

H.E. McCracken Middle School
Bulldog Grading Handbook

Principal's Message

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe every student can learn, grow, and achieve at high levels. Grading is one of the most important ways we communicate learning, and with that comes a responsibility to ensure our practices are fair, consistent, transparent, and centered on student growth.

Whether you are a teacher, parent, or student, this handbook is intended to provide a shared understanding of how grades are determined, communicated, and used to support learning. By working together with common expectations, we create an environment where every Bulldog has the opportunity to succeed.

Purpose

The H.E. McCracken Middle School Bulldog Grading Handbook is designed to provide students, families, and staff with a shared understanding of how learning is assessed, how grades are determined, and how academic progress is communicated throughout the school year.

The mission of H.E. McCracken Middle School is to build on the academic foundation of diverse learners and establish high expectations for contributing, independent, and collaborative members of an ever-increasing technologically driven society. Our grading practices support this mission by ensuring that grades accurately communicate student learning, encourage academic growth, and provide meaningful feedback throughout the learning process.

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe grading is more than assigning a score—it is an opportunity to communicate progress, celebrate growth, identify areas for support, and strengthen the partnership among students, families, and educators. Effective grading practices promote transparency, encourage student ownership of learning, and provide timely information that supports academic success.

This handbook outlines the school-based grading practices that align with Beaufort County School District Administrative Regulations IS-43 and IS-48, as well as applicable South Carolina law. While district policy establishes the expectations for grading and assessment, this handbook explains how those expectations are implemented at H.E. McCracken Middle School to ensure consistency across classrooms and a shared understanding among students, families, and staff.

By establishing common grading practices, H.E. McCracken Middle School is committed to maintaining high expectations, promoting equitable learning experiences, fostering open communication, and ensuring that grades remain an accurate reflection of student learning.

Bulldog Family Connection

Our goal is for every student and family to understand how grades are determined and how they support learning. This handbook is intended to answer your questions, explain our grading practices, and strengthen the partnership between home and school. We encourage families to use this handbook as a resource throughout the school year and to reach out to teachers or school administrators whenever questions arise. Together, we can support every Bulldog's academic growth and success.

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Who Should Use This Handbook?

Students

- Understand how grades are calculated.
- Know what is expected for assignments and assessments.
- Learn how to seek help and improve academic performance.

Families

- Understand how student progress is communicated.
- Know when to expect updates from teachers.
- Learn how to partner with the school to support student success.

Teachers

- Maintain consistent grading practices aligned with district expectations.
- Communicate student progress in a timely and meaningful manner.
- Collaborate with colleagues to ensure equitable learning experiences for all students.

Our Commitment

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe assessment is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. Effective assessment provides meaningful information about student learning, guides instructional decisions, and supports continuous growth for every student. Our grading practices are grounded in the belief that grades should accurately reflect a student's demonstrated proficiency on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards while providing timely, meaningful feedback to students and families.

Our commitment extends beyond assigning grades. We are committed to creating a culture where assessment supports learning, feedback promotes growth, and consistent grading practices provide students and families with a clear understanding of academic progress. Through collaboration, communication, and high expectations, we strive to ensure every Bulldog has the opportunity to succeed.

Bulldog Expectations

To ensure consistency, equity, and transparency across every classroom, H.E. McCracken Middle School is committed to the following expectations:

We are committed to grades that communicate learning. Grades will accurately reflect what students know and are able to do based on grade-level standards and learning targets.

We are committed to using assessment to improve instruction. Assessment results will guide instructional decisions, identify learning needs, provide timely intervention, and celebrate student growth.

We are committed to meaningful feedback. Students will receive timely, specific, and actionable feedback that helps them understand their progress, recognize areas for improvement, and take ownership of their learning.

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We are committed to consistency. Students and families will experience common expectations for grading, assessment, feedback, and communication regardless of the classroom or teacher.

We are committed to collaboration. Teachers will work together through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to develop common learning targets, design high-quality assessments, analyze student work, and share effective instructional practices that promote equitable learning experiences for all students.

