

Agenda Item #:

ITEM TYPE: Discussion

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

TITLE: Review and Update of Policy #IKAB: Grading Homework and Communicating Student Achievement Policy

DATE: August 14, 2019

OVERVIEW: Policy #IKAB: Grading Homework and Communicating Student Achievement Policy, has been updated to comply with updates to state student record requirements as set forth in COMAR 13A.08.02. Explanation and process of any grade change must be included in each school system's local policy. This policy must be submitted to MSDE by October 1, 2019.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Pillar I: Provide Multiple Pathway Opportunities for Student Success

OBJECTIVE I.i: Students exit CCPS college, career, and community ready.

Pillar II: Strengthen Productive Family and Community Partnerships

OBJECTIVE II.1: Communication between CCPS and the community demonstrates transparency, trust and respect.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

RECOMMENDATION/FUTURE DIRECTION: CCPS Staff seek approval of the BOE to review and revise policy IKAB: Grading Homework and Communicating Student Achievement Policy, in order to provide more quality control to any future grade changes in the student information system.


Submitted by:

Jason A. Anderson, Chief Academic, Equity and Accountability Officer

Approve/Concur:

Jason Anderson, Chief Academic, Equity and Accountability Officer

Steven A. Lockard, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools

	Governance Grading, Homework, and Communicating Student Achievement	Policy #	IKAB
		Implemented	5/10/77
		Reviewed/Updated	1/8/92 3/12/97 4/12/00 2/9/05 5/12/10 6/15/16 8/14/19
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Policy Owner	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction CHIEF OF ACADEMICS, EQUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	Expiration/Review	Review: every three years

Policy

1. Purpose


To establish a uniform, countywide policy that ensures consistent grading and homework practices, as well as effective communication among educators, students, and parents regarding student learning and achievement.

2. Statement

Effective communication among educators, students, and parents enhances the teaching-learning process. Issuing report card grades is an effective way to communicate a measure of student achievement of course objectives and provide feedback and guidance regarding student learning. Meaningful homework assignments can have a positive impact on student learning. It is the policy of the Board of Education that report card grades be as pure a measure as possible of student achievement in mastering content standards and course outcomes. In addition, homework assignments shall be meaningful; that is, they shall be related to course outcomes, rigorous and relevant to students, and differentiated, as appropriate, to account for individual differences among students.

3. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent/designee has the responsibility for enforcing this policy by communicating it to all relevant parties and by providing necessary instructions and/or administrative regulations to all staff members.

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Administrative Regulation

1. Purpose

The following regulations have been established to ensure consistent grading and homework practices in all Carroll County Public Schools, as well as to ensure effective communication among educators, students, and parents regarding student learning and achievement.

2. Procedures

GRADING

POLICY


Report card grades shall be as pure a measure as possible of student achievement in mastering content standards and course outcomes.

PURPOSES OF GRADES

- A. Communicate a measure of student achievement of content standards and course outcomes.
- B. Provide feedback and guidance regarding student learning.


GRADING GUIDELINES

- A. There shall be four marking periods during each school year. Report cards are issued at the end of each marking period.
- B. Grades reported on report cards shall be derived from work that measures student learning of the knowledge, skills, and competency profiles outlined in the course curriculum.
- C. When calculating student grades, more weight shall be given to summative assignments (assignments designed to evaluate student learning) than to formative assignments (assignments designed to provide practice and guide next-step

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instruction). Curriculum supervisors shall provide target formative and summative weights for each course at the middle and high school levels. Principals shall ensure that there is consistency in weighting among grade-level teams at the elementary level.

- D. All courses offered for high school credit shall administer a final assessment. The final assessment shall be comprehensive and measure student learning of the content standards and outcomes presented during the course. The final assessment grade shall be reported to parents and carry a weight of 10% of the final grade.
- E. Teachers are encouraged to provide second-chance learning opportunities (including reteaching, extra practice, and the opportunity to demonstrate learning on another assessment) for all students, regardless of their achievement level.
- F. Extra credit shall be given judiciously. If awarded, it shall be awarded only as an extension of student learning of course outcomes and not as a substitute for missed learning or as a way to accumulate points for activities not related to course outcomes.
- G. Teachers shall not assign group grades. Teachers shall assess the work and contributions of each individual student when grading collaborative assignments.
- H. Attendance, effort, volunteering in class, lateness to class, and other student compliance behaviors or disciplinary action shall not be considered when calculating student grades, unless those behaviors are specifically outlined in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or are part of the essential course outcomes stated in approved Carroll County Public Schools curriculum guides or competency profiles of Career and Technology Education programs. Student behaviors shall be reflected in the comments that teachers make on the report card, communicated to parents via phone calls, conferences, or written communications, or handled through the school's discipline procedures.
- I. Teachers shall return students' assessed work in a timely manner in order to facilitate next-step learning.

