

GRADING POLICY

The Berlin Central School District offers a rich educational environment where students can attain deep learning, express their learning in a variety of ways, perform at grade-level or above grade-level the various skills found within each of the District approved Curricula, and cultivate relationships that encourage collaboration, respect, and individual student agency, thereby creating responsible, resilient graduates with potential and promise to achieve in their subsequent endeavors.

Grading Systems

Grading is considered a positive tool to indicate achievement and development in each class or subject in which a student is enrolled. The Board of Education recognizes that the classroom teacher has the primary responsibility to evaluate students and determine student grades.

The District shall use a uniform grading system. Classroom teachers shall evaluate students and assign grades according to the established system.

Grading shall be based upon student improvement, achievement, and participation in classroom discussions and activities. Parents/guardians shall be provided a written report card regarding their child's progress. The use of marks and symbols will be appropriately explained.

To achieve these aims the District will implement the following grading practices, as they are outlined and applicable to the specific grade-levels, K-12.

Scoring Protocols (*Exceptions to the articulated protocols below may be presented to the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for consideration, and may be implemented upon written approval.*)

K-5:

- K-5 will continue to utilize Standards-based grading by trimester.
- K-5 will emphasize the use of 'comments' to further communicate expectations and understandings as to student progress with parents or guardians.

6-8:

- 10 week courses will have no midterm or final.
- 40 week courses will have a PBL cross-curricular "Comprehensive Project" assigned during the school year, with consideration being given to extemporaneous timelines, such as the 6-8 exams, Regents exams and the end of year expectations, etc.
- Comprehensive Project = 10% - student receives their project grade for each of the core courses from the core course teacher, however, skills from the encore courses, such as Art, Music, Tech, etc. should be taken into consideration. This aligns with the understanding that students can demonstrate their proficiency through a myriad of formats.

9-12:

Non regents ending courses:

- 40 week course shall be graded according to the following: 22.5% per quarter, 10% for final (the final exam must be based on the student's choice of a traditional final exam or a comparable project-based learning model assignment). Teachers may override the student choice on their final assessment should the need arise. This would be based on quantitative data, such as a higher score in one or the other assessments
- 20 week course: Each quarter will weigh 45% with a final exam or project weighing 10%.

Final exam score will be the student's choice of one of the following (or teacher's discretion when in the best interest of the students' overall final average for the course): 10% final exam score OR 10% Project grade.

Regents ending courses:

- Each quarter will weigh 22.5%
- Final Assessments may be calculated by taking 5% for the PBL and 5% for the Regents exam, or a student may elect to use the Regents exam as the entirety of the Final 10% of their grade. However, students may not use the PBL as the entirety of the 10% Final Assessment grade. This approach allows a student to mitigate the impact of their Regents on their course grade, while also respecting the weight and importance of the Regents exams.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Parents and students shall be provided a written report card 3 times per year for grades K-5, and 4 times per year for grades 6-12. Interim progress reports shall be available 4 times per year using our Learning Management System for grades 6-12 grade at the halfway point of each quarter. Printed interim progress reports will be provided upon request, though parents and students are encouraged to access grades in the Learning Management System often, using the format provided by their teachers in the course syllabus.

Teacher Expectations (minimum requirements)

- Teachers will provide a course syllabi to the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for approval, annually. This document will be due prior to the first day of school for students, with the only exception being the SY 2021-22. In this singular exception, the syllabi will be due on October 11th, 2021. This syllabi will include the following mandatory components:
 - o Syllabi will be provided to students (and by extension parents) on the first day of classes, and will be posted on the teacher's pages in the Learning Management System (LMS).
 - o Syllabi will provide an overview of the subject matter being taught.
 - o The grading breakdown for the subject; i.e. participation = 15%, formative assessments = 20%; quizzes = 200 points, tests = 400 points; etc.
 - o Any final exam or final project information, expectations, and implications.
 - o The teacher's resubmission policy.
 - o Mandatory and/or important dates for the subject/course.
 - o Teacher contact information; i.e. email, LMS pages, etc.

- o Class expectations, in terms of procedures. (Note: classroom rules should be developed in collaboration with the student body whenever possible).
- o Class materials needed to be successful in the course. (These should be limited to the actual needed materials only.)
- Teachers at grades 4 and above will encourage all students to utilize a planner to properly track their various assignments, and better ensure success in these assignments. We will also encourage planners for students as a 'tool' to assist in self-regulated organizational thinking, and best empower each student to attain self-efficacy and greater self-sufficiency and reliability.
- Teachers will provide timely feedback to students on assignments and progress within courses. The standard for this will be an update to gradebooks, bringing these current *at least every two weeks*, unless an assignment is deemed to have an exception to this expectation (e.g., Cross-curricular PBL assignments, Research Papers).
- No assignment in any subject where grades are calculated for a numerical score may weigh more than 20% in any given quarter,
- All gradebooks will include a variety of formative assessments and summative assessments.
- No grades lower than 50 will be permitted to be recorded for students for quarters 1, 2 & 3. 4th quarter will be allowed to record the students' raw quarterly score, even if below the previous minimum of 50. For semester long courses, the grade for the first quarter of that semester will be no lower than a 50. The second quarter of that semester the raw score will be allowed.

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Any allegations of plagiarism or cheating shall be investigated by the Building Principal or designee. Students found to have committed plagiarism, or to have been confirmed to have cheated on an assignment or assessment will automatically receive a 0 (zero) on the assignment in question. Determinations on these offenses will be made by the Building Principal, and where additional consideration is required, with consultation from the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. Any student found to have violated the rules for academic integrity will be found to be ineligible for Academic Recognition, as defined below for the duration of one marking period.

