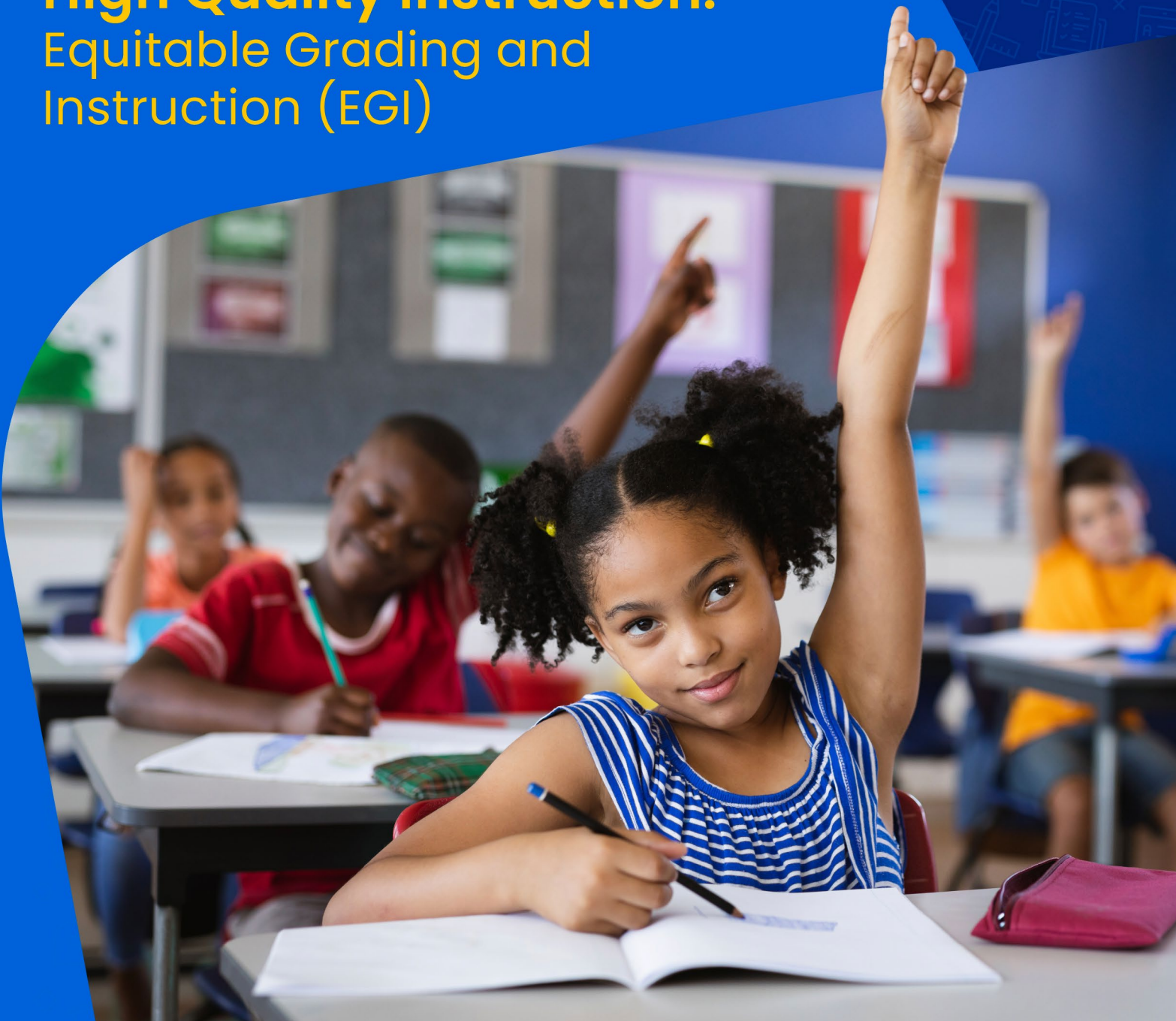


FAMILY GUIDE

High Quality Instruction:
Equitable Grading and
Instruction (EGI)



Introduction

Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI) is an evidence-based, equity-focused approach that emphasizes a growth mindset in teaching and learning through proficiency-based grading practices. It is based on the belief that all students can learn when provided with the right support and conditions.

