

# WMS Grading Policy

## Statement of Purpose

The Woonsocket Middle School uses standards-based curriculum, instructional delivery and assessments. Teachers convert the data into numeric grades. The purpose of grading is: 1) For the teacher to measure the understanding of concepts by the students and 2) To plan instruction and to assess students' strengths and areas needing improvement. Grades are based on an impartial, consistent observation of the quality of a student's mastery of academic standards. Grades are used to communicate the academic achievement of each student to his/her parent/guardian.

## Assessment Categories

Formative Assessments are on-going evaluations of students learning during the learning process. Since this is the most of the students' learning throughout the day, it should be at least 70% of the total quarter grade.

Summative assessments are at the end of the learning process. They are used to evaluate if a student has learned the material that was covered over a certain amount of time. Since these are at the end of the learning process, it should be a maximum of 30% of the total quarter grade.

Teachers will provide a minimum of 16 assessment grades for each marking period. There is a minimum of 12 formative assessments and 4 summative assessments. Encore teachers will provide a minimum of 8 assessment grades (6 Formative and 2 Summative) for each marking period (45 day marking period) due to the classes meeting every other day.

<b>Formative Assessments</b>	<b>Summative Assessments</b>
Classwork/activities	Tests
Quizzes	Reports/Research papers
Homework*	Culminating Projects/Performances
Warm-ups/Do Nows/Exit Tickets	Essays/Final Writing Pieces
Reading Logs/Book Reports/Book Quizzes	Presentations
Drafts (writing)	Science Lab Formal Report
Notebook Checks	Cooking Demonstration Lab
Science Labs Activity	

### **Advanced Placement**

Students in the advanced placement should expect a more rigorous pace with a high level of superior quality of work. Students will not be expected to do excessive amounts of homework unless it directly relates to the grade level standards. Students will receive a separate higher level curriculum in math in order to prepare them to take Geometry during ninth grade at the high school.

### **Behavior/Effort**

Behavior, effort, and participation are not part of students' grades. They are comments stated on the progress report and report card.

### **Cheating/Plagiarizing**

The student will be required to redo the assignment with the oversight of the teacher. At the discretion of the teacher, the new version will receive a penalty grade of no more than one letter less that reflects the academic achievement of that assignment. The student uses his/her retake opportunity for the new version. Administrator consequences may include a meeting with a parent/teacher/administrator, detention or PASS.

### **Dropped Assessments**

At the teacher's discretion, one formative or summative assessment per a quarter can be dropped.

### **Extra credit**

There are no extra credit assignments since students are allowed to make up all assignments and allowed retakes. Students cannot be given extra credit for bringing in classroom supplies, helping our school community, or by providing community service outside of the school.

### **Grading Scale**

A range of 100 to 90: Excellent outcomes in meeting lesson objectives and grade-level/subject standards. Students at this level have mastered all essentials for his/her grade level.

A range of 89 to 80: Good outcomes in meeting lesson objectives and grade-level/subject standards. Students at this level have mastered most the essentials for his/her grade level.

A range of 79 to 70: Fair outcomes in meeting lesson objectives and grade-level/subject standards. Students at this level have mastered the necessary essentials for his/her grade level.

A range of 69 to 50: As per the district policy, a 69 or below is failing. As a result all failing grades are entered between the range of 50 to 69. Any grade 69 or below is a variation of a "F", which indicates that the student has not met basic standards for learning. (O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011) A failure floor of 50 has been established at the middle school level. This allows students to recover from a poor assessment/quarter and have the motivation and ability to recover in order to complete the year successfully.

### **Group projects**

Students will be given both a group grade along with an individual grade for their part of a group project to promote 21st century skills learning at Woonsocket Middle School.

### **Homework**

Homework will be meaningful and have a purpose related to the objectives/standards being taught on the day it is assigned. It should be a reinforcement/practice of standards/skills learned in class, provide a chance to increase their learning, and/or an enhancement of concepts taught in class with a link to the real world. Homework can not count for more than 5% of a student's quarter grade.

### **Late work/Make-ups/Missing work/Incompletes**

Work will be accepted up until one week before the end of the quarter. At the discretion of the teacher, the student will receive a penalty grade of no more than one letter less that reflects the academic achievement of that assignment. Work that is consistently submitted late will be brought to the parent's/guardian's attention by communication from the teacher via phone calls and/or meetings. Students who have missed school due to special circumstances will have an individual plan created in conjunction with administration, guidance, and teachers. Students who do not complete an assignment will not be given a grade until the assignment is completed. If by the end of the quarter, a student still has not submitted his/her work, the student will receive a 50 for each assignment which is the failure floor. \*See grading scale for more details.

