

HIGH SCHOOL GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Governing Board believes that grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians identify the student's areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. Parents/guardians and students have the right to receive course grades that represent an accurate evaluation of the student's achievement.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a uniform grading system that shall be applied to all students in that course and grade level. Teachers shall inform students and parents/guardians how academic performance will be evaluated in the classroom.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

A teacher shall base a student's grades solely on the quality of the student's academic work and his/her mastery of course content based on district standards. Students shall have the opportunity to demonstrate this mastery through a variety of methods, including, but not limited to, tests, projects, portfolios, and/or class discussion as appropriate. Other elements that are not a direct measure of knowledge and understanding of course content, such as attendance, effort, student conduct, and work habits, shall not be factored into the academic grade but may be reported separately.

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)

When reporting student grades to parents/guardians, teachers may add narrative descriptions, observational notes and/or samples of classroom work in order to better describe student progress in specific skills and subcategories of achievement.

Note: Education Code 49066 provides that the grade assigned by a teacher is final, absent any clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith or incompetency, and that the Board and Superintendent cannot order a student's grade changed unless the teacher, to the extent practicable, is given an opportunity to state the reasons for which such grade was given and to be included in all discussions regarding the changing of the grade; see AR 5125.3 - Challenging Student Records. In *Las Virgenes Educators Association v. Las Virgenes Unified School District*, the court determined that a citizenship mark is a "grade" within the meaning of Education Code 49066 and upheld a teacher's right to make the final decision regarding a citizenship mark.

The teacher of each course shall determine the student's grade. The grade assigned by the teacher shall not be changed by the Board or the Superintendent except as provided by law, Board policy and administrative regulation. (Education Code 49066)

Absences

Whenever a student misses an assignment or assessment due to either an excused or

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(continued)

unexcused absence, he/she shall be given full credit for subsequent satisfactory completion of the assignment or assessment.

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

A teacher may assign a failing grade to a student who has 15 or more unexcused absences during the grading period.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

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Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

48070 *Promotion and retention*

48205 *Excused absences*

48431.6 *Required systematic review*

49066 *Grades; finalization; physical education class*

49067 *Mandated regulations regarding student's achievement*

49069.5 *Students in foster care, grades and credits*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

10060 *Criteria for reporting physical education achievement, high schools*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*

6101-6251 *School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994*

COURT DECISIONS

Owasso Independent School District v. Falvo (2002) 122 S.Ct. 934

Las Virgenes Educators Association v. Las Virgenes Unified School District (2nd Appellate District 2001) 86 Cal.App.4th 1

Swany v. San Ramon Valley Unified School District (N.D.Cal. 1989) 720 F.Supp. 764

Johnson v. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education (App. 2 Dist. 1986) 224 Cal. Rptr. 885, 179 C.A. 3d 593

Management Resources:

CDE PUBLICATIONS

Elementary Makes the Grade!, 2001

WEB SITES

CDE: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

Advanced Placement Challenge Project: <http://www.apchallenge.net>

Policy
adopted: February 23, 1999
revised: May 25, 2004
revised: June 26, 2018

VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Visalia, California

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The Superintendent or designee shall inform teachers of the district's policy regarding grading, including expectations that grades shall be based on factors that directly measure students' knowledge and skills in the content area and shall not include nonacademic factors.

Report cards displaying students' grades in each subject or course shall be distributed to parents/guardians at the end of each grading period. Parents/guardians shall be offered an opportunity to meet with their child's teacher(s) to discuss the grades and strategies to improve their child's performance.

Prior to the start of each school year, every teacher will submit to the Superintendent or his/her designee the standard of determining grades for the teacher's class that shall be included in a published class syllabus and course outline and available to each student's parent/guardian.

Grades for Academic Achievement

Grades shall be reported for each marking period as follows:

A	(90-100%)	Outstanding Achievement	4.0 grade points
B	(80-89%)	Above Average Achievement	3.0 grade points
C	(70-79%)	Average Achievement	2.0 grade points
D	(60-69%)	Below Average Achievement	1.0 grade points
F	(0-59%)	Little or No Achievement	0 grade points
I		Incomplete	0 grade points
NM		No Measurable Achievement	not calculated
P		Pass	not calculated

(cf. 6145 – Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)

Grades for Advanced Placement Courses and College Coursework that is Transferrable Toward a Four Year University

Grades shall be reported for each marking period as follows:

A	(90-100%)	Outstanding Achievement	5.0 grade points
B	(80-89%)	Above Average Achievement	4.0 grade points
C	(70-79%)	Average Achievement	3.0 grade points
D	(60-69%)	Below Average Achievement	2.0 grade points
F	(0-59%)	Little or No Achievement	0 grade points
I		Incomplete	0 grade points
NM		No Measurable Achievement	not calculated
P		Pass	not calculated

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Whenever it becomes evident to a teacher that a student is in danger of failing a course, the teacher shall arrange a conference with the student's parent/guardian or send the parent/guardian a written report. (Education Code 49067)

(cf. 5123 - Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)

(cf. 5124 - Communication with Parents/Guardians)

Teachers are encouraged to allow for trends in the quality of student work. When a student finishes a grading period doing high quality work which requires skills acquired throughout the grading period, low grades at the beginning of the grading period need not diminish the appropriate evaluation of the student's achievement. Similarly, high grades at the beginning need not compensate for a downward trend in achievement.

