

**GRADING AND REPORTING:
MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**

Effective: April 13, 2023

I. Notification/Dissemination

The principal will inform all students, parents, and employees of the provisions of this 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 employee/student handbooks.
- D. Making the information available for new students through the registration process.

II. Grading

- A. Determining Quarterly Student Grades
 - 1. The letter grade will be used to indicate the individual level of achievement of each student in relation to mastery of curriculum standards.
 - 2. Curriculum coordinators will work with teachers and other stakeholders to collaboratively create quarterly grading parameters to include percentages, appropriate short-term (formative) assignments and summative tasks by content area and/or grade level. Neither summative nor short-term assignment categories should exceed 70 percent of the total quarterly grade.
 - 3. Short-term assignments may include a variety of classwork such as independent work, individually graded group work, oral responses, and other tasks.
 - 4. Summative tasks may involve examinations (e.g., tests) and tasks/projects (e.g., longer-term assignments, essays, projects). Both short-term assignments and summative tasks should include a variety of types of work. Tasks will be graded on demonstration of performance objectives, quality of work, and completeness.

5. The parameters will be submitted for review to the Division of Academics Leadership Team. Once accepted, parameters will be reviewed by the Division of Academics Leadership Team annually and any changes will be made collaboratively with educators and the Division of Academics. Recommendations for changes to grading parameters will be subject to a comment period prior to review.
6. Extra credit is not offered in Grades 6-12. However, students may be provided with opportunities to recover credit and demonstrate mastery through other relevant coursework. Opportunities should be given to students who are not passing whenever possible.
7. Within the first five days of class, every teacher will distribute to their students an explanation of how students' grades will be calculated. This information will be made available to parents both in writing and through the learning management system. Prior to distribution to students, the administrator will review and approve the teacher's grading explanations.

B. Final Assessments for Courses Taken for High School Credit

1. 1.0 credit or more courses that are not State assessed.
 - a. At the end of the second marking period, a mid-term assessment will be given. At the end of the fourth marking period, a final assessment will be given.
 - b. Assessments may take different formats, including but not limited to, a report, capstone project, portfolio, or multiple choice test.
 - c. No student is exempt from assessments, and assessments may not be taken/due before a scheduled assessment date.
 - d. Non-traditional courses may not have a final assessment or these may be scheduled for a different time (see Section II.J. for additional information).
2. 0.5 courses

At the end of the second or fourth marking period, a final assessment will be given.
3. A student on suspension or expulsion at assessment time will be permitted to take the assessment and will remain eligible to qualify for the awarding of course credit.

C. Reporting Middle and High School Grades

1. For middle and high school courses, only the final grade and/or code will be retained on the Student Records Systems card.
2. If a student retakes a high school credited course when credit was previously earned:
 - a. The student may earn credit more than once for the same course only if the course is designated as eligible for additional credit in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses.
 - b. If the course is not designated as eligible for additional credit in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses, the student may still retake the course but will only earn credit once.
 - c. Both the final grades from taking the course originally and for retaking the course will be recorded on the high school transcript. Any course, original or retaken, taken in high school, will be included in the high school Grade Point Average (GPA).

D. Implementation of Codes

Codes used for courses taken in middle school and high school

1. I (Incomplete) Code
 - a. Incomplete 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. If a student transfers into an HCPSS school with a code of I as a final grade, the student will receive no credit for that course and it will not be calculated into the cumulative GPA. If it is a marking period grade, it will be calculated into marking period GPAs in accordance with this policy.
2. N/A (Not Available) codes will be used when transfer students (in-county or from out-of-county) are missing grades from one marking period. Courses with N/A codes will receive credit and will be calculated into the cumulative

GPA. The final grade will be the average of the remaining quarters and/or assessment grades. N/A codes may also be used as a placeholder for non-traditional courses until the marking period and/or assessment grades are recorded at the end of the semester. If an N/A code is needed for another reason, counselors should request permission from the Office of School Counseling. A student may not receive an N/A in multiple quarters of the same course and still receive credit. A student needs to pass at least two quarters and at least one quarter in each semester or both quarters of Semester 2 of a full-year course in order to pass the course.

