



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



MARKING GUIDELINES

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Grades

1 - 3

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Note: These Amended Marking Guidelines are the result of feedback from the field regarding subject area grading. No policy changes have been made; however, the content is streamlined to provide quick, relevant information for consistent grading. Additional resources on content areas, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners (EL) are available in the Marking Guidelines Appendices and can be found on the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment website.

Introduction

The School District of Philadelphia has implemented a PA Common Core Standards-driven curriculum with aligned assessments in all content areas. The purpose of this document is to ensure consistency across the district as teachers calculate report card grades which reflect their classroom-based data and observations. Ultimately, it is expected that teachers use this guide as a tool in their professional decision-making while assigning marks, supported by evidence of daily formal and informal observations.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Chapter 4 regulations, all students are required to be instructed in the Arts (Visual Arts, Music, Theater, and Dance), Health, and Physical Education during the school year. In some cases, schools are not able to provide these subjects during a given Term. If a classroom teacher does not provide the Arts, Health, or Physical Education, then no grade will be given during that particular Term.

The Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart below reflects the numerical mark assigned to each letter grade and is applied to all subject areas:

Numerical scores for all content areas should be converted into the following letter grades:
100–90 = A
89–80 = B
79–70 = C
69–60 = D
59–50 = F

Notes:

- Students whose final average falls below a 60 will receive an “F” on the final report card.
- Benchmark Assessments are not a part of the report card grade. They are used as formative assessments to guide instruction.

English Learners (EL)

- **English Learners may not be given a failing mark based on their entering, beginning, developing, or expanding level of English proficiency. For any failing marks, teachers must provide documentation that instruction and assessment was modified appropriately and parents must be notified.**
- An English Language Learner's instructional and independent reading level(s) may be below grade level because of his/her English language proficiency level. When this is the case, a below-grade reading level is not sufficient cause to lower a student's reading grade.
- The classroom teacher must collaborate with the ESOL teacher when determining the reading, writing, and oral communication grades.
- Grading in all subjects must follow the same procedures outlined in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart. However, teachers must use the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, available in the appendices or at www.wida.us/standards/CAN_DOs/, to modify instruction and assessments. Grades must be determined based on modified instruction and assessment.
- Students that have been in the country less than 15 school days may be given a NG (No Grade). The reason code is “No grade due to late admission.”

- For further information regarding assessment of students in dual language programs, see the Dual Language Program Handbook, downloadable at: https://webapps1.philasd.org/downloads/tdm/Dual_Language_Program_Handbook.pdf

Promotion Policy (as applies to grades 1-8)

Promotion Policy (as applies to grades 1-8)

- In grades 1 and 2, students must pass reading and math.
- In grades 3 through 7, students must pass reading, math and science.
- In grade 8, students must pass reading, math, science and social studies.

Policy Statement

The policy of the School District of Philadelphia requires all students to meet specified requirements for promotion and the School District requires all students to meet specified requirements for promotion and graduation in accordance with federal, state and local guidelines.

The policy of the School District of Philadelphia requires all students to meet specified requirements in addition to specified local, state and federal requirements.

Children with disabilities will be promoted or will graduate if they satisfy the requirements of a program developed by an Individualized Education Program team.

Policy Procedures

Principals are required to monitor all report card grade entries made by teachers.

NOTE: This Promotion and Graduation Policy is on record as of 2004/2005. This revision is reflective of this policy, with the exception of the TerraNova and the End of Grade (EOG) tests, which are no longer used.

Grading Policy

All grades will be recorded in the district-provided electronic grade book in Infinite Campus, the Student Information System. It is suggested that students receive written feedback twice weekly; teachers would enter at least two grades per week.

Reading

In adherence with our instructional model based on the PA Core Standards for Reading, the purpose of assessment is to measure students' ability to gather, comprehend, evaluate, synthesize, report on, and interact with an extensive range of print. Teachers evaluate student progress using individual reading assessments. These assessments monitor student progress and allow teachers to match appropriate instructional materials to accelerate student growth. Teachers need to determine what students can do independently and then determine a focus for instruction to move students to higher levels. In order for reading instruction to be effective, students must be working at their highest instructional level.

Independent Reading Level

The Independent Reading Level is the level at which students can read without assistance. For a student's independent reading level to progress toward grade-level performance, a student must engage in independent reading many times during the day.