### **Promotion Policy**

The Woonsocket Middle School believe that all children can achieve instructional standards given appropriate instruction and time. To that end, grade retention is a last resort. A student shall be promoted if he/she attains 5 ¼ credits per an academic year. Students must pass English/Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies for a total of four (4) credits. Students must receive at least 1 ¼ additional credits from the

remaining academic subjects including encore, health, physical education, chorus/band, and reading. A student who does not attain 5 ¼ credits may have the option of attending summer school. The cost of summer school shall be the responsibility of the parent.

#### Academic Credits by Subject

- Mathematics - 1 credit per year
- English/Language Arts - 1 credit per year
- Science - 1 credit per year
- Social Studies - 1 credit per year
- Encore - ½ credit per half year
- Health - ½ credit per year
- Physical Education - ½ credit per year
- Reading - ½ credit per year

#### **Reporting Student Progress/Grades**

Progress reports and report cards are distributed four times a year. Quarter 1 is August 31st to October 30th. Quarter 2 is November 2nd to January 15th. Quarter 3 is January 19th to April 1st. Quarter 4 is April 4th to June 14th.

#### **Retakes**

All students are afforded the chance to take retakes in all classes. Students who wish to retake an assessment due to failing or not meeting the student's expectation may do so once within two weeks of the assessment. All retakes will be graded based on the retake and not an average of the first assessment and the retake. At the discretion of the teacher, the student will receive a penalty grade of no more than one letter less that reflects the academic achievement of that assignment. Teachers may request students to fix all incorrect answers on the assessment before taking the retake. Teachers may give students a different version of the assessment that still is assessing the same standards and objectives.

#### **Rubrics/Criteria Charts**

Teachers give students rubrics/criteria charts for writing pieces/essays, reports, projects, presentations, and labs. Rubrics use a scale of 1 (below the standard) to 4 (exceed the standard). These rubrics and criteria charts explicitly state what students need to include on the assessment to achieve each standard. The entire rubric is based on the academic achievement of the assessment and not on effort, behavior or participation.

## **Students With Special Education Needs**

Students who have a 504 Plan or an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) have goals and objectives written specially for them in order for them to access the grade level standards with supports and accommodations. Teachers are required by federal law (ADA: American's with Disabilities Act and IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) to implement the accommodations and modifications that are contained in the student's IEP. Accommodations are supports that help the student access the grade level standards while modifications are changes to the grade level standards that the student is expected to master. For the majority of our special education students, who are in general education classrooms with support from a special education teacher, that special education teacher will collaborate with the general education teacher to modify assignments. The general education teacher will grade assignments with collaboration from the special education teacher. In addition to a quarterly report card, students who have an IEP receive a quarterly progress report on their progress towards mastering their IEP goals and objectives.

### **Students receiving English Language Learners (ELL) Services**

As part of Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, ELL students are expected to attain English proficiency and meet grade level standards in their academic classes like all students are expected. The ELL and general education teacher collaborate on accommodations and modifications of assignments and grading of those assignments based on the English proficiency of the student.

### **Skyward Family/Student Portal**

Teachers will maintain a record of students' achievement and attendance in Skyward. Teachers will post assignment grades on a weekly basis. It is highly recommended that a minimum of two grades a week are posted for classes that meet on a daily basis. A minimum of one grade a week is posted for classes that meet two to three times a week.

### **Truancy**

No grade is given to a student who is truant. The comment on the report card is "Failure due to non-attendance."

### **Unannounced Quizzes**

#### **"Pop Quizzes"**

Teachers will not utilize "pop quizzes" as a part of students' grades. They will not be used as a threat for behavior or incomplete homework. The use of unannounced quizzes increases both student stress and parent angst (Guskey, 2002; Partin, 2005).

## **Zeroes**

Students who do not hand in an assignment will receive a comment code of NS (Not Submitted) into the column where a grade should be. Giving a student a zero, “This not only reflects grading as a punishment, but also creates a hole that students can not get out of” (Guskey, 200; Reeves, 2004; O’Connor and Wormeli, 2011). If a student is non-compliant in completing an assignment, he/she will receive a comment code of NS (Not Submitted) into the column where a grade should be, and the teacher will note in Skyward in the comments section for the assignment that “child has chosen not completed assignment”. The student will follow the make up policy listed above. The only exception is for a case where the student has had little to no instructional time due to lack of attendance.