

Regulation

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: Policy II

Responsible Office: ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT FOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

GRADING

A. PURPOSE

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining rigorous performance and achievement standards for all students and to providing a fair process for evaluating and reporting student progress that is understandable to students and their parents and relevant for instructional purposes.

B. PROCEDURES

1. At the beginning of a grade or a course of study, teachers shall provide students and parents with a written overview of grade/course expectations, including:
 - the content, skills and concepts students are expected to acquire;
 - the grading/evaluation procedures to be used;
 - the procedures parents can use to contact the teacher;
 - the materials parents are expected to supply;
 - the procedures for providing absence notes to the teacher, including the process of obtaining make-up work; and
 - the frequency and types of homework assignments.
2. Teachers shall evaluate student progress to determine the degree of mastery of course objectives, skills, content and concepts. A grade or code, which is a symbol reflecting the teacher's evaluation of a student's achievement and progress, shall be determined by the teacher.
 - a. Elementary School
 - (1) Grades or codes are given to elementary students to document mastery and application of skills, concepts and processes. Guided practice, assigned before mastery is expected, shall not be graded.
 - (2) Grades shall be weighted differently according to the nature and complexity of the assignment, task or activity.
 - (3) Assignments completed at home shall not be given as much weight as those completed at school.

- (4) Prekindergarten and kindergarten Progress Reports are used to report student progress to parents. They are completed for the fall and spring parent-teacher conferences. When completing the Progress Report, a teacher shall use a check mark to indicate “consistently demonstrating,” “developing,” and “not yet demonstrating” for each item observed.
- (5) In Grades 1 and 2, each teacher shall keep a record of students’ performances in each area of the report card. This entry shall be representative of a student’s performance over time rather than an average of the student’s performance or the student’s performance on a single task.
- (6) For Grades 3, 4, 5, the teacher shall make an entry every five to eight school days as an assessment of the student’s performance for each indicator in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies and science. Each entry shall be dated and notation of the activity observed and/or task shall be included in the record.
- (7) Teachers shall maintain accurate and precise grade books that support assigned marking period grades.
- (8) In art, music, physical education, and expected student behaviors, documentation to support a holistic assessment shall be recorded by the appropriate teacher at least three times during a marking period.
- (9) Teachers shall help prepare students for the work place by providing opportunities for cooperation, especially since current research underscores the value of cooperative learning. However, each student shall receive an individual grade for work performed in groups.

b. Middle School

- (1) Grades are given to middle school students to document mastery of course objectives, skills, content and concepts. Guided practice, assigned before mastery is expected, shall not be graded.
- (2) In the daily courses, each marking period shall have a minimum of nine separate evaluations.
- (3) In three-day rotation courses, each marking period shall have a minimum of five separate evaluations.
- (4) In A day/B day courses, each marking period shall have a minimum of seven separate evaluations.
- (5) Teachers shall use points to evaluate individual assignments.
- (6) Extra credit work shall be assigned and factored into the student’s grade at the discretion of the teacher.

- (7) A student who exhibits academic dishonesty as determined by the teacher shall receive a zero on the particular assignment in question.
- (8) Teachers shall help prepare students for the work place by providing opportunities for cooperation, especially since current research underscores the value of cooperative learning. However, each student shall receive an individual grade for work performed in groups.

c. High School

- (1) Grades are given to high school students to document mastery of course objectives, skills, content and concepts. Guided practice, assigned before mastery is expected, shall not be graded.
- (2) All courses that meet every other day during each marking period must have a minimum of nine separate evaluations.
- (3) Extra credit work shall be assigned and factored into the student's grade at the discretion of the teacher.
- (4) Teachers shall use points to evaluate individual assignments. When work is returned to students, the points earned, along with the total possible points for the assignment, shall be written on the assignment.
- (5) A student who exhibits academic dishonesty as determined by the teacher shall receive a zero on the particular assignment in question.
- (6) Teachers shall help prepare students for the work place by providing opportunities for cooperation, especially since current research underscores the value of cooperative learning. However, each student shall receive an individual grade for work performed in groups.

