

BOARD AGENDA ITEM
September 27, 2016

SUBJECT:

Changes to Policy IKA Grading/Assessment Systems – Final Reading

BACKGROUND:

The District's present policy no longer conforms to the modified South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy nor does it sufficiently address the need for high school credit courses in middle school.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The State Department of Education recently modified the Uniform Grading Policy initiating a 10-point grading scale for all high school credit courses. The Instructional Services Division (ISD) involved stakeholders in exploring the need for expanding the 10-point grading scale to all middle and elementary school courses. The proposed policy includes the recommendation that the 10-point scale be used for all courses in grades one through twelve for which numerical grades are required.

The revision clarifies the availability of high school credit courses in middle schools by specifying the types of courses that qualify and the requirements for enrollment in those courses.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the proposed changes on final reading

ATTACHMENT:

Policy IKA Grading/Assessment Systems

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GRADING/ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Code **IKA** Issued **8/14**

Purpose: To establish a basic structure for assessment of student instruction.

Grading system

Student performance should be evaluated based on state grade-level standards, academic plans, IEPs, textbook and teacher-made tests, and other available methods. Student conduct will be excluded from consideration in determining a student's grade.

Provisions in this policy will supersede all other rules pertaining to class rank, course weightings, course levels and sections.

Grading scales

Kindergarten

In kindergarten a checklist reflecting academic achievement standards will be used each nine weeks.

Grades one through 12

In grades one through 12, numerical grades as specified will be used to report student progress for each reporting period. Report cards will reflect the academic achievement standards.

Numerical grades will be used on report cards, transcripts and permanent records in reading and mathematics for grade one. Numerical grades will be used in all subject areas for grades two through 12 except as noted in the following paragraphs.

- Meeting standards (MS), making progress towards standards (MPS) and not making progress towards standards (NMP) will be used in art, physical education and music in grades one through five. MS, MPS and NMP will be used in ELA, social studies and science in grade one and handwriting in grades one and two. Health will be included with science in grades one through five.
- In grades one through five, the ELA grade will be a composite of spelling, English and composition, with reading being a separate grade. In grades six, seven and eight, the ELA grade will be a composite of English, reading and composition.
 - A student promoted to the seventh or eighth grade may take units of ninth grade or higher work for high school credit. Courses receiving high school credit must be legitimate high school courses from the state course activity code manual and must reflect full coverage of the standards associated with the high school course. The high school courses offered in the middle school must be limited to core courses, career and technology education courses, and foreign language courses which are currently in the 9–12 Activity Coding System per Regulation 43-232 (B). A middle school may not use middle school courses with middle school standards to receive high school credit.
 - All middle school courses for which a student has received high school credit from an accredited public school (both in and out of district), will transfer with the student and must be transcribed to conform to the South Carolina uniform grading policy.

- Physical education and band will be excluded as high school credit course offerings at the middle level.

Eighth grade students qualifying for Honors Algebra I and/or Honors English I

For consistency across the district, the following criteria or combination of criteria should be used to determine a seventh or eighth grade student’s eligibility to take an Honors level core content course.

- 6th Grade State assessment score
- District Readiness Assessment
- Current 7th Grade Yearly Course Average in core content course
- teacher recommendation - may not be used as an excluding criterion

At the principal’s discretion, students not meeting the above criteria may be placed in Honors Algebra and/or Honors English I with a signed parent waiver form. The principal or his/her designee would accept the responsibility to monitor the student’s progress.

Conduct

Grades will not be used for conduct assessment. Student behavior may be reported as comments.

Letter grade/numerical grade

Letter grade	Numerical grade
A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	Below 60

State Uniform Grading Policy

Grades nine through 12

The state board of education adopted a uniform grading policy for South Carolina’s public schools in December 1999. That policy, which applied to all students who first enrolled in the ninth grade in the 2000-01 school year, was revised in 2007 and modified in 2016. The particulars of the state’s revised uniform grading policy are set forth in the pages that follow here.

The modified uniform grading scale and the system for calculating grade point averages (GPAs) and class rank were effective for all students in the 2016-2017 school year. Recalculations will be limited to the use of the three decimal-place conversion factors specified in the South Carolina uniform grading policy’s grade point conversion chart. Increased quality points for dual credit courses and full credit for dual credit courses will not be figured into recalculations.

