



# Secondary Grading Guidelines 2026-2027

As a district, we believe we should meet students at their instructional levels and move them to the next level through rigorous and challenging coursework aligned with each student's individual needs. Additionally, we want to communicate as clearly and often as possible about how each child is doing and our expectations for student success. Specifically, we believe students, teachers, and parents are partners in the learning process and everyone involved needs to understand where each student is performing academically and how to help them reach their individual goals. In this endeavor to begin the shift to mastery-based assessment practices in order to provide more accurate information (grades) to parents and students about a student's knowledge/mastery of grade level content, we have developed a set of district-wide assessment and grading practices for students in grades 6-12. Based on research and best practices, mastery has been defined as a grade of 80 or above.

## **Grade Categories and Weights:**

| Grading Category                 | Grading Weights      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Check for Understanding/Homework | 5% of quarter grade  |
| Formative Assessments            | 35% of quarter grade |
| Summative Assessments            | 60% of quarter grade |

**Note: At the beginning of the year, a teacher may choose to opt out of the Check for Understanding/HW category, which would result in a grading scale of 40% formative and 60% summative. Teachers will decide this at the beginning of the year and seek administrator approval.**

## **Assessment Definitions & Descriptions:**

- **Check for Understanding/Homework (CFU/HW): 5%**

**CFU:**

- Assignments used to guide instruction and the instructional needs of students (i.e., exit tickets, homework; and/or verbal and written responses, etc.)
- Graded for completion
- Given at the teacher's discretion

**Homework:** (Per [ECSD School Board Policy IKB](#) )

Assigned homework should be a quality learning opportunity that prepares students for engaging learning experiences and provides opportunities for students to practice necessary skills to reinforce learning outside of the classroom.

The following practices will be applied to homework assignments:

- Graded for completion;
  - A continuation of classwork, unfinished classwork or reinforcement of skills/content;
  - May be assigned at any time based on instructional needs; and
  - Assigned homework grades will be included in the CFU/HW category which is weighted 5%;
  - The following will be considered when assigning homework:
    - online/offline resources,
    - paper/pencil options,
    - resources at home, and
    - support at home.
  - Dual Credit courses will follow the homework policy of the host university or technical college.
- **Formative Assessments: 35%**
    - Formative assessments are defined as assessments for students to practice and to inform instructional steps towards mastery of standards/skills. (i.e., quizzes, initial drafts, minor lab assignments, and other practice assignments, etc.)
      - **Q1-Q3: Students will have between 6-12 formative assignments per nine weeks**
      - **Q4: Students will have between 4-10 formative assessments**
- **Summative Assessments: 60%**
    - Summative assessments are defined as “end performance” assessments that are used to determine student mastery of a set of standards and/or skills. (i.e., tests, final drafts of writing assignments, projects, major lab assignments, performance assessments, and presentations, etc.)
      - **Q1-Q3: Students will have between 3-5 summative assessments per nine weeks**
      - **Q4: Students will have between 2-4 summative assessments**

### Grading Practices:

- All assignments must be converted to a 100 point scale prior to being recorded in the gradebook.
- Assignments will only be entered into Gradebook one time and may not be duplicated or recorded more than once.
- Teachers use professional judgment when designing their assessments in order to effectively promote learning for each student and to determine if reassessment is most appropriate to accurately reflect the student's mastery of the learning objectives.
- Retakes
  - Any summative may be retaken if the original score is below an 80 **and** the student completes remediation/tutoring.
  - Students can be disqualified from a retake if any of the following occurred:
    - Cheating/Plagiarism (*see Academic Integrity Guidelines below for more detail*)
    - First attempt was incomplete or unsatisfactory (student left items blank, wrote IDK, etc.)

- Formatives have been consistently turned in past deadlines
  - Student has not participated in class (sleeping, refusal to complete assignments, etc)
- Students must make arrangements with the teacher within 5 school days of grade being posted in PowerSchool and must retake summative assessment within 10 school days of the grade being posted in PowerSchool. Students maintain eligibility for retakes on assignments and assessments in which grades are not posted by the teacher in the required timeframe. See final bullet of this section for teacher deadlines to post grades.
- The retake should be scored for accuracy. The accurate grade should be recorded. Since research indicates that a minimum score of 80 represents mastery, and in an effort to maintain the integrity of strong work ethic while also checking for mastery, **the maximum grade that can be earned on a retake is an 80**. The retake grade should replace the original grade if it is higher than the original grade.
  - This means that a student scoring anything between 80-100 on the retake would be a final grade of 80.
- High School Credit Final Exams and Major Projects are excluded from retakes.
- Teachers have the discretion on whether or not to offer retakes on any formative assessments, following the same criteria for summative retakes.
- For students with disabilities, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to administer retakes. Retakes should not be given to the Resource/Special Education teacher to administer, as their time **must** be spent providing services outlined in the student's IEP.
- **Whole-Class Reteaching & Reassessment**
  - If **50% or more** of students in a class section fail a major summative assessment, it is flagged as a *Systemic Instructional Mismatch*, triggering the following action steps:
    - 1. Pause & Reflect**
      - **Hold Grades:** Delay entering final failing marks into PowerSchool.
      - **Alert Administration** per school process
      - **Analyze Data:** Pinpoint the specific standards or question types where the breakdown occurred to evaluate instruction (pacing, clarity, or depth).
    - 2. Reteach (In-Class)**
      - **Tier 1 Time:** Dedicate standard class time to re-teaching the failed concepts. Remediation *cannot* be shifted to before or after school.
      - **New Strategies:** incorporate different instructional strategies while maintaining fidelity to rigor of standards and required high quality instructional materials.
    - 3. Reassess & Record**
      - **Alternative Format:** Administer a new version of the assessment that tests the same standards and rigor using different questions or prompts. This alternate assessment should be collectively developed by teachers of the same course to maximize consistency.

