



# A Parent's Guide to Grading and Reporting

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## **FCPS Secondary Guidelines for Grading**

The purpose of the Secondary Guidelines for Grading and Reporting is to establish grading and reporting practices at the middle and high school levels in order to reach the following goals:

- Ensure that grades are based on student achievement, knowledge, and skill proficiency demonstrated in the classroom and are **separated from work habits**.
- **Promote consistency in grading across teams, departments, and schools.**
- Promote ongoing formative feedback to students.
- Promote practices that encourage continuous engagement in learning.
- Provide parents and students ongoing, credible, and useful feedback that conveys the expectations and achievement of **identified standards of knowledge** included in the curriculum.
- Ensure alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment.

### **Grading Philosophy:**

At Edison High School, we are in alignment with FCPS guidelines for grading. Furthermore, we believe in grading practices that foster a growth mindset because all students can learn and achieve; therefore, through standards-based grading, we utilize a 4.0 grade scale in conjunction with a rolling gradebook. This practice informs all stakeholders of the essential standards/skills students learn in each subject area at a particular grade level. It is designed to give students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians a better understanding of strengths and areas of growth for that student, so that targeted support may be offered. With these grading principles, educators can provide greater clarification of student progress through our use of some common understandings and practices for grading, while staying true to our commitment to a culture of deeper learning.

### **Edison High School Common Grading Language:**

#### Grading levels for 4.0 scale

- **Advanced** - the highest level of learning on Edison High School's 4.0 grading scale in which a student must consistently demonstrate applying, recognizing, and transferring of the standard. A mark of "advanced" calculates to an A or A- on the FCPS grading scale.
- **Proficient** - a level of learning on Edison High School's 4.0 grading scale in which a student demonstrates understanding of the standard with few to no errors. A mark of proficiency is calculated to a B+, B, or B- on the FCPS grading scale.

- **Competent** - a level of learning on Edison High School's 4.0 grading scale in which a student shows partial understanding or demonstration of the standard and requires some additional support. A mark of "competent" calculates to a C+, C, or C- on the FCPS grading scale.
- **Limited** - a level of learning on Edison High School's 4.0 grading scale in which a student demonstrates minimal understanding of the standard or is unable to demonstrate understanding without significant support. A mark of "limited" calculates to a D+ or D on the FCPS grading scale.
- **Insufficient Evidence** - a level of learning on Edison High School's 4.0 grading scale in which a student shows no evidence of understanding either by not completing any work or by a lack of quality in the work submitted. A mark of "insufficient evidence" calculates to an F on the FCPS grading scale.

## Edison High School 4.0 Grading Chart

	Definition	Communication	Grade Range
Advanced	Consistent demonstration of applying, recognizing, and transferring the standard	"I can apply my knowledge in different situations or from different perspectives."  "I can do this well enough to teach others."	A 3.8 - 4.0
			A- 3.4 - 3.7
Proficient	Demonstrates understanding of the standard with few errors	"I can complete all of my work independently, but I might make minor mistakes."	B+ 3.1 - 3.3
			B 2.8 - 3.0
			B- 2.4 - 2.7
Competent	Partial understanding or demonstration of the standard; requires some additional support	"I can complete some of my work."  "I am not confident that I am doing it right without help."  "I am in the process of learning to do this, but need more practice or help."	C+ 2.1 - 2.3
			C 1.8 - 2.0
			C- 1.4 - 1.7
Limited	Minimal demonstration of understanding of the standard; unable to demonstrate understanding without significant support	"I cannot complete any of my work without help."	D+ 1.1 - 1.3
			D 0.8 - 1.0
Insufficient Evidence	No evidence of understanding yet	"I turned in completed work, but my work does not show that I understand."	F 0.1-0.7
		"I did not turn in any work."	F 0.0

**Grading Communication:** Parents and students can access grades in our Student Information System (“SIS”) at any time. Parents and students can view SIS information on the FCPS website (ParentVUE or StudentVUE). Both parents and students are encouraged to contact a teacher if they have questions about what they see in SIS.

**What do grades represent?** The grade earned indicates the level of knowledge in accordance with the FCPS Program of Studies or International Baccalaureate Program. Grades will be posted within seven school days after the due date with the understanding that major projects/papers may require additional time to ensure quality feedback.

