West Ada School District

Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Challenges

Elementary Standards-Referenced Instruction

Parent Guide

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The purpose of this hand book is to explain Standard-referenced instruction and scoring. This is a new way to assess and report student achievement in a manner that clearly measures what students know, do, and understand based on a clearly identified set of learning targets aligned to state standards.

What is standards-referenced instruction and scoring?
Standards-referenced instruction focuses a student's learning on the **priority standards, which are the key skills and knowledge for a content area** (i.e. math, reading, health, music)
The goal of this approach is to provide the teacher, student, and parent with accurate feedback on where the student is in relation to the learning target. Learning is a process that takes place over time. The teacher provides feedback to the student about what to focus on next, and the student can show improved learning over time by being reassessed. If the new evidence shows a higher level of mastery, a new score will replace the original score. Each outcome is reported separately and is not averaged together for a final score.

At the beginning of every unit, teacher teams, called Professional Learning Communities (PLC), create lessons using proficiency scales. **A proficiency scale** (example below) **is an instructional tool that provides information for teachers, students, and parents on levels of understanding while learning the skills and knowledge in a priority standard.** During the unit, the student is frequently assessed to gauge understanding and application of the material. Teachers use a variety of assessments, such as traditional pencil and paper tests, projects, discussions, or reports. Grades are based on evidence the teacher collects demonstrating a student's mastery of the essential priority standards.

Proficiency Scale

Priority Standard:			
Grade:			**Example**
Score 4.0	In addition to score 3.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught.		
	3.5	In addition to score 3.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications with partial success.	
Score 3.0	Target Goal/Learning Intention:		
	2.5	No major errors or omissions regarding 2.0 content, skills and/or processes and partial success of 3.0 content, skills and/or processes.	
Score 2.0	Simpler Goal/Intention: • Recognize and recall specific vocabulary such as ….		
	1.5	Partial demonstration of the 2.0 content, processes and/or skills but major errors or omissions regarding the 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
Score 1.0	With help, partial demonstration of the 2.0 and 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.		
	0.5	With help, partial demonstration of the 2.0 content, processes and/or skills but not the 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
Score 0.0	Even with help, no demonstration of content, processes and/or skills.		

How is standards-referenced reporting different from traditional grading?

In the traditional 100-point grading system, a student's grades are typically based on all the work assigned in class, including classwork, homework, projects, quizzes, and tests. The grade may also include points for non-academic factors, such as effort, or attitude. At the end of the grading period, grades are often averaged; and students are penalized for lower scores in the beginning of the learning cycle. Reporting scores in this type of system does not truly reflect what the student knows at the end of the teaching cycle.

Standards-referenced reporting reflects how well a student has mastered the priority standards based on the criteria of the proficiency scale. The learning is based on instruction and practice. Practice is not used to measure a student's mastery of the priority standards, but rather to give students time to develop understanding. After giving time to practice, students have the opportunity to assess their skills and knowledge as evidence of learning in reference to each priority standard. This enables the teacher, student, and parent to have a very detailed picture

of each student's learning. Non-academic factors like behavior, attitude, and attendance are not included in the outcome grade, but are recorded and reported separately.

Why is the district using standards-referenced reporting?

The goal of the West Ada School District is to assess and report student achievement in a manner that clearly measures what students know, do, and understand based on a clearly identified set of learning targets aligned to state standards. We recognize learning is a process that takes place over time and is different for each student. Standards-referenced instruction allows students to demonstrate levels of understanding communicated with scores that are accurate, consistent, meaningful, and supportive of learning:

Accurate: By basing a student's score solely on evidence of academic learning, the teacher creates a clear picture of what the student has learned without the influence of other factors, such as effort and attitude.

Consistent: The use of proficiency scales describes exactly what the student will need to master and establishes clear expectations of what needs to be learned. All teachers will use proficiency scales based on the same identified priority standards throughout the district.

Meaningful: A meaningful score is one that clearly communicates to students, teachers, and parents what learning has taken place and what learning still needs to occur.

Supportive of Learning: This approach supports learning by focusing on meaningful scores that allow new levels of learning to replace old scores when a student shows improvement.

What does the number on a proficiency scale (4.0, 3.5, 3.0, 2.5, 2.0, 1.5, 1.0, 0.5 and 0.0) mean?