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- J. At the beginning of each course, teachers shall communicate to students and parents an overview of the course, teacher expectations, and the procedures and criteria for determining grades.
- K. Teachers shall assist students in understanding the grading process and in using assessment data, grades, and feedback to improve their levels of achievement and performance.

COMMUNICATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT


GRADES K-2

- A. Students in grades K- 2 shall receive a report card at the end of each marking period. Interim reports are issued at the mid-way point of each marking period.
- B. In grades K-2, letter grades are not used. Instead, the following notations to achievement and performance will be used:

Outstanding
Satisfactory
Needs improvement

GRADES 3-12

- A. Students in grades 3-12 shall receive a report card at the end of each marking period.
- B. The following five letter grading system to indicate student achievement and performance on work assigned shall be used:
 - A = 90% - 100%
Consistently meets curriculum standards at an outstanding level
 - B = 80% - 89%
Generally meets curriculum standards at a high level
 - C = 70% - 79%

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Meets curriculum standards at a satisfactory level

D = 60% - 69%

Meets some curriculum standards

F ≤ 59%

Fails to meet curriculum standards. No credit toward graduation is granted to a student receiving a final grade of “F” in a high school course.

I = Incomplete

Given when a student has not completed the assigned work or has failed to demonstrate an appropriate level of mastery on an assignment. The teacher shall determine when the “I” shall be converted to the appropriate letter grade and whether full or partial credit will be awarded. An “I” may be converted to an “F” when a student refuses to complete an assignment.

A teacher shall consult with the school principal before assigning an “I” on a report card. An “I” on a report card shall be converted to the appropriate letter grade by no later than the mid-way point of the subsequent marking period or by June 30 in the case of marking period 4, unless a greater extensions is granted by the principal.


C. Percent scores shall be rounded to the nearest whole number. Any score below .5 rounds down, and any score .5 and above rounds up.

Example: 89.49% rounds to 89%
 89.50% rounds to 90%

D. In grades 3-5, student performance levels in reading and mathematics will be noted as not meeting, meeting, or exceeding grade level expectations.

E. In grades 3-5, student performance levels in reading and mathematics will be noted as not meeting, meeting, or exceeding grade level expectations.

F. Teachers have the option to communicate additional information regarding student achievement and performance by providing comments on the report card.

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G. Parent/teacher conference days are scheduled each school year. A personal contact with the teacher affords the parents an opportunity to find out how they can more effectively participate in their child's education. Teachers, counselors, and administrators are also available for conferences at other times during the school year. Parents and teachers are urged to initiate conferences when there is a concern about the child's academic performance or social relationships. Teachers shall request a conference with the parent(s) when a student is in danger of failing a course or subject area.

GRADE APPEALS

In the instances when a student or parent disagrees with the grade assigned to a student, the student and/or parent shall arrange for a conference with the teacher. If the issue of the grade is not resolved, the parent or student may appeal the grade to the principal. If a disagreement still exists after the principal's decision is rendered, the parent or student may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.