**How do I interpret the gradebook?** In the gradebook, assessments will be in the form of “I can” statements, which are based on standards/skills for the course. For example, “I can use a variety of sentence structures.” In addition, there are practice grades to provide feedback to parents and students on how students are performing to prepare for assessment of standards.

**How will we know when assignments need to be turned in?** Teachers will enter due dates for each entry in SIS. Additional assignment information can be found on Schoology. If you cannot find what you are looking for, please email the teacher.

**What comments will teachers use in their gradebooks?** The following comments will be used in SIS to communicate to parents and students the status of assessments recorded in the gradebook.

- Absent = AB
- Excused from the assignment (no point value) =EXC
- Retake Grade= RT
- Not Handed In= NHI
- Insufficient Evidence = IE

**Is extra credit offered?** Per FCPS grading policy, students cannot be awarded extra points/credit in lieu of or to replace assignments or assessments.

**How will grades be calculated?** A student’s demonstration of learning on a standard is entered in SIS on a 4.0 grading scale as a numerical value ranging from 0.0-4.0, with increments to the hundredths.

**What are final exams like?** Teachers are encouraged to create a culminating learning activity to reflect on what students have learned throughout the year. Course syllabi will explain expectations of the final exam. Additionally, any exemptions will be detailed in course syllabi. Three options determined by teachers:

1. Reflective activity on what I learned
  - a. An assignment - low points - minimal impact
2. Assessment on specific standards that I did not do well on
  - a. Replace the grade from that standard
3. Traditional cumulative exam
  - a. Traditional separate percentage
  - b. Part of the rolling gradebook

***How do quality points work for honors and IB classes?*** For students who pass an IB/HNs course, an additional 1.0/.5 quality point will be added to the quality point value assigned to the final mark for purposes of calculating GPA. Students enrolled in IB courses are strongly encouraged to take the culminating external examination associated with the course. These standardized examinations are designed to measure content and skill mastery and a successful score may earn college credit.

***What if a student submits an assignment past the due date?*** Students remain responsible for turning in work within deadlines in order to receive timely feedback. An assignment may close, but the standard will remain open in order to continue to demonstrate understanding. IB courses may have firm deadlines set by IBO to which students must adhere in order to earn an IB exam score. If a student knows their work will be turned in late due to special circumstances, the student should communicate with teachers in advance to create an action plan. All teachers adhere to the CT agreed upon late policy, which could deduct up to 10% of the overall grade.

***Will students be able to retake or revise assessments?*** Students who do not show a level of understanding on standards assessed may be given subsequent opportunities to demonstrate their learning of the standards after completing remediation designed by the CT. For these assessments, at least one new opportunity to demonstrate advanced knowledge shall be provided to any student who scores below 3.4 on a 4.0 scale or 90% on the 100 point scale (less than an A-) and completes corrective action determined by the subject team. Assessments not eligible for a retake will be articulated in a teacher's course syllabi. The highest score a student can receive is a 3.4.

***What will I see in the gradebook? How can I see feedback in the gradebook?***

There are two types of grades (scores) entered in SIS. One is in the form of feedback, which appears as "practice" and may be calculated as no more than 10% of the overall grade. A score is associated with practice to understand how students are doing in preparation for an assessment. The second form is an "I can" statement, which is calculated in the student's grade based on the standard listed.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **What are the pedagogical benefits of standards-based grading?**

Overall, our goal is for grades to be accurate, consistent, meaningful, and supportive of learning. In standards-based grading teachers are to give better, specific feedback to students. Better feedback accelerates learning. Instead of teachers traditionally stating a student did poorly on unit 1 or earned a 75%, teachers must be intentional to provide feedback about the task performed, skill used, or the knowledge demonstrated based on the standard. For example, stating to a student that they did not demonstrate an understanding of chemical and biochemical processes, specifically protein synthesis is more helpful to a student. This helps students understand their current level areas of improvement and helps them reach the next level.

### **How does standards-based grading take into consideration those with disabilities and/or those who don't test well, as class assignments and homework are non-graded work?**

Assessments are not only tests. Assessments come in a variety of formats: essays, short answers, exit tickets, projects, presentations, labs, quizzes, oral responses, etc. After a student has had the opportunity to practice and has received feedback, an assessment of their knowledge can occur. The goal of ungraded practice is to provide the opportunity for students to practice without being penalized. Specifically, teachers are to use a variety of assessments, beyond tests, to determine what students know and are able to do.

