

Formative Assessments: work conducted when a student is still learning the curriculum. 10% of overall grade.

Will the summative assessments that measure students' attainment of competencies be the same in each section of a given course? And consistent within each department? Yes.

Is there just one assessment for each competency? In most cases, no. Part of our task along with defining the competencies and developing their assessments was to also make decisions regarding what would constitute sufficiency. That is, how much evidence would be needed to document a student's having mastered a specific competency? Therefore, most competencies are measured by several assessments. It should also be noted that any given assessment may be used to measure more than one competency.

Will a student have to pass each assessment that measures a competency? The assessments that measure any particular competency will be recorded together to determine a student's status for that particular competency. The overall grade must be a "70" or above to achieve mastery status for that competency.

What happens if a student only masters some of the competencies in a course? To receive credit for a course students must pass each competency with a minimum of 70%

If a student scores below 70% on any competency they may submit a relearning plan during the course or be required to make up the competency through a competency recovery program.

GRADING

What role will homework play in the Competencies model? Homework, which falls under the heading of formative assessments, will continue to play an important role in preparing students to pass the summative assessments for each competency. As a whole, formative assessments—which, in addition to homework, include tools like quizzes and class work that prepare students to succeed on the summative assessments—will count for up to 10% of the overall grade for each competency.

What will student grade reports look like? The format of report cards will include much more detail. Each of the competencies for a course will receive a grade. Please refer to District Competencies & Skills found under "Curriculum" on the website and on course syllabi.

How will this system affect students' eligibility for extra-curricular activities? Any student wishing to participate in an extra-curricular activity is required to be competent in all courses. If a student is below competence at the time of an official school report he or she will be placed on probation for one week in order to focus on reassessment. A student will remain on probation until a grade of competent or higher is achieved.

How will students with IEP's be affected by this system? IEP's will continue to play an important role in facilitating the success of students with identified learning needs. Modifications will not be made to the competencies themselves but rather to the assessments which measure competence. Alternate forms of assessment may be used.

Whom should I contact if I have a question about my student's work with competencies? The most immediate source of information will be your student's classroom teacher. If you have a broader question regarding competencies, contact Principal Kyle Repucci.

EPPING HIGH SCHOOL

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENT'S COMPETENCY-BASED GRADES AND REPORTS



This year Epping High School—along with every other New Hampshire high school—will introduce a competency-based grading system, which will offer a radical departure from the traditional numerically-based system we are all familiar with. This assessment model, which was mandated by the New Hampshire Department of Education and is aligned with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), our school's accreditation body, offers some exciting possibilities for improving the education of our children. However, with any substantive change to business as usual, this system will present challenges as that transition is made. This Parent Guide is one tool Epping High School is using to help parents and students to this new grading and reporting model.

DISTRICT & COURSE COMPETENCIES

Traditional grading system vs. competency-based system. Traditional grading systems award credit based on a passing grade, competency-based systems award credit based on meeting competencies in content areas.

Why change? The NHDOE states that local districts must have a competency assessment process and defined course level competencies in place for all public high schools. They also state that credit toward graduation is to be awarded based upon student demonstration of mastery of these course level competencies. A competency-based system is also a requirement for NEASC accreditation.

What will not change? Students will still continue to receive an overall course grade and transcript. EHS will continue to calculate a GPA, have an honor roll and recognize a graduation valedictorian/salutatorian and top ten.

What is a competency? A competency is an essential part of the content - concepts and skills that are to be mastered in a course of study. All course competencies are aligned to District wide competencies based on state standards.

How many competencies are there in a course of study? Typically between 4 and 6 .

Where can I see the competencies for each course? Competencies are included in the course syllabus that students receive for every course they take. They are on our school's website under "curriculum". They will also be listed on each student's grade report.

Are students expected to master every competency in a course of study? Yes.

What happens if a student only masters some of the competencies in a course? In order to earn credit for a course a student must demonstrate "competence" for each individual competency assessed for that course. Relearning and reassessment opportunities may be needed to demonstrate competence.

Why relearn or reassess? Will students have an opportunity to attain competencies after the traditional end of a course? Yes. It should be pointed out that this is one of the most promising aspects of the Competencies model, which has the potential to essentially eliminate failure for students who might need additional time or assistance in meeting specific competencies. Rather than retaking the entire course, a student can focus on just the competency or competencies that he or she still has to master or show competence.

Where do the competencies for each EHS course come from? EHS educators developed the competencies for each course within a department. All course competencies are aligned to District wide competencies set for each discipline.

Assessment

What exactly do students have to do to master a competency? Once EHS educators defined the competencies that constitute each course, they developed competency or *summative* assessments that measure students' attainment of each individual competency. These assessments take a wide variety of forms and include writing assignments, projects, portfolios, presentations and exhibitions as well as more traditional "paper and pencil" tests.

What is the difference between Summative & Formative assessments? Summative Assessments: work conducted when a student has had adequate instruction and practice to be responsible for the curriculum. It is designed to provide information to be used in evaluating a student's achievement at the end of a sequence of instruction. 90% of overall grade.