

K-12 ASSESSMENT AND GRADING COMMON GUIDELINES

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) philosophy regarding assessment and grading is based on teachers' collective belief of a growth mindset. Students master concepts and skills in different ways and at different rates. Teachers are responsible for developing instructional plans based on frequent and varied assessments. Grades shall not reflect behavior, but rather, a student's mastery of content or competencies of the curriculum.

A. Formative Assessment is assessment for learning that occurs during the learning process and is designed to guide next steps toward mastery. The goal of formative assessments is to monitor learning, provide feedback, and set goals to move learning forward. Information gathered during formative assessment is used to inform next steps in instruction. Formative assessments will not be used to determine final grades.

1. Formative feedback informs the learner, teacher, and parents/guardians about progress toward mastery of the concept or skill.

2. At least one formal formative assessment must precede each summative assessment and be recorded in the gradebook. Formative assessments are not included in the overall quarter grade. (See HW Section)

3. All feedback should be specific, timely, clear, consistent, and actionable.

4. Formative assessment data must be used by teachers to identify areas of student strength and student growth. Teachers will use this data to adjust instruction accordingly.

B. Summative Assessment is assessment of learning that occurs at the end of a learning cycle and is designed to determine a student's level of mastery of specified content or competencies. Summative assessments become the source of information for grading.

1. Individual major summative assessments should range between 10-20% of the quarter grade. The total of major summative grades must represent at least 80% of the total final grade for the quarter.

2. Each major summative assessment must include a formal formative assessment that provides specific feedback and is documented in the gradebook.

3. A summative assessment less than 10% of the quarter grade is not considered major.

4. If a student has made reasonable effort (concerted attempt to complete the assessment) to complete a summative assessment, a grade of no lower than 50% will be assigned in order to provide the student an opportunity to recover from the grade.

5. Teachers, in consultation with student support teams and parents, will provide students who demonstrate a pattern of repeated late or missing work an appropriate intervention, including assigning a grade of less than 50%.

6. Grade level and curriculum teams should create common summative assessments that are aligned to a common unit of standards.

C. Gradebook and Grading Timeline. Teachers must include the following categories in their gradebook: formal formative assessments (not for grading), minor summative assessments, major summative assessments, and extra credit (optional).

1. If pre-determined by the CLT or department, the gradebook may include extra credit (cannot exceed 3% of the quarter grade) and must be based on accuracy and content.

2. Individual Assessment - students who make reasonable effort to complete a summative assessment cannot receive lower than a 50%.

3. Individual Assessment - teachers, in consultation with student support teams and parents, will provide students who demonstrate a pattern of repeated late or missing work with an appropriate intervention, including assigning a grade less than a 50%. Interventions must be documented in the gradebook.

4. Quarter Grade - students must receive at least 50% for quarters 1, 2, & 3 in all high school courses and all quarters in middle school courses.

5. There are no cumulative midterm or final exams.

6. Teachers must record in the gradebook and provide feedback to students on all assessments within 6 consecutive school days from the date the assignment is collected.

D. Reassessments encourage a growth mindset in students and allow them to demonstrate mastery.

1. Teachers will provide the opportunity for reassessment of major summative assessments to students who score below an 80%, and remediation may be required prior to reassessment.

2. Teachers cannot average the scores from the original assessment and the reassessment. The reassessment grade must not exceed 80%. A note must be added to the gradebook documenting the original score and the retake score.

3. The reassessment must take place within 6 consecutive school days after the student receives feedback from the original assessment and remediation.

4. The format of the reassessment does not need to mirror the format of the original assessment.

5. The reassessment may be limited to the standards not mastered by the student.

6. Teachers should utilize the resources available to them such as their school systems of support when encouraging students to take advantage of the reassessment process.

7. Reassessment practices must be consistent school-wide.

E. Homework is a natural extension of the school day and is considered to be practice. Thus, it is used for formative feedback.

1. In limited cases, teachers may assign long-term assignments such as reports and projects that are completed outside the classroom, and they may be considered summative assessments and are therefore graded. When used as a summative assessment, the total of homework assignments cannot cumulatively equal more than 10% of the final quarter grade.

2. If homework is to be used as a summative assessment, at least one formative assessment must precede this grade and it must be graded for accuracy not completion.

3. Any homework assigned to students must be something the students are able to complete successfully on their own in a reasonable amount of time.

- a. For elementary students in grades 1-3, students should spend no more than 30 minutes daily on homework. For students in grades 4-5, students should spend no more than sixty (60) minutes daily on homework.
- b. For middle and high school students, the time students spend on homework will reflect the expectations and level of the course. For example, Honors, Dual Enrollment, and Advanced Placement courses will require more time.

F. Late Work. It is important that teachers accept late work to document learning and inform instruction. Reasonable and consistent guidelines for accepting late work must be set and communicated to students. Flexible deadlines may be required for submitting late work.

1. If a student has made a reasonable effort to complete any summative assessment, a grade of no lower than 50% will be assigned in order to provide the student an opportunity to recover from the grade. It is important that students feel there is an opportunity for students to succeed and learn.

2. Teachers, in consultation with student support teams and parents, will provide students who demonstrate a pattern of repeated late or missing work with an appropriate intervention, including assigning a grade less than 50%.

G. Academic Dishonesty. Students are expected to perform honestly on schoolwork and tests.

1. If dishonesty is determined, students must complete an alternative summative assessment to demonstrate their learning within 6 consecutive school days after the student received the feedback.

2. Teachers working with one or more of the following parties (parents, student, counselor, or administrator) will create an academic Recovery Plan. It may include a parent-teacher conference, retaking the assessment, an alternative assessment, a lowering of the grade, or receiving a failing grade.

3. Teachers should clearly define expectations regarding collaborative and independent work, reinforce behavioral expectations regarding dishonesty in assigned work, provide feedback throughout the learning process or the assignment timeline, and take reasonable action to maintain assessment and test security.

H. Extra Credit is a CLT or department choice and must be connected to the course content curriculum and specific learning goals.

1. If extra credit is assigned by a CLT or department, it must be available to all students.

2. Extra credit cannot cumulatively exceed 3% of the quarter grade and should be content-related and assessed for accuracy.

I. Dual Enrollment (DE) Courses must meet the unique grading, assessment, and withdrawal policies as specified by the accrediting college or university.

1. Teachers and counselors should inform parents and students of the accrediting college or university policies before and during the course selection process.

2. Teachers of DE courses must provide a course syllabus with assessment, grading, and withdrawal guidelines to all students and their parents at the beginning of each semester.

3. As a reminder, Advanced Placement (AP) courses are LCPS courses and must comply with LCPS assessment and grading policy and guidelines.