



Administrative Guidelines

Department: Academics (OAAP)

Policy: IHA

Topic: Grading Guidelines

Revised: August 2019

PROCEDURE

The following guidelines applied consistently will provide a sound base of implementing equitable grading procedures:

A grade is a measure of student achievement relative to Marietta City Schools and Georgia's curricular goals and performance standards. Grades serve to communicate academic progress to students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

Student assessment and grade reporting are tools to measure growth, progress, and the academic development of the student. Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the curriculum. Effective grading and reporting promotes interaction and involvement among all stakeholders (teachers, students, and parents) in the educational process.

The accuracy, equity, and quality of grades as a measure of student learning are directly dependent on the quality of instruction provided, the alignment of student learning tasks to the content and pacing of the district's curriculum, and the quality and rigor of the student work that is used to determine grades.

MCS Grading Objectives

Reflect mastery of content standards

Provide opportunities for grade recovery

Ensure fair and credible evaluations of student work

Enhance communication regarding student academic achievement between school and home

Grading Guidelines

Schoolwide grading procedures shall be developed and consistently implemented. All grading guidelines and procedures must be approved by principal or designee. Communication shall be made to students and parents in writing at the beginning of each course or school year as directed by the school principal and shall include the following:

1. Content to be studied

2. Teacher expectations for student performance
3. MCS grading scale (MCS Policy IHA): 100-90% = A, 89-80% = B, 79-73% = C, 72-70% = D, and 69-0% = F
4. Grading practices - including how students will be assessed and how credit weight is determined for each grading category
5. Procedures for determining grade weighting will be developed by teachers/department chairs. All sections of the same course must use the same grading categories and weights.

Grades assigned for participation must be reflective of student content mastery, not student behavior. For example, a form that must be signed by a parent would not meet the guidelines for a participation grade.

Formative grades may include anything that teachers assign during the course of a unit that informs the teacher about student progress towards meeting a standard. These items are on-going assignments such as quizzes, homework, self-check activities, class work, labs, minor essays, etc. from which the teacher checks student understanding and mastery of the standards.

Formal evaluation of individual student and group projects and informal assessments/observations of student performance are appropriate and accepted methods to gauge student progress. Specific Georgia Standards of Excellence must be given to students prior to the assignment/project. Additionally, grading rubrics shall be provided to students prior to the start of the assignment/project.

Teachers will not require students to pay a fee to participate in a course. After school participation will not be required for any course, and performances will not be substituted for final exams in any course. Should a student miss a performance that takes place during the school day and is used for assessment, the student will be given an alternate assignment on which to be assessed.

Results of assessments are to be used to evaluate and plan instruction and to provide timely feedback to students to correct or strengthen learning efforts.

Lowering academic grades shall not be used as a consequence for misconduct, except in cases of cheating. In grades K-5, administrative approval is required to lower a grade in the case of cheating.

When it is reasonably determined that a student is in danger of failing a subject/course, the parent will be notified in writing in a timely manner to allow the student the opportunity to improve performance and show mastery of the standards. This written notification is in addition to district grade reports. Schools and/or teachers will keep a record of this written notification.

Teachers will make available documentation such as test scores, work samples, checklists, rubrics, and teacher notes to explain or justify a particular grade when needed.

In the event a report card grade must be changed after posting, schools must adhere to the following procedure:

1. The teacher communicates the needed change with the appropriate school administrator in writing.
2. The school administrator reviews the grade change and submits a request to reopen the grading window to the district SIS Coordinator.
3. Once the grading window is reopened, the teacher will enter the correct grade(s) and communicate with the appropriate administrator and the district SIS Coordinator that the task is complete.

Parents of students enrolled in special education, ESOL, or gifted courses may receive periodic progress reports from their student's teacher. These reports show progress towards specific program goals that may or may not reflect on-grade level standards.

For guidance on grading for English Learners (ELs) refer to the district ESOL manual.

Grades K-5 Guidelines

Students in grades K-2 receive a standards-based report card every quarter.

Students in grades 3-5 should receive at least 9 grades per quarter in each academic subject area. For classes that may meet fewer than five days per week, flexibility for number of grades per quarter will be given.

Student grades must be entered in Aspen within 5 days of the assignment due date.

Teachers shall provide opportunities for each student to continue learning material that has not yet been mastered. Students who have not yet provided evidence of mastery will have opportunities to receive reteaching and be reassessed. This may occur during regular instructional time or at other times when students are able to attend that are not disruptive to required instruction.

Students will not receive a grade lower than 50%. Students will not be penalized for late work.

Grades 6-8 Guidelines

Content area PLCs will devise grading policies that are reasonable, balanced, and consistent. All teachers within a common PLC will adhere to the same grading policies. These policies should reflect a similar number of summative assignments, as well as a consensus of what constitutes mastery. All PLC grading policies will be approved by the principal or designee prior to the first day of school. Teachers will communicate these grading policies via the course syllabus within the first full week of the school year.

No final exams are to be given in EOC courses taken at the middle school.

Student grades must be entered in Aspen within 5 days of the assignment due date. This may be extended for major summative assignments.

Teachers shall provide opportunities for each student to continue learning material that has not yet been mastered. Students who have not yet provided evidence of mastery will have opportunities to receive reteaching and be reassessed. This may occur during regular instructional time or at other times when students are able to attend that are not disruptive to required instruction.

Students will not receive a grade lower than 50%, with the exception of a state-required End of Course test in a Carnegie unit course. Students will not be penalized for late work.

Grades 9-12 Guidelines

Content area PLCs will devise grading policies that are reasonable, balanced, and consistent. All teachers within a common PLC will adhere to the same grading policies. These policies should reflect a similar number of summative assignments, as well as a consensus of what constitutes mastery. Teachers will communicate these grading policies via the course syllabus within the first full week of each semester.

Grading policies may differentiate with reason to allow for course level differences (Honors, IB, AP, etc.).

No single assignment in the gradebook may exceed 20% of the student's grade. A reasonable number of assignments per grading category must be assessed so that a student's grade is a balanced representation of performance and mastery.

Final exams may be given in courses not taking an EOC Semester 1 and may count as much as 20% of a student's grade. No final exams are to be given in EOC/AP/IB courses semester 2.

All PLC grading policies will be approved by the principal or designee prior to the first day of school.

Student grades must be entered in Aspen within 5 days of the assignment due date. This may be extended for major summative assignments. Students who have not yet turned in the assignment when it is being entered into Aspen will receive a 0. The purpose of this is to communicate to parents and students precisely where the student's grade stands at any given time in the grading period.

Teachers shall provide opportunities for grade recovery for each student to continue learning material that has not yet been mastered. Students who have not yet provided evidence of mastery will have opportunities to receive reteaching and be reassessed. This may occur during regular instructional time or at other times when students are able to attend that are not disruptive to required instruction. Grade recovery policies must be consistent within PLCs, approved by the principal or designee, and communicated to students and parents via the syllabus within the first full week of each semester.

Teachers with failure rates greater than 20% at progress report times are required by the principal to develop and submit an instructional/student intervention support plan based on the root cause analysis process. Principals will include this information in the school data collection presented during the formative evaluation process with the Deputy Superintendent.