

R 2624 GRADING SYSTEM

A. Purpose of Grading

1. The purpose of grading is to assist students in the process of learning; all grading systems will be subject to continual review and revision to that end.
2. Grades acknowledge a student's demonstrated proficiency in the New Jersey State Learning Standards and locally established learning goals and objectives, but are also an indicator of the following learner attributes:
 - a. Active participation in and attention to daily lessons,
 - b. Frequent contribution to discussions,
 - c. Prompt, thorough, accurate, and neat preparation of assignments,
 - d. Thorough preparation and performance on tests and assessments,
 - e. Display of an eagerness to learn and an inquisitive approach to lessons,
 - f. Attention to the need for proper materials,
 - g. Cooperation with the teacher's efforts, and
 - h. Willingness to work to the best of his/her ability and to do more than the minimum expected.

B. Definitions

- a. Instructional objectives are general statements of what the student should attain and represent the purposes of instruction for all students in a course.
- b. Assessment Measures are indicators that are used to provide evidence of the attainment of instructional or performance objectives. The degree to which each student has attained these objectives is determined by performance on assessment measures.



The nature and numbers of these measures necessary to demonstrate attainment are an integral part of evaluating student progress and planning instruction.

- c. Performance objectives are specific statements of what the student should be able to do. These objectives, contained in curricula guides or formulated by teachers, assist the student in the attainment of the instructional objectives. Performance objectives are used for planning classroom instruction and are assigned based on a student's progress in the subject. Those appearing in the curriculum guides are suggestions of ways to attain the instructional objectives.
- d. Grading, in accordance with the policy on Grading, is used in these procedures in a broad sense to include the assignment of any symbols for evaluation as well as the related comments, conferences, and reports. Where emphasis is on the comments or the conference or the report, the word "evaluation" is sometimes used.

C. Preparation for Grading and Performance Objectives Indicators

- 1. Each student must be informed of the behavior and achievements expected of him/her at the outset of each course of study or unit of study.
- 2. Each student must be kept informed of his/her progress during the course of a unit of study. Students who so request are entitled to see the grades resulting from their performance during the grading period.
- 3. Each method of grading shall be appropriate to the course of study and the maturity and abilities of the students.
- 4. Students should be encouraged to evaluate their own achievements.
- 5. The process of review and revision will involve teaching staff members, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and, as appropriate, students.

D. Grading Periods



1. Grades or performance objective indicators will be awarded at the end of four marking periods for students in grades 6-12 and at the end of three marking periods for students in Kindergarten-5th grade.
2. In grades 6-12, students will be given notice of their mid-term progress at the mid-point of each marking period. In kindergarten-5th grade, students that are not meeting standards will be given notice of their mid-term progress at the mid-point of each marking period.
3. Students will be given a final grade or performance objective indicator in each subject at the end of the school year.
4. Grades or performance objective indicators will be recorded on report cards for parent(s) or legal guardian(s) notification in accordance with Policy No. 5420 and Regulation No. 5420.

E. Basis for Grading

The teacher responsible for assigning a grade should take into consideration the student's:

1. Completion of written assignments prepared in the classroom or elsewhere;
2. Oral contributions in class, including discussion responses, observations, panel participation, presentations, initiation of topics;
3. Performance on oral and written tests and quizzes;
4. Research into standard references and other background materials;
5. Oral and written reports on materials read by the student;
6. Laboratory work;
7. Term papers;
8. Special oral or written reports;



9. Other evidences of the student's constructive efforts and achievements in learning; and
 10. For the final grade or performance objective indicator, the student's attendance record, in accordance with Policy Nos. 5200, 5410, and 5460.
- F. Procedures
1. The Sayreville school district recognizes that no one method of student assessment and grade reporting system can be all encompassing. The information outlined below is a starting point for the multi-faceted, comprehensive reporting system that we strive to achieve because it is a critical piece for students, parents, and staff in the overall educational process.
 2. Student assessment and grade reporting is considered a positive tool to measure growth, progress, and the development of the student. One of several important components of student assessment and grading systems is the student's report card. This is mentioned specifically because it is the traditional and most often used format for providing information about student progress and performance. One of the goals of this grading regulation is to allow for consistency of grading practices between teachers teaching the same course, among all teachers within a school, and between teachers in the different schools in the district.
 - a. **Criteria for Grading and Reporting Student Progress**

