

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

The Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Division of the Richmond County School System shall devise a grading system, which shall be used to report student progress toward academic standards to parents/guardians and to record this progress in each student's educational record.

The administration is also authorized to establish differentiated quality points based upon the academic demands of specified high school courses.

PROCEDURE:

In 2015-16, this rule will apply to all students in grades K-10. In 2016-17, to all students K-11 and 2017-18, all K-12 students.

The following grading systems shall be used in the District:

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. Assignment of Grades:

While the Richmond County School System's grading system has been developed cooperatively between the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Division and local school educators, the final evaluation of students and the assignment of grades is the responsibility of teachers and school administrators. The following guidelines shall be followed in the calculation of grades:

a. Courses with state-required end-of-course Georgia Milestone assessments will count this test as the only comprehensive final exam and must calculate the score as 20% of the final grade.

b. Grade Changes:

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.20, no classroom teacher shall be required, coerced, intimidated, or disciplined in order to change the grade of a student. This Rule shall not apply when a teacher has failed to comply with the grading Policies or Procedures adopted by the System or written procedures established by a school within the Richmond County School System that are applicable to the grading process unless such a Policy, Rule, or Procedure would require a student be given a grade different than the actual grade achieved. Under these circumstances a teacher may be disciplined.

Nothing in this Rule shall be construed to prevent a principal or other school administrator from discussing the grade of a student with a classroom teacher. Further, this Rule shall not be construed to prevent a central office administrator, Superintendent, or other System administrator from changing a student's grade. Any grade change made by a person other than the classroom teacher must be clearly indicated

in the student's school records and must indicate the person responsible for making such grade change.

2. Late Enrollment:

Students enrolling in the System when two weeks or less remain in the evaluation period shall receive evaluation marks based on the transcript from the sending school. Parents/guardians shall be notified of this procedure.

3. Notification of Failure:

The Principal shall follow the established system procedures requiring parent/guardian notification prior to a student's receiving a failing grade as a final grade for an evaluation period.

4. Accommodations/Modifications:

a. Accommodations are changes in instruction that enable students to demonstrate their classroom abilities. They provide equity, not advantage. Appropriate accommodations for disabled students do not reduce or lower the standards or expectations for content and do not invalidate assessment results. Therefore, students with accommodations may earn the same credit as those not receiving accommodations. Accommodations will adhere to the State Special Education Accommodations Manual and the decisions of the IEP/504 Team.

b. Modifications according to the IEP or 504 Plans are alterations that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. These modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Consistent use of modifications could adversely affect students throughout their educational career. Modifications on statewide assessments may invalidate the results and may not be appropriate or allowed on statewide assessments.

c. The report card shall designate modified curriculum by the assigned special education-designated course number.

B. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

1. Kindergarten – 3rd Grade

a. Students shall be evaluated on one scale that reflects the implementation of the curriculum in Academic Areas and Behaviors that Support Learning.

b. Academic Areas:

Performance in some academic areas shall be marked on the following scale:

4 = Exceeds Standards-in addition to meeting standards, makes applications and inferences beyond expectations;

3 = Meets Standards-consistently and independently;

2 = Progressing toward meeting the standards;

1 = Emerging; Limited progress toward mastery of the standards;

and

ND = Not yet demonstrated.

c. Behaviors that Support Learning:

Behaviors that Support Learning shall be marked on the following scale:

- 4 = Exceeds the expected learning skill and behaviors;
- 3 = Meets expected learning skills and behaviors;
- 2 = Progressing toward meeting expected learning skills and behaviors;
- 1 = Emerging toward mastery of expected learning skills and behaviors;
- ND = Not yet demonstrated.