We are committed to supporting every learner. Assessment will be used to provide feedback, guide reteaching, plan interventions, and create opportunities for continued academic growth—not simply to assign grades.

We are committed to strong partnerships with families. Teachers will provide regular gradebook updates, meaningful feedback, and proactive communication to ensure families remain informed and engaged as partners in their child's education.

These expectations reflect the values of H.E. McCracken Middle School and serve as the foundation of our Bulldog Grading Handbook. Together, we are committed to maintaining grading practices that are accurate, meaningful, consistent, equitable, and centered on student learning while aligning with Beaufort County School District policies and expectations.

Bulldog Family Connection

As a family, you can expect:

- Grades that accurately reflect your child's learning and progress toward grade-level standards.
- Consistent grading practices across classrooms.
- Meaningful feedback that helps your child continue to grow academically.
- Regular communication and updated grade information throughout the school year.
- Teachers who collaborate to provide equitable learning experiences and common expectations for all students.
- A school that values partnership with families and is committed to supporting every Bulldog's success.

Together, we share the responsibility of helping every Bulldog learn, grow, and achieve.

Alignment with BCSD Policy

The Beaufort County School District establishes grading and assessment expectations for all schools through Administrative Regulations IS-43 and IS-48, as well as applicable South Carolina law. H.E. McCracken Middle School is committed to implementing these expectations consistently while maintaining a student-centered approach to teaching, learning, and assessment.

While district policy establishes the "what," this handbook explains the "how." The chart below summarizes how H.E. McCracken Middle School implements district grading expectations to ensure consistency, transparency, and equitable learning experiences for all students.

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Bulldog Expectations

BCSD Expectation	McCracken Implementation
Grades reflect student proficiency on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.	Teachers will design standards-aligned assessments that measure student learning and provide meaningful feedback to support continued growth.
BCSD does not utilize a grade floor.	Student grades will be recorded as earned in accordance with district policy. Grades will not be artificially increased to meet a minimum score.
Quarter grades are calculated using a 40% formative and 60% summative weighting.	Teachers will utilize the district-approved weighting of 40% formative assessments and 60% summative assessments .
Diagnostic assessments are used to guide instruction.	Diagnostic assessments will determine students' current level of understanding and will not be included in a student's course grade.
District benchmark assessments are instructional tools.	Benchmark assessments will be used to monitor student progress, guide instructional planning, and identify intervention needs. Benchmark assessments will not be included in course grades unless otherwise permitted by district guidance.
Grades should be entered throughout the grading period to allow timely intervention.	Teachers will update PowerSchool at least weekly so students and families have an accurate picture of current academic progress.
Parents should be notified when a student's average falls below 70%.	Teachers will communicate with families at least every two weeks while a student's average remains below 70% , providing updates on progress, concerns, and available supports.
Students should have opportunities for support before the end of a grading period.	Teachers will provide timely feedback, intervention, reteaching, and academic support to help students demonstrate mastery of learning standards.
Students who do not complete required assignments may not be eligible for content or credit recovery under South Carolina law and district policy.	Teachers will communicate missing assignments promptly and partner with students and families throughout the grading period to encourage assignment completion and support student success.
Teachers use professional judgment while maintaining consistency.	Teachers will implement common school expectations while exercising professional judgment to meet the individual needs of students within district guidelines.

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Bulldog Family Connection

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, our grading practices are aligned with Beaufort County School District policies and South Carolina law. While the district establishes grading expectations, our goal is to implement them in ways that are consistent, transparent, and centered on student learning.

As a family, you can expect:

- Grades that accurately reflect your child's demonstrated learning and progress toward grade-level standards.
- Weekly updates to PowerSchool so you can monitor your child's academic progress throughout the grading period.
- Communication from teachers at least every two weeks if your child's average falls below 70%, including information about concerns and available supports.
- Meaningful feedback that helps students understand their strengths, areas for growth, and next steps for improvement.
- Consistent grading practices across classrooms that provide equitable expectations for all students.
- A continued partnership between home and school to support every Bulldog's academic success.

