

EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PERFORMANCEK-12 Forward

The Pennsville School District values the importance of using accurate grading methods to effectively evaluate student achievement. Assigning grades that are valid, reliable, and transparent promotes effective communication of student achievement. Therefore, grading guidelines that address the validity, reliability, and transparency of grades that are assigned to students are essential.

Overall Philosophy

In today's world of education, individual staff and District accountability has increased and come to the forefront. Grading Guidelines increases the validity, reliability, transparency, and accountability of grading, while at the same time demonstrating an accurate account of students' achievement of the standards set forth by the District and the State of New Jersey. Overarching ideas incorporated in the overall philosophy that shaped the grading guidelines are:

- Grading practices must be consistent, valid, reliable, transparent, and fair;
- Grading practices must be consistent within departments and across grade levels;
- Grades must be transparent and easy for parents/guardians and students to understand and calculate;
- Grades are to reflect student achievement of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards;
- Grades must be a valid measure of student achievement and include multiple and varied types of assessments; and
- Grading practices must incorporate flexibility to allow for course differences.

High School and Middle School Guidelines

The following grading guidelines will be implemented for students in Pennsville Memorial High School and Pennsville Middle School:

A. Total Points

- Using total points is the most transparent way for parents/guardians and students to calculate averages.
- Grades are to be standards based.
- Grades must reflect the degree to which the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills.
- The grade book will document completion of work, enrichment activities, and remediation.

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REGULATION: 6147.1R

B. Homework

- Homework is to be no more than 10% percent of a grade.
- Homework is not to be accepted late unless provided for in a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.

C. Extra Credit

- If a teacher chooses to offer extra credit, it must be standards based and offered to all students in that course.
- Extra credit can be no more than 5% per assignment.
- Extra credit can not be applied to a student's final grade, except in the case of the three (3) extra points applied to Honors or AP final grade.
- Extra credit must be used by the teacher judiciously.

D Absences

- Students who are absent, whether excused or unexcused, will be permitted to make up missed work and assessments.
- Students will have at least as many school days as the student was absent to make up work.

E Zeroes, Cheating, Incompletes, and No Grades

- If a student is absent on the day that a test and/or quiz is administered or that an assignment for grade is collected, the grade for the test, quiz and/or assignment for grade is to be logged as "Missing" and a zero placed in the gradebook until the test and/or quiz is taken, or the assignment for grade is completed.
- Students who have cheated on any assessment will be given a "0" with the opportunity for an alternate re-assessment during an administrative detention. If the student chooses to take the alternate re-assessment, the two scores will be averaged. If the student decides not to take the alternate re-assessment, the zero will remain.
- "EX" is to be used for excused assignments and it will not be used in the average.
- Marking period, Mid-term, and/or Final exam grades that are incomplete will be placed in the gradebook as an "I" and will be averaged into the semester or year average as a zero until the work is completed or until the deadline established for finalizing grades.
- Marking period, Mid-Term, and/or Final exam grades that are not graded will be placed in the gradebook as "NG" and are to be given only by Administrative directive from the Building Administrator, Superintendent or his/her designee.

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F. Late work

- Major assignments or assessments that are not submitted on time may be accepted late with a grade penalty that will not exceed a ten percent (10%) deduction per day.
- No assignment shall be accepted more than five (5) school days after the due date unless an exception is made by the Building Administrator for an extenuating circumstance, or an additional exception is provided by the student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- Homework will not be accepted late unless an exception is provided for in the student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- Assignments which are late due to absence will be treated according to applicable Board policy and Administrative regulation. In this regard, refer to the guidelines for absences above.
- Students are responsible for obtaining and completing the make-up work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher.

G. Reassessment

- Reassessments are not permitted unless the teacher determines that the assessment was invalid and/or a reassessment is provided for in a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- Every student that is reassessed will be reassessed using an alternate assessment.
- Teacher discretion may be used to post-pone an assessment or redo an assessment for unusual extenuating circumstances on a case by case basis, such as family emergency the night before the assessment or illness.
- Programs such as Study Island and/or Accelerated Math, which are based on reassessment of skills until mastery is achieved, are exceptions to the above.
- Revisions in the writing process are not considered reassessment.

H. Bell curves

- Use of the bell curve is not consistent with standards-based assessment and, therefore, is not to be used.

I. Category values

- Teachers are to follow departmental guidelines and use consistent categories within like sections/courses.
- Multiple types of assessments are necessary to ensure differentiation of instruction.

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- More emphasis and value are to be placed on summative/academic achievement which reflects a student's mastery of content skills rather than formative/academic practice. *Please see attached guideline delineating summative/academic achievement versus formative/academic practice.

