

5.10 – GRADING POLICY

I. Philosophy and Intent

Grades assigned to students for performance shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed academic objectives of the course. Grades that are aligned with other educational objectives such as the student learning expectations contained in the curriculum frameworks may also be given.

The basis for evaluating student progress is intended to address the need for information concerning the academic progress of students. The purposes of the grading system are:

- To give information for pupil guidance and counseling.
- To show the achievement of pupils.
- To assist in promotion, retention, transfer, and grade placement.
- To inform parents of the progress of their children.
- To help administrators evaluate the effectiveness of the school program.

II. Report Cards and Grade Reporting

In the Van Buren School District, a report card shall be provided at the end of each grading period, but no less than four (4) times each school year. The report card shall be (a) mailed to the last known address of the student, (b) given to a parent at a parent/teacher conference, or (c) sent home with the student. Parents shall not be required to provide postage or self-addressed envelopes to receive a report card.

III. Grading Scale for Secondary Schools.

The grading scale for students in grades 6-12 shall be:

90 -- 100 A
80 -- 89 B
70 -- 79 C
60 -- 69 D
00 -- 59 F

IV. Determining Grade Point Averages

For the purpose of determining Official Grade Point Averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be as follows:

A = 4 points
B = 3 points
C = 2 points
D = 1 point
F = 0 points

The grade point values for Advanced Placement courses shall be one point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall be worth zero points. To receive credit on the 5.0 scale students must take the entire AP course and complete the applicable test offered by the College Board. The 5.0 scale applies to AP or Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Approved Honors Courses.

For class rank purposes only, the point value for Pre-Advanced Placement and ADE approved Honors courses shall be one-half point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall be worth zero points.

V. Elementary Schools

Student learning in grades K-5 will be reported through the use of a Standards-Based reporting system.

The primary purpose of the K-5 grading system is to communicate to both students and parents each student's level of learning relative to Arkansas Standards. A Standards-Based reporting system helps achieve consistent, accurate, meaningful grades and grades that support learning as defined by Arkansas Standards.

The following ratings indicate a student's progress in relation to the year-end standards.

Level 4 -- Exceeding Standards: Students who exceed the standards demonstrate superior performance (more depth/extension with grade-level work) well beyond proficient grade-level performance. They can apply established reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education skills to solve complex problems and complete demanding tasks on their own. They can make insightful connections between abstract and concrete ideas and provide well-supported explanations and arguments.

Level 3 -- Meeting Standards: Students who are meeting standards demonstrate solid academic performance for the grade level. They can use established reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education skills and knowledge to solve problems and complete tasks on their own. Students can tie ideas together and explain the ways their ideas are connected.

Level 2 -- Approaching Standards: Students who are approaching the standards show substantial skills in reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education skills; however, they only partially demonstrate the abilities to apply these skills.

Level 1 -- Below Standards: Students who are below standards fail to show sufficient mastering of skills in reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education to attain the basic level.

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