We are extremely proud of Central’s tradition of excellence and believe that grading based on standards enhances academic rigor and communication among teachers, students, and families about student performance. The intent of this document is to provide Central’s standards-based grading expectations. We encourage teachers, students, parents, and community members to utilize this information to guide discussions relevant to grading practices and procedures, as well as Central’s mission of academic achievement.

What are standards?
Many who first hear about standards-based grading often ask the question, “What are standards?” Standards are statements that express what students are expected to know and be able to do after completing a particular course. They also clarify the content of each course and help ensure consistency between and among teachers teaching the same course. The broad concept of “standards” is not new to Central High, the Omaha Public Schools, or education. In fact, over the years, a variety of terms such as “learning outcomes,” “benchmarks,” “performance goals,” and “proficiencies” have been used to describe what students will learn in a course. The term “standards” has been used consistently in recent years, specifically because it encourages students to be measured against a designated standard instead of against other students. Every OPS course has standards, which we officially call “content standards,” with most courses having somewhere between five and ten. All assignments given in classes will be directed towards one or more content standard. It is our hope that these content standards will eventually be displayed on report cards. A comprehensive list of course standards can be found by clicking on the following link: OPS Course Standards

How does grading by standards increase student achievement?
Research clearly shows that the most powerful single influence on student achievement is descriptive teacher feedback, such as that provided by rubrics. Rubrics, which are foundational for standards-based grading, describe what performance should look like at various levels. Rubrics help students understand their current level of work and how it can be improved. As you can see from the sample rubric below, levels 3.5 and 4 encourage academic rigor by requiring students to develop and demonstrate the higher level thinking skills required for success in college and beyond. At the bottom of the rubric, you will see that a zero (0) will be earned if either the student does not turn in the assignment or if the student turns in the assignment and there is insufficient evidence of student learning.

| Level 4 Advanced | In addition to the proficient performance (Proficient, 3.0), makes in-depth inferences and extended applications of what was learned, including connections to other experiences. |
| Level 3.5 Proficient + | In addition to the complex ideas and processes (Proficient, 3.0) performance, partial success at in-depth inferences and extended applications of what was learned, including connections to other experiences. |
| Level 3 Proficient | No major errors or omissions regarding any of the concepts and/or simple (Basic, 2.0) or complex processes (Proficient, 3.0) that were explicitly taught. |
| Level 2.5 Basic + | No major errors or omissions regarding any of the information and/or simpler details and processes (Basic, 2.0) and partial knowledge of the more complex ideas and processes (Proficient, 3.0). |
| Level 2 Basic | No major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and processes (Basic, 2.0), and some of the more complex ideas and processes (Proficient, 3.0). |
| Level 1 Below Basic | A partial understanding of some of the simpler details and processes (Basic, 2.0), but major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes (3.0). |
| Level 0 Failing | No evidence or insufficient evidence of student learning. |

Based on the work of Robert Marzano (2006).
CHS Grading Expectations

1) All students will have an opportunity to earn a grade of A-F in all classes not specifically designated as pass/fail. Grading is about providing specific information about student performance.

2) All assignments and assessments will be directly related to one or more course content standards.

3) All assignments and assessments given to students will include a rubric that clearly articulates the requirements for each performance level. In many cases, general rubrics written for specific units or content standards can apply to multiple assignments and assessments. Students must be made aware of the expectations for all levels of learning possible on that assignment or assessment.

4) All units of study will include multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning at Level 4. Graded assessments and projects will include Level 4 questions. Students must demonstrate the consistent ability to master content at Level 4 in order to score at that level.

5) Students must answer questions at all performance levels. Teachers must be able to assess each student’s performance accurately, which means they need sufficient supporting evidence at each performance level. Unless specifically directed by the teacher, students must complete Level 2 and Level 3 questions before moving on to Level 4.

6) Teachers will use their discretion in allowing students to turn in late work and redo unacceptable work. Work not turned in (at all) will receive a mark of “M.” This will reflect as Missing on the Portal and calculate as a 0. Teachers will provide students with the appropriate due dates for student work. Teacher discretion will be used in determining whether or not late work will be accepted. Teachers will also utilize their discretion in allowing students to redo unacceptable work. Work that is allowed to be turned in late or redone will be scored and the grade will replace the score that was initially given. EXCEPTION: Students who copy work, either from other students or from the teacher during instruction, may receive reduced credit, no credit, or an alternate assignment at the discretion of the teacher. The student must personally demonstrate mastery of the course content in order to receive a grade.

