Standards-based Grading

Moving to Standards-Based Grading & Reporting in the Raymond School District
Achievement Grading Study Team’s Philosophy on Grading:

- We believe that in order to support optimum student learning, we must have a grading system that is meaningful, accurate, and consistent. Grades must reflect achievement on learning goals that are directly connected to State of NH and National learning standards.
Purpose

- We should accurately measure achievement and support the academic successes of our students.
- Why should we grade students? What should a course grade be based on?
Practice

- Connect with standards for meaningful grading.
- Ensure that all teachers use similar assessments and rubrics for fairness and consistency.
- Ensure that all teachers use the same practices to grade students (same % for HW, same standards, re-assessment opportunities, etc.)
- Grade on mastery of state or national standards with 4 levels of achievement (A, B, C, i), or like NECAP we could use:
  - Proficient with distinction,
  - Proficient,
  - Partially Proficient,
  - Substantially Below proficient
What’s in a Grade?

- What is the difference between those students who earn As and Bs and those students who earn Ds and Fs?
A student received the following marks on the 10 assignments during a marking period:
- C, C, MA (missing assignment), D, C, B, MA, MA, B-, A
- What is the final grade?
Learning and Grading: what does the research tell us?

- Grading is complicated.
- Grading is often subjective and emotional.
- Grading is inescapable.
- Grading practices are changing in schools.
- Grading is not essential for learning to occur.
If grading is not essential to learning, why do we grade?

- Instructional uses
- Communication uses
- Administrative uses
- Guidance uses
- To evaluate the educational program
Consider this:

- The primary purpose for grading should be to communicate with students and parents about their achievement of learning goals.

Susan M. Brookhart, Grading
Moving from a Traditional Report Card to a Standards-Based Report Card

**Traditional**
- Content areas listed (language, math, science, social studies, music, art, etc).
- Letter grades reflect an individual teacher’s expectation, student effort, and achievement.
- Letter grades are typically calculated as average score over time.
- Instruction may or may not be aligned to state standards.

**Standards-based**
- Reporting areas are defined by specific content standards.
- Marks indicate progress towards content standards.
- Marks are skill-specific with the most recent assessments weighted more heavily using mode or median.
- Instruction is aligned with standards.
- Academic achievement and work habit behaviors are reported separately.
Make Grading Meaningful

- Grades should support learning & encourage student success.
- Grades should be tools to enhance learning.
- Grades should be based on performance standards (criterion-referenced vs. norm-referenced).
- Home work, attendance, class participation, behavior, attitude, ability, effort, extra credit, bonus points, and late assignments should all be reported in some manner.
- Meaningful grading should focus on the most essential elements, should allow second chances and extra time.
- Assessment of learning (summative) vs. assessment for learning (formative)
Guidelines for Grading are Needed

- Academic standards need to be assessed.
- Focus on performance standards not on chapter or unit tests. The assessments show the progress toward the learning goals.
- Rubrics need to be used with assessments to describe student performance.
- Scores in rank books will represent proficiency or mastery of standards, not chapter or unit tests.
- Emphasize more recent evidence of learning.
- Avoid using mean (average); consider using median or mode.
- Consider a 4 pt. scale instead of a 100 pt. scale.
Avoid Grading Based on Mean (Averages)

- Student A
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 70
  - 91
  - 91
  - 889 mean = 88.9%

- Student B
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 91
  - 889 mode = 91
  - median = 91
The 100 pt. Grading Scale:

- 100  4
- 90   3
- 80   2
- 70   1
- 60   0
- 50  -1
- 40  -2
- 30  -3
- 20  -4
- 10  -5
- 0   -6
Brain-based Research says:

- We must:
  - Teach for understanding.
  - Make classrooms supportive and high in challenge.
  - Actively engage and motivate students.
Understanding by Design (UbD) a.k.a. Backward Design

- Stage 1 - Identify the desired results
  - Define what students will know or be able to do (enduring understandings/competencies)

- Stage 2 – Determine acceptable evidence
  - Performance tasks, tests, quizzes, essays, observations, etc.

- Stage 3 – Plan the learning experiences
  - What learning experiences will allow students to develop and demonstrate the desired understandings?