



School District U-46

Standards-Based Learning and Assessment

Parent Handbook

At all U-46 schools, we use standards based learning and assessment (SBLA) based on state and national standards. This provides assessment based on evidence of student learning against standards. Assessments based on SBLA demonstrate that students have the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the next grade, next course and finally for college and career.

SBLA measures learning objectives based on a set of standards that students need to meet for each grade/content level. Scores do not compare one student to another. They measure how students are doing on grade level/course level standards.

The Standards Based Learning and Assessment Approach:

- Indicates what students know and are able to do.
- Shows student progress towards meeting a standard.
- Communicates expectations ahead of time.
- Is based on complex tasks, as opposed to memorization.
- Focuses on recent evidence of learning.

Following are the Guiding Principles for SBLA in U46:

Guiding Principle 1– Grades should reflect proficiency on well-defined standards-based learning targets that are clear to all stakeholders.

SBLA provides feedback about how a student is progressing toward learning each standard. Homework is tied to learning objectives, and provides feedback for students as they practice new skills. Attendance, effort, behavior, participation and other factors are important, but separating these from achievement gives students and parents a clear picture about student learning.

Guiding Principle 2 - Grades should be based on academic performance using formative and summative assessments.

SBLA links instruction, evaluation, and intervention. This makes grading consistent, accurate, and meaningful.

*Formative Assessment is periodic assessment for learning that is used to adjust instruction for individual students or a whole class based on needs.

*Summative Assessment is assessment of learning, and is designed to show information about a student's achievement at the end of a period of instruction.

Guiding Principle 3 - Grade scales should be devised to give equal incremental value to each letter grade.

Accurate grades provide the real measure of achievement and is fair to all learners. Use of a four point rubric scale allows grading practices to be accurate and consistent

Standards Based Learning and Assessment Rubric Scale:

4 - Mastery	Demonstrates ability to apply extended thinking about the skills and knowledge of the standard
3 - Proficient	Demonstrates skills and knowledge of the standard
2 - Basic	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the skills and knowledge of the standard
1 - Below Basic	Demonstrates a below basic understanding of the standard; may demonstrate gaps in skills and knowledge
0 - No Evidence *Secondary only	There is no, or insufficient, evidence of learning to assess the standard at this time
NE = Not Evaluated	This standard has not been evaluated at this time

Guiding Principle 4 - Students should be expected to complete work for credit.

As stated under Principle 2, practice or homework is expected and should be a risk-free chance to experiment and practice with newly acquired skills. Work will be considered and recorded as a formative assessment when feedback is provided on the work.



Guiding Principle 5 - Students should be given multiple ways to demonstrate their knowledge.

Allowing students to demonstrate learning in a variety of ways ensures that teachers can respond to the needs and strengths of the members of their class. Teachers are encouraged to combine different methods of assessment to obtain the best information about their students' progress.

Guiding Principle 6 - Feedback should be timely, specific, and related to learning targets.

Using SBLA, teachers provide feedback about how a student is progressing toward learning each standard. Feedback should be specific and clear to students and parents. Student scores are often based on rubrics they are given. The rubrics assist understanding how the student's assessment is determined.

Guiding Principle 7 - Students should be given multiple opportunities to reach proficiency on specific, standards-based concepts and skills.

Students will be given a time length, appropriate to the class level and established by the teacher, to relearn the material before additional attempts. The guidelines for this will be clearly communicated to parents and students by the teacher. Teachers can determine how the multiple opportunities are presented to the student, whether within the structure of normal classroom time or time outside of the classroom. Full mastery (4) must be available to the student on a summative reassessment.



Grading and Assessment Definitions

Assessment - Gathering and interpreting information about student achievement using a variety of tools.

Evidence of Learning - collection of student work samples to illustrate skill growth, understanding of concept, or standard proficiency

Grade - A simple, clear, and concrete summary representation of student achievement based on what a student knows at the end of a given time period. The number (or letter) reported at the end of a period of time as a summary statement of student performance.

Learning Targets/Essential Understandings/I Can Statements – brief statements that describe what students will be expected to learn by the end of an instructional interval.

Mastery - Demonstration of student performance against standard criteria at a pre-established level.

Rubric – a document that articulates the expectations for an assignment by listing the criteria, or what counts, and describing levels of quality from excellent to poor.

Standards - Statement that describes what and/or how well students are expected to understand and perform.

Student Learning Objective - is a targeted, long-term goal for advancing student learning. This data-informed process involves diagnosing and improving specific student learning needs.

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