J. Number of Grades per Week and Frequency of Grades Entered In PowerGrade

- Students are to be given multiple and varied opportunities (at least 2 per full week) to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.
- Grades are to be recorded in PowerGrade within one week of the due date.
- Certain assessments, such as research papers and large projects, may be exempted from being recorded in PowerGrade within one week of the due date. Teachers should use their discretion in these instances and notify students of when the grades will be recorded.

K. Final Marking Periods Grades

- For the first marking period, no student at the high school or middle school will receive a reported grade lower than sixty percent (60%) on their report card for a full year course.
- For the second marking period, no student at the middle school shall receive a reported grade lower than sixty percent (50%) on their report card for a full year course.
- For the third marking period, no student in the middle school shall receive a reported grade below fifty percent (50%) on their report card for a full year course.
- For semester courses, no student at the high school or middle school shall receive a reported grade lower than sixty (60%) on their report card for the first marking period of the semester.
- Grades for quarter/marketing period courses at the high school have no minimum grade in any marking period.
- For quarter/marketing period courses at the middle school, no student shall receive a reported grade lower than sixty (60%) on their report card.

L. Group projects

- For any group project, two rubrics must be used to grade group projects: a group grade and an individual grade.
- The individual grade must have a greater value than the group grade.

M. Home projects

- No more than two (2) major grades in any subject during one marking period shall be home projects other than in a project-based course. Home projects are defined as projects that are done entirely at home and that require a final product other than an essay or paper. A major grade is defined as comparable to a test grade in value.

N. Honor roll

- The honor roll requirements will be “All A Honor Roll” and “A and B Honor Roll”.

O. English as a Second Language

- Until a student is determined to be fully English proficient, alternative grading procedures will be in effect.
- When an ELL achieves a numerical grade below seventy-eight percent (78%), an “NG” indicator with accompanying narrative detailing strengths and weaknesses is appropriate.

P. Related Arts or Project based Courses:

1. Middle School

In the middle school, the teacher should evaluate student progress in terms of individual growth and encourage student self-evaluation through individual and group critiques. Emphasis should be focused on the creative process rather than the final product. The teacher should use rubric based assessments for student work. Related Arts—educators recognize that some skills may be measured by testing or objective product evaluation. Effective teachers also make evaluative judgments based on expressive measures. The grading criteria established for middle school related arts classes must recognize both of these elements.

Objective scores and documentation of the teacher’s professional judgment will be maintained to determine the student’s daily/weekly grades. In formulating grades the relative weight of these components may vary from unit to unit. Teachers should use rubrics showing how their subjective assessments translate into grades. When reporting progress, teachers must be sure that the system is easily understood by the students and the parents.

2. High School

In a high school related arts course, evaluation of the student’s total experience requires consideration of the individual’s aesthetic growth, understanding of art culture and heritage, and development of skills, as well as the quality of creative work. Teacher evaluation must include evidence of artistic growth. Since innovation, imaginative response, and expression are highly valued in the arts, evaluation must be based on the student’s individual growth. The teacher’s professional judgment is extremely important in evaluating that growth.

In both objective and expressive evaluation, in addition to rubrics the teacher may use a variety of formal and informal assessment tools (observations, checklists, discussion, portfolios, demonstrations, exhibitions, sketch-books, self-evaluation, written and oral reports and tests, and

individual and group critiques). For grading purposes the relative weight of the objective and subjective components will vary depending on the criteria established for the individual unit or project. The student should have a good understanding of the criteria being used for each segment of the curriculum.

Elementary School Guidelines

A. Product

- Assessments used for grades will be standards-based without any “non-achievement” factors.
- No work/project is to be used as a product grade if it is completed at home unless provided for in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.

B. Process

- A student’s conduct will be graded as “O,” “S,” or “N.”
- A student’s conduct grade will be part of process with standardized conduct rubric unless an exception is provided in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- One conduct grade per week will be entered in PowerGrade.

C. Progress

- Student progress will be communicated through comments section on report card, as well as through any other means of communication provided for in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.

D. Total Points

- No grade is to be entered in PowerGrade lower than sixty percent (60%) of the total points of the assignment.
- Using total points is the most transparent way for parents/students to calculate averages.
- Grades are to be standards based.
- Grades must reflect the degree to which the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills.
- The grade book will document completion of work, enrichment activities, and remediation.