Proficiency scales are provided for each priority standard which allows students, teachers, and parents to know exactly what needs to be mastered at each level of learning. The numbers on the proficiency scale represent a learning continuum and are NOT equated to a grade. Instead, a

score indicates a student has demonstrated the skills and knowledge to be proficient at that level of learning. The number on the proficiency scale translates to the number reported to students and parents, both on the proficiency scale and in PowerSchool. The number is just a name of a descriptive category, not a quantity of points earned.

Previous Grade Scale

Grade Scale

Grades		Teacher Gradebook Values		
Grade *	Description	Teacher Scale	Cutoff % *	Grade Value *
ADV	Advanced	☑	101	110
PRO	Proficient	☑	77	83
STR	Strategic	☑	56	65
BAS	Basic	☑	0	49

Grade Scale for 2019-2020

Grade Scale

Grades		Teacher Gradebook Values		
Grade *	Description	Teacher Scale	Cutoff % *	Grade Value *
4.0	In addition to score 3.0 performar	☑	4	4
3.5	In addition to score 3.0 performar	☑	3.5	3.5
3.0	Target Goal/Learning Intention	☑	3	3
2.5	No major errors or omissions reg	☑	2.5	2.5
2.0	Simpler Goal/Intention	☑	2	2
1.5	Partial demonstration of the 2.0 c	☑	1.5	1.5
1.0	With help, partial demonstration c	☑	1	1
0.5	With help, partial demonstration c	☑	0.5	0.5
0.0	Even with help, no demonstration	☑	0	0

Below are two examples of West Ada Proficiency Scales for Math and Social Studies:

Math:

Priority Standard:	Addition and subtraction of fractions and mixed numbers with like denominators.	
Grade: 4		**Example**
Score 4.0	In addition to score 3.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught.	
	3.5 In addition to score 3.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications with partial success.	
Score 3.0	Target Goal/Learning Intention: • I can decompose a fraction and record with an equation. • I can add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers with like denominators. • I can solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators.	$\frac{1}{8} + \frac{4}{8} = \square$ $\square = \frac{4}{8} - \frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{4}{5} = \square + \frac{2}{5}$ Show two different ways: $\frac{7}{8} = \frac{\square}{8} + \frac{\square}{8} + \frac{\square}{8}$ $\frac{7}{8} = \frac{\square}{8} + \frac{\square}{8} + \frac{\square}{8} + \frac{\square}{8}$ Zach spent $\frac{1}{5}$ hour reading on Friday and $1\frac{1}{5}$ hours reading on Saturday. How much more time did he read on Saturday than on Friday?
	2.5 No major errors or omissions regarding 2.0 content, skills and/or processes and partial success of 3.0 content, skills and/or processes.	
Score 2.0	Simpler Goal/Intention: • I can recognize and produce equivalent fractions. • I can explain and show the meaning of the numerator and denominator. • I can represent fractions as numbers on a number line. Recognize and recall specific vocabulary such as: *add, benchmark, common denominator, denominator, equivalent, equivalent fractions, fraction, mixed number, subtract, tape diagram, unit fraction, whole*	Show that $\frac{4}{5}$ is equivalent to $\frac{8}{10}$ using a tape diagram and a number sentence. Which model shows 1/8 of the whole figure shaded? What numerator goes in the box to make the equation true? Place a point at 2/4. $0 \quad \frac{1}{4} \quad \frac{2}{4} \quad \frac{3}{4} \quad 1$ $0 \quad\quad 1$ $1 = \frac{\square}{4}$
	1.5 Partial demonstration of the 2.0 content, processes and/or skills but major errors or omissions regarding the 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
Score 1.0	With help, partial demonstration of the 2.0 and 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
	0.5 With help, partial demonstration of the 2.0 content, processes and/or skills but not the 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
Score 0.0	Even with help, no demonstration of content, processes and/or skills.	

