

Second Reading - 8/30/10 Board Meeting

PROGRAM
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Assessment/Grading System

R 2624 ASSESSMENT/GRADING SYSTEM

A. Purpose of Assessment

1. The purpose of assessment is to assist pupils in the process of learning; all assessment systems will be subject to continual review and revision to that end.
2. Assessment reports acknowledge a pupil's demonstrated proficiency in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and locally established learning goals and objectives:
 - a. Active participation in and attention to daily lessons,
 - b. Frequent contribution to discussions,
 - c. Prompt, thorough, accurate, and neat preparation of assignments,
 - d. Thorough preparation and performance on tests and assessments,
 - e. Display of an eagerness to learn and an inquisitive approach to lessons,
 - f. Attention to the need for proper materials,
 - g. Cooperation with the teacher's efforts, and
 - h. Willingness to work to the best of his/her ability and to do more than the minimum expected.

B. Assessment/Grading

1. Each pupil must be informed of the behavior and achievements expected of him/her at the outset of each course of study or unit of study.
2. Each pupil must be kept informed of his/her progress during the course of a unit of study. Pupils who so request are entitled to see the grades resulting from their performance during the grading period.

3. Each method of assessment/grading shall be appropriate to the course of study, the maturity and abilities of the pupils, and reflect uniformity across grades and subjects.
4. Pupils should be encouraged to evaluate their own achievements.
5. The process of review and revision will involve teaching staff members, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and, as appropriate, pupils.

C. Assessment/Grading Periods

1. Grades will be awarded at the end of four marking periods in each school year for grades 7-12.
2. Pupils and parents will have ongoing access to student achievement records through the online student information system.
3. Beginning in 2011-2012, pupils in grades 7-12 will be given a final grade in each subject at the end of the school year.

D. Basis for Assessment/Grading

The teacher responsible for assigning a grade should take into consideration the pupil's:

1. Completion of written assignments prepared in the classroom or elsewhere;
2. Oral contributions in class, including discussion responses, observations, panel participation, presentations, initiation of topics;
3. Performance on oral and written tests and quizzes;
4. Research into standard references and other background materials;
5. Oral and written reports on materials read by the pupil;
6. Laboratory work;

7. Term papers;
 8. Special oral or written reports;
 9. Other evidences of the pupil's constructive efforts and achievements in learning; and
 10. For each marking period and the final grade, the pupil's attendance record, in accordance with Policy Nos. 5200, 5410, and 5460.
- E. Meaning of Grades 7-12
1. The following grades will be given in each academic subject at the end of each marking period in grades 7-12 beginning in 2011-2012:
 - a. A grade of A indicates superior performance. It may be given to a pupil whose achievement is significantly above grade level; whose work achieves a quality and quantity that consistently excels; and who demonstrates a high degree of initiative, application, and purpose.
 - b. A grade of B indicates above average performance. It should be given to a pupil whose achievement is above grade level; whose work frequently excels; and who generally demonstrates strength in the subject.
 - c. A grade of C indicates average performance. It should be given to a pupil whose achievement in most areas of the subject are average; whose work is acceptable; and who demonstrates a satisfactory degree of proficiency.
 - d. A grade of D indicates below average performance. It should be given to a pupil whose achievement in the subject is barely passing; whose work is the minimum acceptable for credit; and who demonstrates only weak proficiencies in the subject.
 - e. A grade of F indicates failing performance and that no credit can be given for the subject. It should be given to a pupil who has not met the minimum requirements of the course; who has

demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to master the basic elements of the course; or who has failed to meet the minimum attendance standards necessary to pass a course of study.

f. Letter grades may be modified by plus or minus signs.

