

Additional Resources

Teacher Q and A

1. Will the SBRC be online to be filled out?

At this time the report card will not be available for completion online. However, as the report card evolves we will explore computer applications.

2. Are we going to assign a rubric score based on the final assessment only?

In a standards based reporting system, teachers will use a variety of assessment practices, which will include performance assessments, formal assessments, student work and final assessments. In addition teachers will use anecdotal notes and observations as tools to document the student's growth toward proficiency. As students make progress and growth over the grading period, teachers will score students according to the rubric on the SBRC based on proficiency level of the student at the end of the grading period. Teachers should be careful about using homework as an assessment of student proficiency because work completed outside of the classroom is not under the control and supervision of the teacher. In addition, the purpose of homework is practice, and the student should not be penalized for practice towards proficiency. Failure to turn in assignments or work is a nonacademic factor that is considered in the citizenship rubric section on the report card.

3. Does every assignment need its own rubric?

Yes, every assignment should have criteria for success. Students should know before they begin the assignment what the expectations for what success is and what they are expected to know and do. Teachers should use the resources in the curriculum guide to develop scoring guides for assignments. Scoring guides are developed for specific tasks and projects. No assignment should be given without clear scoring criteria prior to the assignment. A scoring criteria can be as simple as the number correct on the task, for example if students are asked to know ten sight words.

4. When do we determine mastery?

The proficiency levels on the rubric are limited, progressing, and mastered. As teachers become more familiar with the standards, elements and rubrics, they will become more comfortable making professional judgment necessary to decide if a student has reached proficiency. On going collaboration involving reviewing student work using scoring guides, rubrics and discussions about effective interventions will assist teachers and clarify performance levels.

5. My school is discussing consistency in grading across grade levels. Should students be scored on the quarter standards and rubrics or based on the end of the year standards and rubrics?

Each reporting period scores should reflect the quarter standards and rubrics. To score a student based on end of-year expectations would be a misrepresentation of the student's performance level at that point in time (the end of each scoring period). It is important to provide parents and students with accurate information regarding concepts and skills that have been taught during each grading period.

"The most important purpose for grades is to provide information or feedback to students and parents. The best referencing system for grading is content-specific learning goals. Research unquestionably supports the importance of feedback to specific learning goals. To illustrate after reviewing 7,827 studies on learning and instruction, researcher John Hattie (1992) reported that providing students with specific information about their standing in terms of particular objectives increased their achievement by 37 percentile points. (Transforming Classroom Grading, Robert J. Marzano.) This translates into HCSS quarterly standards.

6. Do you keep assessing the same standard through the year if one student becomes proficient?

Yes, as students progress toward full proficiency at grade level standards, teachers continue to provide multiple opportunities to re-check for understanding. No matter where a student falls on the rubric in regards to the proficiency levels, a teacher must continue to provide challenging learning opportunities to take the student to a deeper level of understanding. Whenever appropriate, acceleration strategies and techniques such as differentiation must occur to move the student to the next level. The standards are not a checklist.

7. Does proficient mean "all" the time, or above 80-85% of the time?

The only way that a staff will be able to come to consensus on this is by looking at student work and having discussions about what proficiency at each performance level looks like. In terms of assigning particular "percentages" to student work as you are describing, we need to discuss how students evolve into proficiency. If you say that a student is proficient or basic 70-80% of the time what does that mean? How is proficiency being assessed? The only way to achieve a given "percentage" is through selected response testing. However, in a rubric-based system, multiple measures should be used.

It would make little sense to combine all test scores for a given students (by computing an average score, for example) during a unit, because this might penalize the student for his lack of knowledge at the beginning of the unit. The driving force behind criterion-referenced grading is to ascertain the extent to which

students reach a specific level of knowledge or skill in a specific learning outcome at the end of a grading period. (Transforming Classroom Grading, Robert Marzano, page 22.)

Over the course of a quarter students should be given multiple opportunities to become proficient. At the point that they are able to exhibit proficiency in terms of knowledge of a particular standard as evidenced by a variety of work a performance level should be assigned.

