

PSHS GRADING GUIDE



No More Grading Game

In the traditional grade book, grades were determined by an accumulation of points. Many times, it was difficult for students and parents to figure out what the grades meant. In some cases, if teachers had not entered anything in the grade book for a while, they would enter a random assignment with little value to the ultimate learning outcomes of the class. Students, for the most part, did not see their grade as a reflection of what they knew or were able to do in their classes. A student's actual knowledge of content could be disguised by good behavior and collecting enough points on miniscule assignments. Students would also begin to barter for points and ask for extra credit which had little to no value on the learning of educational outcomes. In some cases, missing work was not been treated as opportunities to learn, but rather an exercise of get it done quickly to get the missing points.

In an effort to change the game, the faculty at PSHS has developed new grading practices and guidelines. Student's grades will be based on how they perform academically. The fundamental behaviors of successful students, called Habits of Work, will be tracked and reported, but will not be factored into a student's academic grade.

"We want to change the conversation from "I failed and can't do this, to ... I don't know how to do this yet.""

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Academic Grades

The grade books will have two categories, "Summative" and "Formative." Summative is worth 80% of a student's final grade and includes things such as unit tests, papers, etc. Formative is worth 20% of a student's final grade and includes things such as quizzes and other checks for understanding. There will not be any homework grades. However, we believe homework is extremely important. It is for preview, practice, and evidence of learning. It allows teachers to give feedback to students regarding progress on learning outcomes.

Our gradebooks will be set up with four individual quarters. In order to pass each quarter, students will be required to pass all summative assessments that quarter. To earn a credit in the class, students will need to pass all four quarters. The final grade in the class will be the average of all four quarters and be placed on the student's transcript.

Multiple Opportunities

Our basic teaching and learning cycle ensures students will have multiple opportunities to learn the material before they are assessed: preview the material, direct instruction, practice and feedback, and then finally, assessment. If a student has been fully participating in the teaching learning cycle and needs more time to learn, **teachers will give students another opportunity to try again after the student has shown additional preparation and/or practice.** Often this requires students to work with the teacher outside of class. In the meantime, the next teaching and learning cycle has begun, making “catching up” more challenging, but the extra effort will be rewarded by changing the grade of the redone assignment/assessment. This is where good **habits of work** are rewarded. Students who are

“What matters most is that students learn the material”

doing their best will get the opportunity to try again. What matters most is that students learn the material. As such, teachers are more flexible with students who need additional time. However, teachers must use their discretion to determine how much additional time is enough, assign a grade and move on. Students will have additional opportunities throughout the course to pass each of their summative assessments

Three primary purposes for homework

1. Preview - To prepare students to learn new material.
2. Practice - To help students master learning outcomes.
3. Evidence - To provide evidence of a student’s progress toward a learning outcome

Homework is not assessed, but it is extremely important.

Homework is a critical component of the learning process. It allows teachers to give feedback on learning progress. It also allows teachers to identify misconceptions and provides them with the information they need to adjust instruction in the classroom.

Habits of Work (HOW)

Be Respectful

- Respect Yourself
- Decency (Actions and Words)
- Respect Others

Engage in Class

- Uses Technology as Directed by Teacher
- Uses Available Resources
- On Task

Show Up

- Attendance
 - Proactive about Make Up Work
- Tardies
- Prepared for Class

Turn in Your Work

- Meets Deadlines
- Demonstrates Effort
- Work is Original
- Complete

“Habits of Work are the fundamentals for success in school.”

The habits of work, or HOW, are the behavioral things students do to be successful in classes. We believe these are the fundamentals for success in school. Each teacher will be tracking the HOW for every student in every class every day. They are for communication and problem solving purposes only. If students should start to struggle, we can then look at their HOW and better target areas students are struggling. For example, if a student has a low academic grade, and his HOW are low, we can suggest the student improve their habits to see if it will cause their academic grade to increase. Conversely, if the student’s HOW are high and their academic are grade is low, then we as teachers need to figure out a way to help the student learn the material. The habits of work are things the student has full control of and either does or does not.

Why??

We believe assigning grades in this fashion, puts the student in the driver seat. Grades are something they control vs. a game that is sometimes hard to decipher and win. It also allows students the time they need to learn the content of each class.

For our college bound students, this grading system will better prepare them for what is expected at college. Many college classrooms do not look at daily homework; the grades are based solely on the tests given. We want our students to learn the importance of doing homework for learning, not for a grade.

These changes also require each student to meet a level of competency to earn a credit. A student can no longer fail an assessment and hope the scores on their other assessments and assignments will create a high enough average to counteract the poor grade. This process, which has been common practice before, can potentially create gaps for students leaving them susceptible to trouble later down the road.

Ultimately, we want the student conversation to change from “I failed and can’t do this to ... I don’t know how to do this yet.”

Mindset & Motivation: **We foster Growth Mindsets**

We believe that intelligence is not fixed – we are not “born smart.” Instead, we believe that intelligence is open – students can learn and grow through hard work and perseverance.

Instead of ...

Try ...

I’m not good at this ...

What am I missing?

I’m awesome at this ...

I’m on the right track.

I give up ...

I’ll use some of the strategies we’ve learned.

This is too hard.

This will take some time and effort.

I made a mistake.

Mistakes help me to learn better.

It’s good enough.

Is it really my best work?