3. Homework is a required component for student achievement. A teacher's evaluation of homework shall be reflected in the grade or the code given for "Expected Student Behavior."

- a. All homework assignments shall be designed to meet one or more of the following outcomes:
 - promote the attainment of positive work habits and study skills;
 - practice material and skills already taught;
 - prepare for upcoming lessons;
 - study for upcoming assessments; and/or
 - extend student understanding of concepts.

- b. Students are expected to dedicate focused time outside of school hours toward the completion of homework. The following provides general guidelines on time allotments for homework.
- (1) Generally, students in prekindergarden and kindergarten should spend approximately 20 minutes per night on homework, two to three times per week.
 - (2) Students in grades 1 and 2 should spend approximately 30 minutes per night on homework, three to four times per week
 - (3) Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 should spend approximately 45 minutes per night on homework, three to four times per week.
 - (4) In the middle school grades 6 to 8, students should spend approximately 60 minutes per night on homework, four to five times per week.
 - (5) In the high school grades 9 to 12, students should spend approximately 120 minutes per night on homework, four to five times per week.
 - (a) Courses identified as Honors, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme may require additional time commitments to meet homework expectations.
 - (b) In certain Honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme courses, expectations may include pre-course assignments.
- c. At the beginning of a grade or course of study, students and parents shall be provided with the names and telephone numbers of school personnel to contact if there are concerns about homework.
- d. Parents shall not be expected to play a "formal teaching role" in homework. Parents can, however, support this aspect of their children's education by establishing regular times for homework completion and identifying specific places in the home where students can work with minimum distractions.
- e. Teachers shall be responsible for evaluating the homework assigned. At the teacher's discretion, some assignments may be evaluated for completeness, while others may be evaluated for accuracy. Teachers shall maintain records to document student performance on homework assignments.
- (1) In elementary school, homework shall be reflected in the code given for "Expected Student Behaviors."

- (2) Middle school courses differ in design and content.
 - (a) In middle school Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language courses, homework shall be assigned and evaluated. Homework grades shall count no less than 10% and no more than 15% of the total available points for the marking period.
 - (b) In middle school courses being taken for high school credit, homework shall be assigned and evaluated. Homework grades shall count no less than 15% and no more than 20% of the total available points for the marking period.
 - (c) In all other middle school courses, homework shall be assigned at the teacher's discretion. The teacher shall determine the weight of homework for those courses, not to exceed 15% of the total available points for the marking period.
- (3) High school courses differ in design and content.
 - (a) In high school English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language courses, homework shall be assigned and evaluated. Homework grades shall count no less than 15% and no more than 20% of the total available points for the marking period.
 - (b) In all other high school courses, homework shall be assigned at the teacher's discretion. The teacher shall determine the weight of homework for those courses, not to exceed 20% of the total available points for the marking period.
4. Student progress shall be reported to students and parents by school staff on a regular basis.
 - a. Because parents are partners in the education of their children, communication between teachers and parents is vital to student success. Written notes, telephone conversations, e-mail, and face-to-face conferences are all excellent means of maintaining appropriate and open communication with parents.
 - b. Teachers shall be required to complete interim reports and/or comment sheets only for those students making unsatisfactory progress.
5. Teachers and schools shall maintain records of student progress.
 - a. Elementary School
 - (1) The evaluation of student progress which culminates in a performance and/or achievement indicator on the report card is a continuous process,

involving many evaluated activities. These activities parallel the learning experience in which each student is engaged.

