

Elementary Grade Reporting Handbook

Polk County
Public Schools

Revised April 2020

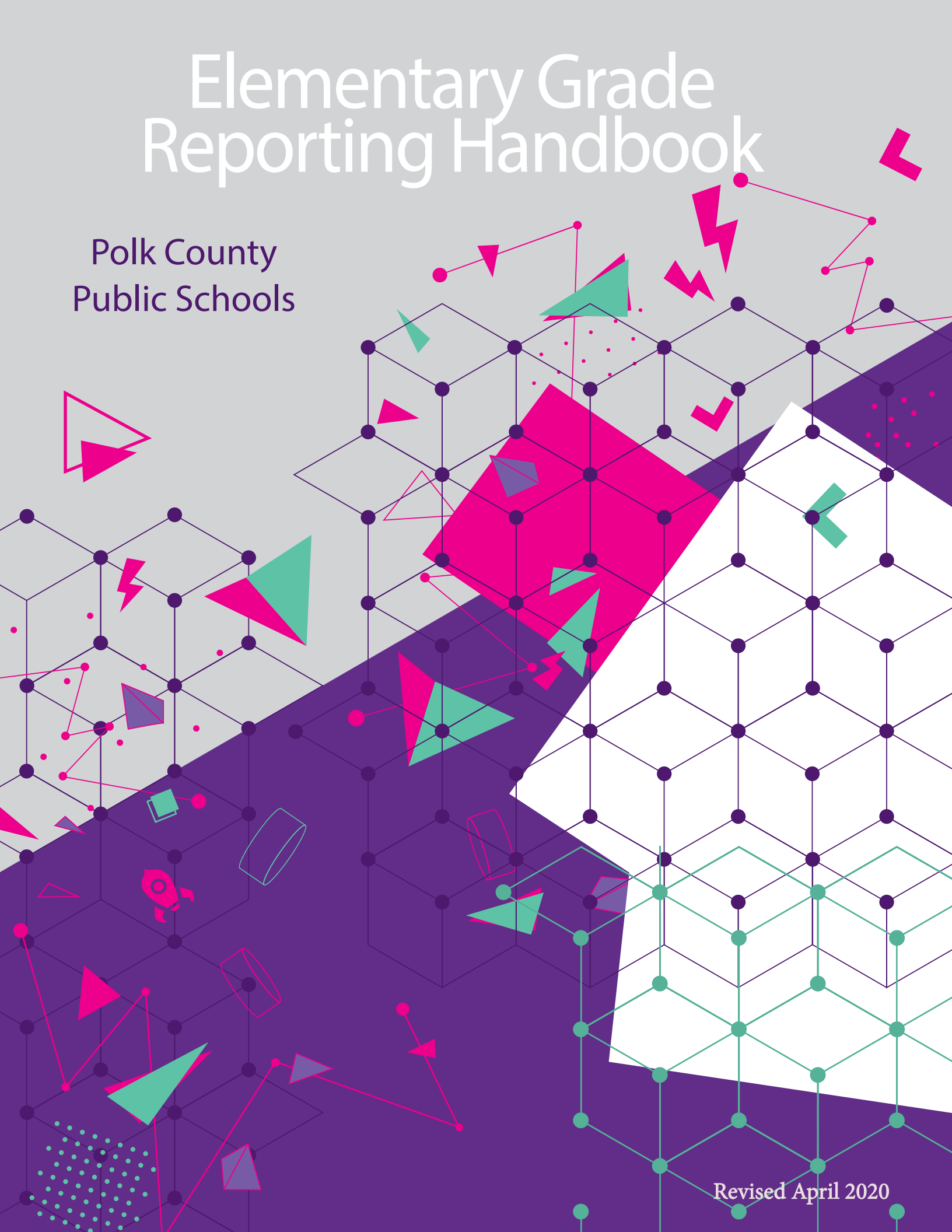


TABLE OF CONTENTS

p4 Purpose of Grade Reporting Handbook

p6 What are the Polk County Public Schools' policies related to grading and reporting student progress?

p7 What is the importance of assessment and grading?

p9 What are the underlining principles of the grading system?

p10 How is student progress communicated to the parent/guardian?

p12 What is the district's policy regarding homework?

p14 What is the recommended number of grades per subject per grading period to clearly communicate student progress?

p15 How often should grades be entered into ?

p16 Should students have an academic grade on their report card for every quarter?

p17 Will FOCUS calculate final grade for the student if he/she is missing a quarter grade?

p17 Must a final grade be posted on the student's report card?



p18 What options are provided for students receiving failing grades within the grading period or at the end of the grading period?

p20 After the student has completed his/her grade recovery, how should it be documented in FOCUS?

p22 How do grading policies relate to ELL students?

p23 How do grading policies relate to ESE students?

p24 When and how are parents/guardians notified when their child is failing?

p24 What are the promotion requirements for each grade level according to the Student Progression Plan?

p27 How should English, Language Arts (ELA) be weighted?

p28 How should Math, Science and Social Studies be weighted?

p29 What types of learning tasks or assessments should be graded?

p30 What are the procedures for handling progress reports and student transcripts/records when a student transfers within and outside of the district?