Social Studies:

Priority Standard: Identify characteristics of American Indian tribes … in Idaho (1.3.3)			
Grade: 4			**Example**
Score 4.0		In addition to score 3.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught.	• Research and analyze how American Indian Tribes in Idaho keep their culture alive today. This can be done in a paragraph, poster, or PowerPoint.
	3.5	In addition to score 3.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications with partial success.	
Score 3.0		Target Goal/Learning Intention • Identify cultural characteristics of American Indian Tribes in Idaho to include trade, language, legends, ceremonies, and traditions.	• Identify the five federally recognized American Indian Tribes of Idaho and explain their cultural characteristics of trade, language, legends, ceremonies, and/or traditions.
	2.5	No major errors or omissions regarding 2.0 content, skills and/or processes and partial success of 3.0 content, skills and/or processes.	
Score 2.0		Simpler Goal/Intention: • Recognize cultural characteristics of American Indian Tribes in Idaho. Students will define culture, trade, language, legends, ceremonies, traditions	• Match the vocabulary terms with the corresponding definition.
	1.5	Partial demonstration of the 2.0 content, processes and/or skills but major errors or omissions regarding the 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
Score 1.0		With help, partial demonstration of the 2.0 and 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
	0.5	With help, partial demonstration of the 2.0 content, processes and/or skills but not the 3.0 content, processes and/or skills.	
Score 0.0		Even with help, no demonstration of content, processes and/or skills.	

Helpful hints:

- Proficiency is the mastery of skills and knowledge demonstrated at each level of learning.
- It is important students stay on top of assignments as late work may impact their ability to become proficient.
- It is recommended students continue to revise work to improve knowledge and skills, therefore, improving their learning.

As a parent, how do I access my student's scores in PowerSchool?

West Ada School District uses PowerSchool, which is an online application that allows teachers, parents, and school administrators to track and share information on students' progress and growth. Teachers in West Ada use PowerSchool to keep a record of students' academic progress and attendance. Parents can view their student's information anytime by logging into their district PowerSchool account or using the mobile app provided by PowerSchool. Please note, the mobile app is provided directly from PowerSchool and is not supported with technical assistance from the school district.

Parents/Guardians will need to create a PowerSchool Parent account. To create an account, you must know your Parent Access ID and Access Password. These login credentials can be obtained from the main office of your student's school. You will find detailed instructions for creating an account on our district website under the "Parents and Students" tab. www.westada.org

As a parent, what might I see when I log in to see my student's scores?

Scores are reported at the priority standard level; therefore, there will not be an overall subject or course grade. Instead, parents/guardians will see a score that reflects the student's level of learning for each priority standard reported. Comments are available to let parents know if the 2.0 score is on track to master the standard by the end of instruction, or if the 2.0 is a result after the unit is complete.

For more information on how to access PowerSchool, please go to the "Parents and Students" tab on the district website. www.westada.org

How will my student be assessed?

Essentially, everything a student does in a standards-referenced class provides the teacher with evidence of a student's learning. This information can all be used to inform whether a student has demonstrated mastery of the knowledge or skills within the proficiency scale.

What can my student do to raise their level of proficiency (score) in a standards-referenced system?

The goal in a standards-referenced system is to ensure students master the priority standards (skills and knowledge) articulated by the proficiency scales. Any efforts to raise a student's proficiency level (score) will have the same goal. If the student demonstrates a higher level of mastery on learning tasks (homework, quizzes, and in-class activities) or an assessment, then the newer score will replace the older score. Extra credit points are not relevant in standards-referenced system as the reported score is based solely on evidence of student understanding of the standard.

Why should my student do the practice assignments in class or at home?

When a student chooses not to do an assignment, they are missing an opportunity to practice a skill that may be essential to the learning of the priority standards. This could be reflected in both the reported standard grade and their learner behaviors.

What is the timeline for entering scores into PowerSchool?

Teachers collect evidence to determine a student's level of mastery of a priority standard. While the reported score may not change frequently, the teacher is still recording performance on learning tasks (practice assignments, evidence pieces). These provide important feedback about student learning.

Are non-academic factors, such as effort, attitude, and behavior, included in the reporting of the standards?

These factors have always been, and will continue to be, an important part of every student's success. At the elementary level, teachers report non-academic factors separately, using the Learner Behaviors section in PowerSchool.

How can I get more information about my student's score or about standards-referenced instruction?

If you have questions or concerns about your student's learning in a class or if you would like more information on standards-referenced instruction, please contact your student's teacher or school for more information.