South Portland School Department **K-12 Proficiency-Based System** *"Enriching Lives Through Quality Learning for All"*

The South Portland School Department's mission calls for students to be self-motivated and engaged in their own educational planning and success. We want:

- Students to be focused on what they need to know and be able to do;
- Students to take a greater role in understanding and managing their own learning; and
- Students and parents to see progress and achievement in meaningful terms.

Proficiency-Based Reporting

In a proficiency-based learning system students' progress toward meeting a set of clearly articulated, leveled learning targets is measured and reported. In South Portland School Department we have Essential Learning Targets (ELTs) defined for all content areas grades K-12.

The Essential Learning Targets have been synthesized from Maine's content standards known as the *Learning Results*. The Essential Learning Targets are designed so that as student's progress through the South Portland schools in grades K-12, they will demonstrate proficiency as described in these standards and as is required by Maine law.

Assessment

Students engage in tasks and activities that are intended to help them learn and demonstrate what they know and can do. Teachers review students' work on the tasks and activities to know how students are doing in meeting the skills and knowledge outlined in the Essential Learning Targets being assessed.

Some tasks are used as "check-ins" to gauge how well students are progressing toward demonstration of proficiency on the Essential Learning Targets. Often these activities and tasks are focused on a piece of the target or step in the learning process. These activities provide students and teachers with information about support needed to help students as they continue to develop the targeted understanding. Such tasks and activities are referred to as *formative*.

Other tasks or activities, which are designed to have students show their skills and understanding at the complex and rigorous level of the target, are given toward the end of learning units or periods of instruction. These tasks are given so that students are able to demonstrate whether they have acquired the skill or understanding at the complex and rigorous level expected in the Essential Learning Targets. These are referred to as *summative*.

Both formative and summative tasks take a variety of forms. Each of the following types of assessments has a specific purpose, and teachers use these various assessment strategies to determine where a student is in his or her progression to being proficient on the Essential Learning Targets:

- Selected Response Tasks: multiple-choice, true or false, matching, short answer, fill-in items, etc.;
- Constructed Response Tasks: essays, research papers, lab reports, etc.;
- Performance Tasks: presentations, experiments, projects, group discussions, debates, interviews, exhibitions, etc.

Reporting Progress
The purpose of any reporting system is to communicate information to students and parents so that they know where students are in achievement of the Essential Learning Targets. A reporting system should exist to ensure that at any time students know how close they are to meeting proficiency of the targets or if they are making acceptable progress in each course they are taking.

As teachers teach, they evaluate students' progress toward meeting the targets. Progress is reported using the following terminology:

> 4 (Exemplary work that shows a more rigorous, more in-depth understanding or application than required by the proficient expectation for Essential Learning Target)

> 3 (meets the expected rigor of the Essential Learning Target or is progressing appropriately toward meeting the expectation at this point in time)

> 2.5 (is close to and/or has made significant progress toward the expected rigor of the Essential Learning Target or is progressing appropriately toward meeting the expectation at this point in time)

> 2 (partially meets the expected rigor of the Essential Learning Target or the rate of progressing toward meeting the expectation is being monitored because learning may not be at a rate sufficient to meet end-of-year target)

> 1 (no evidence of progress toward meeting the rigor of the Essential Learning Target; learning is not progressing at a rate to meet end-of-year target)

Habits of Work
In a proficiency-based system, a major focus is on student achievement of the Essential Learning Targets. To truly know whether a student has met proficiency on a target, it is important to separate work ethic and classroom behavior from the content standards. Thus, teachers will report habits of work separately.

By reporting these scores separately students and parents will have detailed information about students' content knowledge and skills as well as students' development of Habits of Work important to success in college and the workplace. Habits of Work expectations include three criteria: preparation for learning, engagement with learning, and interaction with teachers and peers.

Habits of work progress is reported:
> 1 (does not meet/needs intervention)

> 2 (partially meets)

> 3 (meets)