In an EGI classroom, teachers use proficiency-based grading practices and an approach to learning founded on Bloom's Mastery Learning principles. Grades communicate students' progress toward meeting grade-level expectations, and instruction is designed to meet the diverse learning needs of all students by using evidence from assessments to guide teaching.

Strategic Plan Priority:

1A: High-Quality Instruction: Focus on consistent implementation of high-quality

Pillar 1: Academic Excellence

High-Quality
Instruction

Enriching
Experiences

Eliminating
Opportunity Gaps

College and
Career Readiness



Understanding Learning and Progress in EGI

How grades communicate learning and growth

Grading systems play an important role in communicating **student progress**. Grades help families understand which subjects students are doing well in and where they may need additional support. They also inform decisions about eligibility for certain school programs, such as magnet programs, and classifications like English Learner reclassification. In secondary classrooms, grades can be used to determine eligibility for school activities, scholarships, graduation requirements, and college admissions. Because grades inform many important decisions throughout a student's academic career, it is important that they accurately reflect students' **academic proficiency**, which is what students know and can do.

Why Grades Matter



Progress



Opportunities



College & Graduation

Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI) focuses on a set of evidence-based, equity-focused practices that help grades accurately reflect and support student learning. These practices promote more specific, learning-focused feedback from teachers. They also support student ownership of learning and encourage growth and improvement. As a result, grades become a tool for communication, reflection, and motivation. The following sections describe key EGI practices teachers use to support student learning and communicate progress.

What Families Will See in EGI



Use the same learning expectations for all students.



Provide clearer information about progress and growth.



Support reflection, feedback, and next steps for learning.

Learning Targets

Clarity and ownership

Teachers who implement EGI use standards-based, student-friendly **learning targets** to describe and communicate the specific knowledge and skills students will learn in their class. When students understand what they are learning and why, they are better able to monitor their progress and use **feedback** to improve¹.

In secondary classrooms, learning targets appear as categories on the **grade report** so students can easily see areas of strength and areas for growth. In elementary classrooms, these targets identify the specific skills students practice within each reporting area, or **report card domain**. In the classroom, learning targets guide lessons and **assessments** and help students, teachers, and families understand what students are learning and how they are making progress over time. Learning targets describe what students are learning. Proficiency-based scales help communicate how students are progressing toward these targets.



Sample Learning Targets



I can use ratio and rate reasoning to solve real-world and mathematical problems.



I can explain and apply offensive and defensive strategies in physical activities.



I can develop a model to describe the cycling of water through Earth's systems.



I can construct timelines of key events, people, and periods from the historical era we are studying.

These sample learning targets are examples from various grade levels and subjects, showing how learning is communicated in clear, student-friendly language.

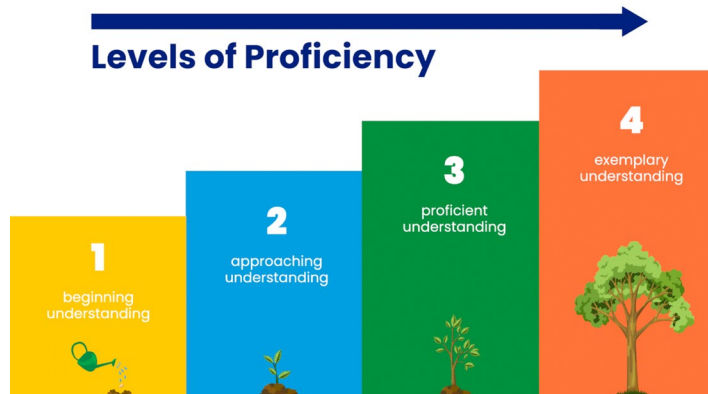
Why Learning Targets Matter for Families

- Help families understand what skills their student is working on.
- Make feedback easier to interpret.
- Show progress by skill, not just assignments.