GRADE CHANGING PROCEDURES

- A. A TIMELINE FOR FINAL GRADE CHANGES THAT CANNOT EXCEED 45 SCHOOL DAYS FOLLOWING THE LAST DAY OF THE GRADING PERIOD. FOR A CHANGE OF GRADE FOR THE FOURTH MARKING PERIOD, THE TIMELINE WOULD BEGIN ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR. WEIGHTED AND NON-WEIGHTED GRADE POINT AVERAGES AND CLASS RANK ARE CALCULATED FOR EACH STUDENT AT THE END OF EACH SEMESTER.
- B. THE NAMES OF PERSONNEL AT THE SCHOOL AND CENTRAL OFFICE LEVEL AUTHORIZED TO MAKE FINAL GRADE CHANGES;
- C. DOCUMENTATION THAT AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN TO SUPPORT THE FINAL COURSE GRADE CHANGES, INCLUDING, AT A MINIMUM THE:
 - I. NAME OF THE TEACHER REQUESTING FINAL GRADE CHANGE;
 - II. REASON FOR THE GRADE CHANGE;

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- III. SIGNATURE OF PERSON APPROVING THE GRADE CHANGE;
- IV. REASON FOR APPROVAL;
- V. DATE OF THE APPROVAL; AND
- VI. SIGNATURE OF THE PRINCIPAL;

D. HOW AND WHEN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM WILL AUDIT THE VALIDITY OF THE GRADE CHANGES EACH YEAR.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) AND CLASS RANK


- A. The final grade for high school courses shall be reported on the official student transcript.
- B. Weighted and non-weighted grade point averages and class rank are calculated for each student at the end of each semester.
- C. The dual GPA/class rank system will be based on the following assignment of quality points. The charts below identify the quality points assigned in both the weighted and non-weighted system.

WEIGHTED GPA

NON-WEIGHTED

GRADE	AP AND TRANSCRIPTED	HONORS	ACADEMIC AND ARTICULATED	GRADE	ALL COURSES
A	5.0	4.5	4.0	A	4.0
B	4.0	3.5	3.0	B	3.0
C	3.0	2.5	2.0	C	2.0
D	1.0	1.0	1.0	D	1.0
F	0	0	0	F	0

- D. Grade point averages will be calculated by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of credits.

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Quality points are calculated by multiplying the credit assigned to the course by a point value assigned to each grade (see chart above).

Credits are determined by the actual credit assigned to each course.

Pass-fail courses will not be used to compute the grade point average.

If a student repeats a course that may not be given repeat credit, the higher grade received will be calculated in the grade point average.

HOMEWORK

POLICY


Homework assignments shall be meaningful; that is, they shall be related to course outcomes, rigorous and relevant to students, and differentiated, as appropriate, to account for individual differences among students.

PURPOSES OF HOMEWORK

- A. To prepare for subsequent lessons (e.g., read the next chapter)
- B. To practice or review to strengthen concept and skill development (e.g., complete practice problems)
- C. To evaluate what students know by applying, extending, or integrating their knowledge and understanding through projects or other assignments (e.g., write a report or complete a long-term project)

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- A. Different courses will undoubtedly demand varied amounts of homework. Homework shall be assigned on an as needed basis as determined by the teacher.
- B. The amount of homework shall be appropriate to the student's needs and abilities; moreover, the total amount of homework from all the student's teachers shall be reasonable. One guideline found in the educational research that helps to clarify

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“a reasonable amount” of homework is the Ten-Minute Rule (Cooper, 2006). This guideline suggests that if assigned, students should have a total amount of homework of about ten minutes per grade level. For example, a first-grade student should have no more than a total of 10 minutes of homework, a fifth-grade student 50 minutes of homework, a ninth-grade student 90 minutes of homework, etc. Because of individual student differences, and because homework shall only be assigned on an as needed basis, the Ten-Minute Rule is only intended to be a guideline and should not be interpreted as policy.

- C. Assigning collaborative or group projects for homework can be problematic for students. Teachers who assign collaborative or group projects for homework shall do so with discretion and the knowledge of the inherent obstacles that such homework can present for students and families. Teachers shall adjust their expectations accordingly to reflect the best interests of all students involved.
- D. Students should be able to complete homework assignments independently. Parents should monitor student homework and encourage student efforts to complete assignments.
- E. Teachers shall provide feedback to students on all homework assignments. This feedback can be a verbal check, written comments, or a grade.

MISSED WORK

- A. At the secondary level, it is the individual student’s responsibility to request missed assignments upon returning to school. At the elementary level, teachers will work with students upon their return from an absence to address missed assignments.
- B. For an extended student absence of three or more school days, parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate school personnel to request assignments.
- C. Students shall have the number of days equal to the number of days absent to turn in completed make-up work, unless a greater extension is granted by the teacher.