The Sayreville Public Schools Curricula, New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and supporting materials represent the basic framework or reference source for the validation of student reporting practices. Grading and reporting of student progress are based on performance on assessment measures identified for the instructional and performance objectives in accordance with the Sayreville Public School curricula documents that are appropriate to the subject offering, grade, or age level. Students will be informed of the general objectives of each course or unit and of the basis upon which students' performance will be evaluated. Parents will be informed of the general objectives by the school.



b. Grading Practices

Grading is based on performance on assessment measures identified for the instructional objectives of the curriculum. All assessment measures for the objectives of the unit of instruction in the course will be considered when a grade is determined. At all grade levels, assessment activities selected by teachers for each objective will be used to establish standards of acceptable performance for students in their schools or departments. Grades should not be used as a behavior/discipline consequence. For students with disabilities receiving special education services, grading is based on instructional and performance objectives assigned to the student. All appropriate and documented curricula modifications and accommodation for both instruction and assessment will be available and implemented.

Each teacher is charged with the responsibility of using valid and reliable grading procedures. All teachers must have a clearly defined and written grade system that is approved by their supervisor and/or principal within the first two weeks of school. Teachers should assess outcomes beyond the routine recall of facts. The professional staff should work together to develop common and fair standards for evaluating student work.

Teachers are to grade students on mastery of objectives. When relatively large numbers of low grades are noted in the distribution of grades for a class group, the instructional program should be reexamined and/or there should be a consultation with the immediate supervisor to find ways of improving the learning experience of students who are not achieving.

In special education programs, K-12, the evaluation of student progress by teachers and specialists will be based on the attainment of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) objectives.

c. Assessment

School personnel shall not use tests, procedures or other guidance and counseling materials that are differentiated or stereotyped on



the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, ancestry, national origin, or socio-economic status.

The frequency and appropriateness of student assessment is crucial to fairness in the grading of students and has direct implications for their graduation. Types of assessment devices may include, but is not limited to, tests, quizzes, homework, written reports, notebooks, projects, portfolios, and group work.

G. Grading for Students in Grades 6-12

1. Students should be graded on the basis of a minimum of eight assessment devices per marking period for those classes that meet daily. The issuance of assessment devices should be fairly evenly distributed throughout the marking period.
2. Student evaluation and marking period grades should be arrived at through the use of a variety of assessment devices.
3. All teachers who teach a particular subject should use approximately the same number and similar types of assessment devices within a marking period.
4. Assessment devices should be aligned to the Common Core and/or the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in both content and wording whenever possible.
5. Homework will account for a maximum of 5% of each marking period grade in core curriculum courses. Homework should be meaningful and be of an appropriate length determined as described in Policy and Regulation 2330.
6. Extra credit should be issued judiciously, if at all. Extra credit must be connected to a learning standard and integrated in a specific assessment or assignment. Extra credit points may account for a maximum of 5% of an assessment grade. Extra credit will not take the place of missed assignments, nor is it added as a separate entry in calculating a final marking period grade.



7. Class participation and preparedness are behavioral and should not be calculated in a marking period grade.
8. Formative assessments in classes that require active demonstration of knowledge and skills may include participation as an integral part of the grade. These classes may include physical education, music, performing and visual arts and practical arts.
9. Students should be provided the opportunity to complete assignments after the due date. However, this may result in a reduction of the overall grade for that particular assignment.
10. The following grades will be given in each academic subject at the end of each marking period:
 - a. A grade of A indicates superior performance. It may be given to a student whose achievement is significantly above grade level; whose work achieves a quality and quantity that consistently excels; and who demonstrates a high degree of initiative, application, and purpose.
 - b. A grade of B indicates above average performance. It should be given to a student whose achievement is above grade level; whose work frequently excels; and who generally demonstrates strength in the subject.
 - c. A grade of C indicates average performance. It should be given to a student whose achievement in most areas of the subject are average; whose work is acceptable; and who demonstrates a satisfactory degree of proficiency.
 - d. A grade of D indicates below average performance. It should be given to a student whose achievement in the subject is barely passing; whose work is the minimum acceptable for credit; and who demonstrates only weak proficiencies in the subject.
 - e. A grade of F indicates failing performance and that no credit can be given for the subject. It should be given to a student who has not met the minimum requirements of the course; who has



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demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to master the basic elements of the course; or who has failed to meet the minimum attendance standards necessary to pass a course of study.

