

Forest City Middle School



Standards Based Learning Handbook 2016-2017

“Committed to Developing Life-Long Learners”

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Standards Based Learning Terms and Definitions

Standard - Content specific learning statement that the student will strive to attain.

Learning Target - Small learning goals that help the student acquire the knowledge to get to the ending goal (standard).

Formative Practice - The work the student does in and out of class with specific feedback to help him or her reach the learning targets and standard.

Summative Assessment - Used to evaluate the student's new learning and skills developed at the conclusion of a unit (like the final test). This is where the student's level of proficiency is recorded.

Mastery - The student has demonstrated deep understanding of the learning target and can apply his or her knowledge to other situations.

Proficient - The student has met the learning target.

Approaching Proficiency - The student has foundational skills and knowledge for the learning target and is almost there.

Needs Development - The evidence that the student has submitted shows he or she has a ways to go to reach the learning target.

Spiraling Curriculum - The student will be taught and assessed multiple times over the course of the year. The content will spiral around for the student to re-learn if needed or to continue proving proficiency.

Differentiation - Teachers meet student needs by modifying the content (what is being taught), the process (how it is taught), and the product (how students demonstrate their learning).

Mission Statement

Our mission at FCMS is to provide students with intentional instruction based on agreed-upon common standards, as well as opportunities for support, re-teaching, and growth in the learning process. Grades communicate what students know and can do.

Standards Based Learning Guiding Principles

- > intentional instruction based on state standards and classroom learning targets
- > student learning measured against standards and learning targets
- > proficiency levels will be reported where they finish
- > no averaging of scores
- > students will chase learning, not points
- > neither zeros nor extra credit will be given
- > academic achievement will be separate from behaviors
- > homework and class practice is evidence of learning
- > students have the opportunity to redo and retake summative assessments
- > spiral curriculum
- > students demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways

*** These guiding principles are explained in further detail throughout this handbook.*

Basic SBL Information

Standards Based Learning is a system in which a student's individual learning is the primary goal. It is a method for teachers to measure student knowledge based on state standard curriculum. Although every system needs a grading component, Standards Based Learning encompasses an entire learning process enabling students to take chances, re-learn material, and demonstrate their understanding of the content. Student progress is communicated over time showing student learning for each specific learning goal.

Meeting a student's individual needs is a focus in Standards Based Learning. A student's path to proficiency may vary. The teacher and student will work together to meet the student's needs to be successful. Not all students will understand the content in the time frame it is taught. This structure allows students to continually learn and have chances to show proficiency at a later date through spiraling curriculum and redo opportunities (see page 9).

The learning process consists of two parts: formative practice and summative assessment. Formative practice provides multiple opportunities to grow comfortable with the content, receive feedback from the teacher and/or peers, and reflect on individual understanding. Formative practice activities may include daily work, book assignments, quizzes, group projects, and homework. This work is reviewed by the teacher for feedback and learning purposes but is not included in the final proficiency level recorded. As defined, summative assessments are used to evaluate a student's learning at the conclusion of the unit. A level of proficiency will be recorded in the gradebook.

The Standards Based Learning structure separates work ethic from deep understanding and quality work that is produced. Academic habits (citizenship and employability skills) will continue to be monitored and scored separately but will not be calculated in the final level of proficiency. Extra credit will not be given for compliance, subjective tasks, or good behavior. (See pages 10-11 for Citizenship and Employability Skills Rubric)

Research

“Standards-Based Learning is based on the principle that grades are not about what students earn; they are about what students learn” (Brookhart, 2011, p. 13).

The purpose of clearly defining standards and each student’s level is to be able to communicate to stakeholders including: parents, students, future teachers, or anyone interested in a student’s academic growth, where the student is in relation to performing and understanding a specific standard (Scriffiny, 2008).

Rick Wormeli’s extensive research concluded, “With grades we document progress in students and our teaching, we provide feedback to students and their parents, and we make instructional decisions” (Wormeli, 2009).

