REGULATION Board of Education of Queen Anne’s County

Responsible Office: Superintendent’s Office

REGULATION for High School Grading Policy 629

I. REGULATION ELEMENTS

A. Notification/Dissemination

1. The principal will inform all students, parents, and staff of the provisions of the High School Grading policy annually and at other times as appropriate. This may be done in the following ways:

   (a) Making announcements via the public address system at the beginning of the school year,
   (b) Publishing the information in school newsletters,
   (c) Publishing the information in staff/student handbooks,
   (d) Posting the information on a bulletin board and/or school’s website, and/or
   (e) Making the information available for new students through the registration process.

B. Grading

1. Final Examinations

   (a) Year-long courses and semester courses

      (i) At the end of the course, an examination will be given.
      (ii) Each examination will assess learning for that course.
      (iii) The examination grade will constitute 15% of the students’ final grade.
      (iv) Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, performance on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) End of Course (EOC) exam may account for 20% of the students’ final grade in Biology and Government.
      (v) No student is exempt from these examinations, and examinations may not be taken before a scheduled examination date, without approval from the Academic Dean and/or Principal.

   (b) A student on suspension at examination time will be permitted to take the examination and will remain eligible to qualify for the awarding of course credit.
2. Determining/Calculating Student Grades

(a) The letter grade will be used to indicate the individual level of achievement of each student in relation to attainment of course objectives.
(b) Teachers will assess student progress toward mastery of the course’s essential curriculum on an ongoing basis through a variety of methods. In order to maintain consistent grading practices across high school programs, teachers will adhere to the following definitions for the grading categories. Grades will be provided for Mastery Assessment Tasks and Progress Assessment Tasks.

(i) Final Exam – An End of Course exam which includes content from the essential curriculum of the course.
(ii) Mastery Assessments - Mastery Assessments provide timely feedback after the instructional process for the purpose of demonstrating the level of mastery of the skills being assessed. These could include, but are not limited to, major projects, performance mastery assessments, unit tests, chapter tests, etc.
(iii) Progress Assessments: Progress assessments for learning are assignments and assessments given at a point in time when the students are progressing towards mastery. Progress assignments should vary in type. These could include, but are not limited to, class work, brief progress checks, performance progress assessments and quizzes. Progress assessments are intended to be summative in nature only on a smaller scale when compared to the mastery assessments.
(iv) Homework – Homework are assignments completed by students after school hours and consist of independent practice, which represents an extension of the daily objective.

(c) Attendance, tardiness, participation, and preparation

(i) There is to be no grade value assigned to these areas as they do not reflect academic achievement. Students are not to receive or lose credit for non-academic or non-performance assignments and/or assessments.

a. For example, grades are not to be assigned for returning forms, such as syllabi, field trip permission slips, etc.

b. Additional points may not be given for student compliance such as bringing in donations for food drives, signed papers, etc.

c. Teachers may provide comments on the Interim Reports and Report Card to reflect these behaviors.

d. In the area of Career and Technology Courses, participation may be reflected as a progress assessment.
(ii) School staff should adhere to the regulations and procedures regarding the allowance of make-up work when students are absent as outlined in the QACPS Student Attendance Policy.

(d) Late Assignments

(i) Late assignments are those that are submitted late not due to an absence. Late work will be accepted with the following restrictions:

a. Work must be turned in within 3 days of the due date (unless circumstances for an extension have been approved by the teacher and/or administration).

b. Work accepted after the expected due date may be subjected to a lower grade due to lateness, not to exceed a maximum reduction of 30%.

(e) All grade books will be divided into the following categories and percentages:

(i) Final Exam – 15% of final grade

a. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, performance on MCAP assessments may account for 20%, a significant portion of the student’s final grade, in Biology and Government.

(ii) If the MCAP assessment weight is over 15% of the final grade, the Mastery Assessment weight will be reduced by the number of points above 15%. For example, if the MCAP assessment is worth 20% of the final grade, the Mastery Assessment will be reduced from 45% to 40% of the final grade.