- f. Letter grades may be modified by plus or minus signs.
11. The following grading scales and indicators shall be used:

In grades 6-12, the grades of sixty-five to one hundred are passing grades. While it is the primary purpose of a reporting system to reflect accurately student achievement and progress, the system is also intended to be motivational. The Board therefore has established that for the first two making periods only; the minimum failing average of fifty would be used in calculating the final average.

Middle School and High School				
		Quality Points		
Numerical Grade	Letter Grade	Regular	Honors	AP (Advanced Placement)
97-100	A+	4.3	4.8	5.3
93-96	A	4.0	4.5	5.0
90-92	A-	3.7	4.2	4.7
87-89	B+	3.3	3.8	4.3
83-86	B	3.0	3.5	4.0
80-82	B-	2.7	3.2	3.7
77-79	C+	2.3	2.8	3.3
73-76	C	2.0	2.5	3.0
70-72	C-	1.7	2.2	2.7
65-69	D	1.0	1.5	2.0
64 or below	F	0	0	0

Grades, when averaged, are rounded off as follows:

- a. .1 through .4 is dropped.
- b. .5 through .9 is raised to the next whole number.



H. Standards-Based Performance Objective Indicators for Students in Kindergarten-5th Grade

The purpose of standards-based grading (SBG) is to have students' grades reflect their understanding of the academic content outlined in the New Jersey Department of Education's Student Learning Standards. SBG bases a student's grade on concept understanding, not on homework, class participation, or practice. This means that grades will be based solely on assessments which will provide a more accurate picture of a student's learning, and will promote a dialogue of how the student can master the material in the class. Courses using standards-based grading will identify major standards for each trimester. The number of standards for each course will vary. These targets are aligned with state accountability benchmarks and will be used to track student performance. In addition, classroom activities and assessments will be aligned with these targets.

The marks which appear on the report cards are not averaged. These marks reflect the student's achievement level at the end of each trimester on the individual standards.

The following assessment guidelines should be adhered to:

1. Students will receive formative and summative evaluations that measure their progress on each learning target and standard. A student's academic grade at the end of each trimester will be based on his/her level of mastery as evidenced on the appropriate rubric.
2. Assessments, formal and informal, are a measure of student understanding of materials, and therefore will make up 100% of a student's grade. Assessments may include, but are not limited to, quizzes, tests, classwork assignments, anecdotal notes, teacher observation, and projects. Assessments are aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and reflect the district approved curriculum.
3. Learning behaviors (collaboration, work ethic, personal responsibility), homework and class participation are reported separately and are not to be factored into academic grades.



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4. All teachers who teach the same subject/grade level should use approximately the same number and similar types of assessment devices during a trimester.
5. The following grading scales and indicators shall be used:

Elementary School Performance Indicators	
ES	Exceeds Standards: Student consistently grasps, applies, and extends key concepts, processes, and skills. Works beyond standards.
MS	Meets Standards: Student grasps and applies key concepts, processes, and skills. Meets standards.
AS	Approaching Standards: Student is beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills. Approaching standards.
NS	Needs Support: Student is not grasping key concepts, processes, and essential skills. Area of concern.
X	Not Assessed at this Time
Curriculum modifications are factored into this evaluation if a student is eligible.	
Grading for Effort	
C	Consistently
U	Usually
S	Sometimes
N	Not Yet

3. A grade of “Incomplete” will be given to those students unable to complete the work assigned to the course for reasons beyond the student’s control, such as the student’s disability.
 - a. A teacher who submits a grade of incomplete will accompany the grade with a reasonable estimate of the amount of time the student



will require to complete the work necessary for the granting of credit.

- b. Except as may be required by unusual circumstances, make up work should be completed within two weeks of the end of the marking period or, if the student is disabled at the end of the marking period, two weeks after the student's return to school.
- c. The student's completed work will be graded and the teacher will submit a grade, which will replace the incomplete grade on the student's transcript.
- d. A student who does not complete the work within the period allowed will receive a grade of F in the subject.

