Assessment in the Secondary Classroom

Students learn and perform differently on various types of assessments; therefore, it is important for teachers to use an assortment of assessment methods. Individual differences and learning styles should be considered when the teacher chooses assessment techniques.

Non-standardized assessments or assignments should be graded with a scoring rubric. The scoring rubric should be communicated to the students before the assessment is administered or before the assignment is made. Teachers should make an attempt to evaluate the student's work at each stage of the process, not just the finished product (i.e. pre-writing activity, drafts).

The teacher is responsible for evaluating the accuracy of all graded work; therefore, assessments graded by students should be reviewed by the teacher for grading accuracy.

Policies regarding make-up work/tests should follow the guidelines as stated in the Student Handbook.

Each 9-weeks grade should
1. Include a minimum of four (4) major grades (e.g. tests, projects, writing assignments, etc.) that assess the mastery of required content of the course.
2. Be based on a variety of assessment methods, such as book reports, oral presentations, projects, writing assignments, homework, quizzes, and tests.
3. Reflect a numerical value consistent with the students' mastery of the course content.

In English courses, the 9-weeks grade should reflect the mastery of a combination of course material (i.e. grammar, literature, composition, vocabulary, etc).

In mathematics, partial credit should be given on assignments prior to students being formally assessed on the content.
Some possible types of assessments include the following:

**Tests**
All tests should be valid and assess only the material that has been taught. Varying the test format will promote thinking elicit responses of a higher level. Test dates should be announced in advance to allow students ample time to prepare. Tests should be a combination of standardized tests and teacher-made tests.

**Homework**
The completion of homework is an indication of a student’s effort and should be evaluated for accuracy or completion with checklists, grades, or any format that provides feedback to the student. Homework provides opportunities for reflection and self-assessment and should be assigned only when appropriate. In grades 7-12, homework should count no more than 0-20% of the 9-week grade.

**Projects**
If assigned, projects should be graded with a scoring rubric. The scoring rubric and project guidelines should be explained when the project is assigned. Give ample time for proper completion. The assignment should be appropriate to the season, location, school calendar, and course curriculum.

**Cooperative Learning Group Work**
Heterogeneous group activities are encouraged to promote learning. These types of activities should improve the learning of the slower students but should not penalize the more advanced students. Grades resulting from cooperative group work should not be used as major grades, such as tests or projects.

**Labs and Other Hands-On Activities**
All lab/hands-on activities should reinforce the subject content. A lab practical or assessment or the activity may be administered. Written lab reports and post-activity writing assignments should accompany each lab/hands-on activity. Communicate, before the lab/hands-on activity is assigned, how the activities will be assessed.