

COMPASS

Standards-referenced

Learning

Parent Guide

www.compasscharter.org

What is Standards-referenced learning?

Standards-referenced learning focuses a student's learning on the essential outcomes for a class, or how well the student understands and can apply the key material in class. At the beginning of every unit, the teacher will break down the outcomes for the unit into smaller components and criteria using a detailed rubric. During the unit, the student is frequently assessed to gauge understanding and application of the material. Teachers will use a variety of assessments, such as traditional pencil-and-paper tests, projects, discussions, or reports. The class grade will be based on all of the evidence the teacher collects demonstrating a student's mastery of the essential outcomes.

The goal of this approach is to provide the teacher, student, and parent as accurate a picture as possible of the student's learning and to encourage a conversation about how the student can master the material for the class. In particular, because learning is a process that takes place over time, the teacher will provide feedback to the student about what to focus on next, and the student will be allowed to show improved learning over time by being reassessed. If the new evidence shows a higher level of mastery, that new score replaces the old one.

How is Standards-referenced learning different from traditional grading?

In the traditional 100-point grading system, a student's grades are typically based on all of the work assigned in class, including classwork, homework, projects, quizzes, and tests. These scores are often arranged in the grade book based on the type of assignment rather than on the essential outcomes for the class. The grade may also include points for non-academic factors, such as participation, effort, or attitude.

Standards-referenced learning looks at how well a student has mastered the essential outcomes, so the grade book does not separate out tests, homework, or projects. Instead, all of the work a student does is used to assess the student's mastery of the essential outcomes. A student's scores from their work are tracked by essential outcomes that give the teacher, student, and parent 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 Compass using Standards-referenced learning?

The goal of Compass Public Charter School is to improve student learning by reporting grades that are accurate, consistent, meaningful, and supportive of learning, and the shift to Standards-referenced learning is an effort to reach that goal. Here is how Standards-referenced learning addresses each of those four criteria.

Accurate: By basing a student's grade solely on academic factors, the teacher creates a clear picture of what the student has learned without the influence of other factors. These other factors, such as effort and attitude, are still essential, but are not part of the student's academic grade and are communicated separately.

Consistent: For each unit, the teacher will provide a rubric that describes exactly what the student will need to master. The rubrics establish clear expectations for mastery at the beginning of a unit and are referenced consistently throughout the unit and semester.

Meaningful: A meaningful grade is one that clearly communicates what learning has taken place. In a Standards-referenced classroom, scores are recorded by the essential outcomes rather than by type, such as tests or homework, making it easier to identify areas of strength and to address areas of concern for each student.

Supportive of Learning: This approach supports learning by focusing on the material that has or has not been learned rather than on accumulating points to reach a certain total. The reassessment practice also supports student learning by allowing new levels of learning to replace old when a student shows improvement on an outcome.

What does the number scale on the proficiency rubric mean?

The scores on the scale represent a learning continuum and are NOT equated to grade point average. Each of the levels builds on the others and explains the learning students have to demonstrate in order to earn that score. Students must demonstrate proficiency as they move up the scale. For example a student may not earn a 3 until they demonstrate proficiency of the level 2 concepts or skills. The scale designations are as follows:

4 – The student demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the material by completing advanced applications of the material.

- 3.5 – In addition to a 3.0 score, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications with partial success.

Applies to secondary (7-12) only

3 – The student demonstrates proficiency on the complex, targeted knowledge and skills for the class.

- 2.5 – In addition to a 2.0 score, the student demonstrates partial knowledge of 3.0 elements.

2 – The student understands the foundational material, but is still working to master application of the concepts and skills

- 1.5 – The student demonstrates understanding of all 2.0 elements with help and independent understanding of some 2 elements.

1 – The student is able to demonstrate an understanding of all of the foundational material with support

- 0.5 – The student demonstrates understanding of some 1.0 elements.

0 – Even with assistance from the teacher, the student shows no understanding of the material.

Why is the grade scale for Standards-referenced learning different?

Standards-referenced grading focuses on measuring students' mastery of a specific set of outcomes. The grade scale reflects the level of proficiency achieved for each outcome.

| K-8 | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| This is the standards-referenced grade range | This is the report card grade |
| 3.50-4.00 | 4 |
| 2.6-3.49 | 3 |
| 1.6-2.59 | 2 |
| 0.60-1.59 | 1 |
| 0.00-0.59 | 0 |

At the K-8 level, outcome scores are never averaged together for a final grade or translated into a letter grade at any time.