Grade Point Conversion Chart 10 Point Grading Scale

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions

Numerical Average	Letter Grade	College Prep Weighting	Honors Weighting	AP/IB/Dual Credit Weighting
100	A	5.000	5.500	6.000
99	A	4.900	5.400	5.900
98	A	4.800	5.300	5.800
97	A	4.700	5.200	5.700
96	A	4.600	5.100	5.600
95	A	4.500	5.000	5.500
94	A	4.400	4.900	5.400
93	A	4.300	4.800	5.300
92	A	4.200	4.700	5.200
91	A	4.100	4.600	5.100
90	A	4.000	4.500	5.000
89	B	3.900	4.400	4.900
88	B	3.800	4.200	4.700
87	B	3.700	4.100	4.600
86	B	3.600	4.000	4.500
85	B	3.500	3.900	4.400
84	B	3.400	3.800	4.300
83	B	3.300	3.700	4.200
82	B	3.200	3.600	4.100
81	B	3.100	3.500	4.000
80	B	3.000	3.400	3.900
79	C	2.900	3.300	3.800
78	C	2.800	3.200	3.700
77	C	2.700	3.100	3.600
76	C	2.600	3.000	3.500
75	C	2.500	2.900	3.400
74	C	2.400	2.800	3.300
73	C	2.300	2.700	3.200
72	C	2.200	2.600	3.100
71	C	2.100	2.500	3.000
70	C	2.000	2.400	2.900
69	D	1.900	2.300	2.800
68	D	1.800	2.200	2.700
67	D	1.700	2.100	2.600
66	D	1.600	2.000	2.500
65	D	1.500	1.900	2.400
64	D	1.400	1.800	2.300
63	D	1.300	1.700	2.200
62	D	1.200	1.600	2.100
61	D	1.100	1.500	2.000
60	D	1.000	1.400	1.900
59	F	0.900	1.300	1.800
58	F	0.800	1.200	1.700
57	F	0.700	1.100	1.600

Computing Grade Point Averages

GPA's already earned by students will be recalculated on the basis of the revised policy's three-decimal-point scale.

All South Carolina public schools will use the following formula to compute all GPA's:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{sum (quality points x units)}}{\text{sum of units attempted}}$$

Computations will not be rounded to a higher number.

The establishment of criteria for determining honors graduates, including the valedictorian or salutatorian, is a local decision. Local boards may establish earlier cutoffs (e.g., the seventh semester of high school, the third nine weeks of the senior year) when ranking students for any local purpose. However, class rank for LIFE Scholarships is determined at the conclusion of the spring semester of the senior year.

STUDENT EXAMPLE

Course Taken	Numerical Average	Quality Points	Unit
English 1	91	4.100	1
Algebra 1	87	3.700	1
Physical Science	94	4.400	1
World Geography, Honors	83	3.300	1
Physical Education	92	4.200	1
French 1	84	3.400	1

Quality Points	Units			
4.100	x	1.0	=	4.100
3.700	x	1.0	=	3.700
4.400	x	1.0	=	4.400
3.300	x	1.0	=	3.300
4.200	x	1.0	=	4.000
3.400	x	1.0	=	3.400
sum of units attempted - 6.0		22.900 - sum of quality points x unit		

sum of quality points x units
divided by sum of units attempted

$$22.900 = 3.8166 \rightarrow \text{Student's GPA}$$

6.0

Courses carrying Carnegie units

The uniform grading scale and the system for calculating GPAs and class rank will apply to all courses carrying Carnegie units, including units earned at the middle school level.

All report cards and transcripts will use numerical grades for courses carrying Carnegie units. Transcripts and report cards will specify the course title and the level or type of course the student has taken (e.g., English 1, Algebra 2 honors, AP U.S. History). The grading scale must be printed on the report card.

Honors courses

Honors courses, which extend and deepen the opportunities provided by courses at the high school level, are designed for students exhibiting superior abilities in the particular content area. The honors curriculum places emphasis on critical and analytical thinking, rational decision-making, and inductive and deductive reasoning. The goal of this policy is to be rigorous and uniform while allowing for local decision-making.

School districts may designate honors courses and give the assigned weighting under the following conditions.

- An honors course must have a published syllabus that verifies rigor sufficiently beyond the College Preparatory (CP) requirements.
- Textbooks and other course materials must be differentiated and more rigorous than those used in CP courses.
- Honors courses may be offered in English, mathematics, science and social studies. Honors weighting may be designated in other content areas for the third and fourth level of the courses provided the two above standards are met.

Honors weighting may not be designated in any physical education courses.

One-half of a quality point (.5) is added to the CP weighting for honors courses that meet the three criteria listed above. These criteria apply to all courses, including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings and those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school accredited under the regulations of the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency: the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Northwest Association of Colleges and School (as specified in State Board Regulation 43-273, Transfers and Withdrawals).

Dual credit courses

Dual credit courses, whether they are taken at the school where the student is enrolled or at a post-secondary institution, are those courses for which the student has been granted permission by his/her home school to earn both Carnegie units and college credit for those particular courses.

