

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

October 26, 2021

SUBJECT:

Revision of Policy IKA Grading/Assessment Systems, First Reading

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Aiken County Public School District offers a uniform grading policy to provide guidance for schools. Policy IKA Grading/Assessments is based on the South Carolina State Board of Education's Uniform Grading Policy (UGP). The UGP was updated in May 2019.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

Administration recommends the revision of Policy IKA Grading/Assessment Systems to reflect the State Board of Education's (SBE) Uniform Grading Policy (UGP) May 2019. The UGP provides guidance for high schools related to grading for transcripts for colleges and universities and guidance on Credit Recovery and Content Recovery. Corrections were made to ensure alignment between the UGP and Board Policy as it relates to the calculation of grade point averages.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Policy IKA Grading/Assessment Systems, First Reading

ATTACHMENTS:

Policy IKA Grading/Assessment Systems, First Reading

PREPARED BY:

Jeanie Glover
Salvatore Minolfo

GRADING/ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Code IKA Issued 911/21

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, teacher's formative and summative assessment data, 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 English/language arts, 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.
 - MS = 100-80 (A-B)
 - MPS = 70-79 (C)
 - NMP = 69-0 (D-F)
- 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.

When approved by the principal and the parents, a student promoted to the seventh or eighth grade may take units of ninth grade or higher work for high school credit. The high school courses offered must be limited to courses that are currently in the 9-12 section of the *Activity Coding System for the Student Information System*, with the exception of physical education and health education courses. It is expected that students taking courses for high school credit have been taught and have mastered the middle school level standards prior to taking the courses for high school credit. A middle school may not use middle school courses with middle school standards to count for 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 health courses will be excluded as high school credit course offerings at the middle school level.

Middle school 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:

- multiple state assessment scores
- current 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/legal guardian waiver form.

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	60-79
F	Below 60

State Uniform Grading Policy

Grades nine through 12

The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted a Uniform Grading Policy (UGP) for South Carolina’s public schools in May 2019. That policy, which applied to all students who first enrolled in the ninth grade in the 2000-01 school year, was revised in 2007, 2016 (ten-point scale), 2017, and 2019.

The new uniform grading scale and the system for calculating grade point averages (GPAs) and class rank became effective for all students beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

The School District of Aiken County

The particulars of the state's revised Uniform Grading Policy, May 2019, are set forth in the pages that follow here. The Uniform Grading Policy for 2016 can be found at <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/uniform-grading-policy/>.

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions				
Numerical Average	Letter Grade	College Prep	Honors	AP/IB/Dual Credit
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	4.300	4.800
87	B	3.700	4.200	4.700
86	B	3.600	4.100	4.600
85	B	3.500	4.000	4.500
84	B	3.400	3.900	4.400
83	B	3.300	3.800	4.300
82	B	3.200	3.700	4.200
81	B	3.100	3.600	4.100
80	B	3.000	3.500	4.000
79	C	2.900	3.400	3.900
78	C	2.800	3.300	3.800
77	C	2.700	3.200	3.700
76	C	2.600	3.100	3.600
75	C	2.500	3.000	3.500
74	C	2.400	2.900	3.400
73	C	2.300	2.800	3.300
72	C	2.200	2.700	3.200
71	C	2.100	2.600	3.100
70	C	2.000	2.500	3.000

69	D	1.900	2.400	2.900
68	D	1.800	2.300	2.800
67	D	1.700	2.200	2.700
66	D	1.600	2.100	2.600
65	D	1.500	2.000	2.500
64	D	1.400	1.900	2.400
63	D	1.300	1.800	2.300
62	D	1.200	1.700	2.200
61	D	1.100	1.600	2.100
60	D	1.000	1.500	2.000
59	F	0.900	1.400	1.900
58	F	0.800	1.300	1.800
57	F	0.700	1.200	1.700
56	F	0.600	1.100	1.600
55	F	0.500	1.000	1.500
54	F	0.400	0.900	1.400
53	F	0.300	0.800	1.300
52	F	0.200	0.700	1.200
51	F	0.100	0.600	1.100
0-50	F	0.000	0.000	0.000
WF	F	0.000	0.000	0.000
WP	-	0.000	0.000	0.000

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 third decimal place.

