

The background of the cover is a collage of school-related photos arranged in a grid of diamond shapes. The photos are tinted with yellow and blue colors. The photos include: a student with hands raised in a classroom, a smiling student, a student at a desk, and a classroom with a whiteboard and a basket.

YOUR GUIDE TO  
**PROFICIENCY-BASED  
GRADING**

[www.graniteschools.org](http://www.graniteschools.org)

# PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING PARENT INFORMATION

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## INTRODUCTION

During the last five years Granite School District has been researching proficiency-based grading (PBG) and how students in the district might benefit from a grading system that focuses on their ability to demonstrate their learning and accurately reflects areas of academic strength and weakness. During the 2016-17 school year eighteen teachers began beta testing proficiency-based grading utilizing the Granite District Gradebook. The beta test expanded during the 2017-18 school year to include many additional teachers. This packet provides a brief overview of proficiency-based grading in Granite District. We welcome your feedback as we move forward to implement proficiency-based grading district wide.

## PREMISE FOR PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING IN GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Grades are intended to communicate progress toward mastery of articulated course content standards to students and parents. They are intended to indicate at a prescribed moment in time what a student knows and is able to do with respect to course objectives that have been explicitly taught. They encourage the student to act on feedback and the teacher to adjust and individualize instruction.

## REINFORCING PRACTICES OF PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING

- Issues of student behavior, participation, punctuality, work timeliness and effort are reflected in a citizenship grade rather than an academic grade.
- “Extra credit” is not included in the academic grade.
- Teachers create frequent opportunities for students to demonstrate concept proficiency.
- Teachers utilize a multitude of evidence in multiple modalities to determine a student’s level of proficiency: assignments, observations, portfolios, assessments, products, discussions, projects, performance tasks, etc.
- Homework is meaningful independent practice which requires time and effort outside the classroom and has an articulated purpose tied to content standards but is not scored.
- Points are not deducted for reasons other than a student’s lack of academic proficiency.
- Classroom assessments tie directly to specific content standards and objectives.
- Gradebook is updated regularly to prompt learning and increase proficiency in content standards.

## COMPARING SYSTEMS: TRADITIONAL GRADING VS. PBG

TRADITIONAL GRADING SYSTEM	PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING SYSTEM
Based on multiple assessment methods (quizzes, tests, homework, projects, etc.). One grade/entry is given per assessment. Assessments are based on a percentage system. Criteria for success may be unclear.	Based on learning goals and performance on assessment opportunities specifically designed to assess one or more standards. A minimum of three assessments per standard is required to determine a final score. Scores are consistently reported using a scale of 1-4 which indicates the level of proficiency on the standard.
Utilizes an uncertain mix of assessment, achievement, effort and behavior to determine the final grade. May use late penalties and extra credit.	Measures achievement only. Separates achievement from effort/behavior. No penalties or extra credit applied.
Everything may go in the Gradebook – regardless of purpose. Homework is often given more weight than assessments of learning which can be detrimental to a student's grade while they are engaged in new learning.	Purposefully designed assessment opportunities are provided to students in different modalities to give each student multiple opportunities to show mastery of the standards. Opportunities for reassessment are also provided.
May include every score, regardless of when it was collected. Method for scoring varies from teacher to teacher. Grades reflect an average of all the grades input into Gradebook.	Final grade calculation places greater emphasis on most recent evidence of learning. This allows students to benefit from continued learning throughout the grading period and expected improvement on assessments of the standard.

Adapted from O'Connor K (2002). How to Grade for Learning: Linking grades to standards (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

# PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING IN THE PARENT/STUDENT PORTAL

Here's what you can expect to see in Gradebook.

