

Competency-Based Grading

Teachers in the Rochester School District are responsible for reporting out on students' academic progress as well as on their habits of engagement.

Summative assessments provide evaluative data that indicate the level of student learning for reporting purposes. They allow teachers to make judgments about student achievement at the end of a sequence of instruction. Summative assessment tools may be tests, quizzes, projects, performances and/or products. These assessments are rigorous and include a variety of opportunities to demonstrate depth of knowledge. Students in the Rochester School District demonstrate their learning through multiple opportunities and through varied forms of assessment for each class' competency statement. It should also be noted that a summative assessment may be used to measure more than one competency.

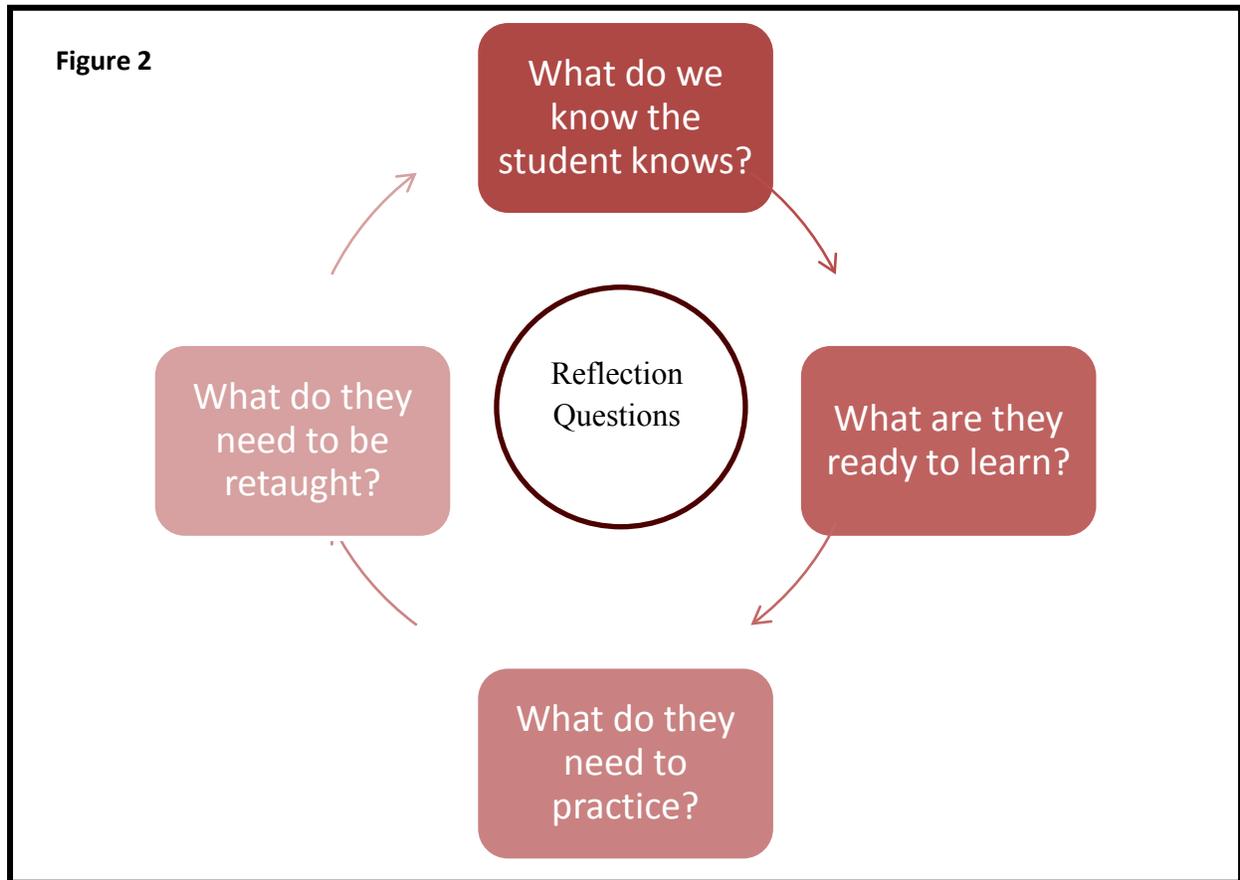
Competency-Based Grading will assist teachers in being able to better understand where to tailor instruction to the strengths and weaknesses of individual students or for the entire class. The CBA structure will also assist teachers, students, and their parents/guardians with the relearning and reassessment process both *during* and *beyond* classroom instruction. **Reassessment grades will replace the original assessment grade.**

