



Middle School

Grading for Learning

South Washington County Schools - 7362 E. Point Douglas Rd. S. - Cottage Grove, MN 55016

The goal is to ensure grading practices include a focus on learning, not behavior; provide meaningful feedback; and high-quality assessments.

Grading Scale

During the 2011-12 academic year, Middle School administration and teachers are committed to ensure that report card grades are an accurate reflection of what students know and are able to do in relationship to grade level academic standards.

The grading scale will be organized around four core beliefs:

- Grades must be accurate;
- Grades must be fair;
- Grades must be specific; and
- Grades must be timely.

The grading scale for A-F must be of equal intervals for all letter grades (e.g., 10 points).

Components of a Grade

Middle School Grades are composed of assessments for and of learning.

Assessments for learning are given during the process of instruction to help students and teachers understand students' current learning relative to the content standards." Some examples of formative assessments include homework, rough drafts and practices.

Assessment of learning is defined as "Measures of student learning status at the end of a specific period of instruction." Example of summative assessments include: Tests, projects, performances, and written papers.

Homework

Homework will not exceed 20% of a student's final grade. Homework is assigned to provide both the student and teacher information on how well students are grasping lessons aligned to state standards. Therefore, homework is an assessment that provides information back to teachers and students so that instructional adjustments may be made -- prior to administering a summative exam in a content area. By definition and practice homework is a form of formative assessment.

Missing Assignments

We believe students have an obligation to complete all assignments that are part of the curricular program in the Middle Schools. Therefore, rather than accepting missing work, students are now required to complete all assignments. Zeroes are not permitted and programs are in place at each middle school to assist in ensuring that work completion is the norm for all.

Why we do this

Considering the middle school model, what if we implemented a system by which we minimized failures and increased student engagement as well as successes in our middle schools fall 2011 forward? (Reeves)