“If the goal is for all students to master essential learning, the philosophy teach, test, and move on should be replaced with teach, test, and now what?” (Erickson, 2011, p. 69).

“Grades are displayed in a way in which students are not compared to one another, but instead, each student’s individual growth is monitored. Comparing students is not only unfair, but also hindering to them. No research supports the idea that low grades prompt students to try harder. More often, low grades prompt students to withdraw from learning” (Guskey, 2011, p. 21).

“If we base our grades on standards rather than attendance, behavior, extra credit (which often has nothing to do with course objectives), we can actually help students grapple with the idea of quality and walk away with a higher degree of self-sufficiency” (Scriffiny, 2008, p. 74).

Scale

Score	Academic Descriptor	Description
4.0	Mastery	I have demonstrated deep understanding of the learning target and can apply my knowledge to other situations.
3.5	Advanced	I have met the learning target and can extend my knowledge to show deeper understanding.
3.0	Proficiency	I have met the learning target.
2.0	Approaching Proficiency	I have foundational skills and knowledge for the learning target, and I am almost there.
1.0	Needs Development	The evidence that I've submitted shows I have a long way to go to reach the learning target.
NA	Not Yet Assessed	I have not been assessed over this standard yet.
M	Missing	I have not submitted evidence of learning for the learning target.

Questions to ask your child

For day to day interaction about school:

- What activity/assignment did you do today in (class)?
- What learning target were you working on?
- How do you feel about the content?
- What are you not understanding?
- Have you expressed this to (teacher)?
- Have you practiced your learning targets?

When inquiring about proficiency scores, consider asking:

- In what standards are you proficient?
- What practice, studying and/or re-teaching opportunities have you completed in preparation for the next reassessment opportunity?
- What standards do you plan to reassess?
- When will you see your teacher to schedule a reassessment?

FCMS Redo Policy

The objective of our redo policy is to enable students and teachers to re-learn and re-teach material that was not fully understood the first time around. This differs from the traditional belief of “teach, test, and move on”. Through Standards Based Learning, students have the opportunity to learn, assess, and reflect.

General Redo Policy:

- Student can redo any assessment with any grade.
- Students will be required to complete a re-learning process (differentiated learning through skill work, online practice, small group work, and/or verbal conferencing) prior to redo assessment.
- Teacher has the right to change the format of the redo.
- Teacher can require a redo.
- Teacher will always take the highest grade from the redo process.
- Teachers will not allow any work to be redone during the last week of the grading period.
- If necessary, teachers may ask students to create a calendar of completion.

*** This policy is an outline followed by all FCMS teachers. Specific procedures may differ between content and classrooms.*

ECMS Citizenship and Employability Skills Rubric		
	Academic Conduct	Work Completion
Exceeding	<p>4</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrives on time prepared for class every day. • Participates every day, actions drive instruction forward. • Consistently does what's expected and helps others do the same. 	<p>4</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes work as assigned every day. • Routinely submits work on time. • Takes full advantage of retake/redo opportunities and support.
Meeting	<p>3</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrives on time prepared for class consistently. • Participates in class, actions benefit instruction. • Accepts responsibility for their actions, rarely requires redirection. 	<p>3</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently completes work as assigned. • Usually submits work on time. • Takes advantage of retake/redo opportunities and support.
Developing	<p>2</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrives on time prepared for class inconsistently. • Participates in class, actions at times distract from instruction. • Usually follows redirection and changes their actions. 	<p>2</p> <p><u>The Student</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistently completes work as assigned. • Inconsistently submits work on time. • Occasionally takes advantage of retake/redo opportunities and support.
Beginning or Insufficient Progress	<p>1</p> <p><u>Even with help, the Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely brings materials to class, even with teacher coaching. • Rarely participates, comments often distract from instruction. • Does not follow redirection to change their actions. 	<p>1</p> <p><u>Even with help, the Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely completes work as assigned. • Rarely submits work on time. • Rarely takes advantage of retake/redo opportunities and support.
No Evidence	<p>0</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has not demonstrated sufficient evidence. 	<p>0</p> <p><u>The Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has not demonstrated sufficient evidence.

