



Standards-Based Learning Environment Introduction

This is an introductory guide to help our school families begin to understand the philosophy of Standards-Based Grading, an initiative being implemented throughout the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. We are excited to embrace the educational research that has made SBLE a staple in schools around the country (including right here in Whitefish Bay!).

We will provide you more information consistently throughout this school year as we transition to SBLE (to be fully implemented for the 2020-2021 school year).

**We will also be hosting an SBLE Parent Night in Donovan Hall on
Tuesday, October 8th from 6:00-7:00.**

SBLE

standards-based learning environment

WHAT IS IT?

A Standards-Based Learning Environment is based on the principle that grades should convey how well students master **content** and **standards**.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

Your child will continue to be assessed and graded. Instead of averaging all assignment and test grades over the course of a trimester, however, we will focus on mastery achieved at the end of the trimester. Practice. Practice. Fail. Try again. Practice. Practice. Practice. Success! Move on. Practice. Fail. Practice. Practice. Practice. Assessment. Proficient! (The grade is based on that assessment -- not the practice.) Instead of A,B,C,D, F letter grades, students will earn a Proficiency Score that indicates the level of mastery a student achieves. Don't panic. Keep reading.

WHY IS ST. MONICA DOING THIS?

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee recognizes the educational research that supports the philosophy of SBLE. Research has caused the tide to begin to shift in academic thought (test-optional universities, etc.). SBLE is a proven, effective way to better assess what students know and where they have opportunity for growth.

Where SBLE is ALREADY being used: Cumberland, Richards, St. Robert, Holy Family,

Whitefish Bay Middle School (established SBLE/still incorporating letter grades 2019-2020), **St. Eugene, St. Joe's, Lumen Christi**

WE TURNED OUT JUST FINE. WHY CHANGE?

Even though you may have not worn a seatbelt as a child doesn't mean you won't put your own child in a seatbelt. *We know more than we used to about the way our brains learn, adapt, grow.*

Do not confine children to your own learning; for they were born in a different time. -Chinese Proverb

IS THIS A MUSHY "EVERYONE GETS A TROPHY" THING?

The opposite. Students will take more ownership of their learning and be able to communicate their strengths and weaknesses. In fact, you may find out that on certain standards, your child is perfectly average (proficient). When "**Learner Behaviors**" are removed from being part of a child's academic grade (turning in work on time, best penmanship, doing extra credit, having parents help on projects at home), we can more easily see exactly what a student knows and doesn't know. This is a good thing!

***Learner Behaviors** are assessed as a separate indicator on the report card.



HOW WILL MY CHILD BE PREPARED FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE?

The rigor of our curriculum will prepare your child. By developing intrinsic motivation, ownership for mastery and a knowledge of what they should be demonstrating, students will leave St. Monica with the skills necessary to achieve in high school and beyond.

We've met with academic deans, principals, and teachers at area high schools over the past year. Their message? High Schools rely primarily on entrance exams and teacher recommendations. Letter grades and GPA's mean different things from the plethora of grade schools that they draw from, and all schools' report cards look differently.

SO MY CHILD NEVER NEEDS TO PARTICIPATE? LATE WORK IS TOLERATED?

On the report card, **Success Indicators**, previously called Learner Behaviors, will be recorded and reported for students and parents. This is separate than the standard-based proficiency grade in order to distinguish between behaviors and achievement. Your child may receive homework for extra practice. You will receive a report card that gives you extensive feedback on your child.

What's Wrong with Averaging Scores?

Student 1:	90, 90, 90, 90, 95, 95	=	92%
Student 2:	98, 95, 50, 98, 95, 95	=	89%
*Student 3:	20, 50, 90, 90, 100, 100	=	75%
Student 4:	70, 75, 78, 83, 85, 92	=	81%
Student 5:	90, 90, 90, 90, 90, 90	=	90%

Averaging scores does not accurately demonstrate the growth a child achieves. In fact, it doesn't encourage growth!

