

# Lyon County School District

## Standards Based Grading



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# Standards Based Learning and Reporting (K-6)

- **Policy Statement and Philosophy**

- The Lyon County School District (LCSD) is committed to a grading and reporting system that accurately, consistently, and truthfully communicates a student's achievement of the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS). Our standards-based system reports out a student's academic skill; in the areas of literacy, math, social studies, science, and professional skills to provide clear, reliable, and actionable feedback to students, families, and teachers.
- The system is guided by three core principles: **Communication/Feedback, Accountability, and Instructional Clarity.**

- **Guiding Questions for System Design**

- This policy is designed to answer the following operational questions:
  - **Communication/Feedback:** How might we create a system of effective communication/feedback to all stakeholders (students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers) to ensure that all stakeholders know the expectation?
  - **Accountability:** How might we create a system of accountability to ensure that students are owning their learning and teachers are clear with what is being taught?
  - **Instructional Clarity:** How might we create a system where teachers have a clear and deep understanding of what skill or action is needed, how to teach it, how to assess it, and how to communicate the results?



## Tight and Must-Do Elements of Grading:

All grading practices must adhere to the following non-negotiable standards to ensure fairness and clarity across the district. Also reference [LCSD Board Policy IK](#)

Element	Requirement	Purpose
<b>Grades are Understandable</b>	Grades must convey clarity as to what the student knows and is able to do. Reports must be designed to limit the number of specific standards reported to avoid overwhelming parent(s)/guardian(s) while providing essential data.	To ensure parent(s)/guardian(s) (who may be familiar with traditional letter grades) and students can easily interpret the achievement level and identify areas for growth.
<b>Grades are Reliable</b>	Grades must be focused on demonstrable results (performance toward criteria) and represent the student's <i>current</i> progress toward a set of learning criteria. Grading must prioritize the most recent, <u>consistent level</u> of performance.	To answer the parent question, “ <b>How is my Student doing now?</b> ” or answer the student question, “ <b>How am I doing?</b> ” and ensure consistency of marks across the district.
<b>Grades are Truthful</b>	Grades must reflect how well a student has mastered a set of priority standards, <u>supported by evidence of mastery</u> . Grades should not be based on only one assessment or single data point.	To ensure grades accurately reflect student knowledge, not simply an average of past performance, effort, or activity completion.
<b>Clear Success Criteria</b>	Teachers must define, articulate, and share clear success criteria for assignments, performance tasks, and assessments <i>before</i> the learning task begins.	To ensure both students and teachers have a shared understanding of what "mastery" looks like for a given standard or skill.
<b>Non-Academic Factors</b>	Academic performance (mastery of standards) must be reported separately from non-academic factors (e.g., effort, participation, timeliness, cooperation, homework, attendance).	To provide a more accurate view of both academic and behavioral progress without penalizing a student's academic grade for compliance issues.

## Policy Implementation: The Three Big Ideas

## **Communication: Reporting and Feedback:**

The LCSD utilizes distinct reporting models for different grade bands to balance the need for detailed standards-based data with traditional grade reporting expectations.

- [Grades K-4: Standards-Based Reporting - 4-Point Scale](#)
- [Grades 5 and 6: Standards-Based Grading - Hybrid Model](#)

## I. Grades K-4:

Standards-Based Reporting (4-Point Scale)

### A. Report Card Format (K-4):

1. The report card will show **priority standards** for core subjects (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies).
2. Teachers will link specific **assignments, success criteria, and scores** to the standard being assessed, providing context for the mark received.
3. Individualized teacher comments are essential for offering narrative feedback for actionable steps to move the student forward when additional support is needed. Educators will select the standards that need this narrative feedback and in a timely manner.

### B. Grading Input Procedures (K-4):

1. [LINK](#)

C. Students in Grades K-4 will receive marks on a detailed Standards-Based Report Card.

Score	Description	Community Language
4	<b>I Can Show You This Skill(s) and Apply It in New Ways:</b> The student consistently demonstrates a thorough and independent understanding of the skill and extends that knowledge by applying it to unexplored situations or complex tasks.	Advanced Mastery Level
3	<b>I Can Show You This Skill(s) Independently:</b> The student consistently demonstrates a thorough and independent understanding of the skills and concepts taught in relation to the standard.	Mastery Level
2	<b>I Can Show You This Skill(s) With Support:</b> The student is approaching and developing toward the standard but demonstrates a more limited understanding. Additional teacher support is still needed for consistency.	Developing Level
1	<b>I Cannot Show You This Skill(s) Yet:</b> The student is having difficulty meeting the standard and is unable to demonstrate an understanding of skills and concepts taught without extensive or intensive teacher support.	Instructional Level - Sign of immediate need for Tier 1 Differentiation*
N/A	<b>The Skill(s) Has Not Been Assessed Yet:</b> The standard was not the focus of instruction during the current reporting period.	For standards not taught in the current quarter

\*Note: A student cannot fail an athletic or community eligibility check solely for receiving a '1' on a standard that has only been partially assessed or for which limited evidence exists.

## I. Grades 5 and 6:

To prepare students and families for secondary school, we will utilize a hybrid model, traditional grades with standards.