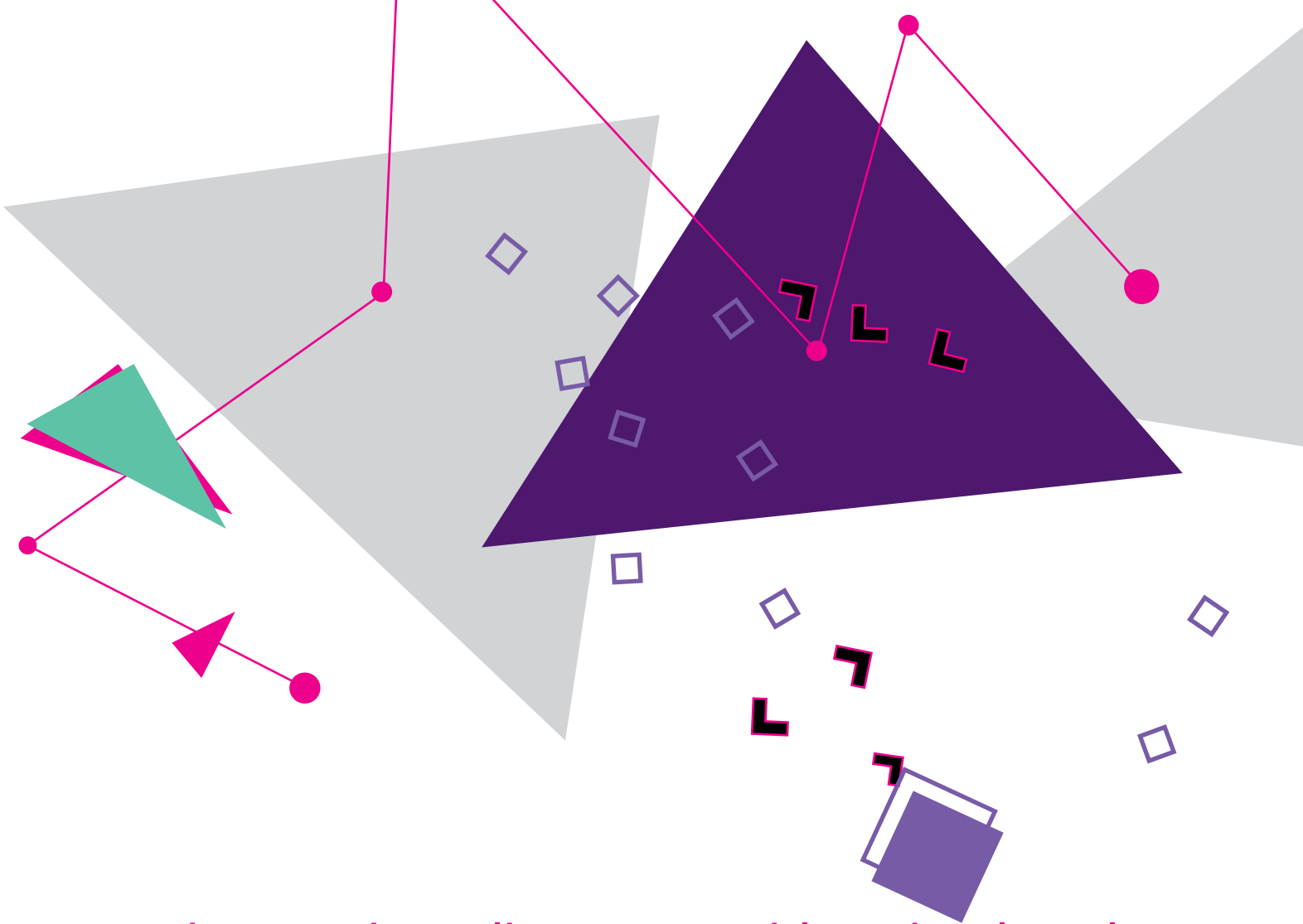
PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to assist educators in making quality decisions about communicating student progress, based on district policy that is supported by current research and best practices. This document will provide schools and staff with a framework for decision-making, strategies for establishing criteria, and guidelines for communicating successfully with parents. All decisions regarding establishing grading criteria and communicating student progress should reflect Polk County Public Schools' vision that every Polk student will be college and career ready after graduation.

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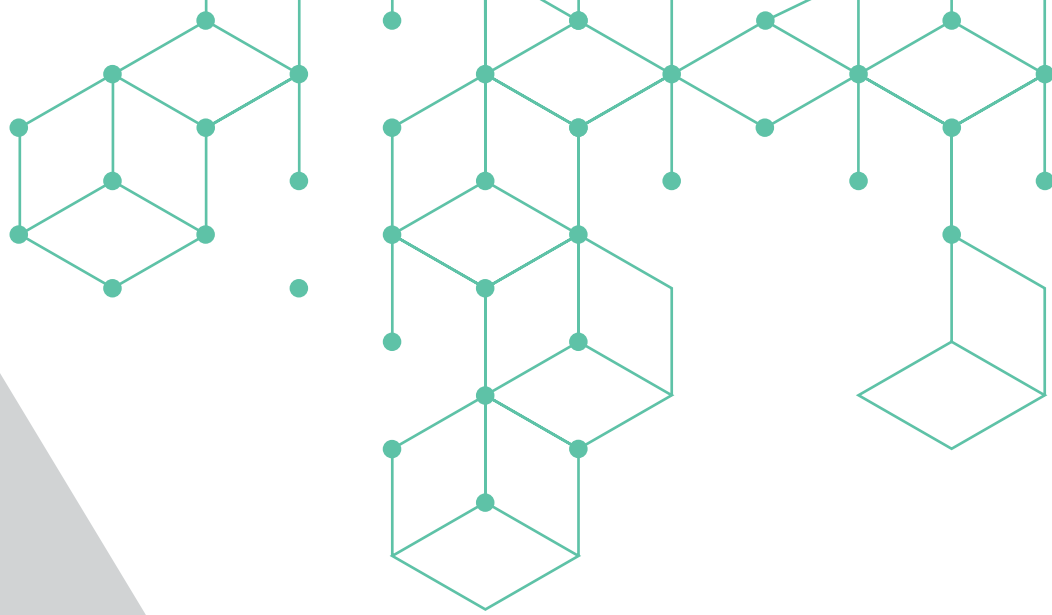
What are the Polk County Public Schools' policies related to grading and reporting student progress?

Polk County Schools believe that the cooperation of school and home is an essential ingredient to the growth and education of the whole child. We recognize the responsibility to keep parents informed of a student's wellbeing and progress in school.

We believe that grades must provide a clear, useful, and relevant information to students, parents and the community. Polk County Schools recognize the responsibility for providing a system of grading student achievement that can assist the students, teachers, and parents appropriately to determine how well the student is achieving the goals of the Florida Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and District's standards.

Polk County Schools believe that the District's grading system should be reliable and one that ensures each student's grades signify accurately his/her degree of accomplishment of those expected learning outcomes that are to be stated for each program at every grade level, kindergarten through 12th grade [F.S. 1003.33].

Polk County Schools directs the establishment of a system to notify parents of student progress that shall include written reports, parent conferences with teachers, and shall require all appropriate staff members to comply with such a system as part of their professional responsibility.



What is the importance of assessment and grading?

Teachers engage in continuous assessment of students' understanding and use this information as the basis for planning future instruction. The ultimate purpose of assessment is to determine students' needs and to plan instruction to support students in achieving identified instructional objectives. Students who have not been successful on a graded assessment must have the opportunity for additional instruction and reassessment.

Evaluation is the attachment of grades to independently completed student work that is representative of academic performance. Grades are assigned once the instructional material (reflective of grade-level instructional objectives) has been taught and sufficiently practiced. Criteria used for grading are clearly articulated to students and high quality samples are offered as models. The grading system recognizes progress toward achievement of the established Florida Standards, even if additional instruction is required to demonstrate mastery of the standards. Note that student work is compared to standards, not to the work of other students.

Grading should be fair, consistent, reliable, and comprehensive. All grades should be supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., anecdotal notes, work samples, checklists, portfolios, rubrics). It is recommended report card comments be limited to the menu options in the grade reporting system.