One quality point is added to the CP weighting for dual credit courses that are applicable to baccalaureate degrees or to associate degrees offered by accredited institutions (see State Board of Education Regulation 43-234, Defined Program, Grades 9-12 and Regulation 43-259, Graduation Requirements).

College orientation courses offered by postsecondary institutions carry CP weighting and do not receive honors or dual credit quality points.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses

The following criteria apply to the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) courses and to International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings and those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school accredited under the regulations of the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency: the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Northwest Association of Colleges and School (as specified in State Board Regulation 43-273, Transfers and Withdrawals).

- Only AP or IB courses can be awarded a full quality point above the CP weighting. Seminar or support courses for AP or IB may be weighted as honors but not as AP or IB courses.
- An AP course can carry only *one* quality point.
- A standard-level (SL) IB course can carry only one quality point. However, two quality points of IB credit can be granted for higher-level (HL) courses in the IB program that require a minimum of 240 hours of instruction.

End-of-course examination program (EOCEP) courses and the credit recovery option

Students who are enrolled in courses requiring state end-of-course examinations must take the examinations and fulfill all requirements outlined in Regulation 43-262.4.

Students will be allowed to take the examination only *once*, at the end of the regular course duration and not at the end of an extended period granted through the credit recovery option.

Students who repeat the course must be treated as though they are taking the course for the first time and all requirements will apply.

Converting grades on transcripts

When transcripts are received from accredited out-of-state schools (or in-state from accredited sources other than the public schools) and numerical averages are provided, those averages must be used in transferring the grades to the student's record. If letter grades with no numerical averages are provided, this conversion will apply.

A = 95
B = 85
C = 75
D = 65
F = 51

If the transcript indicates that the student has earned a passing grade in any course in which he/she had a numerical average lower than 60, that average will be converted to a 63 numerical grade on the new scale (see State Board of Education Regulation 43-273 for complete information on transfers and withdrawals). The criteria for accepting transcripts from home schools are a local decision.

If the transcript shows that the student has earned a grade of P (passing), that grade will be converted to a numerical designation on the basis of information secured from the sending institution as to the appropriate numerical value of the P. If no numerical average can be obtained from the sending institution, the student's cumulative transfer GPA will be calculated and the corresponding number equivalent will be assigned to replace the P. (For example, if a student transfers with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 on the CP scale, the grade of P would be converted to an 85. A grade of P, in other words, will neither positively nor negatively impact the student's transfer GPA.)

Withdrawing from a course

With the first day of enrollment in the course as the baseline, students who withdraw from a course within three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course or 10 days in a 180-day course will do so without penalty.

Students who withdraw from a course after the specified time of three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course or 10 days in a 180-day course will be assigned a WF and the F (as a 51) will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average.

The three, five and 10-day limitations for withdrawing from a course without penalty do not apply to course or course level changes approved by the administration of a school. Withdrawal limitations for distance learning courses will be established by local districts.

Students who drop out of school or are expelled after the allowed period for withdrawal but before the end of the grading period will be assigned grades in accordance with the following policies.

- The student will receive a WP if he/she was passing the course. The grade of WP will carry no Carnegie units and no quality points to be factored into the student's GPA.
- The student will receive a WF if he/she was failing the course. The grade of WF will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 51.

If a student fails a course due to excessive absences, an FA will be recorded on his/her transcript. The grade of FA will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 51.

Retaking courses

Students in grades nine through twelve may retake a course at the same level of difficulty if they earned a D or F in that course. The student's record will reflect all courses taken and the grades earned.

The student may retake the course either during the current school year or during the next school year but no later than that second year. In addition, the student must retake the course before he/she has enrolled in the next sequential course (unless the student is granted approval by school administration to do so).

A student who has taken a course for a Carnegie unit prior to his/her ninth grade year may retake that course regardless of the grade earned. In such a case, only the retake grade will be used in figuring the student's GPA and only the retake attempt will show on the transcript. This rule will apply whether the retake grade is higher or lower than the grade previously earned by the student.

Adopted 6/10/75; Revised 5/24/83, 4/28/87, 12/12/88, 3/23/99, 5/9/00, 1/8/02, 9/23/08, 5/24/11, 2/26/13, 8/12/14

Legal references:

A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 59-18-310(B) - Development or adoption of statewide assessment program to measure student performance.
2. Section 59-18-320 - Review of field test; general administration of test; accommodations for students with disabilities; adoption of new standards.
3. Section 59-5-68 - Uniform grading scale.
4. Section 59-38-10 - South Carolina Education Bill of Rights for Children in Foster Care.

B. State Board of Education Regulations:

1. R43-262 - Assessment program.

2. R43-262.4 - End of course tests.
3. R43-274 - Student attendance.
4. R43-234 - Defined program, grades 9-12.