



## Norris Middle School Grading Policy



2009-2010

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### **Explanation**

The Norris Middle School Grading Policy was created by educators from a wide variety of departments at each grade level. This policy provides all educators in the Middle School with a set of grading guidelines to follow.

### **Purpose of Grading**

Norris Middle School believes that the purpose of grading is to measure and communicate student achievement to students, teachers, parents, and community members. Grades also:

- Monitor student progress against established learning goals/standards
- Guide teacher instruction
- Identify students for available educational opportunities
- Provide information that students can use for self-evaluation and growth

### **Grading Guidelines**

The following guidelines will be used by all teachers to arrive at a student's final grade. These guidelines ensure that the purpose of the grading policy is reflected in the reporting so that the focus will remain on student learning.

Teachers still have the flexibility to work within these guidelines to develop the most appropriate grading model for their particular grade, course, or group of students.

### **Assessment - Guideline #1**

Teachers will base 70% or more of a student's final grade on summative (*formal*) assessments and 30% or less on formative (*informal*) assessments.

**Summative Assessments:** A summative assessment is typically used to arrive at a *formal conclusion* of what a student knows and can do with knowledge and skills. A summative assessment is a *culminating* judgment/decision using assessment information based on established standards. Summative assessments can take the form of projects, papers, exams, tests, or other performance tasks designed to measure student learning. Students will be assessed using a wide variety of summative assessment tools and given *multiple opportunities* to demonstrate content/skill mastery in every class. All effort will be made to avoid failing grades on summative assessments.

**Formative assessment:** A formative assessment is an *informal ongoing* assessment that provides information to guide instruction. Formative assessments are class discussions, quizzes, simulations, feedback, homework and many other activities designed to promote or measure learning as part of the instructional process.

**The following stipulations apply to homework as formative assessment:** Homework is work completed outside of instruction time.

#### **The purpose of homework is to:**

- Prepare students for upcoming instruction
- Provide practice and repetition of essential skills previously taught
- Prepare for summative assessments
- Give students opportunities to apply or extend (enrich) learning
- Promote study skills and accountability
- Promote the development of independent learning skills
- Allow students opportunities to self-evaluate their progress

### **The teacher's responsibility regarding homework is to**

- Ensure that it is tied to the learning goals
- Provide timely feedback
- Communicate with parents regarding expectations
- Provide necessary resources and support for each student to complete the task
- Monitor and hold students accountable for assignments through interventions

### **The student's responsibility regarding homework is to**

- Put forth his/her best effort
- Seek help from the teacher or other available school resources when needed
- Complete and turn in all assignments on time
- Use feedback from the homework as self-evaluation

Students will be involved in ongoing assessment of their learning goals. It is crucial that students are actively engaged in their learning process. Middle school students will use a variety of ways to monitor their learning. These measurements may include, but are not limited to; journals, charts, graphs, portfolios and peer/teacher feedback.

### **Participation / Performance - Guideline #2**

In addition to receiving a final grade, every student's report card will include a comment bank that records behavior and effort for each class. Although these factors will not affect a student's letter grade, *behavior*, *effort*, *attendance*, *participation* and *citizenship* will continue to informally influence a student's grade.

Performance(s) may be included in a student's grade if it is the actual goal being taught or measured.

### **Group Grades- Guideline #3**

A grade reflects what a student can do as an individual; therefore, every attempt will be made to assess an individual's performance when group work is being graded.

### **Extra Credit- Guideline #4**

Extra credit work will have a minimal effect on a student's grade. Extra credit cannot replace required assignments, nor be offered merely to adjust a grade. Departments/grade levels may at their professional discretion assign students extra credit.

### **Student Late Work - Guideline #5**

Students are expected to complete all assignments. When a student does not complete an assignment, opportunities for learning are diminished. Therefore, Norris Middle School will utilize a systematic framework of interventions to support teachers and students in order to ensure that work is completed. These include, but are not limited to; LITT, PASS and Specials. Students may receive a 2% reduction per day on late work, not to exceed 10% of the final grade on any assignment.

### **Use of Zeros - Guideline #6**

All summative assessments will be completed by the end of the quarter and will be graded accordingly. Any work not completed by the end of the quarter will receive an incomplete. Incomplete work is expected to be completed two weeks after the beginning of a new quarter, or the incomplete will remain as the final grade.

Stipulations for students with special or unique learning needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis using established District parameters.

### **Reporting Student Progress**

We will continue to use the same performance indicators used in previous years.

A (92-100%); B (83-91%); C (74-82%); D (65-73%); F (Below 65%)