

A large, solid blue arrow pointing to the right, which serves as a background for the main title text. The arrow is positioned in the center-right of the page.

YOUR GUIDE TO
**PROFICIENCY-BASED
LEARNING**

A collage of diamond-shaped images showing students in a classroom setting. The images are overlaid with a white geometric pattern of intersecting lines. The colors of the diamonds range from yellow to blue.

www.graniteschools.org

PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING PARENT INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, Granite School District began researching Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL) and how students might benefit from a grading system that both focuses on their ability to demonstrate learning and accurately reflects areas of academic strength and weakness. During the 2016-17 school year, eighteen teachers began beta testing PBL utilizing the Granite District Gradebook. The beta test expanded during the 2017-18 school year to include many additional teachers. To date, 2000 teachers in the district currently practice PBL and utilize the PBL Gradebook program; the practice is standard in grades K-8 and increasing so in grades 9-12. This packet provides a brief overview of Proficiency-Based Learning in Granite District. We welcome your feedback as we move forward to implement proficiency-based grading district-wide.

PREMISE FOR PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING IN GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Grades are intended to communicate progress to students and parents. They are intended to indicate at a prescribed moment in time what a student knows and is able to do with respect to course objectives that have been explicitly taught. They encourage the student to act on feedback and the teacher to adjust and individualize instruction.

REINFORCING PRACTICES OF PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING

- Issues of student behavior, participation, punctuality, work timeliness and effort are reflected in a citizenship grade rather than an academic grade.
- “Extra credit” is not included in the academic grade.
- Teachers create frequent opportunities for students to demonstrate concept proficiency.
- Teachers utilize a multitude of evidence in multiple modalities to determine a student’s level of proficiency: assignments, observations, portfolios, assessments, products, discussions, projects, performance tasks, etc.
- Traditional “homework” is replaced with meaningful independent practice aligned to content standards which requires time and effort outside the classroom, but is not scored.
- Teachers require extra practice on specific concepts before reassessment.
- Points are not deducted for reasons other than a student’s lack of academic proficiency.
- Classroom assessments tie directly to specific content standards and objectives.
- Gradebook is updated regularly to prompt learning and increase proficiency in content standards.

