

# Perry Local Schools

## Grading and Reporting Philosophy, Guidelines, and Practices

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### History

Grading and reporting in a standards-based environment was identified as one of three, district-wide SMART Goals at the beginning of the 2007-08 school year and was defined as follows:

*Create, evaluate and revise an integrated, K-12 guaranteed and viable curriculum that ensures student achievement and progress.*

In a standards-based learning environment, we needed to explore ways in which traditional grading and reporting practices were counter-productive to learning and adopt grading practices that were more compatible with an emphasis on learning.

The action steps under this district SMART Goal included the creation and implementation of a standards-based report card, while addressing the academic meaning of a grade. This goal was targeted for three main reasons:

- 1). The need to better align grading and reporting practices to other district-wide curricular, instructional, and assessment philosophies, and practices.
- 2). The need for consistent grading practices within our K-12 grade levels and courses.
- 3). The need to improve parent communication (i.e., parent portal in Infinite Campus).

Therefore, a district-wide committee comprised of our Teacher Leaders and members of the Leadership Team met in May of 2008 to discuss and write grading and reporting guidelines to ensure that grades assigned to K-12 students in our district would be consistent, accurate, meaningful and supportive of learning. We read best practice literature, compared our current practices to the best-practice recommendations and outlined the grading and reporting issues needing our attention if we were to meet our goal.

Based on a review of educational research and best practices, the district-wide committee established a framework of 8 grading and reporting policy sections:

- 1). Criterion-Referenced Grading vs. Norm Referenced Grading
- 2). Academic Practice (formatives) and Academic Achievement (summatives)
- 3). Ingredients in a Grade (i.e., Extra Credit/Bonus Points and Learning Skills)
- 4). Missing Work/Late Assignments/Zeros
- 5). Determining Criteria for Performance and 6/9 Week Grades
- 6). Reporting of Grades/Infinite Campus
- 7). Assessment Quality with Clear Performance Criteria
- 8). Student (Parent) Involvement and Understanding in Grading and Reporting

The committee set an overall goal of supporting the learning process and encouraging student success through full implementation of these guidelines in the 2008-09 school year. In 2009, 2010 and 2011, the district-wide grading and reporting committee has continued to review and revise our guidelines to best communicate our grading and reporting expectations.

Our work in 2011 on these guidelines resulted in a change of how we organize our information. We now have six guidelines that explain our grading and reporting practices. These are:

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<b>Guideline 1:</b>	Assign grades for the grading period that align with the achievement of the district's course/grade level Power Objectives.
<b>Guideline 2:</b>	Use quality assessments and properly record evidence of formative and summative data/results.
<b>Guideline 3:</b>	Use sample student performances when determining grades for the grading period to best communicate student understanding of content.
<b>Guideline 4:</b>	Separate achievement from all other student behaviors and dispositions.
<b>Guideline 5:</b>	Establish a culture of collaboration with all stakeholders (students, teachers, administrators, parents) to ensure student responsibility for completing all assigned work to the best of their ability.
<b>Guideline 6:</b>	Involve students in the assessment and grading processes throughout the learning cycle.

Also in 2011, we revised the rubric we use to determine performance on each of our Power Objectives. We will be using the following:

### K-12 Performance Level Descriptors

Meet/Exceed Power Objective	Progressing Toward Power Objective	Not Meeting Power Objective	Insufficient Evidence
Students achieving at this level <b>regularly meet/exceed deep understanding</b> of the Power Objective.	Students achieving at this level are <b>beginning to, and occasionally demonstrate understanding</b> of the Power Objective.	Students achieving at this level are <b>not demonstrating understanding</b> of the Power Objective.	Students receiving an IE have <b>not completed</b> enough evidence to provide a description of their performance on the Power Objective.

