

GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Board of Education believes that grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians identify the student’s areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. Parents/guardians and students have the right to receive course grades that represent an accurate evaluation of the student’s achievement.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)

The teacher of each course shall determine the student’s grade. The grade assigned by the teacher shall not be changed by the Board or the Superintendent except as provided by law, Board policy and administrative regulation. (Education Code 49066)

(cf. 5125.3 - Challenging Student Records)

Teachers shall evaluate a student’s work in relation to standards which apply to all students at his/her grade level. The Superintendent or designee shall establish and regularly evaluate a uniform grading system, and principals shall ensure that student grades conform to this system. Teachers shall inform students and parents/guardians how student achievement will be evaluated in the classroom.

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

Grades should be based on impartial, consistent observation of the quality of the student’s work and his/her mastery of course content and objectives. Students shall have the opportunity to demonstrate this mastery through a variety of methods such as classroom participation, homework, tests and portfolios.

When reporting student grades to parents/guardians, teachers may add narrative descriptions, observational notes and/or samples of classroom work in order to better describe student progress in specific skills and subcategories of achievement.

Students in grades K-5 (required for K-3) receive narrative evaluations rather than letter grades in order to give parents/guardians more information about their children’s developmental levels and also promote students’ self-esteem and experiences of success.

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

Unexcused Absences

If a student misses class without an excuse and does not subsequently turn in homework, take a test or fulfill another class requirement which he/she missed, the teacher may lower the student’s grade for nonperformance.

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (continued)

Five unexcused absences per grading period shall constitute excessive unexcused absences. Students with excessive unexcused absences may receive a failing grade and not receive credit for the class(es).

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The Superintendent or designee shall recommend to the Board the methodology to be used in calculating students' grade point averages.

The Superintendent or designee shall also recommend to the Board whether extra grade weighting will be assigned for honors courses that are substantially similar in depth, breadth and rigor to an Advanced Placement course, an entry-level college course or a community college level course.

(cf. 6141.5 - Advanced Placement)

*Legal Reference:*EDUCATION CODE

41505-41508 Pupil Retention Block Grant

48070 Promotion and retention

48205 Excused absences

49066 Grades; finalization; physical education class

49067 Mandated regulations regarding student's achievement

49069.5 Students in foster care, grades and credits

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

10060 Criteria for reporting physical education achievement, high schools

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

6101-6251 School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994

COURT DECISIONS

Owasso Independent School District v. Falvo (2002) 122 S.Ct. 934

Las Virgenes Educators Association v. Las Virgenes Unified School District (2nd Appellate District 2001) 86 Cal.App.4th 1

Swany v. San Ramon Valley Unified School District (N.D.Cal. 1989) 720 F.Supp. 764

Johnson v. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education (App. 2 Dist. 1986) 224 Cal. Rptr. 885, 179 C.A. 3d 593

*Management Resources:*CDE PUBLICATIONS

Elementary Makes the Grade!, 2001

WEB SITES

CDE: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

Advanced Placement Challenge Project: <http://www.apchallenge.net>

Policy
adopted:

PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Palo Alto, California