8. Using the scores 2, 3, 2, 1 from core assessments, would you average the number?

Teachers will get a better understanding of a student's proficiency level at the end of a grading period by taking a "snapshot" of student learning by looking at a student's most recent assessment of the standards. During the course of the grading period assessments should be formative in nature. This means that the teacher should be able to analyze student performance and provide needed intervention during the grading period to move each student toward proficiency on the targeted standards and benchmarks. There are ways to appropriately average assessment scores. We recommend the use of Robert Marzano's power law found in Transforming Classroom Grading. The book has been provided to site principals and committee members. On going collaboration that includes teachers looking at student work alongside rubrics/scoring guides will provide directions and continuity in grading practices.

9. Should we include benchmark assessment scores in determining grades?

District benchmark assessments are a series of standards-based level assessments intended to inform classroom instruction. While scores are useful in measuring student progress toward proficiency in grade level standards, these scores are not meant to be summative in nature.

10. Are the Georgia Performance Standards subjective to each teacher, grade level, and school?

The GPS are consistent district and state wide and very clear. It is the assessment of student performance that needs clarity and consistency. The rubrics are designed to meet this need. It is essential for all teachers to use the rubrics and to collaborate in assessing student work so that the evaluation of students is fair and equitable to students between classes, grade levels and school sites.

11. Do you give a student a score in every math strand in a quarter?

No. In order to accurately report information a teacher must review the essential standards and teach different standards in different quarters in order to follow the scope and sequence of the curriculum. Based on grade level standards and

curriculum pacing guides a grade level may not score a student on every standard (each box) and that's ok.

12. Kids will catch on that "Once I can prove I can do 3 work I won't have to complete any more work," then what should I do?

Teachers have an obligation to continue to teach every student at the highest level. This means that when a student consistently demonstrates over time command and proficiency of a standard that the teacher must provide increasingly challenging assignments, allowing the student to explore subjects at greater levels of depth and complexity. This is not an easy thing to do, but it is incumbent that educators provide this level of instruction for every learner by differentiating instruction according to student needs.

13. Will the new report card be used with students with disabilities?

Yes. Federal law requires that students in certain qualifying programs, such as special education have access to the same curriculum as other students; additionally, progress for students in special education must be reported at least as often as students who are not in special education. This means that the report cards of special education students will look exactly like the report cards of regular education students. However, as is also required, each special education student will additionally receive a copy of his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP), and IEP progress reports on individual student IEP objectives are attached to the report card.

14. Will the new report card be used with English Language Learners (ELL)?

Yes, exactly as it is for other students. This means reporting honest information about the ELL student's achievement against the same English Language Arts Standards that all other students are expected to meet. However, depending on the ELL student's language skills he/she may also be enrolled in an ELL program complete with its own specific course outcomes and progress reports.

15. How do we align assessments for students with disabilities? According to grade level? According to student's performance level?

In a standards reporting system, all student progress is measured against the standard of the grade level. The reporting system provides for consistency and continuity by assessing a student's learning and achievement against the same criteria for the grade level. Assessments provide valuable information such as student's strengths and areas of need so that the teacher can effectively target the student's instructional program that aligns with his opportunity to work towards proficiency. Information from assessments not only is used to design a targeted instructional program, but also interventions as needed in order for students to recoup deficits. All students, including Special Education, English Language

Learners, and EIP are included in the Standards Based Reporting System. Teachers are to report academic information on how a student is performing in relation to the standards being assessed. District assessments are aligned to the Georgia Performance Standards. Additionally, teachers can utilize the classroom rubrics and benchmarks as indicators of how a student performs at a given point in time.

16. To a parent, how will the reporting system look? When in one grading period, say my child scores a 3 in writing, and a 2 the next grading period? Will this system be confusing to parents?

In working closely with parents you will have clearly articulated the standards and elements as they appear in the district's written curriculum by quarter. This should eliminate any preliminary confusion on the part of the parent. However, you will need to continue close regular communication with parents so that they understand that each quarter's standards build upon the previous quarters. It is also important that the parents understand that their child will have multiple opportunities to perform at their highest level throughout the school year. Remember, the child has until the end of year to meet grade level standards.

17. How do you keep a grade book with work samples?

There are several examples of different ways to keep documentation in grade books. In a standards-based reporting system teachers use multiple sources of information, grade books, student work samples and other assessment information. The grade book will take a different form with some teachers opting to use a three ring binder in which each student has a separate grade sheet and where a teacher can store samples of the student's work. The system that works best for each teacher is often individually determined. We suggest that teachers look at different formats and experiment to find the one that best meets their needs. Traditional students' grades such as percentages are replaced in a standards based reporting system with levels of proficiency.