- **Shared Accountability:** The teacher provides the in-class instruction and opportunity; the student is responsible for actively participating and completing the new assessment.
  - **Final Grade:** Record the higher of the two scores (up to 100%)
  - This Alternative assessment counts as the retake. No additional retakes would be given to individual students who did not pass the alternative.
  - If 50% or more of the students continue to fail the summative reassessment, the teacher should reach out to administration.
- Extra credit and group grades will not be given.
  - Final grades at the end of quarter, semester, and year should reflect the grade earned.
  - Grades/Feedback should be provided to students and entered into Powerschool grade book within **seven** school days of due date or assessment. An exception will be made when a student is absent and [Policy JH](#) has been applied for makeup work purposes and/or Whole-Class reteaching and reassessment must occur.

### **Deadlines**

- If Absent:
  - Students must make arrangements with the teacher within 5 school days of returning to school and complete work within 10 school days.
- If Present and assignment is not submitted (late work):
  - For graded assignments, a grace period of 1 school day will be given (after one day, teacher discretion will apply)
  - If work is not submitted by the teacher's deadline, assignment will drop a letter grade each day after; the highest grade will be a 50;
  - If assignment is still not submitted, the zero stays;
  - Grades are final when quarter is locked.

*\*It is the school's responsibility to provide time **within the school day** and outside of the school day for remediation and tutoring. Procedures should be in place to notify parents of these opportunities and communicate progress (or concerns) at various times throughout the year including Parent Portal, Interims, Report Cards and individual student notifications as needed (Ex. phone calls or emails). If a student is performing below grade level standards, parents should be informed and kept abreast, prior to the interim and/or report card distribution.*

# Academic Integrity Guidelines

## Academic Integrity:

- is a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and principled practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
- is further defined as respect for the intellectual property of others and submission of only authentic pieces of work with the ideas of others fully acknowledged
- supports a school-wide culture of integrity by not aiding or encouraging others to be academically dishonest.

It is absolutely essential that all assignments—written, oral, digital, or artistic—completed by a student for assessment completely and authentically use the student’s own language and expression. Any sources used or referred to—whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase—must be fully and appropriately acknowledged or cited. This includes content generated by AI tools. Students must ensure that any AI-generated content is used ethically, with clear acknowledgment of its use, and not presented as their own original work. There will be a series of consequences for students who are academically dishonest.

In light of the growing role of AI in education, it is equally vital for schools and teachers to continue to educate themselves about AI technologies and their implications. These guidelines will help educators guide students in understanding the ethical use of AI, ensuring that they can navigate these tools responsibly. By fostering an environment of integrity and ethical use of technology, educators can better prepare students for the challenges of the digital age.

## The Role of the School

- The school will promote these guidelines through its website and student handbook and will revisit it annually to make sure it is updated and accurate.
- This topic will be addressed in-depth in at least one core academic area at the start of each school year.

## Teachers are expected to:

- provide sufficient guidance and instruction for students on what constitutes academic dishonesty in their subject area and how it can be avoided,
- provide guidance about how to conduct research and appropriately cite evidence,
- teach students the difference between collaboration and collusion,
- include subject-specific language about academic dishonesty in their syllabi,
- confirm that, to the best of their knowledge and using available technologies, all students’ work accepted or submitted is the authentic work of each student,
- reflect on why students might be tempted to be academically dishonest in their courses and to avoid creating situations that tend to encourage academic dishonesty,
- teach the importance of deadlines and adherence to them
- use provided technologies (i.e. Classwize Focus) during testing situations to lock down devices to minimize temptation for academic dishonesty.

## Student Roles and Responsibilities

The academically honest student

DOES:

- understand the concept of academic honesty, intellectual property and plagiarism,
- ensure that all work submitted for assessment is authentic,
- understand the consequences of committing academic misconduct, regarding both school-based work and external examinations and assessments,
- document source material formally and appropriately
- use direct quotations, paraphrases and summaries in an appropriate manner,
- bring the effort of others who cheat to the attention of school officials; actively support honesty among classmates “if you see something, say something,”
- abide by the rules for technology in the classroom and in examinations,
- contribute equally to the work of a group in collaborative assignments, and
- abide by exam rules.

