

Gaston County Schools Grading Guidelines

Grades 3-12

General Guidelines

Purpose: To provide direction to all teachers in expected grading practices

Expectations:

- Grading practices shall be reviewed annually by the principal and School Improvement Team.
- Academic grades shall be a content-based measure of what students are able to demonstrate.
- Grading shall provide appropriate and accurate feedback to the students and parents.
- Grades shall reflect performance that is consistent with demonstrated achievement on the goals of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Guiding Documentation

Purpose: Written documentation of how a grade is derived is essential for communicating with parents.

Expectations:

Elementary (3-5)	Middle (6-8)	High (9-12)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Each grade level within a school shall be responsible for providing a written document to parents explaining their grading guidelines. ● Each grade level's document must be approved by the principal. ● Upon approval, the grade level document shall be sent home and signed by parents within the first two weeks of school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All teachers are required to have a course outline for each course taught. ● The course outline must be approved annually by the administration. ● The course outline must be communicated annually to students and parents via website and/or handout. ● The course outline must include the breakdown of grading plan to include percentages or points. ● The course outline must include a list of classroom procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All teachers shall be required to give the Principal or his designee and students a course syllabus that contains at least the course title, course description, general curriculum topics to be covered, materials, grading practices which may include an example of a calculated student grade, classroom procedures including behavior management, teacher contact information. Course syllabi must be distributed to all students within the first week of the semester, or student enrollment. Principals shall review each course syllabus annually.

Grade Composition

Purpose: Grades shall reflect student performance in various subject areas aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The make-up of the student grade shall be based on various classroom and remote learning assignments with differing percentages.

Expectations:

Elementary	Middle	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading and writing grades – The weights of each shall be reading 70 percent and writing/word study 30 percent. ● If a child is working below grade level, it shall be noted in the comments section of the report card. ● Academic grades shall not be reduced for misconduct or for punishment. ● Grades shall be based on percentages, not points. ● The final Language Arts grade shall be based upon a minimum of eight (8) reading assignments and four (4) writing assignments. ● The final math grade shall be based upon a minimum of eight (8) assignments. ● The science grade shall be based upon a minimum of four (4) assignments. ● The social studies grade shall be based upon a minimum of four (4) assignments. ● District and state formative assessment should not be used as grades (iReady diagnostic, NC Check-ins) ● All grades must be entered in Schoology. Teachers will sync grades to PowerSchool at least once weekly. *Remember assignments marked "missing" in Schoology with sync as a 0 so teachers will need to adjust prior to the sync. ● School level professional learning communities shall help determine an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assignments shall carry different weights based on the importance of the activity, time spent on the activity and the degree of involvement. ● The nine weeks grade shall be determined by the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 40 percent - tests (major - projects, papers and performances) 2. 30 percent independent work - (quizzes, classwork, common assessments, etc.), 3. 20 percent guided work -(group activities, teacher led activities, etc.) and 4. 10 percent homework ● A minimum of three (3) tests (major - projects, papers and performances) shall be given during each grading period for all middle school courses. In addition to test grades, a minimum of five (5) guided assignments and four (4) independent assignments shall be given in each grading period for all middle school courses. ● District and state formative assessment should not be used as grades (iReady diagnostic, NC Check-ins) ● Academic grades shall not be reduced for misconduct or for punishment. ● Teachers shall supply a copy of their grading procedures to the principal, students and parents. ● Teachers shall work with Professional Learning Communities to determine interventions and monitor progress to ensure mastery of content knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assignments shall carry different weights based on the importance of the activity, time spent on the activity and the degree of involvement. ● The nine weeks grade shall be determined by counting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tests (major projects, major papers, etc.): 60 percent, 2. quizzes: 20 percent and, 3. daily/class grades and/or homework: 20 percent. ● All students shall take a final exam in all courses. The exam grade shall count 20% of the final course grade. The final exam is a cumulative exam created by the State, District, or teacher and shall include all standards in the course curriculum. ● Each nine weeks grade shall be made up of a minimum of three (3) major test grades (may include major projects, essays, research papers, performances) which shall count 60 percent of the grade. ● Each nine weeks grade shall be made up of a minimum of six (6) quizzes (only covers part of a unit of study or a specific step in a project or performance) which shall count 20 percent of the grade. ● Each nine weeks grade shall be made up of a minimum of nine (9) daily/class and/or homework grades (may include warm-ups or bell

<p>appropriate number of additional assignments to be given for each discipline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The teacher shall adhere to the IEP, the 504 and any Tier Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teachers shall enter grades in PowerTeacher weekly.● PowerSchool will show the official student average; Canvas will display grades given for assignments and quizzes in Canvas. Canvas should not display an average.● School level professional learning communities shall help determine an appropriate number of additional assignments to be given for each discipline.● The teacher shall adhere to the IEP, the 504 and any Tier Plan.	<p>work) which shall count 20 percent of the grade. Exceptions to this shall be made for all non-core classes except foreign language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● AP/Honors courses shall not be graded differently. Content and expectations shall be more rigorous.● Fine Arts, PE and ROTC shall include grades for performance.● Academic grades shall not be reduced for misconduct or for punishment.● In accordance with BOE Policy #4310, students will be subject to consequences outlined in Rule 25 of the Student Code of Conduct for cheating, plagiarism, etc.● Teachers shall enter grades in PowerTeacher weekly.● School level Professional Learning Communities shall help determine an appropriate number of additional assignments to be given for each discipline.● The teacher shall adhere to the IEP, the 504 and any Tier Plan.
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Homework Assignments

Purpose: Homework is important in supplementing instruction and furthering the goals of the educational program. It reinforces learning and stimulates independence, responsibility and self-direction.

