

At Willowcreek Middle School (WMS) we believe that:

All students can learn.

Teachers improve their teaching when they focus on the major/essential concepts from their core curriculum.

Students increase the quality of their learning when they more clearly understand the major concepts and are given opportunities to prove their knowledge.

Students achieve more as teachers and parents work together.

We use Walk Aways at WMS as a tool to improve the overall effectiveness of your student's education.

What is a Walk Away? A Walk Away is an assessment used to monitor the knowledge base students will walk away with from each class. Other schools use terms such as "standards," "targets," or "vertical mapping" to explain the same thing.

How are Walk Aways developed? Teachers receive a "core curriculum" from the Utah State Office of Education. Through collaboration time in the summer and on Mondays (when we send students home early) they break this down to the basic essentials of each subject. Then they develop an assessment to ensure that the knowledge is taught and mastered.

What do the Walk Away assessments mean to my student? As these concepts are critical for student success, it is vital to make sure students have mastered this knowledge before moving forward. Here at WMS each student needs to pass the assessment with at least 80 percent. Further, 80 percent of the students in each class must pass each Walk Away for the class to continue with their curriculum. Students who struggle with these concepts will be given additional opportunities to be re-taught and are given remediation efforts to help them pass the assessments. This means teachers will continue to work with each student to assure when they leave a class, they exit with the essential knowledge from that class.

What happens if a student does not pass a Walk Away assessment? If a student does not pass a Walk Away their class grade becomes an "I" for "in progress". The "I" grade remains as long as the student has a Walk Away which has not been passed. Students are given remediation efforts and opportunities to retake multiple versions of the Walk Away. All Walk Aways must be made up within 10 school days after the end of Terms 1, 2, 3. Term 4 Walk Aways must be made up by last day of school.

What happens if a student received an "I" on a report card? We believe that students need to focus on obtaining the knowledge and skills required to pass each Walk Away assessment. Any student with one or more "I" grades posted on a report card will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities representing WMS, including athletic teams, student council, peer leadership, band, choir, drama, FFA, etc. Once all "I" grades have been resolved the student can request an updated report card to show the teacher/advisor to be eligibility to participate in activities.

How can I help my student? Grades are updated on Skyward each Friday before teachers leave school. If you notice a low grade or an "I" grade, visit with your student to find out what they are doing to improve the grade. Make sure they are completing all homework assignments so they are prepared for the Walk Away assessments. If they have not completed all homework, insist that they complete it prior to retaking the assessment. Encourage your student to do their best and to participate in all remediation efforts. Communicate with the teacher and the school if you have any questions.

Working together we believe all students will achieve their highest potential.

2016-2017 Walk Away Guidelines

Purpose & Creation

Departments will formulate assessments based on the Utah State Core Curriculum that will allow students to demonstrate understanding of the most important learning objectives. These assessments will be given to all students within a grade level and/or class. All Walk Aways will be approved by the department CTL before the beginning of each term. Hard copies of all Walk Aways will be submitted to the administration secretary.

Grading Walk Aways

Students demonstrate mastery of Walk Aways by achieving 80% or higher on the assessment. Students on an IEP can have adjusted pass rates as deemed appropriate for each student in specified classes. Students can retake any Walk Away as long as they are enrolled in the class assigning the Walk Away. Students that pass all Walk Aways will be awarded at least a D- for the class. **All Walk Aways must be made up within 10 school days after the end of Terms 1, 2, 3. Term 4 Walk Aways must be made up by last day of school.**

Weighting

Walk Aways will account for 30% of a student's grade.

Category

Walk Aways will be recorded in the Skyward Category listed as "Skills"

Description: Walk Away #--Objective/Skills (aligned with state/department standards)

Scoring Walk Aways

Pass 1st Attempt

Students that pass a Walk Away on the first attempt will receive the percentage they scored (80%-100%).

Retakes

Students that pass a Walk Away on the second or subsequent retake will be awarded 80%.

Transparency

Students and parents will be able to identify proficiency from Walk Aways by the posted scores in Skyward. The following scale, consistent in every class with every Walk Away, will create WMS proficiency levels.

Highly Proficient: 80-100%--Passed the Walk Away on the first attempt, earned percentage posted

Proficient: 80%--Passed the Walk Away with a retake

Approaching Proficient: "I"--In Progress/Incomplete, score below 80%, showing in Skyward as 0%

Monitoring by Teacher

- Students are ensured at least a D- if they pass all of the Walk Aways in a given Term
- If fewer than 80% of all students within a class should pass the Walk Away on the first try, remediation should occur within the class periods
- All Walk Aways should be scored through Mastery Connect
- An assessment calendar is created by departments to ensure Walk Aways given by multiple teachers are administered within 8 school days or 4 class periods
- Remediation is required for all students that did not pass a Walk Away before a second attempt is provided