If a student moves out of the state of Maryland within 14 school days of the last day of school (or end of first semester) and is not beginning in their new school for the remainder of the year, a principal can allow the student to accept the grade at time of withdrawal for Q4 or Q2.

3. W (Withdrawal) Code

W codes indicate that a student withdrew from a course after the designated date for withdrawal (24 school days from the start of a full-year course and 16 days from the start of a semester-long course).

- a. 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 averaged into the new course. The new teacher may require make-up work.
- b. 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 not be required to make up work in the new course if the schedule change is made prior to the W date. If make-up work is completed it may be averaged into the current marking period grade.
- c. 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 and no credit will be awarded. The schedule change form will be placed in the student's cumulative record. The teacher of the new course may recommend work for the student in order to gain missing content, and it will be the teacher's decision if it will be included in the student's grade. The principal may permit a student to earn credit in the new course until the midpoint of the course as outlined in Section II.E.1. below.
- d. If an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines a student needs a change in schedule to make progress toward meeting their IEP goals, a code of W will be assigned in the withdrawn class. The student may earn credit in the new course until the midpoint of the course, and the final grade will be calculated based on the grades earned in the new

course. The schedule change form will be placed in the student's cumulative record. If a student has two (2) or more N/As in the same course, the student will not be awarded credit. Make-up work for the purposes of gaining critical content will be given and graded to replace at least one of the quarters with the N/A grade.

- e. Students may enroll in a digital education course, with approval, after the posted withdrawal deadline if they are able to complete the course requirements by the course end date or school year, whichever is earlier.

4. X (Late enrollment) Code

X codes will be issued when a student enrolls in a course too late for credit to be granted (after the 24th school day of a full-year course or after the 16th school day of a semester-long course).

- a. When a student withdraws from a course after the designated date for withdrawal and transfers to a different course (rather than another level of the same course), an X code will be assigned in the new course for marking periods prior to and including the marking period in which the transfer occurred. An X code will also be assigned for the final grade on the report card and the transcript and no credit will be awarded.
- b. When a student transfers into the HCPSS more than 24 school days after the start of the course and before the second or fourth marking period begins, and enrolls in a course in which they were not enrolled in the previous school, X is assigned for all marking periods prior to and including the marking period in which the student transfers. An exception may be made as outlined in Section II.E.1. below.

5. Z (Assessment not taken) Code

Z codes will be assigned when a student does not take a midterm or final assessment for a course. Z codes will be converted to the letter grade earned on the assessment if the assessment is taken within the following deadlines:

- a. For a midterm assessment, the student will take the assessment no later than four weeks (20 school days) following the administration of the assessment.
- b. For a final assessment, the student will take the assessment no later than 10 days following the start of the next school year.
- c. For graduating seniors, Z codes will not be used. If a senior misses an assessment, an E will automatically be given.

Under unusual circumstances, the principal may approve an extension to the deadlines in Section III.D.5. above. Otherwise, within 45 school days, the Z

code is converted to an E for the assessment grade, and a final grade will be calculated.

6. A student may change levels of a course (e.g. move from Honors to G/T until 16 days after the end of the second marking period for 1.0 credit or more courses without code change or penalty.