2. Grades 4-5

a. Students in grades 4-5 shall be evaluated in all courses by means of numerical grades. These numerical grades represent the following letter grades:

- A Shall represent an average of 90-100
- B Shall represent an average of 80-89
- C Shall represent an average of 75-79
- D Shall represent an average of 70-74
- F Shall represent an average of below 70

b. In grades 4 - 5 a letter grade of D or above shall indicate that the student's academic performance complies with the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2.13 now written or hereafter amended Grading Systems, which establishes 70 as a minimum passing score.

c. Conduct and Study/Work Habits shall be evaluated as:

- A Shall represent an average of 90-100
- B Shall represent an average of 80-89
- C Shall represent an average of 75-79
- D Shall represent an average of 70-74
- F Shall represent an average of below 70

3. Honor Roll:

At the end of each nine week grading period and at the end of the year, students in grades 4 and 5 meeting the following criteria will be recognized as follows:

a. Academic

ALL "A/B" ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HONOR ROLL

Criteria: "A" or "B" in each subject and "S" in all categories requiring a grade of "S" or "U" with the exception of conduct.

ALL "A" ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HONOR ROLL

Criteria: "A" in each subject and "S" in all categories requiring a grade of "S" or "U" with the exception of conduct.

b. Academic and Conduct

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS

Criteria: "A" in each subject area and "S" in all categories requiring "S" or "U" including conduct.

C. MIDDLE SCHOOL:

1. Grades:

All subjects shall be graded by means of numerical grades. These numerical grades represent the following letter grades:

- A Shall represent an average of 90-100
- B Shall represent an average of 80-89

- C Shall represent an average of 75-79
- D Shall represent an average of 70-74
- F Shall represent an average of below 70

2. All high school rules and procedures shall apply to high school courses taken in middle school, including, but not limited to grading, withdrawing, and scheduling. Courses that students received credit for in Middle School, will NOT be used to calculate the high school GPA.

3. Honor Roll:

At the end of each nine week grading period and at the end of the year, students meeting the following criteria will be recognized as follows:

a. Academic

ALL "A/B" ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HONOR ROLL

Criteria: "A" or "B" in each subject and "S" in all categories requiring a grade of "S" or "U" with the exception of conduct.

ALL "A" ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HONOR ROLL

Criteria: "A" in each subject and "S" in all categories requiring a grade of "S" or "U" with the exception of conduct.

b. Academic and Conduct

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS

Criteria: "A" in each subject area and "S" in all categories requiring "S" or "U" including conduct.

D. HIGH SCHOOL:

1. **Grades:** Student performance shall be recorded on the permanent record using numerical grades. These numerical grades represent the following letter grades.

A Shall represent an average of 90-100

B Shall represent an average of 80-89

C Shall represent an average of 75-79

D Shall represent an average of 70-74

F Shall represent an average of below 70

2. **Exams:** Final Exams will count for 20% of the overall grade for each high school course.

Georgia Milestone Assessments and other state mandated assessments may not be exempt. Final Exams for students in grades 9-12 may be exempted provided students meet the following requirements:

- a. 90 average or above in the course
- b. No more than 6 non-school related absences for a year-long course and 3 for a semester course.

3. AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT

- A. Students shall be awarded credit only for courses that include concepts and skills based on the state adopted curriculum for grades K-12 approved by the State

- Board of Education (SBOE) in accordance with the provision for each program or course described in the State Board Rules(s) and State Department Guidelines.
- B. The Board shall award units of credits for middle school courses that are based on the state adopted curriculum for grades 9-12 and approved by the Richmond County Board of Education.
 - C. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to establish procedures whereby a student may earn course credit by demonstrating subject area competency without regard to the amount of instructional time the student spends in the course.
 - D. An eligible student may earn course credit by "testing-out", which means scoring at the "Distinguished" level on a state End of Course Test (EOC) prior to taking the course. Students attempting to test out must have parent permission and their parent shall be informed of potential costs prior to the EOC administration. Course credit earned through testing-out shall be reported in the same way as credit earned through course completion. A student's numerical grade for a course in which the student tests out shall be determined by converting the student's EOC scale score to a prorated numerical score using state EOC conversion scale for the subject. Student eligibility criteria for earning credit for EOC "testing-out" and information regarding grade assignment and collection of any associated fees shall be included in the student handbook and/or advisement materials.
 - E. Military dependents shall be awarded course credit in accordance with OGCA 20-17-2.