Student example

Course Taken	Numerical Average	Quality Points Unit
English	91	4.100 1
Algebra	87	3.700 1
Physical Science	94	4.400 1
World Geography, Honors	83	3.800 1

Physical Education	92	4.200 1
French	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
3.800	x	1.0	=	3.800
4.200	x	1.0	=	4.000
3.400	x	1.0	=	3.400

sum of units attempted = 6.0 23.600 = sum of quality points x unit

sum of quality points x units 23.600 = 3.933 student's GPA

divided by sum of units attempted 6.0

Academic Honors

Students graduating early will be ranked as members of the senior class, but students must attend 8 semesters in a high school (grades 9 to 12) to qualify for the recognition of Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

To be recognized as Valedictorian or Salutatorian, students must be enrolled before the beginning of the (junior year or second semester of the junior year) or have four consecutive semesters at the awarding high school. The Valedictorian and Salutatorian designation will be determined at the conclusion of the 8th semester. The juniors who have the highest class rank at the end of the fifth semester will be recognized as Junior Marshalls.

School Enrollment

1200 or higher	20 Junior Marshalls
800-1199	15 Junior Marshalls
799 and below	10 Junior Marshalls

Graduation Honors for the 2018 and 2019 graduating classes will be:

Summa Cum Laude	GPA 4.5 or higher
Magna Cum Laude	GPA 4.0 - 4.4
Cum Laude	GPA 3.5 - 3.9

Graduation Honors beginning for the graduating class of 2020 will be:

Summa Cum Laude	GPA 4.8 or higher
Magna Cum Laude	GPA 4.4 - 4.7

The School District of Aiken County

Cum Laude

GPA 3.9 - 4.3

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 district may designate honors courses and give the assigned weighting under the following conditions as designated by the *SC Honors Framework*:

- There must be evidence that the honors-level course represents extension, acceleration, and enrichment of the South Carolina CP course of study. Curriculum should indicate depth in rigor, complexity, challenges, and creativity beyond the CP level course as outlined in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*.
- There must be evidence of appropriate differentiation in instructional practices for advanced learners that will enhance the delivery of instruction while strengthening the components outlined in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*.
- There must be evidence that purposeful assessment practices align with the honors level curriculum and instructional best practices include pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment.

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, as well as those courses receiving honors weight from in-state and out-of-state public schools accredited under the regulations under the Board of Education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency, even if the course is not offered at the receiving school State Board of Education [Regulation 43-273](#). Physical Education courses are not eligible to receive honors weight.

Students taking honors weighted courses through home school, private school, or out-of-state non-public charter schools will have the opportunity to provide evidence of to the receiving school to be evaluated using the *SC Honors Framework*. The receiving school will make the final decision on whether to award honors weighting.

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 written permission by his/her home school to earn both Carnegie units and college credit for those particular courses.

Dual credit courses that are applicable to baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees, or certification programs that lead to an industry credential offered by accredited institutions per established district articulation agreements will carry an additional weight of 1.0 quality point added to the college prep (CP) weight. (see State Board of Education [Regulation 43-234](#), Defined Program, Grades 9-12 and [Regulation 43-259](#), Graduation Requirements). Students can take coursework at the college level without having the course transcribed on the high school transcript by taking courses for concurrent enrollment credit instead of dual credit. Written permission should be obtained by his/her home school to participate in concurrent enrollment prior to beginning coursework at the college.

The high school will transcribe a numerical average of 0 to 100 when provided by the postsecondary institution for the purpose of recording a final grade on the high school transcript.

The School District of Aiken County

If the numerical average is not provided, the UGP conversion rule for other grades will be applied.

College remediation courses may not be taken for dual credit. College orientation courses offered by postsecondary institutions carry CP weighting.

When a student transfers from out of state, the weight applied at the sending institution according to that state's regulations will be applied on the transcript in accordance with the UGP.

Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certification of Education (AICE) Courses

The following criteria apply to the College Board's (AP) courses, high school (IB) courses, and high school AICE courses, including those offered online and in nontraditional settings, as well as those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school accredited under the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency:

- Only AP, IB, or AICE courses can be awarded a full quality point above the CP weighting. Seminar or support courses for AP, IB, or AICE may be weighted as honors but not as AP, IB, or AICE courses.
- An AP course can carry only one credit with the additional quality point above CP.
- An IB or AICE course with 120 hours of instruction can carry only one quality point weighting per course. A Higher Level IB (HL) or Advanced AICE (A) course requires a minimum of 240 hours of instruction (or two courses) and may also receive one quality point weighting per course (i.e. two weighted credits).

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 State Board of Education [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

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 high school units of credit with the exception of Credit Recovery courses, which are assigned a grade of P or NP. 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 current grading scale must be printed on the report card and all official 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, the following conversion will apply:

A = 95

B = 85

C = 75

D = 65

F = 50

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 P on the new scale (see State Board of Education [Regulation 43-273](#) for complete information on transfers and withdrawals).

The district will consider a student's transcript along with additional supporting evidence such as course syllabi, lesson plans, schedules, textbooks, or other instructional resources to validate course credits from homeschools.

For international students, the district will attempt to gather as much course information as possible from the sending school, including course syllabi, standards, end-of-course assessment results, or other instructional resources to determine the course credits that are the best match.

If the transcript shows that the student has earned a grade of P (passing) or F (failing), 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 or F. If no numerical average can be obtained for the P, an earned credit will be awarded and follow UGP Administrative Procedures for entering a P on the transcript. If no numerical average can be obtained from the sending institution on the F, an NP will be entered on the transcript.

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 50) will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average.

The three, five, and ten-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. Students who withdraw from a course with administrative approval will be given a WP for the course. Withdrawal limitations for distance learning, dual credit, and virtual courses are established in conjunction with partner institutions of higher education and VirtualSC enrollment and withdrawal deadlines.

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 50.

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 50.

The School District of Aiken County

Retaking Courses

Students may retake a course at the same level of difficulty if they earned a D, F, P, NP, WP, FA, or WF in that course. The student's record will reflect all courses taken and the grades earned. If the same level course is not accessible, the course may be retaken at a different level of rigor.

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 unit of high school credit prior to his or her ninth-grade year may retake that course regardless of the grade he or she has earned. A student who retakes a high school credit course from middle school must complete it before the beginning of the second year of high school.

Only the highest grade will be used in calculating the student's GPA. For all grade levels, all courses will remain on the transcript. If the course being retaken has an EOCEP, the EOCEP must be retaken.

Credit and Content Recovery

ACPSD is committed to providing meaningful and challenging experiences that enable students to achieve their academic and career goals through student-centered, personalized learning. In keeping with that commitment, the district offers interventions for students who have failed or are failing to achieve mastery in unit-bearing courses.

Credit Recovery shall be defined as a course-specific, skill-based learning opportunity for students who have previously failed to master content or skills required to receive credit in a unit-bearing course. The term "Credit Recovery" refers to a block of instruction that is less than the entirety of the course. Credit Recovery targets specific course components or academic standards the student must master to achieve overall proficiency in the course. Credit Recovery shall be governed by the following guidelines:

- Students must follow all requirements for Credit Recovery outlined in the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy. <http://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/uniform-grading-policy/> If a student passes the credit recovery course with a 60 or higher, the passing grade is entered as a "P" as the final grade and transcribed to the numerical grade value of "0". Thus, the credit recovery course does not impact the student's GPA. If a student fails the credit recovery course, the failing grade is entered as an "NP" as the final grade and transcribed to the numerical grade value of "0". The initial course attempt remains on the transcript and counts in the cumulative GPA. A student wishing to modify his or her GPA shall repeat the full course for credit and not seek a credit recovery solution.
- Students must complete an application and obtain the consent of their parent/guardian to participate in Credit Recovery.
- A student, grades 9 through 12, who has failed a course with a minimum of a 50 is eligible to enroll in Credit Recovery. Principals may waive the minimum grade requirement in special circumstances. Students may recover credit from a prerequisite course while enrolled in a next level course, where applicable.
- Students may enroll in a maximum of two (2) Credit Recovery courses at a time. Principals may waive this requirement for seniors needing additional credits to graduate.

