

## **GRADING SYSTEMS**

**345.1**

The basic grading/reporting system shall be reasonably uniform among the grades within each school. Alternative education programs and any charter schools may use a grading and reporting system unique to the needs and structure of the program/school. In addition, this paragraph shall not be interpreted to prohibit the piloting of possible changes to a District grading/reporting system when approved by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction or the use of different systems among different District schools when approved by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

The District's overall system of grading and progress reporting should reflect the evaluation of each student's demonstrated achievement compared to established academic standards, benchmarks, and learning goals. Grades reflect what a student knows and is able to do in relationship to identified priority standards. Non-academic factors such as behavior and attendance are not to be considered or reflected in academic grades.

As needed, the administration shall provide appropriate staff orientation and professional development to promote teachers' shared understanding of the relevant grading and reporting system(s) and teachers' consistent implementation of the system(s).

1. Neither any school nor individual teacher shall use a grading method (such as a forced bell curve distribution) which, based upon students' performance relative to one another, either directly restricts the number of students who can achieve a particular mark/category or mandates the placement of at least some students in all available marks/categories.
2. When a school or individual teacher administers a formative assessment to determine a student's starting point prior to the student's participation in the relevant curriculum or progress during the learning process, the result on all formative aspects of such an assessment shall not negatively affect the grade or mark that the student receives on a later summative-type assessment.

The expectations for the District's teachers in connection with grading and progress reporting include the following:

1. In a manner appropriate to the developmental level of the students, teachers are expected to inform students of the general criteria used for grading/evaluation in their classes at the beginning of the relevant school year/course and unit.
2. Subject to administrative oversight and subject to any established standards within the applicable grading system, teachers may assign different weight to tests, projects, and other assessment activities that demonstrate a student's learning, progress, and skills.
3. During the relevant instructional period, teachers are expected to provide students with reasonably prompt and specific feedback regarding assignments, projects, tests, etc.
4. Teachers shall maintain adequate records of the basis for any summative, composite grade(s) that are issued at the end of a grading period.
5. Teachers are expected to use grades, assessments, and other measures of learning as a tool in their ongoing communication with students and students' parents and guardians in regard to each student's academic progress and the planning of each student's overall educational program.
6. The District's grading systems allow for subjective elements, and subjective elements may be unavoidable in connection with particular courses, subjects, or skills. Teachers are to conduct all student assessment and evaluation using sound methodologies and without bias or partiality.
7. The official record-keeping system for student grades is the Student Information System. If the teacher creates or uses additional records of progress, these must be made available to students and parents/guardians, must be maintained according to student record confidentiality policies and rules, and must be retained according to the appropriate records retention laws and policies.

In the event a student, parent or guardian challenges a grade, the final decision with respect to such a challenge lies with the building principal.

If a student is at risk of earning a failing grade for a specific grading period, the teacher must notify the student and the parent/guardian according to a timeline that reasonably creates an opportunity for the student to improve their grade to a passing level.

At least as often as parents and guardians of students who do not have an identified disability are informed of their child's academic progress, teachers and other educators shall inform parents and guardians of students with disabilities of their child's academic progress. In addition, teachers and other educators shall communicate with the parents and guardians of a student with a disability in an appropriate and timely manner regarding the student's progress toward the annual goals outlined in the child's individualized education program (IEP).

The District shall not unlawfully discriminate in the methods, practices and materials used for evaluating students on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, any physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other legally-protected status or classification. This does not, however, prohibit the use of special testing materials or techniques to meet the individualized needs of students. Discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established procedures.

#### **Legal References:**

##### **Wisconsin Statutes**

- [Section 115.38\(1\)](#) [school performance reports; indicators of academic achievement]
- [Section 115.385\(4\)](#) [school accountability reporting to parents/guardians]
- [Section 115.787](#) [required components of IEPs for students with disabilities]
- [Section 118.13](#) [student nondiscrimination]
- [Section 120.12\(2\)](#) [board duty; advise regarding instruction and student progress]
- [Section 120.13\(1\)](#) [board power; make rules for organization and gradation of schools]

##### **Wisconsin Administrative Code**

- [PI 9.03\(1\)](#) [student nondiscrimination in student evaluation/testing policies]
- [PI 26.03\(1\)\(b\)1](#) [academic and career planning services for students, including requirement to update parents/guardians on the progress of their child's planning]

[HEA 9.05\(2\)](#) [high school grading policy required]

**Federal Laws**

[Elementary and Secondary Education Act \[Part A - Subpart 1\]](#) [includes reporting student assessment, academic achievement and academic growth data to parents/guardians, and school accountability reporting]

**Adopted:**           **09/01/81**  
                          **09/18/95**  
**Amended:**       **06/20/22**