Expectations:

Elementary	Middle	High
<p>Expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework assignments shall be designed to provide additional practice, preparation, or extension to curriculum taught in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Homework shall not be longer than the grade level X 10 minute rule (ex. A second grader would have no more than 2 times 10 minutes); excluding reading practice. Total time includes completing unfinished class/remote assigned work. Homework shall not be counted as a grade. Teachers shall avoid using homework as punishment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework assignments shall be designed to provide practice, preparation, or extension to curriculum taught in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Teachers shall work with Professional Learning Communities to determine amount and frequency adhering to best practice guidelines. Teachers shall assign a reasonable amount of homework and it shall count no more than 10 percent of the final grade. Students shall receive feedback on homework. Teachers shall avoid using homework as punishment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers shall work with Professional Learning Communities to determine amount and frequency of homework and it shall count no more than 20 percent of the final grade. Also included in this 20 percent are class and daily grades. Homework shall be meaningful and relevant to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Teachers shall avoid using homework as punishment.

Interim/Report Card Grades

Purpose: Every student shall be given the opportunity to earn a passing final grade.

Expectations:

Elementary	Middle	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers shall not give a final grade below 50 on the report card for all marking periods. The teacher shall utilize the appropriate PowerTeacher comment on the report card. Actual grades shall be reflected on assignments that are returned to students and in the gradebook. Interim reports shall reflect actual grades. The teacher shall maintain frequent communication with student and parent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers shall not give a grade below 50 on the report card for all marking periods. The teacher shall utilize the appropriate PowerTeacher comment on the report card. Interim reports shall reflect actual grades. The teacher shall maintain frequent communication with student and parent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Credit Recovery and *Repeating a Course for credit will be available to students who fail a course. Teachers shall not give a grade below 50 on the report card for the first and third nine weeks grading periods. Interim reports shall reflect actual grades. The teacher shall maintain frequent communication with student and parent. *Grade Recovery (as described below) will be utilized for students who have not successfully completed assignments/homework for a particular course while in progress.

***Definitions:**

Students enrolled in Grade Recovery have the opportunity to receive a passing grade in a course they did not pass on the most recent report card. Students complete parts of the course curriculum and/or assignments that contributed to them not passing. When a student successfully completes the Grade Recovery their original report card grade will be changed to a passing mark of 60.

Credit Recovery is defined as a block of instruction that is less than the entirety of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for that course. When Credit Recovery is exercised, the original record of the course being completed and failed will remain on the transcript. A grade of pass or fail will be given for each credit recovery course. The mark will not affect the student's GPA. Credit Recovery enables students to recover course credit; it is not intended for grade replacement.

Repeating a Course will be used to refer to a high school course repeated via any delivery method when the entire North Carolina Standard Course of Study for the course is being taught to the student for a second time. Students participating in Repeating a Course for credit will receive a grade and take the associated end-of-course assessment, if appropriate.

Core/Encore Classes

Purpose: All middle school courses are of equal importance in promoting a balanced curriculum for students.

Expectations:

Elementary	Middle	High
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All middle school courses shall carry the same graded weight regardless of the subject or academic level.• All middle school courses shall establish procedures for grading and assessing their students. This includes but is not limited to Health and PE, Band, Chorus, Art, Foreign Language and CTE courses.• The grades shall reflect what a student knows and is able to do.• All classes shall use a variety of assessments to measure learning.• Tests shall include but are not limited to performances, physical activity assessments, content assessments and performance based projects.	N/A

Reteach/Retest

Purpose: High School students shall be given the opportunity to participate in reteach/retest sessions.

Expectations

Elementary	Middle	High
N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The reteach/retest program in Gaston County high schools is a strategy to be utilized in working with student mastery of coursework. This program is intended to be a complement to the regular instructional day and shall be used to increase student mastery of subject matter.● A reteach session is not mandatory before the retest is administered, but can be required by the teacher if he/she believes it to be necessary and beneficial to the student.● Benchmarks, formative assessments and final exams shall not be in the reteach/retest program.● Reteach/retest can be a part of a student’s makeup of work missed due to an absence (this can be addressed within the school-specific guidelines).● Students shall be able to re-test any major assessment one (1) time.● Any student who makes below a 75 is eligible to re-test.● The highest grade a student may make on a re-test is 75. If the re-test grade is lower than the original test grade, the student shall receive the higher of the two grades.● Tests that may be retested are those which comprise the 60 percent of the nine weeks grade

		<p>(major assessments) with exceptions listed above. Entire projects may not be considered part of the retest process. Teachers may allow students to “retest” a portion of a project, therefore positively affecting the overall grade assigned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The reteach-retest guidelines apply to all courses offered in GCS, including honors, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and Gaston Online courses. However, the GCS Grading Guidelines do not apply to CCP and NCVPS courses.● It is recommended that students complete the reteach/retest process for a major assessment within 10 days of original assessment administration.● Students who qualify for the exceptional children’s program may earn higher than a 75 if reteach/retest is included as a modification in the IEP.● Schools must publish the district guidelines and school specific guidelines regarding days and times for retesting to parents, students, and staff in a written document (preferably the student handbook).
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