The academically honest student

DOES NOT:

- copy another student’s work,
- allow another student to copy his/her work and/or submit it,
- use notes during a test unless allowed by the teacher or permitted by the examination rules,
- copy from or communicate with another student during a test,
- disrupt an examination or distract other students,
- impersonate another student,
- write essays for other students,
- do homework for other students,
- steal examination papers
- present material written by another student and/or borrowed from the internet as his/her own,
- purchase and submit pieces written by someone else,
- write down, photograph or record any part of a test or exam.
- use AI beyond the explicit directions from the teacher to create or complete specific assignments

## **Definitions**

### **Academic Honesty:**

- is a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
- is further defined as respect for the intellectual property of others and submission of only authentic pieces of work with the ideas of others fully acknowledged
- supports a school-wide culture of integrity by not aiding or encouraging others to be academically dishonest.

**Authentic Work** - based on a student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged.

**Cheating** - using unauthorized answers or sources to receive credit for school work.

**Collaboration** - loosely defined as: working together on a common aim with shared information. This is an open and cooperative behavior that does not result in collusion (see below for definition).

**Collusion** - defined as supporting academic dishonesty by another student, including allowing one's work to be copied or submitted by another or any cooperative act intended to cheat or deceive others.

**Duplication of Work** - the presentation of the same work for different assignments, assessment components or other requirements.

**Intellectual Property** - includes different forms of property rights; such as: patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyright. It is important that students understand that all forms of intellectual and creative expression must be respected and are protected by national and international laws. This includes illegal music and video downloads and illegal file sharing.

### **Misconduct during Examinations**

- when a student tries to gain an unfair advantage during an examination that affects the results of that student or another student. Some examples are:
- students have unauthorized materials during exams (cell phones, wearable technology, textbooks, cheat sheets, writing on hands/arms, etc.)
- disobeying any classroom or test room rules during exams
- a student communicates or tries to communicate with another student during an examination
- copying another student's work during an exam

**Plagiarism** - the representation of the ideas or work of another person as a student's own, including copying text or works of art without proper acknowledgment. This act can be intentional or unintentional. Work is defined as, but not limited to, a quote, a phrase, complex idea, research, table, chart, graphic, text, internet resource, paper or thesis. Paraphrasing any of the above without proper citation is also plagiarism.

- when quoting others, students should develop the habit of using quotation marks to indicate that the wording is not their own, otherwise they will commit plagiarism.
- some examples are:
- copying information from a book or website without using quotation marks and without using a bibliography at the end of the assignment listing the sources used,
- translating text from the internet into another language to use in his/her work without acknowledging the source,
- copying a work of art or music without acknowledging the source,
- paraphrasing without citing the source(s).

\* subject-specific examples of plagiarism will be supplied by teachers.

## Consequences

### 1st violation:

The 1st violation is generally addressed by school staff members when a student has no prior violations. The staff response teaches correct, alternative behavior so students can learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behavior. Staff members are expected to use a variety of teaching and management strategies. Interventions aim to correct and teach alternative behavior so students can learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behavior.

The Teacher will:

- collect concrete evidence of academic misconduct
- confirm with administrator that this is the student's first academic misconduct violation
- address the misconduct with the student
- speak with the parent/guardian
- refer the student to the proper administrator and indicate if administrative follow-up is needed
- Input "Cheating" in Simpldiscipline as a "note" and give the task a zero with the option to re-do (Excluding Semester and Final Exams). Semester and Final exams will not have the option to re-do for academic misconduct.
  - Re-do Guidelines:
    - Re-do will be a different task covering the same standards
    - Student would earn highest grade of a 60
    - Occur within 5 school days student/parent notification

The Administrator will:

- confirm that this is the student's first instance of academic misconduct
- record the misconduct in the student information system
- if requested by teacher, follow up on the teacher referral and conference with the student

The Student will:

- provide a written reflection/apology to the teacher prior to re-do
- re-do the task, if student chooses to, otherwise be assigned a grade of zero

### 2nd/3rd violation:

Second and subsequent violations will result in interventions and/or disciplinary responses that involve the school administration. These actions aim to correct behavior by stressing the seriousness of the behavior while keeping the student in school.

The Teacher will:

- collect concrete evidence of academic misconduct
- confirm with administrator that this is not the student's first academic misconduct violation
- address the misconduct with the student
- Input a referral for "Cheating" in Simpldiscipline and give the task a zero. **The student may not re-do the task.**
- refer the student to the proper administrator and request follow-up

The Administrator will, due to multiple offenses:

- confirm that this is the student's second or third instance of academic misconduct
- record the misconduct in the student information system
- follow up on the teacher referral and conference with the student
- communicate with parent/guardian and reiterate that the student may not re-do the task.
- assign appropriate consequences according to the ECSD Code of Conduct

The Student will:

- accept that **s/he cannot re-do the task** since this is the repeat violation
- provide a written reflection/apology to the teacher