4. ACCEPTING TRANSFER CREDIT AND GRADES FROM ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS

- A. Carnegie unit credit received from the schools accredited by a designated regional or state accrediting agency will be accepted as established by Georgia Board of Education Rules and Richmond County School System.
- B. The Board will not substitute course and exempt students from the required secondary minimum core curriculum unless the student transferred from an accredited secondary school or the courses presented for credit include concepts and skills based on the state-adopted curriculum for grades 9-12 approved by the SBOE.
- C. For student transcript purposes, grades for courses taken by transferring students will be accepted as recorded on the transcript from the issuing school or program. Grades of students transferring from schools accredited by a designated regional or state accreditation agency will be recorded as numerical grades. Letter grades for high school transfers will be converted to numerical grades using either a conversion scale provided by the prior school or, if a scale

is not available, using a conversion formula established by the Superintendent or designee.

5. ACCEPTING TRANSFER CREDIT FROM NON-ACCREDITED, NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION CENTERS AND/OR HOME SCHOOLS:

Transfer credit shall be validated for courses taken at non-accredited schools, home study programs, and non-traditional educational centers

A. Elementary and Middle School

Elementary and middle school students transferring from home study program, non-accredited schools or non-traditional education center will be placed at the appropriate grade level in a probationary placement based on the student's records in the prior schools or programs. Final placement will be determined by performance on district course assessment and satisfactory performance in the district for one grading period.

B. High School

High school students transferring from home study programs, non-accredited schools or non-traditional educational centers will have a probationary placement of no longer than three weeks in a 9th grade homeroom until the credits are validated. The student may be enrolled in appropriate level courses based on a review of the transcript until the probationary period ends. High school transfer students must take any state-mandated assessments, including applicable End of Course tests. Units of credit shall be granted for courses that meet state-adopted curriculum standards for grades 9-12 as evidenced by the validation process.

The process for validating credits reported from non-accredited home study programs, non-accredited schools or non-traditional educational centers includes:

- i. Administration of EOC Assessment or system assessment for courses that have one associated and,
- ii. For courses that have no EOC or standardized assessment associated, a review of the transferred courses must occur.

C. Validation by the administration of End-of-course Assessment or other standardized assessments

A student must take and pass mandatory state testing course assessment, EOC or a district assessment, with a minimum of 70 grade conversion to receive

credit for the course. A student enrolling from a non-accredited school will receive one test administration opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in order to earn credit for a course that requires the EOC. If the student does not pass the EOC on that administration, the student will not receive credit for that course. If the course is required to receive a high school diploma, the student shall enroll in the course and take the EOC at the completion of the course. Upon earning a passing score on the EOC or standardized assessment, the grade on shown on the transcript from the non-accredited school, non-traditional education center or from a home school will be awarded.

D. Review of transferred courses

Students transferring from a non-accredited school, non-traditional education center or from a home study program will provide official transcript and other documentation (course syllabus) for review of skills and concepts to determine whether transfer courses meet the state-adopted curriculum. Review of course will be conducted by the Curriculum Department or Superintendent’s designee. Courses for which there is no alignment to the state-adopted curriculum will not be awarded credit.

6. Reporting Transferred Grades and Credits from Accredited (Including Post-Secondary Institutions) and Non-Accredited Schools:

District Procedures to correspond to the State Rule 160-5-1-.15

A. Course Titles:

Transfer course titles will be changed to the appropriate Richmond County course titles for courses in English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, health, and the specific course Personal Fitness. Transfer elective course titles will be changed to broad categorical titles, such as physical education, business education and other appropriate categories to best meet the description of the appropriate course. Titles for courses taken through the Move on When Ready/ Dual Enrollment Program will be listed on the high school transcript according to the course name described in the MOWR/ Dual Enrollment Course Directory.