Understanding Grades

Assessment is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. At H.E. McCracken Middle School, assessments are used to measure student learning, provide meaningful feedback, guide instructional decisions, and monitor progress toward mastery of the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.

Student grades are intended to reflect demonstrated learning and proficiency on grade-level standards. Throughout each grading period, students participate in a variety of assessments that allow them to demonstrate their understanding, apply their learning, and receive meaningful feedback. Assessments also provide teachers with valuable information to guide instruction, provide intervention when needed, and celebrate student growth.

In accordance with Beaufort County School District Administrative Regulation IS-43, quarter grades are calculated using two assessment categories:

Assessment Category	Weight
Formative Assessments → Learning along the way (practice, checks for understanding, quizzes)	40%
Summative Assessments → Showing what you know (tests, projects, essays, presentations)	60%

This balance allows students to demonstrate their progress throughout learning while also showing mastery of standards after instruction has occurred.

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Formative Assessments (40%)

Formative assessments are used throughout instruction to monitor student learning, provide feedback, and guide instructional decisions. In accordance with district guidance, formative assessments may be graded only when they assess content that has already been taught and are designed to measure progress toward identified learning standards.

Examples of formative assessments include, but are not limited to:

- Quizzes
- Classwork
- Exit tickets
- Warm-ups
- Journals or notebooks
- Skills practice
- Learning checks
- Classroom discussions
- Draft writing assignments
- Teacher conferences

Summative Assessments (60%)

Summative assessments are administered after instruction has occurred and measure a student's demonstrated proficiency on the standards taught during a unit of study.

Examples of summative assessments include, but are not limited to:

- Unit or chapter tests
- Major projects
- Research papers
- Essays
- Performance tasks
- Presentations
- Laboratory investigations
- Common assessments
- Performances
- Culminating writing assignments

Diagnostic Assessments

Diagnostic assessments are administered before or at the beginning of instruction to determine students' current knowledge, strengths, and areas for growth. Diagnostic assessments are used to guide instructional planning and identify student needs. Diagnostic assessments **are not** included in a student's course grade.

District Benchmark Assessments

District benchmark assessments measure student progress toward grade-level standards and are used to guide instructional planning, intervention, and enrichment. In accordance with district and state guidance, benchmark assessments are **not included** in a student's course grade unless otherwise permitted by Beaufort County School District policy.

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Assessment results should be used to provide meaningful feedback, guide instructional decisions, identify opportunities for intervention, and celebrate student growth.

Bulldog Family Connection

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, grades are designed to reflect what your child knows and is able to do—not simply the work they complete.

Here's what families should know:

- Quarter grades are calculated using 40% formative assessments and 60% summative assessments, as required by Beaufort County School District.
- Formative assessments measure learning throughout instruction and provide opportunities for feedback and growth.
- Summative assessments measure a student's understanding after instruction has occurred and make up the largest portion of the quarter grade.
- Diagnostic and district benchmark assessments help teachers plan instruction and monitor progress but are not included in your child's course grade.
- Students receive a variety of assessment opportunities throughout each grading period to demonstrate their learning.
- Assessment is intended to support student growth by providing meaningful feedback and identifying opportunities for additional support when needed.

Grading Scale

Grades are intended to provide an accurate reflection of a student's demonstrated proficiency on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards. Throughout each grading period, assessments are recorded in PowerSchool using the district-approved formative and summative assessment categories. At the end of each grading period, those assessment scores are calculated to determine the student's overall course average.

H.E. McCracken Middle School follows the Beaufort County School District grading scale for all courses.

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90–100
B	80–89
C	70–79
D	60–69
F	59 and Below

Grades are calculated based on a student's demonstrated performance on assessments and are recorded as earned in accordance with Beaufort County School District policy.

