

RECOMMENDED GRADING PROCEDURES FOR 2019-2020 QUARTER 4 AND FINAL GRADES



As a community of educators, Miami-Dade County Public Schools is committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that every child achieves their full potential in any learning environment. Since March 16th, teachers, parents, administrators, and students have demonstrated this commitment again and again. Innovative solutions to help all students successfully learn from home have been implemented, and we remain adamant about resolving inequities across our school communities. We continue to address the basic needs of our students as we navigate this unprecedented time together.

Grading Practices

Grading has long been one of the biggest sources of inequities in education because grades may be influenced by factors outside a student's control, including access to resources and opportunities outside of school. School closures have made these disparities even more apparent. In the past, schools have helped ensure students have comparable access to learning tools, instruction, technology, and wrap around supports — with distance learning, this is much more difficult.

In high schools, our students face post-secondary consequences that are the difference between gaining access to well-paying jobs and health benefits or not. Grading implicates hundreds of millions of dollars in scholarship opportunities. Grading systems can impact military recruiting, college athletics, access to college majors, and more.

Our efforts with this guidance document are to address, as best we can, the variability in access and inherent biases in grading. This is the best possible way to protect our students from harm and to honor their hard work under extremely difficult circumstances while not penalizing anyone for factors outside their control.

The following principles guided the development of the document and reflect our commitment to advancing equity:

- Ensure that the negative impact of the school closures on students is minimized;
- Keep students engaged in learning;
- Engage families as partners in supporting their children;
- Meet the state's requirement to make a good faith effort in providing meaningful high school credit-bearing opportunities; and
- Promote common expectations across all schools.



Grading Student Performance During Quarter 4

Starting April 6, 2020, students began earning grades for assignments given by their teachers that demonstrated their progress. These grades will count towards the fourth grading period and as part of the final grade for a course.

As a reminder, School Board Policy 5410, the Student Progression Plan (SPP), requires that academic grades reflect the student's academic progress based on the standards/benchmarks for the grade level course in which the student is enrolled. The academic grades must not be based on the student's effort, conduct, attendance, or tardiness. The grade must provide for both students and parents a clear indication of each student's academic performance as compared with norms which would be appropriate for the grade or subject.

In Kindergarten, teachers will use the *Code of Development*, as described in the SPP, to reflect the teacher's most objective assessment of the student's social, emotional, and academic achievement. For grades 1 through 12, letter grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," "F," or "I" shall be used to measure student success with each letter grade corresponding to a specific percentile from zero to one hundred percent.

While teachers have autonomy in assigning grades, it is recommended that sensitivity be used when issuing grades because students are facing serious issues regarding lack of connectivity at home, no in-person support, sharing of devices with siblings or working parents, and social/emotional concerns. Understanding that teachers will make every effort to ensure students successfully complete the fourth quarter, students will be permitted to make up any missed assignments throughout the grading period.

Teachers have the following recommended options of assigning grades for students who cannot engage in distance learning in an equitable way:

Final 4 th Quarter Grade Options	Gradebook	Impact on Course Final Grade
Grade earned based on assignments given	A, B, C, D, F	Students grades from each quarter are computed by DSIS and a final grade is issued
Teacher overrides 4 th quarter in Gradebook to a non-failing grade because of individual student circumstances	A, B, C, D	Students grades from each quarter are computed by DSIS and a final grade is issued
Incomplete is issued by teacher because student did not engage in distance learning during quarter 4 (not applicable for current seniors)	I	Due to the incomplete in the 4 th grading period, the student will not have a final grade computed by DSIS for the course and must be given opportunities to reengage in the course based on consultation with the student/parent/principal/teacher to determine how student will earn a grade for quarter 4. Teacher must issue a grade prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

Determining Final Academic Grades

To determine an **elementary** student's final course grade, DSIS automatically computes the letter grades for each of the nine-week grading periods are averaged for a given subject. A **secondary** student's final course grade is computed by DSIS as follows: 25 percent value for each of four nine-week grading periods, with a provision for teacher override. A teacher may administer an assessment at the end of each nine-week grading period. The value of the assessment may not exceed 5 percent of the grade for each nine-week grading period. This equates to ten points required to pass an annual course using a 4.0 scale. In **secondary** courses with mandatory Florida End of Course (EOC) assessments, the EOC score will not be included this school year due to the cancellation of all state assessments.

In order to pass an annual course, students in **grades 9-12**, must earn a minimum of 10 grade points, five of which must be earned in the second semester. Students in **grades 6-8** must also earn a minimum of 10 grade points but earning five points in the second semester does not apply.

For **senior high school students**, the forgiveness policy for required courses is limited to replacing a grade of D or F with a grade of C or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. The forgiveness policy for elective courses is limited to replacing a grade of D or F with a grade of C or higher earned subsequently in another course. In either situation, when a student attempts forgiveness for a grade, only the new grade will be used to compute the student's GPA. Any course not replaced according to this policy will be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation. The only exception to the forgiveness policy stated above applies to middle school students who take any high school course. In this case, forgiveness can be applied to courses with a final grade of C, D, or F. In such case, the forgiveness policy must allow the replacement of the grade with a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in the same course or comparable course.

Promotion and Retention Considerations

Recent state guidance places the responsibility of decisions regarding student **promotion and retention** for all grade levels, including grade 3, with the principal, in consultation with parents and teachers. Decisions should be based on students' classroom performance and progress monitoring data. Students may not be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion (F.S.1008.25).

Promotion and Retention consideration should be given to the following indicators:

- ability levels and grades earned in reaching the age appropriate standards;
- attendance and number of retentions;
- other school records; and
- input from parent or guardian

Retention should be approved by the principal in cases where the teachers and parents/guardians agree that it is in the student's best interest.