To determine the student's independent reading level:

1. Teachers can obtain the independent reading level by acquiring the Lexile Level from the AIMSweb R-CBM results. See Reading Level Correlation Chart to convert Lexile Level to reading level for the report card. **(See page 8)**
2. Students who score below the grade-level instructional targets should be assessed using the DRA2. **{See page 8 for Lexile Levels (LL)}**
3. Teachers can verify an independent reading level using the DRA2. Students who score in the "Independent" range on the observation rubric, are independent at that level. Students who score "Advanced" should be tested at the next level until they reach "Independent".

Instructional Reading Level

Using the PA Core Standards for Foundational Skills, Speaking & Listening, Informational and Literature Reading will help to ensure that students will be prepared to achieve identified instructional targets. A student will grow as a reader as the teacher models and provides frequent and varied reading experiences. Students must interact with books on their instructional and independent level on a daily basis. Students must receive grade-appropriate instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics and vocabulary in order to develop fluency and comprehension.

The highest instructional reading level is the level at which the student can read and comprehend with support and instruction from the teacher.

To determine the student's highest instructional reading level:

1. Consider the instructional level to be one or two levels higher than the independent reading level (as determined above).
2. The Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2) may be used to confirm an instructional reading level and determine a focus for instruction. Students who score below the independent level according to the Observation Guide Rubric on the DRA2 are at the instructional level.
3. Confirm the accuracy of the DRA2 level by working with students in guided reading or small group instruction at this level. If the DRA2 level is the proper instructional level the student should demonstrate effective use of most (approximately 80%) of the reading behaviors (e.g., using word attack strategies at point of difficulty or self-correcting/rereading when meaning is lost) associated with that reading level. **See Appendix I.1 – I.12** for the list of Reading Behaviors.

Note:

- **Use all information to determine the independent level and the highest instructional level.** The Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2) alone does not determine a student's instructional reading level for daily instruction, nor the student's independent reading level for report cards.
- Sometimes a small amount of review is necessary in September to refresh a student's reading skills. If it is determined that the previous June level is too high, teachers may lower an independent reading level by one level with proper documentation such as DRA2 records, anecdotal records, writing samples, and/or administrative approval. This can only be done for the first marking period. Indicate the student's highest independent level by using the designated drop-down menu in Student Information System (SIS).

Goals for Independent Reading Levels – For Report Card Recording in Grades 1 - 3

GRADE 1	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient)	C and above	D and above	E and above	G and above	I and above
Strategic Intervention Needed	A, B	C	D	F	G, H
Intensive Intervention Needed	*PR	B and below	C and below	E and below	F and below

GRADE 2	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient)	I and above	J and above	J – K and above	K and above	L and above
Strategic Intervention Needed	H	I	I - J	J	K
Intensive Intervention Needed	G and below	H and below	H and below	I and below	J and below

GRADE 3	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient)	L and above	M and above	M - N and above	N and above	O and above
Strategic Intervention Needed	K	L	L - M	M	N
Intensive Intervention Needed	J and below	K and below	K and below	L and below	M and below

Shaded boxes indicate target independent level for each grade. Targets are printed on the report card.

*PR = Pre-Reading

Note: See Appendix pages 3 and 4 for information regarding Special Education: Students with Disabilities and English Learners (EL).

Goals for Instructional Reading Levels – For Instructional Planning

GRADE 1	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient)	D and above	E and above	F and above	H and above	J and above
Strategic Intervention Needed	B, C	D	E	F, G	H, I
Intensive Intervention Needed	*PR, A	C and below	D and below	E and below	G and below

GRADE 2	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient)	J and above	K and above	K – L and above	L and above	M and above
Strategic Intervention Needed	I	J	J	K	L
Intensive Intervention Needed	Below I	Below J	Below J	Below K	Below L

GRADE 3	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient)	M and above	N and above	N – O and above	O and above	P and above
Strategic Intervention Needed	L	M	M	N	O
Intensive Intervention Needed	Below L	Below M	Below M	Below N	Below O

Shaded boxes indicate target instructional level for each grade. They are used to inform classroom instruction.

*PR = Pre-Reading

Note: See Appendix pages 3 and 4 for information regarding Special Education: Students with Disabilities and English Learners (EL).