7) Teachers will update their grade books every other week so that parents may view them on the Portal. Teachers may update gradebooks more often, but the grades displayed on the Parent Portal on designated days should reflect the student’s current progress in that class. Teachers are expected to use Infinite Campus as their official grade book. Keeping a separate gradebook and only entering updated grades on designated Thursdays is not acceptable. Parents must be able to track student progress on individual assignments and assessments via the Portal. (Parents of International Baccalaureate students may view their grades on Managebac.)

8) There will be no extra credit or bonus points given. Students must be accountable for the course content standards. We do expect and encourage students to go above and beyond the minimum requirements on all assignments.

9) Group grades will not be utilized outside of the Performing Arts Department. We encourage cooperative learning and consider it to be an outstanding teaching technique. However, group grades do not reflect any individual student’s achievement or growth and should not be used to document progress, provide feedback, or guide instructional decisions. Ensemble music and drama classes are exceptions because group performance is specifically identified in course content standards.
10) **Common language will be used to identify all coursework.** All assignments/assessments will be identified by the teacher and indicated in grade books as either practice, formative, or summative. Professional development for teachers regarding common language use and application will be ongoing. For families, the definitions are as follows:

- **Practice** is work assigned purely for the purpose of helping students grasp new course content without fear of making mistakes. Practice assignments prepare the students to demonstrate their knowledge on formative and summative assessments. Practice work may be scored based on completion rather than accuracy or not scored at all.

- **Formative assessments** are given during the course of a unit of study. They provide feedback about student progress on course content which helps teachers adjust content delivery and helps students identify areas that need improvement. Formative assessments are graded for completion and accuracy.

- **Summative assessments** are given at the end of a unit of study. They allow students to demonstrate their final level of proficiency for the content of a unit or course. Summative assessments are graded for completion and accuracy.

11) **The district has determined how coursework will be organized within teachers’ gradebooks.** All gradebooks will be organized in the following fashion using the specified weights:

   a. **Formative Assessments** – 35% of the course grade
   b. **Summative Assessments** – 65% of the course grade
   c. **Practice (optional)** – Not calculated in the course grade

**Homework Philosophy**

Homework is coursework that is assigned to be completed outside of school. Homework may be assessments that are practice, formative, or summative in nature.

- Both formative and summative assessments will affect the students’ grades whether the work is completed in school or outside of school.

- Practice is coursework that is graded for completion rather than accuracy and will not directly impact the student grade.

- Lack of practice will likely lead to lower formative and summative assessment scores.

- It is the expectation of Central High School that all coursework be completed, regardless of whether it is practice, formative, or summative.

**OPS Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Value</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.51-4.00</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.01-3.50</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.51-3.00</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.01-2.50</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.51-2.00</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.76-1.50</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-.75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2016-17 Field Tested Grading Scale***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Value</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.26-4.00</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.51-3.25</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.76-2.50</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.01-1.75</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1.00</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Courses for field test are Algebra 1-2, Honors Algebra 1-2, Physical Science 1-2, Honors Physical Science 1-2, English 3-4, Honors English 3-4, and Modern World History 1-2

**References:**


**Updated August 2016**

3
**Student Tracking of Grades:**
Teachers are strongly encouraged to have students reflect on their learning, record scores, and develop a plan of action for improvement. Student tracking of goals and achievement increases student motivation and completion of work.

**Missing Coursework:**
Work not turned in at all will be recorded in Infinite Campus (district grade book) as an M for missing which calculates to a score of zero.

**Late Coursework:**
Students are expected to complete coursework on time. Late coursework may be accepted for full credit until the end of the unit based on the teacher's professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Accepted late work will not result in a reduction, and the M (missing) will be replaced with the score earned by the student. The teacher or school may make exceptions depending up on student circumstances (such as prolonged absences due to illness).

**redoing/revising coursework:**
Students may be allowed redos and revisions of coursework for full credit during that unit of study based upon the teacher’s professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Scores for student work after retaking, revision, or redoing work will not be averaged with the first attempt at coursework or assessment, but will replace the original student score.

**Transfers:**
Teacher discretion, with the assistance of school administration, is used when students transfer from one OPS school to another. Students who transfer from outside of OPS will have their grades from their previous schools averaged with their current scores to most accurately reflect the student’s level of learning.

