



Memorandum

To: BOE members and Dr. Iline Tracey, Superintendent of Schools
From: Typhanie R. Jackson on behalf of the governance committee
Date: May 4, 2020
Subject: Update grading during pandemic event 2020

At this time, New Haven Public schools came together as a community to review grading practices during this pandemic event. As such, we gathered multiple data points to include a focus group of community, parents, staff, and students, small working groups sub groups, in addition to the distribution of a survey. The results of the survey are as follows:

Staff

There were 983 respondents and 94% were teachers, 5.1% were school administrators, and 0.7% were Central Office administrators. The results indicated that 53.9% of the staff preferred a Pass/Fail grading system with an option for Pass with Distinction and 21.1% selected a Pass/Fail system for quarter 4. In reference to the final grade, 75.1% of staff selected the final grade to be calculated using traditional letter grades (A-F) with quarters 1 - 3 (and the midterm for high schools).

Parents and Students

There were 3,884 respondents and 90.2% were parents and 9.8% were students. The results indicated that 38.7% of the parents and students selected a traditional A-F grading system and 20.5% selected a Pass/Fail grading system with an option for Pass with Distinction for quarter 4. In reference to the final grade, 56.4% of parents and students selected the final grade to be calculated using traditional letter grades (A-F) with quarters 1 - 4 (and the midterm for high schools).

Recommendations for Grading during Pandemic for Fourth Marking Period

Grades preK-4 Recommendations:

Proposed Prek-4 Fourth Marking Period

Teachers will provide narratives to explain the topics/standards covered and will complete descriptive sentences detailing each individual student's performance during this marking period. In addition, teachers will also provide the following non-punitive feedback on their level of participation in distance learning:

High Engagement* -100%-50% participation in learning

Moderate Engagement* -49%-20% participation in learning

Limited Engagement* -less than 20% participation in learning

*NOTE: We recognize that level of engagement in distance learning is affected by technology access and a variety of other factors and may not be an indication of the student's genuine level of interest in the learning. This feedback is only meant to provide information to parents and future teachers on how much distance learning time students may have experienced in the Spring of 2020.

Grades 5-12 Recommendations:

Proposed Grade 5-12 Grading Policy for the last marking period (M4/T3) of 2019-20 distance learning due to COVID-19

The expectation during distance learning is that teachers will continue to provide students with continuity of learning and feedback on their work. We recognize that during the last term no one has been experiencing school as usual so grades for the final term will need to provide information about the students' learning but in no way penalize students for circumstances outside of their control.

Pass with Distinction (P+) – Consistent engagement/performance during distance learning (80-100%)

Pass (P) – Moderate engagement/performance in distance learning less than 80%

Not Graded (NG) – limited or no engagement in distance learning (this may be due to a multitude of reasons including but not limited to lack of access, additional responsibilities, and parental decisions not to participate) Will not negatively impact a student's final course grade.

Teacher comment for last quarter could include short narrative with feedback on student's academic performance.

Proposed Grade 5-12 Grading Policy for final course grades (Y1) for the 2019-20 SY for schools using traditional grade scales (A-F)

Semester 1 courses – concluded January 17, 2020. Not impacted by pandemic.

Semester 2 courses – started January 20, 2020 with in person meetings through March 12, 2020 and continued with distance learning

Course grade (HS or MS Grade scale) no lower than grade at the end of MP3 grade but can be raised based on engagement/performance in distance learning. The option of Incomplete would exist for high school students who had not yet demonstrated enough work to earn credit. Incompletes would be time bound and we would need to set a date (possible date 11/6/2020 end of first quarter) by which the work would be completed to earn credit.

Full Year Courses – started August 30, 2019 with in person meetings through March 12, 2020 and continued with distance learning.

Course grade (HS or MS Grade scale) no lower than Y1 grade at the end of last term when students were physically in school (average of M1-M3 and X1 where applicable) but can be raised based on engagement/performance in distance learning. The option of Incomplete would exist for high school students who had not yet demonstrated enough work to earn credit. Incompletes would be time bound and we would need to set a date (possible date 11/6/2020 end of first quarter) by which the work would be completed to earn credit.

***For schools utilizing mastery based grading, similar flexibility will be used to determine M4 and course grades**

***Please note that transcripts will reflect final course grades and GPAs will be calculated based on final course grades, not individual marking periods**

***Grading must consider students with disabilities and in accordance with the child's IEP. Additionally, Grading must be considerate of students with English Learning Needs**