



# GRADING PROTOCOL FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8)

# PREFACE

In accordance with Board policy, Memphis Shelby County Schools' (MSCS) grading system for middle schools adheres to the Tennessee Uniform Grading System, other state laws and regulations concerning grading, and grade inclusion standards required by the State of Tennessee student assessment system. Academic grades are determined by students' mastery of content in each subject using varied assessment strategies.

The District believes that providing academic grades is important to ensure that students and parents receive information regularly about student academic progress to facilitate learning and parent engagement. This grading protocol, aligned with Board policy, sets forth district-wide standards for grading students in grades 6-8 and provides a foundation for consistent grading practices from teacher to teacher and school to school within the district. Additionally, this protocol is intended to support, not duplicate, policy requirements and should be reviewed in conjunction with policy 5015 - Grading System for Grades 6-12 to ensure compliance with Board policy.

In carrying out the requirements of this protocol, MSCS school teachers and principals are reminded that a district-wide moratorium on the use of grade floors was established in 2017 and remains in effect to date.

## DISTRICT REQUIRED GRADING CATEGORIES & WEIGHTS (PER NINE WEEKS )

The District believes that a sufficient number of grades should be earned and recorded to accurately reflect a student's progress. Students in grades 6-8 must be provided an opportunity to earn at least 17 grades per nine-weeks (quarter) distributed among the following categories with the following weights. With the exception of projects, portfolios, and presentations, two grades for each required category (totaling eight grades) must be earned and recorded by the interim of the nine-week period.

**Homework: 10% (min. of 4 grades)**

**Class Participation: 5% (min. of 4 grades) Classwork: 40% (min. of 4 grades)**

**Projects/Portfolios/Presentations: 5% (min. of 1 grade)**

**Assessments: 40% (min. of 4 grades)**

### MSCS Grading Scale

**A 90-100**

**B 80-89**

**C 70-79**

**D 60-69**

**F 59-0**

**District required grading categories and weights will be preset by the district in the PowerTeacher Pro gradebook. PowerTeacher Pro is the only official gradebook for the Memphis Shelby County Schools District; therefore, all recorded grades must be recorded in PowerTeacher Pro. In addition, a printed backup copy of the gradebook must be maintained per quarter.**

**For middle school honors courses, teachers must manually enter the additional points for each nine-week grade and the semester exam in the PowerTeacher Pro gradebook. Teachers should refer to the Administrative Rules and Regulations of MSCS Board Policy 5015 for guidance regarding the addition of points and to the PowerTeacher Pro documentation provided by the Department of Student Information Management regarding how these manual adjustments are made.**

### **Special Education and English Learners**

Special education students receiving instruction in general education are graded as other students unless the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) makes provision for alternative grading procedures. The grading category requirements detailed in this protocol may be modified based on a student's IEP.

Students receiving services as English Learners must have an opportunity for modified instruction and evaluation that relates specifically to a student's stage of English Language Development (ELD) and provides access to grade level content and skills. The grading category requirements detailed in this protocol may be modified based on a student's Individualized Learning Plan (ILP).

Should this protocol contradict any requirements of a student's IEP or ILP, the plan shall govern.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Teachers will: (1) consistently implement common grade-level or department grading procedures in compliance with this protocol, (2) clearly communicate the common grading procedures to parents and students in writing under the direction of the principal and mastery criteria for projects or other assignments that are used to evaluate multiple concepts using tools such as rubrics or criteria charts, and (3) record grades in the PowerTeacher Pro gradebook.

Principals will: (1) ensure compliance with Board policies and regulations related to grading, (2) develop procedures to communicate the school grading practices, (3) monitor teacher gradebooks and ensure that grading protocols are followed, and (4) report student learning progress to all parents, school instructional staff, and others as deemed appropriate in compliance with law.

### **Homework (10% – min. of 4 grades)**

Homework should include assignments used to reinforce and support mastery of learning and engage parents in the learning process. When appropriate and possible, homework should be differentiated for students based on their mastery of the objectives. For non-graded assignments that are sent home for completion, comments that offer insight on students' progress and mastery should be provided when deemed appropriate. Homework should be based only on content standards previously taught and assigned.