Adapted with permission from Des Moines Public Schools and Council Bluffs School Districts

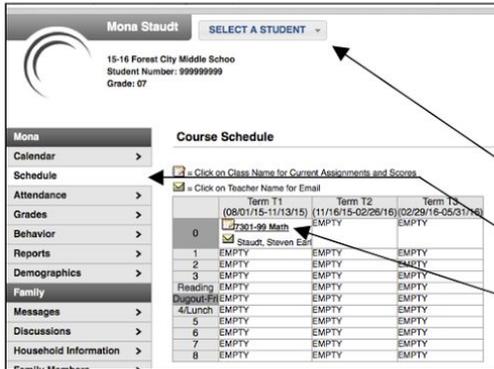
*All bullet points are indicators for the level. Not all indicators must be met in order to score a student at a particular level in each category.

ECMS Citizenship and Employability Skills Rubric		
	Working With Adults	Working with Students
Exceeding	<p>4</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes responsibility for learning by seeking help and asking questions in a timely manner. Consistently listens and follows suggestions given by adults. Consistently demonstrates effective communication skills and willingness to work with adults. 	<p>4</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively leads a group of students. Can help resolve most conflicts. Seeks out different points of view. Embraces diversity in others.
Meeting	<p>3</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually assumes responsibility for learning by seeking help and asking questions when needed. Usually listens and follows suggestions given by adults. Usually demonstrates effective communication skills and willingness to work with adults. 	<p>3</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively communicates with other students. Does not participate in conflicts. Accepts different points of view. Accepts diversity in others.
Developing	<p>2</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally seeks help and asks questions when needed. Inconsistently listens and follows suggestions given by adults. Sometimes demonstrates effective communication skills and willingness to work with adults. 	<p>2</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally communicates effectively with other students. Does not escalate conflicts. Occasionally accepts different points of view. Occasionally accepts diversity in others.
Beginning or Insufficient Progress	<p>1</p> <p>Even with help, the Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely seeks help and asks questions when needed. Rarely listens and follows suggestions given by adults. Rarely demonstrates effective communication skills and willingness to work with adults. 	<p>1</p> <p>Even with help, the Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not communicate effectively with other students. Escalates conflicts. Does not accept different points of view. Does not accept diversity in others.
No Evidence	<p>0</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has not demonstrated sufficient evidence. 	<p>0</p> <p>The Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has not demonstrated sufficient evidence.

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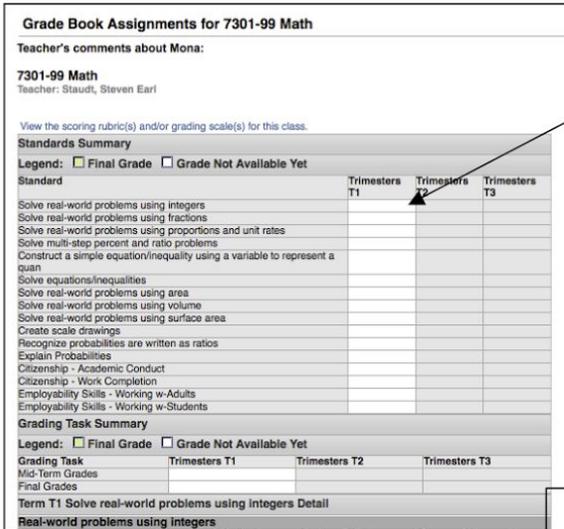
*All bullet points are indicators for the level. Not all indicators must be met in order to score a student at a particular level in each category.