	Student A		Student B		Student C	
Grades	100	100	70	70	55	55
	90	90	65	65	59	59
	85	85	70	70	60	60
	95	95	65	65	57	57
Missing Assignment Value	0	50	0	50	0	50
Final Student Average	74	84	54	64	46.2	56.2

The Case of the "Zero". Click [HERE](#)

What are the underlying principles of the grading system?

These four underlying principles support a standards-driven reporting system.

1. Align assessment methods while planning instruction

It is important to establish a match between the means of assessment and Grade level appropriate learning experiences once the criteria and targets have been identified. Students are in a better position to respond when the assessment criteria and the means of assessment are shared with them early in the instructional cycle (e.g., utilization of essential questions and summarization strategies, as well as strongly encouraging the use of rubrics to communicate the levels of performance).

2. Provide grade level appropriate instruction and assessment for students

If the grades students receive are to be fair and meaningful, then we must provide high quality instruction and interventions matched to student needs. Learning experiences must be appropriate in content, process, intensity and complexity. The use of zero is strongly discouraged if it does not accurately reflect a student's understanding of the material. When work is not completed on the due date, lowering the grade each day the work is late is an inappropriate practice.

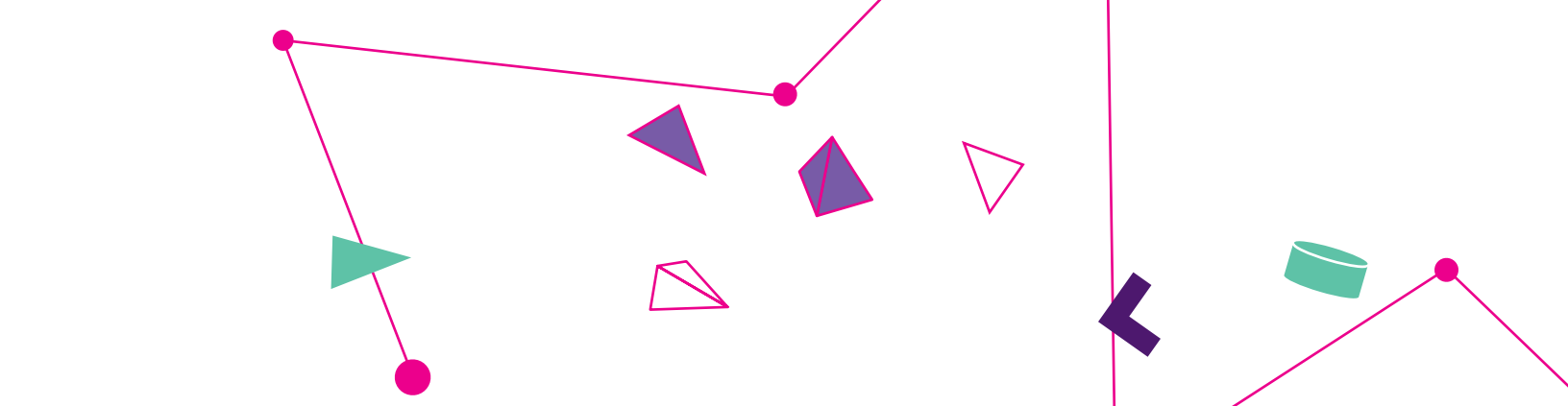
On the page to the left there are three examples of students who received a failing grade of a 0 compared to a 50 for a missing assignment. While both values equal an "F", the impact on final student average is 10 points over all in these scenarios. When a student receives just a few zeros it can prevent that student from achieving academic success. Replacing zero with 50 will not raise a failing student's grade above an "F" (student C) but will keep a struggling learner on track to pass (student B). In contrast, even one zero is enough to cause an otherwise successful student's grade to plummet (student A).

3. Provide each student with ample opportunities to acquire concepts and skill

Students must have the opportunity to reflect on their own practice with feedback and apply concepts and skills within a supportive context. Students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their acquisition of targeted learning goals.

4. Penalizing behavioral actions should not have an academic impact

Grades should only reflect academic performance while behavior should be reflected in Successful Learner Behaviors section on report card.



How is student progress communicated to the parent/guardian?

CONFERENCES

Conferences between parents and teachers are encouraged. This one-on-one interaction promotes involvement of both the home and the school, promotes mutual understanding of the student's progress, clarifies the student's strengths and needs, and allows for the exchange of information and ideas needed to strengthen and reinforce student performance. Conferences may be requested by parents or by teachers.

Please be reminded through federal programs (ESE, ESOL, Title I) and state statutory requirements mandate consistent and frequent communication with the family regarding progress monitoring.

INTERIM REPORTS

Interim Reports are issued at the midpoint of each grading period for students, grades K-12. Teachers will use the electronic gradebook version of the Interim Report. A paper or an electronic copy will be provided to parents.

Effective communication between school and home is a contributing factor to academic success. A positive, productive teacher-parent relationship contributes to collaborative efforts toward a student's academic achievement. The following means of communication are used to keep parents informed of their student's progress.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards - (appendix A) shall be issued in accordance with the school calendar following the end of each grading period approximately every nine weeks. The dates of distribution are established each year by the division superintendent and published on the school calendar.

The purpose of the student Report Card is to formally communicate to parents their student's performance on the grade-level standards taught during each of the four nine-week grading periods. Parents/guardians should be made aware prior to report cards being distributed if there are concerns. It is recommended report card comments be limited to the menu options in the grade reporting system.

Parents return the signed report card the first three grading periods in elementary schools to ensure that they have reviewed the document. At the end of the year, a copy of the final report card should be placed in the student's cumulative folder. An electronic copy of the student report card can be located in the SIS folder for schools to print and file.

REPORT CARD SUBJECTS:

- English Language Arts
 - * Reading
 - * Writing
 - * Language
 - * Speaking
 - * Listening
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Science
- Physical Education
- Music
- Art

GRADING SCALE

A – Excellent progress of standards	90 – 100
B – Good progress of standards	80 – 89
C – Satisfactory progress of standards	70 – 79
D – Unsatisfactory progress of standards	60 – 69
F – Failing to meet standards	0 – 59

SUCCESSFUL LEARNER

- Takes pride in work
- Works well on his/her own
- Listens and follows directions
- Participates in activities
- Respects rights of others
- Gets along with classmates
- Respects authority
- Behaves in school
- Completes class assignments
- Completes homework assignments
- Brings proper materials daily
- Returns books/forms on time
- Handwriting

GRADING SCALE FOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING BEHAVIORS

- E – Excellent
- G – Good
- S – Satisfactory
- N – Needs Improvement

REPORT CARD COMMENT

1. Poor attendance is affecting progress
2. Excessive tardiness
3. Outstanding work in Reading
4. Outstanding work in Writing
5. Outstanding work in Mathematics
6. Outstanding work in Speaking and Listening
7. Work has improved in Reading
8. Work has improved in Writing
9. Work has improved in Mathematics
10. Work has improved in Speaking and Listening
11. Reading standards/expectations not met
12. Writing standards/expectations not met
13. Mathematics standards/expectations not met
14. Speaking/Listening standards/expectations not met
15. Demonstrates positive attitude
16. Good classroom effort
17. Does not stay on task
18. Parent/Guardian conference request
19. Below grade level in English, Language Arts
20. Below grade level in Math

FOCUS CODES

X-Grade: The grade of X tells the teacher, student and parent the student was excused from the assignment. The value of the assignment is ignored for the student when calculating the summary grade.