The Rochester School District does not see grading as a terminal event. A student's final grade is a reflection of the level of mastery that the student has reached toward each of the competencies, *not* simply an average of how he/she has scored on tests and assignments given.

Best practices in a competency-based grading system are outlined below.

- Once grading, or assessment, has taken place, the student must receive clear feedback from the teacher on his/her performance. The more timely and criterion-referenced the feedback is, the more it will impact student growth.
- If a student has been deemed not yet competent, it is compulsory to provide clear instructions on what must be done to achieve competency.
- In determining a student's competency, emphasis is placed on the most recent evidence collected. New levels of understanding *can* replace old levels of understanding in the grade book.
- Teachers are encouraged to make their assessment & grading practices transparent to their students. This will allow them to take more ownership of their learning. Additionally, they will know where improvement is needed.
- Students who understand concepts and skills without needed additional practice are not penalized for skipping this work.
- Students who need additional time, practice, and/or instruction are not penalized by the averaging of assignment/assessment scores over time.
- Teachers at each grade/class/course-level will collaborate to develop an understanding of what is an adequate demonstration of proficiency.
- Teachers will assess skills and concepts in multiple contexts and in multiple ways.
- Attention is placed on student learning, not on student grades.

The expectation is that teachers will use these best practices and discuss these grading practices with students and parents. When making instructional decisions from the student evidence of learning gathered by formative assessments, teachers are encouraged to reflect through the following questions (figure 2) in order to plan for future instruction:



While students’ grades will primarily be derived from the summative assessment data, it is the formative assessment that will drive instruction and feedback along the way. With that said, there are essentially two levels of formative assessment.

Most day-to-day drills, activities, homework and worksheets focus on the practice aspect of learning isolated skills. Teachers typically conclude “you got it” or “you didn’t get it”, or “it’s complete” or “it’s incomplete” from these practice opportunities. When feedback can be tracked in this manner, the *turned in* and *missing* features in Infinite Campus are appropriate.

A great analogy for this kind of practice is that to participating in athletics; for example, dribbling, passing, and trapping balls. As students begin to “get it” and “complete it”, teachers are able to advance to the next level of formative assessment. This level is analogous to the scrimmage! This is when we begin to put all of the isolated skills and concepts together. We do practice runs for the eventual summative assessment “game day”, providing timely, criterion-referenced feedback along the way. Formative assessment along the learning path can be predictive of success when summatively assessed. Game day can be scheduled once you know most of the players are ready! ***Parents and students should expect to see a correlation between the formative scrimmages and their eventual game day performance!***

Student Assessment and Grade Reporting

Formative Assessment
Assessment for Learning
(weighted no more than 10% at the high school level and 0% at the elementary/middle levels)

Summative Assessment
Assessment of Learning
(weighted no less than 90% at the high school level and 100% at the elementary/middle levels)

Isolated Skill & Drill Work
Examples:
Yes/No, Complete/Incomplete, Got It/Didn't Get it, Turned in/Missing
Tracked on a Checklist, not a grade in Infinite Campus

Scrimmage Time!
Putting the isolated skills & drills together, this should feel like practice for the summative. Provide timely, criterion-referenced feedback!
Reported out in Infinite Campus

Game Day!
Game day reporting & scrimmage practice should correlate.
Reported out in Infinite Campus



E / C / NYC / IWS
A / B / C / NYC / IWS

Deriving an Overall Competency Grade based on Summative Assessment Grades

In the Rochester School District, only letter grades are given. The mode, highest frequency of a grade, is the best measure of central tendency. When interpreting competency grades, teachers should begin by determining the mode.