#### Best Practice Literature:

##### Books

- *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning* by Richard J. Stiggins, Judith Arter, Jan Chappuis and Stephen Chappuis
- *How to Grade for Learning* by Ken O'Connor
- *Transforming Classroom Grading* by Robert J. Marzano
- *Fair Isn't Always Equal* by Rick Wormeli
- *Ahead of the Curve*—Editor, Ken O'Connor

##### Articles

- "The Case Against the Zero" by Douglas B. Reeves, *Phi Delta Kappan*
- "Grading Policies that Work Against Standards ... and How To Fix Them" by Thomas R. Guskey in the December 2000 issue of the NASSP Bulletin.
- "Helping Standards Make the GRADE" by Thomas R. Guskey, *Educational Leadership*
- "Grading to Communicate" by Tony Winger, *Educational Leadership*

See **Appendix A** for a roster of the 2011 Grading and Reporting Committee.

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*The Perry Local Schools believes that all grading and reporting practices should support the learning process and encourage student success in the standards-based learning environment.*

*Quality use of these grading practices is directly dependent on the quality of formative and summative assessments teachers use on a regular basis to measure learning. These guidelines articulate and facilitate the implementation of a grading philosophy to all stakeholders, which is consistent with educational best practices and all other aspects of the district’s teaching and learning practices. At the same time, these guideline provide flexibility for individual teacher use -- because effective grading practices must be implemented by teachers based on both evidence and professional judgment.*

*The guidelines listed below should be considered individually, but applied holistically in practice.*

### Guideline 1:

### Assign grades for the grading period that align with the achievement of the district’s course/grade level Power Objectives.

- Each Power Objective will be assessed using the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors:

Meet/Exceed Power Objective	Progressing Toward Power Objective	Not Meeting Power Objective	Insufficient Evidence
Students achieving at this level <b>regularly meet/exceed deep understanding</b> of the Power Objective.	Students achieving at this level are <b>beginning to, and occasionally demonstrate understanding</b> of the Power Objective.	Students achieving at this level are <b>not demonstrating understanding</b> of the Power Objective.	Students receiving an IE have <b>not completed</b> enough evidence to provide a description of their performance on the Power Objective.

- The grade assigned for the grading period—nine weeks at primary, intermediate and middle school and six weeks at high school—must be based on both the **body of evidence** (the evidence of understanding demonstrated for the assessed Power Objectives for that grading period) and **professional judgment** (common sense). Teachers need to understand their option and authority for infusing judgment when assigning grades.
- At the conclusion of the grading period, professional judgment involves consideration of the most appropriate measure of central tendency (mean, median or mode) and how best to address more recent scores. Grading must involve more than just crunching numbers. Professional judgment requires asking the question “which grade makes the most sense?” Based on evidence of the assessed Power Objectives collectively and professional judgment, teachers are expected to assign the most appropriate grade for the grading period.

Our Exploratory Arts teachers may report differently due to a variety of circumstances. See **Appendix B** for further information.

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### Guideline 2:

#### Use quality assessments and properly record evidence of formative and summative data/results.

- Assessments meet rigorous design criteria.
  - *Clear learning targets*
  - *Assessments aligned with Power Objective, Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions*
  - *Appropriate match of verb of Power Objective and assessment method selected*
- Students will have multiple assessment opportunities (when applicable). Students need to be given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in different ways and at different speeds. Teachers should vary assessment opportunities including the type of assessments, the number of assessment opportunities, time available and the assessment methods used.
- The practice of providing multiple opportunities does not mean second chances should automatically be given to students for every assessment or performance task. Students must provide evidence that they completed some type of correctives (e.g., personal practice, study tables, Wednesday school, etc.) before they are allowed second chance opportunities. Any reteaching, review or reassessment should be done according to teacher professional judgment.
- Make available timely evidence of formative and summative data/results in Infinite Campus.
- ❖ *Continued discussion and research needed on using Infinite Campus to share intervention and enrichment strategies.*

### Guideline 3:

#### Use sample student performances when determining the grade for the grading period to best communicate student understanding of content.