**Late enrollments for out of school students:**
Determination of grades for late enrollees (who have been out of school) will depend upon the number of days and assignments missed in that grading period that cannot be made up. After school assistance and credit recovery options will need to be considered.

**Student Modifications:**
Modifications alter course content, assignments, and assessments are not used.

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**Student Accommodations:**
Accommodations are provided to students with special needs without adjusting or reducing grades. Accommodations for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans may change requirements for quantity of work, time allotted, presentation format, type of evidence, etc.

**Professional Judgment in Grading:**
Teachers make decisions everyday informally about student learning through observations, oral discussions, group interactions, practice work, projects, etc. Sometimes there is dissonance between how students test and the actual level of learning reflected in a grade. In such incidences teachers may choose to exercise professional judgment to more accurately reflect the level of learning the student achieved.

Teachers should reflect on semester grades to make sure that the grade given accurately reflects what a student knows and can do. Professional judgment decisions different from the grading evidence should be documented and shared with building administration before grades are turned in for the grading period.

**Grading Scale:**
Students will receive a proficiency level of: 4/advanced; 3/proficient; 2/basic; 1/below basic; 0/insufficient or no evidence of student learning.

Letter grades are not awarded for individual assignments or assessments. At the end of a grading period, scores will be converted to a letter grade using the secondary OPS grading scale.

**OPS Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.51 – 4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.01 – 3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.51 – 3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.01 – 2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1.51 – 2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>0.76 – 1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00 – 0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For the 2016-2017 school year, selected courses will use the field test grading scale that is different from above.*
Grades for students enrolled in the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) are based on achievement of District-wide/State content standards, which specify what students should know and be able to do. Standards are the same across schools and classrooms for the same courses in the Omaha Public Schools. These grading practices are intended to ensure students have the knowledge and skills necessary for the next level of a course, the next grade or readiness for college or the workforce.

Purpose and Intended Use:
Common grading practices provide specific, clear learning goals for students, parents, teachers and administrators of what a student must know and be able to do to master the content of a course. They allow teachers to be consistent with best practices from grading based on educational research. Most importantly, common grading practices provide tremendous clarity for students and families as to what the grading criteria and expectations are between and amongst teachers, courses, and schools in OPS.

Coursework Types:
Coursework may be expected to be completed during class time or outside of school.

- **Practice** assignments (0%) are brief. Practice assignments may be graded for accuracy, and may represent a small portion of the grade. They are done to learn a new skill or to gain initial content knowledge, (e.g., student responses on white boards, a valid sampling of math problems, keyboarding exercises, diagramming sentences, checking and recording resting heart rate). Practice assignments are not generally graded for accuracy (descriptive feedback will be provided in class) and are not a part of the grade. Practice work is at the student’s instructional level.

- **Formative** (35%) assessments/assignments are done for learning. They are minor assignments, (e.g., a three paragraph essay, written responses to guiding questions over an assigned reading, completion of a comparison contrast matrix). Formative assignments are graded for accuracy and descriptive feedback is provided. Descriptive feedback provides the student with the necessary information to improve their learning. Formative work is at the student’s instructional level and/or grade level standards. It is suggested to have three to five formative assessments for every one summative assessment.

- **Summative** (65%) assessments/assignments are major end of learning unit tests or projects, (e.g., a research paper, an oral report with a power point, science fair project). Summative assignments are graded for accuracy. Summative assignments assess the student’s progress on grade level standards.

Coursework Amounts:
Coursework that is expected to be completed at home should average no more than ten minutes per day times the student’s grade level. These minutes reflect the total minutes of coursework per day for all subjects. This is a broad estimate that will vary dramatically depending upon the courses taken, the speed of completion of tasks, student ability to work independently outside of class, the number of study halls and the amount of time provided in class for coursework.

Proficiency Scales:
Proficiency scales are established levels of learning that are standardized at the district level for each course, and they are broadly written to allow teachers to use the same scale for multiple assignments/projects. Proficiency scales are available to students and parents by posting them in the classroom and publishing them in a course syllabus or on the teacher’s website.

Rubrics:
Rubrics are teacher-created scoring guides that are specific to an assignment, a skill or a project and are based upon the levels in the proficiency scale for that course. Rubrics should be available to students and parents by posting them in the classroom and publishing them in a course syllabus or on the teacher’s website.

Samples of Student Work:
Samples of student work that are both strong and weak should be provided by teachers and examined by students so that expectations for the basic, proficient, and advanced levels of learning on the proficiency scale or rubric are clear.