B. Grade Conversion:

- i. Student grades will be subject to the following conversion scale if the transferring school has not assigned a numerical average.

A+ = 99 **B+** = 89 **C+** = 79 **D+** = 74 **F** = 65

A = 95 **B** = 85 **C** = 77 **D** = 72

A- = 90 **B-** = 80 **C-** = 75 **D-** = 70

- ii. In cases where the issuing school uses a grading scale different from Richmond County's the numerical grade to be recorded will be derived by the following steps:
 - a. Converting the transferred numerical grade to a letter grade according to the issuing school's grading scale, and then,
 - b. Assigning a numerical grade based on the preceding conversion scale.

- iii. If grades of pass or fail are received, the following procedure must be applied:
 - a. Fail will be recorded as "F", and no course credit will be included in the calculation of the cumulative average;
 - b. Pass will be recorded as "P", and course credit will be awarded however, this course will not be included in the calculation of the cumulative average.

- iv. If a situation occurs where the above procedures adversely affects the academic standing of the student, a request for transcript review may be made to the school administration. If dissatisfied with the decision of the school administrator a written request may be made to the School Principal for an appeal to the Richmond County Transcript Review Committee. A Review Committee consisting of two counselors, Director of Student Services, Director of Curriculum, and the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction will make the final determination. The Review Committee will meet on a quarterly basis to review requests.

7. Repeated Courses:

- a. Once a student has received credit for a course, he/she may not repeat the course for additional credit or to improve his/her grade.
- b. A student may repeat for credit a course in which he/she has received an F. Both grades must be recorded on the cumulative record and figured in the grade point average.

8. Grade Point Average:

A student's grade point average (GPA) is based on quality points (See Chart Below regular High School courses 4.0 scale and AP, IB and

College/University Courses 5.0 scale) awarded for each grade earned. High School Student Transcripts include the GPA, Class Rank and Numerical Average.

QUALITY POINTS	
Regular Courses	Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and College/University courses
A = 4 Quality Points	A = 5 Quality Points
B = 3 Quality Points	B = 4 Quality Points
C = 2 Quality Points	C = 3 Quality Points
D = 1 Quality Points	D = 2 Quality Points
F = 0 Quality Points	F = 0 Quality Points

9. Honor Roll:

At the end of each nine week grading period and at the end of the year, students meeting the following criteria will be recognized as follows:

ALL "A/B" ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HONOR ROLL

Criteria: "A" or "B" in each subject

ALL "A" ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HONOR ROLL

Criteria: "A" in each subject

10. Class Rank:

a. An official class rank should be compiled for each grade based on the students' quality point GPA. It will be computed at the end of the year. Averages are to be carried out to three decimal places. The final averages are not rounded.

b. When two or more students have the same average, they shall be given the same rank in class, but each student shall be counted as though he/she were occupying a separate station in the ranking. For example: Students A, B, and C have a GPA of 3.729. The immediately preceding average is 3.750 which ranks number 8 in the class. Students A, B, and C are assigned rank number 9. Student D, with a GPA of 3.695 is assigned rank number 12.

- c. After the final computation of averages, Honor Graduates shall be only the students with a grade point average of 3.500 or better after the third nine weeks

11. Valedictorian/Salutatorian:

The Valedictorian is the student with the highest average in the senior class and Salutatorian is the student with the second highest rank in the senior class. These students should be selected at the end of the third nine weeks of their senior year based on the students' quality point GPA. Valedictorians and Salutatorians must attend their representative high school their Junior and Senior years prior to receiving this honor. If students vying for Valedictorian or Salutatorian have identical grade point averages, the 100 point scale GPA shall be considered.

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