



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

February 8, 2019

Dear Principals and Teachers,

**Re: Grading and Reporting Procedures for Primary and Middle Level Teachers
for the Period January to June 2019**

Thank you for your patience as efforts were made to engage key stakeholder groups in sharing about next steps for reporting and grading for Primary and Middle Schools.

One of the major goals of the Bermuda Public School System (BPSS) is to become a Standards-Based Education System. [PLAN 2022, Adaptive Strategy 1.1.2]. Over the next few years, we will make this transition for the benefit of the children in our schools.

The Standards-Based Steering Committee has mapped out a plan to transition the BPSS from a system of traditional grading to a Standards-Based Grading system. As we prepare to transition from a system that uses traditional grading to a Standards-Based education system, we must still keep the following philosophy about grading in the forefront of our minds:

The purpose of grades is to provide students, teachers, parents and stakeholders with accurate information about (1) what students know and (2) what they can do in relation to standards or learner objectives.

Additionally, while in the midst of transition, both the Department of Education and schools are responsible for:

1. Working collaboratively to advance the philosophy, principles and practices of Standards-Based Education
2. Ensuring quality teaching and learning
3. Keeping parents abreast of what students know and can do via the PowerSchool gradebook
4. Reporting on the evidence of implementation to determine our progress as we transition to a Standards-Based Education System
5. Providing relevant and needs-based professional learning for Department of Education Staff, Principals, Teachers and Parents
6. Developing policies to guide and standardize practices across schools

7. Collaborating with Department of Education Staff, Principals, Teachers and Parents
8. Ongoing communication with Department of Education Staff, Principals, Teachers, Parents and the community
9. Collecting evidence of implementation of teaching practices, professional development and support

The information that follows outlines the expectations for primary and middle level teachers in the Bermuda Public School System for the period January to June 2019.

These expectations take into consideration the reality of where we are in relation to our transition to a Standards-Based System; feedback from teachers, principals, parents and stakeholder groups who were engaged in discussions about what grading and reporting would look like for the period January to June 2019.

These expectations were not determined in isolation. They were determined within the context of numerous complex factors which have the potential to impact teachers, students, parents and the Bermuda Public School System.

GRADE BOOK SETUP

All gradebooks at the primary and middle levels will continue to have the standards, objectives and or/ strands populated in PowerSchool.

We will continue to have standards, objectives and / or strands in the gradebook to keep teachers who teach the same course focused on teaching the same standards, objectives and / or strands; to help promote standardization of what is being taught across schools; and to provide parents and students with information about what children are expected to know and do.

ENTERING ASSIGNMENTS

Teachers will continue to enter assignments into their PowerSchool gradebooks.

When an assignment is entered, teachers will:

1. Name the assignment
2. Give a concise description of the assignment
3. Select the assessment category - Obtrusive, Unobtrusive, Student Generated, *Performance or *Test (* These categories, which were used last year, can be used for the remainder of the year)
4. Put in an assignment due date
5. Link the assignment to the standards, objectives and/or strands

Having one format for entering assignments will standardize this practice across schools and for students and parents. More specifically, this format will also enable students and parents to:

1. See which standards, objectives and / or strands were taught and assessed
2. Determine the type of assessment used for each standard, objective and / or strand
3. Have information about the details of the assessment that was used to assess the standard, objective or strand

4. Have information about their child's level of achievement for each standard, objective or strand once a score is entered in PowerSchool

ASSESSING STUDENTS

Teachers are expected to assess each standard, objective or strand multiple times in alignment with the best practice that students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning.

SCORING ASSIGNMENTS

When teachers score assignments, they will continue to input a score from 0 to 4 in the gradebook. This will provide consistency with the format of scoring that was used during the first term for students and their parents.

Teachers may score assessments using a 0 to 4 scale or teachers may use percentages and convert the percentages to a score of 0 to 4. When converting percentages to a 0 to 4 scale, we will use the same conversion chart that was shared with teachers last year and which is currently in PowerSchool. This will promote consistency between scoring from last term and this term.

Conversion Chart

Scale	Description	Percentage
4.0	*Advanced understanding	90-100
3.5	Progressing towards advanced	86-89
3.0	Proficient understanding	80-85
2.5	Progressing towards proficient	76-79
2.0	Basic Understanding	70-75
1.5	Progressing to basic	66-69
1.0	Minimal understanding	60-65
0.5	Progressing to minimal understanding	40-59
0.0	No or insufficient evidence	0-39

It is important for you to note well that the scoring process that is expected above is a traditional approach to grading and that it is only being used as an interim step as we transition to a Standards-Based Education System.

Reporting to Parents

We also had to make a decision about what reporting to parents would look like. The decision was based on our goal for reporting as we transition to a Standards-Based Education System. That goal is to provide parents with a snapshot of students' progress and achievement for standards, objectives and / or strands during and at the end of a course.

During the first term, parents and students were able to use PowerSchool to see progress for standards, objectives and / or strands. It is important for them to continue to be able to do this.

When we report out to parents, we will report out on the strands for each course. When we do this, we will use two types of report cards – a progress report and an end of year report for each course.

Parents will receive a progress report (1) at the end of February and April 2019 and (2) an end of year report card in June 2019. These reports will be pulled from PowerSchool.

We will also provide a report for students' personal and social development (E.g. work habits, etc.) using a scale of 0 to 4. This report will have to be completed manually and the first report will be sent at the end of February 2019.

We recognize that based on what is being asked, we will need to provide (1) professional learning; (2) technical support; and (3) improve the response time for PowerSchool when scores are being entered. The Department of Education will provide the professional learning; a team of teachers will provide technical support and our IT Team has put a solution in place to address technology concerns related to length of time that it takes for PowerSchool to respond when grades are being entered.

I thank you for your patience and I thank you for your support as we transition to a Standards-Based Education System.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kalmar Richards".

Kalmar Richards (Mrs.)
Commissioner of Education