

Shelby County Board of Education

5014

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GRADING SYSTEM FOR GRADES PRE-K-5

I. PURPOSE

To outline guidelines for grading in grades prekindergarten through five.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to Shelby County Schools students.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

Shelby County Schools establishes the grading system for grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, adheres to the Tennessee Uniform Grading System, and other state laws and regulations concerning grading, and shall comply with the grade inclusion standards required by the State of Tennessee student assessment system which are outlined in the administrative rules and regulations to this policy.

Accordingly, Shelby County Schools believes providing academic and conduct grades is important to ensure that students and parents receive regular information regarding a students' academic progress in order to facilitate learning and parent engagement. Academic grades are determined by students' mastery of content in each subject using varied assessment strategies. Conduct grades are based on expectations of students' behavior in promoting an environment conducive to learning. Regularly issued reports cards, combined with scheduled parent-teacher conferences, serve to promote a continuous process of communicating a student's progress.

GRADING LEGEND

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten report cards show progress toward the state standards. The grade level standards are set by the state and indicate what a student should know and be able to do. Students are evaluated based on their progress toward meeting benchmarks for each standard. This is indicated by symbols expressing mastery or non-mastery for each

skill. Additionally, the letter grades “E”, “S”, “N”, or “U” will be used to express basic grading for art, music, world languages, and physical education (P.E.).

Grades 1-5

Conduct Grades

In all schools, students' conduct is graded as “E”, “G”, “S”, “N”, or “U” and is to be reported at each grading period on the report card. Self-contained classes receive one homeroom conduct grade. Departmentalized classes each give a conduct grade.

Conduct grades are based on behavior and shall not be deducted from scholastic grades. Similarly, academic performance may not form the basis for conduct grades.

Academic Grades

The basic grading system for knowledge/subject area is expressed by the letters “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”, and “F” according to the numerical values listed under the Grading Scale below except for first (1st) grade science, social studies classes, prek-5 art, music, world languages, and P.E. which will be expressed by the letter grades “E”, “S”, “N”, or “U”.

Grading Scale

A	93-100
B	85-92
C	75-84
D	70-74
F	Below 70

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students receiving special education services in Functional Skills Programs [Adaptive Functional Skills (AFS) and Functional Skills (FS)] will receive a “Report Card of Progress” based on progress towards goals stated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

GRADING PROVISIONS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)

Special provisions outlined in the administrative rules and regulations to this policy apply for students receiving services as English Learners.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

A. The Shelby County Schools is responsible for informing students and parents/guardians about grading policies and regulations; students and parents/guardians are responsible for becoming knowledgeable with grading guidelines.

B. Principals are responsible for ensuring that all teachers are provided current information pertaining to grading and assessment and for ensuring that grades and other reporting categories for student progress are documented accurately.

C. Teachers are responsible for determining student grades and using the district identified gradebook to accurately report information for generating the report cards.

E. The Chief Academic Office is responsible for implementation of this policy and answering questions concerning the interpretation of this policy.

G. The Superintendent (or designee) is responsible for administering this policy.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-1-614
2. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.05
3. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.06
4. TCA 49-1-302
5. TCA 49-2-203(b)(7)
6. Uniform Grading Policy 3.301 – TN State
7. Title 49, Chapter 12, Part 3 - Part Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Cross References:

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Special Education

Students receiving special education services in Functional Skills Programs [Adaptive Functional Skills (AFS) and Functional Skills (FS)] will receive a “Report Card of Progress” based on progress towards goals stated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

English Learners (EL)

Students receiving services as English Learners must be afforded modified instruction and evaluation that relates specifically to the student’s stage of English Language Development (ELD) and provides access to grade level content and skills. English Learners (EL) must be evaluated with appropriate and valid assessments that are aligned with state and local standards and that take into account the language acquisition stages and cultural backgrounds of the students. During the early stages of ELD, grading for content-area courses must be focused more on the progress made than on direct comparisons to the achievement of native speakers.

The use of World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Model Performance Indicators (MPIs) and Can Do Descriptors located in curriculum documents, in conjunction with a student's identified level of English language proficiency, should guide the modification of instruction, alignment of assessments, and grading procedures.

Letter grades of “E”, “S”, “N”, or “U” may be used for beginning level EL students in elementary and middle school grades. The overall instructional program for EL students, including instruction, evaluation, and grading practices should ensure that EL students develop high levels of academic attainment in English and make progress towards meeting the same challenging academic content and achievement standards that all students are expected to meet.

The Chief Academic Office will advise schools regarding modifications when additional information is necessary or requested.

Report Cards and Interim Reports

Two (2) report cards are used in grades Pre-K-5; one (1) for Pre-K and kindergarten; a different one (1) for grades 1-5. Teachers should refer to the appropriate card for an explanation of the grading system for each level.

Report cards are sent to parents at the end of each nine-week period. Parents must be notified within a report card period when a student is not doing acceptable work. At the midpoint of the nine weeks, parents will be notified of students' progress; all will receive an interim report. Parent-teacher conferences should be held for gaining parental support in an effort to improve student performance.

Nine-Week Grades

In grades 1-5 Integrated Language Arts and Math, a minimum of twelve (12) grades per subject per nine-week term should be recorded for every student. For all other subjects (i.e. science, social studies, art, music, world languages, and P.E.) in grades 1-5, a minimum of nine (9) grades per nine-week term should be recorded. Fifty percent of the required grades must be earned and recorded by the interim of the nine-week term. Term grades given at the end of each nine-week period will be determined by the average of daily work, oral, and written assignments, individual and group assignments, quizzes, projects, and tests. The teacher will assess all student assignments and weigh the value of grades given for various assignments within the nine-week term in computing the term grade. This procedure will enable the teacher to allow for individual student differences in the grading process. Grades for homework assignments should be given with care, since homework may not always be completed by the student himself. Homework assignments are of value in affording students needed practice, and such assignments should be made within practicable limits.