Objectives/Learning Goals:
Teachers will provide clear expectations so students specifically know their learning goals. Teachers and students are asked to write learning goals using student-friendly language for a clearer understanding of expectations. This could be done by rephrasing the expectation as “I can….”

Group Grades:
Group grades are not utilized.

Bell Curve:
Grading is never based on the bell curve. Grading on a curve is not based upon an individual student's work and should never be used.

Extra Credit:
There is no extra credit.

Levels of Learning:
- **Level one (Basic)** tasks allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to new or related situations or scenarios. Level one tasks are basic recall tasks.
- **Level two (Proficient)** tasks require students to demonstrate basic proficiency. Level two tasks allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to new or related situations or scenarios.
- **Level three (Proficient)** tasks require students to demonstrate advanced proficiency. Level three tasks include extended tasks which allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to new or related situations or scenarios.
- **Level four (Advanced)** tasks require students to demonstrate advanced proficiency. Level four tasks require students to demonstrate extended proficiency. Level four tasks require students to demonstrate advanced proficiency.

Assessment Levels:
- **Formative** (35%) assessments/assignments are done for learning. They are minor assignments, (e.g., a three paragraph essay, written responses to guiding questions over an assigned reading, completion of a comparison contrast matrix). Formative assignments are graded for accuracy and descriptive feedback is provided. Descriptive feedback provides the student with the necessary information to improve their learning. Formative work is at the student’s instructional level and/or grade level standards. It is suggested to have three to five formative assessments for every one summative assessment.
- **Summative** (65%) assessments/assignments are major end of learning unit tests or projects, (e.g., a research paper, an oral report with a power point, science fair project). Summative assignments are graded for accuracy. Summative assignments assess the student’s progress on grade level standards.

Leveled Assessments:
All graded assignments, projects and assessments will have opportunities for students to demonstrate basic, proficient, and advanced levels of learning to ensure rigor and to ensure that students can reach the highest possible level.

- **Level two (Basic)** tasks are basic recall and simple skills which include knowledge and comprehension.
- **Level three (Proficient)** tasks (the target of instruction) consist of complex knowledge and skills and include application and analysis.
- **Level four (Advanced)** tasks allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to new or related situations or scenarios. Level four tasks start with application, analysis, and move into synthesis and evaluation.

Weighted Assignment Categories:
Teachers will place scores for formative and summative coursework within Infinite Campus. Formative coursework is weighted at 35% and summative coursework is weighted at 65%. Standard-based assignments are named through common language indicating which standard is being assessed. The final score for each of these categories will then be averaged to obtain the student’s final grade.

Weighting Assignments (Using a Multiplier):
When entering grades in the grade book, teachers may assign greater weight to some assignments. For example, the final exam may impact a student’s summative grade more than a unit test. Teachers will have the option use the multiplier to weight both formative and summative assessments to a maximum of 4. If a weight of 2 or more is applied to an assessment, this information will be communicated to students at the time the assessment is announced.

Posted Scores/Grades:
Scores are proficiency levels on an individual assessment or assignment. A grade is the final score for the course. Scores will be updated every other week in Infinite Campus. In addition, teachers communicate to students the updated progress grades bi-weekly. Check Campus Portal for updates.

Checkpoints and Final Due Dates:
For larger projects, student learning will be chunked into manageable segments with mid-unit checkpoints and feedback. Final due dates are posted in Infinite Campus.

Campus Portal Update:
Student grades may be viewed on the OPS web-based Campus Portal. Schools send home quarterly report cards to parents every nine weeks.
OPS Common Grading Practices
Questions and Answers

Field Test Questions and Answers

Q: Why is there a change in the grading scale?
A: During the past year and a half, a committee of Omaha Public Schools (OPS) staff have been working to evaluate the grading practices across the district. It was determined that the current grading scale didn’t necessarily reflect students understanding of the curriculum. Students could submit minimal work and still maintain a “proficient” grade. OPS is committed to providing students and families with an accurate representation of students learning. Therefore, OPS will be field testing an adjusted grading scale throughout the 2016-17 school year.