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High School Credit Courses

Qualifying seventh and eighth grade students may enroll in courses that earn high school credit, including:

- Spanish I
- Earth Science
- English I
- Algebra I
- Geometry

Students enrolled in high school credit courses are held to Beaufort County School District and South Carolina Department of Education requirements for both grading and attendance.

Students enrolled in a 1.0 credit course must attend a minimum of 120 instructional hours. Students enrolled in a 0.5 credit course must attend a minimum of 60 instructional hours.

Students who do not meet the required instructional hours must complete approved seat-time recovery in accordance with district procedures or may receive a failure due to attendance, regardless of the earned course average.

All high school credit courses include a final examination. Courses with a state-required End-of-Course (EOC) examination follow South Carolina Department of Education testing requirements.

For Algebra I, the state-required End-of-Course Examination (EOC) is administered near the end of the course and counts as 20% of the student's final course grade, as required by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Bulldog Expectations

To ensure grading remains accurate, fair, and consistent across classrooms:

- Teachers will utilize the Beaufort County School District grading scale for all courses.
- Quarter grades will be calculated using the district-approved weighting of **40% formative assessments** and **60% summative assessments**.
- Grades will be recorded as earned and will accurately reflect a student's demonstrated level of proficiency.
- Teachers of high school credit courses will follow all Beaufort County School District and South Carolina Department of Education requirements related to grading, attendance, seat-time, final examinations, and End-of-Course (EOC) testing.
- Grade calculations and reporting practices will align with Beaufort County School District Administrative Regulations IS-43 and IS-48.

Bulldog Family Connection

Understanding how grades are calculated helps families monitor student progress and support learning throughout the school year.

Here's what families should know:

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- H.E. McCracken Middle School follows the Beaufort County School District grading scale.
- Quarter grades are calculated using the district-approved **40% formative** and **60% summative** weighting.
- Grades reflect your child's demonstrated learning on classroom assessments.
- Beaufort County School District **does not utilize a grade floor**. Students earn the grades they demonstrate through their work and assessments.
- Families can monitor grades throughout the quarter through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.
- Students enrolled in high school credit courses must meet both **academic** and **attendance (seat-time)** requirements to earn high school credit.
- Parents of students enrolled in Algebra I should be aware that the **state-required End-of-Course (EOC) examination counts as 20% of the student's final course grade**.
- Questions regarding individual assignments, grade calculations, or high school credit requirements should be directed to the classroom teacher as early as possible so concerns can be addressed before the grading period ends.

Gradebook & Monitoring Student Progress

The PowerSchool gradebook is an important communication tool that provides students, families, and teachers with timely information about academic progress throughout the grading period. Rather than waiting for progress reports or report cards, the gradebook allows everyone to monitor learning, celebrate success, and identify concerns early so that support can be provided before the end of the grading period.

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe that regular communication between home and school is essential to student success. Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date gradebook promotes transparency, encourages student ownership of learning, and strengthens the partnership between families and educators.

Bulldog Expectations

To ensure consistency across all classrooms, H.E. McCracken Middle School has established the following gradebook expectations:

Gradebook Maintenance

- Teachers will update PowerSchool at least weekly throughout each grading period.
- Grades will be entered in a timely manner following the completion of assignments and assessments to provide students and families with an accurate reflection of current academic progress.
- Teachers will maintain gradebooks using the district-approved assessment categories and grading practices.

Monitoring Student Progress

- Students are encouraged to regularly review their grades in PowerSchool and communicate with their teachers regarding questions about assignments, assessments, or missing work.
- Teachers will use gradebook data to identify students who may benefit from additional instruction, intervention, or enrichment.

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- Missing assignments will be entered into the gradebook in a timely manner so students and families are aware of incomplete work and can address concerns promptly with a zero. Once completed the grade will be updated.

Communication

- Teachers will communicate with families at least every two weeks when a student's overall course average remains below 70%.
- Communication will include current academic progress, areas of concern, and available supports to help improve student achievement.
- Teachers are encouraged to communicate positive student growth and achievement throughout the school year.

