

## SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

1477 South Schodack Road  
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JASON M. CHEVRIER  
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MICHAEL TUTTLE  
President  
Board of Education

Students and Parents:

We wanted to give a little information about grading and what you will find on your report cards moving forward. This information was shared through email already, but there is an update section as well.

**Expectations for the student:** You are expected to develop a routine for learning. Teaching and learning have not stopped. Our goal for you is to receive a "3" and meet standards. You should be attending your Google Meet sessions with your teachers and if you are unable to on occasion, you should communicate that with your teachers. Your participation in learning activities is an expectation and you should check your Google Classrooms daily and reach out with questions or concerns. Thank you for all your hard work you are putting in every day!

### UPDATE:

- In recognition that students are juggling many demands and that learning from home is both new and presents challenges for many students, a rotating "A,B,C,D day" schedule model will be used at the secondary level. Please note that some assignments may be assigned at the beginning of the school week with multiple days to complete. In addition, Google Meets may be outside of the classroom times, but teachers are expected to adjust this if students are expressing conflicts with other classes.
- Students **(on average per day)** should be expected to spend no more than 4 hours on their schoolwork at home; including learning new material, watching instructional videos, participating in class chats/hangouts, and assigned work. This is an average and some days may require more or less time depending on the assignments and the student's time management.
- We are working through logistics to share a calendar with parents for when Google Meets and office hours are taking place.

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### **UPDATE-Guidance on Regents Examinations:**

- Regents exams have been canceled for the 19-20 school year.
- Students who earn a passing grade in a current course ending in a Regents exam will be exempt from taking the exam and the requirement to pass the exam as a diploma requirement.
- Students who do not earn a passing grade in the course ending in a Regents exam will need to make up the course to earn credit.
- Students previously enrolled in a course leading to an applicable Regents examination who achieved course credit, but have not yet passed the associated Regents examination and intended to take the test in June 2020 to achieve a passing score will be exempted from the exam and the requirement to pass the exam as a diploma requirement.
- Exemptions will count towards students' diploma designation (Regents, Advanced Regents, etc.)
- Students in LOTE (Language other than English) classes that have received 3 passing credits in the language class will be exempted from their checkpoint B exam and the requirement to pass this exam for diploma requirements.

**Quarter 3 (Ends on April 9th):** Your teachers will be giving you a "Pass" or an "Incomplete" for your efforts in quarter 3. If you receive an incomplete you will be given two weeks to submit missing assignments to your teachers. This is your responsibility to ask your teacher what work you should prioritize. If work is not received by April 30th, you will receive a "Fail" for the quarter. If you complete the missing assignments, your grade will be changed to a "Pass". Failing grades will be averaged into your grade point average.

**Quarter 4 (Begins on April 10th):** You will be assessed on the learning based on the most important learning standards that your teachers identify. We developed a 1-4 rating system that provides students and families an opportunity to gather feedback and better understand their learning of the objectives.

• All your scores will be reported on google classroom, and if you are unsure, please ask your teacher.

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- **Exceeds(4)** - Student demonstrated learning of curriculum that exceeded the standards on what was taught and assigned.
- **Meets(3)** - Student demonstrated learning of curriculum that met the standards on what was taught and assigned.
- **Partial(2)** - Student demonstrated learning of the curriculum that shows partial understanding of the standards that were taught and assigned.
- **Not Yet Learned (INCOMPLETE)(1)** = Student has not completed assignment or work completed does not yet demonstrate learning of the curriculum. Students will be given the opportunity to redo and resubmit work to demonstrate learning. Students will have two weeks to turn in improved/revised/incomplete work.

**Class rankings:** The spring 2020 semester will not be calculated in class ranks or GPAs. Students in grades 9 through 12 will be evaluated on 7 instead of 8 semesters of work for their final senior Rank and GPA. Colleges recognize that schools are being flexible in grading and many of them are using a pass/fail system as well.

**New Letter day schedule during the originally scheduled spring break:** As you know, we are expected to conduct classes during the originally scheduled spring break. Please see the updated later day schedule below:

4/10 = no letter day assigned (students make up work/teachers available to review, re-teach, or be available for questions especially pertaining to "back work" or optional student enrichment opportunities)

4/13 = C

4/14 = D

4/15 = A

4/16 = B

4/17 = no letter day assigned (students makeup work/teachers available to review, re-teach, or be available for questions especially pertaining to "back work" or optional student enrichment opportunities)

4/20 = C day (no interruption to the school letter-day calendar)

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Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions. Remember to take a look at the "Frequently Asked Questions" sheet located on the school website.