Z-Grade: The grade of Z indicates the assignment is missing and the student has the opportunity to make up the assignment based on the rules for makeup work in the teacher's class. Until work is made up, the Z grade is going to calculate as a zero.

AT RISK OF RETENTION

If a student is at risk of retention the report card should be marked with comment code 22 for the 2nd and 3rd grading period. This will be used in conjunction with codes 20 and 21.

WORKING BELOW GRADE

If a student is working below grade level the student will have a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP). The PMP will outline the areas of academic need, and strategies for appropriate intervention and instruction to assist the student.



What is Polk County Public Schools policy regarding homework?

If the teacher chooses to incorporate homework the activity should be an extension of daily instruction and provide additional independent practice.

Homework is not for academic grading purposes. Completion could be reflected in the Successful Learner Behavior section of the report card.



The suggested guidelines established by the District School Board of Polk County Public

- Homework should be a properly planned part of the curriculum, extending and reinforcing the learning experience in the classroom.
- Homework should help students learn by providing practice in the mastery of skills, experience in data gathering, and integration of knowledge, and an opportunity to remediate learning problems.
- Homework should help develop the student's sense of responsibility by providing an opportunity for the exercise of independent work.
- The number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments should be based on the ability and needs of the student.
- As a valid educational tool, homework should be assigned with clear direction and its product carefully evaluated.
- The schools should recognize the role of parents by suggesting ways in which parents can assist the school in helping a student carry out assigned responsibilities.
- Homework should always serve a valid learning purpose; it should never be used as a punitive measure.

[Homework Article Link - Principal: What happened when my school ended useless homework?](#)



K - 1st


10 - 20 minutes

2nd - 3rd Grade

20 - 30 minutes

4th - 5th Grade

40 - 50 minutes



What is the recommended number of grades per subject per grading period to clearly communicate student progress?

The total number of grades per subject may vary but the suggested minimum number per grading period are:

Subject	Minimum Number of Graded Items Recorded
ELA: Reading ,Writing, Speaking & Listening, Language	2 per week
Math	1 per week
Social Studies	4 per nine weeks
Science	1 per week
P.E.	4 per nine weeks
Art	4 per nine weeks
Music	4 per nine weeks



Graded Items May Include:

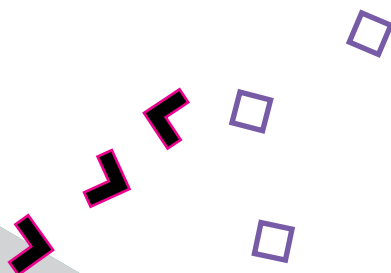
- Assessments
- Performance tasks
- Quizzes
- In-class assignments
- Teacher observations
- Student interviews
- Student work samples
- Graphic Organizers
- Writing tasks
- Summaries
- Error analysis
- Labs



How often should grades be entered into the FOCUS Gradebook?

In accordance with FS [1002.20](#), each student and his or her parent must be informed of their child's academic progress. Grades for each subject area should be entered in a timely manner. It is recommended that grades be entered on a weekly basis to provide an up-to-date account of the student's progress. Through the use of Parent Portal, parents are able to view their child's grades as frequently as they deem necessary.

Keeping grades current allows parents to use the information to assist their children. Grades are intended to inform parents of students' progress and performance on the Florida Standards and be reflective of multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the standards.



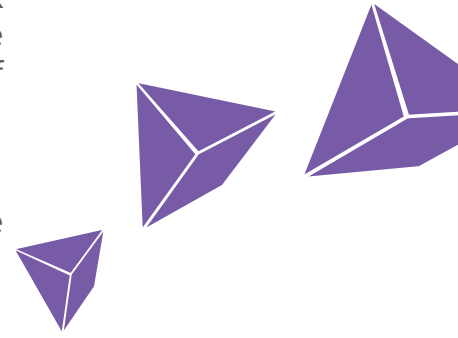



Should students have an academic grade on their report card for every quarter?

Yes, if a student has been in attendance at any school during the school year, the academic transcripts should be requested and averaged with the student's grade. All quarter grades earned by the student will be posted to the grade reporting screen in FOCUS to be averaged into the student's final grade.

Transfer grades will be given to the teacher to be entered into the gradebook and averaged to determine a student's nine week grade. This will ensure the student's grades accurately indicate his/her degree of accomplishment of learning outcomes.

The terminal operator, counselor or teacher should make every effort to acquire grades from the student's previous school. Transfer grades should be requested within 3 days of the student enrollment.






Will FOCUS calculate a final grade for the student if he/she has a missing quarter grade?

No. The student must have a grade posted in each quarter for FOCUS to calculate a final grade. The teacher can go to “Grades Menu” to check for students who are missing a grade.

School Administrators can verify if any students are missing a quarter or final grade.

The steps to assess missing grades:

1. Log into FOCUS
2. Go to “Grades Menu”
3. Go to “Final Missing Grade Report” (this report can be exported to excel)



Please note: If the posting window has closed the teacher will need to give any missing grades or grade changes to the school administrator to enter.

Must a final grade be posted on the student’s report card?

Yes, a final grade must be entered on the FOCUS grade screen for all courses. This will ensure the grades will post to the student’s scholastic record.

What options are provided for students receiving failing grades within the grading period or at the end of the grading period?

Students who require remediation and reassessment should go through the following process:

- The teacher will provide time to re-teach the material in small groups or individually using research based strategies and then re-assess the student after an appropriate amount of time has been given to practice and learn the skills. Teachers may use formative or summative assessments which may include but are not limited to formal assessments, fewer item assessments, a new task or assignment, and projects or other performance items in order for the student to demonstrate progress towards mastery of the standards. Providing students with the opportunity to complete error analysis to reflect on their learning and improve their understanding towards mastery is a powerful tool to improving failing grades within a grading period.