Examples of homework include, but are not limited to:

- Readings based on content curricula
- Written assignments
- Practice to reinforce classroom learning

**Class Participation (5% – min. of 4 grades)**

Class participation includes opportunities where optimal student learning is characterized by students being actively engaged.

**Note: If a student is absent, the participation grade must be omitted for the time of absence.**

Examples of class participation include, but are not limited to:

- Students ask clarifying questions
- Students explain what mastery looks like
- Accountable talk with their peers as appropriate
- Activities, tasks, or discussions that build on a solid foundation of knowledge
- Students generate their own questions
- Students cite relevant evidence
- Think, pair, share
- Fist-to-five
- Exit tickets
- Bell work

**Classwork (40% – min. of 4 grades)**

Refers to a student's formative demonstration of ability based on the assignments administered during the school day.

Classwork should be rigorous and standards-based and should document cumulative mastery of content area concepts.

Examples of classwork include, but are not limited to:

- Reading/Annotations
- Written assignments
- Modules included in the curricula
- Oral presentations

Examples of Performance-Based Classwork include:

- Skills demonstrations
- Performance, exhibitions, and demonstrations

**Portfolios/Projects/Presentations (5% - min. of 1 grade)**

A culminating project, portfolio, or presentation is an activity or final product that challenges students to demonstrate their academic knowledge in an experiential and summative manner.

Examples of portfolios, projects, or presentations include, but are not limited to:

- Research papers
- Extended lab reports
- Monologues/Dialogues
- PowerPoint presentations

**Detailed Examples of Projects/Presentations Include:****ELA Curriculum Map**

7th grade Performance Task

Module 1

1st nine weeks

**Research-Based Two-Voice Poem**

This performance task gives students a chance to demonstrate their understanding of the characters and issues of survival presented in "A Long Walk to Water" by Linda Sue Park. Students will be crafting and presenting a two-voice poem incorporating the views and experiences of the two main characters, Nya and Salva, as well as factual information about Southern Sudan and the environmental and political challenges facing the people of Sudan during and after the Second Sudanese Civil War. Students will have read the novel and various informational texts to gather a rich collection of textual details from which they can select to incorporate into their poems.

This task addresses ELA CCSS RL.7.6, W.7.3.a, W.7.3.d, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.8, W.7.9, L.7.1, and L.7.2.

**Math Curriculum Map**

6th grade Performance Task

Standard – 6RP2 – Ratio and Proportions

1st nine weeks

Standard -6.RP.2 Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems. Understand the concept of a unit rate  $a/b$  associated with a ratio  $a:b$  with  $b \neq 0$  ( $b$  not equal to zero), and use rate language in the context of a ratio relationship. For example, "This recipe has a ratio of 3 cups of flour to 4 cups of sugar, so there is  $3/4$  cup of flour for each cup of sugar."

Ratio & Proportions: This project is designed for middle school students to increase their knowledge about obesity and Type 2 diabetes, as an attempt to prevent Type 2 diabetes. It is predicted that as many as one in three individuals will develop Type 2 diabetes, a disease that may be preventable with regular engagement in physical activity and healthy eating choices. Given the nature of and potential effects on this generation of young people, these materials are timely and designed specifically for the interests of this age group.

**Assessments (40% – min. of 4 grades)**

Assessments refer to a student's culminating, independent demonstration of mastery of one or more competencies.

