

# Solon Community School District Standards-Based Grading Parent Update & PowerSchool Guide

**Fall 2013**

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## Introduction

The primary purpose of grading in the Solon Community School District is to communicate achievement status to students, parents and others. In May 2011, the Solon Board of Education approved five grading guidelines as the district transitioned to standards-based grading (SBG). In 2013-14, all Solon Middle School (SMS) and Solon High School (SHS) teachers (except those who are new or have new teaching responsibilities) will be implementing standards-based grading in all of their courses. During the summer of 2013, the board of education commissioned a task force of teachers and administrators to discuss themes of standards-based grading in need of revision and to identify specific outcomes in order to improve communication of student learning. One of those themes was effectively communicating student progress through PowerSchool. **The purpose of this parent guide is to assist you in viewing your child's progress in PowerSchool as well as share additional information resulting from the task force's work during the past several months.**

## How do I view my child's progress in PowerSchool?

The following paragraphs and images provide a brief narrative describing how to navigate the PowerSchool system to track your child's progress.

We once urged parents to have weekly, if not daily, updates automatically e-mailed from PowerSchool, however, we no longer advise this as the primary communication between school and parents, because it is not a true indicator of your child's progress at a given time in the grading period. In order to gain the best understanding of your student's current level of learning, we suggest you log into PowerSchool using your username and password. After doing so, you should see a screen that looks like the first image below.

From this screen, you can access more information on any of the classes in which your child is currently registered. Simply click on the blue letter grade or percentage score. If there is no letter grade or score that does NOT mean that there is not information recorded. Simply click on the double hyphen (--) instead. (also on image below)

Course	Q1	Q2
6th Grade Math Erickson, Kimberly K - Rm: 410	A 100	- 
6th Grade Social Studies Kerkove, Travis - Rm: 414	--	--
6th Grade Reading Smith, Julie M - Rm: 415	--	- 

After clicking on either the grade or the double hyphen, you should see a screen that shows all the due dates, categories (standards being assessed), and assignments (practice work or assessments.)

Due Date	Category	Assignment
09/05/2013	R PS #2	Survival Gear Activity
09/06/2013	R PS #2	Hatchet Comprehension Check PB 13
09/09/2013	R PS # 3	C - Hatchet Skills Check - Vocabulary
09/09/2013	R PS #2	B - Hatchet Skills Check - Noting Details
09/09/2013	R PS #1	A - Hatchet Skills Check - Summarizing

-OR- You will see a screen that shows all of the due dates, categories (daily work, assessments, etc.) and assignments (standards being assessed).

Due Date	Category	Assignment
08/23/2013	Daily Work	Ch 1 Application Problems
08/26/2013	Daily Work	Ch 1 Mastery Problem
08/27/2013	Daily Work	Ch 1 Review Problem
08/28/2013	Overall Standards	G1: Accounting Terminology
08/28/2013	Overall Standards	G2: Transactions

You will also possibly see:

- Colored codes
  - ✔ - Collected, ▲ - Late, ■ - Missing, ◆ - Score is exempt from final grade, ✖ - Assignment is not included in final grade
- Scores (Four Point Scale – 4 , 3.5, 3, 2, 1)
- Percentages (0 – 100%)
- Grades (A, B, C, D, F )

All practice work or any assessment with the code ✖ shows that it is NOT included in the final grade. If a teacher is not assigning grades for the course you will see a “NG” under the grade category (Middle School only).

Codes	Score	%	Grd
✔	✖		
✔	✖		
	✖	3.5/4	87.5
	✖	2/4	50
	✖	3/4	75
			NG
			NG
			NG

At the high school, homework may be entered as green checks and/or using a code communicated by the classroom teacher such as CO (complete) PC (partially complete) MC (mostly complete) and NO (not observed).

10/31/2013	Daily Work/Homework	LoF Study Guide Sections 1, 2, & 3 (Ch.1-6)	0/0	PC		
11/06/2013	Daily Work/Homework	LoF Writing Objective #11	0/0	CO		
11/08/2013	Daily Work/Homework	LoF Writing Objective #6	/0	NO		

In addition, you may can click on an assignment highlighted in blue to access more specific details about that assessment or standard.

08/22/2013	R4	<a href="#">This Week in History #00</a>
08/22/2013	R1	<a href="#">Raymond's Run</a>
08/22/2013	SL2	<a href="#">CNN Student News Week #00</a>
08/23/2013	L1	<a href="#">Kinds of Sentences</a>

<b>Teacher</b>	Cocking, John
<b>Course</b>	Lang Arts 8
<b>Assignment name</b>	Raymond's Run
<b>Description</b>	<p>Bulls-Eye Skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify characters as protagonists, antagonists, flat, round, static, or dynamic</li> <li>2. Comprehend, interpret, analyze, &amp; evaluate literary text</li> </ol>

You can often click on a *score* highlighted in blue to access more information about that assessment, including reassessment opportunities.

	<a href="#">4/4</a>
	<a href="#">2/4</a>
	3.5/4

  

<b>Teacher</b>	Smith, Julie M
<b>Course</b>	6th Grade Language
<b>Assignment Name</b>	B-Grammar Skills Check-Complete & Simple Subjects
<b>Date Due</b>	09/11/2013
<b>Comment</b>	Will need to attend re-teach session during homebase on 9/17 over skill.

