



WARWICK SCHOOL DISTRICT  
301 W. Orange Street, Lititz, PA 17543

## Grading & Assessment Guidelines

### Philosophy of Grading:

Grading and assessment has major implications on students' learning and can determine if they succeed or fail. Therefore, it is important to examine research regarding best practices. The Warwick School District *Grading & Assessment Guidelines* have been created by a large committee of professional staff to improve and refine the district's grading and assessment practices. Much time, effort, and research were invested in the development of these guidelines.

Assessment is a process used by teachers and students before, during, and after instruction to provide feedback and adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve student achievement and to provide appropriate challenge for all students at their instructional levels (pdesas.org). The Warwick School District supports the belief that **consistency** in grading and assessment practices is an integral part of student achievement. To safeguard achievement we must have a "guaranteed and viable" curriculum where the **taught and tested curriculum are aligned** (Schmoker, 2001). Grading and feedback should be **accurate, fair, specific, and timely** (Reeves, 2011).

The Warwick School District believes that students' academic grades must accurately reflect their achievement of the subject/course concepts as outlined in the curriculum approved by the Board of School Directors.

The district-wide implementation of the Grading & Assessment Guidelines will improve student outcomes through the attainment of meaningful learning, increased achievement, and successful communication among all stakeholders.

### Non-negotiable Items for Grading & Assessment Practices:

- No negative grading to be used
- Set maximum value for homework
- Provide timely grading and feedback
- Offer sufficient number of grades
- Apply extra-credit maximum – which is related to content
- Align grades to achievement of content
- Provide comments on non-graded areas (progress with academic learning behaviors)
- Make contact with parents when students are failing
- Provide clear expectations for grading of subjects
- Ensure graded group projects have in-school working time
- Provide ability to make up work after absence
- Long-term projects should have teacher "check-ins" and feedback along the way



### Provision of FEEDBACK

#### Providing timely and meaningful feedback:

- Should enhance student's motivation & achievement
- Be dependent on assignment & student
- Focus on the "product, process and progress"
- Include use of effective tools – graphic organizers, rubrics, exit cards/tickets, think-pair-share, peer editing, etc.
- Be daily
- Be consistent among grade levels/departments for **long-term projects**
  - Checkpoints (2 recommended)
- Uses predetermined criteria or outcomes that are shared with students ahead of time

## Provision of ACADEMIC GRADES in Grade Book

### Using Required Number of Assignments in Grade Book

- All students in classes that meet daily (full-year or semester-long classes/courses) should have a minimum of nine (9) academic grades in the grade book per marking period, averaging one academic-related grade per week.
- For gr. K-6 students in classes that meet less frequently than daily (specials classes), a minimum of four (4) academic grades will be obtained per marking period. For gr. 7 & 8 students in specials/enrichment classes that meet less frequently than daily, a minimum of five (5) academic grades will be obtained per marking period.

### Reporting Non-Academic Items Separate from Academic Grades

- Grades in grade book should consist of activities directly related to content/academic standards – the curriculum approved by the Board of School Directors.
- Non-academic items are not included in the reporting of academic grades in the grade book; the reporting of academic grades involves removal of things that are not content-specific.
  - Examples: Providing point value/grades to bringing tissues, writing utensils, signed syllabi, book covers, wearing certain hats/clothing, academic learning behaviors, etc.

### Eliminating Inflated Grades

- Grades will not be “inflated” (grades that include academic learning behaviors and/or homework/assignments not checked for accuracy). The assigning of grades higher than what was achieved against clear academic standards of achievement is not permitted.

### Reporting of Academic Learning Behaviors (Non-Academic Grades)

- “Academic learning behaviors” consist of specific skills that contribute to overall student learning: work ethic, class participation, preparation/organization, and interpersonal skills.
- Since academic learning behaviors are important skills worthy of developing and monitoring, a new district-wide reporting system will be used to assess these skills.
- Academic learning behaviors will not be included in academic grades that are placed in the grade book.

## Reporting NON-ACADEMIC LEARNING BEHAVIORS

- A new district-wide reporting system will be used to assess students’ work ethic, class participation, preparation/organization, and interpersonal skills (effective for the 2015-2016 school year).
- Elementary & secondary report cards include features that allow reporting of these skills for all students.
- The new system will also allow for coding if students received accommodations, modifications, or enrichment.

## Provision of HOMEWORK

- Homework will be checked and/or graded for accuracy (homework must be checked for accuracy, but does not need to be included as a grade in the grade book).
- Students will not receive multiple consequences for lack of homework completion (discipline & grade penalty).
- The following scale will be applied according to frequency:
  - Minimal 0-5%; moderate 0-10%; high 0-15%
- **Homework will not exceed 15%** of total grade.

## Provision of EXTRA CREDIT/ENRICHMENT:

- If extra credit/enrichment is used, it must be available to all students.
- Extra credit/enrichment should relate to content and be reported in grade book as a separate, defined grade.
  - Extra Credit - Graded out of zero with **maximum of 3%**
  - Enrichment - Graded out of total possible points.

## Procedures for Addressing Plagiarism/Cheating (secondary level only):

- Immediately notify parents and provide information to the school administration for discipline and further determination of how grading of assignment/assessment will be addressed.

**OPTIONAL: If the provision of RETESTING is used:**

- Not appropriate for midterms, finals, cornerstone/common assessments.
- Should allow all students the opportunity for retests, corrections, and revisions in order to increase mastery of content.
- Students must have completed all unit work prior to retesting.
- Parent notification & some form of remediation should be in place.
  - New grade should count in place of former grade.

**OPTIONAL: If the provision of LATE WORK is used:**

- Conditions for acceptance/lack of should be shared with students.
  - (Ex.) Including statement at top of study guide – “This assignment will not be accepted after assessment is completed.”
- Grade penalty should be given when accepting work.
  - All assignments must be submitted within 2 weeks of due date.
- Maximum reduction of 50% of earned grade.

**Grading of SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

- Research recommends that formative assessments be ungraded and consist of specific, constructive feedback to students. Examples include oral questioning, think-alouds, group response techniques, etc.
- Summative assessments are graded and consist of **unit-ending assessments** & **intra-unit assessments**.
  - **Unit-ending assessments**: % should be higher than intra-unit assessments.
  - **Intra-unit assessments**: % should be lower than unit-ending assessments.