



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA



# MARKING GUIDELINES

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**Grades**

**4 - 8**

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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:

<b>Numerical scores for all content areas should be converted into the following letter grades:</b>
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 cannot 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 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 alphanumerical equivalency chart. However, teachers must use the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, available in the appendices or at [www.wida.us/standards/CAN\\_DOs/](http://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 can be given an NG (No Grade). The reason code is “No grade due to late admission.”
- For further information regarding assessment of students in dual language programs,

## 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 School District requires all students to meet specified requirements for promotion and graduation in accordance with federal, state and local guidelines.

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 reflects this policy, with the exception of the TerraNova and 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 and that teachers 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.

## **Instructional Reading Levels Grades 4-8**

The instructional reading level is the level at which the student can read and comprehend with support and instruction from the teacher. Sometimes a small amount of review is necessary in September to refresh his/her instructional reading level skills. If it is determined that the previous June level is too high, teachers may lower an instructional reading level by one level with proper documentation such as WRAP records, anecdotal records, writing samples, and/or administrative approval. This can only be done for the first marking period.

## **Independent Reading Levels Grades 4-8**

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 for Grades 4 and 5 use the AIMSweb score. The independent reading level is NOT recorded on the report card for 2018-2019.**

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 WRAP. See Goals for Instruction Reading Levels (See page 6).
3. Teachers can verify an independent reading level using the WRAP. Information from the WRAP, along with information gained from working with the student in small group instruction, the analysis of writing samples, informal running records, and anecdotal notes will clarify the student's instructional reading level.

4. Administer the WRAP in Grades 4 and 5 if students score below the cut off identified on the chart:

Grade	AIMSweb Lexile Score
4	350
5	600

**To determine the student's instructional reading level for Grades 6-8, refer to the grade equivalent column on the enclosed chart and consider student data. The instructional reading level is recorded on the report card.**

1. Administer the Gates-MacGinitie. This is the starting point, but does not necessarily determine the highest instructional reading level.
2. Confirm the accuracy of the Gates-MacGinitie level during guided reading and/or small group instruction. Students should demonstrate effective use of some (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 level.
3. If the Gates-MacGinitie indicates a reading level more than one year below the student's grade level, administer the WRAP (Writing and Reading Assessment Profile) assessment.
4. Information from the WRAP, along with information gained from working with the student during guided reading and/or small group instruction, the analysis of writing samples, informal running records, and anecdotal notes will clarify the student's instructional level.

### **Note:**

- Use all information to determine the highest instructional level and subsequent independent reading level. The AIMSweb, Gates-MacGinitie, or the WRAP alone do not determine a student's reading level for report cards.
- Indicate the student's independent level in grades 4 and 5 by using the designated drop-down menu in SIS.
- Indicate the student's highest instructional level in grades 6-8 by using the designated drop-down menu in SIS.

## Goals for Instructional/Independent Reading Levels - in Grades 4 and 5

- The Goals for Instructional and Independent Reading Levels serve as a guide. Please use a combination of anecdotal notes, running records, and reading assessments to accurately identify a need for strategic or intensive interventions.
- Please note that “+” includes the level and above; for example W+ indicates that the student is reading at level “W or Higher”.

Grade 4	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
TARGET LEVEL <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>F &amp; P Independent Level</i> <i>Grade Level Based on Month</i>	P+ O+ 3.9+	Q+ P+ 4.2+	Q - R+ P - Q+ 4.5 +	R+ Q+ 4.7 +	S+ R+ 4.9+
STRATEGIC INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>Grade Level Based on Month</i>	O (3.0 - 3.8)	P (3.3 - 4.1)	P - Q (3.6 - 4.4)	Q (3.8 - 4.6)	R (4.0 - 4.8)
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>Grade Level Based on Month</i>	Below O 2.9 and Below	Below P 3.2 and Below	Below P 3.5 and Below	Below Q 3.7 and Below	Below R 3.9 and Below
Grade 5	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
TARGET LEVEL <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>F &amp; P Independent Level</i> <i>Grade Level Based on Month</i>	S+ R+ 4.9+	T+ S+ 5.2+	T - U+ S - T+ 5.5+	U+ T+ 5.7+	V+ U+ 5.9+
STRATEGIC INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>Grade Level Based on Month</i>	R (4.0 - 4.8)	S (4.3 - 5.1)	S - T (4.6 -5.4)	T (4.8 -5.6)	U (5.0 - 5.8)
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>Grade Level Based on Month</i>	Below R 3.9 and Below	Below S 4.2 and Below	Below S 4.5 and Below	Below T 4.7 and Below	Below U 4.9 and Below

