



4 point scale

Assessment in the service of Learning for Life

Essential Question:

Why are we using a 4 point scale to communicate student learning in grade 1 - 9 progress reports?

Big Idea #2*

Well Organized Quality Evidence

3. Provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations/learning outcomes; in student friendly language.
4. Compare each student's performance to preset student learning outcomes; avoid assigning grades based on student's achievement compared to other students.

**Prairie Spirit School Division
Quality Assessment Practices
[website](#)*

PSSD Recommended Practice: "earning to learning"

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	MASTERY 4	MEETING 3	APPROACHING 2	BEGINNING 1	INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE
as described by the curriculum expectations	deep knowledge and understanding	complete knowledge and understanding	basic knowledge and understanding	partial knowledge and understanding	ME – Missing Evidence NT – Not reported at this time

Key Message – the shift from percentages to levels of learning will provide a pathway to intrinsic motivation and continuous improvement.

Background Context – There is the recognition of a need for an appropriate learning progression scale. Communicating student learning through one percentage score per subject makes it impossible to accurately differentiate levels of performance from 0-100 on any task. Accuracy and consistency improves when teachers work with grading scales showing four levels of student achievement. Progress Reports may still contain a single grade for a subject area, but teachers, students, and parents have access to information and evidence about specific areas of strength, areas of growth, and next steps.

Research

"...rating their children's achievement against clear and consistent performance standards provides far more useful information than percentage grades that sift and sort their children as being bright, average or weak!"
(Cooper, 2010, p.203)

"Scales with many points put nearly impossible demands on a teacher's ability to distinguish different levels of learning... This leads me to the conclusion that the time has come to abandon grading scales that link symbols (letters or numbers) to percentages."
(O'Connor, 2009, p.73)

"Clearly, a better method for developing and scoring assessments is needed – one that ensures that the scale stays the same from one assessment to the next and that a teacher applies the same logic to scoring each assessment... such a method would exclude the typical use of the 100-point scale."
(Marzano, 2010, p. 42)

Effective Teacher and Student Practices

- The challenge is to create clear descriptors of curricular goals and outcomes to judge students achievement to determine levels of proficiency.
- Have professional dialogues about student learning among teachers, so they develop shared understanding, apply standards consistently and establish shared levels of proficiency .
- Exemplars of student work make various levels of proficiency clear.
- Post goals, outcomes and assessment criteria in student-friendly language.
- Base grades on preset achievement student learning outcomes - to be criterion referenced, not norm referenced in assigning grades.

Learning Progression Scale	Percentages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on feeding forward the learning • Curriculum based, not assignment based • Provides clear expectations and a clear target • Consistency in marking • Focus on intrinsic motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on 'earning' marks • Assignment focused • No information for growth or next steps • Often inconsistent • Focus on extrinsic motivation

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