Q: What classes does the field test grading scale affect?
A: The field test will take place in the following classes:

**Elementary**
- 4th grade Math

**Secondary**
- Social Studies 7 1-2
- English/Language Arts 8 1-2
- Physical Science 8 1-2
- Modern World History 1 - 2
- English 3 - 4 and Honors English 3 - 4
- Algebra 1 - 2 and Honors Algebra 1 – 2*
- Physical Science 1 - 2 and Honors Physical Science 1 – 2*

*includes dual language

Q: Why were these particular classes chosen?
A: In an effort to determine the effectiveness of the field test grading scale prior to full implementation across the district, OPS is field testing the new scale within a variety of classes and grade levels. The classes chosen represent a variety of subject matters.

Q: What does this mean for my child’s grade?
A: Student grades will continue to be graded using common grading practices. Standards-based grading scores student assignments/assessments based on district-wide proficiency scales and rubrics. Students then receive a score of 4, 3, 2, 1 or 0 at elementary or 4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, 1, or 0 at secondary.

Grades will continue to be graded with 35% of the final grade based on formative assessments (minor assignments like a three paragraph essay or short written response to reading) and 65% of the grade based on summative assessments (research papers, end of unit tests, etc).

The only thing that changes for students is the final grade scale.

Q: What is the new grading scale?
A:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPS Field Test Grading Scale 2016-17</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q: When will OPS decide if the grading scale will be implemented District-wide?
A: Throughout the fall semester, OPS will be asking for feedback from teachers, parents and secondary students regarding the field test grading scale. We welcome your honest feedback. After the fall semester, all feedback will be analyzed. In addition, students in the field test group will have their field test grading scale grades compared to what their grades would have been with the old grading scale to see if it is reflective of their understanding. Lessons learned during field test implementation will inform any needed adjustments prior to full implementation of the new grading scale.

Q: Will my child’s previous grades be adjusted to the new scale?
A: No. Student’s previous grades will not be impacted by the field test scale.

Q: Will my students’ GPA/class rank calculate differently?
A: No. There is no change in the way class rank is calculated.

Q: Will my student be taking classes on different grading scales?
A: The goal of the field test is to assess if the proposed grading scale will accurately measure student’s understanding of the course material and reflect that understanding in the final grade. Instead of implementing the grading scale district-wide, OPS is field testing the grading scale to ensure it meets students and staff needs. Therefore, students may be enrolled in classes on the current grading scale and as well as enrolled in some on the field test grading scale.

Q: What are the questions the field test seeks to answer?
A: The goal of the field test is to assess whether if the proposed grading scale will accurately measure student’s understanding of the course material and reflect that understanding in the final grade. Instead of implementing the grading scale district-wide, OPS is field testing the grading scale to ensure it meets students and staff needs. In addition, the field test will provide lessons learned that inform any needed adjustments prior to full implementation of the new grading scale.

Q: Can I opt my child out of this field test?
A: The field test was designed so that all students across OPS, taking a particular class, would be on the same grading scale. Many of the classes in the field test are required for graduation. Students will still need to take those classes to meet graduation requirements. If you have concerns about your child taking a field-test class, please talk to your building principal.

Grading Practices Questions and Answers

Q: How is missing work designated for grading?
A: Work not turned in at all will recorded in Infinite Campus (district grade book) as an M for missing which calculates to a score of zero.

Q: Are there any changes to turning in late coursework?
A: Students may be allowed redos and revisions of coursework for full credit during that unit of study based upon the teacher’s professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Scores for student work after retaking, revision or redoing work will not be averaged with the first attempt at coursework or assessment, but will replace the original student score.

Q: Will assignments be weighted? (secondary only)
A: When entering grades in the grade book, teachers may assign greater weight to some assignments. For example, the final exam may impact a student’s summative grade more than a unit test. Teachers will have the option use the multiplier to weight both formative and summative assessments to a maximum of 4. If a weight of 2 or more is applied to an assessment, this information will be communicated to students at the time the assessment is announced.

Q: Is there any changes to redoing/revising coursework?
A: Students are expected to complete coursework on time. Late coursework may be accepted for full credit until the end of the unit based on the teacher’s professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Accepted late work will not result in a reduction, and the M (missing) will be replaced with the score earned by the student. The teacher or school may make exceptions depending up on student circumstances (such as prolonged absences due to illness).

Q: My student is on an IEP - how will this impact them?
A: OPS works hard to put accommodations in place for all students to succeed at the expected standards. If you have concerns about your student meeting the standards, please contact your student’s case manager.

Q: Where can I get additional information?
A: Additional information can be found on the Omaha Public Schools website at www.ops.org or feel free to contact your building principal.