- Grades will be determined primarily on summative assessments (at least 80% of the marking period grade). Formative assessments will count for a maximum of 20% of the marking period grade. Teachers have the option to use a 10%/90% or 0%/100% ratio, with the lesser percentage used to calculate formatives into the grade.

#### **Pre-assessments:**

- Pre-assessment is an important component of a balanced assessment system and is the first step to accessing prior student knowledge. To know where your students are before you begin a unit is critical in planning for engaging, relevant and meaningful student learning experiences.
  - *Teachers will use their professional judgment at the beginning of instructional units to determine if pre-assessment is necessary. Teachers may select from a variety of pre-assessment techniques.*
  - *Pre-assessments may be used prior to instruction to collect baseline data for grading period SMART Goals based on the Power Objective(s).*
  - *Pre-assessments may be used to allow teachers to adapt, revise and/or differentiate instructional strategies to best meet the needs of students, related to achieving understanding of unit Power Objectives.*
  - *Pre-assessments may be used to give students a preview of the Power Objective(s), Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and unit expectations.*

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- *Examples of pre-assessments include, but are not limited to the following: writing prompts, entrance/exit slips, anticipation journals, checklists, standardized or teacher-created written pre-assessments.*

### **Formative assessments:**

- Formative assessment is conducted when a student is still learning the material. It is designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to instruction for individual students or for a whole class. Assessment **FOR** learning is assessment with descriptive feedback.
- The purpose of formative assessment is not to judge a student's final achievement of a concept/topic, but to assess where he/she is in the learning process, diagnose any problems, give the student help needed to learn the material, allow the student to reflect on his/her progress and take action to improve it, and aid in providing enrichment or extended learning. In addition, this daily practice is not for grading opportunities. It is critical that teachers communicate to students the important relationship between practice (both guided and independent practice) and performing well on assessments and performance tasks.
- Students will continue to work in formative ways until the teacher determines a student's readiness for the summative assessment.
- If the student is not successful during the formative process, the teacher will use the Pyramid of Interventions for support of which Response to Intervention (RtI) is a component. (See **Appendix C**)

### **Summative assessments:**

- Summative assessments occur after a student has had sufficient instruction and practice on a concept/topic, and it is reasonable to evaluate the understanding of the concepts, ideas, knowledge and skills. Assessment **OF** learning is assessment with evaluative feedback.
- The purpose of summative assessments is to provide information to be used in making judgments about a student's achievement at the end of a period of instruction.
- All summative assessments must be completed. If the student is not successful during the summative process, the teacher will use the Pyramid of Interventions for support of which Response to Intervention (RtI) is a component. (See **Appendix C**)

Pre-assessment (if applicable)	
<p style="color: blue; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Summatives (Academic Achievement)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment <b>OF</b> Learning</p> <p><i>Measures understanding and use of knowledge</i></p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">NO LESS than 80% of final grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Performance Tasks</b> (e.g., essays, artwork, visual representations, models, multimedia, oral presentations, lab experiences, live or recorded performances, exhibits)</li> <li>✓ <b>Tests</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Academic Prompts</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Self Assessment and Reflection</b></li> </ul>	<p style="color: blue; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Formatives (Academic Practice)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment <b>FOR</b> Learning</p> <p><i>Scores for practice work</i></p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">NO MORE than 20% of final grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Academic Prompts</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Observations</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Reflective Journals or Learning Logs</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Independent Practice/Homework</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Quizzes</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Self-Assessment and Reflection</b></li> </ul>

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### Guideline 4:

#### Separate achievement from all other student behaviors and dispositions.

- Academic achievement will consist solely of individual student evidence because a grade must reflect what the individual student understands and is able to do.
  - Because grades should reflect academic achievement, they should not be used to attempt to change or modify behavior.
  - Only sources from formatives and summatives can account for a six or nine week's grade. Other factors such as behavior, attitude, participation and effort are very important but in most cases are reported on a separate section of the report card (Learning Skills). In some courses, learning skills may be part of the academic content of the course, in which case they would be part of the academic grade (e.g., oral participation in Spanish and cooperation in team activities in Physical Education).
  - Extra credit and bonus points are not a part of the Perry Local Schools' Grading and Reporting System. We believe that all learning is part of the process towards achievement and therefore should not be considered as an "add-on" or as an extra part of learning. Enrichment work is evidence of practice and/or achievement and should be utilized in the same way as any other piece of evidence.
  - If the student is not successful during the learning process, the teacher will use the Pyramid of Interventions for support of which Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a component. (See **Appendix C**)
- ❖ *Continued discussion and research needed about the efficacy of the Learning Skills section of our grading and reporting system as well as how best to report the action steps of the Rtl process in Infinite Campus.*

### Guideline 5:

#### Establish a culture of collaboration with all stakeholders (students, teachers, administrators, parents) to ensure student responsibility for completing all assigned work to the best of their ability.

**It is expected that the student should complete all work. Completing work in a timely manner demonstrates self-discipline, responsibility and life skills.**

#### **Make-up Work from absences**

- The effort to obtain missed assignments is the student's and, of course, the effort to complete the assignments is the student's.
- If the student misses one school day, all prior assignments, including written work, test, quizzes and projects, are due the day he/she returns to school.
- Any assignments the student missed during the one day absence will not be due until the day after the student returns to school. If the student misses more than one school day, he/she is responsible for getting the assignments by calling the school office or by getting them from your teachers immediately upon returning, the student's first day back. The student has as many school days as he/she missed to complete the make-up work including written work, tests, quizzes and projects. For further information on Make-up Work Procedures, you may refer to the student handbook.

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### **Late Work/Missing Work**

- If student does not complete work, he/she will complete work before/after school, during lunch or any other within or extended day opportunities.
- If student does not complete formative work, an **M (Missing)** will be entered into Infinite Campus until the work is turned in. **M** and will be factored into grade as a zero. After multiple teacher attempts to intervene with the student, the teacher will decide the priority of continuing to try to intervene regarding the missing homework. Work still not complete at the conclusion of the grading period will be designated as **M** and will be factored into grade as a zero. In addition, the report card will indicate Insufficient Evidence for this Power Objective (from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors).
- All summative assessments must be completed. Teacher should use professional judgment to determine amount of grade lowered for late work, if any. Care should be taken to ensure that penalties do not distort the grade, but instead irresponsible behavior is reported on in the Learning Skills section of the report card.
- If the student is not successful during the learning process, the teacher will use the Pyramid of Interventions for support of which Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a component. (See **Appendix C**)

### **End of Course Incompletes**

- A student who has not completed major assessments by the end of the grading period will receive an INC (Incomplete) on the report card. The student will then have **one week** after the end of the grading period to make up any missing assignments. If the student does not make up missing assignments by the end of the one week period, an incomplete grade will become an “F” unless there are extenuating circumstances, upon which the teacher will use his/her professional judgment to designate a timeline for completion of assignments.
  - If the student is not successful during the learning process, the teacher will use the Pyramid of Interventions for support of which Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a component. (See **Appendix C**)
- ❖ *Continued discussion and research needed for the following:*
- *middle school students not passing core classes*
  - *the effect of the zero and how it affecting our grading and reporting practices*
  - *homework—quantity vs. quality*

## **Guideline 6:**

### **Involve students in the assessment and grading processes throughout the learning cycle.**

- Ensure that students understand in advance how their grades will be determined (age appropriate) and what evidence the teacher will accept that the content is understood deeply.
- Involve students in the assessment process, record keeping and communicating their achievement and progress.
- Allow the student to reflect on his/her progress and take action to improve it.
- Encourage/expect students to track their progress in Infinite Campus for grades 3-12.

