

April 27, 2020

Dear Students and Families,

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) released guidance on how grading will take place until June 19. Since this guidance was issued, district administrators have been working on our district grading plan to share with staff, students and families.

As we considered OSPI's guidelines, we did so understanding that the home situations for our students during this time vary widely. We know that despite our best efforts, not all students are able to work at home digitally, many students are responsible for caring for siblings and others are just trying to get by. These inequities were at the forefront of our decisions as we developed our grading plan for the remainder of the year.

Grading Rules from OSPI

Below are OSPI's rules and [guidance](#) for Washington State schools regarding grading for the current semester given our closure through June 19. The key points are:

- Do no harm.
- Every student will get an opportunity to improve their grade using their March 17 status as a baseline.
- No student will receive a "pass," "fail," or "no credit" grade for any course.
- Teachers will assign grades or assign an "incomplete" for students who cannot engage in an equitable way.
- Every class taken during the closure period will be given a statewide designator on the high school transcript to denote the unique environment in which the course was taken.
- Students assigned an "incomplete" for a course will be given opportunities to re-engage in the learning standards based on local school district decisions in consultation with the student/parents/guardians.
- All students will be given an opportunity to engage in continuous learning to maintain or improve their mastery of essential standards.

OSPI Guidelines and our Schools

Second semester/third trimester students in grades 9-12, and 7th and 8th grade students in credit-bearing courses, will earn "A" or "B" letter grades or Incompletes. Pass or C/D/F grades will not be issued for credit bearing courses. It is important to note that in alignment with OSPI's new guidance, especially to "do no harm," students will not earn grades lower than the grade they had on March 13, the final calendar day we were in session before officially closing school for in-person learning on March 16.

In our interpretation of "do no harm," we recognize that this part of the 2020 school year is a small part of the overall experience our students will have in their Kindergarten through 12th grade time with us and, except for our seniors, our students will be given opportunities in PSD to fill learning gaps in subsequent years. Thus, we feel it is inappropriate to add any stress to the student experience during this crisis.

The content covered at all grade levels April 20-June 19 is referred to as **Essential New Learnings (ENLs)**.

For Students in Grades PreK-5:

- Letter grades are not given.
- We will still issue a final report card to help identify where students are on grade level standards.

For Students in Grades 6-8:

The grading system will be “Pass/Incomplete” for the third trimester. The guideline of “No Pass” grades from the state does not apply at the middle school level.

- Middle school students had just completed the second trimester at the time of closure and were scheduled to start the third trimester on the first day of the closure.
- For middle school students enrolled in courses which may result in high school credit, letter grades carried over to their high school transcript from the second trimester are subject to the guidance below.

For Students in Grades 9-12:

All students will have the opportunity to earn a higher grade through a variety of options outlined below. No students will earn an “F” or “Pass” grade; all will earn either an A, B, or an Incomplete. All transcribed courses will be denoted as COVID-19 impacted courses on transcripts.

2020 2nd Semester Grading: A/B/Incomplete		
Grade on March 13	To Maintain Grade:	To Raise Grade:
A	The A would not drop down. Students are encouraged to engage in ENLs.	N/A
B/C/D	All students will earn a B or better. Students are encouraged to engage in ENLs.	Students would have multiple opportunities to achieve an A grade for the semester, including meeting ENL standards, submitting work that is exemplary, and completing extension activities, among others.
F	No F’s will be given. Students who do not engage will receive an Incomplete***.	Engaging in the opportunities above to meet ENLs would allow these students to raise their grade to an A or a B.

Here are examples to help:

- Tara's Biology grade was an A on March 13. Tara's grade will be an A for the semester. Tara is strongly advised to engage in the ENLs for this course (and others) through the final 9 weeks of school. Understanding these concepts/standards will be critical for her success in subsequent courses such as Chemistry and Physics.
- Carlos's Algebra grade was a B on March 13. Carlos's grade will be no lower than a B, and can be raised to an A. Again, engaging in the ENLs will be critical as concepts such as Linear Equations taught in the final 9 weeks need to be understood for subsequent courses. As shown in the table above, there will be several paths for Carlos to engage and raise the grade to A.
- Mia's English 9 grade was a C on March 13. Mia's grade will be no lower than a B and can be raised to an A as outlined above.
- Elijah's World History grade was a D on March 13. Elijah's grade will be no lower than a B and can raise the grade to an A. This would require a substantial time and effort commitment on Elijah's part but would be possible.
- Amanda's Health grade was an F on March 13: If Amanda does not engage in any more learning she will receive an Incomplete for Health for 2nd semester. Amanda should engage in learning. If she does, she will have an opportunity to raise her grade to a B or even an A. Like Elijah, this would require a substantial time and effort commitment on Amanda's part, but would be possible. If she earns the Incomplete, there are options listed below for her to convert that to a grade. This will need to be a priority for Amanda, because passing Health is a graduation requirement.

***Converting Incompletes

In order to graduate high school, all students must work to convert their Incompletes to letter grades. We will work diligently to support students to make this happen. Below are some examples of how students can do this with support from their teachers:

- Take summer school (summer 2020);
- Take courses in the following term or year;
- Take independent study;
- Take competency-based courses;
- Take courses online; and/or
- Backfill the Incomplete grade with the letter grade obtained in the next course taken in that subject area. For example, if Connor has an Incomplete in Algebra as a freshman, and earns a B in Geometry as a sophomore next year, he could also backfill his Incomplete in Algebra with a B. This is a special grading option due to COVID-19.
- Other options may be considered; please work with your student's teacher.

A Note to Seniors

We recognize this is a change from what we communicated to our seniors on April 15, which included a "Pass" option. At the time, we believed we could make this determination. Based on this new guidance from OSPI, **seniors will now be subject to the same guidance for grading as listed above.**

As stated in that senior guidance, we will exercise the authority to waive credits as needed and as appropriate, as well as using other routes for retrieving credits to ensure all those on track to graduate at the time of the closure can graduate this year.

Moving Forward

We are grateful for your support of our staff who are working hard to continue teaching students while at home. This is an unprecedented crisis with ramifications across our society, and

schools are certainly being greatly impacted. We will continue to work to bring high levels of learning to students, keeping in mind the impacts of the crisis.

If you have questions about Continuous Learning or our new grading plan, please reach out to any staff at your child's school. Please stay safe and healthy.