Reading Level Equivalency Chart

Grade	DRA2 Level	Lexile Level (Ind Level)	Independent Reading Level	Instructional Reading Level
K	A	-	PR	PR
K	1	-	PR	A
K	2	-	A	B
K	3	-	A	B
K	4	-	B	C
K	6	100	C	D
1	8	125	D	E
1	10	175	E	F
1	12	200	F	G
1	14	225	G	H
1	16	275	H	I
1	18	300	I	J
2	20	350	J	K
2	24	400	K	L
2	28	450	L	M
3	30	500	M	N
3	34	600	N	O
3	38	650	O	P

Determining a Reading Grade

To determine the report card grade, the teacher uses a **COMBINATION** of graded assignments and the student's independent reading level. **The reading level alone does not determine the reading grade.**

First, generate the numerical average of all graded assignments using the following weights:

Component	Weight
Tests/Quizzes	40%
Class Work (written or oral work completed during class)	30%
Participation (verbal and non-verbal engagement in class activities)	20%
Homework	10%

These graded assignments must show a balance of grade-level tasks, as well as work at a student's independent and instructional level. Benchmark Assessments are not a part of the report card mark.

Second, the numerical average is one consideration when determining a student's grade. It **may** be adjusted based on reading level as indicated by the chart below:

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Independent Reading Level
A	100-90	At or above grade level
B	89-80	At or above grade level
C	79-70	At grade level/no more than 1 year below
D	69-60	1½ to 2 years below grade level
F	59-50*	More than 2 years below grade level

* Students who have an average below 60 may not be assigned a grade higher than a "B" on their report card.

Notes:

- A reading grade will be assigned to each of the four Terms. How to determine a reading grade is defined in the chart above.
- An additional column will be added to the report card. This column will show the average grade of the 4 Terms.
- **See Appendix page 3** for information regarding Special Education: Students with Disabilities
- **See Appendix B. 1 – B.2** for more information on Determining Independent and Instructional Reading Levels and Grade Level Targets.
- **See Appendix B.3** for Pennsylvania Department of Education PSSA Short Answer Response Rubric (Reading Assessment Rubric).

Oral Communication

Students need ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations. Being productive members of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information and engage in discourse to expand the conversation.

Students must:

1. Contribute to large and small group discussions on grade-level topics and follow discussion rules such as listening to others, speaking one at a time, and staying on topic.
2. Retell a story in sequence using key story elements for fiction, as well as main ideas and details for non-fiction.
3. Relate a personal experience with relevant details expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
4. Ask questions to obtain information, clarify something that is not understood, or gather additional information to deepen understanding.

Assess the student's competency in each component according to the following levels, and input a numerical equivalent in the online system:

A (100-90) - Student consistently uses communication skills in all 4 components

B (89-80) - Student frequently uses communication skills in 3 of the 4 components

C (79-70) - Student usually uses communication skills in 2 of the 4 components

D (69-60) - Student sometimes uses communication skills 2 of the 4 components

F (59-50) - Student rarely uses communication skills in the 4 components

Writing

Students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding, conveying thoughts, feelings, and experiences (real and imaginary).

The writing grade measures development and growth over time by assessing a collection of writing. Assessment is based on a minimum of 4 writing samples that are reflective of a student's best work and multiple modes of writing (Informative/Explanatory, Persuasive, or Narrative).

Due to a wide range of writing development across grades 1 – 3, various rubrics are used at each grade to reflect the student's development towards conventional writing.

First and Second Grade:

- Writing samples are scored using grade-specific Pennsylvania Writing Assessment Domain Scoring Guidelines (**See Appendix C.3**).
 - For first grade, writing samples are initially scored using the “Developmental Writing Stages” rubric (**See Appendix C.2**). As a student's writing progresses and shows evidence of focus, content, organization and conventions, the Pennsylvania Writing Assessment Domain Scoring Guide for Grades 1 and 2 is used.
- Each writing sample receives a score for each domain (focus, content, organization, style and conventions).
- For each writing sample, add the scores in all the domains and get a composite score of up to 20 points.
- Add all the composite scores together and divide by the total number of samples to get a rubric score for writing.
- Convert the rubric score into a numerical score and report card grade using the table below to generate a report card grade.