(iii) Mastery Assessments - 45% of final grade

a. A minimum of 6 mastery assessments is required for each course, with a minimum of 2 entered into the grade book by the mid-course interim report.

b. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, if performance on MCAP assessments in Biology and Government accounts for 20% of the student’s final grade in the aligned courses, the Mastery Assessments will count for 40% of the students’ final grade.

(iv) Progress Assessments - 30% - 40% of final grade

a. A minimum of 24 progress assessments is required for each course with a minimum of 12 grades entered into the grade book by the mid-course interim report.
(v) Homework - 0% - 10% of final grade

   a. If homework is not used or not maximized at 10% of final grade, then
      the remaining value is added to the progress assessment category.

(f) Extra Credit

   (i) Extra Credit may be offered at the teacher’s discretion. If extra credit is
       offered, it must satisfy all of the following guidelines:

       a. It must be available to all students.
       b. It must reflect extra learning or understanding, not participation.
       c. It must clearly relate to, or extend, content from the area it is assigned.
       d. It must be reported as a progress assessment and carry a weight that is
          no more than an average / typical progress assessment.
       e. Extra credit is not to be used to elevate a grade to passing when a student
          has not met course standards.
       f. A student electing to not complete extra credit may not be penalized.

(g) Retake/Revision of Mastery Assessments

   (i) Students will be permitted to retake or revise mastery assessments with the
       exception of midterm exams (if applicable) and final exams within 10
       school days from the time the test grade is posted if the score is 69% or less
       and may earn up to a 70%.

(h) Within the first five days of a course, the teacher will distribute an explanation
    of how students' grades will be calculated. This information is typically a
    component of the course syllabus and will be made available to parents.

(i) Prior to distribution to students, the principal/designee will review and
    approve the teacher’s grading explanations to ensure alignment to
    Determining / Calculating Grades.

(i) Parent Contact

    (i) When a student’s calculated grade falls below 60% direct parental contact
        is required by the teacher. Teachers are required to document the contact.
    (ii) Up to date grades are available to parents via online access to the district's
         grade monitoring platform.

3. Determining Final Grades and Credit

   (a) Earning Credit is as follows:
(i) Each high school one-semester class that meets every day for the full block period will earn one credit.
(ii) A year-long class that meets for an abbreviated full block period will earn one credit.
(iii) A one-semester class that meets for two full block periods will earn two credits.

(b) Only the final letter grade and/or code will be retained on the student transcript.

c) Final grades will be determined by translating the calculated percentage into a letter grade for each course according to the following scale:

- A = 90-100% (Outstanding level of achievement)
- B = 80-89% (High level of achievement)
- C = 70-79% (Satisfactory level of achievement)
- D = 60-69% (Low level of achievement)
- E = Below 60% or lower (Failure)

(d) Prior to final letter grade assignment, all calculated grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, any calculated grade with a decimal part of less than .5 rounds down and any score with a decimal part or .5 and above rounds up to the next whole percent. For example, 89.4% rounds to 89, while 89.5% rounds to 90.

(e) Course credit is earned when the final grade is an A, B, C, or D.

(f) If a student retakes a course during the school year or in summer school where credit was previously earned:

(i) The student may earn credit more than once for the same course only if the course is designated as such in the QACPS High School Program of Study.  
(ii) If the course is not designated as eligible for additional credit in the QACFS High School Program of Study, the student may still retake the course. The grade earned for the retake will be used in cumulative GPA calculations instead of the original earned. However, both attempts at taking the course will continue to appear on the transcript.

a. The original grade for the course will be replaced with an “R” to signify the course has been retaken. The retaking of the course must occur in the normal sequence of course offerings for that discipline.

(g) Summer courses

(i) Original Credit – Original credit course grades earned in summer school will be recorded in the high school transcript and calculated in the cumulative GPA.
(ii) Recovery credit – Recovery credit course grades earned in summer school will be calculated in the cumulative GPA. Both the original course grade
and the summer school grade will be included in the GPA and recorded on the high school transcript.