Bulldog Family Connection

PowerSchool is the primary tool for monitoring your child's academic progress throughout the school year. Families are encouraged to review grades regularly and partner with teachers to support student success.

Here's what families should know:

- PowerSchool will be updated at least weekly so you have timely information about your child's academic progress.
- Missing assignments will be entered into the gradebook as a zero so you can quickly identify incomplete work.
- Teachers will communicate with families at least every two weeks when a student's average is below 70%, providing updates on progress and available supports.
- Grades may change throughout the grading period as additional assessments are completed and entered into the gradebook.
- Questions or concerns about grades should be addressed with your child's teacher as early as possible so they can be resolved before the end of the grading period.

Regular monitoring of PowerSchool and open communication between home and school help ensure every Bulldog has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.

Late & Missing Work

Completing assignments on time is an important part of the learning process and supports student success. Classroom assignments provide opportunities for students to practice new skills, receive meaningful feedback, and demonstrate their understanding of grade-level standards.

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe students are most successful when learning is completed during the instructional unit. Timely completion of assignments allows teachers to provide feedback, identify misconceptions, and offer intervention before new learning builds upon previous concepts.

While students are expected to complete assignments by the established due date, our primary goal is student learning. Therefore, opportunities to complete missing work are intended to support mastery of standards while also encouraging responsibility, organization, and timely completion of assignments.

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We believe learning is the priority, but responsibility matters. Meeting deadlines, communicating proactively, and taking ownership of one's learning are important life skills that prepare students for success both in and beyond the classroom. Our goal is to support students in developing these habits while ensuring every learner has the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency on grade-level standards.

Bulldog Expectations

To ensure consistency across classrooms, H.E. McCracken Middle School has established the following expectations:

- Teachers will clearly communicate assignment expectations, due dates, and learning targets.
- Missing assignments will be entered into PowerSchool in a timely manner as a zero so students and families are aware of incomplete work.
- Students are expected to complete all assignments by the established due date whenever possible.
- Students may submit late or missing assignments **until the end of the instructional unit**, unless otherwise prohibited by district policy or the nature of the assignment.
- Teachers will provide timely feedback and appropriate academic support to encourage successful completion of required learning.
- Teachers will communicate with students and families regarding patterns of missing work and available supports.
- In accordance with Beaufort County School District policy and South Carolina law, students who do not complete required assignments may not be eligible for content recovery or credit recovery opportunities. This means any zeros, will prevent a student from completing content recovery.
- Professional judgment may be exercised in extenuating circumstances while remaining consistent with district policy and school expectations.

Bulldog Family Connection

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe learning should remain the focus. While students are expected to complete assignments by the assigned due date, we also recognize that learning continues beyond a single day.

Here's what families should know:

- Encourage your child to complete assignments by the assigned due date.
- Students may submit late or missing assignments **until the end of the instructional unit**, allowing opportunities to demonstrate learning while instruction is still occurring.
- Missing assignments will be reflected in PowerSchool so families can monitor student progress.
- Students who consistently miss assignments may receive additional academic support and intervention.
- Students who do not complete required assignments may not be eligible for content recovery or credit recovery under South Carolina law and Beaufort County School District policy.
- Early communication between home and school provides the best opportunity to support student success.

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Together, we can help every Bulldog develop responsibility, demonstrate learning, and achieve academic success.

Academic Support, Intervention & Content Recovery

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe every student is capable of learning and achieving at high levels when provided with timely support, meaningful feedback, and appropriate intervention. Academic struggles should be addressed early through collaborative efforts among students, families, and educators to ensure students have every opportunity to demonstrate proficiency before the end of a grading period.

Intervention is not simply a response to low grades—it is an ongoing part of quality instruction. Teachers continuously monitor student progress, provide feedback, adjust instruction, and offer additional support when students experience difficulty mastering grade-level standards.

Our goal is to identify academic concerns early, provide targeted interventions, and partner with families to help every Bulldog experience success. While learning is our priority, students are expected to actively participate in the support opportunities provided and take ownership of their academic growth.

