



A Guide for Families | The Secondary Report Card

In Council Bluffs Schools, we believe that grades reflect mastery and serve as a communication tool for students, parents, teachers, and postsecondary schools. As a result of a transparent and consistent grading process, students will be able to evaluate their learning and set personal goals to attain the district learning targets and communicate achievement status to interested stakeholders.

This will be accomplished through

- the use of a wide variety of quality assessments that meet rigorous design criteria to communicate progress on learning targets.
- effective methods for documenting and preserving evidence of student learning.
- a student's active engagement in the assessment and grading process by understanding learning targets, monitoring their progress, and communicating their learning to teachers and parents.

We also believe that learning occurs at different times and in different ways for students. Students may need multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery through a wide variety of assessments throughout the duration of a course.

Grading Requirements & Practices

The Council Bluffs Community School District uses a grading system designed to provide students and parents with comprehensive feedback on academic progress. Grades serve as an indicator of a student's demonstrated mastery of course content and application of acquired skills. Letter grades on the final report represent a student's overall achievement in relation to course or grade-level standards. The table below outlines the components used to evaluate student performance.

Grades are based on student achievement in categories designated as performance and practice.			
Category	% of grade	Description	Recovery & Retakes
Performance Grades	60	Performance grades assess a student's ability to apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate mastery of course or grade-level standards. These evaluations reflect a student's capacity to execute tasks and engage in activities that showcase their understanding.	Students are allowed to recover a failing performance grade at the teacher's discretion. Students are allowed to retake a performance grade, however, it must be completed no later than one week prior to the end of the grading term (i.e. semester). Teachers do have discretion to extend the deadline.
Practice Grades	40	Practice grades measure a student's progress in developing the knowledge and skills necessary for mastery. These grades reflect engagement in learning activities that prepare students for performance assessments.	Students are allowed to recover a practice grade up until the end of the unit.

We acknowledge the importance of skills such as attendance, effort, engagement, and attitude in fostering student success. While these behaviors are not assigned letter grades, their development is encouraged through feedback and collaboration with families.



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Understanding the Academic Scale

The chart below provides details of the grading descriptors used to evaluate a student's academic progress. They reflect the student's demonstrated understanding and application of grade-level standards. The descriptors outline the key skills and knowledge expected at each level, offering insights into how the student is progressing in their coursework. Understanding these descriptors will help to interpret the student's grades and support their academic growth.

Final Grade	Scale	Descriptors	
A	3.20-4.00	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student demonstrates a <u>mastery-level understanding</u> of grade-level standards. The student independently, or with designated supports, performs the skills at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is expected for grade-level standards. The student flexibly applies knowledge in varied situations, extending their understanding beyond the core curriculum.
B	2.4-3.19	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student demonstrates a <u>proficient understanding</u> of grade-level standards. The student *performs the skills at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is expected for grade-level standards. The student applies knowledge in varied situations within the core curriculum but demonstrates limited extension beyond it.
C	1.6-2.39	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student demonstrates a <u>basic understanding</u> of grade-level standards. The student *performs the skills at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is at a basic level for grade-level standards. The student is developing the ability to apply knowledge in varied situations within the core curriculum.
D	.80-1.59	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student demonstrates <u>minimal understanding</u> of grade-level standards. The student is *unable to apply knowledge in simple situations within the core curriculum and demonstrates significant gaps in understanding.
F	0-.79	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student demonstrates <u>little to no understanding</u> of concepts and/or grade-level standards or does not attempt.

*Students' grades will reflect their understanding of the content, and the use of designated supports such as language scaffolds, language supports, modifications and/or accommodations will not negatively impact grading.

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Report Card Frequently Asked Questions

My child received a P* on the grade report. What does this mean?

The P* grade is a specific designation used to address situations where attendance significantly impacts a student's ability to demonstrate mastery in a high school level credit-bearing course. It serves as a tool to acknowledge the challenges posed by excessive absences while still providing a record of course completion. A P* grade is included in the GPA calculation and carries the weight of a D, which is equivalent to 1 credit point. Courses scored as P* have the potential to lower a student's GPA. A student may file an appeal with the building administrator regarding a decision to apply the designation of P*.

