

# PBL Points



Proficiency-Based Learning:

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century World*

February, 2021

## Beyond Recency: Determining vs. Calculating Proficiency

Feedback is pouring in regarding our district's move to recency as the new Gradebook calculation method. Thank you!

Recency favors students and their learning by placing the greatest value on the most recent evidence of learning. We know that learning is a process and, generally, students gain greater proficiency as they move through a unit of study and gain more knowledge and skill. As a result, the most recent evidence of learning should be the best representation of what students know and can do, right?

Yes - in most cases. However, as many of you have experienced, determining proficiency can be more complicated and complex. In the 2016 Educational Leadership article entitled *Grading: Why You Should Trust Your Judgement*, Thomas R. Guskey and Lee Ann Jung write, "computers use only numbers... they know nothing of the individual students who produce those numbers, the learning environment, or the nature and quality of the assessments." Gradebooks (ours and others) ignore quality and context, which means those two important aspects of determining proficiency are left to the teacher's professional judgement.

Grading is both an art and science, and teachers must remain the final decision maker when it comes to determining proficiency. This requires engagement in grade determination, not just calculation. Learning evidence/assessments should be organized in service of communicating the most accurate scores/grades possible. Sometimes the most recent evidence is the most accurate, but sometimes the most frequent is the most accurate (Schimmer, Hillman, Stalets. *Standards-Based Learning in Action*, 2018.).

For this reason, it is important to remember the following formula when determining proficiency under PBL: **MODE + RECENCY + PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT**. Gradebook can help identify **mode** (the scores that appear most frequently) through various views and reports that show trends by proficiency level/color, and our program will default to calculating the **most recent** score for the overall proficiency on a standard. However, it is essential that teachers then engage their **PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT** to weight the evidence of learning they've collected and determine whether the Gradebook calculation is an accurate reflection of student proficiency. If it is, great! If it isn't, teachers should then make a determination and override the most recent score to ensure a more accurate reflection of a student's proficiency on the standard.

**PBL Gradebook questions or concerns? Encourage teachers to reach out to your STS/LMETS and, if they still have questions, the IS Facilitators at 385-646-2500. If YOU have PBL questions or concerns or need on-site support, please contact Dawn Hauser at [dlhauser@graniteschools.org](mailto:dlhauser@graniteschools.org) or 385-646-2142.**



## Important Reminders

- **February 26th: PBL Troubleshooting Session: Assessment & School City.** Teachers can jump onto the public Microsoft Team with questions: secondary 1:30-2:30; elementary 2:30-3:30.
- **The 10<sup>th</sup> Grade PBL Institute is coming: June 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> 2021!**

**Please begin encouraging your 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to mark their calendars and plan to attend.**

**Participants will receive stipends for their attendance.**

**Teachers will be trained in PBL philosophy and practice, PBL Gradebook, using Proficiency Scales and designing assessments and rubrics in preparation for 10<sup>th</sup> grade PBL implementation in the 2021-2022 school year.**

**Registration details coming soon!**