Third Grade:

- Writing samples are scored using the Pennsylvania Scoring Guidelines for Opinion, Informative/Explanatory and Narrative Writing (**See Appendix C.4 – C.6**).
 - Included in **Appendix B.3** is the Pennsylvania Rubric for Short Answer Responses. Students should be exposed to this rubric for writing by the end of third grade.
- Each writing sample receives a score based on the Scoring Guide specific to the mode of writing.
- The rubric score is the composite score up to 4 points.
- Add all the composite scores together and divide by the total number of samples to get a rubric score for writing.
- Convert the rubric score into a numerical score and report card grade using the table below to generate a report card grade.

Grade 1, 2 Rubric Score	Grade 3 Rubric Score	Numerical Score	Report Card Grade
20-19	4.0 – 3.8	100-90	A
18-15	3.7 – 3.0	89-80	B
14-10	2.9 – 2.0	79-70	C
9-5	1.9 – 1.0	69-60	D
4-0	1.0 & below	59-50	F

Notes:

- **See Appendix C.3 – C.6** for all Pennsylvania Writing Rubrics.

Mathematics

The goal of mathematics instruction is to promote conceptual understanding while supporting procedural and computational fluency. Mathematical proficiency in grades 1-3 includes Numbers and Operations in Base Ten, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Geometry, and Measurement and Data. Students in grade 3 begin to study Numbers and Operations – Fractions.

Teachers should support students consistently as they:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Component	Weight
Tests/Quizzes	40%
Classwork/Participation (written or oral work completed during class)	30%
Projects/Presentation (ongoing endeavor that exhibits mastery of a concept in the curriculum)	20%
Homework	10%

Notes:

“Classwork” is defined as a product that is to be completed by the student in class.

Science

Acquiring scientific knowledge involves constructing hypotheses, conducting observations, formulating useful questions that provoke scientific inquiry and mastering content knowledge. Students in science need to be exposed to and participate in the experimental design process through hands on manipulation of materials.

Teachers have multiple opportunities to evaluate student progress using a variety of assessment strategies (chapter tests, unit exams, performance-based assessments, labs, research, etc.)

Generate the numerical average of all graded assignments using the following suggested weights:

Component	Weight
Tests and Quizzes	40%
Classwork/ Labs	30%
Participation/Presentations	20%
Homework	10%

Notes:

“Classwork” is defined as a product that is to be completed by the student in class.

Social Studies

In social studies, focus questions and global themes that are traditional allow students to understand self, neighborhood, community, city, state, nation and the world.

Teachers have multiple opportunities to evaluate student progress using a variety of assessment strategies (chapter tests, unit exams, journal writing, performance-based assessments, research, etc.).

Component	Weight
Tests and Quizzes	40%
Classwork	30%
Participation/Presentation	20%
Homework	10%

Notes:

“Classwork” is defined as a product that is to be completed by the student in class.

Digital Literacy and Technology Skills

The purpose of assessing digital literacy and technology skills is to measure proficiency as indicated in PA Business, Computers, and Informational Technology Standard.

Teachers are encouraged to use multiple opportunities to evaluate student progress using the following suggested assessment tools:

- Anecdotal record
- Class participation
- Finished projects (individual/group)
- Logs
- Portfolios
- Presentations
- Quizzes/tests
- Reports

See the Curriculum Engine for additional resources.

Scoring: Multiple assessments are needed to calculate one report card grade.

Assessment for each marking period should be based on the following Digital Literacy and Technology Strands:

- Computing and Society: Internet Safety
- Digital Tools and Collaboration
- Digital Media and Literacy
- Computer Science Fundamentals and Coding

Health

Grading in health is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix E for additional information on instruction.**

Physical Education

Grading in physical education is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix F for additional information on instruction.**

Visual Arts

Grading in visual arts is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix G.1 for additional information on instruction.**

Music

Grading in music is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix G.2 for additional information on instruction.**

Dance

Grading in dance is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix G.3 for additional information on instruction.**

Theatre

Grading in theatre is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix G.4 – G.5 for additional information on instruction.**

World Language

Grading in world language is consistent with the criteria as indicated in the Alpha/Numerical Equivalency Chart on page 3. **See Appendix H for additional information on instruction.**