

Education Programs

Assessment, Grading and Reporting of Student Progress

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a structure and framework for grading student learning in the district.

II. General Statement of Policy

A. The purpose of student grading includes:

- Communicating the achievement status of students to parents and others
- Providing information that students can use for self-evaluation
- Providing incentives to learn
- Evaluating the effectiveness of instructional programs and classroom instruction

B. Grading should reflect student performance as measured by several forms of assessment. Student performance and achievement should be assessed on classroom subject or course-determined curriculum standards and objectives.

C. Grades reflect a combination of student achievement, student progress in learning, and other student learning factors (i.e. effort, attitude/behavior, work completion).

D. Student understanding of scoring criteria is a hallmark of quality standards-based instruction and grading.

E. Course or subject objectives are aligned with district curriculum standards. Grading practices will be based on assessment of students against a standard for learning and not on arbitrary predetermined percentages that consider quantitative grading conclusions.

F. The grading system at the high school will involve weighted and non-weighted grading and values. This grading system is designed to provide more effective, responsive and flexible postsecondary college and university planning for students.

G. Teachers and other professional staff will not use grading procedures that are open to widely divergent interpretations within and across subjects or courses and grade levels.

III. Definitions

- A. Grades – An assessment tool used by teachers to communicate the achievement status of students to parents, students and others.
- B. Progress Reports – Periodic reporting that provides a grade status report for a student’s scheduled classes or coursework.
- C. Academic Standards – State-prescribed grade and course specifications in particular learning areas of content that are embedded in the curriculum.

IV. Standards for Completing Student Grading and Assessment

A. Grading Criteria

Each school program level (elementary, middle school and high school) will establish standardized grading criteria. The grading criteria will be reflective of the age of the student and the level of content learning. Variations in the grading schedule among schools in a given program area are acceptable when approved by the superintendent.

The grading criteria shall include:

- Definition of grading scale
- Definition of credit and no credit for coursework
- Definition of pass or fail for credit
- Definition of weighted grading (if appropriate)
- Definition of student honor roll or recognition for progress reports
- Frequency of grade reporting schedule

B. Establishing Grading Criteria

The grading criteria will be coordinated by the director of teaching and learning and established by the administration with input from task forces at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The criteria will be reviewed on a periodic basis. The administration will ensure the grading criteria is seamless from kindergarten through grade twelve (see Appendix I).

C. Grading Procedure

The teacher responsible for the instruction of the student’s class or course will complete the necessary assessment and provide the appropriate grade. No grade will be altered without consultation with the assigned teacher.

D. Informing Students and Parents/Guardians

1. Students will be informed of the grading criteria at the beginning of the school year or course. Students and parents will be informed of the grading criteria in each school's handbook and/or course syllabi. Secondary teachers shall determine if a final examination requirement is part of the grading requirement.
2. Each school level will determine the frequency of reporting student progress, including the number of formal marking periods. The school calendar will determine the beginning and end of each marking period.
3. The teacher and/or counselor (when appropriate) may report on a student's progress to the parents/guardians midway through the marking period. A notification shall be made to the parents/guardians when the student is performing unsatisfactorily up to and including the fifth week of the marking period.

E. High School Class Ranking and Honors

A student's high school grade point average and class ranking and academic honors will be based solely on grades approved by the district.

V. Acceptance of Grades from Other Schools, Institutions or Agencies

A. Student Grade Review

The district administration will determine appropriate grade placement, course completion and accepted grade of a student transferring from another public school, nonpublic school, home school, educational institution or educational agency. Transferred students may be required to demonstrate knowledge and expertise of the required standards in a specific course or class to assist the administration in determining grade placement, satisfaction of course completion and appropriate course grade.

The administration may award a passing grade for acceptable course completion versus the grade given from another school, institution or agency. A course grade from home schools will not be included in a student's cumulative grade point average at a district school.

B. Student Grade Transfer Appeals

Appeals by a transfer student will be directed to the director of teaching and learning who will review the information from the school transfer and make a final determination. The decision of the director of teaching and learning is final.

C. High School Diploma

Any student who transfers into the high school and wishes to receive a high school diploma must meet all the district requirements for credits and graduation standards.