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### APPENDIX A

#### Grading and Reporting Committee 2011

Rosemary Gornik—Assistant Superintendent  
Amy Harker – Director of Student Services  
Robert Knisely—High School Principal  
Todd Porcello —Assistant High School Principal  
Scott Hunt—Middle School Principal  
Shelley Pulling—Intermediate School Principal  
Jodi Poremba—Primary School Principal  
Coni Steverding—Learning Facilitator  
Tom deHaas—Guidance Counselor Teacher Leader  
Jennifer LaBoe—Intervention Specialist Teacher Leader  
Michele Shipley—Kindergarten Teacher Leader  
Paige Ward—1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Barry Sneed—2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Heather Crum—3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Maryann Cassidy—4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Ann Rayner—5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Cherise Maffit—6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Darlene Tyler—7<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Cindy Pinter—8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Leader  
Rachele Alpine—High School English Teacher Leader  
Jeff Goodman—High School Social Studies Teacher Leader  
Kathy Traina—High School Math Teacher Leader  
Bob Glavan—High School Science Teacher Leader  
Deb Suba—Art Teacher Leader  
Gary Stevenson—Business/Technology Teacher Leader

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### APPENDIX B

#### Additional Information for Exploratory Arts Grading and Reporting Guidelines

Since students are taken out of Exploratory Arts for a variety of reasons (i.e., PLUS, Healthy Heart, TPP, Intervention, Speech, etc.) and assuming that each course has been designed and paced to complete the stated Power Objectives in a given period of time, the teacher should be able to grade the student on the work accomplished.

Exploratory Arts courses have varying amounts of student contact time; therefore, some Power Objectives will not be reported on for some students, depending upon whether the student was present in the class or not. For those students who have not completed enough evidence because of their unwillingness to complete the work, a designation of Insufficient Evidence will be provided on the report card (see below). The teacher would grade the student on the progress of the Power Objective(s) to date, for which the student was in attendance to learn. This supports the grading scale on the report card in that Power Objectives left blank are not reported on at that time.

- K-4 **Art, Music and PE Teachers** will use the scale of O=Outstanding, S=Satisfactory, and U=Unsatisfactory for the grade reported at the end of each semester. In addition, the teacher will report from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each semester.
- K-4 **Spanish Teachers** will use the scale of O=Outstanding, S=Satisfactory, and U=Unsatisfactory for the grade reported at the end of each semester. In addition, the teacher will report from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each grading period.
- 5-6 **Art, PE, Industrial Tech and Technology Exploratory Arts Teachers** will use the scale of O=Outstanding, S=Satisfactory, and U=Unsatisfactory for the grade reported.
- If the class meets all year, the teacher will report O, S, U for the grade reported at the end of each semester, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each semester.
  - If the course meets for nine weeks, the teacher will report O, S, U for the grade reported at the end of the nine weeks, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the Power Objectives for the nine weeks.
- 5 **Spanish Teachers** will use the scale of O=Outstanding, S=Satisfactory, and U=Unsatisfactory for the grade reported at the end of each semester. In addition, the teacher will report from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each grading period.
- 6 **Spanish Teachers** If the course meets for nine weeks, the teacher will report a letter grade at the end of the nine weeks, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e.,

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Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the Power Objectives for the nine weeks.

- 5-6 **Music Exploratory Arts Teachers** will report a letter grade at the end of each semester, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each grading period.
- 7-8 **Exploratory Arts Teachers** will report a letter grade for each grading period, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each grading period.
- If the class meets all year, the teacher will report a letter grade for each grading period, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each grading period.
  - If the course meets for nine weeks, the teacher will report a letter grade at the end of the nine weeks, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the Power Objectives for the nine weeks.
- 9-12 **The Exploratory Arts Teachers** will report a letter grade for each grading period, in addition to reporting from the K-12 Performance Level Descriptors (i.e., Meet/Exceed Power Objective, Progressing Toward Power Objective, Not Meeting Power Objective or Insufficient Evidence) for the assessed Power Objectives at the end of each grading period.

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**APPENDIX C**

Pyramids of Intervention