Proficiency-Based Scales

What progress looks like

In addition to clear, student-friendly learning targets, teachers who implement EGI use proficiency-based scales to communicate progress toward learning expectations. A **proficiency scale** describes levels of learning and shows where a student is in relation to a specific learning target. Rather than relying on points or averages, the scale focuses on understanding and skill development over time.



Proficiency-based scales describe levels of understanding tied to learning targets and help communicate student progress over time. At a level 3, the student has demonstrated grade-level proficiency of the learning target.

Proficiency-based scales use the same learning expectations for all students, while providing different levels of support as needed, so every student has access to the knowledge and skills needed for success². These scales support student reflection, guide teacher feedback, and give families a clearer picture of student progress. In secondary classrooms, academic **proficiency** is reported using a 0–4 scale, while elementary classrooms use a 1–4 scale. Families can view proficiency scores by learning target in Schoology grade reports to see areas of strength and growth. More information about how progress is monitored can be found in the Progress Monitoring section of this guide.

Why Proficiency Scales Matter for Families

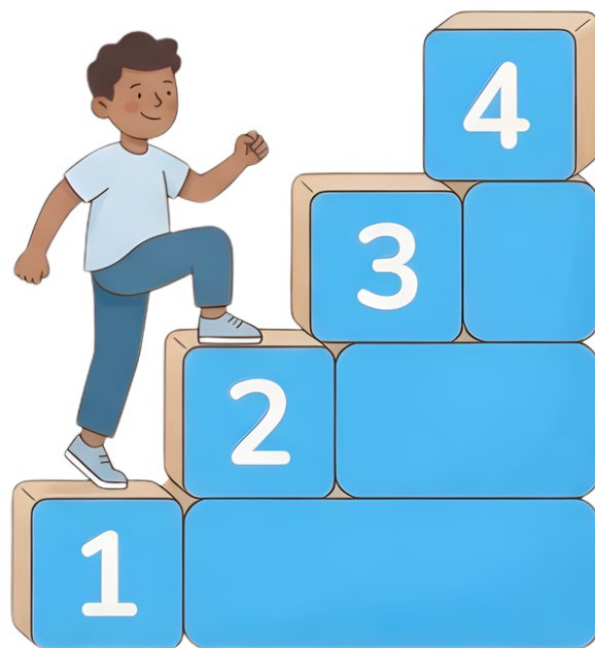
- Use the same learning expectations for all students.
- Provide clearer information about progress and growth.
- Support reflection, feedback, and next steps for learning.

Want to learn more?

Click the link to watch a short video explaining proficiency scales.



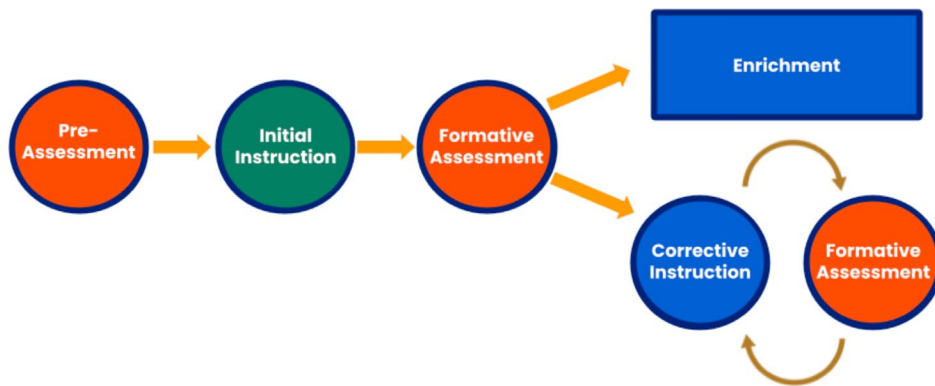
bit.ly/ScaleOverview



Personalized Learning

Time and support for learning

Equitable instruction in EGI recognizes that students may need different amounts of time, practice, and support to meet proficiency of learning targets because everyone's learning needs are different. While all students work toward the same expectations, instruction is tailored to help each student learn and grow.