If there is no evidence, teachers will report NR (not reported at this time). The code NR is to be used in the beginning of the school year, before a competency is formally assessed. Once a student has earned a summative grade toward a competency statement, the NR will *not* be used in subsequent progress reporting periods. If no additional summative assessment grades are reported between progress report periods, the previous overall competency grade is to be carried over. Best practice would be to assure that the student has maintained that level of performance over time. As we continue to evolve our implementation of the competency-based model teachers will work together to develop systematic curricular responses based on grade-level needs.

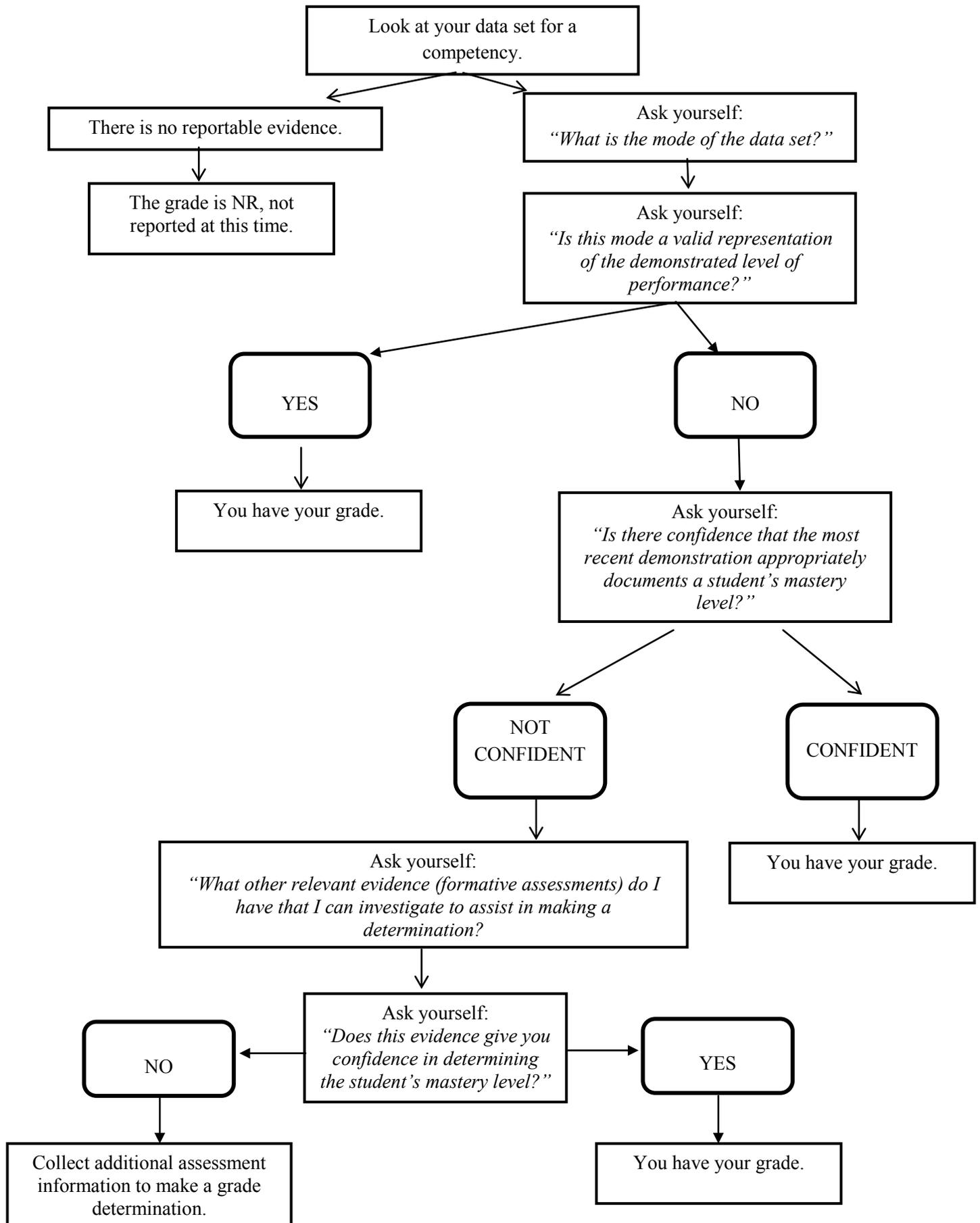
When determining the mode, teachers should ask themselves a series of reflective questions in order to reach a confident conclusion. Please refer to figure 3.