For each student in grades 9-12, the Superintendent or designee shall maintain a transcript recording the courses taken, the term that each course was taken, credits earned, final grades, and date of graduation.

An Incomplete is given only when a student's work is not finished because of illness or other excused absence. If not made up within six weeks, the Incomplete shall become an F.

Pass/Fail/NM Grading – Grades 9-12

Pass/Fail/NM may be appropriate in the following courses:

1. Courses taken in the Special Education Program,
2. Specified noncollege preparatory courses, or
3. Other as prescribed by an IEP, ILP or a 504 Plan.

A “No Measurable Achievement” (NM) is given when a student has, because of extended absences or other unforeseen circumstances, been unable to maintain measured progress in a class. The “No Measurable Achievement”(NM), nor the class in which it was received, will be used when calculating the student's grade point average. No units of credit toward graduation will be granted.

Grades for Physical Education

Student performance in high school physical education courses shall be based upon evaluation of the student's individual progress, attainment of goals in each instructional area, tests designed to determine skill and knowledge, and physical performance tests.

(cf. 6142.7 - Physical Education)

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No grade of a student participating in a physical education class may be adversely affected due to the fact that the student, because of circumstances beyond his/her control, does not wear standardized physical education apparel. (Education Code 49066)

Grades for Citizenship and Effort

Grades for citizenship and effort shall be reported each marking period as follows:

- O Outstanding
- S Satisfactory
- N Needs Improvement
- U Unsatisfactory

Criteria for determining grades for citizenship may include but are not limited to:

1. Student obeys rules.
2. Student respects public and personal property.
3. Student maintains courteous, cooperative relations with teachers and fellow students.
4. Student works without disturbing others.

Criteria for determining grades for effort may include but are not limited to:

Student takes responsibility for having necessary tools and materials.

1. Student shows interest and initiative.
2. Student goes to work immediately, and completes assignments.
3. Student uses free time resourcefully.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The Superintendent or designee shall determine the methodology to be used in calculating students' grade point average (GPA), including the courses to be included within the GPA and whether extra grade weighting shall be applied to Advanced Placement, and/or concurrent postsecondary courses.

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Plus and minus signs may be used at the option of the teacher but will not be considered for grade point average computation.

Students in grades 9 through 12 must earn at least a 2.0 or C grade point average with no more than one “F” in order to participate in extra/cocurricular activities.

Each academic year, the Superintendent or designee shall provide to the Student Aid Commission the GPA of all district students in grade 12, except for students who have opted out or are permitted by the rules of the Student Aid Commission to provide test scores in lieu of the GPA. (Education Code 69432.9)

Honor Roll – Grades 9 through 12

Each school shall maintain an Honor Roll. All courses except Pass/Fail shall be counted in computing eligibility for the Honor Roll. To qualify for the Honor Roll, a student must receive no current grade below a C and have a grade point average of 3.3 or better.

Clearing Deficiencies Due to D or F Grades After High School Graduation

Students who, by the time of high school graduation, have deficiencies due to D or F grades in certain subjects may clear those grades in the summer immediately following high school graduation by enrolling in appropriate high school or college courses. Both grades received will be entered on the student’s transcript. The highest grade received will be the permanent grade on the student’s transcript.

The highest grade received shall be used in determining the student's overall grade point average.

Withdrawal from Classes

A student who drops a course during the first ~~six~~ three (3) weeks of the grading period may do so without any entry on his/her permanent record card. A student who drops a course after the first ~~six~~ three (3) weeks of the grading period shall receive an F grade on his/her permanent record, unless otherwise decided by the principal or designee.

Effect of Absences on Grades

Teachers who choose to withhold class credit because of excessive unexcused absences shall so inform students and parents/guardians of such a possibility at the beginning of the school year or semester. When a student reaches the number of unexcused absences defined as excessive in Board policy, the student and parent/guardian shall again be notified of the district's policy regarding excessive unexcused absences.

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(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)
(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

The student and parent/guardian shall have a reasonable opportunity to explain the absences.
(Education Code 49067)

If a student receives a failing grade because of excessive unexcused absences, the student's record shall specify that the grade was assigned because of excessive unexcused absences.
(Education Code 49067)

Grades for a student in foster care shall not be lowered if the student is absent for any reason specified in Education Code 49069.5.

(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)

Transiency Issues

For a student enrolled 20 days or more, the teachers of record complete a drop slip including grades and conferences with parent/guardian, and provide a current progress report as appropriate.

For a student enrolled less than 20 days, the teachers of record complete a drop slip, including any pertinent information. The drop slip indicates that “Child enrolled _____ days. No grades given.”

Number of days

For a student who moves after being enrolled for 20 days or more, the teachers of record will complete the drop slip and provide a current progress report to be placed in the child’s cum to be sent to the new school.

Regulation
approved: May 26, 1998
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