

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

8.4 Criteria used to evaluate student work and the reporting mechanisms are valid, consistent, transparent and justly administered.

I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?

Benchmark 8.4 is about how faculty and professional staff members determine what a student has learned and how well the student has learned. Faculty and professional staff members must determine how they will measure whether a student has acquired a new skill or new knowledge and then report to students and parents about the students' progress.

Grading practices can vary greatly, yet some consistency is important in order to provide parents and students with a clear understanding of student progress. Clear learning expectations are delineated and a student's ability to demonstrate mastery of that expectation is to be reported. It is important that students be allowed to demonstrate mastery in various ways in order for faculty and professional staff members to be confident that a student is making consistent academic progress. Using a single performance measure can be an unfair assessment of a student's ability to reach a learning expectation. Therefore, it is necessary to allow students the flexibility to demonstrate mastery in diverse manners.

II. As a review team member, what evidence do I look for?

Here are some fundamental guiding questions which will help frame this item:

- Are the evaluations and assessments utilized a true measure of what it is we say we are measuring in student learning?
- Are we measuring student learning consistently for individual students and across students in the same grade level and content area?
- Are assessments administered fairly and with individual student performance preferences in mind?
- Are students and parents/guardians aware of criteria prior to administration of assessment? Do they understand the criteria?
- When reporting results of the evaluation of student learning is the information shared valid, consistent, transparent, and fair?

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- Do those evaluating student work collaborate to ensure inner-rater reliability to ensure fair assessments of all student work?

III. What are the key differences between the levels of the rubric?

At level **3-Fully Meets Benchmark**,

criteria used to evaluate student work and the reporting mechanisms are generally aligned with curriculum. Most assessments are valid, consistent, transparent, justly administered, and are easily accessed by students and families. How learning will be measured is usually articulated and understood by students at the outset of assignments. Faculty members meet regularly to ensure validity and build inter-rater reliability of many assessments. Assessment criteria are based on national best practices and shared with parents/guardians and students. Assessment criteria are often differentiated so that students can demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways.

At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

criteria used to evaluate student work and the reporting mechanisms are fully aligned with curriculum. Assessments across all subjects are valid, consistent, transparent, justly administered, and are easily accessed by students and families. How learning will be measured is articulated and understood by students at the outset of assignments. Faculty members meet regularly to ensure validity and build inter-rater reliability of assessments. Assessment criteria are based on national best practices and shared with parents/guardians and students. Assessment criteria are differentiated so that students can demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways. Communication with students and parents/families about assessment and criteria is regular and consistent.

At level **2-Partially Meets Benchmark**,

criteria used to evaluate student work and the reporting mechanisms are sometimes aligned with curriculum. Some assessments are valid, consistent, transparent, justly administered, and accessible to students and families, but this occurs inconsistently. How learning will be measured is occasionally articulated at the outset of assignments so that some students have an understanding of learning expectations. The faculty sometimes meets to

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ensure validity and to build inter-rater reliability of assessments, but this, too, is inconsistent. Assessment criteria are sometimes based on national best practices and shared with parents/guardians and students.

At level **1-Does Not Meet Benchmark**,

criteria used to evaluate student work are not valid and/or not communicated. The reporting mechanisms are not consistent, transparent, justly administered, or easily accessed by students and families.

IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

To move from level 1 to level 2,

- Provide professional development for faculty and professional staff on how to create authentic assessments that successfully measure learning
- Increase opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways
- Align assessments to learning expectations
- Work with faculty and professional staff to develop assessments based on national best practices

To move from level 2 to level 3,

- Provide regular opportunities for faculty to validate assessments for reliability
- Provide professional development for faculty and professional staff on how to differentiate assessments to measure learning

To move from level 3 to 4,

- Monitor assessments to check for validity
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn more about assessments and how faculty and professional staff measure learning

V. What are key terms for common understanding? (Refer to the NCEA Glossary for the key terms listed below.)

Validity