This Mastery Learning cycle shows how instruction and assessment work together to support student learning. Students receive instruction, feedback, and opportunities for additional practice or enrichment based on their progress toward learning targets.

Teachers use learning targets to guide instruction and proficiency scales to understand how each student is progressing. This information helps teachers identify specific areas where students may need additional support or opportunities for deeper learning, allowing instruction to meet individual needs without changing expectations. This approach is grounded in Benjamin **Bloom's Mastery Learning** model, which emphasizes that all students can learn when given appropriate time, feedback, and support³.



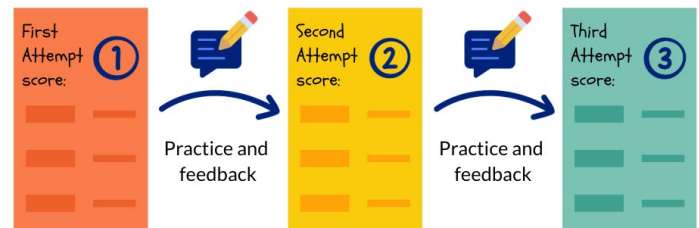
Why Personalized Learning Matters for Families

- Progress is measured by learning, not speed.
- Students receive support based on their needs.
- Growth is expected and supported over time.

Reassessment Opportunities

Growth over time

Reassessment opportunities allow students to demonstrate new learning after they have had time to practice and receive support. When a student has not yet met proficiency on a learning target, reassessment provides another opportunity to show growth and understanding. Reassessments may take different forms, such as written responses, oral explanations, or other ways students can demonstrate learning.



Reassessment opportunities allow students to demonstrate new learning after practice, feedback, and support, helping grades reflect current understanding over time.

Reassessment promotes equity by giving students who need more time or practice an equal opportunity to learn and demonstrate understanding. When students show improvement or meet proficiency, their grade reflects their current level of learning. This shifts the focus from earning points to accountability for learning and growth, and supports a **growth mindset** by helping students learn from mistakes and build confidence⁴. Reassessment opportunities are provided after students understand what they need to improve and have engaged in practice and support. They are not unlimited opportunities to improve without preparation. Expectations and rigor remain the same, while flexibility allows students to demonstrate learning when they are ready.

Why Reassessment Opportunities Matter for Families

- Grades reflect current understanding.
- Mistakes are part of learning.
- Growth is recognized and valued.



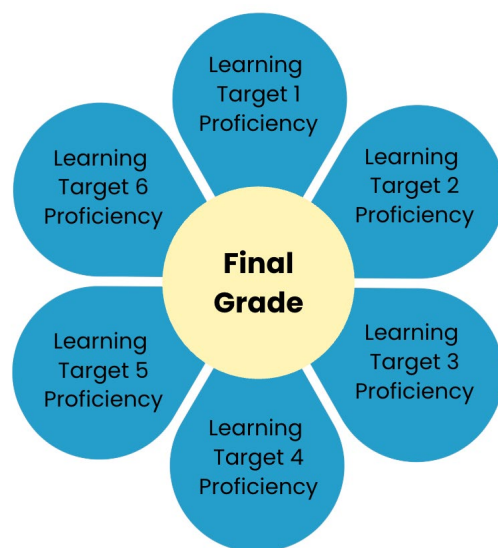
Proficiency-Based Grades

How grades are determined

In EGI, grades are based on a student's **evidence of learning**. Teachers review multiple assessments over time to develop a clear picture of how well a student understands and can apply each learning target. As students receive feedback, practice, and opportunities to demonstrate learning, proficiency levels may be updated to reflect their current understanding.

Rather than averaging all attempts together, teachers use the full **body of evidence** and their professional judgment to determine the proficiency level that best represents what a student knows and can do. This approach provides a more accurate picture of learning because early attempts do not permanently lower a student's grade once growth and proficiency are demonstrated.