(h) Credit by Examination

(i) Credit toward high school graduation may be earned in grades 9–12 by passing an examination that assesses student demonstration of locally established curricular objectives.
(ii) Credit by examination must be approved by the Curriculum Supervisor on a case-by-case-basis. According to COMAR 13A.03.02.04, and in collaboration between MSDE, local school systems and institutions of higher education determine the test and cut-off scores that students would need to achieve on a state approved examination in order to obtain English IV credit by examination. In order for a student to obtain English IV credit by exam, they must do the following:

a. Declare intent to obtain English IV credit by exam by the fall of Grade 11;
b. Take the Advanced Placement® Language Composition Assessment Exam in the spring of Grade 11; and
c. Score at least a three on the Advanced Placement® Language Composition Assessment Exam.

(iii) Credit earned by examination will be reflected on the student’s transcript but will not be calculated in the cumulative GPA.

a. In order to earn credit students must earn a minimum score of 60% on the content supervisor approved exam.
b. Upon earned credit, the report card code “P” will be used on the student’s transcript.

(i) Transfer Credit

(i) A student entering the school system may transfer high school credit through the following provisions:

a. A student coming from an accredited institution with an official transcript will be awarded a credit and grade for each successfully completed course, which are compatible with the QACPS High School Program of Study and Career Planning Guide.

1. Grades recorded on official transcripts from an accredited institution will be reflected on the QACPS high school transcript and calculated in the cumulative GPA.
b. A student from a home instruction program or non-accredited institution will have their program and course work evaluated through the Division of Curriculum and Instruction prior to the student taking the credit by examination.

1. Should it be determined that a student has to take an end-of-course examination to earn credit, the student must pass the end-of-course examination with a grade of 60% or higher in order to receive credit for that course.
2. If credit is awarded, the grade code P will appear on the student transcript.

(j) Credit for Dual Enrollment

(i) Credit earned during dual enrollment at a QACPS high school and an approved institution of higher education will be recorded on the student’s transcript. The grade earned will be recorded in the high school transcript and calculated in the cumulative GPA.

(k) Credit recovery during the school year

(i) Recovery credit - Recovery credit course grades earned during the school year will be calculated into the cumulative GPA. Both the original course grade and the recovery course grade will be included in the GPA and recorded on the high school transcript.

(l) Academic Eligibility

(i) Academic eligibility will be determined based on all courses in which a student is enrolled, in accordance with the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Queen Anne’s County Public Schools Guide for Student Athletes and Parents.

(m) Implementation of Report Card Codes

(i) I (Incomplete) Code

a. I codes will be issued for students enrolled in courses awaiting MCAP scores, should they be factored into the student’s final grade for the aligned course.

b. I codes will be issued only for marking period grades and only upon approval of the principal/designee when a student has been unable to complete required course work due to legal absences or other extenuating circumstances.

c. I codes must be converted to a letter grade no later than two weeks after the issuance of the report card, except in unusual circumstances as
approved by the principal/designee. At the end of the two weeks, the teacher will change the incomplete code to the appropriate grade and notify the student and parent.

(ii) W (Withdrawal) Code

a. W codes indicate that a student withdrew from a course more than 5 days after the start of the course.

1. If a student transfers between levels of the same course, a W code will not be assigned. The grade the student earned in the original course will be transferred and averaged into the new course. The teacher may require make-up work.
2. If a student transfers to a different course prior to the designated date for withdrawal, a W code will not be assigned. The student will be responsible for making up work in the new course.
3. If a student withdraws from a course and transfers to a different course after the designated date for withdrawal, a code of W will be assigned in the withdrawn class. For GPA purposes, W codes are assigned no credit, and do not count towards the GPA.

(iii) R (Retake) Code

a. R codes indicate that a student is retaking a course that was previously taken and a grade of B, C, or D was earned. Course with R code will replace the original grade for the course and signify that the course has been retaken. The grade for the retaken course will receive credit and will earn the appropriate quality points in the semester GPA, end-of-year GPA, and cumulative GPA.

(iv) P (Pass) Code

a. P codes will be used when a student successfully completes a course through credit by exam, credit awarded for coursework from non-accredited schools, home instruction courses upon enrollment in an QACPS school or in extenuating circumstances as approved by the principal/designee and/or content supervisor. Courses with P codes will receive credit and will not be calculated into the semester GPA, end-of-year GPA and cumulative GPA.

