

Guidelines for Grading for Parents

Answers for Parents

Why is Capital School District adjusting current grading practices?

Capital School District's grading policy promotes student success based on current research. The goal is to align grading practices across grade levels, courses, classrooms and schools. The grading scale is being adjusted in order to more effectively measure and communicate a students' academic achievement. Grades will be based on clearly defined learning goals and performance standards with a focus on student achievement.

What is the purpose of grading?

The main purpose for grading is to communicate achievement status to students, parents, and others during, and at the conclusion of each grading period. Grading provides information that students can use for self-evaluation and growth and is also used to identify students for opportunities and course placement. At the school and district level, grades can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of curricular, instructional, and assessment practices and programs.

What is the grading scale?

The Capital School District grading scale is as follows:

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| A= 94-100 | Well Above the Standard (Excels) |
| B= 85-93 | Above the Standard |
| C= 77-84 | Meets the Standard |
| D= 70-76 | Below the Standard |
| F= 0-69 | Well Below the Standard (Failure) Parent Notification is required |

This scale will be used for grading student work. At the end of each marking period, cumulative averages below 50 will be converted to a 50. This adjustment still reflects that a student failed and is Well Below the Standard. However, with hard work, the student has the opportunity to recover by earning a "passing" grade.

How will using the grading guidelines more accurately reflect student achievement?

Grades will more accurately reflect what a students knows, understands, and how to use this knowledge in meaningful ways. Behavior, participation, and attitude will no longer be factored into achievement grades. Grades will be based primarily on various assessments and performance tasks, which reflect larger chunks of learning. Also, when a score accurately reflects a student's knowledge and skills, weaknesses can be detected early so the student can get extra help in a timely manner.

Student mastery of instructional objectives as aligned with the DE Content Standards and the Capital School District Curriculum Guides shall be the major factor in determining a student's grade. Teachers will also be required to record a sufficient number of grades for a subject or course that is an accurate reflection of the student's mastery of the learning objectives. In addition, in grades 2-12, no single grade shall count more than 20% of the nine weeks or semester grade. In grades 2-12, a teacher's grade book will be divided into formative and summative grades. For grades 2-4, 80% of the grades will be formative and 20% of the grades will be summative. For grades 5-12, 20% of the grades will be formative and 80% of the grades will be summative.

Can students still earn extra credit?

Extra credit opportunities are limited strictly to additional work that provides extended learning and that directly matches the content standards or grade level expectations and should be offered to all students. Activities such as bringing school supplies, merely attending an event, or completing any task not directly related to achievement does not meet the guidelines.

How does feedback relate to the grading guidelines and enhance student achievement?

The teacher will inform students and parents of how grades will be determined in a particular class. This information will include the weight that each assignment carries, where appropriate. Teachers will also inform students in advance of the grading criteria or rubrics to be used in evaluating major assignments. Student achievement is enhanced when feedback is immediate and precise. Teachers are encouraged to grade work promptly (within a week of submission is a good rule of thumb) and return it to students for review.

How might the new grading guidelines impact students' grades?

The rationale for addressing K-12 grading was never to intentionally raise or lower students' grades or to make our district match other schools or colleges. That said, some students would now earn higher or lower grades because achievement and behavior are now reported separately. Grades are now determined primarily on assessments and major tasks, and how well students prepare for and perform on assigned work. As it should be, a student's best opportunity to achieve the desired grade is to complete all assigned practice, performance tasks, and assessments to the best of their ability. Since extra credit opportunities are very limited, and students' attitudes, and participation are now graded separately, students must show what they know/understand and how they can apply knowledge to earn their grades.

If you have any questions please contact:

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