



# Deerfield Township School District Grading Guidelines



## **What is the purpose of grades?**

### *District Policy 2624 - Grading System*

The Board of Education recognizes that a system of measuring, recording, and reporting the achievements of individual students is important to the continuing process of learning. The Board, therefore, directs the instructional program of this school district to include a system of grading that measures progress toward the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and the educational goals of the district.

Students shall be informed at the outset of any course of study of the behaviors and achievements that are expected of them and shall be kept informed of their progress during the course of study. As a rule, grading should reward students for positive efforts and minimize failure, and students should be encouraged to evaluate their own achievements.

The Superintendent shall develop and continually review in consultation with teaching staff members, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and students, a grading program appropriate to the course of study and maturity of students. The final decision on any contested grade will be the responsibility of the Principal. A student classified as disabled will be graded in accordance with his/her Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or the Section 504 Plan.

## **Reporting Student Progress**

Grades will be awarded at the end of four marking periods in each school year. Students will be given notice of their mid-term grades at mid-point of each marking period and a final grade in each subject at the end of the school year. Grades will be recorded on report cards for parent(s) or legal guardian(s) notification in accordance with Policy No. 5420 and Regulation No. 5420.

The evaluation of each child in the academic areas will be reported to parents and guardians at the middle and end of the marking period using the standard school issued report cards including comments regarding student progress. All grades will be issued based solely on evidence reported in the class record book and, at the end of the school year, recorded in the student's cumulative folder. A student's grade will not be used as a disciplinary device or threat, but solely as a means to evaluate academic progress.

Multiple measures, such as tests, quizzes, homework, class work, and participation, should be utilized whenever evaluating students' performance and determining marking period grades in all academic subject areas. Formative assessments should be used to determine student academic needs and skill progress.



*\*Students in grades PK - 2 will receive a standards-based report card. Each subject area will contain a list of skills and standards. The student will receive a grade to reflect his or her progress on each skill using the grading scale below.*

## **Grading Scale**

### **Grades K - 2:**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>X</b> | <b>Not assessed at this time</b>  |
| <b>1</b> | <b>Needs Support</b><br>The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the concept or skill. Tasks cannot be completed without teacher support.                                  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Approaching Standard</b><br>The student is working toward competency in the concept or skill with teacher assistance. Further practice and use of this skill or concept is needed. |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Achieves Standard</b><br>The student consistently demonstrates understanding and application of a concept.   |

### **Grades 3 - 8:**

|          |                     |   |
|----------|---------------------|---|
| <b>A</b> | <b>100 - 93</b>     | <b>A grade of "A" indicates superior performance.</b><br>It may be given to a student whose achievement is significantly above grade level; whose work achieves a quality and quantity that consistently excels; and who demonstrates a high degree of initiative, application, and purpose.                                  |
| <b>B</b> | <b>92 - 85</b>      | <b>A grade of "B" indicates above average performance.</b><br>It should be given to a student whose achievement is above grade level; whose work frequently excels; and who generally demonstrates strength in the subject.   |
| <b>C</b> | <b>84 - 76</b>      | <b>A grade of "C" indicates average performance.</b><br>It should be given to a student whose achievement in most areas of the subject are average; whose work is acceptable; and who demonstrates a satisfactory degree of proficiency.  |
| <b>D</b> | <b>75 - 70</b>      | <b>A grade of "D" indicates below average performance.</b><br>It should be given to a student whose achievement in the subject is barely passing; whose work is the minimum acceptable for credit; and who demonstrates only weak proficiencies in the subject.   |
| <b>F</b> | <b>69 and below</b> | <b>A grade of "F" indicates failing performance.</b><br>It should be given to a student who has not met the minimum requirements of the course; who has demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to master the basic elements of the course; or who has failed to meet the minimum attendance standards necessary to pass a |



|  |  |                  |
|--|--|------------------|
|  |  | course of study. |
|--|--|------------------|

During the first marking period, NO student shall receive a grade on any assignment, test, quiz, etc. lower than a 50% and such should be reflected in OnCourse, unless a student is found cheating or no attempt is made.

Classified students should not receive a grade lower than 50% during the entire school year, unless the student is found cheating or no attempt is made. If a student is classified and is failing, the teacher must address the situation immediately. Accommodations and/or modifications must be followed in accordance with the student's IEP. Please see the CST case manager or Director for assistance if needed.

### **Gradebook for Grades 3-8**

Graded assignments for students in grades 3-8, will be divided into three categories: Summative Assessments, Formative Assessments and Practice/Supportive Assignments.

#### ***Summative Assessments***

Summative assessments evaluate mastery/comprehension of specific instructional concepts over a period of time. These concepts should be aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) and include tasks that require higher level thinking skills.

Examples of summative assessments may include: tests, writing assignments, performance-based assessments, projects, labs.

#### ***Formative Assessments***

Formative assessments evaluate students' mastery/comprehension of specific concept(s) or NJSLS. These assessments should be ongoing and used to guide instruction.

Examples of formative assessments may include: quizzes, lesson rubric, minor written responses.

#### ***Practice/Supportive Assignments***

Practice/supportive assignments are assignments that provide students with the opportunity to practice and reinforce specific skill(s) or concept(s). These assignments can be tasks completed in or outside of school.

Examples of practice/supportive assignments may include: classwork, homework, participation, iReady lessons, and Achieve3000 articles.



