

Distance Learning Parent Handbook



**Hamden Public Schools
2020**

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a framework to ensure consistent practices and expectations for all students and staff. We will learn, grow and adapt as needed to adjust to the complexities of our new reality. As such, this document will change from time to time, and should not be considered an exhaustive list of expectations and responsibilities.

The last day of the 2019-2020 school year is scheduled to be June 9, 2020.

Accountability

Attendance

- Students are expected to log in daily and must answer the attendance question posted
- Parents/ Guardians are expected to communicate with school staff for any missed days

Grading

High school classroom teachers will grade assigned work. Elementary and Middle School teachers will provide feedback to students on completed assignments. Due dates and workload are intended to help students plan their academic responsibilities. Guidelines for teachers include, but may not be limited to::

- No work should have a due date of less than 24-hours from the date assigned, and teachers are strongly encouraged to give students at least 48 hours to complete assignments.
- No new assignments should be given that require students to complete them over the weekend
- Teachers are encouraged to set due dates for assignments on a weekly basis
- Teachers are advised to give no more than 2-3 assignments per week per class, unless otherwise noted
- Teachers may have a due date of Sunday at 11:59 pm to ensure flexibility for students to complete assignments on a schedule that works for their family
- No grade lower than a 50 shall be given to a student for final marking period

High School teachers are expected to continue to input grades into PowerSchool. The current practice of inputting grades every week will continue. Middle and Elementary teachers will keep records in order to ensure final Marking Period Report Cards can be completed. Below is an outline of what will be expected for final marking period report cards:

Rationale for Adjustments to Report Cards and Grading

“The CSDE supports the growing national consensus, that given the variability of online teaching and learning models, and issues of equity, it is appropriate to view the second half of the 2020 school year as a special case in terms of grading, GPA’s and transcripts. All students and staff are working under challenging conditions and, therefore, we are encouraging districts to focus priorities on student engagement and learning.” ~ Commissioner Miguel Cardona, CT State Department of Education

Elementary and Hamden Middle School Report Cards

- All standards/ subject areas will be marked as NA
- The elementary report card Academic Success Habits section will be left blank (as it is not possible to put NA)
- Teachers will be provided with a comment bank which will allow for more specific feedback connected to the distance learning format
- Teachers will not create individual narratives and must use the comment bank

Hamden High School
Flexible and Compassionate Grading Options
Quarter 4

Faced with an unprecedented situation, the district was tasked with creating an equitable and accessible grading system to summarize student performance during the COVID-19 crisis and subsequent school closure.

Hamden High School is committed to supporting the entire student body. This includes their physical and emotional well-being, as well as the academic growth and progress. Using guidance from the State Department of Education, the Connecticut Association of Schools, and stakeholder feedback, the below grading system eliminates penalties that may have been caused by students' access to content, or caused by economic and social stressors that influenced students' performance during the distance learning period. The options presented below demonstrate Hamden Public Schools commitment to inclusivity and equity for all of our learners.

No student will receive a failing grade for Quarter 4.

Quarter 4 will follow the traditional numeric/weighted grading system.

- 10% of the final year grade
 - 29% of Semester 2 Courses
-
- Honors student effort and adjusts weighting to accommodate for the change to distance learning platform

Families will be provided the opportunity to consult with their child's House Administrator if the traditional grading system does not adequately support or meet their child's needs. **The following options are available through consultation with the House team:**

Pass (Exempt):

- Course credit earned
 - Quarter 4 does not calculate into weighted GPA
 - No numeric value given to Pass
-
- 100% of the student's weighted GPA is calculated into Quarter 1, Quarter 2, mid-term exam and Quarter 3

Pass (Non-exempt):

- Course credit earned
- Quarter 4 does not calculate into weighted GPA
- Numeric value of 85% given to Pass to calculate course average that includes Quarter 4

- Students who were not passing a course at school closure, but were within reach, to continue to demonstrate mastery to earn the credit
- Allows students with low first semester grades and/or low third marking period grades to improve scores and earn class credit

Incomplete

- This option as stated by the CSDE “supports students who may not have had adequate access to technology, students with IEPs in need of direct support, EL students, students who may need counseling or mental health services, students who were sick themselves, caring for a family member, or dealing with the trauma of loss as a result of the pandemic, and disengaged students, who with a second chance opportunity and counseling could regain agency and get a result of pass (and credit).”
- Students will be given an opportunity to change an incomplete to a pass through an alternate educational opportunity
- No Quarter 4 failures

Individualized Grading Plans

- Such a plan would be tailored to an individual student’s needs
- Honors student effort and adjusts weighting to accommodate for the change to distance learning platform
- Individualized grading plan for students will allow for House Teams to determine the most equitable way to support each student individually

Beginning on March 13, 2020 and inclusive of the entire fourth marking period no grade lower than a 50% shall be given to a student on any assignment. Students will have extended time to make up missing assignments. Missing assignments will be issued an M grade which will have a value of 50%.