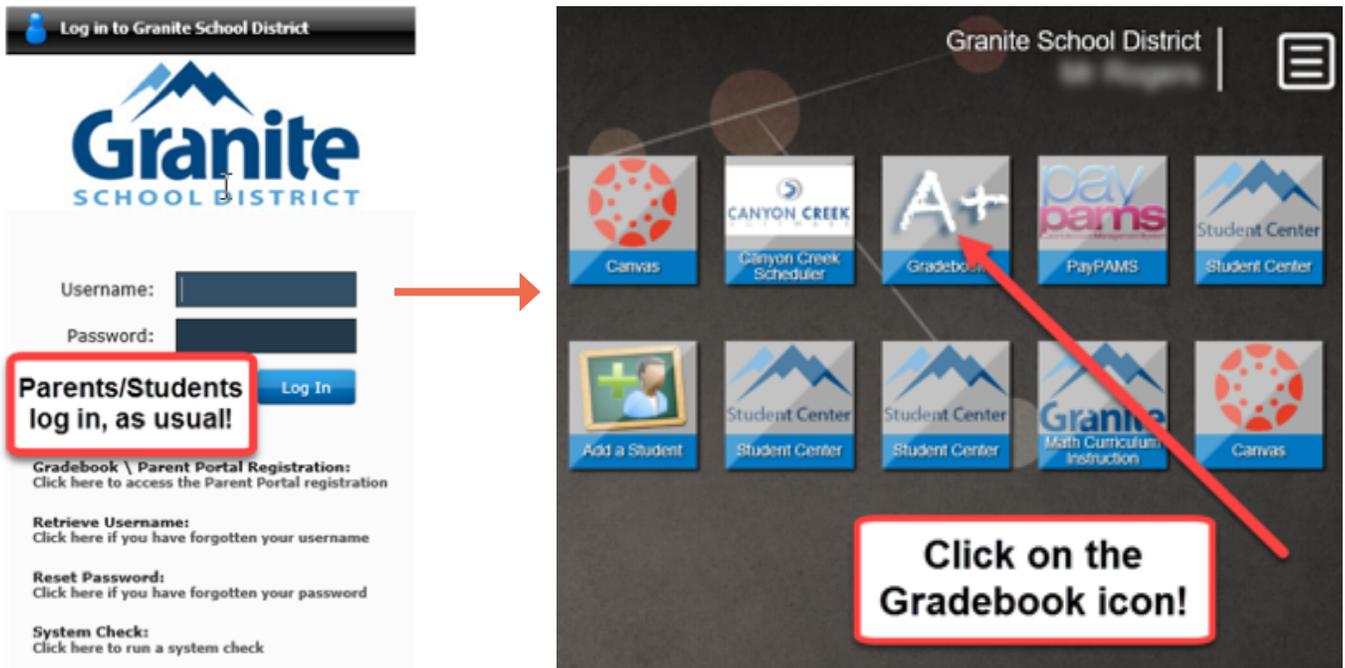
COMPARING SYSTEMS: TRADITIONAL GRADING VS. PBL

TRADITIONAL GRADING SYSTEM	PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING SYSTEM
<p>Based on multiple assessment methods (quizzes, tests, homework, projects, etc.). One grade/entry is given per assessment. Assessments are based on a percentage system. Criteria for success may be unclear.</p>	<p>Based on learning goals and performance on assessment opportunities specifically designed to assess one or more standards. A minimum of three assessments per standard is required to determine a final score. Scores are consistently reported using a scale of 1-4 which indicates the level of proficiency on the standard.</p>
<p>Utilizes an uncertain mix of assessment, achievement, effort and behavior to determine the final grade. May use late penalties and extra credit.</p>	<p>Measures achievement only. Separates achievement from effort/behavior. No penalties or extra credit applied.</p>
<p>Everything may go in the Gradebook – regardless of purpose. Homework is often given more weight than assessments of learning which can be detrimental to a student’s grade while they are engaged in new learning.</p>	<p>Purposefully designed assessment opportunities are provided to students in different modalities to give each student multiple opportunities to show proficiency on the standards. Opportunities for reassessment are also provided.</p>
<p>May include every score, regardless of when it was collected. Method for scoring varies from teacher to teacher. Grades reflect an average of all the grades input into Gradebook.</p>	<p>Final grade calculation places greater emphasis on most recent evidence of learning. This allows students to benefit from continued learning throughout the grading period and expected improvement on assessments of the standard.</p>

PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING IN THE PARENT/STUDENT PORTAL

Here's what you can expect to see in Gradebook.

<https://portal.graniteschools.org>



Student Schedules		03/10/2017					Full Year
Attendance	Per	Mon (03/06)	Tue (03/07)	Wed (03/08)	Thu (03/09)	Fri (03/10)	
1	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...	561600-5 SPANISH 1 CASTRO, JUAN	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...	561600-5 SPANISH 1 CASTRO, JUAN	500100-1 DANCE 2 MCKECHNIE, SH...	561600-5 SPANISH 1 CASTRO, JUAN	
2	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...	601500-6 CHEMISTRY PLUIM, MICHA...	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...	601500-6 CHEMISTRY PLUIM, MICHA...	618501-22 FASHION DESIG... HODGSON, CHRI...	601500-6 CHEMISTRY PLUIM, MICHA...	
3	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...	584500-7 HN WORLD CIVI... COUSINS, AARON	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...	584500-7 HN WORLD CIVI... COUSINS, AARON	568600-53 HN ENGLISH 10 GUNTHER, SAM...	584500-7 HN WORLD CIVI... COUSINS, AARON	
4	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM	607801-28 HEALTH II SMITH, SHAWNE...	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM	607801-28 HEALTH II SMITH, SHAWNE...	577200-4 SECONDARY MA... OKESON, HYRUM	607801-28 HEALTH II SMITH, SHAWNE...	