VI. Confidentiality

A student's grades and individual assessments are confidential and can only be shared with the student and his/her parents/guardians or designee(s), with parental permission. Confidential information may also be shared with the appropriate teachers, administrators and other educators who are assisting in the student's educational program.

Cross Reference:
Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)

Policy
adopted: 10/26/09

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 273
Edina, Minnesota

Appendix I

GRADE LETTERS AND VALUES

I. Elementary School

A. Elementary progress is scored on a 4-3-2-1 scale against the academic standards to be accomplished in the subject at the grade level. The criteria are standards-referenced and not based on percentiles.

- 4 – Advanced; independently exceeds standard at this time
- 3 – Proficient; independently meets standard expectations at this time (an excellent score)
- 2 – Partially proficient; making progress toward basics of standard at this time, with support
- 1 – Needs improvement; lacks expected progress towards standard at this time

The scoring points should assist teachers in maintaining a focus on the learning expectations, encourage frequent diagnosis of how well students are meeting them, and align learning expectations, teaching and feedback.

B. Not Assessed

“Not assessed at this time” simply means that the content area or indicator was not assessed for the semester for which the report is provided. In the first semester, for some elementary content areas, and in some specialist classes, it may be premature to provide this assessment information. In other content areas, teachers may balance the distribution of content so that one or two areas are the focus in the fall and other areas in the spring so there will be no score.

C. Progress Reporting for Special Needs Students

Progress by all students is reported against the same criteria; the standards/benchmarks for that grade level. A lack of proficiency on any standard does not signal failure, but signals a need to continue to assist student development in that area. Teachers can include information on student progress on individual goals through the teacher’s comment section of the report, as well as to share if the student has a “replacement curriculum” or the grades are actually provided by another teacher.

II. Secondary Schools

A. Middle School

1. The middle school assigns a letter grade with a numerical value for the purpose of calculating grades for courses or subjects. The following non-weighted letter grade values are used by the middle schools:

A	4.000	B-	2.667	D+	1.333
A-	3.667	C+	2.333	D	1.000
B+	3.333	C	2.000	D-	0.667
B	3.000	C-	1.667	F	0.000

2. In certain cases the letters “NG” (no grade) are earned or a “P” (passing) is granted to represent the passing of a course or subject with a C- or higher when no letter grade is assigned. An “I” (incomplete) may be assigned as indication that work has not met an expected standard or is still in progress.

B. High School

1. A dual-weighted grading system will be implemented at the high school. The dual-weighted grading system will calculate a weighted and an unweighted grade point average for all high school students.
2. Grade Non-weighted Letters and Values

A	4.000	B-	2.667	D+	1.333
A-	3.667	C+	2.333	D	1.000
B+	3.333	C	2.000	D-	0.667
B	3.000	C-	1.667	F	0.000

Each letter grade has been assigned a numerical value for the purpose of calculating final grades and for determining the grade point average of each student.

3. Grade Weighted Letters and Values

A	4.800	B-	3.200	D+	1.600
A-	4.400	C+	2.800	D	1.200
B+	4.000	C	2.400	D-	0.800
B	3.600	C-	2.000	F	0.000

Determined courses at the high school are assigned a weighted value of 1.2 for purposes of calculating a weighted grade point average.

4. Final Exams

Final exams may be given at the discretion of the teacher.

C. Graded Weighted Courses

The criteria and procedures for determining that a course will be designated as a grade weighted course at the high school will involve the following steps:

1. Advanced placement courses will be grade weighted.

2. High school courses that are not advanced placement courses and that are requested to have a weighted status require staff to complete a proposal.
 - a. Teachers or other school professionals will complete a grade weighted course proposal. The proposal content and intent will be discussed at high school area leader meetings and with the area-designated teacher on special assignment (TOSA).
 - b. The proposal will be submitted for approval to the high school principal and director of teaching and learning.
 - c. The new course-weighted proposal will be discussed and reviewed by the Board Teaching and Learning Committee. The submission of a new course weighted proposal will follow the same timeline as secondary new course proposals.
 - d. Following the advisory approval of the Board Teaching and Learning Committee, the proposal will be shared with the school board for discussion and action.