Deriving an Overall Class/Course Grade based on multiple Competency Statement Grades

In order to report-out overall class/course grades in a consistent manner from teacher to teacher, overall grading rubrics have been created by the teachers of the Rochester School District in grades 4-8. It is an expectation that teachers use these rubrics when reporting out overall class/course grades. Rubrics for grades 4 and 5 are posted on the CIA website <https://sites.google.com/a/sau54.org/cia/elementary>. To view sample grading rubrics, please view the appendix.

Figure 3

Deriving an Overall Competency Grade based on Summative Assessment Grades



Reporting of Student Progress

When will teachers be expected to report out on students' grades under the competency-based learning model? Student competency grades in the Rochester School District are a progression of student learning. Therefore, student progress reporting provides a snapshot of a student's journey through competence. The grade that is reported at the class/course's completion is the student's *final* class/course grade. Before the reporting out of that final grade, teachers will provide snapshots of student progress throughout the year.

Competencies, Performance Indicators, and rubrics for grades K-5 in Science and Social Studies will be developed during the 2013-14 school year. However, for the 2013-14 school year, teachers of grades 1-5 should be using **E/C/NYC** or **A/B/C/NYC** to report student achievement in Science and Social Studies during each even numbered progress reports. Currently, across the district there is a variety of curricular implementation in both Science and Social Studies. Therefore teachers are expected to define these levels of performance (E/C/NYC or A/B/C/NYC) within their classrooms, and collect evidence of learning throughout the school year.

The following figure and table outlines the expectations for reporting at each grade-level. Also available on the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA) website are visual tools for understanding the expectations for reporting student progress K-12. In addition, the appendix provides teachers with a writing guide for criterion-referenced comments.

Figure 4

**COMMUNICATING
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TO PARENTS**

**GRADE-LEVEL / COURSE
COMPETENCIES GRADES**

**HABITS OF ENGAGED LEARNERS
GRADES**

**Grades K-3 PLUS
Elementary Unified Arts &
Middle School Exploratory Unified Arts
Reported As**

**Grades 4 - 12
Reported As**

**Grades K - 12
Reported As**

E Exceeds Competent	C Competent	NYC Not Yet Competent	IWS Insufficient Work Submitted
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A Advanced Competent	B Beyond Competent	C Competent	NYC Not Yet Competent	IWS Insufficient Work Submitted
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EE Exceeds Expectations	ME Meets Expectations	NI Needs Improvement
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F High School students with NYC at the end of the course, not finishing their completion plans will receive an F .	F High School students with IWS at the end of the course, automatically converts to an F .
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What happens if my child is Not Yet Competent (NYC)?

This learning is so important that we need to work together to bring your child to a competent level. Therefore, your child may need to do one or more of the following:

- **Relearn** and **reassess** with his/her teacher
- Participate in a **competency completion program** such as:
 - A tiered intervention program
 - Before and/or after school tutoring
 - Summer school
 - Online learning opportunity

Exceptionalities:

If you have a question about how the Competency-Based Learning Model works with a 504 Plan or IEP, please contact your child's Case Manager.

