

WHAT IS A GRADE? Part 4

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This is Part 4 of a 4-part series on the subject of grading in public schools

Habits of Scholarship (Student Behaviors): In Windsor Locks, all schools have changed their grading approach to ensure that student behaviors are separate from grades that indicate a student's level of mastery of the subject or specific subject standards. At the middle and high school levels, the four student behavioral expectations are:

- Conducts self in an appropriate manner
- Maximizes time on task
- Completes homework
- Participates in class discussions

These behavioral expectations are VERY important. They are important enough that they need to be separated from an overall academic grade that should reflect what the students knows, understands, and is able to do after learning the subject-specific concepts, skills, and big ideas.

In the past, these components have been "averaged" into an overall grade where an emphasis on behavior clouded the student's mastery of subject matter and skills.

By separating Habits of Scholarship (HOS) from mastery of standards we are better able to both celebrate the habits that create a life-long and successful learner and pinpoint students' strengths and areas that need support in mastery of specific standards.

At the Middle School: There are 9, 20-day cycles over the course of the year. At the end of each cycle, students are issued a HOS Report, which details FOUR scores across all of their classes, and an overall Cycle Average. These are EXPECTATIONS and not STANDARDS. Teachers and support staffers work with students who are Ineligible or At Risk for a second time to improve specific HOS scores. Teachers integrate HOS Character Targets alongside Academic Learning Targets to help students focus on key or timely HOS characteristics. The WLMS Honor Roll is based entirely—until the end of the year— on the HOS scores. **See attached for explanation.** At the end of each cycle, all students in Model Standing are publicly recognized, photographed, and fed. Their 'team photos' live splendidly in the front office.

At the High School: HOS were reported separately starting in the fall of 2014. Considerable work has been done to emphasize the significance of HOS on student academic success. HOS are reported on each report card for every course as a comment. Students are recognized each marking period for achieving HOS. In the weeks leading up to the recognition, the nominations (without student names) are broadcast on TVs around the school to get students to guess and think about who is actually nominated. The "reveal" of the actual honorees takes place at a breakfast ceremony with families and staff members. Habits of Scholarship are also used to determine which students will be able to participate in Field Day in the spring.

In preparation for the incoming class of 2020, the Middle and High Schools are collaborating to align practices in honoring HOS along with achievement of mastery of academic standards.

Explanation for Windsor Locks Middle School Honor Roll

The following is a detailed description of the Windsor Locks Middle School Honor Rolls, as well as a rationale.

- 1) **For the first two trimesters, we had TWO Habits of Scholarships Honor Rolls: 1st and 2nd Honors. These Honor Rolls will take into account all three reporting cycles of each trimester.**
- 2) **For the final trimester, in addition to the two Habits of Scholarship Honor Rolls, we will create two Academic Honor Rolls: 1st and 2nd Honors. These Academic Honor Rolls will take into account a student's mastery of standards over the course of the year.**

By only publishing an Academic Honor Roll at the end of the year, we are truly promoting and celebrating growth. If what our students are accountable to are "end of year" standards, we can only expect them to be accountable to them at the end of the year. However, we can still promote and celebrate our Habits of Scholarship throughout the year, since these are expectations we hold for all students at all times.

<u>Reporting Period</u>	<u>Honor Rolls</u>
After Trimester 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1st Honors in Habits of Scholarship• 2nd Honors in Habits of Scholarship
After Trimester 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1st Honors in Habits of Scholarship• 2nd Honors in Habits of Scholarship
After Trimester 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1st Honors in Habits of Scholarship• 2nd Honors in Habits of Scholarship
At End of Year:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1st Honors in Habits of Scholarship (full year)• 2nd Honors in Habits of Scholarship (full year)• 1st Honors in Academic Standards (full year)• 2nd Honors in Academic Standards (full year)

For an Honor Roll to be an effective source of both recognition and motivation, research shows that APPROXIMATELY 10% of students should be named to 1st Honors and 20% of students to 2nd Honors. These are the general numbers that we have always sought within our Honor Rolls. At this point, 125 students have qualified for the Honor Roll. At this point last year, 103 students had qualified.

If your student qualified for the Honor Roll, it is indicated at the bottom of his/her report card.