## **Requirement for Gradebook**

The online gradebook provides opportunities for students and families to stay informed on student achievement, skills mastered and areas that the student may need additional support or practice. Staff are expected to update their gradebook in OnCourse on a weekly basis so that the student and family have timely feedback.

The percentage for each category and minimum number of assignments are as follows:

| <b>Category</b>                  | <b>Weight</b> | <b>Minimum assignments</b>                             |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Summative Assessments            | 40%           | 2 by mid-marking period<br>4 by end of marking period  |
| Formative Assessments            | 35%           | 3 by mid-marking period<br>6 by end of marking period  |
| Practice/ Supportive Assignments | 25%           | 5 by mid-marking period<br>10 by end of marking period |

## **Grading Policies**

*District Regulation 2624 - Grading System* requires teachers to do the following:

1. Each student must be informed of the behavior and achievements expected of him/her at the outset of each course of study or unit of study.
2. Each student must be kept informed of his/her progress during the course of a unit of study. Students who so request are entitled to see the grades resulting from their performance during the grading period.
3. Each method of grading shall be appropriate to the course of study and the maturity and abilities of the students.
4. Students should be encouraged to evaluate their own achievements.
5. The process of review and revision will involve teaching staff members, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and, as appropriate, students.

Teacher's late policy and retake policy should be clearly outlined and included in the syllabus provided to parents at Back-to-School Night and posted on teacher's webpage.

### ***Late Policy***



Late policy for assignments provides transparency and clear expectations when shared with students and families at the beginning of the school year. The policy should clearly outline how late assignments will be graded, cut off for turning in late assignments, and how special circumstances (extended absences, IEP/504, ...) will be addressed.

### ***Retake Policy***

Retake Policy for summative assessment is an opportunity for students to show mastery/comprehension of a concept after receiving feedback on the original summative assessment and possibly completing intervention/remedial work on specific skills. The Retake Policy should clearly outline steps a student must take to be eligible for a retake.

The student responsibility:

- Reaching out to the teacher within one week after assessment is returned to request retake
- Following the teacher's procedures for requesting a retake and completing any intervention/remedial actions required by the teacher, if applicable.
- Completing the retake at the date and time determined by the teacher (not to be completed during the class period).

The teacher responsibilities:

- The teacher should determine the procedure for requesting a retake
- Any intervention/remediation activities that need to be completed before the assessment can be retaken.
- The number of retake opportunities a student is allowed per marking period
- How the assessment grade will be recorded (average of original and retake, higher of the two grades, points for each correction?)
- The teacher will provide a date and time for the student to retake the assessment that is not during the class period. The teacher may utilize the Academic Foundations period or time after school for the students to retake assessment.

## **Family Communication**

Family involvement in the educational process is very important for student success.

Teachers are expected to keep families informed of their student's progress by:

- Providing a clear outline of course grading policy including absences, late/missing assignments, and retake policy at the beginning of the school year.
- Updating online gradebook in OnCourse weekly.
- Providing notes/comments next to individual assignments and/or end of marking period, as appropriate.
- Reaching out to the guardian if the student fails a summative assessment and actions needed to be taken by the student to be eligible for retake.
- Reaching out to the guardian if the student has two or more missing assignments.





## **Additional Information**

*Per District Regulation 2624 - Grading System*

### ***Grade Validation***

In order that he/she may justify a grade, each teacher is directed to retain in his/her possession the following records to validate grades awarded to students. The records should be kept for a minimum of six years after the end of the school year in which the grades were awarded.

1. The daily attendance and tardiness record;
2. All grades earned for classroom activities such as quizzes, tests, reports, and class recitations;
3. All grades earned for activities conducted elsewhere, such as homework assignments and term papers;
4. Any notation regarding the meaning of each grade and its relation to the type of activity or material covered;
5. Any notation of discussions with the student on a grade or the student's cumulative grade average;
6. Any referrals for guidance, discipline, and the like; and
7. Any notations recording communications between the teacher and the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), the Principal, or other teaching staff members.

### ***Appeal***

1. Each teacher is responsible for the determination of the grade a student receives for participation in the teacher's course of study.
2. Each teacher may be required to furnish reasons, supported by evidence above to substantiate any grade earned.
3. If a grade is challenged by a student or a parent(s) or legal guardian(s), the teacher will convene a conference and will explain the grading system and the reasons for the final grade.
4. If the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or student is not satisfied by the teacher's explanations, he/she may appeal the grade to the Principal, who will consult with the teacher and the student in an attempt to resolve the dispute. The Principal will give every reasonable deference to the teacher's professional judgment.
5. If the Principal determines that the grade should be changed, he/she will alter the grade on all records and indicate by whose authority the grade has been changed.
6. No reprisals will be taken in any form against a teacher who remains determined in his/her belief that the grade originally given is fair and correct.
7. The Superintendent may hear an appeal from the Principal's determination. Only in the most extraordinary circumstances will the Superintendent alter a grade determined at the school building level.



**Resources:**

[ASCD: Giving Retakes Their Best Chance to Improve Learning](#)

[Edutopia: A Teacher's Policy for Letting Students Retake Tests and Assignments](#)

[Great Schools Partnership: Grading and Reporting for Educational Equity](#)

[New Jersey Learning Standards: Standards, Transparency, and Mastery Platform](#)

[OnCourse: Teacher Gradebook Supports and Tutorials](#)

[University of Arkansas: Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Write Effective Learning Outcomes](#)

[University of Florida: Creating Assessments](#)