My child's grade changed after the reporting period ended. Why?

Grade changes provide a structured process for students to address incomplete coursework or demonstrate improvement after the conclusion of a term. The teacher, in conjunction with the student, determined a responsible timeframe for work completion beyond the end of the term. This procedure allows for extended learning opportunities and ensures that final grades accurately reflect a student's demonstrated abilities.

What is a grade point average (GPA)?

Grade Point Average (GPA) is a standardized measure of a student's academic performance calculated using semester letter grades. It serves as a key indicator of achievement for students, parents, and postsecondary institutions. Semester letter grades (A, B, C, D, F and P*) are used to determine grade point averages as indicated in the scale below. Pass (P)/No Credit (NC) are not Included in GPA calculation.

- A = 4.0
- B = 3.0
- C = 2.0
- D = 1.0
- F = 0.0
- P* = 1.0

Students who are enrolled in Concurrent Enrollment (CE) and/or Advanced Placement (AP) Courses will have their grade point raised by 1.0. For example, if a student received an A in the course, which is equal to 4.0 grade points, the grade points would then be raised to a 5.0. The high school grade points assigned to CE and AP courses will be adjusted at the end of each semester.

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I noticed there has been a change in the GPA scale. What does that mean for my child?

While the letter grades [A, B, C, D, F] remain the same, the GPA ranges associated with each letter grade have been slightly adjusted and now feature a consistent interval. More importantly, we've added clear descriptions of what your child demonstrates at each level of understanding. The refined GPA ranges, with their equal intervals, align with the detailed descriptions of learning. You can now see not just a letter grade, but also a description of what that grade signifies in terms of your child's understanding and application of the course content. This provides more meaningful feedback on their academic progress and areas where they are excelling or may need additional support.

My child shared that he received a score of 2 on an assignment. The top score on the chart above is a 4. Does that mean he has a score of 50%?

The 0-4 scale may create a misconception for students and parents. Educators use the rubric to score each assignment based on the descriptors, not the percentage correct on the assignment. Educators remain focused on the learning standard to determine where the student falls in his or her learning according to the descriptors. An educator will ask themselves, what level of understanding did the student demonstrate on the standard?

Here is an example: A student receives a score of 2 on an assignment. According to the rubric descriptors, this indicates that the student has a basic understanding of the standard and/or is developing the ability to apply knowledge in varied situations. The educator places a 2 in the Gradebook. The 2 placed in the gradebook does not indicate that the student knew 50% of the content (i.e. 2 out of 4; or received a percentage score of 50%). The 2 tells the student, educator, and parent/guardian that the student is at a basic level of understanding and will need additional practice with the standard to achieve deeper mastery.

How do I talk with my child about his progress report?

It's important that conversations about school reflect the fact that learning is a process. Some concepts, understandings, and skills are easier or more difficult to grasp than others. Providing students multiple opportunities to learn and practice under the direction of expert teaching, in combination with support at home, will ensure progress. It is important that adults help children recognize and celebrate their efforts and progress toward specific learning goals. Families are encouraged to collaborate with their child's teachers for specific strategies to support learning.



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My child didn't have letter grades in elementary. How can I help her adjust to this new reporting system?

The elementary Progress Report focused on the learning process by articulating successful learning behaviors in addition to academic skills and content. Students who understand the learning process from initial learning to proficiency have developed an awareness of their own strengths and learning preferences. Success in middle school and beyond is largely influenced by a student's understanding of this process. With the transition to letter grades in middle school, the teaching staff will help her to understand how academic achievements are reflected in secondary grading policies and practices.

How do I access my child's report card?

In order to access the progress report, it is necessary to create a PowerSchool Parent/Guardian Portal Account. Once created, parents/guardians will have access to view the report. If a Portal Account has been created, parents/guardians can sign in and navigate to the Grades and Attendance tab. Directions on establishing a Parent/Guardian Portal Account can be found [here](#).