Reassessment promotes equity by giving students who need more time or practice an equal opportunity to learn and demonstrate understanding. When students show improvement or meet proficiency, their grade reflects their current level of learning. This shifts the focus from earning points to accountability for learning and growth, and supports a **growth mindset** by helping students learn from mistakes and build confidence⁴. Reassessment opportunities are provided after students understand what they need to improve and have engaged in practice and support. They are not unlimited opportunities to improve without preparation. Expectations and rigor remain the same, while flexibility allows students to demonstrate learning when they are ready.



Final grades are based on evidence of learning across multiple learning targets



Start of the term

End of the term

EGI Overview Video

This short video provides an overview of Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI) and explains why **proficiency-based grading** practices focus on learning and growth. It highlights how grades are determined, how student progress is communicated, and how EGI helps grades more accurately reflect what students know and can do over time.



bit.ly/EGIOverviewVideo



EGI focuses on learning as a process that develops over time.

Understanding Progress Monitoring Elementary Grades (K-5/6)

How families can see learning and growth in Schoology

In elementary grades, a student's overall subject grade (such as Math or English Language Arts) is based on learning across multiple **domains**. For example, an English Language Arts grade is informed by learning in areas like Foundational Reading Skills, Effective Expression through Writing, and Making Meaning from Text. These domain marks, along with the overall subject grade, appear on the report card sent home to families.

In Schoology, these same domains appear as **gradebook categories**. As shown in the example below. Under each domain, you will see multiple assignments and assessments. Each assignment provides evidence of student learning and may include the specific skill or **learning target** in parentheses after the assignment name. This allows families to see how students are progressing with individual skills within a larger domain.

Some assignments are designed for practice and feedback, while others are identified as summative evidence. These assignments represent independent demonstrations of learning and are used to help inform the domain mark that appears on the report card.

Sample Elementary Grade Report		
1	ELA: Foundational Reading Skills	
	Phonics and Word Recognition Word Sort (LT: Phonics and Word Recognition)	1/4
	Word Building Activity (LT: Phonics and Word Recognition)	3/4
	Prefix/Suffix Application Task (LT: Phonics and Word Recognition)	3/4
	Fluency Check-In (LT: Fluency)	1/4
	Expression Emphasis Activity (LT: Fluency)	3/4
2	Fluency Performance Task (LT: Fluency)	3/4

- 1 Domain (Gradebook category)**
A group of related skills that appears on the report card.
- 2 Assignments and Assessments**
Practice and evidence of learning within the domain.
- 3 Learning Target/Skill**
The specific skill being practiced (shown in parentheses).
- 4 Summative Evidence Tag**
Indicates assignments used to help determine the report card mark.
- 5 Proficiency Score**
Shows the student's current level of understanding.

Understanding Progress Monitoring Secondary Grades (6-12)

How families can see learning and growth in Schoology

Below is an example of how learning and progress may appear in a secondary Schoology grade report. The numbered callouts explain what each section shows about your student's learning.

1 LT 1: Rational and Irrational Numbers		
Understanding Rational Numbers (Check-In)	8/19/25	1/4
Classifying Rational & Irrational Numbers	8/22/25	3 2/4
4 You're correctly identifying rational numbers. Next, focus on explaining why a number is irrational using examples.		
Using Rational Numbers to Solve Problems	8/27/25	3/4
Unit Assessment: Rational & Irrational Numbers	9/02/25	3/4
5 LT 1 Proficiency Column	9/03/25	3/4
LT 5: Understanding Functions		
Identifying Functions (Practice Check)	10/06/25	1/4
Interpreting Function Tables and Graphs	10/10/25	2/4
4 You are correctly reading values from tables. Next, focus on explaining how the table and graph represent the same function.		
Representing Functions in Multiple Ways	10/15/25	2/4
Unit Assessment: Functions	10/20/25	3/4
LT 5 Proficiency Column	10/21/25	3/4
6 Course Grade: B		