Examples of assessments include, but are not limited to:

- Tests
- Essays
- Project evaluations
- Performance-based assessments

**Note: Teachers should use variety of assessment methods.**



# MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work occurs **during a nine-week period.**

- Students should make every effort and be afforded the opportunity to make up work missed due to excused and unexcused absences.
  - In the event of an excused absence, students are expected to make-up work missed within a reasonable time (e.g., at least one or more days of make up for each day of excused absence).
  - In the event of an unexcused absence (including short-term suspensions), one day of make-up shall be allowed for each day of unexcused absence (unless otherwise extended by the school or extended based on law or policy), **beginning the day after the student's return to class.** For example, if a student misses Thursday and Friday of a week and returns to school on Monday, the student has Tuesday and Wednesday to complete make-up work and work is due on Thursday.
- **Students and/or parents should work with teachers for assistance in completing make-up work (e.g., obtaining make-up work/assignments, requesting tutoring, participating in available tutoring, etc.).**
- Assessments should be made up under the supervision of the classroom teacher or a designee.
- Teachers must provide the make-up work and determine the grade during a nine-week period.
- Teachers should create designated areas in the classroom or a virtual platform for students/parents to obtain make-up work. Once make-up work is obtained, students/parents must sign-off that the work has been received.
- It should be the primary responsibility of students/parents to obtain the provided make-up work and to complete it in the allotted time to receive **full credit earned without point reduction.**
- No Report Card Change-of-Data form is required if all work is done and graded prior to report cards being issued.
- Teachers' make-up rules/regulations must be included in principal-approved written communication to parents.

# RETAKE/RE-DO

A teacher will not be precluded from providing multiple opportunities for any student desiring to retake assignments/assessments to improve a grade. However, provided opportunities must be in alignment with principal-approved guidelines including, but not limited to, the exact number of times a student can retake in a given nine-week period.

# GRADE REPAIR

Grade repair occurs **after a student receives a failing grade for the nine-week period (quarter). This will not apply to students who fail the final nine-week period.**

- Grade repair shall be available for students who: (1) need additional time to complete assignments necessary to pass a subject due to absences, (2) have experienced special/extenuating circumstances that jeopardize their ability to remain on track to pass a subject during a nine-week grading period (e.g., death/serious illness in the family, displaced due to fire, etc.), or (3) students who need to recover a failing grade (69 or below) during any of the first three (3) quarters of a yearlong course or the first quarter of a semester-long course.
- **Proactive monitoring of students' grades and implementation of intervention strategies must be an ongoing practice throughout each nine-week period.**
- The teacher must consult with the counselor about potential grade-repair options for a student at risk of failing for the nine-week period as early as the release of progress reports.
  - After a potential grade-repair option is determined, the counselor must immediately consult with the parent about the grade repair option that will be provided for the student who is at risk of failing for the nine-week period and provide documentation at the conclusion of the consultation.
- Once a student receives a failing grade for the nine-week period, notification and documentation of the grade repair option predetermined by the teacher and counselor must be provided to the parent with the nine-week report card.
- The grade-repair option must go into effect at the **start of the next nine-week period.**
- Students have up to the end of the nine-week period to complete the program in order to receive **a maximum grade of 70 for the nine-week period being repaired.** Examples of grade-repair options include:
  - Zeros are Not Permitted (ZAP)-The purpose of ZAP is to provide an opportunity to students who have not been successful on assessments/assignments. This program is not designed as punishment, but rather a second chance to succeed. It is also designed to allow parents to become more involved in the educational process. The completed ZAP referral, inclusive of parent/guardian's signature, must be submitted back to the referring counselor. ZAP instruction can be held before, during, or after school, on Saturdays, and/or at the discretion of principals.
  - i-Ready
  - Kahn Academy
  - Clever



**Report Card Change-of-Data Grade Form**

- In order to initiate a valid Report Card Change-of-Data form, the teacher of record must verify the student has met the content guidelines to repair the nine-week grade, then correctly complete the form.
- The teacher of record must correct the nine-week grade/average in the PowerTeacher Pro gradebook (a comment of “why” this grade was changed must be included).
- The school’s designee must then change the stored quarter grade in the historical section of PowerSchool.

## FAILED CORE CLASSES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

- If a student fails one or two core classes for the school year, he or she may attend summer school.
- If a student fails three or more core classes for the school year, he or she must repeat the failed grade.

## CREDIT RECOVERY FOR END OF COURSE CLASSES (EOC) ONLY

For students and teachers impacted by EOC classes, please refer to the Credit Recovery section of the Grading Protocols for High School Courses.