



Gateway High School Curriculum Guide Overview

Introduction

This curriculum guide is designed to make clear what each student should know and be able to do by the end of each course in order to have a solid foundation for success in later grades. We understand that not all students are at the same level at any given point in time, but we hope that high expectations will bring parents and teachers together to support success for all students. This guide is a work in progress. Each year, we continue to evaluate and improve the guide, and we appreciate your comments and suggestions.

Gateway High School Mission Statement

Gateway High School is a model, college preparatory charter school committed to academic excellence through personalized, student-centered learning. Gateway combines a rigorous academic program with an approach where the individual talents and strengths of its students are identified and supported. Working with teachers committed to our mission, Gateway students will acquire the skills, habits, and knowledge necessary for academic and personal success in college and in adult life.

Gateway's values of personal integrity, responsibility, and respect for others should inspire students to contribute to their communities however they can. By attending a school which reflects the diversity of the Bay Area, Gateway students will appreciate what they have in common with those who are different and value what they learn from one another.

A Commitment to Partnership with Families

At Gateway, we believe that parents and guardians play a vital role in the education of their children. While the adolescent years tend to be a time when students yearn for greater independence from their families, it is also a time when family involvement remains essential to students' academic success. Gateway is committed to working with parents to reach the academic and social goals necessary for student success in middle school and beyond. This guide is one way in which we seek to bring parents and teachers together to support success for all students.

To encourage continued family involvement, Gateway High School provides many other opportunities for meaningful family participation, including:

- Family Conferences
- Humanities Exhibition Nights
- Gateway Parents' Association (GPA) and Latino Parents' Association
- Parenting Workshops
- Flexible volunteer opportunities at school

Gateway High School Schoolwide Learning Outcomes

Gateway High School Graduates will be:

Self-Advocates who share responsibility for their learning by:

1. Understanding, monitoring, organizing, and facilitating their own learning
2. Setting high standards for themselves, striving to achieve individual academic potential and developing perseverance in academically challenging situations
3. Capitalizing on the support and resources available to them.

Models of Integrity who contribute to an ethical community by:

1. Striving to live by a code of ethics developed through evidence, reflection, and dialogue with others
2. Leading by example, encouraging others to examine their own values
3. Practicing compassion by acting with responsibility and awareness toward self, fellow students, faculty, the environment, and the community at large.

Community Advocates who create positive change for their communities by:

1. Recognizing and understanding their position in the local and global community
2. Being socially responsible and informed citizens
3. Applying their broad base of knowledge and skills to contribute to their communities.

Respectful of Differences

1. Recognizing the strengths of diversity and difference, including socioeconomic, ethnic, philosophical or learning differences
2. Collaborating effectively with and understanding the perspectives of others
3. Advocating for and supporting the learning of others.

Critical and Creative Thinkers who possess the skills and content necessary for lifelong learning by:

1. Interpreting, synthesizing, analyzing, and evaluating information effectively to solve problems
2. Communicating ideas effectively through a variety of modes and media
3. Having a deep knowledge and skill base necessary for college preparation and continued learning.

Gateway High School Approach to Grading

GHS Purpose of Grading: *We grade at Gateway in order to communicate to students and stakeholders students' academic skills, academic knowledge and Process of Learning skills, so that students self evaluate, receive appropriate support and grow.*

What is proficiency-based grading?

Gateway believes that grades should communicate—as clearly as possible—what students know and can do. We also seek to create a growth mindset environment that encourages students to take risks and to embrace mistakes as learning opportunities. Proficiency-based grading and the corresponding four-point scale are set up to support these two values by identifying clear learning goals and assessing students on their progress towards meeting those goals—rather than focusing primarily completion of tasks and assignments over learning. This allows for more meaningful student learning and teacher feedback, and moves away from an approach in which students are seeking to earn points rather than practicing to meet the learning goal.

What is the four-point scale?

Educational researchers developed the four-point scale to more clearly assess what a student knows and can do:

4	Exceeding Standards	Demonstrates a high level of understanding and knowledge, including application and extension of knowledge
3	Meeting Standards	Meets expectations for proficient work Demonstrates an acceptable level of understanding and knowledge
2	Approaching Standards	Meets some expectations for proficient work Demonstrates some understanding and knowledge
1	Below Standards	Meets few expectations for proficient work Demonstrates limited understanding and knowledge

What does this look like in practice?

- **Grades are clearer to students:** Teachers and students engage in conversation about what 4/3/2/1 work looks like, so students understand what is expected and what they are learning.
- **Grades are more useful and meaningful:** When students get clear grades and feedback on a four point scale, they can monitor their progress and set goals for their learning. Teachers can also provide more specific feedback on how to improve from a “3” to a “4”.
- **Grades are more consistent for students:** The four-point scale is consistent with how students are assessed in other ways. For example, SFUSD uses four-point, standards-based grading in elementary schools and many middle schools, state testing assesses students on a four-point scale, and most teacher rubrics use four levels of mastery. In addition, the four-point scale helps teachers to use a consistent approach to grading, so that students experience similar expectations across the team.