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Learning Target (Gradebook category)
The skills your student is learning in the course. | 4 Teacher Feedback
Comments that explain strengths and next steps for learning. |
| 2 Assignments and Assessments
Practice and evidence of learning for the same learning target. | 5 LT Proficiency Column
This score shows your student's current level of understanding for this learning target, based on multiple assessments. |
| 3 Proficiency Scores (0-4)
Show progress toward each learning target. | 6 Course Grade
Summarizes learning across all learning targets. |

Tips & Activities

As described in previous sections of this guide, learning is a process that includes practice, feedback, and reflection. The ideas below offer simple ways families can support these habits at home through everyday conversations and routines.

Growth Mindset

Helping your student see learning as something that grows with practice.

Share a family story of learning from a mistake.

Talk about what helped you succeed the second time around.

Break routines or school tasks into small steps.

Notice and celebrate the progress made along the way.

Practice

Noticing and celebrating effort, persistence, and progress over time.

Talk about times you stuck with something challenging.

Focus on the process and effort, not just the final result.

Use simple ways to notice effort. Try a quick check-in, a note on the fridge, or a weekly “What did you keep trying this week?” conversation at dinner.

Motivation

Building confidence to try again after a setback.

Share examples of people who learned from setbacks.

Discuss what was gained from the experience.

When something doesn't go as planned, ask, “**What could we try next?**” Choose one small, new step to take together.

Feedback

Talking about the process, not just the outcome.

Ask your student to explain their thinking.

Praise the strategies and decisions they used to solve the problem.

Compare an older piece of work to a newer one.

Point out specific ways their skills have improved over time.

Questions to Ask Your Student

Supportive inquiry to monitor student learning

In a classroom where Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI) is implemented, student learning is guided by learning targets, and the academic grade on the report card reflects a student's level of achievement on those learning targets.

The questions below are intended to support you and your student in reflecting on academic progress, identifying next steps for learning, and thinking about the support that can help them continue to grow.



Learning & Progress

- Which learning targets are you meeting proficiency in right now?
- Which learning targets feel more challenging or might need more practice or support?



Practice & Next Steps

- After practicing this learning target, what options do you have to show your learning again (such as revising work or retaking an assessment)?
- How will feedback from your teacher help you improve?



Support & Accuracy

- You were absent recently; are there any learning targets you still need to show evidence for so your grade reflects what you know and can do?
- What support do you need to do that?

Resources

Understand What and How Students Are Learning

Learning Targets

Learn more about the clear goals outlining what students should know and be able to do in a course.



Mastery Learning

Explore more about the approach where students get feedback and practice to help them meet proficiency in a skill.

Get Academic Support

Tutor.com

Use your free LA Public Library Student Success Card to get live, one-on-one help with homework, test prep, and writing.

Tutor.com

Spanish instructions for accessing tutor.com.

Get Academic Support

Elementary (TK-6) Progress Reporting

Uses a 1-4 scale (4 - Exceeds, 1 = Minimal Progress) to show progress toward grade-level standards.

Secondary (6-12) Grading and Marking Practices

Uses A-F letter grades to communicate proficiency on course standards.

Glossary

Academic Achievement Score (elementary)- For grades K-5/6, this is a numerical score (1-4) that indicates a student's attainment of grade-level standards at that given point in time. A composite score acts as the final overall grade for subjects like ELA and Mathematics.

Academic Grade (secondary)- For grades 6-12, a letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F) is assigned to communicate proficiency in the Standards that have been explicitly taught at the time that the grade is reported through the progress report, final report, and in the Learning Management System's online gradebook. Information about how the grade is determined is outlined in each teacher's course syllabus and aligned to the Criteria for Grades.

Academic Proficiency- Academic proficiency is the level of competence a student demonstrates on the standards taught in a course. In an equitable grading system, grades are intended to accurately reflect a student's academic proficiency and are reported separately from non-academic factors such as behavior, participation, or attendance.

Assessment- An assessment is any procedure used to gather valid and reliable evidence on students' performance.

