

Grading and Reporting Student Achievement in Middle School Courses

Teaching and learning is the daily interaction that supports student achievement in his/her course of study. Teachers establish learning goals by assessing their students' strengths and needs and then plan instruction based on the required curriculum. Teachers continually gather evidence about student learning and adjust their instruction to ensure student success on tasks and assessments that combine the content and skills addressed during instruction.

Grading and reporting student achievement are closely linked to the mission of the SASD school district, "to prepare students to demonstrate competencies needed to contribute and to succeed in a changing world by building on a commitment to excellence and innovation, by working in partnership with family and community, and by assuring a quality education for all students in a safe and nurturing environment."

Guiding Questions about Learning:

- What do students need to know and be able to do?
- How will we know they have learned it?

These two questions directly relate to the expectation that teachers will collect evidence of and report on student achievement of the SASD curriculum.

Consistent procedures and processes are established within and among the two middle schools, grades are based on multiple and varied measures over time; and those grades reflect student achievement of the SASD curriculum.

Grading Principles:

Promote grades that

- Carry consistent meaning within the district
- Reflect student achievement of the SASD curriculum
- Reflect student learning as assessed on a variety of measures, and
- Reflect student learning as assessed on multiple measures over time.
- Can be explained by teachers and are clearly understood by parents and students.

**Grades/points will not be used as reward or penalty for contracts, signatures, etc . . .*

Weighted categories – the weighted categories method provides a framework for consistency and transparency. Weighted categories establish weights and proportions. It is possible for teachers in the same course to have a number of task/assessments different from another teacher in the same course.

- A disproportionate amount of the grade will not be concentrated in too few tasks/assessments.
- Each category has multiple task/assessment.
- All teachers will follow the grading plan.

*Ungraded categories – Ungraded Tasks/Assessments – this is used for recording ungraded task/assessments such as: record keeping, work checked for completion, and participation.

Assessments for Learning in and out of the Classroom NOT REPORTED in the Gradebook:

- **Formative Assessments** (ungraded) – “a process used by teachers and student during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes.”

Formative Assessments can include but should not be limited to the following list:

- Conferring with students
- Half- to one-page quick-writes,
- Exit cards,
- Oral responses to clarifying questions,
- Thumbs-up/down,
- Buttons pressed on audience response system “clickers,”
- Completing graphic organizers,
- Observing body language and facial expressions,
- Practice problems/sentences,
- Skill demonstrations,
- Think-alouds,
- Teacher observation, and
- Classroom participation.

Assessments of Learning in the Classroom REPORTED in the Gradebook for all Core Subjects

60% Formal Assessments - Variety of assessments: tests, major quizzes, summatives and projects

40% Informal Assessments - Variety of assessments: classwork, warm-ups, notebook checks, quizzes, homework.

Homework -

- Assigned at the discretion of the teacher
- Represents 0 - 25% of the Informal Assessments [this is equivalent to 10% of the overall grade]
- **Homework for Practice** assignments reinforce school learning and involve only material with which the student is very familiar. To be effective, this type of homework will be assigned only after sufficient guided practice in the classroom ensures the student will be successful when working independently.
- **Homework for Preparation** assignments normally refer to assignments that are given prior to class meetings so that class time may be spent in discussion or some other form of application of the prepared information. Homework of this sort will be carefully assigned to ensure that the student has a clear idea of the purpose of the assignment.