4 = Advanced Knowledge and Skills

3 = Proficient Knowledge and Skills

2 = Approaching Grade Level Knowledge and Skills

1 = Limited Knowledge and Skills

0 = Lacks Knowledge and Skills

| High School 9-12 | |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| This is the standards-referenced grade range | This is the letter grade |
| 3.50-4.00 | A |

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 2.6-3.49 | B |
| 1.6-2.59 | C |
| 0.6-1.59 | D |
| 0.00-0.59 | F or I (Incomplete) |

Compass High School (9-12):

A = Demonstrates thorough understanding of grade level standards and consistently and independently applies knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts.

B = Demonstrates understanding of grade level standards and applies knowledge and skills in presented contexts.

C = Demonstrates understanding and application of most grade level standards; needs teacher support to demonstrate proficiency.

D = Demonstrates limited understanding and application of grade level standards; needs more instruction and/or practice to demonstrate proficiency.

F or I = Rarely demonstrates understanding and ineffectively applies grade level standards. This score may also be the result of not completing/submitting work.

Proficiency level of content standards are translated into a traditional letter grade to determine a grade point average (GPA) for transcript purposes.

One common misconception that arises when moving to Standards-referenced Learning is that a student only needed to get a 25% percent to pass, and while technically correct, this misconception misses what exactly the 25% percent means. In a traditional grading system, a 25% means that a student answered 25% of the questions correctly. In Standards-referenced Learning, this means that a student reached the 1.0 level on the rubric, which is based on the learning the student demonstrated and completely unrelated to how many questions the student answered correctly. This distinction is an important one as the Standards-referenced Learning interpretation sets a much higher level of expectation for student learning.

What does EXE, MET, DNM, and NC mean?

Practice and participation in formative learning tasks, or homework, can support and enhance your child's learning, therefore your student will be given a variety of learning tasks to help them master foundational concepts and apply new skills. Since learning is a process that takes place over time and at different speeds for different students, learning tasks in a standards based learning system will be scored, but not included in the final outcome grade. The purpose of scoring learning tasks is to provide detailed feedback to students and parents about student progress. You will see the following score codes in the grade book:

EXE – student performance on the learning task exceeds expectations

MET – student performance on the learning task met expectations

DNM – student performance on the learning task did not meet expectations

NC – student has not completed learning task

What does “LND” mean?

LND stands for “level not determined.” This score is used when there is not enough information to give a student a score for an outcome based on the current assessment evidence. This score may be used when a student struggles with an assessment and the teacher needs to follow up to determine if the student can do the work with support, or if the student shows mastery at the 3.0 or 4.0 levels but shows gaps on the 2.0 level. LND's are temporary scores used while the teacher gathers more evidence to give a score and will not be in the grade book for more than two weeks. An LND does not affect the student's overall grade.

What does “INC” mean?

INC stands for “Incomplete.” This code can be used for assessments when codes (rather than numerical scores) are

being used to indicate when a student has not completed the assessments due to absences or other factors. In order to be considered for a passing grade, a student must complete at least 80% of the outcomes covered (assignments and assessments) during a semester. Additionally, a student cannot miss/skip a summative assessment/assignment and earn a completion grade. In this case, a zero is entered as the student's grade to show the effect of not completing the assessment/assignment and it will be flagged as incomplete. The student's actual score will replace this score once the student completes the assessment/assignment by the deadline provided by the teacher. If a student does not complete at least 80% of the outcomes covered or a summative assessment/assignment by the deadline provided, the zero is left in the student's grade at the end of the semester and may result in the student failing the class.

How will my student be assessed?

A student's learning is assessed using a variety of formative and summative assessments. These tools include formal assessments such as traditional paper-and-pencil tests, projects, written papers, lab reports, or verbal assessments, but they may also include informal assessments such as classroom discussions or teacher observations. Essentially, everything that a student does in a Standards-referenced class provides the teacher with evidence of the student's learning.

What can my student do to raise their grade in a Standards-referenced class?

