

Grading of ELLs

L.Smith 2013-14

ELLs

❖ Commonly asked question-

How do I grade my ELL student?

LY Students

- ❖ LY students (students qualifying through testing for support) are participants in the ELL program because they do not have either **oral language proficiency and/or proficiency in reading and writing** to enable them to fully comprehend grade level instruction.

Second Language Learning..

- ❖ Is not a disability but rather a “temporary situation”.
- ❖ ELLs need **time** to develop language skills in order to achieve competency in academic tasks.
- ❖ What we do as teachers while this process takes place has a significant impact on student motivation and self-confidence.

State Mandate

“Comprehension A Goal”

- ❖ ELL students are to be provided with comprehensible instruction – through the use of strategies and/or translation.

What is Comprehensible Instruction?

Comprehensible Instruction is instruction that reaches the **level of understanding** for an individual.

ELL students who are limited in English need support with grade level instruction in order to reach a **level of understanding**.

Need for Understanding of Second Language Learning

- ❖ Teachers sometimes think all students need to be on the “same playing field” when it comes to assessment and that students need to be compared with one another in order to be fair.
- ❖ ELL students need teachers who understand the second language process.
- ❖ (2-3 years for English oral proficiency and 7-10 years for academic proficiency equivalent to that of mainstream monolingual students.

Ell Students - Not The Same

- ❖ ELL students are at different stages of language acquisition and therefore are not equally able to successfully manage grade level instruction.

Adjusting Instructional Technique

“Comprehension A Goal”

- ❖ We know that we routinely make adjustments while working with ELLs in the classroom.
- ❖ We use **ELL strategies** to make content comprehensible for ELL students.
- ❖ We provide for language access through bilingual tutors, differentiated and small group instruction through a scaffolded approach, and various instructional interventions that support language growth.

Instruction and Assessment

- ❖ Just as we are mandated to make instruction comprehensible for ELLs, so are we required to make assessment comprehensible.
- ❖ As language develops, accommodations for learning and assessment should decrease.

District Policy

- ❖ What is the policy of the District on grading of elementary, middle, and high school students?

*District
Grade Reporting Manual
Philosophy for Elementary and Secondary*

- ❖ “We believe students have a right to receive grades that represent an accurate evaluation of achievement and that thoughtful, informed assessment promotes learning.”

District
Grade Reporting Manual
Philosophy of Elementary and Secondary

- ❖ “Academic progress reporting consists of **identifying a student’s instructional level in the basic skills areas** in elementary schools or the various titles and levels of middle and high school courses, providing a judgment as to the extent to which the student is utilizing his/her abilities.”

*District
Grade Reporting Manual
Philosophy of Elementary and Secondary*

- ❖ “We believe that grades **reflect progress and mastery in meeting the Next Generation Florida State Standards, district standards and mastery of approved course objectives.** We believe **grades are earned, not given**, are based on a sufficient amount of graded work, are based on a logical and justifiable grading process, are derived from varied types of assessment, and are weighted and balanced.”

District
Grade Reporting Manual
Philosophy of Elementary and Secondary

- ❖ Each teacher's evaluation process should be designed to:
 1. Reflect each student's individual progress.
 2. Relate directly to the body of knowledge or skills taught.
 3. Include numerous indicators of student progress rather than relying on one or two.

Important!

- ❖ **No ELL student is given a grade!**
- ❖ **ELL students must EARN grades!**
- ❖ ELL students should receive a failing grade if the contributing factor for failure is unrelated to second language acquisition – poor attendance, unwillingness to try or complete work.

District
Grade Reporting Manual
Philosophy of Elementary and Secondary

- ❖ ELLs should be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate achievement of standards to include:
- ❖ **Formative Assessments** – (ex. weekly quizzes, projects, presentations, class work activities).
- ❖ **Summative Assessments** – (ex. major tests, projects, and presentations).

Elementary Reporting

- ❖ “The grade reporting system is designed to match the teaching and learning in Collier County Public schools with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards as the foundation for instruction for all students, including Exceptional Students and English Language Learners.”

Grading Elementary ELLs

- ❖ We want to instruct and assess ELL students **at the level in which they are functioning.**
- ❖ Our goal is to use assessment as an instructional tool for students to verify what they know and build on what they do not know.