E. Students Transferring into the HCPSS or into Alternative Education Placement

1. A code of X or N/A is typically used if a student transfers into the HCPSS (more than 24 school days after the start of a full-year course or more than 16 school days after the start of a semester-long course and before the second or fourth marking period begins) and enrolls in a course in which they were not enrolled in the previous school. However, the principal or their designee may take extenuating circumstances into consideration when determining whether a code of X or N/A should be used and may permit a student to earn credit in the new course until the midpoint of the course. If a student has 2 or more N/As in the same course, the student will not be awarded credit unless make-up work for the purposes of gaining critical content will be given and graded to replace at least one of the quarters with the N/A grade. Make-up work for the purposes of gaining critical content may be given and averaged into grades at the discretion of the teacher. Students may also be enrolled in non-traditional courses to supplement work to be included in quarter, assessment, or final grades.
2. The grades for comparable courses for students who have transferred from another school will be averaged into the final grade. If HCPSS does not offer the course level, the most equivalent course level will be assigned. For example, if a student received credit in an Honors course and HCPSS does not have an Honors course, the student will receive credit for the gifted and talented (GT) course while retaining the original course title on the transcript.
3. Religion courses and final grades in those courses from parochial schools not satisfying Section II.E.2. above will be reflected on the transcript but will not be awarded credit.
4. Credit transfers for students assigned to alternative education placements will be reviewed by the Gateway Student Support Team (GSST) or Central Education Placement Team (CEPT) and approved by the principal.

F. Middle School Academic Intervention, Promotion, Retention and Accelerated Grade Placement

1. Academic Intervention
 - a. When a middle school student performs below grade/curriculum expectations, the school team, including the teacher, will, with the

knowledge and appropriate participation of parents, provide additional assistance and opportunities for the student to improve their performance. Interventions may include the following:

- i. A conference with the student
 - ii. Differentiated instruction delivered within the regular classroom/school day
 - iii. A change in class/subject placement
 - iv. The involvement of a student support team (which may include IEP team for special education students or 504 team for students with 504 Plans)
 - v. The involvement of support staff
 - vi. Participation in supplemental academic activities (e.g., before/after school tutorials, mentoring)
 - vii. Enrollment in summer school
- b. In addition, for students who perform below grade level in reading and/or mathematics, the school team will develop a plan to improve and monitor achievement.
 - c. Grade level teams will review and modify student plans with the appropriate grade level teams for the following year.

2. Consideration for Promotion

- a. The principal may, upon the recommendation of a school/grade team, promote a student who achieves at or above grade/curriculum expectations towards curriculum standards in English, mathematics, science, and social studies as measured by teacher-made or selected assessments and by teacher observations.
- b. A student receiving special education will be assessed based on the provisions of their IEP.
- c. After consideration of all factors, including parent input, the principal will decide if promotion is appropriate. Parents may appeal a decision to promote to the Community Superintendent.

3. Consideration for Retention

- a. With input from the appropriate school/grade team, the principal will consider a student for retention when a student fails to meet standards appropriate for the grade level. The principal may also consider for retention a student who is recommended by a school/grade team or parent for other reasons. The principal must consider whether the needs of the student are best met through retention and offer the parent an opportunity to be included in the decision-making process.

- b. The principal will make a decision about retention based on a number of factors, which may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - i. Academic achievement level
 - ii. Demonstrated progress in response to academic interventions
 - iii. Age of the student
 - iv. Previous retention(s)
 - v. Attendance record
 - vi. Parental concerns
 - vii. Developmental factors
 - viii. Health factors
 - ix. Emotional factors
 - x. Report Card
 - xi. IEP, if applicable
 - xii. 504 Plan, if applicable (see Policy 9060 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Compliance: Section 504)
- c. For students who receive special education services, the IEP team will provide input to the administration regarding retention of a diploma-bound student.
- d. The provisions of this policy do not apply to a student with an IEP who is scheduled to graduate with a certificate of completion rather than a diploma.
- e. Any student who is not passing in English/Language Arts and/or mathematics at the end of 8th grade (as shown on the student's report card) will be required to participate in appropriate interventions, based on academic need as determined by the middle school principal. Interventions may include summer school, evening school, and other non-traditional course options and/or designated reading and/or mathematics intervention courses in 9th grade.
- f. Parents may request retention in writing for the following school year from May 1 to June 30, or within 10 school days of entry to school from another school outside of HCPSS. The principal will respond within 20 school days. If the parent is not in agreement with the principal's decision, the parent may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the appropriate Community Superintendent within 10 days of receipt of the principal's response.
- g. The Community Superintendent will notify the Executive Director of Program Innovation and Student Well-Being, who will convene a cross-divisional committee to discuss the parent's request. After reviewing the parent's materials and the school's materials, the team will share their feedback on the situation and the Community Superintendent will render

a decision in writing within 15 school days of receiving the appeal. Retention is not appealable beyond the Community Superintendent.

