



FREMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Cupertino High School | Fremont High School | Homestead High School | Lynbrook High School | Monta Vista High School | Adult School

Dear FUHSD Parents and Students,

SUPERINTENDENT

Polly M. Bove

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rosa Kim

Jeff Moe

Naomi Nakano-

Matsumoto

Roy Rocklin

Bill Wilson

First of all, we would like to thank you for your support and understanding during this challenging time. The current crisis and school closures have placed tremendous pressure on every member of our community as our daily lives essentially transformed overnight. Our primary goal is to make sure you and your family remain safe during this global pandemic. And, while our physical campuses will not reopen this school year, the Fremont Union High School District is committed to supporting our students through remote learning to ensure they remain engaged and well-prepared for the future.

As we continue with remote learning through the rest of the school year, we will do the following:

- Focus on essential skills and learning;
- Support student engagement and work to maintain connections between students and teachers;
- Ensure that students maintain the progress they have made up to this point so that they are adequately prepared for their courses next year and continue to move towards successful graduation;
- Intervene and provide additional support for students that are struggling;
- Provide enrichment opportunities for those students and families that want them.

[In a letter dated April 1, 2020](#), the Santa Clara County Office of Education communicated that remote learning will extend through the end of the school year, and both the [University of California](#) and [California State University](#) system issued statements about grading requirements on the same day. We then drew upon the expertise of teacher leaders and solicited input from site and district administrators on the subject of grading. Together, we considered ways in which the current remote learning environment, which began months into the semester, would pose challenges to a letter grading system. These challenges include:

- Not all learning objectives for the course can be addressed, or to the extent and depth intended.
- Certain essential knowledge and skills are challenging, if not impossible, to assess in a remote learning environment.
- Students may not have access to the technology, learning supports, and/or other resources necessary for a more equitable learning environment.
- Universities across the country, including both the UC and CSU systems, have made clear that students will not be penalized for posting credit/no credit transcripts for this semester.

To that end, we have made the decision to move to a Credit/No Credit grading system for the Spring semester of 2020. While we know that some members of our community will be disappointed in this change in grading policy, please understand that we did not make this



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decision lightly. Over the last several weeks, district staff have been in direct contact with multiple colleges and universities to better understand how they will be viewing college applications and the decisions that districts are making around grading practices. We spoke to as many educational partners as possible in order to make the best decision for our community.

Additionally, the Santa Clara County Office of Education released a memo this week recommending that all districts move to a Credit/No Credit grading structure for distance learning for the remainder of the school year. Most local school districts are following this recommendation. And so, while this was a difficult decision to make, we are confident it is in the best interest of our students.

It is our commitment that we will continue advocating on behalf of each of our affected students over the coming years as they undertake the college admissions process. In partnership with the SCCOE and our neighboring districts, we will continue to use our voice and keep pressure on our institutions of higher education to uphold their commitments to treating all students equitably under these unprecedented circumstances. Because of the unusual circumstances we find ourselves in, we know that letters of recommendation and reflections from teachers will likely become even more critical in the admissions process and we are developing a plan with our teachers to allow our juniors to request these early, while giving teachers more time and resources to work on these letters. Please wait for direction from your site guidance team on when and how to make these requests to your teachers. As we develop this plan, we will continue to work with colleges and universities to make sure our work is aligned with their processes.

We understand that this change from a letter grade system brings up a number of questions. It is important to remember that our shared overarching goals are to keep students engaged, ensure they learn the essential skills that will allow them to be successful at the next level in a course sequence, and to maintain social connections with other students and adults to provide stability and decrease social isolation during the school closures. Below are responses to some frequently asked questions. We recognize this is not an exhaustive list, and other questions or concerns have not yet been answered. Please do not hesitate to communicate with us so that we can address your concerns.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How will a teacher determine whether a student gets “Credit” for the course? What criteria will they use?**
 - When students return from Spring Break, teachers will share a green sheet outlining the expectations and measures for success for the final 6 weeks of the term.
 - Each week, teachers will provide assignments for students to complete such as:
 - Participation during class period
 - Demonstration of learning through course activities and assignments
 - Other performance assessments