- (2) In prekindergarten and kindergarten, progress reports shall indicate “consistently demonstrating,” “developing,” and “not yet demonstrating” for specific skills in listening/speaking, reading, writing, math, science, social studies, technology, social emotional growth, and psycho-motor development.
 - (a) “Consistently demonstrating” means the student exhibits the skills independently with minimal teacher intervention.
 - (b) “Developing” means the student exhibits the skills with teacher guidance and support.
 - (c) “Not yet demonstrating” means the student exhibits the skills in isolated or rare instances, or with a great deal of support. The performance is inconsistent and below the normal range of expectancy for a student at that grade level.
- (3) In grades 1 and 2, report cards shall indicate “consistently demonstrating,” “progressing in the development of skill,” and “needs improvement” for specific skills in reading, writing, math, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, and expected student behaviors.
 - (a) “Consistently demonstrating” (CD) means the student exhibits the skills independently with minimal teacher intervention.
 - (b) “Progressing in the development of skill” (PR) means the student exhibits the skills with teacher guidance and support.
 - (c) “Needs improvement” (NI) means the student exhibits the skills in isolated or rare instances, or with a great deal of support. The performance is inconsistent and below the normal range of expectancy for a student at that grade level.
- (4) In grades 3 to 5 in elementary school, report cards shall indicate student achievement by letter grade for reading, writing, math, science, and social studies:
 - A – Excellent
 - B – Good
 - C – Average
 - D – Poor
 - E – Unsatisfactory
 - NG – No Grade

Each letter grade on the report card shall be based upon a compilation of the grades recorded during the marking period.

- (5) In grades 3 to 5 in elementary school, grading codes shall be given for:
- Art
 - Music
 - Chorus
 - Instrumental Music
 - Physical Education
 - Expected Student Behaviors
- (a) “Consistently demonstrating” (CD) means the student exhibits the skills independently with minimal teacher intervention.
- (b) “Progressing in the development of skill” (PR) means the student exhibits the skills with teacher guidance and support.
- (c) “Needs improvement” (NI) means the student exhibits the skills in isolated or rare instances, or with a great deal of support. The performance is inconsistent and below the normal range of expectancy for a student at that grade level.

Each grading code on the report card shall be representative of a student’s performance over time rather than an average of the student’s performance or the student’s performance on a single task.

b. Middle School and High School

- (1) When calculating marking period grades, teachers shall calculate the total points earned by each student.
- (a) Teachers shall determine the percentage of the total points available earned by each student.
- (b) The percentage of points earned shall be calculated to the tenths place and then rounded to a whole number (.5 and higher rounds up).
- (c) A letter grade for the marking period shall be established using the following scale:
- 100% - 90% = A
 - 89% - 80% = B
 - 79% - 70% = C
 - 69% - 60% = D
 - 59% or less = E

- (d) The letter grade shall be reported on the report card.
- (2) In middle school and high school:
- (a) Any student receiving an “A” shall show exceptional achievement on concepts, skills, and processes presented. In so doing, the student shall be consistent in exhibiting leadership and independence in the classroom. The student’s response, written or oral, to questions and testing situations shall be consistently accurate, logical, and rational. The student’s interest, attitude, retention, initiative, originality, and responsibility toward assignments, class work, evaluations, research, and projects shall consistently be at the highest level of achievement for course standards.
 - (b) Any student receiving a “B” shall show above- average achievement of concepts, skills, and processes presented. In so doing, the student’s leadership and independence require occasional teacher support. Written and oral response to questions and testing situations shall show above-average accuracy, logic, and reasoning. The student’s interest, attitude, retention, initiative, originality and responsibility toward assignments, class work, evaluations, research, and projects shall consistently be at a high level of achievement for course standards.
 - (c) Any student receiving a “C” shall show satisfactory achievement of concepts, skills, and processes presented. The student may occasionally display some leadership and independence. The student’s written and oral responses to questions and testing situations shall show satisfactory accuracy, logic, and reasoning. The student’s interest, attitude, retention, initiative, originality, and responsibility toward assignments, class work, evaluations, research, and projects shall consistently meet course standards.
 - (d) Any student receiving a “D” shall show an achievement of the minimum number of concepts, skills, and processes required. The student shall be able to follow directions when given a reasonable amount of time and teacher support. The student’s written and oral responses to questions and testing situations shall show a minimum amount of accuracy, logic, and reasoning. The student’s attitude, retention, initiative, originality, and responsibility toward assignments, class work, evaluations, research, and projects shall consistently be at the minimum acceptable level of achievement for course standards.