(v) F (Fail) Code

a. F codes will receive no credit and will not be calculated into the semester GPA, end-of-year GPA and cumulative GPA.
4. Student's Transferring into the QACPS System

(a) When a student transfers into the QACPS system after the course has begun, the final course grade will be calculated based on the remaining marking period grades and final exam.

(b) The grades, when available, for comparable courses for students who have transferred from another system, will be calculated into the final grade.

(c) Credit transfers for students assigned to QACPS programs will be reviewed by the Academic Dean, who will consult with the Content Supervisor's Office(s) as needed and approved by the principal.

5. Promotions

(a) To be promoted to grade 10, students must be in their 2nd year of high school and have earned at least five credits.

(b) To be promoted to grade 11, students must be in their 3rd year of high school and have earned at least 12 credits.

(c) To be promoted to grade 12, students must be in their 4th year of high school and have earned at least 18 credits.

(d) Queen Anne's County Public Schools require 26 credits for graduation.

6. Weighted Grades, GPA, and Class Rank

(a) Class rank is the relative position of a student in their senior class based upon a weighted cumulative grade point average.

(i) Class rank is a method of comparing a group of students with one another on the basis of academic achievement. The primary uses of class rank are for college transcripts and for eligibility for some programs and awards.

(ii) When determining class rank for an award, the most accurate calculated GPA will be used, extending to as many decimals places as needed.

(b) Weighted courses are indicated in the QACPS High School Program of Study. For transfer students, QACPS will weight grades of courses deemed comparable to weighted courses in the QACPS High School Program of Study.

(c) Students must earn a grade of A, B, or C in a weighted course in order to earn the weighted designation of 1.0 additional quality point per credit. The following summarizes quality points for weighted class rank/GPA purposes:

(i) Letter Grade = A

   a. Designated weighted courses are awarded 5.0 quality points.
   b. Regular courses are awarded 4.0 quality points.

(ii) Letter Grade = B
a. Designated weighted courses are awarded 4.0 quality points.
b. Regular courses are awarded 3.0 quality points.

(iii) Letter Grade = C

a. Designated weighted courses are awarded 3.0 quality points.
b. Regular courses are awarded 2.0 quality points

(iv) Letter Grade = D

a. Designated weighted courses are awarded 1.0 quality point.
b. Regular courses are awarded 1.0 quality point.

(v) Letter Grade = E

a. Designated weighted courses are awarded 0 quality points.
b. Regular courses are awarded 0 quality points.

(d) Both a non-weighted and weighted GPA are computed for each marking period, for each year, and cumulatively at the end of each year. Both a non-weighted and weighted cumulative GPA will be on final report cards at the end of each school year.

(e) At graduation, a non-weighted and weighted cumulative GPA will be calculated based on credits earned in grades nine through twelve, and high school credits earned in middle school. Weighted class ranks will be determined by these GPAs. Both GPAs and resulting class ranks will serve as the final GPAs and the final class ranks and will be recorded on the final High School Transcript.

(f) Weighted GPA will be used for academic eligibility, National Honor Society, honor roll, and for any other activity requiring the reporting of a grade point average.

C. Reporting

1. Interim Report

(a) At the midpoint of each course, an interim will be distributed serving as written notice to the parent concerning student progress.
(b) Teachers should also notify parents of unsatisfactory progress throughout the marking period.

2. Final report cards for high school students will be distributed to students and parents upon conclusion of the course and at the end of the year.
D. Report Card Letter Grade Change

1. A change of a report card or course letter grade will be made for a sound educational purpose according to the following protocol:

   (a) The only school-based personnel authorized to make a grade change is the School’s principal/designee and the Teacher of the course.
   (b) A teacher will not change a student’s report card grade unless there are extenuating circumstances and the change is approved by the principal/designee. The teacher will follow the procedures established by the QACPS below in I.D.2.
   (c) The principal/designee may change a student’s report card grade only after conferring with the teacher who assigned the grade. The principal/designee will notify the teacher in writing if the grade is to be changed. The principal/designee is responsible for implementing the procedures defined by the QACPS below in I.D.2 for processing and recording a grade change and subsequent change to permanent records.