Be well,  
Ms. Hill and Mrs. Sullivan



**Statement from Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School's Guidance Department:**

For many, the change in our grading system for the second semester has brought concerns and questions. The decision to move to a pass/fail grading method through the end of the year was made after gathering information about what many secondary schools across the state were doing as well as what colleges and universities were expecting of their prospective students. Please be assured that colleges are expecting that high schools across the nation will be adjusting their grading systems in these unprecedented times. Our students will not be penalized in the admissions process as a result of our move to pass/fail. Our school profile which is sent with each transcript to colleges will detail our grading policy change for this semester to inform colleges how our students were graded and how grade point average and rank are determined.

For our seniors, we understand that you are worried about the impact of Pass/Fail in relation to your college applications and acceptances. Colleges and Universities are expressing their understanding that high schools around the nation are adjusting their learning and grading as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. They are sharing that they are aware that Spring 2020 transcripts will look different and that many, if not most high schools, are moving to Pass/Fail for the remainder of the year. Colleges have already received the 7 semester information for seniors from the Mid Year report at the end of the first semester, which they use as they complete their admissions process. They then receive the Final Transcript, as confirmation that students have successfully completed their coursework. Only a failing final grade will negatively impact college decisions, but that is the case in typical times as well.

For our grade 9 through 11 students, the spring 2020 semester will not be included in grade point average and rank. Please be aware that failing grades during the third and fourth quarters could negatively impact a course grade and result in a student's course average to fall below passing necessitating repeating the course.

While pass/fail grading will not distinguish you from others during this semester on your transcript, the effort and level of participation that you put into your classes can still distinguish you in other ways. In the absence of spring semester grades, colleges will look more closely at the other ways they use to evaluate students such as through teacher recommendations. What can teachers say about how well you are managing your academics under these difficult circumstances?



Students are also concerned about how colleges will view the break in activities they had been engaged in or planned to engage in during the spring semester. Colleges understand that clubs, athletics and volunteer activities were all put on hold. They will, however, be interested in how you utilized your time. Did you organize online meetings to stay engaged in clubs? Did you practice skills on your own to develop in your sport? Did you help siblings with their schoolwork? There are many things you can be doing to stand out to colleges.

Please take a look at some of the information we have received from colleges.

We understand that this is a stressful time and you may have other questions and concerns. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Mrs. Hebert and Mrs. O'Leary for any assistance.

### **Sample of College Statements on Grading**

#### **Yale University**

I want to reassure all future college applicants that a community's response to the outbreak—and students' personal circumstances associated with it—will not negatively affect a student's chances of admission to Yale.

Yale's whole-person review process relies on a committee of admissions officers, faculty members, and college deans to make admissions decisions through discussion and deliberation. This system allows for maximum flexibility when considering applicants from all backgrounds and experiences. Our upcoming admissions cycles will be no different.

Below are insights from the Admissions Committee about common areas of concern:

#### **Academic Records**

Just as secondary schools take a diverse set of approaches to curricula and assessment during normal times, schools are taking a diverse set of approaches when responding to the outbreak. We expect that many transcripts will look different for at least the spring 2020 semester. Regardless of your school's decisions, we will work to understand your school's unique context and will not penalize students whose transcripts lack letter grades. It may be helpful to know that Yale does not re-calculate or re-weight grade point averages to a uniform scale.



We also recognize that many students' personal circumstances may make it especially difficult to achieve at their typical academic level during this time. These considerations will also be part of our committee's whole-person review.

### **New York University**

As we look to the coming weeks and months, we are preparing to support those students who have encountered significant interruptions to their education, especially those who will be enrolling with us this fall. Please rest assured that we will work with you and your students to find solutions to allow all our matriculating students to join us as planned this fall, and support students who feel this disruption has impacted their ability to submit a strong application in the future. We continue to assess the situation and to think critically about how best to support your students.

### **Florida State University**

#### **Pass/Fail Grading**

If your school has decided to change their normal grading system this year to reflect Pass/Fail grades, we completely understand this decision. At FSU, we offered a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option to our own students enrolled in the Spring term. Pass/Fail grades will not negatively impact your admission status as long as you pass! For all other students enrolled in high school, Pass/Fail grades will not negatively impact your ability to be considered for admission in 2021 and beyond.