D. Dropping Classes

1. Students who drop a class before the end of the fourth week of the semester due to unique circumstances may receive one of the marks listed below. Non-letter grades have no impact on grade point average. These marks will remain on the student's permanent record until the student retakes the course during a future semester. Non-letter grade marks are:
 - NG – No letter grade assigned; a grade of NG should be supplemented by anecdotal reports to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - NC – No credit given for the class; no letter grade assigned.
 - P – Credit granted for passing the class with a C- or higher; no letter grade assigned.
2. Students who drop a class after the end of the fourth week of the semester will incur a penalty by receiving a grade of "F" that will be calculated into the grade point average. An appeal may be submitted by a counselor to the principal on a case-by-case basis where special circumstances should be taken into consideration.

E. Interpretation of Letter Grades

1. A grade is given to every secondary student to reflect the student learning progress. Letter achievement grades are interpreted as follows:

A – Excellent	C – Satisfactory	F – Failure (No credit)
B – Very good	D – Lowest passing grade	I – Incomplete

2. Letter grades should be used only in those courses where the teacher intends to report learning progress that students make on course or subject standards and objectives. Grade distributions will be monitored regularly to identify areas of possible inconsistency. Teachers with classes in which the letter grade approach is not desirable are urged to use another system of reporting student progress. Alternative grading approaches need to be reviewed and approved by area leaders, the principal and the director of teaching and learning.

F. Grade "F"

1. The grade of "F" should be reserved for the student who fails to exert reasonable effort to complete class assignments. The special education student who fails examinations, but demonstrates a mastery of required standards, should not receive an "F" on the report card.
2. In no case should a student be assigned an "F" grade without prior communication with the parent(s)/guardian(s). A midterm communication indicating unsatisfactory progress should be mailed to the family midway through the marking period. If the circumstances were such that this notice was not mailed to the parent(s)/guardian(s), a telephone contact must be made.

G. Incompletes ("I")

1. An incomplete may be used to temporarily indicate low performance or missing work when the grade earned is lower than C-. Teachers may allow retake/resubmission of work until a standard is met at a C- or better level and the grade changed until 30 calendar days after the end of the semester. If this allowance is granted, the school will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of this process.

A student who has been provided an opportunity to retake/resubmit work and has an outstanding "I" after the 30 calendar day period will be assigned the original "D" or "F" they would have received.

2. Incompletes due to student absence. Incompletes as a final grade shall be used for those students whose absence from school has not permitted them a fair opportunity to complete the work.
3. Every student, regardless of the reason for an absence, has a right to make up the work missed. Students who have been absent and have not had a reasonable opportunity to complete the class work shall be given an incomplete rather than the letter grade "F."
4. The maximum deadline to remove all incompletes, due to absence, is 30 calendar days after the end of the semester. Work, which has not been made up, will be marked zero. This implies that daily assignments and activities must be well-defined and necessitates complete recordkeeping of

such assignments and activities. A daily plan of activities and assignments shall be replicable for make-up purposes. In essence, a student shall not be able to take a final exam for a course and pass, but shall demonstrate evidence of meeting required course standards through assignments. Teachers and other school professionals are required to contact the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide the student with a thorough timeline and list of required assignments.

5. If the assignments are not made up during the 30 calendar days after the end of a semester, a failure grade shall be given, unless there is a good reason for the continuing incomplete such as a prolonged illness.

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Appendix II

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS

I. Marking Periods

Marking periods will vary in length from one school year to the next. The school calendar adopted each year will determine the beginning and ending of each marking period. Special instructions and details regarding the processing of student progress reports will be issued preceding the close of each marking period by an administrator, when needed. Student learning progress is reported at the end of all marking periods. Those semester courses that meet for one period on an alternating-day basis will have grades issued at the end of the second and fourth marking periods.

II. Progress Reporting for Secondary Schools

- A. Student learning progress may be reported to the parent(s)/guardian(s) midway through the marking period.
- B. Student learning progress on the district's parent portal will be updated on a regular basis, as determined by the district administration.
- C. In addition to regular electronic reporting, parental contact will be made when a student is performing unsatisfactorily up to and including the fifth week of the marking period. This affords the family, teacher and student adequate time to impact the student's performance before the end of the marking period. Appropriate documentation of this contact will be maintained during the academic year.
- D. Teachers and other school professionals are encouraged to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) to highlight unique or significant student contributions on a regular basis.

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