- (e) Any student receiving an “E” should be failing to meet the criteria as listed in the previous section. The student would receive no credit toward graduation or promotion.
 - (f) A student with lawful absences near or at the end of a grading period may receive a temporary “I.” Students who receive an “I” should complete makeup work within a reasonable amount of time in order to receive credit for a course. (Administrative regulation JB)
 - (g) Any student receiving an “S” (Satisfactory) has satisfactorily completed the requirements for the course and will receive credit, but the “S” will not be calculated into the grade point average.
 - (h) Any student receiving a “U” (Unsatisfactory) has not met course requirements and the “U” will not receive credit nor be calculated into the student’s grade point average (GPA).
 - (i) Any student receiving a letter grade with a suffix of “W” has had credit withheld for excessive absence or failing to meet course requirements. The student will not receive credit. The grade will be calculated into the student’s grade point average (GPA) as a credit attempted.
 - (j) Any student receiving the grade "NG" for:
 - (i) a final examination will not have the exam grade calculated into the semester average. The grade will not be included in any semester calculation for Honor Roll, GPA or eligibility.
 - (ii) a marking period grade will not have the marking period calculated into the semester average. The grade will not be included in any marking period calculation for Honor Roll, GPA or eligibility.
 - (iii) a final grade will not receive credit for the course. The grade will not be included in any semester or year-long calculation for Honor Roll, GPA or eligibility.
- (3) High school course semester grades are determined by averaging three term-weighted grades. (Marking Period Grade – 40%; Marking Period Grade – 40%; Final Examination – 20%). The student must receive a passing grade for two of the three grades or an “E” is earned regardless of numerical average.

- (a) For the purpose of averaging, the percentage score for each marking period and final exam should be used.
 - (b) For the purpose of determining a course grade, the following percentage scale shall be used:
 - 100% - 90% = A
 - 89% - 80% = B
 - 79% - 70% = C
 - 69% - 60% = D
 - 59% or less = E
- (4) Full year middle school course grades are determined by averaging the four marking period percentage grades. A student must pass at least half of the marking periods to receive a passing grade regardless of numerical average.
 - (5) Semester middle school course grades are determined by the average of the two marking period grades. However, if the grade does not accurately reflect the student's performance, the teacher, with the principal's permission, may change the grade to the more accurate grade.
 - (6) If a teacher believes a student has stopped working during any grading period, the student's record shall be thoroughly evaluated to determine whether a passing grade will be given. There must be thorough documentation, evidence of opportunity for parental input and approval by the principal to override a numerical average.
 - (7) If a teacher believes a student has made significant improvement during any grading period, the student's record shall be thoroughly evaluated to determine the grade given. There must be thorough documentation and approval by the principal.
 - (8) Students with three or more unlawful absences in a marking period will receive an "E" for the marking period.
 - (9) School staff shall calculate Grade Point Average for high school students.
 - (a) "Honors" courses – An additional .50 quality point will be awarded to students who earn grades of A, B, or C in "honors" and "Pre-IB" courses. No additional quality points will be added for grades of D or E.
 - (b) "Advanced Placement" and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme courses – An additional 1.0 quality point will be awarded to students in "Advanced Placement" and International

Baccalaureate Diploma Programme courses who earn grades of A, B, or C. No additional quality points will be added for grades of D or E.