Additional notes:

While there are many consistencies throughout the middle school and high school, the needs of different grade levels, content areas and teacher preferences result in slightly different reporting of scores. For example, while some teachers use the highlighted links mentioned above to post comments and reassessment opportunities, it is not a universal expectation. Please refer to classroom teacher websites for additional information. And, as always, please feel free to contact teachers with individual questions.

## After viewing PowerSchool what questions should I ask my student or his/her teacher?

When a student's score in the grade book are below proficiency, consider asking your student the following questions:

- What standards do you think you still need to learn?
- When was the last time you practiced / worked on [standard]?
- When was the last time you were assessed (i.e. test, quiz, project) on [standard]?
- When is your next opportunity to reassess on [standard]?
- What practice, studying and/or re-teaching opportunities have you completed in preparation for the next reassessment opportunity?
- What are you doing during seminar? Are you working on your homework/practice? Have you used seminar time to visit your teacher(s)? [High School]

When contacting a teacher about below proficiency standards in the grade book, consider asking the following questions:

- When was the last time all students were assessed on [standard]?
- When is the next opportunity my student will have to reassess on [standard]?
- What practice, studying and/or re-teaching opportunities should my student take advantage of related to [standard] before reassessing?

## What is the Solon Standards-Based Grading Rubric?

In order to be consistent in every class at both the middle school and high school, the district adopted a SBG Rubric in Fall 2012 (as shown below). Please note, a score of "4" indicates a thorough understanding of the standard and is not intended to signify perfection.

4	3.5	3	2	1
Demonstrates thorough understanding of course or grade level standard.	Demonstrates understanding of course or grade level standard.	Demonstrates a developing understanding of course or grade level standard.	Demonstrates partial understanding of course or grade level standard.	Demonstrates minimal understanding of course or grade level standard.

## How are final grades calculated?

The final grade is calculated using all standards and (optionally, per course syllabus) a weighted final test. The middle school and high school will continue to use plus and minus when reporting the final grade (example B+ or C-). High school students' grade point averages will continue to be calculated just as they were previously at the end of each quarter. The following tables describe this process.

*PowerSchool Translation*

<b>Rubric Score</b>	<b>PowerSchool Entry</b>	<b>Parent Sees</b>
4	4	4/4 = 100%
3.5	3.5	3.5/4 = 87.5%
3	3	3/4 = 75%
2	2	2/4 = 50%
1	1	1/4 = 25%
0	0 (or missing indicator)	0/4 = 0%

**\*\*2.5 (2.5/4 = 62.5%) may be used in fine arts courses**

*Grading Scale*

<b>A</b>	<b>90-100%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>80-89%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>70-79%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>60-69%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0-59%</b>

*"Plus" and "minus" grades will continue to be given as well within the above parameters.*

Finally, high school grade point averages are calculated at the end of each quarter based on final grades from each course using the grade point scale below. (Note: this scale and calculation method remains unchanged).

A	=	4.00	C	=	2.00
A-	=	3.67	C-	=	1.67
B+	=	3.33	D+	=	1.33
B	=	3.00	D	=	1.00
B-	=	2.67	D-	=	0.67
C+	=	2.33	F	=	0.00

## How and when are reassessment schedules and opportunities communicated?

Teachers are communicating reassessment schedules/opportunities (including quarter/semester ending reassessment deadlines) with parents & students through the following mediums: classroom website, course syllabus, [online building schedule](#) (HS only), and posted in the classroom.

## How do students initiate reassessments?

Student initiated reassessment is an important part of a standards-based grading philosophy. If a teacher determines that a large number of students in a particular class did not demonstrate understanding, additional assessment opportunities may be given to all students. However, if a teacher determines a large number of students in a class have already demonstrated understanding, then reassessment will be administered individually or in small groups. At the teacher's discretion, students may be required to demonstrate steps towards additional learning prior to a "formal" reassessment. Additional learning requirements may include, but are not limited to any of the following:

- Completion of previously assigned homework/practice assignment(s) related to the specific standard
- Additional homework/practice assignment(s) related to the specific standard
- Teacher directed tutoring/learning session with selected resource
- Written reflection of past misconceptions of learning standard and/or new understanding of standard

## Do students initiate all reassessments?

In order for reassessment to work at an optimal level, reassessment should be initiated by BOTH students and teachers. In some scenarios it may be appropriate for a teacher to reassess some or all students during regular class time. In another scenario, it may be appropriate for a teacher to reassess individual or a small group of students who have demonstrated additional understanding of a standard.

## What is the purpose of homework at Solon?

A task force of teachers and administrators identified homework as any meaningful task tied to a learning target or standard and can come in a variety of formats. Homework can be an opportunity for stakeholders to identify strengths and continue to improve upon weaknesses. *It is not calculated as part of the final grade.*

Feedback on homework is often provided to students during class. See the "How do I view my child's progress in PowerSchool?" section in this guide for more information describing homework completion communication to parents.

## Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

If you have concerns regarding your child's progress or would like assistance understanding the PowerSchool gradebook, contact his or her teacher. If after meeting with the teacher, you still have questions or concerns, then contact the building principal.