Reporting of Student Progress

All Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When reporting out on class/course competencies, teachers will also make an assessment of each student’s Habits of Engaged Learners. When reporting an NYC or IWS for a competency grade <i>or</i> overall class/course grade, teachers will provide criterion-referenced, guiding, <i>academic</i> comments. When reporting an NI for Habits of Engaged Learners, teachers will provide criterion referenced, guiding, <i>habit referenced</i> comments. Best practice includes following up with academic and/or habit concerns with a phone call home. The code NR (Not Reported), is to be used in the beginning of the school year, before a competency is formally assessed The RSD encourages the use of IC Messenger and Student Submission. Students who are working on modified competencies will be provided a report card and a personalized report.
Elementary	
K - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teachers will provide seven (7) progress reports and a final grade report for a total of eight (8) reporting periods. During the odd number reporting intervals (1, 3, 5, 7), classroom teachers will only report on reading/language arts and mathematics competencies plus Habits of Engaged Learners. During the even number reporting intervals (2, 4, 6, 8), all areas will be reported on, including the Habits of Engaged Learners; the eighth (8th) reporting interval will reflect the final grade in all areas, <i>including Science and Social Studies for grades 1-5</i>. Criterion-referenced comments as outlined above will only be required during the even number intervals (2, 4, 6, 8); however, if a student is NYC or IWS in an area and/or NI during an odd number interval (1, 3, 5, 7), teachers will be required to provide a progress report with criterion referenced comments. The first interim progress report (interval 1) will be provided on September 27. Kindergarten teachers will NOT participate in the first progress report (interval 1), but will thereafter. Classroom teachers will use the Infinite Campus grade book; however, their parent portals will not be live.
4 - 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teachers will provide seven (7) progress reports and a final grade report for a total of eight (8) reporting periods. During the odd number reporting intervals (1, 3, 5, 7), classroom teachers will only report on reading/language arts and mathematics competencies including an overall subject grade plus Habits of Engaged Learners. During the even number reporting intervals (2, 4, 6, 8), all areas will be reported on including the Habits of Engaged Learners; the eighth (8th) reporting interval will reflect the final grade in all areas, <i>including Science and Social Studies</i>. Criterion-referenced comments as outlined above will only be required during the even number intervals (2, 4, 6, 8); however, if a student is NYC or IWS in an area and/or NI during an odd number interval (1, 3, 5, 7), teachers will be required to provide a progress report with criterion referenced comments. The first interim progress report (interval 1) will be provided on September 27. Classroom teachers will use the Infinite Campus grade book with live parent portals.
Unified Arts Teachers: Art, Music and Physical Education	
K - 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unified Arts teachers will report out individual competency grades and Habits of Engaged Learners during the even number reporting intervals (2, 4, 6, 8); the eighth (8th) reporting interval will reflect the final grade in all areas. The parent portal will be open for grades 4 and 5. Criterion-referenced comments as outlined above will only be required during the even number intervals (2, 4, 6, 8); however, if a student is NYC or IWS in an area and/or NI during an odd number interval (1, 3, 5, 7), teachers will be required to provide a progress report with criterion-referenced comments.
Middle School	
6 - 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teachers of yearlong classes will provide seven (7) progress reports and a final grade report for a total of eight (8) reporting periods. The eighth (8th) reporting interval will reflect the final grade in all areas. During each reporting period all areas will be reported on including the Habits of Engaged Learners. Exploratory Unified Arts classes will report out twice during the class. The final report will reflect the final grade for the class. The first interim progress report (interval 1) will be provided on September 27. Criterion-referenced comments as outlined above will only be required during the even number intervals (2, 4, 6, 8); however, if a student is NYC or IWS in an area and/or NI during an odd number interval (1, 3, 5, 7), teachers will be required to provide a progress report with criterion referenced comments.
High School	
9 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teachers will report out students’ overall competency grades as well as overall course grades every 2 weeks. For semester and year-long courses, criterion-referenced comments as outlined above will only be required during the even number intervals (2, 4, 6, 8); however, if a student is NYC or IWS in an area and/or NI during an odd number interval (1, 3, 5, 7), teachers will be required to provide a progress report with criterion referenced comments. For quarter-long courses, criterion-referenced comments are required bi-weekly if a student is NYC or IWS in an area and/or NI. During progress intervals 1 & 2, teachers will be required to provide a progress report with criterion referenced comments.