This is the initial view a parent/student sees. NOTE: If a parent has more than 1 student, they will need to select 1 of them to get to this point!

Click **Standards** to display PBL courses. NOTE: PBL courses will also display beneath assignments (currently), but there will be no scores or calculations.

Click **Show Details** to see all standards and scores.

Student Schedules	Term 1 - GP1	Term 1 - GP2	Term 2 - GP1	Term 2 - GP2	Show Details				
	Title Course-Section Teacher	Period Term	Pct	Grade	Absences				
					Total	Unexcused	Excused	Tardies	
Attendance	4 HN 8TH GRADE MATHEMA... 576600-2	3 - 3 2	3.805	A	3	1	2	0	
Report Card	4 440956 - Use informal arguments to establish facts about the angle sum and exterior angle... 3.805 Description Due Date Course Section Angle Relationship Unit Test 02/02/2018 576600 - 2 3.7 Triangle Relationship 01/31/2018 576600 - 2 4 Angle Relationships 01/24/2018 576600 - 2 4								
Assignments	4 440959 - Apply the Pythagorean Theorem to determine unknown side lengths in right trian... 1 more score needed for average Description Due Date Course Section 2 & 3D Pythagorean Quiz 02/14/2018 576600 - 2 3.5 Pythagorean Theorem/Conv... 02/08/2018 576600 - 2 2.5								
Standards	4 440960 - Apply the Pythagorean Theorem to find the distance between two points in a coord... 2 more scores needed for average Description Due Date Course Section Distance Quiz 02/21/2018 576600 - 2 3.5								
Transcripts	4 HN ENGLISH 8 566500-3	7 - 7 2	3.473	A-	3	1	2	0	
Skills	4 442435 - Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role... 1 more score needed for average Description Due Date Course Section Harriet Tubman #3 02/13/2018 566500 - 3 4 Informational Text #1 02/07/2018 566500 - 3 4								
Testing	4 442451 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concept... 2 more scores needed for average Description Due Date Course Section Book Review - written speech 02/23/2018 566500 - 3 4								
Course Request	4 442469 - Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated... 3.060 Description Due Date Course Section Questioning Assessment #3 02/12/2018 566500 - 3 3.5 01/31/2018 566500 - 3 1.3 01/29/2018 566500 - 3 4								
Miscellaneous	4 442487 - Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information,... 3 more scores needed for average Description Due Date Course Section Book Review - Visual Aid 02/23/2018 566500 - 3 4 02/12/2018 566500 - 3 3.5 02/07/2018 566500 - 3 4								
	4 442488 - Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of form... 3 more scores needed for average Description Due Date Course Section Book Review - presentation 02/23/2018 566500 - 3 4								

Standards are highlighted in each section with a preceding number. Scores (or what more is needed for a score in a particular standard) are displayed on the right.

SCORE LEGEND:
 4 - Highly Proficient
 3 - Proficient
 2 - Approaching Proficient
 1 - Below Proficient

DISCUSSING GRADEBOOK ENTRIES

WITH THE TEACHER

- Has my child completed the learning activities/extra practice you have provided?
- Will my student have another opportunity to be assessed on the standard?
- What are your submission and reassessment deadlines?
- What practice, studying, and/or reteaching opportunities should my student take advantage of before the next assessment and/or reassessment?
- How might my student demonstrate level 4 proficiency on the standard?

WITH YOUR STUDENT

When discussing a student's score in the Gradebook, consider asking your student the following questions:

- What standards do you think you still need to learn?
- What practice, studying and/or re-teaching opportunities have you completed in preparation for the next assessment on the standard?
- Have you talked to your teacher about what you need to do before reassessing to improve a score ?
- Do you know your teachers' deadlines for submissions and reassessments?
- If your student has demonstrated level 3 proficiency on the standard - How might you demonstrate that you are highly proficient (level 4) on the standard? Have you discussed opportunities to demonstrate that you are highly proficient with your teacher?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING?

