



The mission of Nippersink District 2 is to foster academic growth, instill integrity, confidence, and civic responsibility while preparing all students for an ever-changing global society.

Standards-Based Reporting - Quarterly to Trimester Grading

Purpose

Transitioning from 9-week quarters to 12-week trimesters improves the accuracy, fairness, and instructional value of grading while better supporting student learning.

1. Stronger Learning Cycle

- Supports full cycle: instruction → practice → feedback → performance
- Reduces premature assessment
- Provides multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery
- Promotes deeper learning

2. More Accurate Grades

- Reliable grading requires multiple data points
 - Best practice: *at least 3 pieces of evidence per standard*
- Trimesters allow time to:
 - Gather varied assessment
 - Ensure grades reflect true mastery

3. Focus on Growth

- Aligns with Standards-Based Grading
- Supports trend grading (most recent evidence prioritized)
- Reflects where students end, not where they start
- Encourages persistence and improvement

4. Increased Instructional Focus

- Fewer grading periods (3 vs. 4):
 - Reduces grading pressure
 - Minimizes “grade fog” and point accumulation

- Shifts focus to:
 - Quality feedback
 - Meaningful assessment
 - Student learning

Overall Impact

- More accurate and meaningful grades
- Greater student success
- Stronger alignment to best practices
- Increased focus on learning and mastery

Quarterly to Trimester Grading

Slide 1: The Academic Rationale: Time for the Learning Loop

- **Concept:** Shifting to a 12-week trimester provides the necessary time to support the "practice-feedback-performance" loop. Short, 9-week quarters often rush testing before students have fully grasped concepts. Trimesters give teachers the runway needed to instruct, allow students to practice, provide formative feedback, and offer multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency without prematurely penalizing them for early mistakes.
- **Citations:**
 - Tomlinson, C. A., & Moon, T. R. (2013). *Assessment and Student Success in a Differentiated Classroom*.

Slide 2: The Reporting Rationale: Accurate Evidence of Mastery

- **Concept:** To determine an accurate and reliable grade, teachers must collect a sufficient quantity and variety of assessments. Measurement experts advise that educators need at least three pieces of evidence per standard to make a sound judgment about a student's true achievement level. Trimesters provide the adequate reporting window needed to thoughtfully collect this evidence.
- **Citations:**
 - O'Connor, K. (2011). *A repair kit for grading: 15 fixes for broken grades* via the *Orland School District 135 Standards-Based Grading Handbook*.

Slide 3: The Growth Rationale: Utilizing Trend Grading

- **Concept:** Standards-Based Grading focuses on a student's progress over time. A trimester allows teachers to effectively use Trend Grading, which gives priority to the most recent and comprehensive evidence of learning. This ensures that a student who struggles early in the term but eventually demonstrates mastery is accurately rewarded for their final proficiency.
- **Citations:**
 - Guskey, T. (2015). *Challenging the conventions of grading and reporting*.
 - *Orland School District 135 Standards-Based Grading Handbook*.

Slide 4: Reducing "Grade Fog" and Assessment Fatigue

- **Concept:** Moving from four grading periods to three reduces the administrative rush to constantly generate grades. This clears away the "grade fog" caused by

rushing to compile points, allowing teachers to spend more time focusing on high-quality, actionable formative feedback and authentic learning experiences.

- **Citations:**

- Brookhart, S. (2004) via *Assessment and Student Success in a Differentiated Classroom*.
- Hattie, J. (2009) *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*.