How to Grade Elementary

- ❖ Beginning and Low Intermediate ELL students should be graded according to their academic performance at the grade level in which they are functioning, not at the grade level in which they are placed.

How to Grade Elementary

- ❖ High Intermediate and Proficient ELL students are orally proficient and **should find most classroom instruction comprehensible.**
- ❖ These students should be graded according to the same standards as other mainstream students. They will need occasional support with emphasis on vocabulary development.

Indicating Level of Instruction

Elementary

- ❖ **On or above grade level:** student has been working in grade level curricula for the majority of the grading period. (CELLA High Intermediate or CELLA Proficient)
- ❖ **On grade level with accommodations:** student has been working in grade level curricula and changes have been made in grade level instruction and assessment. (CELLA High Intermediate)
- ❖ **Below grade level:** student has been instructed in below grade level curricula.(CELLA Beginning or Low Intermediate)

Secondary Reporting Middle School

- ❖ “ Appropriate assignment to the courses should accomplish matching of course requirements and ability levels to the extent that students utilizing their abilities can be successful. The extent of content mastery of the standards and benchmarks of the course should be the primary basis for evaluation as opposed to abilities. Effort and conduct grades are not to be factored in the grade.”

Indicating Level of Instruction

Middle School

Regular Instructional Levels

“In the basic skills areas of language arts and mathematics, two levels of courses are provided in middle school. Students are to be evaluated according to the mastery of skills, learning the concepts and acquiring knowledge required by the course.” ELLs are to be provided with strategies to make content comprehensible to ensure success.

Indicating Level of Instruction Middle School

- ❖ Course Levels
- ❖ 1. Working on alternate standards (EMH, PMH, TMH)
- ❖ 2. Working on standards below assigned grade level (**Intensive Reading**)
- ❖ 3. Working on standards at assigned grade level
- ❖ 4. Working on standards above assigned grade level

Secondary Reporting

High School

- ❖ “The evaluation of high school students should be based upon their mastery of the skills, concepts and knowledge specified by the Next Generation Florida State Standards and state course objectives.
- ❖ Accommodations using ELL strategies facilitate a student’s successful participation in the general education curriculum. Grades for ELL students should be consistent with mastery of course objectives.”

Secondary Reporting

High School

“Appropriate course selection ensures that all students can be successful in high school course work.”

- ❖ “A student’s **progress in the mastery of the curriculum** must be the grading criteria for high school course work. Grades must **NOT** be adjusted according to the ability level of a student.” Use of ELL strategies are to facilitate a student’s participation and comprehension of course content.

Indicating Level of Instruction High School

- ❖ **Level 1 Courses**

Small group and individualized instruction provided in language arts and math whose primary instructional needs are basic skills.

- ❖ **Level 2 Courses**

Students who are functioning at or near grade level.

- ❖ **Level 3 Courses**

Above grade level work

- ❖ **Level 3 AP Courses**

University Level learning opportunities

What to Grade?

Secondary

- ❖ Teachers may derive grades from a variety of sources. These include but are not limited to:
- ❖ End of course exams
- ❖ Formative assessments
- ❖ Teacher-made tests
- ❖ Follow-up activities
- ❖ Observations
- ❖ Project Evaluations
- ❖ Summative assessments

Let's Make It Comprehensible

❖ It is possible!

So How Do We Accommodate?

Technique #1-Format of assessment!

- ❖ Teacher-made tests should gradually progress in difficulty.
- ❖ According to language proficiency, students are responsible for only a portion of the test.

So How Do We Accommodate?

Technique #2 –Adapting text!

- ❖ Adapt test to include simpler sentence structure.
- ❖ Provide a word bank.
- ❖ Provide teacher notes/study guide prior to testing.
- ❖ Concentrate on key concepts only.

So How Do We Accommodate?

- ❖ **Technique #3 – Use alternate measures to assess!**
- ❖ “Grades are based on multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of standards.”
- ❖ “Student performance may be measured through a variety of assessments to include tests, assignments, and projects.”

Generally speaking!

- ❖ The percentage of ELL students who receive failing grades should **not** exceed the percentage of mainstream students who receive failing grades!

Questions?