Bulldog Expectations

To support student success, H.E. McCracken Middle School is committed to the following:

- Teachers will regularly monitor student progress using classroom assessments and gradebook data.
- Students demonstrating academic difficulty will receive timely intervention, reteaching, and additional instructional support whenever appropriate.
- Teachers will provide meaningful feedback to help students understand strengths, areas for improvement, and next steps for learning.
- Families will be notified when a student's course average falls below 70% and will continue to receive communication at least every two weeks while the student's average remains below 70%.
- Teachers, counselors, interventionists, and administrators will work collaboratively to identify appropriate supports based on individual student needs.
- Students are encouraged to seek assistance, attend available academic support opportunities, and communicate with their teachers when additional help is needed.
- In accordance with Beaufort County School District policy and South Carolina law, students must complete required coursework and assignments to be eligible for content recovery or credit recovery opportunities.
- Content recovery opportunities will be provided in accordance with district guidelines and are intended to support students in demonstrating proficiency on required standards during the instructional period whenever possible.

Bulldog Family Connection

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe the best intervention happens before a student falls too far behind. We are committed to partnering with families to identify concerns early and provide the support students need to be successful.

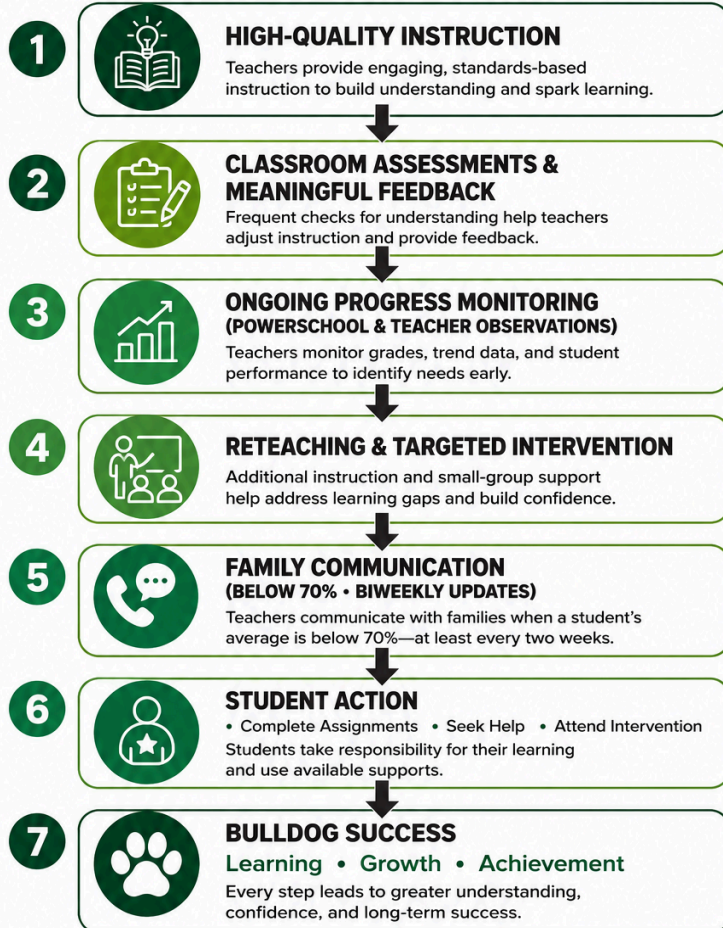
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Here's what families should know:

- Teachers regularly monitor student progress and provide additional support when students need assistance.

SUPPORT BEFORE FAILURE

Every Bulldog deserves support before academic struggles become academic failure.



At H.E. McCracken Middle School, intervention is not a last resort— it is an ongoing commitment to ensuring every Bulldog has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed. 

- Families will be contacted when a student's average falls below 70% and will continue to receive updates while concerns remain.

