



GOVERNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM AMPHITHEATER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10

DATE OF MEETING: **April 14, 2020**

TITLE: **Grading Plan for Students K-12 During School Closure**

BACKGROUND:

The statewide closure of schools for the entire 4th quarter of the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic was unprecedented and unexpected. Instead of returning from the Amphitheater Spring Break to the resumption of classes, district educators and students had to learn and shift to a completely different way to interact with one another so that learning could continue. Amphitheater teachers and staff are diligently working to provide our students with meaningful instruction during this unusual time. Of course, we must acknowledge that this new and temporary approach to the continuation of educational programs and services is far from “normal”. Teachers, staff, students and parents also are having to adapt to make the best of our new reality.

All students unique, individual learners, and their personal circumstances vary. As a consequence, we have had to vary and individualize the current instructional practices and methodologies that we are currently employing to address the unique needs and circumstances of our students. We have many students working entirely off-line, many on-line, and some who we have not heard from since the last day of the third quarter despite multiple efforts to contact their homes. In each respect, we are striving to ensure that our teachers and other educators have the support they need to provide students with meaningful learning opportunities which will enable each student to be successful.

One support our teachers have requested and clearly need is guidance and direction regarding the grading and assessment of student work and achievement during the fourth quarter of this school year. Over the course of the last two weeks, principals have obtained input and recommendations from instructional staff regarding the current instructional models and methodologies being utilized and the implications which these practices have with respect to assessment and grading. Principals, in turn, met with the Associate Superintendents of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop draft proposals for grading practices, which were then juried again with a sampling of teachers for additional input. While consideration was given to a broad survey of all teachers for final input on the recommendations which follow below, principals advised that our already burdened teachers would be further burdened by a requirement to participate in a survey, particularly given the fact that teacher input was obtained at the start of the development process.

Apart from the obvious differences between our “normal” functioning and that of our current reality and the implications of the same for grading practices generally, there are also distinct differences between elementary and secondary levels in terms of grading and reporting -- beginning with the needs of our early learners and ending with those graduating in May. As a result, the recommendations which follow below for this quarter and semester remainder differ between the two levels.

Recommendation for Elementary Education Grading and Reporting for Academic Quarter 4 of 2020:

- Feedback to students should be provided from teachers throughout the quarter, in whatever ways that are feasible, as work is submitted and/or on-line progress is made.
- No letter grades will be given for any subject in Grades Four and Five. This is a departure from our existing practice, where students in Grades Four and Five normally receive both standards-based and letter grades. The variances in student learning conditions (access to technology, etc.) make fair and consistent letter grading very difficult at this time.
- For students who were able to work on-line, a report on their accomplishments with the on-line curriculum will be provided to the parent with the 4th quarter report card.



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- The report card for fourth quarter will largely be in narrative format. The report card will include a general statement regarding the current situation:
 - *Schools were closed by the Governor for the 4th Quarter of 2020 due to a COVID-19 pandemic. Report cards for this quarter contain limited student progress information due to this crisis.*
- A brief teacher narrative will be written for each student.
- Teachers can choose to assign a standards-based grade to a particular standard on the report card if they believe they have enough data from either student on-line or off-line learning to support their decision. Grade levels at a particular school will decide as a team whether or not to include a standards-based grade. Assigning a standards-based grade is not required for this quarter.
- The standards based elementary report card form will be used. Teachers will enter their narrative, and any standards grades, in Tyler SIS.
- Art, music and physical education teachers will not be providing grades this quarter. They are providing activities and assignments for learning at home.

Recommendation for Secondary Education Grading and Reporting for Academic Quarter 4/Spring Semester of 2020:

- 3rd quarter grades will be used as a baseline for the remainder of the Spring Semester with the focus for secondary students being to maintain or improve from that baseline through their 4th quarter work.
- If a student does not complete work and/or participate in assigned activities, they *may* see their grade go down from the baseline.
- Students should email their teachers regarding any missing work from 3rd quarter that *might* still be accepted for grade improvement.

As also described above, we must understand that students and families may have unique circumstances that impact the ability of students to participate in online learning or other methodologies, and we will work with those students and families on an individual basis to address the implications of the same. We are all committed to helping students complete the year successfully.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Administration recommends that the Governing Board approve the implementation of grading practices described above.

INITIATED BY:

Dr. Roseanne López, Associate Superintendent for Elementary Education
Mike Bejarano, Associate Superintendent for Secondary Education

Date: April 10, 2020

Todd A. Jaeger, J.D., Superintendent