There will be no final exams.

The above option references only Quarter 4. Final transcripts will only report completed final grades.

No student will receive a failing grade for Quarter 4. Students unable to pass Quarter 4 will receive an Incomplete with an opportunity to pass through an alternate educational opportunity.

While it is impossible to predict how the college landscape may change, Hamden Public Schools strives to ensure that all of our students' needs are being met in the most equitable manner possible.

Communication

Critical Points

- Teachers **cannot** use video during Zoom, Google Meet, Skype, Facetime when communicating with families. The teacher is unable to control images and may be subject to liability if inappropriate video is streamed. Teachers may communicate by phone, chat, message board, and/or email. Teachers may use tools such as (Google Hangout audio only, Zoom audio only, UberConference, Free Conference Calling, or GotoMeeting).
- Teachers **must not** livestream face to face instructional videos. However, teachers may use Zoom, Google Meet or Hangout to interact with students, but must ensure student video streaming is disabled. Teachers might choose to demonstrate a concept or problem using the white board option or sharing their screen to demonstrate what is expected with a particular task.
- Teachers may conference call with students who would typically be grouped together with parent permission in the traditional school setting by using platforms such as Google Hangout audio only or Zoom audio only (i.e., Resource, ELL, small reading groups, SRBI interventions).
- Teachers **may** create and post previously recorded instructional videos. Previously recorded instructional videos should not capture anything in the background such as religious symbols, images of alcohol/drugs, violence, weapons, nudity or any other content that may be offensive to a reasonable person.
- Students may submit still photos
- Students may submit previously recorded videos **as part of an assignment**. ***Any videos submitted as part of an assignment*** must be reviewed **and permission must be granted by the parent** before being shared with the class. Students may submit videos that only show themselves and/or their parent/guardian, and are in accordance with Hamden Public Schools' Acceptable Usage Policy. **Adhering to these guidelines ensures we are in compliance with FERPA and provide the most equitable environment for all of our students.**

Distance Learning Schedule

Teachers will be available to students, parents, and other staff between the hours of 9:00-1:00 pm. Teachers will be available to administration for their regular work day, inclusive of contractually required before/ after school meetings.

Connection and Communication Check- In Day

While many staff members are communicating with families frequently and monitoring and adjusting work loads as needed, providing a day focused on these important aspects of the teaching and learning experience will ensure greater equity for all students.

To that end, each Wednesday will be used for maintaining connections to students and allowing students the opportunity to catch up on assignments. As such:

- No new work will be assigned. Teachers may post a task for students that does not require anything to be submitted (watch a video, interactive Internet activity, discussion board, AP practice test, etc.)
- Students will be encouraged to complete previously assigned work they may not have completed and/ or work that needs to be revisited after teacher feedback
- Teachers and support staff should dedicate time to reaching out to students and families.
- Teachers must still take student attendance on this day.

Elementary

Elementary students will engage in distance learning activities as assigned by their teacher. The chart below outlines the approximate instructional times expected per grade level. Teachers must check in on student attendance and work completion daily.

	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Reading	<u>Up to 45 min/day</u> Independent Reading (includes mini lesson or shared reading) 20-25 min/day Lexia 15 min/day Writing about reading 5min/day (2-3x per week) Optional Read Aloud 10 min/day			<u>Up to 62 min/day</u> Alternate between mini lesson (5 min) and interactive read aloud (10 min)~average 6 min/day Lexia 20 min/day Independent reading 30 min/day Writing about Reading 6 min/day			

Writing	None	Optional 30 min/day 3x per week Or 18 min/day	
Math	Up to 45 min/day	Up to 60 min/day	Up to 60 min/day
Science	Up to 45 min/week	Up to 90 min/week	Up to 90 min/week
Social Studies	Up to 30 min/week	Up to 45 min/week	
Health, PE, Art, Music and Media	Up to 30 min/week each		
English Learner	Required minutes will be based on individual students' English Proficiency Levels. All Grade levels up to 90 min/week (Collaboration with EL Specialists will determine mode of delivery)		

Secondary

Hamden Middle School and Hamden High school students will complete daily assignments from their currently scheduled courses. Each course will provide up to 25 minutes of work per day; 2-3 assignments weekly. Directors will provide additional guidance to departments. Teachers must check in on student attendance and work completion daily. AP or ECE courses will follow regular expectations with more time dedicated to complete the requirements for those courses.

Standardized Testing

All standardized assessments, whether district administered or otherwise have been cancelled or postponed, with the exception of AP exams. AP teachers with questions or concerns should contact their administrator.