



STUDENTS: Promotion and Retention

Grading and Reporting

I. Purpose

To align grading and reporting practices with the curriculum and assessments of Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) in order to accurately document and report student achievement.

II. Definitions

- A. *Body of Evidence* – A collection of aligned instructional tasks, such as assignments, assessments, homework, presentations, products, and observations, used to determine if a student has met identified curriculum goals.
- B. *Course Expectations* – Written statements of skills and knowledge the student should attain by the end of a middle or high school course and that have been made available to the student and the student’s parent.
- C. *Curriculum* – The specific blueprint for learning that is derived from content and performance standards.
- D. *Final Evaluation Activity* – An assessment administered at the end of a middle or high school course that:
 - 1. determines whether students understand and can apply what has been taught;
 - 2. provides students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge/skills on which they have had time to practice;
 - 3. is based on known criteria;
 - 4. focuses primarily on individual student performance;
 - 5. integrates important skills and knowledge;
 - 6. may take the form of examinations, papers, projects, and/or performance tasks such as discussion, recitation, simulation construction, movement, procedure, or application.
- E. *Grade-level Expectations* – Statements of skills and knowledge that elementary students should attain in a subject by the end of a grade; what an elementary student is expected to know and be able to do by the end of a grade level in a specific subject, as outlined in the grade/subject curriculum.

- F. *Interim Report* – A report issued at the midpoint of each marking period that reflects the academic progress of a student through the date of issuance.
- G. *Marking Period* – Approximately a nine-week period, or quarter, at the end of which individual student’s achievement of the concepts and skills taught during that period is reported.
- H. Parent – The biological or adoptive parent, legal guardian, or person acting in the absence of the parent or guardian.

III. Standards

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction shall develop procedures that ensure a consistent and fair process for evaluating, grading, and reporting student progress and that require the following:

- A. Meaningful feedback on student achievement to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the school system. This feedback should provide relevant information for instructional purposes.
- B. Alignment with BCPS curriculum.
- C. Consistent high expectations of all students across all courses and programs within and among schools.
- D. Objective reflection of student achievement compared to grade-level or course expectations outlined in the curriculum as demonstrated on a variety of measures over time.
- E. Opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of grade-level or course expectations outlined in the curriculum through a variety of methods addressing multiple learning styles.
- F. Clear and timely communication to parents and students of grading criteria, grading components, and student progress.
- G. Active participation in the teaching and learning process and the intellectual exchange that occurs in the classroom, which makes attendance an essential component of a quality educational experience.

- H. Summative assessments, as grade appropriate, which reflect a student's mastery of grade-level or course material.
- I. In all Schools:
 - 1. Students and parents will be informed at the beginning of the school year of grade-level and/or course expectations outlined in the curriculum of each course or unit and of the basis upon which student performance will be evaluated.
 - 2. Student grades will be based on the collected body of evidence.
 - 3. Teachers will use a variety of instructional approaches over time to create a body of evidence and monitor student learning of the BCPS curriculum.
 - 4. Student evaluation must reflect the developmental and individual differences of students.
 - 5. Student progress will be evaluated at various stages of instruction and reported in terms of the performance on multiple and varied assessment measures, corresponding with grade-level and course expectations outlined in the curriculum.
 - 6. Teachers will maintain accurate and precise records that support reported achievement.
 - 7. Students and parents will be informed about progress throughout the grading period and teachers are strongly encouraged to provide such information at frequent regular intervals.

IV. Evidence of Student Learning

- A. The Division of Curriculum and Instruction is responsible for developing curricula consistent with BCPS' policy and rule that establish grade-level expectations at the elementary level and course expectations at the middle and high school levels aligned with MSDE standards and assessments.
- B. Teachers will use a variety of assessment approaches over time to create a body of evidence and monitor student learning of BCPS curriculum. Student grades will be based up the body of evidence.
- C. The body of evidence may include assessment products such as unit assessments, end-of-course assessments, homework, assignments, presentations, products, observations, and/or performance tasks such as discussion, recitation, simulation, construction, movement, procedure, or demonstration of a skill.

V. Grades

- A. Grades must be based on individual mastery of skill and understanding.
- B. Grades for elementary content areas are based on evidence of the attainment of assigned grade-level or content expectations.
- C. Grades for middle and high school courses are based on evidence of attainment of course expectations.
- D. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) teachers, special educators, and general education teachers who provide instruction will collaboratively examine the body of evidence to determine a student's grade.
- E. Permissible grade symbols, scales, and procedures used for grades and grade reporting are set forth in the BCPS *Grading and Reporting Procedures*.

VI. Pre-Assessment, Formative Assessments, and Summative Assessments

- A. Pre-assessments are designed to determine what students know and can do in order to plan instruction.
 - 1. Pre-assessment scores are administered before instruction and may include teacher or system-designed assessments.
 - 2. Pre-assessments may be recorded but cannot be used in the body of evidence to determine a student's marking period or final grade.
- B. Formative assessments are learning checks or assessments used during the course of instruction that measure student progress and current levels of understanding in relation to the learning targets. Formative assessments are used by teachers to inform and guide subsequent instruction.
- C. Summative assessments are assessments used to evaluate student learning progress and achievement at the conclusion of a specific instructional period—usually at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year.

VII. Final Evaluation Activity

- A. Final evaluation activities are designed to measure student achievement of the course expectations.

- B. Teachers will follow the BCPS *Grading and Reporting Procedures* for the implementation of final evaluation activities.

VIII. Reporting Student Achievement

- A. Interim Reports
 - 1. An interim report shall be issued for students in Grades 1-12 at the midpoint of the marking period.
- B. Report Cards
 - 1. Report cards summarize evidence of student achievement collected throughout the marking period.
 - 2. Parents of students with individual education programs (IEP) will receive supplemental information on progress toward the attainment of IEP goals at the time report cards are issued, consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state regulation.
 - 3. Parents of English language learners will receive supplemental information on their student's performance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing based on expectations that are appropriate to their English language proficiency level.
 - 4. A report card will be distributed for students in Grades 1-12 each marking period.
 - 5. Instructional staff will follow the BCPS *Grading and Reporting Procedures* for the completion of report cards at the end of each marking period.

IX. Grade Change

After marking period grade has been determined, a grade change may be initiated by teachers in unusual cases in which, in their judgment, a course grade should be given which does not correspond to the grade generated using the computation shown in the *Grading and Reporting Procedures*. Principals must approve and sign all grade changes.

X. Computation of Class Rank

Quality points and class rank will be determined in accordance with the BCPS *Grading and Reporting Procedures*.

XI. Appeal

- A. All questions about a student’s grade should be directed first to the classroom teacher.
- B. If the matter remains unresolved, a student and/or his parent may file a complaint with the principal within 15 business days of the report card being issued, indicating the reason for the dispute and the remedy sought.
 - 1. The principal will evaluate the complaint and provide a written response within thirty (30) business days of receiving the complaint.
 - 2. With the exception as outlined in XI.C., the principal’s decision is final.
- C. A student and/or his parent may only appeal the principal’s decision for alleged violations of procedures or violations of a student’s due process. Otherwise, the principal’s decision in the matter is final.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. §1400, *et seq.*, *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*
COMAR 13A.05.01.09(B), *Report of Progress*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 0100, *Equity*
Board of Education Policy 5120, *Attendance and Excuses*
Board of Education Policy 5200, *Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration*
Board of Education Policy 5250, *Graduation Requirements*
Board of Education Policy 6500, *Research and Assessment*

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