

Dear Dr. Sally K. Ride Community,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the Grading and Reporting Policy. Grading and reporting is standards based, aligned with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) curriculum, and are an accurate reflection of student achievement compared to grade level or course expectations. The purpose of the Grading and Reporting Policy is to maintain rigorous performance and achievement for all students and to provide a fair process for evaluating and reporting student progress that is understandable to students and their parents and relevant for instructional purposes.

Student achievement depends on the interaction between teachers and students as they engage in the day-to-day efforts of teaching and learning. Grades are an essential way to communicate student progress. Teachers will determine student grades based on performance in two categories: formative assessments and summative assessments. Formative assessments are on-going assessments, reviews, and observations in a classroom. Teachers use formative assessments to improve instructional methods and to provide students with feedback throughout the teaching and learning process. Summative assessments are typically used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs at a pre-determined time or at the end of an academic course. Summative evaluations are used to determine if students have mastered specific competencies and to identify instructional areas that need additional attention. Summative assessments might include the following: End-of-course or semester exams, assessments that end an instructional unit or period of study, final research papers, reports, or essays and culminating projects or performances.

Art, Music and Physical Education grades are based on the student's ability to demonstrate knowledge or skill via performance tasks. In first, second and third grade the curriculum contains Essential Learnings and corresponding rubrics to assess student's performance on the Essential Learnings. In Kindergarten, fourth and fifth grade the curriculum contains learning objectives and student's grades are also based on their ability to demonstrate knowledge or skills via performance tasks. Assessments may include the following: Paper pencil assessment, culminating project, demonstrations, movement and/or performances.

Re-teaching occurs when teachers determine that students are not meeting learning goals. The teacher determines the method and schedule for re-teaching. Teachers provide one reassessment opportunity per task/assessment. Students may be assessed partially, entirely or in a different format as determined by the teacher. The reassessment grade replaces the original grade.

Participation and effort are not included in academic grades. Participation and effort will be reflected in a separate section of the report card in the learning skills area. Class work completed for practice and will not be graded, will contribute to learning skills grades. Teachers in Kindergarten through 5th grade will continue to report other important

information about a student's effort and behavior as Learning Skills separately from the academic grade.

All teachers distribute interim reports at the mid-point of each marking period. Teachers notify parents in the interim reports if a student is in danger of failing or dropping more than one letter grade. Also, starting in the 2009-2010 school year, work that is graded for report card purposes (often called data points) will be sent home in a Thursday folder for all grade levels. Attached to this letter you will find a document entitled, *Frequently Asked Questions*, and a *flowchart* to assist you in effectively communicating with staff. Please review this information and keep it in a safe place to reference during the school year.

The Grading and Reporting Policy will be reviewed at Back to School Night. Please bring your questions and comments with you that night. Also, at Back-to-School Night, teachers will give you specific information about grading in their classrooms. During the year, we will continue to communicate with you about student performance in many ways. Teachers will use report cards, conferences, progress reports, phone calls, e-mail, and/or notes home to keep you up-to-date on your child's performance in school.

The expectation is that teachers provide regular and frequent updates to parents and students about learning skills, progress, and achievement. As we move forward, we encourage you to continue to talk to your child's teachers about any specific questions you have about your child's grades.

Sincerely,

Christopher Wynne
Principal

Nichola Wallen
Assistant Principal

Attachment