Our highest performing students will be nudged in the direction we want: intrinsically motivated to KEEP GOING & CHALLENGE THEMSELVES.

*Growth! Improvement! Mastery!

We want our students to GROW.. to know they can IMPROVE.. to STRIVE for more.

SMS ACTION STEPS: SBLE

- Northshore Deanery Teacher Inservices Fall/Spring 2018/2019
- SMS Staff Inservice Tuesday, 8.18.19
- Teacher Professional Development Spring/Summer 2019
- Fr. Paul & Fr. Jordan Meeting Wednesday, 8.19.19
- Home and School Informational Presentation Thursday, 9.5.19
- School Committee Presentation Thursday, 9.5.19
- St. Monica School SBLE Parent Night Tuesday, October 8



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Education Jargon for SMS Parents



THE NUMERIC GRADING SCALE

The Numeric Scale communicates a student's progress using numbers, letters, or percentages.

93-100% A

85-92% B

84-77% C

76-69% D

69-0% F

**Although this is comfortable for us parents, these averages do not most effectively represent WHAT a student knows.*

THE PROFICIENCY SCALE

The Proficiency Scale communicates the level at which students are able to demonstrate understanding and application of concepts and skills aligned with grade level standards.

Grade 1-3 Proficiency Scale (same as currently used at SMS)

3 Proficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student demonstrates consistent understanding and application of concepts and skills aligned with grade level standards.• Student can complete assigned tasks independently.
2 Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student demonstrates partial understanding of grade level standards.• Student can sometimes complete learning activities without assistance.
1 Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student needs more time to develop understanding of grade level standards.• Student can complete learning activities with assistance.

Grade 4-8 Proficiency Scale

4 Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student demonstrates understanding of concepts and skills extending beyond grade level standards.• Student can independently complete self-directed studies.
3 Proficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student demonstrates consistent understanding and application of concepts and skills aligned with grade level standards.• Student can complete assigned tasks independently.
2 Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student demonstrates partial understanding of grade level standards.• Student can sometimes complete learning tasks without assistance.
1 Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student needs more time to develop understanding of grade level standards.• Student can complete learning activities with assistance.

**Throughout the 2019-2020 school year at St. Monica School, we will communicate your child's progress using either the numeric or proficiency scale depending on the content, assignment, and assessment.

GRADING

The assigning of a symbol to represent a summary of a student's mastery of a given standard at the end of a predetermined time period or course of study.

REPORTING

The tool or mechanism used to convey a student's level of mastery to both the student and his/her family at a specific, defined time in the academic year (quarter, trimester, and/or semester).

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Used throughout the learning process as a means for student practice and to capture student progress toward learning a targeted standard. A rubric score (4, 3, 2, 1) indicates the extent to which a student is learning, but has no effect on grading. Teachers solely assess this work to gain insight into individual and class needs, and to plan for future instruction.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Used, once learning has taken place, to measure student comprehensive ability to demonstrate the concepts, skills, and knowledge embedded within a standard. A rubric score (4, 3, 2, 1) indicates the extent to which the student has learned the concepts, skills, and knowledge. **Summative Assessment outcomes are the basis of student grades.**

HOW GRADING IS DEFINED

Traditional Grading Paradigm	Standards-Based Grading Paradigm
Low-level rote knowledge	Higher-order thinking skills
Knowing and understanding	Applying, analyzing, synthesizing
Learning defined by what students know	Learning defined by what students can do with what they know
Evidence of learning is repeating back	Evidence of learning is using skills in new situations
Rigor is coverage	Rigor is complexity

Source: Rethinking Grading by Cathy Vatterott, ASCD, 2015 *Rigor and Relevance Framework

HOW LEARNING IS DEFINED

Traditional Grading Paradigm	Standards-Based Grading Paradigm
Whole class - all get the same instruction, same homework, same test	Learning is differentiated to enable mastery

We live in a new reality: the 21st century world. We honor and respect the changes our children will live through, experience, and endure. We strive to make them prepared for this new world.