Academic Recognition

- **Merit List:**
 - o Based on students overall quarterly average (must be 85 or higher)
 - o If a student receives one or more grades below 65, or an incomplete for a course, they will not qualify for Merit List until the incomplete is satisfied. *This may mean that a student will not be included with the names for publication at the end of each quarter.*
- **Honor Roll:**
 - o Based on student's overall quarterly average (must be 90-94)
 - o No course grade can be below 80
 - o No standing incompletes

- **Principal's List:**
 - Based on student's overall quarterly average (must be 95-100)
 - No course grade can be below 85
 - No standing incompletes

Course Weighting for Advanced Classes

This component of the grading policy recognizes that at the secondary level, dual-enrollment courses (often referred to as college-level) or Advanced Placement courses resulting in the prospect of college level credit must follow the college's grading policy. Grade weighting, which is the upward adjustment of the numerical value of student grades, shall be used to reflect the academic achievements of students completing dual enrollment or Advanced Placement courses offered by the District. Only those dual enrollment or Advanced Placement courses offered by the District and taught by qualified teachers shall be considered for grade weighting. Because these courses are also authorized by a center for higher learning, such as a certified college or university or the College Boards, they are monitored, evaluated, and reviewed to ensure course consistency to college level and District academic standards.

Weighted Averages and Class Standing

The academic year final grade average will be determined using the following guidelines:

Dual enrollment or Advanced Placement courses, as defined above, will have a level weight factor of 1.10 when successfully completed. All other courses will have a level weight factor of 1.00. The actual grade earned by the student each marking period will appear on the report card. The weighting factor is only used to determine class rank where applicable.

Add/Drop Timelines

Students will be expected to remain enrolled in the courses that they have selected. The add/drop procedure will begin with the school counselors and ONLY the school counselors will make changes in student schedules.

If a schedule change needs to be made, students will have up to 10 school days after the beginning of the school year to drop or add any course.

After this date a Student Course Change Request form must be used and signed by the student, teacher, parent, administrator and finally the school counselor.

After 10 weeks have passed for a 1 credit course (3 weeks for a .5 credit course), along with the signed Course Change Request form, a parent meeting must be scheduled.

Attendance/Participation

Attendance alone cannot be a reason for a student to fail a course, as per NYSED.

Also, students should be evaluated objectively, and within reason. Grading schemes around participation should be well articulated and reflect a growth mindset. Grading schemes that cannot be justified through objective measures are not considered valid. Participation should count no more than 10% of a student's quarterly grade, though teachers may seek an exception

to this rule through the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. It is not required that teachers utilize participation in their course grading protocols.

Grading shall not be used for disciplinary purposes, although a lower grade can be given for failure to complete assigned work or for lack of class participation.

All students are expected to complete the assigned class work and homework as directed. Students are also expected to participate meaningfully in class discussions and activities in order to receive course credit. If work is missed due to an excused absence, the student is expected to make up the work. The student and/or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) should discuss with the student's teacher an appropriate means of making up for the missed work. Students will be provided with the opportunity and assistance to make up all work missed as a result of an excused absence from class.

Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, unexcused student absences, tardiness, and early departures will affect a student's grade, including credit for classroom participation, for the marking period.

Processing and Changing Student Grades

Grades are expected to be submitted in a continual fashion to be provided to parents on the Parent Portal or the Learning Management System (currently Schoology or Seesaw). Submission of grades in advance of the generation of quarter or interim reports will be open until a date set by the Building Principal, at which point the grading system will be closed and locked. Any submissions after that date must be accompanied by a written request. Grading systems will only be unlocked for enough time to allow the modification. Any extension to the date the system will be locked must be approved by the Building Principal.

While the professional judgment of the teacher shall be respected, it is understood that occasionally there may need to be an adjustment in grades after the term. Examples include, but are not limited to, reflecting additional assignments, correcting mistakes, or to accommodate student illnesses. Once a grade is assigned to a student by a teacher, the grade may only be changed by the Superintendent or designee after notification to the teacher of the reason for such change, or upon request of the teacher. All grade changes require supporting documentation, to be maintained in the system and in the student's record, including the name and title of the person making the request, the date of the request, and the specific reason(s) for the change.

The District's student management system will serve as a historic and official representation of the grades and credits earned. Grade changes and documentation will be filed in the student's permanent record folder.

Should an administrator enforce a grade change, he/she shall be prepared to report to the Superintendent of Schools and/or the Board.

All re-opening of the grading system and grade changes will be reviewed annually by the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment to ensure the process is being followed and there is no unusual or inappropriate activity.

There will be a limited number of personnel other than teachers who have access or permission to enter or change grades in the system This list includes: the Information Processing Specialist, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, and Building Principal.

The Superintendent or designee will develop regulations and procedures for adding users, establishing user's access rights (include, if applicable: override abilities); deactivating or modifying user accounts, granting user permissions, and monitoring user access to and activity within the system.

Access and permission will be reviewed annually to ensure that appropriate individual users have the correct permissions to perform the tasks required of them. Access and permissions will be compatible with roles or job duties. The access and permissions of people no longer employed by the District, or no longer in positions requiring access and permissions, will be removed, modified or deactivated immediately.

Cross References:

Policy No. 7110: Student Attendance
Code of Conduct

Effective August 17, 2021