Bloom's Mastery Learning- Bloom's Mastery Learning is an instructional approach based on the belief that all students can meet proficiency when given appropriate time, feedback, and support. Instruction is tailored to meet individual needs while maintaining the same grade-level expectations for all students.

Body of Evidence- A body of evidence is the collection of student work used to determine a student's current level of proficiency. Teachers review multiple pieces of evidence over time and use professional judgment to report an accurate picture of learning, rather than averaging all scores.

Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI)- Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI) focuses on evidence-based, equity-focused practices that help grades accurately reflect what students know and can do and support their learning over time.

Evidence of Learning- A proficiency scale is a tool teachers use to communicate progress toward a specific learning target. In Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI), proficiency scales help students understand their current level of understanding and identify specific areas for growth.

Feedback- Feedback is written or oral information provided by a teacher or peers to help a student understand what they are doing well and what to work on next. This information helps fill gaps in understanding so students can continue learning and work toward grade-level proficiency.

Grade Report- A grade report reflects a student's progress in a course, including assignments, assessments, and scores. Families can access the grade report online through Schoology by clicking the Grades tab on the left side of the course page.

Gradebook Category- A gradebook category is a way student learning is organized in the online gradebook. In an Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI) system, gradebook categories are based on specific learning targets rather than task types like homework or quizzes. In elementary classrooms, these categories represent report card domains. This helps students and families clearly see which skills a student has demonstrated and which areas may need additional support.

Growth Mindset- A growth mindset, a research-based concept introduced through the work of psychologist Carol Dweck, is the belief that intelligence and skills are not fixed and can grow over time through effort, feedback, and learning from mistakes.

Glossary

Learning Target- Learning targets are standards-based, grade-level appropriate, student-friendly statements that describe what students are expected to learn in a specific subject area. They are written from the student's perspective.

Personalized Learning- Personalized learning is an approach that supports students in reaching the same grade-level expectations by tailoring instruction, feedback, and learning opportunities based on individual needs. Teachers use information about a student's current understanding to provide targeted support, practice, or enrichment.

Proficiency-Based Grading- Proficiency-based grading (also referred to as Equitable Grading) is a system where grades are based on what students know and can do regarding standards-based learning targets.

Proficiency Scale- A proficiency scale is a tool teachers use to communicate progress toward a specific learning target. In Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI), proficiency scales help students understand their current level of understanding and identify specific areas for growth.

Reassessment- Reassessment allows students to demonstrate improved understanding after feedback and additional instruction. Students are given multiple opportunities to show learning, and the most recent evidence is used to reflect progress as part of a Mastery Learning approach.

Report Card Domain (elementary)- A report card domain is a broad area of learning within a subject that appears on an elementary progress report. Domains represent major areas of the California content standards and help organize student learning within a subject, such as English Language Arts or Mathematics.

Score- A measure of a student's proficiency based on performance on an assignment or assessment, recorded in the gradebook or noted on the assignment or assessment.

Standards-Based Grade- Standards-based grades must reflect a student's individual proficiency in the standards and should not be a comparison of that student's performance against other students.

Student Progress- Student progress refers to how a student's learning develops over time.

References

1. **Brookhart, S. M. (2014). What Are Learning Targets? Educational Leadership.**
This article explains how clear, student-friendly learning targets help students understand what they are learning, reflect on their progress, and use feedback to improve their learning.
2. **Guskey, T. R. (2011). Five Obstacles to Grading Reform. Educational Leadership.**
This article explains how proficiency-based approaches maintain the same learning expectations for all students while providing clearer information about student progress than traditional point-based grading.
3. **Guskey, T. R. (2010). Lessons of Mastery Learning. Educational Leadership.**
This article explains how mastery learning supports student growth by providing appropriate time, feedback, and instructional support so all students can work toward shared learning goals.
4. **Dweck, C. S. (2007). The Perils and Promises of Praise. Educational Leadership.**
This article draws on research on growth mindset to explain how feedback and responses to mistakes influence student motivation, confidence, and willingness to learn over time.