### **Will teachers still assign homework to students?**

Yes, students still need to practice and prepare in order to learn and then demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired or show the level of skill development.

### **Why is homework ungraded?**

Per FCPS grading policy, homework cannot be more than 10% of the grade. For years many teachers no longer calculated homework into the grade due to the limited impact. Also, teachers cannot verify that homework is the student's work. Ungraded does not mean no feedback. Teachers are providing feedback on homework in order for students to prepare for assessments.

### **What incentives exist for students to complete ungraded work?**

There are various ways teachers are motivating students to practice. Some have questions from the practice on assessments, open note assessments, completion of the practice to receive timely feedback for the assessment, and completion of practice to earn a retake. Students are learning that they must prepare and practice in order to perform well.

### **How are teachers providing feedback on homework and other assignments so that students are prepared for the assessments?**

Feedback is provided in a variety of ways. Many teachers are providing comments or written feedback, verbal conferences, and/or whole-class reteaching. Teachers are entering practice

grades in SIS that may calculate up to 10% of the overall grade; however, teachers must still provide feedback to the parents and students on how students are performing in class.

**What is the expected timeline for students to receive feedback from teachers?**

Feedback on practice should happen during the class in which the practice is performed or no later than the next class period. For summative assignments, teachers are expected to grade each assignment and post grade to the electronic gradebook within seven school days after the due date with the understanding that major projects/papers may require additional time to ensure quality feedback. If more time is required to provide feedback, teachers will notify students in advance of the project due date.

**How is grading communicated to college admissions? How will this affect a student's ability to get into a college when they are competing with students in the district or state?**

We send a school profile to every college that a student applies to, which includes information specific to Edison, such as information about the Academy, Global STEM, and our IB Program. This year it will include information on standards-based grading. Since the 4.0 scale was already an option for teachers, it has been included in the grading scale information on the profile for the last several years.

**How will transcripts look? How will this affect GPA calculation?**

Students will still receive letter grades based on their grade on the 4.0 scale, so transcripts will look the same. Since students still receive a final letter grade for each course, there is no impact on GPA calculation.

**How is student effort being graded?**

Non-academic factors, such as attitude, effort, participation have always been and will continue to be important to a student's success. We will continue to stress these skills. However, per FCPS grading guidelines, student effort and behavior are not to be calculated into a student's grade. In FCPS, not just Edison HS, work habits must be separated from the academic achievement grade.

**How will a parent know when their child is struggling?**

Practice and assessment grades will be communicated via SIS.

**Is it possible to earn a 4 on all assessments?**

Yes, if a student shows advanced knowledge on a first attempt of an assessed standard, the student will earn an "A" in the gradebook.

**Who do I contact if I have a question about grading?** Students should talk to their teacher if they have a question about a grade. If there are still concerns after the student has contacted the teacher, parents should communicate with the teacher directly. The expectation is that teachers respond to parent concerns within 48 hours. You may also contact your child's school counselor who can help facilitate a conversation with the teacher.



## Terminology:

- **CT** - collaborative team; a team of teachers who teach the same course for the year.  
Example: biology, English 10; US VA history
- **Essential Standards** - core VDOE standards we teach and benchmarks we assess throughout the year that are deemed most important by FCPS and Edison High School
- **Formative Assessment** - an opportunity for students to demonstrate learning of a standard, or a portion of a standard, and receive feedback; based on the results, teachers will design instruction to clarify any misunderstandings or to advance learning; with standards-based grading, formative assessments are documented for visibility of all stakeholders but do not calculate in to the student's grade
- **Growth Mindset** - a belief that all students are capable of learning and need practice to do so; the amount of practice needed is individualized and not intended to punish a student
- **Mandated Retake** - an instructional and assessment policy which supports students whose work falls below a minimum threshold of learning by requiring remediation followed by a retake/redo of the standard
- **Mastery of Learning** - a system of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting based on student demonstration of acquisition of the knowledge of the standards of learning they are expected to progress in through their education
- **Objectives** - statements which encapsulate the learning goal for the day, the unit, and the year which are derived from the standards
- **Practice and Preparation:** Practice and preparation (homework), is an opportunity for students to receive individualized feedback on their learning. Work assigned in this manner is formative and may be calculated up to 10% of the grade. This work can be completed in and/or out of the classroom. Practice and preparation may look like studying, revising, reading, brainstorming, and/or practicing skills. When assigning preparation and practice work, Edison's teachers consider the purpose and the quantity, ensuring that the type and amount is appropriate for students. Without completing practice and preparation, students may be unprepared for graded assessments.
- **Rolling Gradebook** - a cumulative documentation of learning; unlike quarterly gradebooks, a rolling gradebook documents learning on an ongoing basis throughout the year. This grading and reporting practice allows for increased opportunities for students to show their highest level of learning on individual standards.
- **Rubric** - a grading tool for evaluating student work which specifies the qualities or traits to be evaluated in a given assignment

