REGULATION for Middle School Grading Policy 624

I. REGULATION ELEMENTS

The Implementing Procedures for the Middle School Grading Policy were developed with the input of a broad based representation of stakeholder groups, including teachers, parents, and administrators. The following procedures were developed to provide consistency and alignment with our performance based instructional program, reference the most current educational research and communicate student progress toward mastery of learning objectives and content standards in a clear and meaningful way.

A. Assessment of Student Learning and Assignment of Grades- Definitions

1. Teachers will assess student progress toward mastery of learning objectives on an ongoing basis through a variety of methods and share progress with parents and students in a clear and timely manner. In order to maintain consistent grading practices across middle 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

(a) Mastery Assessments: Provides 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, and if applicable, midterm and final exams.

(b) Progress Assessments: These 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 to the mastery assessments.

(c) Formative Assessments: This is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes, and thus shall not be graded. These could include, but are not limited to warm-ups, independent practice on daily assignments, exit tickets, and reflections.
B. Reflection of Mastery

1. All grades shall reflect student progress toward mastery of the prescribed standards, objectives and content of the course. Grades assigned to each task/assessment will be reflected in the notes section of the gradebook if the original grade is 40% or lower or retaken. However, a final grade for the objective will not be lower than a 40%. Each attempt to mastery will be recorded in the notes section. Grades in coursework will not reflect student behavior or teacher expectations. These may be reported separately from measures of student academic performance.

2. The grade earned on each task should be accurately reflected in the teacher’s grade book. All grade books will be kept using the district’s approved grade book program and will be divided into the following categories. Each teacher shall use the grade percentage breakdown as outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Type of Task</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Grades</td>
<td>Mastery Assessments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progress Assessments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Only the final letter grade will be retained on the student’s permanent record.

4. 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)

C. Minimum Grades

The MINIMUM requirements for the number of graded assessment tasks that contribute to progress reporting cycle grades are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses That Meet Daily</th>
<th>Courses Following A/B Day Schedule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Interim Report for each Quarter</td>
<td>By Interim Report for each Quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery Assessments</td>
<td>Mastery Assessments 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Assessments</td>
<td>Progress Assessments 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Progress Report for each Quarter*</td>
<td>By Progress Report for each Quarter*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Students will receive quarterly reports cards with an interim report provided midway through each quarter. The student will receive a final grade for the course on their quarter four progress report.

2. The Unified Arts classes that are half year only, the second report card will reflect their final grade for the class.

D. Extra Credit

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

1. It must be available to all students.

2. It must reflect extra learning or understanding, not participation.

3. It must clearly relate to, or extend, content from the area it is assigned.

4. It must be reported as a progress assessment and carry a weight that is no more than an average/typical progress assessment.

5. Extra credit is not to be used to elevate a grade to passing when a student has not met course standards.

E. Retakes/Revisions

1. Mastery Assessments are not eligible to be retaken/revised. However, if a student demonstrates mastery of previous standards on subsequent Mastery Assessments, teachers will have the discretion to change the Mastery Assessment grade within the quarter.

2. A Progress Assessment can be redone one time up until the Mastery Assessment. There is no threshold for the grade the student may earn for the resubmission of the progress assessment.
F. Missing/Late Assignments

1. In the event that a student does no work on the task/assignment or fails to turn in the task/assignment, "NTI" will be assigned (NTI = Not Turned In). The "NTI" will be a grade of a 40% if the student does not turn in the work. Late work will be accepted with the following consideration:

   (a) Grades reflect the mastery of standards and course objectives not behavior. Work accepted after the due date is not subjected to a lower grade due to lateness. Once the Mastery Assessment is taken for those standards, any work not received will remain the grade of NTI, with the value of 40%.

G. Rounding Grades

Only end of course grades will be rounded to the nearest whole percentage. For example, 78.4% rounds down to 78%, while a 79.5% rounds up to an 80%.

H. Parent Reporting and Communication

When a student’s progress (grade) falls below 70% direct parental contact is required by the teacher. Teachers are required to document the contact.

I. 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.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/designees will notify the teacher in writing if the grades is to be changed. The principal/designee is responsible for implementing the procedures defined by the QACPS below in I.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 grading 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 grading period.

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

(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.

J. Grade Change Validity Audit

1. Each Middle 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.

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

   (a) 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.

K. Grade Appeal

1. If a student believes a course grade is unfair, unjust, or incorrectly calculated, the student or parent may appeal the grade issued via the completion and submission 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 Principal/Designee. 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 Principal/Designee to review the grade for compliance with the QACPS grading policy and the class syllabus. If the Principal/Designee concludes that an error was made in determining the grade, they must complete and submit a Grade Change Form. If the Principal/Designee determines that the grade is unjust but cannot determine what the correct grade should be or if the Principal/Designee upholds the original grade issued and the student still disputes the grade, the Principal/Designee 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.

L. Teacher Grade Books

In order to provide timely feedback, teachers must input graded assignments into the gradebook within one week of submission.

M. Excused Absences, Tardiness, and Suspension

All assignments will be allowed to be made up in accordance to the Student Attendance Policy.

N. Classes Earning High School Credit

Any class (Spanish I, Algebra) where the student earns high school credit will follow the high school grading procedures for that course.

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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<th>Revised</th>
<th>Reviewed</th>
<th>Next Review</th>
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