- Students must complete the Credit Recovery course within one school year following the initial attempt.
- Students enrolled in Credit Recovery courses must complete the course within the semester of enrollment. Deadlines are determined by the program in which the student is enrolled.
- Seniors enrolled in Credit Recovery courses during a summer session must complete the course as outlined by the State UGP to receive course credit for the past academic year. All other students may extend as outlined by the State UGP; the course credit will be recorded in the next academic year.
- Students who have failed a course with an FA (failure for attendance) do not qualify for Credit Recovery. Students who are currently enrolled in a course with excessive absences may demonstrate proficiency in Unit Recovery for Mastery or Semester Recovery for Content.
- Student athletes should be aware that Credit Recovery programs are not approved by the NCAA Clearinghouse; collegiate eligibility may be in jeopardy, if coursework is completed in a Credit Recovery program. It is recommended that student athletes take initial credit courses to meet NCAA Regulations.
- Credit Recovery curricula for all courses shall be based on the South Carolina Academic Standards. The curricula is aligned across courses within the school district.
- All Credit Recovery courses will be supported by certified and highly qualified teachers in the respective content areas. The district will regularly evaluate the instructional materials and methodology used for Credit Recovery to ensure their alignment with the South Carolina Academic Standards.
- The district will provide annual professional development for administrators, counselors, teachers, and facilitators involved in the Credit Recovery Program.
- Credit Recovery options will be available through either an approved system provided by the State Virtual Program or an approved vendor.

Content Recovery shall be defined as a course-specific, skill-based learning opportunity for students who are enrolled in a course with the original teacher of record assigned by the school. ACPSD provides two types of Content Recovery: Unit Recovery for Mastery and Semester Recovery for Content.

Content Recovery shall be governed by the following guidelines:

- Students enrolled in Carnegie unit bearing courses, grades 7 - 12, who have failed a full grading period (Q1, Q2, Q3) in one or more content area courses are eligible to participate in Content Recovery.
- Students shall be eligible to enroll in Content Recovery if the semester/quarter grade is 59 or below and they are actively enrolled in the course for which they are recovering content.
- The number of Content Recovery opportunities available to students during the academic year shall not be limited.
- Content Recovery options will be available through either an approved system provided by the State Virtual Program or an approved vendor.

- The district will provide information, training, and support to ensure that students, faculty, and parents are aware of Content Recovery opportunities.
- Content Recovery during the regular school day will be available to students at no cost.

Unit Recovery for Mastery allows students to recover no more than a quarter of the course at a time, including one or more units of study and/or supplemental assignments/activities assigned and approved by a certified teacher, as needed for student mastery of course content.

- Students will work for a mastery grade of 60 within the assigned units.
- Student will have four weeks from the date of enrollment to complete Unit Recovery for Mastery. The school administrator or designee can re-evaluate the need for extended time.

Semester Recovery for Content allows students to re-take the entire first semester of content in a virtual setting while simultaneously continuing in second semester with the original teacher of record by the school.

- Students will work on all semester one content and the semester one grade will be replaced with the earned grade.
- Students will complete the coursework within the second semester, with deadlines determined by the program enrolled.

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, 8/23/16, 5/8/18, 5/14/19, 9/28/21, 11/9/21

Legal references:

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

[Section 59-5-68](#) - Uniform grading scale.

[Section 59-18-310\(B\)](#) - Development or adoption of statewide assessment program to measure student performance.

[Section 59-18-320](#) - Review of field test; general administration of test; accommodations for students with disabilities; adoption of new standards.

[Section 59-38-10](#) - South Carolina Education Bill of Rights for Children in Foster Care.

State Department of Education Regulations.

[R43-232](#) - Defined program grades 6-8.

[R43-234](#) - Defined program grades 9-12 and graduation requirements.

[R43-262](#) - Assessment program.

[R43-274](#) - Student attendance.

[R43-273](#) - Transfers and withdrawals.