<https://portal.graniteschools.org>

**Log in to Granite School District**

**Granite SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Username:

Password:

**Parents/Students log in, as usual!** [Log In](#)

**Gradebook \ Parent Portal Registration:**  
Click here to access the Parent Portal registration

**Retrieve Username:**  
Click here if you have forgotten your username

**Reset Password:**  
Click here if you have forgotten your password

**System Check:**  
Click here to run a system check

**Granite School District**

**Click on the Gradebook icon!**

**ed** education solutions development, Inc.

**GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT** [Messages](#) [Help](#) [Logout](#)

Student:  Counselor:

School: **GRANGER SENIOR HIGH** Homeroom:

Grade Lv.: **10** ID:  Year: **2016 - 2017** Team: **GENERAL TEAM**

**TEST SITE**

**Student Schedules** 03/10/2017 [Full Year](#)

☐ Currently Attending

	Per	Mon (03/06)	Tue (03/07)	Wed (03/08)	Thu (03/09)	Fri (03/10)
1	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...	561600-5 SPANISH 1 CASTRO, JUAN	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...	561600-5 SPANISH 1 CASTRO, JUAN	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...
2	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...	601500-6 CHEMISTRY PLUIM, MICHA...	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...	601500-6 CHEMISTRY PLUIM, MICHA...	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...
3	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...	584500-7 HN WORLD CIVI... COUSINS, AARON	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...	584500-7 HN WORLD CIVI... COUSINS, AARON	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...
4	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM	607801-28 HEALTH II SMITH, SHAWNE...	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM	607801-28 HEALTH II SMITH, SHAWNE...	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM

**This is the initial view a parent/student sees.**  
**NOTE: If a parent has more than 1 student, they will need to select 1 of them to get to this point!**

Click **Standards** to display PBG courses. NOTE: PBG courses will also display beneath assignments (currently), but there will be no scores or calculations.

Click **Show Details** to see all standards and scores.

Student Schedules	Term 1 - GP1	Term 1 - GP2	Term 2 - GP1	Term 2 - GP2	Show Details				
Attendance	Title		Period	Pct	Grade	Absences			
Report Card	Course-Section		Term			Total	Unexcused	Excused	Tardies
Assignments	Teacher								
Standards	▲ HN 8TH GRADE MATHEMA...		3 - 3	3.805	A	3	1	2	0
Transcripts	576600-2		2						
Skills	▲ 440956 - Use informal arguments to establish facts about the angle sum and exterior angle...								3.805
Testing	Description		Due Date	Course Section					
Course Request	Angle Relationship Unit Test		02/02/2018	576600 - 2				3.7	
Miscellaneous	Triangle Relationship		01/31/2018	576600 - 2				4	
	Angle Relationships		01/24/2018	576600 - 2				4	
	▲ 440959 - Apply the Pythagorean Theorem to determine unknown side lengths in right trianl...								1 more score needed for average
	Description		Due Date	Course Section					
	2 & 3D Pythagorean Quiz		02/14/2018	576600 - 2				3.5	
	Pythagorean Theorem/Conv...		02/08/2018	576600 - 2				2.5	
	▲ 440960 - Apply the Pythagorean Theorem to find the distance between two points in a coord...								2 more scores needed for average
	Description		Due Date	Course Section					
	Distance Quiz		02/21/2018	576600 - 2				3.5	
	▲ HN ENGLISH 8		7 - 7	3.473	A-	3	1	2	0
	566500-3		2						
	▲ 442435 - Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role...								1 more score needed for average
	Description		Due Date	Course Section					
	Harriet Tubman #3		02/13/2018	566500 - 3				4	
	Informational Text #1		02/07/2018	566500 - 3				4	
	▲ 442451 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concept...								2 more scores needed for average
	Description		Due Date	Course Section					
	Book Review - written speech		02/23/2018	566500 - 3				4	
	▲ 442469 - Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated...								3.060
	Description		Due Date	Course Section					
	Questioning Assessment #3		02/12/2018	566500 - 3				3.5	
			01/31/2018	566500 - 3				1.3	
			01/29/2018	566500 - 3				4	
									3.886

Standards are highlighted in each section with a preceding number. Scores (or what more is needed for a score in a particular standard) are displayed on the right.

#### SCORE LEGEND:

- 4 - Above Proficiency
- 3 - Proficient
- 2 - Approaching Proficiency
- 1 - Below Proficiency

## DISCUSSING GRADEBOOK ENTRIES

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### WITH THE TEACHER

- Has my child completed the learning activities/homework you have provided?
- Will my student have another opportunity to be assessed on the standard?
- What practice, studying, and/or reteaching opportunities should my student take advantage of prior to the next assessment?
- How might my student demonstrate above level proficiency on the standard?