- Students are encouraged to ask questions, attend available academic support opportunities, and communicate with their teachers.

- Completing assignments and participating in intervention opportunities gives students the best chance to demonstrate learning and improve academically.

- Students who do not complete required coursework may not be eligible for content recovery or credit recovery under South Carolina law and Beaufort County School District policy.

- Working together—students, families, and educators—we can identify challenges early, provide meaningful support, and help every Bulldog reach their full academic potential.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of meaningful learning. At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe students demonstrate integrity by completing their own work, taking responsibility for their learning, and using available resources in honest, ethical, and appropriate ways.

As technology continues to evolve, students have access to powerful digital tools, including artificial intelligence (AI). When used responsibly, these tools can support learning, creativity, research, and problem-solving. However, technology should enhance learning—not replace thinking. Students are expected to demonstrate their own understanding and proficiency on all graded assignments and assessments.

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Our goal is to prepare students to become ethical learners, responsible digital citizens, and thoughtful users of technology. The responsible use of AI includes respecting academic integrity, protecting personal information, evaluating the accuracy of information, and following teacher expectations for each assignment.

Bulldog Expectations

To maintain academic integrity, H.E. McCracken Middle School has established the following expectations:

- Students will complete and submit their own original work unless collaboration is specifically authorized by the teacher.
- Teachers will clearly communicate expectations regarding individual work, collaboration, and the appropriate use of technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), for each assignment or assessment.
- Artificial intelligence (AI) may be used to support learning only when its use aligns with teacher expectations and district guidance. AI should enhance student learning, not replace original student thinking.
- Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all work submitted for assessment, regardless of the tools or resources used.
- Students and staff will protect personal, confidential, and district information by following Beaufort County School District technology and security expectations.
- Plagiarism, cheating, unethical or misuse of AI in reference to OS-39 No. IV Letter N regulation, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of information, or misuse of technology are inconsistent with the expectations of H.E. McCracken Middle School and will be addressed in accordance with Beaufort County School District policies and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Teachers are encouraged to model and teach ethical, responsible, and appropriate uses of technology to prepare students for success in an increasingly digital world.

Bulldog Family Connection

Technology is an important part of learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming a common tool in education and the workplace. At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe students should learn how to use these tools responsibly and ethically.

Here's what families should know:

- Students are expected to complete their own work and demonstrate their own learning.
- Teachers will communicate when technology or AI may be used for a specific assignment.
- AI should be used to support learning—not complete assignments for students.
- Students should never submit AI-generated work, copied information, or another person's work as their own.
- Families are encouraged to discuss responsible technology use, digital citizenship, and academic honesty at home.
- Students should never enter personal, confidential, or sensitive information into AI tools or websites.
- When students are unsure whether AI or another technology tool is appropriate, they should ask their teacher before using it.

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Together, we will prepare every Bulldog to become an ethical learner, a responsible digital citizen, and a confident problem solver in an ever-changing technological world.

Professional Collaboration

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, we believe every student deserves a consistent, equitable learning experience regardless of the teacher or classroom. While teachers bring individual strengths, creativity, and instructional expertise to their classrooms, collaboration ensures that all students have access to high-quality instruction, meaningful assessments, and consistent grading practices.

Professional collaboration is essential to maintaining fairness and improving student achievement. Through shared planning, ongoing reflection, and analysis of student learning, teachers work together to strengthen instruction, monitor student progress, and provide equitable opportunities for every Bulldog to succeed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Bulldog Expectations

To promote consistency and continuous improvement, H.E. McCracken Middle School is committed to the following collaborative practices:

- Teachers will actively participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- PLCs will focus on student learning, curriculum alignment, assessment design, instructional planning, and continuous improvement.
- Teachers will collaboratively develop common learning targets and standards-aligned assessments whenever appropriate.
- Teachers will analyze student work and assessment data to identify trends, celebrate success, and determine instructional next steps.
- Teachers will collaborate to provide timely intervention, enrichment, and support based on student learning needs.
- Teachers will maintain consistent grading practices that align with Beaufort County School District policies and the expectations outlined in this handbook.
- Professional collaboration will support equitable learning experiences while honoring teacher professionalism and instructional expertise.