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



# Goals for Instructional/Independent Reading Levels – in Grades 6-8

- The Goals for Instructional and Independent Reading Levels serve as a guide. Please use a combination of anecdotal notes, running records, and reading assessments to accurately identify a need for strategic or intensive interventions.
- Please note that “+” includes the level and above; for example W+ indicates that the student is reading at level “W or Higher”.

Grade 6	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
TARGET LEVEL <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>F &amp; P Independent Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	V/W+ U+ 5.9+	W+ V+ 6.2+	X+ W+ 6.5+	X+ W+ 6.7+	Y+ X+ 6.9+
STRATEGIC INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	U 5.0-5.8	V 5.3 - 6.1	W 5.6 - 6.4	W 5.8 - 6.6	X 6.0 - 6.8
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	Below U 4.9 and below	Below V 5.2 and below	Below W 5.5 and below	Below W 5.7 and below	Below X 5.9 and Below
Grade 7	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
TARGET LEVEL <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>F &amp; P Independent Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	Y+ X+ 6.9+	Y+ X+ 7.2+	Z+ Y+ 7.5+	Z+ Y+ 7.7+	Z+ Y+ 7.9+
STRATEGIC INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	X 6.0 - 6.6	X 6.3 - 7.1	Y 6.6 - 7.4	Y 6.8 - 7.6	Y 7.0 - 7.8
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	Below X 5.9 and Below	Below X 6.2 and below	Below Y 6.5 and below	Below Y 6.7 and Below	Below Y 6.9 and Below
Grade 8	September	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (February)	3rd Term (April)	4th Term (June)
TARGET LEVEL <i>F &amp; P Instructional Level</i> <i>F &amp; P Independent Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	Z+ Y+ 7.9+	Z+ Y+ 8.2+	Z+ Y+ 8.5+	Z+ Y+ 8.7+	Z+ Y+ 8.9+
STRATEGIC INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	Y 7.0 - 7.8	Y 7.3 - 8.1	Y 7.6 - 8.4	Y 7.8 - 8.6	Y 8.0 - 8.8
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION <i>F &amp; P Level</i> <i>Grade Level</i>	Below Y 6.9 and Below	Below Y 7.2 and Below	Below Y 7.5 and Below	Below Y 7.7 and Below	Below Y 7.9 and Below

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

# Reading Level Equivalency Chart

Grade	DRA 2	AimsWeb Lexile Level (Ind Level)	Independent Reading Level	Instructional Reading Level
4 (Sept.)			O (3.5)	P (3.9)+
4 (Nov.)	40	700 – 725	P (3.7)	Q (4.2)+
4 (Feb.)		750 – 775	Q (4.0)	Q - R (4.5)+
4 (Apr.)		800 – 825	R (4.5)	R (4.7)+
4 ( Jun.)		850 – 875	S (4.7)	S (4.9)+
5 (Sept.)	50		S (4.7)	S(4.9)+
5 (Nov.)		900 – 925	T (5.0)	T (5.2)+
5 (Feb.)			T (5.2)	T - U (5.5)+
5 (Apr.)		950 – 975	U (5.5)	U (5.7)+
5 (Jun.)			U (5.7)	V(5.9)+
6 (Sept.)	60		U (5.7)	V(5.9)+
6 (Nov.)		1050	W	W (6.2)+
6 (Feb.)			W-X	X (6.5)+
6 (Apr.)		1075	X	X (6.7)+
6 (Jun.)			X	Y (6.9) +
7 (Sept.)	70		X	Y (6.9) +
7 (Nov.)			X	Y (7.2) +
7 (Feb.)		1100	Y	Z (7.5) +
7 (Apr.)			Y	Z (7.7) +
7 (Jun.)			Y	Z (7.9) +
8 (Sept.)	80		Y	Z (7.9) +
8 (Nov.)			Y	Z (8.2) +
8 (Feb.)			Y	Z (8.5) +
8 (Apr.)			Y	Z (8.7) +
8 (Jun.)			Y	Z (8.9) +
9 (Sept.)		1125	Z	(9.0)+