### WITH YOUR STUDENT

When discussing a student's score in the Gradebook, consider asking your student the following questions:

- What standards do you think you still need to learn?
- What practice, studying and/or re-teaching opportunities have you completed in preparation for the next assessment on the standard?
- Have you discussed how you might improve a score on an assessment with your teacher?
- If the student has demonstrated level 3 proficiency on the standard - How might you demonstrate that you are above proficient on the standard? Have you discussed opportunities to demonstrate that you are above proficient with your teacher?



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK IN PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING?

Homework no longer counts toward the final grade; however, it is still assigned as independent practice through which students receive feedback from the teacher on progress toward mastering the related course standards. Some students may choose not to complete the homework. In a proficiency-based grading system a student who has not demonstrated understanding of a standard (and/or is not satisfied with their current assessment scores) can improve their scores on the future assessments by taking advantage of the independent practice and targeted teacher feedback on it.

Two of our reinforcing practices state...

- Teachers create **frequent opportunities** for students to demonstrate concept mastery.
- Teachers utilize a **multitude of evidence in multiple modalities** to determine a student's level of proficiency: assignments, observations, portfolios, assessments, products, discussions, projects, performance tasks, etc.

### HOW ARE STUDENTS MOTIVATED TO COMPLETE HOMEWORK IF IT DOESN'T 'COUNT'?

Parents and teachers can help motivate students by discussing the purposes of independent practice/homework. Final grades should communicate learning that has occurred after opportunities are provided to practice and improve. The goal is that students can demonstrate high levels of understanding by the end of the grading period on the standards which have been taught. Some students master standards quickly and require very little practice, while other students require multiple opportunities to master standards with differing levels of teacher support. Parents can also help students understand that the role of practice in learning course standards is similar to practice in sports or music. The reward is the final game and/or performance; student athletes/musicians are not rewarded after every practice. It is important for parents and teachers to have these conversations with students as they begin to rethink the purpose of homework.

### WILL MY STUDENT RECEIVE A LETTER GRADE IN THE COURSE?

Secondary students will earn a traditional letter grade in a course, and the high school transcript will look the same as it has in the past. The course letter grade will be determined according to the district proficiency-based grading scale.

Elementary students will receive a composite proficiency score of 1-4 that has been calculated by averaging all the proficiency scores for each standard in each subject.

## HOW WILL GRADES BE DETERMINED?

Summative scores for each standard are determined by decaying average, a grading method that puts more weight on the most recent assessment score (see information on decaying average on the next page). Student grades will be calculated by taking the sum of the content standard final scores divided by the total number of standards assessed at least three times throughout the quarter.

## WHAT IS A DECAYING AVERAGE IN STANDARDS-BASED GRADING?

Parents will not be able to see a calculated letter grade until scores on a minimum of three assessments per standard have been entered into Gradebook. Decaying Average recognizes that the most recent score is more representative of a student's current mastery level and puts more weight on that score (as opposed to a straight average that counts the student's first work and most recent work as equally important).

## WHAT IS THE GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT SECONDARY PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING SCALE?

A	3.51 – 4.00	B-	2.50 – 2.66	D+	1.66 – 1.99
A-	3.00 – 3.50	C+	2.34 – 2.49	D	1.33 – 1.65
B+	2.84 – 2.99	C	2.17 – 2.33	D-	1.00 – 1.32
B	2.67 – 2.83	C-	2.00 – 2.16	F	0.00 – 0.99

## HOW WILL PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING HELP MY STUDENT BE COLLEGE/CAREER READY?

Proficiency-based grading encourages students to take ownership of their own learning. It empowers them to improve understanding of a concept and advocate for multiple ways in which to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. It assures that final grades communicate more accurately to students and parents the degree to which the student is proficient in clearly articulated standards and objectives. Students will be less likely to need remedial courses in their post-secondary experiences or be incorrectly scheduled into inappropriate levels of courses.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION IF I HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Teachers participating in the proficiency-based beta test group will be happy to answer questions regarding how proficiency-based grading is being implemented in their classrooms. Principals can answer general questions regarding proficiency-based grading. For additional information or questions please refer to the Granite School District website or contact Sheri Sorensen: [sasorensen@graniteschools.org](mailto:sasorensen@graniteschools.org) or 385-646-7341.