District Research: Standards Based Grading

A summary of Standards Based Schools and Districts
Introduction

- Several school districts have been selected as “standards based”
- With further research, several of these schools are not implementing appropriately, nor are they reporting uniformly
- Summaries of each school district and recommendation for future interaction
- Overall recommendations found from research from all districts
The Short Story:

- Quakertown Community School Dist (+)
- Adams 12 Five Star Public Schools (+)
- Aurora Public Schools (-)
- Excelsior Springs School District (+/-)
- Naperville North High School (-)
- Walla Walla Public Schools (-)
- Sumner School District (-)
- School District of Poynette (-)
- Box Elder Public Schools (-)
- Omaha Public Schools (+/-)
- Colville School District (-)
- Solon Community Schools (+/-)
- Spokane Public Schools (-)
- Summit School District (+/-)
- David Crockett High School (-)
- Osseo Area Schools ISD 279 (+/+/-)
- Preston Middle School (skipped)
- Portland Public Schools (-)
- Garden Grove Unified School Dist (-)
- Jamestown Schools (-)
- Boulder Valley Public Schools (-)
- Bismark Public Schools (-)
- Champaign Unit 4 School Dist.
- Fort Osage R-1 School District
- Nisqually Middle School
- Central Valley School District
Why they qualified for a “+”

- CONSISTENCY!!! Some of these schools were consistent down to websites, rubrics, and syllabi
- Standards based language and teacher consistency in grading
- Easily located websites and syllabi; an “outsider” (a.k.a. new parent to the district) should EASILY be able to determine what their child is doing in each class
- District webpage SBG information; descriptive Q&A information for parents
Why they qualified for “-”

- Difficult to locate or non-descriptive syllabi
- Language that included weighting of assessment types, final exams and/or homework
- Language that indicated no make ups allowed
- Lack of information surrounding Standards Based practices
- Inconsistent policies for schools within the district
- Some looked as though they were in transition and working toward SBG, some looked as though they said they were but were not
Things to consider...

- Several schools are located out of Washington and are on close to their last week of school.
- Several schools were not implementing well but still had GREAT ideas (see supplemental documents & recommendations slide).
- Many schools indicated that they are still looking for a balance between research and practice.
- Many schools may be great resources for the future and should be revisited later.
- Some districts may have teacher websites accessible the way FWPS does (with a student/parent login).
Recommendations in the future

- Common R/R/R Form district wide
- Common syllabi format
- Common format in website, all teachers must post R/R/R form, as well as course syllabus
- CSL reports (Characteristics of Successful Learners)
- Future PD on common website creation; google? Wordpress?
- “Suggested question” bank for parents to discuss grades with students and teachers
- District wide sample rubrics for each standard
- Math teachers post online scientific calculators
- Outlines how many hours of homework per week is appropriate for different levels of classes
Legacy High School had 80% of class of 2013 enroll in post secondary education
Average ACT score was 22, state average was 20.1
List of possible questions to ask kids and teachers when trying to get info about grades
Appears as though they are using weighted standards
All syllabi have the same format
Inconsistent late work policy, but students always allowed to reassess AS LONG AS they’ve met the criteria; done something to prepare and have evidence of that
Use the “.5” for increased granularity
Quakertown Community School District
Quakertown, PA

- SAT scores up roughly 20 in all areas from 2008 to 2012
- Number of AP test takers increased dramatically from 2009 to 2012 and the number of 3’s, 4’s, and 5’s has increased from 64 to 220
- Use a Characteristics of Successful Learner report where behaviors/study habits are reported
- Cannot retake a test for a better grade (individual syllabus)
- Use of the “0”
- Great language explaining 0-4 “I know it well enough to make connections that weren’t taught; I did not provide enough evidence for my teacher to determine that I am proficient on this standard”
- Uniform syllabi format
Standards based at k-8 (non-traditional grades expressed), traditional grades 9-12
Formative assessments identified w/lower case grade, summative identified with upper case
Attendance seems to impact performance based classes (band/choir/etc.)
Homework outlined as a means to practice and doesn’t appear to be graded
Guide for how much homework should be done is provided (no less than 3 no more than 10 hours)
Weighted grades for AP classes (0, 2, 3, 4, 5) “normal” classes=0, 1, 2, 3, 4
Aurora Central High School: teacher websites not well utilized, can’t find any syllabi
Excelsior Springs School District
Excelsior Springs, MO

- R/R/R request found here...LOVE this
- Use the “o” and “.5” for increased granularity, as well as the +/- and “D”
- Characteristics of Successful Learner report used
- Web info reports that they are Standards Based at all levels, but I can’t find any syllabi to support this
- Parent Q&A sheets and example rubrics
- No teacher websites or bio’s
- School website isn’t easily navigated
Teacher can determine what highest possible grade can be on a make up (ex. no higher than an 80% on a retake)

Incomplete or missing work receives a “0” in the grade book

Formal request for reassessment

All course syllabi listed on the website

0-4 in gen. classes, 0-5 in AP w/no 2’s or D’s

Weighted grades ex. 85% course work, 15% final exam
Retake policy varies from teacher to teacher; highest poss grade on retake=current chapter hw average
Teacher websites not universally used
Quizzes 35%, hw 10%, tests 40%, final 15%
Lincoln Alternative High School:
  - Cannot find specific syllabi
  - Websites don’t seem to be used
  - No grading policy in the handbook
Use +/- for increased granularity
All school websites have the same web format
Good explanation of grades and what each means for a 0-4
Weighted grades ex. 70% quizzes/tests, 30% employability
Syllabi hard to find and many teachers don’t have them
After 10 absences grade cannot be higher than a 75%
Not enough information to recommend
School District of Poynette
Poynette, WI