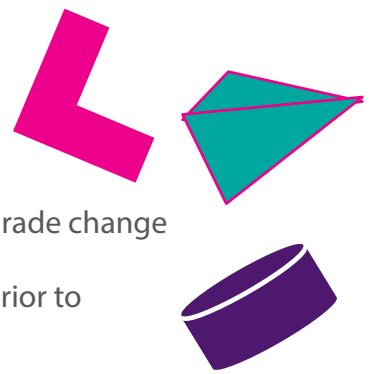
The ability to recover the grade during the nine weeks can occur within the same grading period by the classroom teacher. The date grades are due to the district will be the last day for changes into FOCUS for grade recovery. Teachers may accept work or re-assess up to and including the date grades are due to the district.

Procedures for grade updates beyond the nine week period are indicated below and on the next page:

Grade Change occurs when extenuating circumstances necessitate a grade change. Examples may include, among other reasons, students that may have been ill and missed several assignments towards the end of a grading period, students that were absent for several days due to school business, students that are still working on makeup work beyond grade deadlines, teachers with multi-day absences or emergencies at the end of a 9 week grading period. After the student returns to school and/or submits make up work, the subsequent grade would be the grade earned by the student and a Grade Change Form utilized.

Grade Recovery should be offered to students that have not demonstrated satisfactory performance in the class. Unsatisfactory progress may be the result of missing assignments, incomplete assignments, unsatisfactory progress on assessments, assignments or projects. Upon a student's successful participation in the Grade Recovery Program as demonstrated by 70%-100% on Grade Recovery assignments/assessments, the student's grade should be changed to a 75%/C.





Grade recovery change:

- Principals will complete the Grade Recovery Spreadsheet for every student receiving a grade change as a result of their participation in the Grade Recovery Program.
- Principal will ensure the grades have been changed by the teacher of record in FOCUS prior to grade reporting deadline of the subsequent quarter.
- The grade change should be documented in FOCUS overriding the final average using "GR" (Grade Recovery) code with 75% C.
- The school will maintain the Grade Recovery Documentation at the school and send a hard copy with signatures to the appropriate Regional Superintendent.

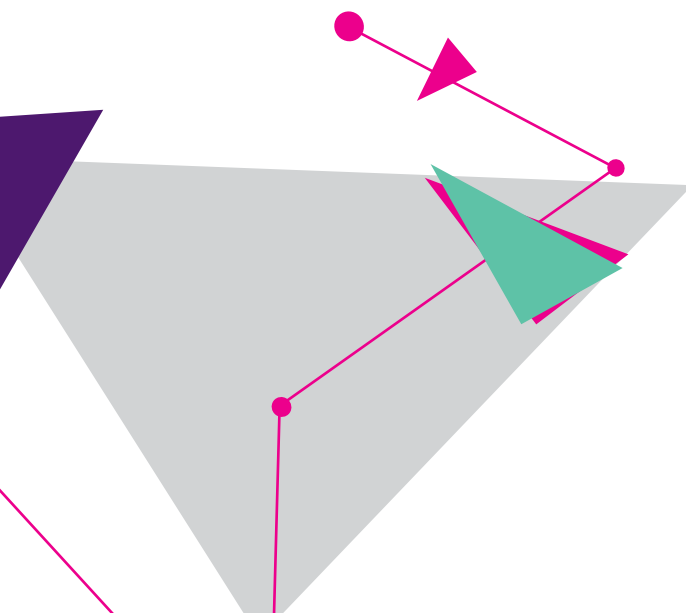
MTSS


Students in kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2 whose diagnostic or progress monitoring assessments in reading and/or mathematics indicate they are below grade level shall receive remediation through an MTSS in the appropriate subject(s). Students in grades 3–5 who score at Level 1 or Level 2 on state assessments or below criterion on progress monitoring assessments in reading, and/or mathematics shall require remediation through an MTSS in the appropriate subject(s).

The student's proficiency shall be reassessed by district-adopted assessments at the beginning of the grade following the intensive instruction, and the student shall continue to be provided intensive instruction until the deficiency is remediated. Schools shall monitor progress frequently and adjust interventions based on data. Progress monitoring of students identified as having a deficiency in reading, writing, math or science shall identify the following:

- the student's specific areas of deficiency or skills gaps,
- the desired level of performance,
- the instructional and support services that will be provided to meet the desired level of performance,
- the success-based intervention strategies to be used,
- how, when, how often, by whom and how long remedial instruction is to be provided, and
- the monitoring and reevaluation activities.

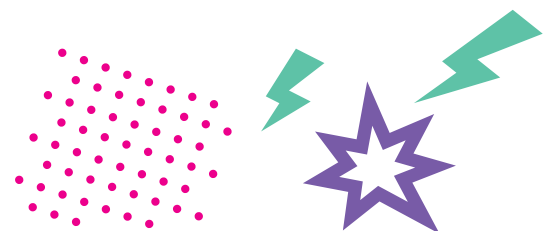
If at any time, a student is not successful in completing a course, the school will immediately enroll the student in a grade or course recovery program. The school's Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will convene to develop and implement a plan with supports for the student. The plan will specifically address areas of needs, appropriate supports and interventions. The school must monitor the student's progress and the effectiveness of the supports provided to the students and document the outcomes.





After the student has completed his/her grade recovery, how should it be documented in FOCUS ?

1. Log into FOCUS and click onto the Grades menu and select Request Grade Changes
2. Select the applicable student
3. Select the Term/Quarter for which the grade needs to be changed
4. Enter an Explanation and/or Reason Code for the grade change
5. Type in the New Grade of 75%
6. The principal will receive an alert that a grade change request is pending review
7. Once the principal has reviewed the request, the teacher will be able to view the Status and Status Explanation entered by the principal





Students	<input type="text" value="Search..."/>
Grades	Gradebook
Attendance	Gradebook Configuration
Discipline	Gradebook Categories & Assignments
School Information	Gradebook Reports
	Request Grade Changes

Date Submitted	Student	Term	Teacher	Course	Course Section	Current Grade %	Current Grade Letter	Explanation	Reason Code	New Grade %	New Grade Letter
	3	4							5		
	Cast...	Gr	Petty, Pep	ENG 1	011	87	B	submitted work	Student Co...	94	A

Student	Term	Teacher	Course	Course Section	Current Grade %	Current Grade Letter	Explanation	Reason Code	New Grade %	New Grade Letter	Status	Status Explanation	Status By	Status Date
NA	NA	Petty, Pepper	ENG 1	011				Resubmit Date	NA					
Cashless, Adam Carter	Q4	Petty, Pepper	ENG 1	011	87	B	submitted work missed due to illness	Student Completed Work	94	A	Approved	Approved	Penawalt, Professor	10/7-07-08
Salera, Paul Noble	Q4	Petty, Pepper	ENG 1	011	88	B		Student Completed Work	A		Insufficient report	Denied	Penawalt, Professor	10/7-07-08

How do grading policies relate to ELL students?