   (i) In the event that the teacher is no longer employed by the district, the principal/designee is authorized to make changes to the report card grade.

2. Procedures

   (a) All grade changes must be completed within 45 days following the last day of the grading period.

      (i) For a change of grade following the 4th marking period (end of school year), the grade change period would begin on the first day of the new school year and extend 45 days into the marking period.

   (b) Grade changes must be documented on the Grade Change Form. Parents must be notified of the grade change by the teacher or the principal/designee. The grade change form needs a signature from the teacher, the Academic Dean, and the Principal. Copies of the grade change form go into the student’s cumulative record, to the teacher, and to the Academic Dean.

   (c) The Grade Change Form will include the following information:

      (i) Name of teacher requesting grade change;
      (ii) Reason for grade change;
      (iii) Signature of person approving the grade change;
      (iv) Reason for approval;
      (v) Date of the approval; and
      (vi) Signature of the Principal.
3. Grade Change Validity Audit

(a) Each High School principal/designee will submit an executive summary of all letter grade changes and copies of each Grade Change Form to the Office of the Assistant Superintendent by April 15th (For Semester 1 courses) and November 15th (for Semester 2 and yearlong courses) each year.

(b) The Assistant Superintendent (or their Designee) will review each letter grade change for validity and generate a guidance document for each High School Principal informing them of any violations.

(i) In the event of a violation, the Assistant Superintendent has the authority to overturn the grade change and return the grade back to its original grade, prior to the change.

E. Report Card Code Change

1. A change of a report card code will be made according to the following procedures:

(a) I (Incomplete) – This code will be changed by following the guidelines below: Incomplete codes must be converted to a letter grade no later than two weeks after the issuance of the report card, except in unusual circumstances as approved by the principal/designee. At the end of the two weeks, the teacher will change the incomplete code to the appropriate grade and notify the student and parent.

(i) A Grade Change Form is not required to convert an Incomplete to a letter grade. The principal/designee is the only person authorized to make this change

   a. P (Pass) – This code will not be changed unless it was assigned in error, in which case the principal/designee is the only person authorized to change it.

   b. W (Withdrawal) – This will not be changed unless it was assigned in error, in which case the principal/designee is the only person authorized to change it.

   c. R (Retake) – This code will not be changed unless it was assigned in error, in which case the principal/designee is the only person authorized to change it.

   d. F (Fail) – This code awarded by a sending institution will not be changed unless it was assigned in error, in which case the sending principal/designee is the only person authorized to change it.
F. Grade Appeal

1. If a student believes a course grade is unfair, unjust, or incorrectly calculated, the student may appeal the grade issued via the completion and submittal of the Grade Appeal Form. With this form, they are required to complete the following:

(a) Speak with the teacher who gave them the grade to make sure the student understands how the grade was earned/calculated. If this conversation resolves the dispute, the process ends here. If the teacher agrees that there was an error in the grade, the teacher must file a Grade Change Form with the Academic Dean. If the issue is not resolved and the student still disputes the grade issued, then the student must have the teacher initial the form and move on to step (b).

(b) The student must speak with the Academic Dean to review the grade for compliance with the QACPS grading policy and the class syllabus. If the Academic Dean concludes that an error was made in determining the grade, they must complete and submit a Grade Change form. If the Academic Dean determines that the grade is unjust but cannot determine what the correct grade should be or if the Academic Dean upholds the original grade issued and the student still disputes the grade, the Academic Dean must initial the form and the student moves on to step (c).

(c) The student must collect proof of why they believe their grade is incorrect. They must submit all information requested on the grade appeal form and write a letter to the Principal explaining their point of view. This must be submitted to the Principal’s office within 15 days of the last day of the marking period.

(d) Should the student wish to appeal the Principal’s decision, they should write a letter to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools within 5 business days of the Principal’s decision.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent directs QACPS staff to implement this regulation.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

Date: April 19, 2023

Patricia W. Saelens, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Queen Anne’s County Public Schools

HISTORY:

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