Unweighted Courses	Honors and Pre-IB Courses	AP and IB Courses
A = 4	$A = 4 + .50 = 4.50$	$A = 4 + 1 = 5$
B = 3	$B = 3 + .50 = 3.50$	$B = 3 + 1 = 4$
C = 2	$C = 2 + .50 = 2.50$	$C = 2 + 1 = 3$
D = 1	$D = 1 + 0 = 1.0$	$D = 1 + 0 = 1$
E = 0	$E = 0 + 0 = 0$	$E = 0 + 0 = 0$

- (c) A system of grading, including weighted grades for honors “Pre-IB,” advanced placement, and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme courses, will be applied for all school system activities and situations, such as ranking in class and extracurricular eligibility. This system will be designated on all student transcripts.
- (d) Grade Point Average calculation for “S” and “U” grades:
- (i) Some courses such as work study, special inclusion classes, some alternative credit programs, etc., produce a grade of “S” (satisfactory) or “U” (unsatisfactory), instead of grades A-E.
 - (ii) The grade is recorded on the transcript as “S” or “U”. An “S” earns credit; a “U” does not. For calculation purposes when an “S” or “U” grade is used, there are no quality points issued, therefore, there is no credit attempted factored into the GPA calculation.
 - (iii) Department aides are not awarded credit and their grades are not used in GPA calculations.
- (e) Grade Point Average calculation for courses repeated:
- (i) Any course a student repeats for grade improvement or to build prerequisite skills, and for which credit has been previously granted, cannot receive credit again.
 - (ii) The highest grade earned for a repeated course will be calculated into the GPA with the lower grade dropped from the transcript. For the purposes of cumulative Grade Point Average calculation, only those courses appearing on the transcript will be factored into the calculation.

- (f) Grade Point Average calculation for courses where credit is denied:
 - (i) At the discretion of the Principal, credit may be withheld due to excessive absences or for failing to meet course requirements.
 - (ii) In the case of credit withheld, the grade for the course is recorded with a suffix of “W”, credit attempted, but credit earned is recorded as a zero. Calculation shall be the same as that of a grade of “E.”
 - (g) The honor roll is published for each grading period. Anne Arundel County Honor Roll certificates are awarded to students at the end of the semester or at the end of the school year, whichever is appropriate.
 - (i) Superintendent’s Honor Roll
The Superintendent’s honor roll consists of students whose grades for both grading periods and semester examination grades are all “A’s” or “S’s” for an entire semester.
 - (ii) Principal’s Honor Roll
The Principal’s honor roll consists of students who receive all “A’s” or “S’s” in a grading period.
 - (iii) Honor Roll
The honor roll consists of students who have a weighted GPA of 3.0 or greater and have no grades of "D", "E", "I", or "U" during a grading period.
6. Procedures shall be established to regulate the credit earning process.
- a. Final Examinations
 - (1) High School final examinations are comprehensive evaluations for the semester. Final examination periods are two hours in length with the exception of final exams for second semester seniors, which are one class period in length. Final examinations will include a variety of question types to include at least one essay question. On the second semester final examination for seniors, the essay will be at the discretion of the teacher. Exceptions to this procedure will be made on a course-by-course basis by the Director of Curriculum in consultation with the content coordinator. Where an alternative assessment is to be substituted for the final examination, it may take the form of a paper, project, or performance. This alternative final examination shall be due during the period set aside

for the final examination in that course. Such exceptions shall be published as part of the course description.

- (a) Teachers in all subject areas will give written examinations designed to be two hours in length.
 - (b) Certain special subject areas may include a practicum exercise as part of the examination.
 - (c) Each examination will include one or more essay questions appropriate to the phase of the course.
- (2) Students unable to take a final examination due to an emergency situation may, with the approval of the principal, be permitted to take a make-up examination. In extenuating circumstances and solely at the discretion of the principal, a waiver to the final examination may be considered.

In eighth grade, students will take comprehensive final examinations in Language Arts/Reading, and Mathematics at the end of each semester. Students will take comprehensive final examinations in Science and Social studies at the end of the semester in which they take the subject. Examinations will be one class period in length. Final examinations for eighth grade students will count 10% of the second and fourth quarter marking period grades for Language Arts/Reading and Mathematics and 10% of the second or fourth quarter marking period grades for Science and Social Studies. Middle school students taking courses for high school credit must take an examination comparable to the high school examination.

