

ACADEMICS

Postville Jr./Sr. High School Grading & Reporting Guidelines and Practices

The Postville Community School District's grading and reporting policies and practices are intended to improve consistency in measuring student learning in academic grading among teachers and subject areas for grades 7-12 focusing on student's achievement. The primary purpose of a grade is to communicate the learning progress of students for grades 7 – 12.

In order to realize these goals, the grading and reporting system must:

- Reflect academic achievement
- Contain meaningful feedback
- Be honest, fair, transparent, credible, meaningful and user friendly
- Be criterion referenced (What students will be able to know, understand, and do.)
- Align with the Postville Community School District's curriculum (standards/benchmarks/Learning Goals)
- Reflect consistency within and among courses, grade levels, departments and schools

The new grading guidelines use a uniform percentage grading scale and place greater weight on final products of learning in calculating the grade with less weight on the academic practice involved in learning.

Definitions

Academic Practice (formative): work conducted when a student is still learning the material. These are assessments that are designed to provide feedback and direction for both students and teachers. For the students, the adjustment may mean review of material, additional practice, or confirmation that they are ready to move forward. For the teachers, it may mean changing instructional strategies, providing additional practice, or being ready to move forward (e.g. teacher observation, practice tests or checkpoints, daily work, rough drafts, peer editing, notebook checks, etc.)

Academic Achievement (summative): work conducted when a student has had adequate instruction and practice to be responsible for the material. It is designed to provide information to be used in making a judgment about a student's achievement at the end of a sequence of instruction, (e.g. final speech/research paper/project, tests, exams, performance assessments, semester test, etc.).

Assessment Guidelines

1. Teachers will assess student learning in a variety of ways within a grading period.
2. Within JMC, these are the categories in which assessments will be categorized: Academic Achievement (Summative), Semester Test (high school), and Academic Practice (Formative).

-Middle School

Academic Achievement (summative) will be 75% of the semester grade.

Academic Practice (formative) will be 25% of the semester grade.

-High School

Academic Achievement (summative) will be 80% of the semester grade.

Academic Practice (formative) will be 20% of the semester grade.

3. **Number of Academic Achievement opportunities:**

Middle School:

For each semester, there will be a minimum of 3 assessments in the Academic Achievement category (summative).

High School:

For each semester, there will be a minimum of 4 assessments (not including the semester final) in the Academic Achievement category (summative).

4. Teachers who teach the same course will use the same number of Common Academic assessments.

5. **Second Chance Testing:** A second opportunity to retest will be available for all students. The second test may not be the exact same as the original test.

When requesting a retake, the student will be required to document what additional learning is needed before they take the test. Students are not permitted to simply show up for a test retake and hope for a better result. The teacher may require the student to complete additional practice, attend a tutoring session, complete another activity or complete any previously assigned daily work.

The higher of the two scores is placed into the grade book (not the average of the two scores.)

6. If the scores on assessments are generally low, a teacher should not simply add points onto the grade for all students. The practice of using the top student score as the maximum for points possible (i.e. 100 point test and the top score is 88; therefore, the test is taken out of 88) is not an acceptable practice.

General Procedures

1. To better prepare students for each Academic Achievement Assessment (summative test), teachers will begin each class with a review of the learning targets (incorporating homework), today's targets to be learned, provide students with engaging learning instructional activities, and conclude each class with a review of the essential learning from that day.
2. All grading and reporting should be based on the standards and be criterion-referenced—not using any type of grade curve.

3. **Course grades** will reflect the level of the student's academic achievement.

While non-academic factors may be highly valued and often contribute to the student's achievement, they should not be included in the student's grade.

The following are examples of non-academic factors and may not be included in the course grade: behavior, attendance, attitude, punctuality, effort, ability, improvement, or participation, (certain class participation such as PE, music, Art are exempt); daily work based solely on completion (i.e. there must be some assessment of the student's work.)

4. **Homework or daily work** is considered practice that is necessary to achieve the targeted student learning goals. It should be focused, meaningful, and completion time should be enough to learn the expected outcomes. It should provide immediate feedback to students about their learning.

5. Late work:

Academic Practice (Formative):

Includes all daily work, homework, checkpoints, practice tests, etc. These are to be completed by the due date. Students will have 5 instructional days from assigned due date to complete the learning activity without loss of points. However, work not turned in on the date due will be recorded as Missing (MI), which reflects in the grade book as a zero.

At the teacher's discretion, late work may be accepted up until the day of the final test and/or the end of quarter.

Academic practice accepted after the 5 days may be subjected to a maximum of 10% deduction.

Any additional days are at the discretion of the teacher.

All work must be completed before Second Chance Testing is to be given.

Academic Achievement (Summative)

Includes a test, exam, final research paper, final class project, final speech, etc. Students are expected to take the assessment on the date scheduled by the teacher. Any student who misses the Academic Achievement assessment must complete it without penalty. **Not taking an assessment is not an option.**

If the student has not completed all summative assessments for the semester, the teacher may assign a course grade of incomplete. A course grade of incomplete must have the Principal's written approval. The students will have 10 school days after the end of the semester to complete course requirements.

6. Extra credit for students will not be available. Students are expected to complete all Academic Practice and Academic Achievement assessments. Students also have Second Chance Testing available.

At a teacher's discretion, bonus points may be included in a specific Academic Achievement Common Assessment grade (tests, final projects, final research paper, semester test, etc.) and should be related to the academic content standards being evaluated in a given class.

Bonus points cannot affect more than 5% of the grade on a given assessment. These rigorous questions shall be related to the standards of a course.

7. High school Semester tests are required for all courses. Teachers who teach the same course will give a final common semester assessment that represents the essential learning of the course. Example assessments may include, but are not limited to: a final oral presentation, an in-class essay, short answer questions, or multiple-choice assessments. All high school students are required to complete all semester tests for the courses enrolled.

8. Grade Updates:

Grade updates will be done 4 times each semester. This may or may not include Mid-Term Grades

These grade updates are provided to students/parents on the JMC Parent Portal available from our school website.

9. The District Grade Scale is used for all classes:

99-100=A+ No higher than a 4.0

93-98 = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

67-69 = D+

63-66 = D

60-62 = D-

00-59 = F

For courses designed as Pass/Fail

P = Passing

F = Failing

10. At the end of the semester, teachers are expected to assign the most appropriate grade, based on the body of evidence of the student's academic achievement.

Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

Under Iowa law students must be enrolled in classes and passing all of them at the grading period, or meeting the goals of their IEP to participate in extracurricular activities

Adding/Dropping Courses

A course may be dropped anytime during the first three days of the any semester, except for classes scheduled for two semesters. Student dropping during this grace period would be dropped without failure. Students must maintain the minimum academic load.