- **Skills** - the action students take in order to demonstrate learning of the standards
- **Standards** - educational objectives of what students should learn in a given course; in FCPS, we use the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) standards as our minimum requirements for each subject/content area; additionally, at Edison High School, we use IB course objectives in conjunction with the VDOE standards
- **Standards-based Grading (SBG)** - a grading and reporting practice to communicate student progress of the course standards; grades directly assessing a standard/skill determine the majority of the overall grade. Students are given practice on the standard prior to assessment; the highest level of learning is recorded. This practice informs all stakeholders of the essential standards students learn in each subject area at a particular grade level. It is designed to give students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians a better understanding of strengths and areas of growth for that student.
- **Summative Assessment** - formal graded work which allows students to demonstrate evidence of learning of the standards; students may have opportunities to demonstrate their learning through different modes of assessment.
- **Task-specific Descriptors** - brief specifications of the quality or traits of student work on a particular assignment at a specific performance level on a rubric.

## Resources:

This is not an exhaustive list, but it does provide a starting point for parents.

*Grading for Equity* by Joe Feldman

*Making Grades Matter* by Matt Townsend

*The Standards Based Classroom: Make Learning the Goal* by Emily Rinkema and Stan Williams

[Ted Talk](#) (only 5 minutes)

[All FCPS elementary schools use SBG](#)

[Grading for Equity website](#)

[What is Standards Based Grading?](#)

[Powerschool and SBG](#)

[Seven Reasons For Standards-Based Grading](#)

[What is Standards Based Grading?](#)

[How to explain SBG](#)

[What does the research say](#)

[FCPS Secondary Grading and Reporting](#)

## Edison High School Percentage to 4.0 Scale Conversion Chart

Percentage	4.0 Scale
100	4.00
99	3.97
98	3.94
97	3.91
96	3.89
95	3.86
94	3.83
93	3.80
92	3.70
91	3.55
90	3.40
89	3.30
88	3.20
87	3.10
86	3.00
85	2.93
84	2.87
83	2.80
82	2.70
81	2.55
80	2.40
79	2.30
78	2.20
77	2.10
76	2.00

Percentage	4.0 Scale
75	1.93
74	1.87
73	1.80
72	1.70
71	1.55
70	1.40
69	1.30
68	1.20
67	1.10
66	1.00
65	0.90
64	0.80
63	0.70
62	0.65
61	0.59
60	0.54
59	0.48
58	0.43
57	0.38
56	0.32
55	0.27
54	0.22
53	0.16
52	0.11
51	0.05
50	0.00

Symbol	4.0 Scale	Percent Scale	EHS Description
A	3.8-4.0	93-100	Advanced
A-	3.4-3.7	90-92	
B+	3.1-3.3	87-89	Proficient
B	2.8-3.0	83-86	
B-	2.4-2.7	80-82	
C+	2.1-2.3	77-79	Competent
C	1.8-2.0	73-76	
C-	1.4-1.7	70-72	
D+	1.1-1.3	67-69	Limited
D	0.8-1.0	64-66	
F	0-0.7	50-63	Insufficient Evidence

Symbol, 4.0 Scale, and Percent Scale Columns can be found at

**Source:**

<https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/HighSchoolGradingEnglish.pdf>

\*Note: A score of "0" in the 4.0 grading scale means "Insufficient Evidence"

\*A score "0" on the 4.0 grading scale does not mean the student has zero knowledge of the topic.