### **Union College - Statement from Matt Malatesta, VP for Admission & Financial Aid during "Your Questions Answered by Union Leadership" online panel discussion**

Union College understands that grading policies and graduation requirements will be adjusted this year by many high schools. They expect that schools are making the best decisions locally for their students and will support these decisions.

Q: Will Changes in senior year course offerings/grades/final results affect my admissions decision?

A: No admissions decisions will be changed based on high school's limit or changing class offerings in the final months of the academic year.



### **Columbia University**

Please be assured that Columbia Undergraduate Admissions fully supports the pedagogical and administrative decisions your school may make in order to assist your community through this crisis. For example, pass/fail marks or alternative grading methods in lieu of letter or numerical grades this spring will be accommodated when we review applicants' transcripts next year and beyond. We all have plenty of obstacles to navigate in the months ahead, and preparing paperwork for your college-bound students should be the least of your concerns.

Furthermore, as we consider younger students, we understand that disruptions may significantly alter the trajectory of their extracurricular, athletic and other pursuits. Students might not have access to summer programs or other enrichment experiences. Their college applications will likely look different than they have in the past. We remain committed to our holistic and contextual review process that considers the individual circumstances that shape each applicant's journey.

### **University of Virginia**

**Please know that students will not be at a disadvantage in the admission process as a result of school closures and cancellations associated with standardized testing.**

**Students are not responsible for things they cannot control.** With most high schools closed for the spring semester, we will need to be flexible when evaluating transcripts and academic course work, and we will continue to monitor the state of standardized testing nationally and abroad. If testing is cancelled through the summer and into the fall, we will need to discuss our testing requirements for next year.

### **Adelphi Uni.**

Our commitment to you is steadfast.

- Your seniors who need additional time to make their college selection will be granted decision and deposit extensions.
- Your students will be provided with meaningful and interactive virtual tours, one-to-one advisement and personal chats at a time when they cannot visit our campus in person.
- Your students who receive pass/fail marks on their transcripts will not be penalized.
- Your students who spent months preparing for AP and IB exams, only to find them canceled or offered in nontraditional formats, will still be considered for college credit.
- Your students who find extracurricular activities and athletic commitments cut short will not be looked at unfavorably.
- Your students who spend their summers in self-isolation, caring for loved ones, or making up online curriculum will be supported in every decision.





### **University of Alabama**

**Pass/Fail:** We realize many schools are considering pass/fail grading for the remainder of the academic year. For seniors concerned about admission or scholarships, we encourage them to keep their grades up. Scholarships or admission will not be revoked unless they fail a core course, thereby not fulfilling our academic requirements.

### **St. Lawrence**

Your school might be making decisions about grades in the final part of this school year. Please know that we will be looking at grades for this semester within the context of the pandemic, and pass/fail grades are not going to hurt your students in their application to St. Lawrence.

### **Admissions Requirements Relaxed at University of California**

**April 1, 1:25 p.m.** The University of California is relaxing admissions requirements for students who enroll in fall 2020 and the foreseeable future.

Many high schools have switched to remote instruction in light of the coronavirus pandemic, and some have switched to **pass/fail grading models** that are not accepted by the California system, according to a **news release**. Standardized testing and college entrance exams have also been canceled.

In response, the system's regents are taking efforts to ease the burden on students seeking college admission. The letter grade requirement will be suspended for winter, spring and summer 2020 classes for all students. Standardized testing won't be required for fall 2021 freshman admission. The cap on the number of transferable pass/no pass units will be suspended for transfer students.

"The COVID-19 outbreak is a disaster of historic proportions disrupting every aspect of our lives, including education for high school students, among others," Janet Napolitano, president of the University of California, said in the release. "The university's flexibility at this crucial time will ensure prospective students aiming for UC get a full and fair shot -- no matter their current challenges."

-- Madeline St. Amour

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/04/03/live-updates-latest-news-coronavirus-and-higher-education>



### **Williams College**

#### **Additional Flexibility in the Admission Process**

We understand that the pandemic has led to school closings, shifts to remote learning and pass/fail grading policies, cancellations of co-curricular activities, and a host of other disruptions that dramatically impact students' experiences. You can be certain that we'll be flexible in working with students and families no matter what challenges or limitations they've faced. None of us know what the next few months will hold, but our commitment to getting to know students and their stories will remain at the core of everything we do.