

POLICY

BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

GRADING AND REPORTING

I. Purpose

The Board is committed to maintaining rigorous performance and achievement standards for all students and to providing a fair process for evaluating and reporting student progress that is understandable to students and their parents/guardians and relevant for instructional purposes.

II. Definitions

- A. *Grade* – *Grades* represent a student’s performance based on course of study expectations. Performance is based upon, but not limited to, assessments, classwork, homework, and participation.
- B. *Grade Point Average (GPA)* – The numerical representation of a grade measuring a student’s overall performance across courses taken for a specific period of time.
- C. *Marking period* – A segment of the school year during which instruction is delivered, student progress is monitored, and grades are given.
- D. *Report card* – A document that records the student’s grades, attendance, and other information.

III. Policy Standards

- A. It is the belief of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners (Board) and Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) that all students can learn, that every member of the City Schools community is responsible for student outcomes, that our work at the district is to empower, and that families and communities are essential partners to students’ success. City Schools acknowledges that student performance can be demonstrated through a variety of methods. City Schools acknowledges that each student’s learning journey is unique. Thus, our grading policy must remain flexible enough to support the diversity of student experiences in our district while adhering to City Schools’ expectations of achievement.

- B. In Baltimore, schools are empowered to make decisions for their students because we believe that school leaders, teachers, and other members of school communities know best what students need to succeed. At the same time, we are one school district, committed to high standards and the provision of a rigorous and engaging education for every student. Therefore, the Board's Grading and Reporting policy is rooted in its belief in autonomy bounded by common standards that guide excellence.
- C. The Grading and Reporting policy outlines City Schools' philosophy towards grading. It is grounded in instructional best practices and is a guideline for fair and consistent grading. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will issue an administrative regulation and the CEO/designee will also issue implementation guidance on Grading and Reporting which will provide greater specificity for schools. The administrative regulation or guidance shall include the grade change process. Schools are responsible for reviewing the district-level policy and administrative regulation and developing their own school-based grading practices that fit within the district framework.
- D. City Schools' district office and school-based personnel have a joint responsibility to proactively and accessibly communicate grades to students and parents. This includes but is not limited to supporting all district stakeholders in leveraging district-supported technology for this purpose. The Board believes that additional efforts should be taken to communicate grades to students and parents when students are not performing at a satisfactory level.

IV. Implementation Strategies

A. Evaluating Student Achievement

- 1. Schools will determine, within district guidelines, the components that make up a grade, and may assign a weight or range to the various components. Teachers in secondary grades will develop a written syllabus for each course to be distributed on the first day of class and use as a guide throughout the course. Syllabi should include the means by which students may improve grades and/or recover from failing grades.

B. Recording and Reporting of Grades

- 1. Grades will be recorded for each subject. Teachers will grade students' performance which may include classwork, homework, and assessments, as well as their participation in the classroom. Assessments may include traditional tests, projects, and other tasks that allow students to demonstrate mastery. Teachers may use letters, numbers, or other symbols on individual tasks/assessments to indicate what a student knows and can do.

2. Timely upkeep of grades is important to inform student progress for teachers, parents and students. The CEO's administrative regulation or implementation guidance shall outline the frequency by which teachers will record grades using City Schools' online grade book of record. These guidelines may differ by content area and course-meeting frequency. Grades will be available online to students and parents.
3. Interim progress reports will be sent out at the mid-point of each marking period in grades Kindergarten through 12. These reports will provide students and parents with information on the student's achievement and progress on course of study expectations to that point.
4. Parents and students will receive notification of grades via report cards which will be issued upon the conclusion of the marking period. Effort must be made to provide translated versions and assistance to help non-English proficient parents understand the report cards.

C. School-based Grading Practices

1. Each school is required to develop its own grading practices. School-based grading practices must be implemented within the City Schools' framework set forth by the administrative regulation on Grading and Reporting issued by the CEO's office (IKA-RA). Schools will review the districtwide policy and administrative regulation and develop further procedures or requirements to enable their students to succeed. The district office encourages schools to have consistent grading practices within each academic department including how the various components of a grade will be weighted. Schools are expected to make their grading practices public.
2. In developing its own grading practice, schools must follow these guidelines:
 - a. Schools may have more rigorous requirements than the district; however, the district administrative regulation is to be upheld as the minimum standard.
 - b. Schools must communicate their grading practice to their school's stakeholders and provide their grading practice annually to the district office.
 - c. Schools must align with the district's calculation of students' GPA.
 - d. All schools must align with the district-wide formula for calculating final grades.
 - e. The CEO/designee retains the authority to review and require any changes s/he deems necessary to any school-based grading practice.

D. Students with Disabilities and English Learners

The Board and City Schools are committed to providing equal opportunity to all students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners. The CEO, through the Grading and Reporting administrative regulation and guidance documents shall issue requirements for grading and reporting that may be necessary for students with disabilities and English Language Learners in compliance with federal and state statutes, rules and regulations.

V. Legal and Policy References

A. Policy References

Related Board Policies: IKEA; IKEB

B. Administrative Regulation References

IKA-RA; IKEA-RA IKEB-RA

Sponsoring Officer: Chief Academic Officer

Policy History: New Policy, Adopted June 28, 2011; Revised May 14, 2019