English Language Learners (ELL) are held to the same standards as native English speakers. Nevertheless, no grading policy shall adversely affect an ELL student solely based on English language proficiency. The Florida Consent Decree states that English language instruction and basic subject matter instruction must be (1) understandable to the ELL student given his or her level of English language proficiency, and (2) equal and comparable in amount, scope, sequence and quality to that provided to English proficient students.

Considerations when grading ELLs:

- Level of English language proficiency
- Grades should reflect the ELL's performance based on a variety of assessment tools including, but not limited to, oral explanations, portfolios and projects.
- The grading system for ELL students is the same as for non-ELLs. A variety of appropriate assessments should be used to assign grades. The following link provides additional guidance to teachers on how students can demonstrate learning of the standards based on language proficiency levels.
 - * K-2: [Click Here:](#)
 - * 3-5: [Click Here:](#)
- Grades cannot be negatively impacted based on the lack of English language proficiency nor the use of one single assessment to measure mastery of content.





How do grading policies relate to ESE students?

Special Provisions for Students with Disabilities

Decisions about grading practices for a student with disabilities should mirror the IEP team's decision about whether the student's needs can be accommodated within the general curriculum or whether the student requires a modified curriculum. Grading students with disabilities is no different than grading students in general education. All students should be provided with multiple attempts at mastery.

The Florida Standards are appropriate for all students with disabilities except those students who meet the criteria for an alternate assessment. Effective accommodations must be in place to support involvement of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum. Accommodations are changes in how the student is taught and tested; they do not change the learning standards for the student but the method for demonstrating mastery of the standard may be adjusted. Accommodations allow the student to participate in and demonstrate mastery of the content of the general curriculum.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities will use Access Points to enable them to access the general education curriculum at the appropriate levels. Embedded into the Florida Standards, Access Points reflect the core intent of the standards with reduced levels of complexity. The curriculum is modified. Modifications are changes in what the student is taught and tested on and means that the student with a disability is participating in less complex learning standards than those of the general curriculum.

Mastery of the Access Points is measured through the Florida Alternate Assessment.

Example:

- In Florida, the standards options are: Florida Standards or Access Points
- Grading decisions are made with reference to the standards the student is following
- Students pursuing a standard diploma through 'Florida Standards + accommodations' should earn grades that reflect mastery of the coursework.

Students working on Access Point standards will receive modified content and should earn grades that reflect mastery of the coursework, taking into consideration that the standards are being modified to the current achievement level of the student.

When and how are parents/guardians notified when their child is failing?

As established in Section IX of the Polk County Public Schools Student Progression Plan, a failing grade is determined by a grade of F (0-59%). While parents are notified through the Interim Report and Report Card, additional notification is required when the student's grade falls below a D at any time during the nine week grading period. Teachers must make every effort to notify parents of the failing grade and the interventions that will be implemented. This may be accomplished through a conference, a conversation via email or phone, or a formal written exchange.

What are the requirements for each grade level according to the Student Progression Plan?

Promotion and Placement

Student progression in grades K-5 is determined by a variety of indicators, as defined by the adopted state standards and district expectations. These expectations include specific levels of student performance on locally determined assessments, including universal screenings and on-going progress monitoring, and the results of statewide assessments as defined by the Commissioner of Education.

Promotion from one grade level to the next is based upon each student's mastery of State Standards in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The evaluation of each student's progress will be based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information.

The final decision as to grade placement is the responsibility of the principal. The only exception is the Mandatory Grade 3 Retention ([s. 1008.25\(5\)\(b\) F.S.](#)). When establishing student eligibility requirements, principals and school districts must consider, at a minimum:

1. The student's performance on a locally determined assessment, a statewide assessment, or a statewide standardized assessment administered pursuant to s. 1008.22.F.S.
2. The recommendations from one or more of the student's teachers in core-curricula courses as outlined in s.1003.01(14)(a)-(e), F.S.

No student shall be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that amount to social promotion or administrative placement. This does not prevent students from being promoted based upon exemption according to state law and district policy.

The student's growth toward the accomplishment of state and district identified minimum levels of performance in reading, writing, mathematics, and science shall be the primary consideration in promotion/retention decisions. Student progression decisions consider the effectiveness of core instruction and the student's response to evidence based instruction/interventions implemented with fidelity.

All students should be afforded every opportunity to meet achievement expectations. Students not meeting district/state identified minimum levels of performance must receive intensive instructional support in order to accelerate the student's rate of progress towards standards.

Every effort must be considered to maintain a student's appropriate grade placement using all available student data and the following strategies:

- Promote and remediate in the following school year with intensive remediation.
- Remediate before the beginning of the next school year and promote.
- Review IEP goals of students with disabilities to determine if retention would provide additional time to master objectives that are required for regular education students.
- Promote English Language Learner (ELL) students for academic progress.

All student retentions must be submitted to the Regional Superintendent.

1. Kindergarten

Promotion of students in Grade K will be determined by teacher judgment and the recommendation of the school site administrator based on the following indication:

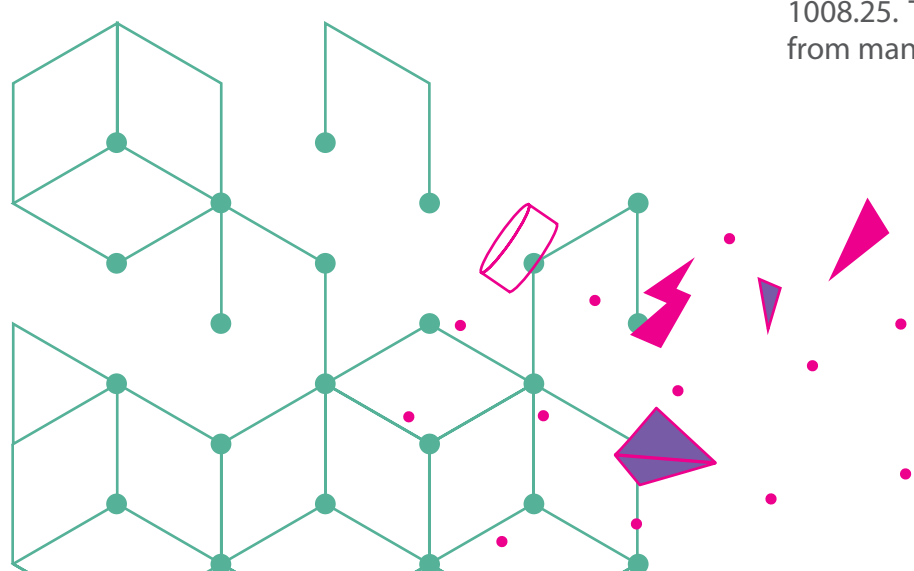
Language Arts – Teacher judgment verifying that the student has met mastery of State Standards in Language Arts.