18. What are the implications for honor roll?

Per quarter, eligibility for Renaissance will be determined by each school based on proficiency in the following content areas:

- English/language arts (reading, writing, listening, viewing, and speaking)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

19. Is it appropriate to use "plus or minus" when marking the proficiency level of a student?

When using classroom-generated scoring guides, a teacher may determine that a student's score ends up as a fractional score (2.5, 1.5, etc.). However, in considering

student progress over time and reviewing the student's portfolio to make a final proficiency level decision at the end of a grading period, it should not be done. The final mark is not a simple scoring guide or combination thereof, but a holistic look at a student's performance and whether or not he or she is proficient. A teacher must take into account the current status of a student's understanding of the concept through formative assessments, anecdotal notes, daily work, and any other measure deemed appropriate.

20. A student comes into a classroom below proficient. Over the course of the quarter, the student slowly improves and exhibits proficiency at the advanced level during the last two weeks of the grading period. What should his/her mark be 1, 2, or 3?

A mark should be given based on a student's ability to exhibit proficiency for a given standard. In this example a student should receive a 3 if he or she has demonstrated mastery of the standard. The student may exhibit proficiency at any point in the grading period and should not be penalized for not meeting standards early in the quarter. A teacher would make a decision based upon a collection of student work and classroom assessments, which are based on the rubric.

21. Is the standards-based reporting system developmentally appropriate? Are the rubric expectations developmentally appropriate? What does research say?
The use of rubrics is developmentally appropriate for all grade levels pre-K-12 and beyond. What must be considered is whether the assessments designed for classroom use are developmentally appropriate. A number of factors come into play when making this determination including the assessment's alignment to grade level standards, rigor, clarity, and incorporation of authentic learning experiences (like writing).

GLOSSARY

Achievement. The demonstration of student performance measured against established criteria (performance standards).

Assessment. Gathering and interpreting information about student achievement (group or individual) using a variety of tools and techniques. It is the act of describing student performance, primarily for the purpose of enhancing learning. As a part of assessment, teachers provide students with feedback that guides their efforts toward improved achievement. This is what the District considers assessment FOR learning (formative), which is different from assessment OF learning (summative).

Benchmark. An assessment developed to measure students knowledge and performance on standards covered in a particular quarter or year.

Criteria. Characteristics or dimensions of students' performance.

Criterion-referenced. Comparing student achievement to specific, stated objectives, learning goals, expectations or criteria. For example, in physical education, running a six-minute mile warrants and "3". (See also norm-referenced and self-referenced.)

Diagnostic. Assessment usually carried out prior to instruction that is designed to determine a student's attitude, skills or knowledge in order to identify specific student needs. (See also formative and summative.)

Element. An observable demonstration of a student's knowledge, skills or behavior; a generic term that is listed under a standard.

Evaluation. Making judgments about the quality of student achievement over a period of time, primarily for the purpose of communicating students' achievements.

Formative. Assessment FOR learning designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program for individual students or for a whole class (e.g., quizzes, initial drafts/attempts, homework (usually), questions during instruction). (See also diagnostic and summative)

Georgia Performance Standards. What students are expected to know and be able to do.

Mark. The "score" (number or letter) given on any single test or performance.

Norm-referenced. Comparing the achievement of a particular student to the achievement of other students within a particular group. For example, a student performs at the 75-percent level if she comes in ahead of three-quarters of the participants in a one-mile race. (See also criterion-referenced and self-referenced.)

Reliability. The consistency with which an assessment strategy measures whatever it is meant to measure. (See also validity.)

Rubric. A set of guidelines for assessment that states the characteristics and/or the dimensions being assessed with clear performance criteria and a rating scale.

Self-referenced. Assessment designed to compare an individual's performance with his or her previous performance. (See also criterion-referenced and norm-referenced.)

Standard. A general statement that describes what and/or how well students are expected to understand or perform.

Scoring guide. A rubric designed with a specific assignment or assessment.

Summative. Assessment OF learning, designed to provide information about a student's achievement at the end of a period of instruction (e.g., test, exams, final drafts/attempts, assignments, projects, performances.) (See also diagnostic and formative.)

Validity. The degree to which an assessment strategy measures what it is intended to measure.
(See also reliability.)