- h. If a student is retained in the current grade, the instructional team for that grade must review any academic interventions provided to the student during the current academic year and make revisions designed to accelerate the student's pace of learning for the following year.

4. Consideration for Accelerated Grade Placement

- a. A principal may, upon the recommendation of a school/grade team or parent, consider accelerating a student to an advanced grade when they consistently demonstrate the ability to achieve at a higher level than expected in the essential curriculum as measured by quarterly, teacher made and other assessments, and by teacher observations.
- b. The principal will decide whether to move the student to an advanced grade based on a number of factors, which may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - i. Academic achievement level
 - ii. Age of the student
 - iii. Previous accelerations
 - iv. Attendance record
 - v. Parental concerns
 - vi. Developmental factors
 - vii. Health factors
 - viii. Emotional factors
 - ix. Report card
 - x. IEP, if applicable
 - xi. 504 Plan, if applicable (see Policy 9060 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Compliance: Section 504)
- c. Students will not be accelerated to advanced grades against the wishes of their parent.
- d. Parents may request acceleration in writing for the following year from May 1 to June 30, or within 10 school days of entry to school from another school outside of HCPSS. The principal will respond within 20 school days. If the parent is not in agreement with the principal's decision, the parent may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the appropriate Community Superintendent within 10 days of receipt of the principal's response.
- e. The Community Superintendent will notify the Executive Director of Program Innovation and Student Well-Being, who will convene a cross-divisional committee to discuss the parent's request. After reviewing the

parent's materials and the school's materials, the committee will share their feedback with the Community Superintendent who will render a decision in writing within 15 school days of receiving the appeal. Acceleration is not appealable beyond the Community Superintendent.

G. High School Promotions

1. To be promoted to grade 10, students must have five credits including one English credit or one mathematics credit and one year of high school attendance.
2. To be promoted to grade 11, students must have ten credits including one English credit and one mathematics credit and two years of high school attendance.
3. To be promoted to grade 12, students must have fourteen credits including two English credits and two mathematics credits, have successfully passed Health I and Lifetime Fitness, and three years of high school attendance.
4. Promotion of students will be considered and updated by high schools at the end of the first semester, the end of the school year and after summer school to account for completion of non-traditional coursework.
5. Students transferring into grade 12 from another school system, will still be considered to be seniors, even if they have not passed Health I and Lifetime Fitness, if they have met the other requirements.

H. GPA

1. Courses carrying a designation of gifted and talented (GT), advanced placement (AP), and honors (H) will contribute to weighted GPA. Weighted courses will be indicated in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses. For transfer students, HCPSS will weight grades of courses designated GT, AP, and H taken outside HCPSS if the same courses are offered in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses. Students taking a dual enrollment course in a post-secondary institution for dual credit will receive the weighting for the highest possible equivalent offered by HCPSS. GT and H designation are not available for some non-traditional courses.
2. Both an unweighted and weighted cumulative GPA will be calculated by the first week of October of the senior year and will be based on credits earned in grades nine through eleven.
3. At graduation, an unweighted and weighted cumulative GPA will be calculated based on credits earned in grades nine through twelve.

4. GPAs from both the first week of October and the end of the senior year will appear on the final high school transcript.
5. Weighted GPA will be used for academic eligibility for extracurricular activities, National Honor Society, honor roll, and for any other activity requiring the reporting of a grade point average.

I. High School Courses Taken in Middle School

1. Any high school course listed in the Middle School Course Catalog which is offered at the middle school is eligible for high school credit and will be treated as an equivalent.
2. The student's final course grade will be recorded on the high school transcript.
3. The student's grade will not be calculated into the high school GPA.
4. If a student re-takes one of the high school courses taken in middle school for which credit was earned, only the first credit will be awarded.
5. If a student receives a full year of high school content within one middle school year, one high school credit will be awarded at the completion of that year.
6. If a student earns a credit in middle school with a weight associated in the course and retakes the course in high school in a course that does not have a weight associated, the course taken in high school will not receive a weighted grade.