The goal in a Standards-referenced class is to ensure that students master the essential outcomes for the class, so any efforts to raise a student's grade will have the same goal. The student should meet with the teacher to determine which outcomes need improvement and fill out a reassessment agreement to create a plan on how to relearn the material and when to be reassessed. If the student demonstrates a higher level of mastery on the outcome assessment, then the newer score will replace the older score. Again, the focus is to improve the student's mastery of the material, so extra credit points are not used in Standards-referenced classes.

What does my student need to do in order to be reassessed?

After completing an assessment in a Standards-referenced class, the student can ask for a reassessment using the process described below. The reassessment agreement is included at the end of this document.

1. The student gets a copy of the reassessment agreement from the teacher and completes the "Outcomes to Reassess" section to choose what outcomes to be reassessed on and at what levels.
2. The student completes the "Preparation Information" by picking a few activities that would help with relearning the material. The student then arranges a meeting with the teacher to discuss the agreement. The teacher may require specific activities to prepare for the reassessment, such as completing missing assignments. Any activity selected by the student or teacher must have evidence that it has been completed.
3. Together, the student and teacher will decide when, where, and how the student will be reassessed in the "Reassessment Information" section.
4. Once all of the relearning activities have been completed, the student will show the necessary evidence to the teacher, and both the teacher and student will sign the "Reassessment Approval" section of the agreement.
5. The student is now ready to be reassessed as described in the "Reassessment Information" section.

The reassessment agreement supports a student's learning by:

- Ensuring that relearning takes place before reassessment.
- Identifying the specific steps the student must complete to be reassessed.
- Clarifying the reassessment process for both the student and the teacher.
- Identifying exactly how the student will be reassessed so there are no surprises.

If you have any additional questions about the reassessment process, please contact your student's teacher.

Why should my student do the homework assigned in class if it isn't included in the grade?

Many students feel that in a Standards-referenced class they don't have to worry about anything except their final chapter or unit test. This is incorrect. It is important for students to understand that their teacher is evaluating their performance on learning tasks, or homework, each day. Teachers analyze student work to determine growth and improvement towards mastery of a specific skill or content. When assigning a final score, every teacher has the responsibility of taking into account all the work a student does during a

semester. So, if a student chooses not to do an assignment, not only are they missing an opportunity to practice a skill, they also miss an opportunity to display mastery of an outcome to their teacher.

Why doesn't my student have a grade yet?

Because Standards-referenced learning focuses on the learning a student demonstrates, the class grade may not be updated as frequently as it was when every assignment impacted the grade. This shift is especially noticeable at the beginning of the semester when it may take a few weeks for the teacher to collect enough evidence to determine each student's level of mastery. However, while the overall outcome grade may not change as frequently, the teacher is still recording performance on other learning tasks, such as homework, quizzes and in-class activities that provide important feedback about what work is being done. This additional information is available in PowerSchool Parent Portal by clicking on a student's overall grade at the middle or high school level. Please contact your student's teacher at any time if you have questions about your student's grade.

Are non-academic factors, such as effort, attitude, participation, and behavior part of the class grade?

These factors have always been and will continue to be an important part of every student's success. However, in standards-referenced learning, these factors will be communicated separately from the student's academic grade. The report card will include the following non-academic reporting:

Life Skills Grading Scale (K-5)

3 = Consistently demonstrates engagement, self-direction, respect, and responsibility.

2 = Sometimes demonstrates engagement, self-direction, respect, and responsibility.

1 = Rarely demonstrates engagement, self-direction, respect, and responsibility.

College and Career Readiness Skills (6-12)

Self-directed Learner – completes work, turns work in punctually, is neat, makes up work

Responsible Learner – is prepared to learn, meets attendance expectations, arrives on time, has materials

Engaged Learner – participates in learning, works well with others, shares ideas

Respectful Learner – follows classroom expectations, stays on task, follows rules

College and Career Readiness Skills Grading Scale (6-12)

4 = Consistently Exceeds Expectations

3 = Consistently Meets Expectations

2 = Inconsistently Meets Expectations

1 = Does Not Meet Expectations

How will Standards-referenced learning affect my student's GPA and transcript?

Standards-referenced learning reports an overall letter grade for each high school course at the end of the semester, so it does not have any impact on a student's grade point average or transcript.

If we change school districts, how will my student's grade be transferred if the new district does not use standards-based learning?