Infinite Campus Portal



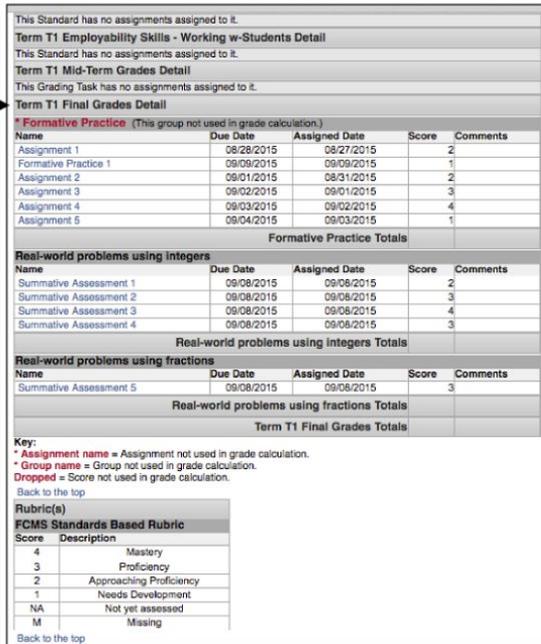
4. Go to the Forest City Schools webpage. Select Resources, and then Student & Parent Resources.
5. You will then select Infinite Campus Portal Login. (if you don't have a Campus login, email ssstaudt@forestcity.k12.ia.us)
6. Once logged in, Select A Student at the top of the page.
7. Then click on **Schedule**.
8. Click on the course you want to view.

This will take you to the Grade Book Assignment page for that class. At the top you will see the grades that were previously posted to your student's report card for each trimester of the current year.



1. To see your student's current scores for that course, scroll to the bottom of the page until you see "Term T1 Final Grades Detail."
2. Right below that, you should see "**Formative Practice." That is where teachers enter assignments that students have used to "practice" their skills. If you click on the assignment, it will show you what Standard, or Learning Target was worked on for that assignment.
3. Below that, the Summative Assessments will be listed below the Standard on which the assessment was given. The scores there are used to determine your student's grade for that Standard.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Mr. Dillavou or the teacher.



Reporting Dates 2016-2017

- August 23 - First Day of School
- September 30 - Mid-term of 1st Trimester
- November 11 - End of 1st Trimester
- January 6 - Mid-term of 2nd Trimester
- February 24 - End of 2nd Trimester
- April 13 - Mid-term of 3rd Trimester
- May 26 - End of 3rd Trimester

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Standards Based Learning?

An educational system in which students' learning is aligned to and measured against specific state standards.

Grades and points have been used for a long time. Why fix it if it isn't broken?

There is little evidence to support traditional grading practices. In fact, we have data that illustrate our traditional grading practices are broken.

What are the advantages of Standards Based Learning?

Improved communication and additional feedback for parents, students and teachers - parents and students will see areas of academic strength and weaknesses in the grade book rather than seeing a test score or homework assignment and wondering what the next steps might be. Teachers will know which standards they need to re-teach. Students will know which standards for which they need additional learning opportunities and/or practice.

How does this practice prepare students for the 'real world'? There are no retakes in the 'real world'.

The teacher who claims to be preparing students for the working world by disallowing all redos forgets that adult professionals actually flourish through redos, retakes, and do-overs. LSAT. MCAT. Praxis. SAT. Bar exam. CPA exam. Driver's licensure. Pilot's licensure. Auto mechanic certification exam. Every one of these assessments reflects the adult-level, working-world responsibilities our students will one day face. Many of them are high stakes: People's lives depend on these tests' validity as accurate measures of individual competence. All of them can be redone over and over for full credit.

Shouldn't attendance, effort and completion of homework be rewarded?

Yes, those things are important. However, they should not be graded. These are behaviors, not learning targets. Students should be held accountable for these things and their progress is reported on the FCMS Citizenship and Employability Skills Rubric.

How many school districts in Iowa are utilizing this system of grading?

Though the Dept. of Education doesn't keep records of this, more than 55 districts across the state have started exploring this work. Des Moines Public Schools, Okoboji, Van Meter, and Solon are all Standards Based Schools.

Additional Resources

Short videos for better understanding: [Link](#) or Search “Rick Wormeli - SBG”

Articles:

Nesbit, J. Standards Based Grading: What Parents Need To Know. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/10881-standards-based-grading-what-parents-need-to-know>

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