J. Non-traditional Courses

Non-traditional courses include, but are not limited to, digital education, credit recovery, or high school credit-bearing courses taught during summer or after regular school hours, or dual enrollment courses taught at a higher education institution. Courses eligible for dual enrollment credit taught in a high school building during the traditional school day may also be considered non-traditional and have a weighting structure that aligns with the institute of higher education partner's accreditation standards.

1. All non-traditional courses have teacher-facilitated instruction that meets the standards of the HCPSS curriculum.
2. All non-traditional courses have a defined period for completion that may vary from the traditional academic calendar.

3. All non-traditional credit recovery courses must be substantially comparable, qualitatively and quantitatively, to the previously attempted course.
4. For non-traditional courses taken outside of the regular school day, the attendance policy may be modified.

K. Summer School

1. Summer school is a continuation of the school year preceding enrollment in the course.
2. Students may enroll in an Innovative Pathways Summer School course up until the third day of the course.
3. For non-traditional courses taken outside of the regular school day, the attendance policy may be modified.
4. Students who retake a course through summer school may be able to gain eligibility for fall extracurricular activities. The grade earned in summer school does not replace the recorded grade for the fourth quarter of a student's report card or transcript. However, the final grade earned in the summer school class will be calculated in place of the student's fourth quarter grade in the course only for the purpose of meeting eligibility requirements.

L. Credit Recovery

1. Schools may enroll students in on-site credit recovery programs within the first 24 school days of the academic year. Transfer students may enroll in credit recovery courses.
2. Students may enroll in credit recovery, including the Innovative Pathways Evening Program (formerly Evening School).

III. Reporting

- A.** Teachers will grade, post, and return student work within three weeks of the due date, barring unusual circumstances and include written feedback when possible and appropriate.
1. Students and parents can expect updated grades every three weeks from the start of a marking period. The exception will be during the start of school when teachers will post updated grades by the fourth week of school (20 school days).
 2. Teachers should notify parents of unsatisfactory progress throughout the marking period.

3. Assignments or assessments that are unable to be sent home due to question security or copyright may be reviewed at school by students or parents but may not be sent home.

B. Non-traditional Reporting

1. Credit recovery course credit may be awarded for the completion of a course where the student was previously enrolled but did not earn credit (See Policy 8200 Digital Education).
2. Non-traditional courses, including but not limited to, summer school, digital education, evening school and credit recovery course grades will be reflected on the high school transcript and calculated in the cumulative GPA.
3. For non-traditional courses where the student was previously enrolled but did not earn credit, both the original course grade and the non-traditional course grade will be included in the GPA and recorded on the high school transcript.
4. For non-traditional courses taught outside the traditional school day, marking period grades may be earned by semester. Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 will reflect the Semester 1 grade, and Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 will reflect the Semester 2 grade. An N/A code may be used for Quarter 1 or Quarter 3 if applicable, which will be updated to reflect the Semester 1 grade at the end of Quarter 2 or Quarter 4. This grade change will not affect student's athletic eligibility for Quarter 1 or 3. If timing prohibits the entry of an exam grade, an N/A can be used and changed.
5. Final grades for non-traditional courses taught outside the traditional school day during the school year will be included in eligibility calculations for Quarters 2, 3 and 4. Final grades will be used.

IV. Report Card Grade Change Procedures

Grade changes must be documented on the grade change form. Parents must be notified of the grade change by the teacher or the principal.

- A. The grade change form needs a signature from the teacher, the data clerk, and the principal. The form must include a reason for the grade change and date of the approval.
- B. Copies of the grade change form go into the student's cumulative record, to the teacher, the data clerk, and to the Office of School Counseling.
- C. If a parent disagrees with a grade, they should send a request in writing with a detailed rationale to the teacher who recorded the grade within six (6) school days of receiving the report card. The teacher will review the grade and respond within

six (6) school days. If after the teacher reviews the parent still disagrees, then the parent may request in writing that the principal review the decision. For a grade change for the 4th marking period or for a non-traditional course or course with a State end-of-course assessment, the timeline would begin on the first day of school in the new school year.