For additional information on Final Examinations, see Policy 608.01/IIA – Final Examinations.

- b. Any student taking a high school course prior to entering high school will receive credit if he/she:
 - (1) Passes the course and passes the Final Exam.
 - (2) Credit will be awarded upon entering ninth grade. The grade for the course will be calculated in the student's GPA in the same manner as other high school courses, including courses with weighted grades.
- c. Summer and evening high school grades for students enrolled in a regular day school program will be transferred and calculated into the student's marking period GPA.
- d. Credit and grades for students transferring from an accredited school outside the county will be based upon the grading policy of the sending school.

- e. Transfer grades for non-accredited schools will be awarded at the discretion of the principal. Students may be required to earn a “C” or better in the next sequential course to receive credit.
 - f. All county high schools will award credit based upon the established policies and regulations of Anne Arundel County Public Schools.
 - g. No grade and course credit will be awarded for after school activities that are not in the Anne Arundel County Program of Studies.
 - h. With the prior approval of the school principal, students may earn additional or alternative credit toward high school graduation. The grades for these courses will be “S” (Satisfactory) or “U” (Unsatisfactory).
 - (1) Alternative credit may be applied only to the "elective" credits required for graduation.
 - (2) Alternative credit programs must be consistent with the educational goals and objectives of Anne Arundel County Public Schools.
 - (3) Alternative credit experiences may provide up to four (4) elective credits toward graduation.
 - i. Credit for a college course may be awarded when the principal determines that the content of the proposed course is consistent with Anne Arundel County Public Schools’ goals and objectives. The grades for these courses will be "S" (satisfactory) or "U" (unsatisfactory).
 - j. Credits for internship/mentorship programs are awarded by the principal based upon successful completion of the program requirements.
 - k. Grades earned by students for course work completed while on home teaching, as determined by the home teacher, will be factored into the marking period grade or semester grade proportionate to the amount of time spent in class and on home teaching.
7. Each high school shall annually designate a graduating valedictorian and salutatorian.
- a. The valedictorian at each high school is the graduate in a diploma program with the highest weighted GPA.
 - (1) For valedictorian determination, the highest weighted GPA must be inclusive of the final grades prior to graduation.
 - (2) All courses that appear on the transcript,, weighted (honors/Pre-IB/AP/International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme) or unweighted, assigned by Anne Arundel County Public Schools, inclusive of summer

school and evening school, that produce a letter grade of A, B, C, D, E (or AW, BW, CW, DW, where credit is being withheld) shall be included in the GPA calculation.

- (3) GPA shall be calculated to the thousandths place. Then GPA shall be rounded to the hundredths place (.005 and higher rounds up).
 - (4) Courses taken at colleges or universities, either during the school year or summer, shall not be included in the student's GPA calculation.
 - (5) In the event that there is more than one valedictorian, resulting from a tie in weighted GPA, there will be no salutatorian.
- b. The salutatorian of each high school is the graduate in a diploma program with the second highest weighted GPA.
- (1) For salutatorian determination, the second highest weighted GPA must be inclusive of the final grades prior to graduation.
 - (2) All courses that appear on the transcript, weighted (honors/Pre-IB/AP/International Baccalaureate) or unweighted, assigned by Anne Arundel County Public Schools, inclusive of summer school and evening school, that produce a letter grade of A, B, C, D, E (or AW, BW, CW, DW, where credit is being withheld) shall be included in the GPA calculation.
 - (3) GPA shall be calculated using the same method as for valedictorian.
 - (4) Courses taken at colleges or universities, either during the school year or summer shall not be included in the student's GPA calculation.

Regulation history: Issued 9/6/06, revised 7/1/11

Note previous regulation history: Replaces II-RA, originally adopted 9/6/06