I. Evaluation Feedback

1. Student

- a. Course objectives and the teacher's grading system should be made clear to each student, and he/she should be given continuous feedback on the quality of his/her work. The purpose of such feedback should be to assist the student in attaining each objective of the unit of instruction, not to tell the student where he/she ranks in relation to others. When the student is experiencing learning difficulties, the teacher should confer with the student in advance of the end of the reporting period to bring about improvements and minimize the chances of a continuing problem. At that time, teachers should reexamine instructional strategies, request specialist consultation, or refer the student to the educational management team, as appropriate.
- b. Evaluation activities will be based on materials covered in the subject.
- c. All graded work will be routinely returned to students within a reasonable amount of time for reviewing achievement and progress. Any unreturned graded student work will be kept on file by the teacher for possible review for a minimum of one year.



d. Students have the right and responsibility to be informed of their grade at all times. Teachers will be given reasonable time to respond to the student.

2. Parents

a. Parents will be informed of the general objectives of each subject by the school. Parents will be apprised of learning difficulties through the reporting system and by conferences as needed. A conference with the parent is encouraged when there is a marked difference in student achievement from the previous reporting period, such as a decrease of more than one letter grade. Conferencing with parents is encouraged beyond the minimum conference provisions of this regulation so that parents may be aware of the student's progress at all levels.

3. Progress Reports

a. Progress reports for all students will be issued mid-marking period. In addition, student assessment information will be available to all parents in the Parent Portal.

J. Grade Reporting System

1. The philosophy of the Board is to utilize a grade reporting system in which there is continuity between grade levels while ensuring a strong standards-based reporting approach at the earliest stages of a pupil's education. Beginning in the 2016 – 2017 school year, the Board established a standards-based grade reporting system in grades K – 5. The achievement levels for pupils in grades K-5 shall be reported as: Needs Support, Approaching Standards, Meets Standards, or Exceeds Standards as assessed by district defined rubrics.

2. In grades 6-12, the Board will utilize an adopted letter grade reporting system that is based upon set numerical grade ranges. The grades of sixty-five (65) to one hundred (100) are passing grades. While it is the primary purpose of a reporting system to reflect accurately pupil achievement and progress, the system is also intended to be motivational. The Board therefore has established that for the first two marking periods only; the minimum failing average of 50 would be used in calculating the final



average. Each numerical marking period grade shall be weighted evenly and averaged into a final grade for each course.

K. Grade Validation

In order that he/she may justify a grade, each teacher is directed to retain in his/her possession the following records to validate grades awarded to students. The records should be kept for a minimum of six years after the end of the school year in which the grades were awarded.

1. The daily attendance and tardiness record;
2. All grades earned for classroom activities such as quizzes, tests, reports, and class recitations;
3. All grades earned for activities conducted elsewhere, such as homework assignments and term papers;
4. Any notation regarding the meaning of each grade and its relation to the type of activity or material covered;
5. Any notation of discussions with the student on a grade or the student's cumulative grade average;
6. Any referrals for guidance, discipline, and the like; and
7. Any notations recording communications between the teacher and the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), the Principal, or other teaching staff members.

L. Appeal

1. Each teacher is responsible for the determination of the grade a student receives for participation in the teacher's course of study.
2. Each teacher may be required to furnish reasons, supported by evidence (see paragraph K above) to substantiate any grade earned.



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3. If a grade is challenged by a student or a parent(s) or legal guardian(s), the teacher will convene a conference and will explain the grading system and the reasons for the final grade.
4. If the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or student is not satisfied by the teacher's explanations, he/she may appeal the grade to the Principal, who will consult with the teacher and the student in an attempt to resolve the dispute. The Principal will give every reasonable deference to the teacher's professional judgment.
5. If the Principal determines that the grade should be changed, he/she will alter the grade on all records and indicate by whose authority the grade has been changed.
6. No reprisals will be taken in any form against a teacher who remains determined in his/her belief that the grade originally given is fair and correct.
7. The Superintendent may hear an appeal from the Principal's determination. Only in the most extraordinary circumstances will the Superintendent alter a grade determined at the school building level.

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