2. First, Second and Third Grades

Promotion of students in Grades 1, 2 and 3 will be determined by teacher and school site administrator recommendation of the school site administrator based on the following indicators:

- For students in grades K-3, teacher judgment that the student has met mastery of state standards in Language Arts and Mathematics.

Additionally, in grade 3, students must demonstrate reading proficiency by a score of two (2) or above on the Statewide Reading Assessment, as specified in F.S. 1008.25. The school Board may only exempt students from mandatory retention for Good Cause.



Good Causes as Outlined by F. S. 1008.25

- Students who have had less than two years of instruction in an ESOL program.
- Students with disabilities whose Individual Educational Plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment test for reading is not appropriate.
- Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative assessment approved by the Florida Board of Education.
- Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that he or she is performing at least at Level 2 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment.
- Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide reading assessment and who have an IEP or 504 Plan that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years, but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3. It is not required that the student be identified as a student with disabilities for (2) years to qualify for this good cause exemption. However the student must receive remediation for a reading deficiency for more than (2) years and have been previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3.
- Students who have received intensive reading intervention for two (2) or more years, but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3, for a total of two (2) years. If promoted under this exemption, intensive reading instruction must include an altered instructional day based on the deficiencies identified during the Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) process that includes specialized diagnostics information and specific reading strategies.

3. Promotion Options for Grade Levels Other Than Third

Every effort must be considered to maintain a student's appropriate grade placement using all available student data.


- Promote and remediate in the following school year with intensive remediation
- Remediate before the beginning of the next school year and promote
- Review IEP goals of students with disabilities to determine if retention would provide additional time to master objectives that are required for regular education students
- Promote English Language Learner (ELL) students for academic progress

A fifth grade student may not be considered for mid-year promotion to sixth grade due to the credit requirements to complete middle school.



How should English, Language Arts (ELA) be weighted?

Weight Percentage	Language Arts Florida Standards Strand	Suggested Sources of Data
60%	Reading: Informational; Literature; Reading Foundation Skills	May include student generated class work; theme and/or unit assessments, formative assessment, and other teacher created assessments and/or assessments on overall performance on Reading Standards
20%	Writing: Text Types and Purpose; Production and Distribution of Writing Research	Student generated drawings, writing, and other demonstrations of composing or production of student writing data.
10%	Speaking and Listening	Should be determined by students level of mastery with grade appropriate collaborative conversations with partners and small groups; ability to confirm understanding of text or read aloud; ability to ask and answer questions about text.
10%	Language Standards	Should be determined by students' demonstration of command of grade appropriate use of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when speaking and/or writing; handwriting, spelling, etc.
100%	Final Comprehensive Performance in Language Arts	Total of each of the above areas.



How should Math, Science and Social Studies be weighted?

It is recommended that student work to be graded and the weighting of different types of student work be agreed upon by each grade level so there is consistency with grading policies for all students.

The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) supports the notion that inquiry in science and mathematics must be a basic in the daily curriculum of every elementary school student at every grade level. Elementary school students learn science and mathematics best when they are involved in first-hand exploration and investigation and inquiry/process skills are nurtured. Instruction must build directly on the student's conceptual framework and the content is organized on the basis of broad conceptual themes common to all disciplines. Laboratory investigations that include the use of scientific inquiry, research, measurement, problem solving, laboratory apparatus and technologies, experimental procedures, and safety procedures are an integral part of all science courses. Mathematics and communication skills are also an integral part of science instruction. Science and mathematics assessments must be aligned with the 5E instructional model (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate), concept application, inquiry, and process skills, and be based on mastery of the standards identified in the state course descriptions and district learning maps. Graded assignments should include the following student behaviors:

- Asking questions, define problems, and predict solutions/results.
- Designing planning and carrying out investigations to collect and organize data (e.g. science notebook/journal).
- Developing and using models.
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information by constructing explanations and designing solutions.
- Being actively engaged and working cooperatively in small groups to complete investigations, test solutions to problems, and draw conclusions.
- Using rational and logical thought processes, and effective communication skills (writing, speaking and listening).
- Analyzing and interpreting data to draw conclusions and applying understandings to new and novel situations.
- Using mathematics, information technology, computer technology, and computational thinking in a creative and logical manner.
- Acquiring and applying scientific vocabulary after exploring a scientific concept.

Evaluating students' understanding is formatively assessed in all stages of the 5E cycle with a summative assessment at the end of the lesson.

Furthermore, speaking and listening skills may also be assessed during mathematics, science, and social studies learning activities.

What types of learning tasks or assessments should be graded?

Grades are based on multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of standards. Teachers may derive grades from a variety of sources. A more accurate decision about a student's grade is made when multiple measures of the student's achievement are used. These include but are not limited to:

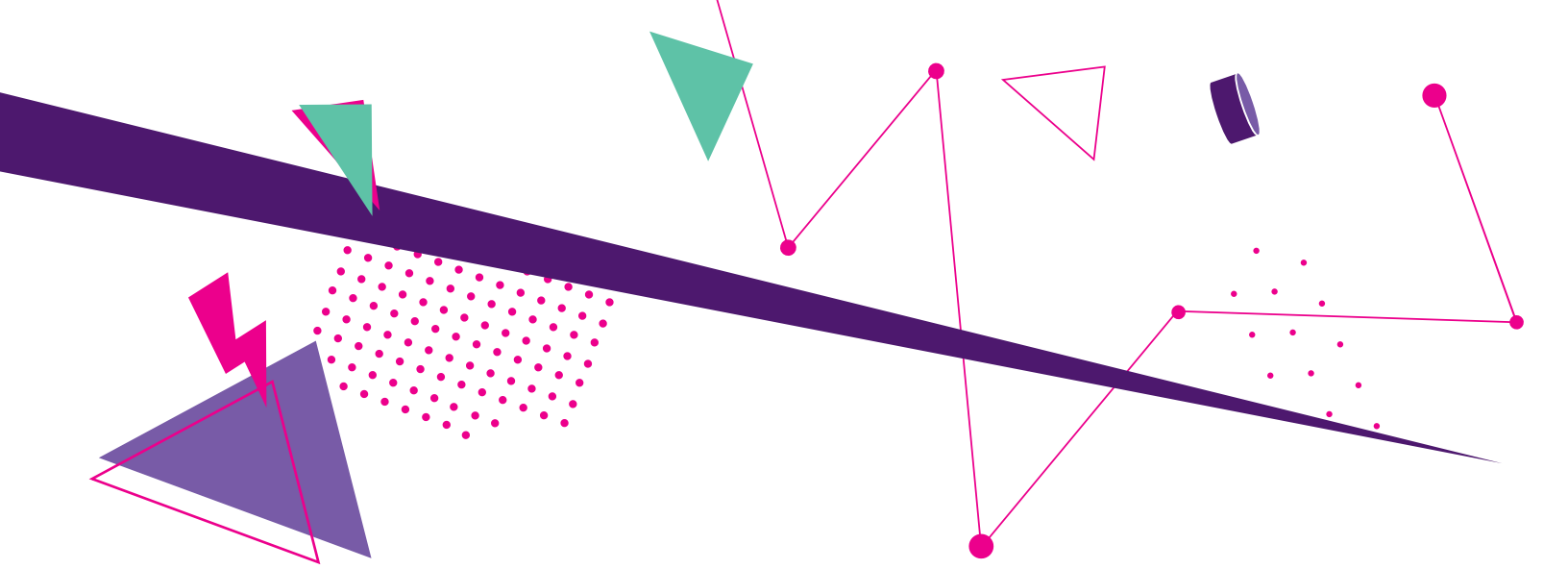
- student work samples (e.g., journals, projects, portfolio entries, writing samples)
- oral questioning/interviewing/responding
- observations
- assessments, quizzes

In selecting an assessment technique, teachers should consider the format which most appropriately measures the standard taught (rubrics, observations, traditional grading methods). Expectations for assignments and projects are clearly outlined for the student, communicated to parents and are based on the Florida Standards.

Progress monitoring/diagnostic assessments such as FAIR may not be used for grades. Accelerated Reader is a reading motivation tool and may not be used as an academic grade.

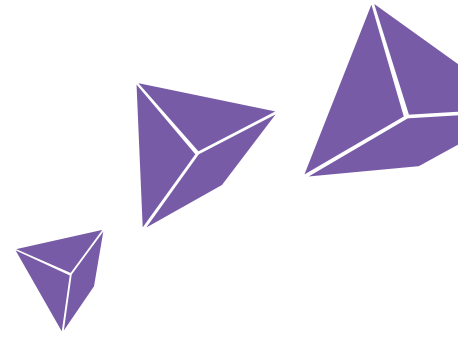
Assignments or activities that are not recommended for grading include:

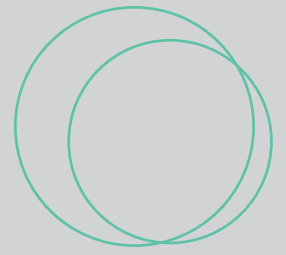
- Organization of notebook/log checks (this is more accurately evaluated in the Successful Learner Behavior section of the report card).
- Homework is not for academic grading purposes. Completion could be reflected in the Successful Learner Behavior section of the report card.



What are the procedures for handling progress reports and student transcripts/records when a student transfers within and outside of the district?

The following procedures for handling student records and progress reports should be used by all schools to ensure accurate records for every student when the student transfers schools. Transfer grades are to be used when determining a student's final grade.





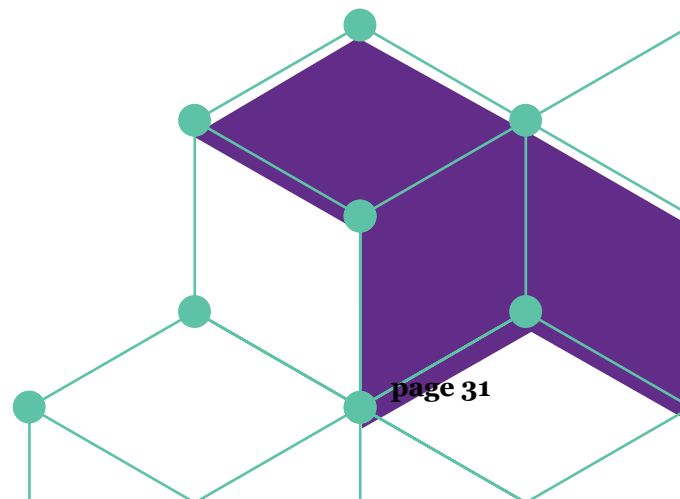
Transfer students within Polk County Public Schools

Sending School

- When a student transfers schools, the sending school should print the Student Progress report to capture any grades to date for the receiving school. The report should be placed in the student's cumulative file before sending.
- The school counselor, media specialist and lunch room manager should be notified before sending the cumulative file to the receiving school. This will ensure all important information is included inside the student file.

Receiving School

- When a student enrolls into a school, the student's cumulative file should be requested within 3 school days. All efforts will be made to receive student records. If a student is missing a grade all efforts should be made to contact the sending school to correctly post the student's transfer grades as part of entering documentation. The date the records were requested should be documented.
- Maintain a copy of the progress report in the student's cumulative folder that was received from the sending school.
- Give a copy of the grades to the student's teachers to be entered into the gradebook. Transfer grades should be averaged and entered into the gradebook as well.
- Notify administrators, school counselor and teacher that the student's cumulative file has arrived for them review.



Transfers within the same school

Sending teacher sends the transfer grade to the receiving teacher. The receiving teacher enters the grade into . See the network manager or administrator for procedures to ensure appropriate weighting is applied.

Transfer students outside the Polk County Public Schools

When a student enrolls into a school, the student transcripts should be requested within 3 school days. All efforts will be made to receive student records. If a student is missing a grade all efforts should be made to contact the sending school to correctly post the student's transfer grades as part of entering documentation. Mailing/ faxing a request, following up with a phone call (more than one call may be necessary), contacting the administrator or district personnel can all be documented attempts. If the sending school cannot provide grades, request that the school send a letter stating the reason and file all documentation in the student's cumulative file.

Transfer students from another country

Make every attempt to receive the address and contact information of the school the student attended. Contact the sending school and request records. If the transcripts are in another language and need to be translated send them to Lourdes Suarez in ESOL department.

Transfer students from Home Education

When a student enrolls from Home Education the parent will need to provide quarter grades. The grades should be entered on the grade screen after the initial 45 day enrollment date and verification of grade level. If the parent cannot provide homeschool grades, no grades will be entered for the student. By leaving the grade cell empty this will indicate the student did not participate in an educational program during that time.