- Very small school district
- Grading for learning information clearly posted on the district website and very thorough examples of 1-4 with sample problems for each level of understanding
- High school website looked much different
- Syllabi posted shows grading based on points and teacher preference
- ½ credit for late assignments, extra credit available
- Uses most recent score for standard grade
- Most teachers stopped posting assignments on websites after October
District website explains 8-12: no extra credit, grades solely based on performance

Box Elder High School
  - Utah Effective Teaching Standards (TPEP?)
  - Not many useful websites to an outsider (from teachers)
  - Teachers using them aren’t posting syllabi
  - Several “error, page has moved” notifications
  - Math department expresses use of weighted grades (tests 50%, assignments 30%, etc)

Bear River High School
  - Websites scarcely used
  - Brief summary of daily work in one English class; some assignments available here; can’t find any syllabi for this teacher
  - Great info from Spanish teacher including sample flash cards, practice videos, weekly goals; no syllabus
Omaha Public Schools
Omaha, NE

- 0-4 scale
- Students only allowed to complete missing work during that specific unit of study
- Formative 35% Summative 65%
- Course work averaged to determine course grade
- Appear to use standards and learning targets
- This district appears to be in transition toward standards based, however their website doesn’t offer enough information to recommend
Curriculum, instruction, and assessment page is under construction on district website

All district level common core/sbg info leads to CCSS website and many docs lead to nowhere

Inconsistent website utilization; most teachers just have a bio and phone #

Some teachers use it well to post homework, but can’t find syllabi

Only info that I can find at all regarding grading is that they’ve adopted CCSS for next year; no SBG or info on grade break down
Website is very limited and small school district
Spanish teacher explains that SBG being used and goes on to explain that online work is 10%, 2nd quarter assessments 30%, final 30%, learning targets 30%
Does have several reassessment opportunities requiring student to complete some sort of R/R/R/R
Appears as though comment codes are being used in their grade books
Looks like they have progressive teachers using SBG, but would also appear to have several flaws in usage
Not enough information to recommend
Spokane Public Schools
Spokane, WA

- District website lists their schools as standards based
- Further discussion and Q&A with individual teachers reflects that they are not consistently implementing
- Teachers are deciding which policies are used in classes
- Teachers determined that they won’t use in the future
District website redirecting me at home page; can’t find it
Summit High School outlines Standards Based as their philosophy
Use MYP in math
No extra credit available
Different math teacher lists 100 point assignments and weighted grades; final worth 20%
Not all teachers use a website, those who do don’t have consistent materials (syllabi) posted
Grading scale is .5-4 and lists of what each type of work “looks” like
Not enough information to recommend, but appear to be transitioning
Website difficult to navigate and documents hard to find
Individual teachers had limited information and very few had syllabi with more than a course description
Board policies were dated 1998
One classroom rule breakdown explained that tests counted twice, quizzes counted three times, and lowest score dropped....?
Work from unexcused absence will be accepted at 80% for same teacher
Same class stated that two tardies=writing assignment
Can’t find any evidence of SBG or practices
Easily located information regarding SBG including district history, explanation of, and why it’s being utilized

District timeline of SBG with benchmarks and standards for teachers (see supplemental docs)

Osseo High School moderately uses teacher web pages; those who do seem to post assignments/resources well but few post syllabi

Teachers individually determining weight of formative/summative assessments
Skipped due to no credit bearing classes
Portland Public Schools
Portland, OR

- Clearly marked information related to future CCSS in their district; some Marzano information also found here
- Reports that K-5 report cards are standards based; Roosevelt High School also uses standards based
- Teachers are able to use 0-4 grade scale with .5’s; some teachers only use 1-4
- Can weight assignments and give extra credit
- Math syllabus states that tests 80%, homework 10%, checked notebook 10% and dress for success participation will give 1 extra credit point per participation day; same teacher says that homework/note book/class work graded on 1-4 scale to express level of completion, not mastery
Garden Grove Unified School District
Garden Grove, CA

- Has sample papers on district website for what qualifies as a “3” and why; based on strategies, conventions, and applications
- No standards based listed under “curriculum and instruction”, nor under “parent information”
- ELA link has CCSS info
- Bolsa Grande High School
  - Formal progress reports go to students w/D’s and F’s
  - All syllabi have individual break down for formative/summative assessment
  - No standards on syllabi that I found
  - Different “language” on grade break down (some say formative/summative, some just say tests/in class work)
Jamestown Schools
Jamestown, RI

- Standards Based Grading link clearly marked and easy to find on main webpage
- Still using dated terminology (GLE’s)
- Use Characteristics of Successful Learner report
- Elementary/Middle participating in SBG, no mention of HS; Elementary 1-4, middle 1-5
- North Kingstown High School
  - Syllabi difficult to locate, most teachers don’t use the website provided
  - Spanish syllabus states hw isn’t graded, but still weights grade in tests, participation, and quizzes
  - Limited information to support SBG at secondary level
Boulder Valley Public Schools
Boulder, CO

- Has a good link that breaks down specific standards and demonstrative skills that students should exhibit in order to meet specified standards
- R/R/R form used; teacher allowed to limit reassessment opportunities; retake opportunities are subject to individual teacher/classroom policies
- 2 types of hw: practice prep (10%), evaluate learning (90%)
- 8th period intervention for failing 9th and 10th graders
- Weighted grades at middle and high school level
- Weighted grades determined by teacher
Bismark Public Schools
Bismark, ND

- Easily located information on Curriculum & Instruction
- Outline of intent to move toward CCSS and previous work in doing so
- Teaching and learning rubric posted
- Bismark High School
  - Easy to find teacher emails, had to search to find websites
  - Many don’t utilize district websites
  - Teachers determine weighting of formative/summative/etc.