Traditional “homework” no longer counts toward the final grade; however, targeted learning activities are still assigned as independent practice on which students receive feedback from the teacher. Some students may choose not to complete the practice. In a Proficiency-Based Learning system, a student who has not demonstrated understanding of a standard (and/or is not satisfied with their current assessment scores) can improve their scores on future assessments by taking advantage of independent practice and targeted teacher feedback. **Teachers should require evidence of independent practice before allowing students to reassess.**

Two of our reinforcing practices state...

- Teachers create **frequent opportunities** for students to demonstrate concept mastery.
- Teachers utilize a **multitude of evidence in multiple modalities** to determine a student’s level of proficiency: assignments, observations, portfolios, assessments, products, discussions, projects, performance tasks, etc.

HOW ARE STUDENTS MOTIVATED TO COMPLETE LEARNING ACTIVITIES IF THEY DON’T ‘COUNT’?

Parents and teachers can help motivate students by discussing the purposes of independent practice/learning activities. Final grades should communicate learning that has occurred after opportunities are provided to practice and improve. The goal is for students to demonstrate their highest levels of understanding on standards taught within the grading period. Some students master standards quickly and require very little practice, while other students require multiple opportunities to master standards with differing levels of teacher support. Parents can also help students understand that the role of practice in learning course standards is similar to practice in sports and music. The reward is the final game and/or performance; student athletes/musicians are not rewarded after every practice, but practice is essential to improving and performing well. It is important for parents and teachers to have these conversations with students as they begin to rethink the purpose of homework.

WILL MY STUDENT RECEIVE A LETTER GRADE IN THE COURSE?

Secondary students in grades 9-12 earn a traditional letter grade in each course, and the high school transcript will look the same as it has in the past. The course letter grade will be determined according to the district proficiency-based grading scale and GPA will continue to calculate as it always has.

Elementary and junior high students in grades K-8 receive a composite proficiency score of 1-4 that is calculated by averaging all the proficiency scores for each standard in each subject.

HOW WILL GRADES BE DETERMINED?

Summative scores for each standard are determined by decaying average, a grading method that puts more weight on the most recent assessment score (see information on decaying average on the next page). Student grades will be calculated by taking the sum of the content standard final scores divided by the total number of standards assessed at least three times throughout the quarter.

WHAT IS A DECAYING AVERAGE IN STANDARDS-BASED LEARNING?

Parents will not be able to see a calculated course grade until scores on a minimum of three assessments per standard have been entered into Gradebook. Decaying average recognizes that the most recent score is more representative of a student's current mastery level and puts more weight on that score (as opposed to a straight average that counts the student's first work and most recent work as equally important).

WHAT IS THE GSD HIGH SCHOOL (9-12) SECONDARY PROFICIENCY-BASED GRADING SCALE?

A	3.51 – 4.00	B-	2.50 – 2.66	D+	1.66 – 1.99
A-	3.00 – 3.50	C+	2.34 – 2.49	D	1.33 – 1.65
B+	2.84 – 2.99	C	2.17 – 2.33	D-	1.00 – 1.32
B	2.67 – 2.83	C-	2.00 – 2.16	F	0.00 – 0.99

HOW WILL PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING HELP MY STUDENT BE COLLEGE/CAREER READY?

Proficiency-based learning encourages students to take ownership of their own learning. It empowers them to improve understanding of a concept and advocate for multiple ways in which to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. It assures that final grades communicate more accurately to students and parents the degree to which the student is proficient in clearly articulated standards and objectives. Students will be less likely to need remedial courses in their post-secondary experiences or be incorrectly scheduled into inappropriate levels of courses.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION IF I HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Teachers participating in Proficiency-Based Learning are happy to answer questions regarding the specifics of how PBL is implemented in their classrooms. Principals can answer general questions regarding Proficiency-Based Learning. For additional information or questions please refer to the Granite School District website or contact Dawn Hauser: dlhauser@graniteschools.org or 385-646-2142.