

FAIR GRADING PRACTICES

High school students' grades are high stakes. They impact course placement, likelihood of graduation, scholarships, and post-secondary program admissions.

In a school year with significant remote learning and tremendous stresses on many families and students, it is critical for school districts to put in place equitable grading policies that:

1. Maximize students' motivation and engagement.
2. Minimize the potential negative impact of remote learning of students confronting significant learning and life challenges.

THIS EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT-FOCUSED HIGH SCHOOL GRADING POLICY ACHIEVES BOTH OBJECTIVES:

- **The letter grades of A, B, C, and Incomplete are the only high school course grading options.** No student will receive a D or F. Districts slightly or significantly adjust the minimum score necessary to receive a C grade. On this scale, a C is equal to a "Complete." or pass. Below C is Incomplete.
- **Incomplete policy.** When a student receives an Incomplete, the teacher who gave the Incomplete is responsible for developing a plan and timeline to support the student in completing the course. A first semester or first or second trimester Incomplete can be brought up to a C, B, or A through work done before the end of the 2020-21 school year, and beyond if the district decides. A second semester or third trimester Incomplete can be brought up to a C, B, or A through work up to a district determined deadline the following school year.
- **A reasonable "No Zeroes" grading policy.** Giving a zero in a 100-point grading scale is unfair and has an immense negative impact on a student's course average. The lowest grade that should be given is a 50 out of 100. Just two or three zeros are enough to cause failure for an entire semester, and even one course failure in ninth grade can lead a student to drop out of high school, incurring a lifetime of personal and social consequences.
- **Late work accepted with no penalty.** The purpose of student work is to demonstrate understanding, not to assess whether a student can do the work on time. By accepting late work with no penalty, the grade represents the student's academic ability, not whether they can do the work by the deadline.
- **Re-takes/re-dos actively encouraged with the highest grade recorded.** Rewarding effort to learn from mistakes cultivates a growth mindset and motivates students to keep learning, even after a failure.