**A. Report Card Format (5-6):** Students will receive Traditional Letter Grades (A-F) per-subject on the report card.

**B. Grading Calculation:** Traditional grades will be calculated using *Categories* that are explicitly connected to a set of priority standards. These *Categories will be weighted equally.*

**C. Assessment Tasks:** Tasks will be grouped into major academic classes (English Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, Social Studies).

**D. Grading Input Procedures (5 & 6):**

1. [LINK](#)

**E. LCSD Internal Reporting:** The district’s gradebook software will require teachers to tag all major assignment scores to the specific NVACS standard they measure, making sure the scores are clear and accurate across the district. These scores will be connected to success criteria for clear transparency to students and families.

Grade	Description	Rationale	Score
A	<b>I Can Show You This Skill(s) Independently and/or Apply It in New Ways:</b> The student consistently demonstrates a thorough and independent understanding of the skill and extends that knowledge by applying it to unexplored situations or complex tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Mastery level</li> <li>Superior</li> </ul>	100% to 90%
B	<b>I Can Show You This Skill(s) Independently:</b> The student consistently demonstrates a thorough and independent understanding of the skills and concepts taught in relation to the standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mastery level</li> <li>Above Average</li> </ul>	89% to 80%
C	<b>I Can Show You This Skill(s) With Support:</b> The student is approaching and developing toward the standard, but demonstrates a more limited understanding. Additional teacher support is still needed for consistency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developmental level.</li> <li>Average</li> </ul>	79% to 70%
D	<b>I Cannot Show You This Skill(s) Yet:</b> The student is having difficulty meeting the standard and is unable to demonstrate an understanding of skills and concepts taught without extensive or intensive teacher support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructional Level               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign of immediate need for Tier 1 Differentiation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	69% to 60%
F	<b>I Cannot Show Any Evidence Of This Skill Yet:</b> The student has been given opportunities to demonstrate the skill, but no evidence is available. Educators can also use an “M” for missing to represent missing evidence in individual assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign of immediate need for Tier 1 Differentiation</li> <li>Failing</li> </ul>	59% to 0%

## II. Grades 5-6: Hybrid Reporting

### Accountability: Student Ownership & Teacher Clarity

# I. **Accountability is a two-way process that ensures student learning and instructional effectiveness.**

## A. **Student Accountability and Ownership**

1. **Reassessment Opportunities:** Students must be provided meaningful, specific, and timely opportunities to demonstrate mastery after initial attempts. Reassessment is not guaranteed but is a core component of the system, allowing students to own their learning progression.
2. **Focus on Current Performance:** Grading practices will prioritize a student's most recent, consistent level of performance, thereby incentivizing students to engage in revision and re-learning.

## B. **Teacher Accountability and Instructional Clarity:** All instructional staff must utilize the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model in collaborative curriculum planning to ensure a clear and deep understanding of expectations and appropriate instructional responses. These four questions must drive all planning and assessment:

1. **What is essential for students to know and be able to do?** Unpacking the NVACS standards and defining core learning outcomes
2. **How will we know if they master it?** Developing valid and reliable common assessments based on clear success criteria
3. **What will we do when students do not master it?** Identifying and implementing targeted support, intervention, and additional time for re-learning
4. **What will we do when students already master it?** Identifying and implementing extension activities, enrichment, and opportunities for advanced application or compacting

## C. **Consistent Success Criteria:** The district will develop and train staff on consistent success criteria and descriptors (e.g., based on a 4-point scale) to ensure consistency and reliability of grading marks across grade levels and schools.

# Support: Intervention and Professional Learning

A robust support structure is necessary to ensure every student has the opportunity to achieve mastery.

## I. Academic Support for Students

- A. **Early Intervention:** A mark of '1' or '2'/'D' or 'F' on the report card or frequent low marks in the gradebook serve as immediate, clear signals that a student is in need of Tier I Differentiation.
- B. **Tier 1 Differentiation:** Interventions, particularly at the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Tier 1 level (which includes high-quality, flexible, and responsive in-class strategies like small group instruction, immediate reteaching, and check-ins), must be precisely targeted to the specific standard or skill deficiency identified by the standards-based mark.

## II. Professional Learning for Staff

- A. **Policy Training:** Mandatory annual professional development for all instructional staff (K-6) will cover the philosophical and operational components of this policy, including:
  - 1. Creating and communicating clear success criteria
  - 2. Designing non-traditional, multi-data assessments (avoiding single-assessment grades)
  - 3. Implementing effective, individualized feedback, ensuring the reported score, success criteria, and written comments are fully aligned
- B. **Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Education:** The school will provide ongoing resources and workshops to educate parent(s)/guardian(s) on how to interpret standards-based marks and connect them to student learning as part of their family engagement outreach.
- C. **Consistency Audits:** The district will conduct periodic grading audits to ensure consistency and reliability across schools, especially for key standards with multiple sub-skills.

# Review and Revision

This policy is subject to annual review by the District Administration and the Board of Trustees to ensure continued alignment with state standards, best practices in educational research, and the needs of the Lyon County community.