Semester Grades

Semester grades for grades 1-5 are determined by an average of grades for each of the two nine-week terms. (NOTE: Semester examinations are not given in grades 1-5.)

Final Grade

Final grades are determined by averaging the two semester grades.

State of Tennessee Student Assessment System Grade Inclusion

Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, for students in grades 3 - 5, scores on the State of Tennessee Student Assessment System shall comprise 15% of the students' final grade for the spring (second) semester in mathematics, reading/language arts, science and social studies.

However, if the District does not receive its students' scores at least five (5) instructional days before the end of the school year, then the District may choose not to include its students' scores in the students' final grades in the subject areas of mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies.

Testing Information

Information about state and/or district mandated tests to be administered in the upcoming school year is available on the District's website and includes the name of the test, the purpose and use of the test, the grade or class in which the test is to be administered, the tentative date or dates on which the test will be administered, how and when parents and students will be informed of the results of the test, and a statement that informs parents how they can access the items on the student's state-required summative standardized assessments and the student's answers. Additionally, test information shall be disseminated by placing the information in each school's student handbook, or other standard or policy guidebook that contains the policies and procedures of the school and is distributed annually.

Grading Restrictions

A student's academic grade is solely intended to reflect the student's acquired knowledge, ability, and/or skills in the designated subject. Therefore, academic credit/points may not be awarded or deducted for any purpose that is not directly related to the student's academic performance. For example, academic credit/points may not be awarded as an incentive to participate or achieve a certain goal in a school fundraising event. Academic credit/points may not be deducted for failure to purchase certain brands or types of school supplies. A reasonable number of academic points may be deducted from a student's academic grade for failure to submit homework or other assigned academic work on the date specified by the teacher.

Make-up Work and Grade Recovery

Make-up Work

Regular attendance should be necessary for passing grades. 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 makeup for each day of excused absence). In the event of an unexcused absence¹ (including short-term suspensions), one day of makeup time shall be allowed for each day of unexcused absence, unless otherwise extended by the school or extended based on law or policy. Students and/or their parents should work with the teacher for assistance in making up work (e.g., obtaining make-up work/assignments, participating in available tutoring/requesting tutoring, etc.)

Grade Recovery

¹ For absences due to long-term suspension (over 10 days)/expulsion, the program of making up work shall be in accordance with state law TCA 49-6-3402(b), which allows students to attend alternative schools to receive instruction as nearly as practicable with that of their home schools and requires that all course work completed and credits earned in the alternative schools be transferred to and recorded in the home school.

Grade recovery shall be available for students who 1) need additional time to complete assignments or make up class work necessary to pass a subject due to absences or 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.) Additionally, grade recovery shall be required for students who need to recover a failing grade in a subject. Students required to take grade recovery for receiving a failing grade in a subject must participate in a grade recovery program up to the end of the nine-week period subsequent to receiving the failing grade. Students and/or their parents should work with the school and teacher for assistance with grade recovery (e.g., participating in a classroom and/or school wide grade recovery program such as Zeros Aren't Permitted (ZAP); participating in online grade recovery programs; obtaining make-up work/assignments, participating in available tutoring/requesting tutoring, etc.) Any grade adjustments resulting from grade recovery efforts shall be accompanied by a justification indicating that a grade recovery program was completed.

Students who qualify for grade recovery based on any of the above reasons shall initially be given an Incomplete Grade (I). Incomplete grades are not to be left as nine-week grades indefinitely, but shall be changed at the end of the nine-week recovery or make-up period to reflect the actual academic grade supported by documentation. Additionally, incomplete grades shall not be given as a final grade in any subject.

Grade Documentation, Recording, and Adjustment

Documentation

Student grades are determined by the teacher in accordance with grading criteria and district policy/regulation. The grade given by the teacher must be supported by documentation. Additionally, the school and/or district shall maintain documentation of each student's participation in and completion of interventions, make-up work, grade recovery, and other such academic programs.

Grade Recording

All student grades shall be recorded using only the official gradebook identified by the District (e.g., the SCS identified electronic gradebook). Additionally, in order to preserve the confidentiality of student records and information, downloadable electronic gradebooks are not permitted.

Adjustment

The principal or designee(s) has the responsibility and authority to modify a grade given by a teacher under his/her supervision when it has been determined that the original grade was based upon inaccurate, erroneous, or noncompliant data or the grade adjustment reflects the following:

- Correction of inaccurate data

- Compliance with appropriate grading practices; district policies/regulations/standard operating procedures; or state or federal law (e.g., adjustments/modifications under academic program such as ESL, SPED, etc.)
- Correction of errors (e.g., clerical/system errors, etc.)
- Justified modifications reflecting a student's participation in and completion of make-up work, grade recovery, interventions, and other such academic programs
- Other justified reason approved by the principal or appropriate district-level administrator

All grade adjustments shall be accompanied by a justification, inclusive of a student's participation in class, school, or district programs, interventions, and efforts to make-up work/assignments, recover grades, or recover credit/courses.

Monitoring and Enforcement

Monitoring - Principals and/or appropriate district-level administrators may monitor student grades to ensure appropriate grading practices exist and ensure that students are identified and referred to required interventions.

Enforcement - Failure to adhere to the provisions of the grading policy/regulations, including the grade recording provision, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.