2. The following grading scales and indicators shall be used:

Middle School	97-100 = A+	77-79 = C+
	93-96 = A	73-76 = C
	90-92 = A-	70-72 = C-
	87-89 = B+	67-69 = D+
	83-86 = B	63-66 = D
	80-82 = B-	60-62 = D-
		0-59 = F

I = Incomplete
WP = Withdrew Passing
WF = Withdrew Failing
DR = Drop
AU = Audit
EX = Excused

High School	97-100 = A+	77-79 = C+
	93-96 = A	73-76 = C
	90-92 = A-	70-72 = C-
	87-89 = B+	67-69 = D+
	83-86 = B	63-66 = D
	80-82 = B-	60-62 = D-
		50-59 = F no credit
	49 and below = no credit, cannot attend summer school	

I = Incomplete
WP = Withdrew Passing
WF = Withdrew Failing
AU = Audit
EX = PE Excused
EE = Exam Excused

3. A grade of "Incomplete" will be given to those pupils unable to complete the work assigned to the course for reasons beyond the pupil's control, such as illness.

- a. A teacher who submits a grade of incomplete will accompany the grade with a reasonable estimate of the amount of time the pupil will require to complete the work necessary for the granting of credit.
 - b. Except as may be required by unusual circumstances, make up work should be completed within two weeks of the end of the marking period or, if the pupil is disabled at the end of the marking period, two weeks after the pupil's return to school.
 - c. The pupil's completed work will be graded and the teacher will submit a grade, which will replace the incomplete grade on the pupil's transcript.
 - d. A pupil who does not complete the work within the period allowed will receive the earned grade in the subject.
4. A grade of "Withdrawal" will be given to each pupil who withdraws from a course of study after fifteen school days.
- a. A grade of "withdrawal-passing" (WP) will be given to each pupil who withdrew after having demonstrated satisfactory achievement and attendance in the course.
 - b. A grade of "withdrawal-failing" (WF) will be given to each pupil who withdrew after having demonstrated unsatisfactory achievement and/or poor attendance in the course or who was removed from the course by administrative action.
5. A grade of "excused" will be given to each pupil in a physical education class who was excused for good cause from participation in certain aspects of the course requirements.
6. Mid-Term and Final Assessments

Students at the high school may take a mid-term* and final assessment in all full year courses. Final assessments will also be given in all semester

courses. The assessments will measure the degree to which students achieve course objectives and will be counted as the equivalent of one half marking period in the determination of the semester and final grade average.

*Students enrolled in A.P. classes will not take a mid-term assessment in the A.P. course. The time allotted for review and for the mid-term exam in that subject will be used for regular instruction in the A.P. class.

Students who request to be excused from school at the end of the year before assessments begin must receive the written approval of the Principal. The number of school days missed by the student must not exceed the total number of cumulative absences provided in the attendance policy, and the student must be willing to take make-up assessments during the summer prior to the opening of school the following year. All students must be prepared to take all assessments unless excused. Failure to take assessments will result in Administrative failure and a grade of zero, which results in no credit being granted for the course. Students may repeat the course in summer school or during the following school year. Students will be permitted to make-up assessments on the designated make-up day or during the summer only under the following stipulations:

- a. Personal illness or recovery from an accident, which is verified by a doctor's note.
- b. Death in the immediate family.
- c. Suspension from school.
- d. Subpoena - court ordered appearance.
- e. Other absences authorized by the Principal with prior written approval.

7. Senior Assessment Exemption Policy

Seniors who achieve an average of 91.5 in the first and second marking periods may be exempt from the mid-term. Seniors who achieve an average of 91.5 in

the third and fourth marking periods may be exempt from the final assessment for the subject in which the average was attained. However, those seniors may have the option to take the final assessment even though they may have exemption status.

Advanced Placement seniors who achieve an average of 91.5 in the first, second and third marking periods may be exempt from the final assessment for the subject in which the average was attained. However, those seniors may have the option to take the final assessment even though they may have exemption status.

8. Final Assessment

Final assessment is the term used to describe semester and year-end course evaluations.

a. The final assessment will evaluate course and state core proficiencies. (Not every course proficiency specified must be included in the final assessment; however, all state core proficiencies must be included in the final assessment.)

b. Final assessments will include the core proficiencies in the identical format mutually agreed upon by grade level teachers and department supervisors.