E. Zeroes

- Assignments that are not graded will be entered in PowerGrade as “NG” and are to be given only by administrative directives.
- There will be no point or percentage deduction for late work that is turned in within three (3) days of the due date.
 - However, an assessment may not be turned in for credit after three (3) days of the due date unless an exception is made by the building administrator for an extenuating circumstance or an exception is made in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- An "I" is to be placed in the gradebook for an assignment that is not turned in.
 - The value of the "I" will be calculated as a zero ("0") until the assignment is turned in and scored unless the assessment is not turned in, as noted above, within three (3) days of the due date. In that event, the "I" will remain in the gradebook and the grade will be calculated as a zero ("0").
 - However, an exception will be made in situations where additional time for the submission of an assessment beyond the three (3) day time frame noted above is provided for in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- It will be at the teacher's discretion to determine an assignment's due date.
- Homework will not be accepted late unless an exception is provided for in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- Assignments which are late due to absence will be treated according to Board policy.
- Students will have no less than one school day for each day absent to complete make-up work unless additional time is provided for in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
 - Assignments will be placed in the gradebook as “M” for missing until the assignment is completed and turned in for scoring.

F. Extra Credit

- Extra credit is not permitted at the elementary level; however, a teacher may give challenge or bonus questions that may be rewarded in ways other than through grades for correct completion.

G. Honor Roll

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- Three is an ‘All A Honor Roll’ and an ‘A and B Honor Roll’ in grades 4 and 5. To qualify for the ‘All A Honor Roll’, a student must have an A in all academic subjects and an O in conduct.
- To qualify for the ‘A and B Honor Roll’, a student must have an A or B in all academic subjects with at least one A in any one academic subject, and a student must have an “O” in conduct

H. PowerSchool

- Information and “How-to” directions for parents/guardians will be included in the handbook and/or Back to School information packet. The information will include topics such as how to find teacher comments for a specific assignment.

I. Tests

- The same assessments are to be used across grade level for end of unit assessments unless an exception is provided for in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- Publisher assessments and teacher created assessments that are used across the grade level for summative assessments are to be kept for one year and then shredded.
- Teachers will record student progress on the Language Arts charts for tests. These charts and tests will be kept for one calendar year after the school year ends at which time they will be shredded.

J. Bell Curve

- Use of the bell curve is not consistent with standards-based assessment and, therefore, is not to be used.

K. Group grades

- Assignments that are completed by groups will be scored using a rubric.
- Students will receive an individual grade for their work on the project and not a group grade.

L. Weighting/Averages

- Categories are not to be weighted.
 - Categories are only to be used to determine the type of assessment.
- End of Unit assessments values are to be consistent across grade levels.

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- Reassessments are not permitted unless the teacher determines that the assessment will not be used for any student because of the need for more instruction, and/or an exception is provided for in a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
 - In addition, teacher discretion may be used to post-pone an assessment or redo an assessment for unusual extenuating circumstances on a case by case basis such as family emergency the night before the assessment or illness.

M. Number and frequency of grades per week entered in PowerSchool

- Students are to be given multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.
- Teachers will follow guidelines and requirements of building administrators/supervisors, as well as any modification and/or supports provided in a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.
- Grades are to be recorded in PowerSchool within one week of the due date.
- There are to be enough grades in each subject to reflect an accurate assessment of student achievement.
- Teachers must follow grade level guidelines unless an exception is provided for in a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.

N. Absences

- Students who are absent, whether excused or unexcused, will be permitted to make up missed work and assessments.
- Students will have at least as many days as the student was absent to make up work unless additional time is provided for in a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Section 504 Accommodation Plan and/or other similarly developed academic plan.

O. Formative/Summative and General Guidelines

- Multiple types of assessments are necessary to ensure differentiation of instruction.
- More emphasis and value are to be placed on summative/academic achievement which reflects a student's mastery of content skills rather than formative/academic practice.
 - Please see attached guideline delineating summative/academic achievement versus formative/academic practice.
- Assignments/assessments such as projects that are not completed entirely in school and that will be used as a grade will be included with formative/academic practice; however, this does not include homework.

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- Homework is not to be used towards a product grade; however, homework is incorporated in the conduct rubric.
- Comments indicating that an assessment has been completed with materials below grade level are to be reported on the comment section of the report card when grading a student who is working with below grade level materials, and who does not have an IEP.

P. Cheating

- Teachers will handle the issue of students cheating on graded assessments in collaboration with the building administrator and applicable Board Policy and Regulation.

Q. English as a Second Language

- Until a student designated as “English Second Language” (“ESL”) is fully proficient in English, alternative grading procedures will be in effect.
- When an ESL student achieves a numerical grade below 78%, an “NG” indicator will be provided with accompanying narrative detailing strengths and weaknesses as appropriate.

Date: July ____, 2009