- D. The principal will respond within six (6) school days and may change the grade without the teacher's permission if there is evidence to make a change. If the parent is not in agreement with the principal's decision, the parent may appeal in writing the principal's decision to the appropriate Community Superintendent within 10 days of receipt of the principal's response.
- E. The Community Superintendent will notify the Executive Director of Program Innovation and Student Well-Being, who will convene a cross-divisional committee to discuss the parent's request. After reviewing the parent's materials and the school's materials, the committee will share their feedback with the Community Superintendent who will render a written decision within 10 school days of the receipt of the appeal. Grade changes may not be appealed beyond the Community Superintendent.
- F. If a grade change is generated from outside the school, a grade change form must be completed and include a reason for the change. This form goes into the student's cumulative record and to the principal and data clerk.

V. Report Card Code Change

Code changes must be documented on the grade change form. Parents must be notified of the code change by the teacher or the principal.

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

- I (Incomplete) This code will be changed by following the guidelines described in Section II.D.1.b. of these procedures.
- P (Pass) This code will not be changed unless it was assigned due to an administrative error, in which case the principal is the only person authorized to change it.
- W (Withdrawal) This code will not be changed unless it was assigned in error, in which case the principal is the only person authorized to change it.
- X (Late enrollment in class) This code will not be changed unless it was assigned in error, in which case the principal is the only person authorized to change it.

VI. Homework

- A. For the purposes of determining the number of hours of homework per week or day, teachers should include reading of course material, studying of course material, and practicing skills taught in course (e.g., rehearsing a musical instrument). Time spent on long-term projects should also be included when determining the number of hours of homework; however, these projects do not constitute homework for grading purposes.
- B. Middle and high school teaching staff will be provided with opportunities to meet as teams to schedule assignments so that students do not regularly have more than one hour of homework each week per instructor. It is recommended that the school principal or designee work with teaching staff to facilitate this collaboration.
- C. The goals and expectations for homework in high school credit courses will be clear and include opportunities for student input. As appropriate, flexibility and student choice will be considered in the assignment of homework duration, rigor, product, and weight in grading. A syllabus is recommended for distribution at the beginning of every semester outlining each course's requirements, including regular assignments, projects, possible due dates, and procedures for requesting feedback on assignments.

VII. Monitoring

Policy 8020 implementation procedures will be overseen by the Division of Academics.

VIII. Definitions

Within the context of these implementation procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. Accelerated Grade Placement – The movement of a student out of the normal progression to an advanced grade.
- B. Alternative Education Placement – A location outside of the designated home school designed to accommodate students who have demonstrated the need for significant academic or behavioral support.
- C. Capstone Project – A multifaceted assignment requiring multiple intellectual activities that serves as a culminating academic experience.
- D. Portfolio – A systematic collection of student work completed throughout the course, demonstrating mastery in multiple aspects of the curriculum.
- E. Report – A written or oral presentation on a topic that a student has explored in depth synthesizing information from a variety of sources.

IX. History¹

ADOPTED: June 25, 1987
REVIEWED: December 21, 2015
MODIFIED: June 13, 2013
February 20, 2014
August 14, 2014
September 11, 2014
December 22, 2020
December 16, 2021
April 13, 2023
REVISED: February 8, 1990
June 10, 1999
January 27, 2005
January 12, 2006
November 21, 2006
June 12, 2008
March 21, 2013
June 13, 2019
August 16, 2022
EFFECTIVE: April 13, 2023

¹ Key: *Adopted*-Original date the Board took action to approve a policy; *Reviewed*-The date the status of a policy was assessed by the Superintendent's Standing Policy Group; *Modified*-The date the Board took action to alter a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee did not require a comprehensive examination; *Revised*-The date the Board took action on a that policy based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee needed a comprehensive examination; *Effective*-The date a policy is implemented throughout the HCPSS, typically July 1 following Board action.