Bulldog Family Connection

Every student deserves access to high-quality instruction and fair, consistent grading practices.

Here's what families should know:

- Teachers regularly work together to plan instruction and discuss student learning.
- Grade-level and content-area teachers collaborate to ensure students experience consistent expectations across classrooms.
- Teachers use assessment data to identify student strengths, provide additional support, and celebrate growth.

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- Collaboration helps ensure that grading practices remain fair, equitable, and aligned with district expectations.
- Our teachers are committed to continuous learning and professional growth so they can provide the best possible educational experience for every Bulldog.

By working together as professionals, we create consistent learning experiences, maintain high expectations, and support the success of every student at H.E. McCracken Middle School.

Every Bulldog. Every Day. Every Opportunity.

At H.E. McCracken Middle School, grading is more than calculating a score. It is a commitment to learning, growth, fairness, and partnership. Together, students, families, and educators share the responsibility of creating a school culture where every Bulldog is challenged, supported, and empowered to succeed.

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Together, we learn. Together, we grow. Together, we succeed.

Questions?

If you have questions regarding your child's grades or academic progress:

Teacher → First point of contact

School Counselor → Academic planning and student support

Administration → Questions regarding school grading practices or district policy

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Frequently Asked Questions

Why did my child's grade change?

Grades may change throughout the grading period as new assessments are completed and entered into PowerSchool. Because grades are intended to reflect your child's current level of proficiency on grade-level standards, averages may increase or decrease as additional evidence of learning is collected.

How often are grades updated?

Teachers will update PowerSchool at least weekly to provide students and families with timely and accurate information about academic progress.

Why isn't the benchmark in PowerSchool?

District benchmark assessments are instructional tools used to monitor student progress, guide instruction, and identify opportunities for intervention or enrichment. In accordance with Beaufort County School District guidance, benchmark assessments are not included in a student's course grade.

Can my child turn in late work?

Yes. Students are expected to complete assignments by the assigned due date; however, H.E. McCracken Middle School believes learning is the priority.

Students may submit late or missing assignments until the end of the instructional unit, unless otherwise prohibited by district policy or the nature of the assignment. Families are encouraged to communicate with teachers as soon as possible regarding missing work or extenuating circumstances.

What happens if my child's average falls below 70%?

Teachers will contact families at least every two weeks while a student's average remains below 70%. Teachers will provide information regarding academic progress, areas of concern, and available supports. Early communication allows students, families, and teachers to work together to improve student learning before the end of the grading period.

Who should I contact with questions about a grade?

Your child's classroom teacher should always be your first point of contact. Teachers can provide information about assignments, assessments, grading practices, and classroom expectations.

If additional assistance is needed after communicating with the teacher, families may contact a school counselor or school administrator.

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Can AI be used on assignments?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a valuable learning tool when used responsibly and when permitted by the teacher.

Teachers will communicate expectations regarding the use of AI for each assignment. AI should support learning—not replace original student thinking. Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all work they submit.

What is the difference between formative and summative assessments?

Formative assessments (40%) monitor learning throughout instruction and provide opportunities for feedback and growth. Examples include quizzes, classwork, exit tickets, and learning checks.

Summative assessments (60%) measure a student's demonstrated understanding after instruction has occurred. Examples include tests, projects, essays, presentations, performance tasks, and other culminating assessments.

Still Have Questions?

We're Here to Help!

We believe strong communication creates strong partnerships. If you have questions about your child's academic progress, grading, or school expectations, we encourage you to reach out.

Questions about assignments or grades? → Contact your child's teacher.

Questions about student support or academic planning? → Contact your child's school counselor.

Questions about the Bulldog Grading Handbook or school-wide grading practices? → Contact the H.E. McCracken Middle School Administration.

Together, we can ensure every Bulldog has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.