# 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%
Classwork/Participation (written or oral work completed during class)	30%
Projects/Presentations (ongoing endeavors that exhibit mastery of a concept in the curriculum)	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	Instructional 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 the 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** for more information on determining Instructional/Independent Reading Levels and grade level targets.
- **See Appendix B.2** for Pennsylvania Department of Education Reading Assessment Rubric: **Text Dependent Analysis**.

# 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).

Students are expected to write for different purposes and audiences. They are expected to write clear and focused text that conveys a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.

The writing grade measures development and growth over time by assessing the following different modes of writing: Informative/Explanatory, Opinion/Argumentative, and Narrative. Writing samples completed by students are scored using the following Guidelines:

- PSSA Informative/Explanatory Scoring Guidelines
- PSSA Opinion/Argumentative Scoring Guidelines
- PSSA Narrative Scoring Guidelines

To determine a report card mark, look at the collection of scored writing produced by the student.

1. Determine which writing samples to score. Using a minimum of 4 writing samples provides a clear assessment of the student's writing achievement **Select writing samples that reflect the *focused writing modality for each Term***. During the final Term of the year, select work samples from all modes.
2. Each writing sample receives a score according to the PSSA Scoring Guidelines for each specific mode (Informational/ Explanatory, Argumentative/Opinion, and Narrative).
3. For each writing sample, determine a score of 4, 3, 2, or 1. This will generate four separate scores for four different writing samples.
4. Add all the writing samples scores together and divide by the total number of samples to get an overall rubric score for writing.
5. Convert the rubric score into a numerical score and report card grade using the following table to generate a report card grade.

Rubric Score	Numerical Score	Report Card Grade
4.0 – 3.8	100-90	A
3.7 – 3.0	89-80	B
2.9 – 2.0	79-70	C
1.9 – 1.0	69-60	D
below 1.0	59-50	F

## Notes:

- See Appendix C.2 – C.7 for all Pennsylvania Writing Rubrics.
- A pattern of incomplete writing assignments may be reflected by lowering the mark one letter grade.

# Mathematics

The goal of mathematics instruction is to promote conceptual understanding while supporting procedural and computational fluency. Mathematical proficiency in grades 4-5 includes Numbers and Operations in Base Ten, Numbers and Operations – Fractions, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Geometry, and Measurement and Data. In grades 6-8, students begin to develop proficiency in the Number System, Systems and Equations, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Ratios and Proportional Relationships are unique to grades 6-7. Students begin to study Functions in grade 8.

## 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.

## Grades 4 and 5

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

## Grades 6-8

Component	Weight
Tests/Quizzes	40%
Classwork/Participation (written or oral work completed during class)	30%
Projects/Presentation (ongoing endeavors that exhibit 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 the following: 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/Quizzes	40%
Classwork/Participation (written or oral work completed during class)	30%
Projects/Presentation (ongoing endeavors that exhibit 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.

## Social Studies

In social studies, focus questions and global themes 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/Quizzes	40%
Class Work/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.

**See Appendix J** and the “Resources and References” concerning multidisciplinary projects. Students in grade 8 may complete a multidisciplinary project to enhance their final grade. However, it is no longer required by the PDE as a promotion requirement.

## Digital Literacy and Technology Skills

The purpose of assessing digital literacy and technology skills is to measure levels of proficiency as indicated in Pennsylvania Business, Computers and Informational Technology Standards

Teachers are encouraged to use multiple opportunities to evaluate student progress using the following suggested assessment tools: anecdotal records, class participation, finished projects (individual/group), logs, portfolios, presentations, quizzes/tests and reports. **See the Curriculum Engine for additional resources.**

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

Assessments 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.**