Additional assessment items will be the same in format but may differ in content as agreed upon by grade level teachers and department supervisors.

c. Each final assessment will be approved by the department supervisor prior to its administration.

d. Special education students' final assessments will be based on their IEP's.

e. Appeals on grades for final assessments will be handled through the regular chain of command, i.e., teacher, supervisor, administrator, Superintendent, Board. Grades will not be changed without consulting the teacher.

- f. The value of midterm and final assessments will represent 20% of the final grade average except if a senior student is exempt from examinations. An example of a final grade average as calculated by our computer program will be:

1st marking period	90 x 2 = 180
2nd marking period	80 x 2 = 160
Midterm Exam	80 x 1 = 80
3rd marking period	70 x 2 = 140
4th marking period	85 x 2 = 170
Final Exam	75 x 1 = 75
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	805 ÷ 10 = 80.5 = 81

Exemptions will be reflected in the denominator when the final averages are calculated. For instance, if a senior student is exempt from both the midterm and final, the sum of the marking periods will be divisible by 8. If the student is exempt from either the midterm or final, the sum of the marking periods will be divisible by 9.

F. Advanced Placement Courses

1. Final Assessments for all A.P. courses may be administered in the third and fourth week of May, following the A.P. examinations.
2. Senior students may be eligible for final exam exemption. They must achieve an average grade of 91.5 in the first, second and third marking periods to be exempt from the final exam in the A.P. subject in which the average was attained. However, those students may have the option to take the final exam even though they may have attained exemption status.
3. Exempt students will use those exam periods for independent enrichment (see 5 below).
4. The value of the final assessment will represent 1/9 of the final grade average except if the student is exempt from the final exam. In this case, each of the four marking periods are averaged together to compute the final average for the course.
5. Teachers in the A.P. program recognize that an exciting opportunity for individual enrichment is available for students after AP exams are complete.

Teachers will determine, on an individual basis, how to best utilize the weeks between the final exam and the end of the academic year. It is understood that all classroom assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, papers, etc.) done at this time will be counted as part of the fourth marking period grade.

G. Grade Validation

In order that he/she may justify a grade, each teacher is directed to retain in his/her possession and give a copy to the Principal the following records to validate grades awarded to pupils. The records should be kept for a minimum of six years after the end of the school year in which the grades were awarded.

1. The daily attendance and tardiness record;
2. All grades earned for classroom activities such as quizzes, tests, reports, and class recitations;
3. All grades earned for activities conducted elsewhere, such as homework assignments and term papers;
4. Any notation regarding the meaning of each grade and its relation to the type of activity or material covered;
5. Any notation of discussions with the pupil on a grade or the pupil's cumulative grade average;
6. Any referrals for guidance, discipline, and the like; and
7. Any notations recording communications between the teacher and the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), the Principal, or other teaching staff members.

H. Appeal

1. Each teacher is responsible for the determination of the grade a pupil receives for participation in the teacher's course of study.
2. Each teacher may be required to furnish reasons, supported by evidence (see ¶E above) to substantiate any grade earned.

3. If a grade is challenged by a pupil or a parent(s) or legal guardian(s), the teacher will convene a conference and will explain the grading system and the reasons for the final grade.
4. If the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or pupil is not satisfied by the teacher's explanations, he/she may appeal the grade through the regular chain of command (i.e., teacher, supervisor, administrator, Superintendent, Board) who will consult with the teacher and the pupil in an attempt to resolve the dispute. The administration will give every reasonable deference to the teacher's professional judgment.
5. If the Principal determines that the grade should be changed, he/she will alter the grade on all records and indicate by whose authority the grade has been changed.
6. No reprisals will be taken in any form against a teacher who remains determined in his/her belief that the grade originally given is fair and correct.
7. The Superintendent may hear an appeal from the Principal's determination. Only in the most extraordinary circumstances will the Superintendent alter a grade determined at the school building level.

Adopted: 5 November 2001

Revised: 5 December 2005; 18 August 2008; 30 August 2010