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- **What does this mean for a student who was earning an A when remote learning started? Haven't they already done enough to pass?**
 - No. All students need to complete the requirements for the duration of online learning to receive credit.
 - In this context, earning credit requires engagement throughout the entire term and not based solely on existing points before remote learning.
- **What does this mean for a student in danger of not passing the class before remote learning began?**
 - Students who were NOT on track to pass the class at the start of online learning (March 23) will be notified, if they have already, and given the opportunity to complete additional requirements necessary to improve and receive course Credit. These students will be provided support to do the regular coursework PLUS any coursework needed to meet the learning goals in order to receive credit.
- **How will students stay motivated in a credit/no credit system?**
 - The credit/no credit system is not necessarily a points system. Teachers will create essential standards that must be met throughout remote learning in order to receive credit.
 - Teachers are adapting their courses to support participation, engagement, interaction, and focus on the essential learnings and key objectives required to help provide students with structure and motivation during this challenging time.
- **Can we give students the option to choose between a letter grade and the Credit/No Credit system?**
 - We will not be giving students the option to choose which grading system they prefer. The prevailing guidance we have received from universities and colleges is that each school district should make a uniform decision on grading that applies to all students. While some institutions of higher learning are offering their own students the option to choose between a letter grade or Credit/No Credit option, colleges and universities simply do not have the ability to respond to this type of hybrid grading system in their admissions process.
- **How can FUHSD be sure that this Credit/No Credit policy will not hurt students with respect to college admissions?**
 - Fremont Union High School District made this decision only after both the UC and CSU systems, as well as several private colleges, gave official statements affirming that students will not be disadvantaged as a result of this policy. Please feel free



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to read the following statements from the [University of California](#), [California State Universities](#), [Harvard University](#), [University of Illinois \(Urbana-Champaign\)](#), and [University of Southern California](#).

- A notation on the official transcript will indicate that all courses for Spring 2020 are Credit/No Credit due to the extraordinary circumstances related to the COVID-19 school closures.
- Students will receive full credit for courses required for college admission.
- As we shared above, we know that letters of recommendation and reflections from teachers will likely become even more critical in the admissions process and we are developing a plan with our teachers to allow our juniors to request these early, while giving teachers more time and resources to work on these letters. Please wait for direction from your site guidance team on when and how to make these requests to your teachers.

- **How does this shift to Credit/No Credit affect a student's progress toward graduation and grade point average?**

- Students who earn credit for their courses will continue to make progress toward graduation.
- Credit/No Credit marks will not be calculated into the grade point average (GPA).

- **What happens if a student is not currently meeting the requirements for Credit?**

- The teacher informs the student that they are not currently meeting the requirements for credit in the course, and delineates what needs to be done to earn credit.
- Guidance counselors and other staff will be working with students to get the support they need to make progress.

- **What about students who think they are so far behind that they have already failed?**

- Teachers can inform students that they do have an opportunity to earn credit, but they will need to do more than the regular maintenance course. The teacher will give students the opportunity to do the work required to earn credit.
- Summer Academy, while likely in a remote learning format, will be available for students to make up credit.

- **What will happen to the grade students earned before schools closed?**

- Six-week progress report grades will be considered as part of the final assessment in determining Credit/No Credit. Our teacher leaders and administration have agreed that all students need to demonstrate continuous achievement. What this means is that students who are currently achieving high marks, must do a satisfactory level of attainment of standards to receive credit. Failure to do so may result in an "incomplete" or no credit. Students who are not currently



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meeting standards shall be given a set of standards to meet in order to earn credit by the end of the semester.

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- **What kind of assessments should students expect in a Credit/No Credit grading system?**
 - When thinking about assessments, our teachers are mindful that they don't know all the circumstances, stressors and anxieties that our students are facing at home when giving any assessment.
 - We also recognize that one-on-one secured tests are not feasible in a remote learning environment.
 - High-stakes tests given as summative assessments in a physical classroom are not feasible in remote learning.
 - The teacher can choose to give summative assessments but know that there are limitations.
 - Courses that have traditionally used papers and other writing assignments as summative assessments may find it easier to implement in remote learning.
 - Individual or group projects may be substituted for traditional exams.

- How will students prepare for AP Exams?
 - In response to the COVID-19 situation, the College Board has made several adjustments to AP Testing. This year's exams will be open book/open note, with students taking exams on any device they have access to – computer, tablet or smartphone. For more information, visit the [College Board website](#). Our teachers remain committed to helping students prepare for their AP exams.

- **What if some students are asking for learning opportunities in addition to the requirements and expectations of the remote course?**
 - Teachers can suggest and/or offer additional resources.
 - Through self-directed learning opportunities, students can determine their ability to handle additional work and focus on topics that are of interest or that help them strengthen their understanding of material. The District is providing a [webpage](#) for self-directed learning resources.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate how challenging this situation is for our entire community. The Fremont Union High School District is committed to providing thoughtful education that will prepare students for the next level and keep them interconnected to the educational community, while prioritizing student well-being as our paramount concern.

Your support and understanding are much appreciated.

Polly Bove