When a student transfers to a new district, the transfer grade is determined by the student's current letter grade. For example, if the student currently has an average of 3 on the Standards-referenced scale, the current letter grade is a B, so the transfer grade is sent as a B.

How can I get more information about my student's grade or about Standards-referenced learning?

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

Compass Reassessment Agreement

Name _____ Subject _____ Date _____

I would like another chance to demonstrate mastery for the following reporting topic(s)/Standard(s):

Before my reassessment, I will do the following to prepare:

| Activity* | Evidence of Completion | Date |
|-----------|------------------------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

*Use the list of ideas on back of this page if necessary. Your teacher may require specific activities.

Reassessment Information (to be completed by the student and teacher together):

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Reassessment Method (to be determined by teacher):

- Written response Verbal assessment Revised form Same form
- Other (please specify): _____

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

Date

Reassessment Guidelines:

- The student must complete all the activities and provide evidence of learning in order to be allowed to complete the reassessment.
- If a student is unable to take the reassessment due to missing evidence or failure to show up, the student will be allowed to reschedule the reassessment once.
- No reassessments will be allowed during the final week of a quarter or semester.
- The reassessment score will be recorded in the teacher's records and used to help determine the student's grade for the outcome. Completing a reassessment does not guarantee that the student's grade will increase.

Reassessment Study Activities:

Select from the activities below to complete the "Preparation Information" section of the reassessment agreement. You can also check with your teacher to see if there are any particular activities that are recommended. If you need any additional explanation or information about any of these ideas, please see your teacher

Sample Activities

- Complete missing assignments
- Make flashcards
- Create practice assessment
- Tutoring with a teacher
- Study notes – 30 minute minimum
- Complete internet activities provided by your teacher
- Design a review game
- Make a poster explaining a topic or process
- Create a web diagram
- Write a summary for each of the individual topics in the rubric
- Complete review exercises in the textbook

Possible Evidence of Completion

- Completed assignments
- Completed flashcards
- Completed practice assessment with answer key
- Signed note documenting tutoring time
- Study log
- Screenshots showing completion
- Completed game
- Completed poster
- Completed diagram
- Completed summaries
- Completed exercises

Other activities provided by your teacher:

Additional Notes:

Standards-referenced Learning Rubric Explanation

A rubric is given to the students for each essential outcome covered in a Standards-referenced class. Each of the levels builds on the others and explains what learning the students have to demonstrate in order to earn that score. The students must master each level as they move up the rubric. For example, students cannot earn a 3 until they have shown mastery of level 2.

The wording in bold is used in every rubric given to students. *The wording in italics is an explanation of each level.*

| Score | Description | Additional Notes: |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 4 | <p>In addition to a level 3 score, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>These are not just harder tasks, but learning that requires deeper or more rigorous thinking.</i> <i>Examples of this type of learning may include: applications for real-world use, teaching another person the material, using information to solve problems in a different context, explaining connections between ideas, demonstrating a unique insight, and/or creative application of skills.</i> | |
| 3.5 | <p><i>In addition to a level 3 score, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications with partial success.</i></p> | |
| 3 | <p>While engaged in grade appropriate tasks, the student demonstrates an ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This level is the focus for the entire rubric.</i> <i>This is the expected level of performance for all students.</i> <i>This level includes essential outcomes, state standards, and related skills and processes.</i> <p>No major errors or omissions with level 2 or 3 elements.</p> | |
| 2.5 | <p>The student demonstrates no major errors or omissions regarding level 2 elements and a partial knowledge of level 3 elements.</p> | |
| 2 | <p>The student demonstrates no major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and processes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This level is the basic learning necessary and serves as the foundation for the higher levels of learning.</i> <i>Examples of this type of learning may include recall questions, fact-based skills, and basic applications.</i> <i>This level does not represent partial understanding of the level 3 elements.</i> <p>However, there are major errors or omissions with level 3 elements.</p> | |
| 1.5 | <p>The student demonstrates understanding of all level 2 elements with help and independent understanding of some level 2 elements.</p> | |
| 1 | <p>With help, the student demonstrates understanding of all level 2 elements or some level 2 and 3 elements.</p> | |
| 0.5 | <p>The student demonstrates understanding of some level 2 elements.</p> | |
| 0 | <p>Even with help, the student demonstrates no understanding or skill.</p> | |

*The bullet points at each level of the rubric are typically referred to as items or components.

