



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BLACK RIVER FALLS
Inspiring Excellence

School District of Black River Falls

Grading Guidelines

Implementation: 2015-2016 School Year

Grading Philosophies

After surveying staff and having continual collaborative discussion through PreK-12 Departments, the School District of Black River Falls has established the following overarching philosophies in Grading:

1. Grades should convey how well students have achieved our established course curricula which are aligned to the standards.
2. Families are a critical piece. We need to report out in a manner that is easy to understand. We need to share information with parents so that they are informed along the way.
3. We believe that soft skills or future work habits are also important for our students to demonstrate and learn. These skills along with course curricula will be evaluated to convey if our students have achieved mastery of these skills.

Grading Guidelines

The School District of Black River Falls has established these guidelines around grading to increase the consistency, clarity, and accuracy in evaluating and reporting student achievement.

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What is the purpose of grading?

The purpose of grading is to engage teachers and students in the process of assessing progress toward targeted knowledge and skills in order to inform learning and instruction. The purpose of final grades is to communicate to students, parents, and teachers the level of competency a student has achieved. Grades are not compensation. Grades are communication.

What makes up a student's grade?

A student's grade is made up of both Formative and Summative assessments.

Formative refers to assessments **FOR learning**. Formative approaches are the practice attempts that are closely monitored by the teacher to determine if the student is "getting it". A formative assessment is like a dress rehearsal for a play or a scrimmage for an athletic event.

Summative refers to assessment **OF learning**. Summative activities occur when the teacher believes the student is ready to demonstrate or perform the learning that has taken place. A summative assessment is like "show time." As a general rule, formative happens throughout a unit of study, whereas, summative opportunities tend to take place towards the end.

Possible examples:

Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classwork/Class Activity - In class discussion - Discussion Board Postings/Response - Lab Report - Quiz - Paper/Essay - Exit Slip - Homework - Example problems - Model/Demonstration - Practice Presentation - Collaborative activities - Speech/video - Research - Reflections - Peer/Self Assessments - Visual Representations - Graphic Organizer - Back Channel Posts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test - Quiz - Exam: Final or Mid-Term - Lab Report - Performance Assessment - Presentation - Project - Model/Demonstration - Speech/Video - Paper/Essay - Individual/Group Work - Research - Reflections - Peer/Self Assessments - Visual Representations - Collaborative activities

**** Please note:** This is not a list of all possibilities. Opportunities for assessment informative or summative form are endless. **The process by which the teacher creates and implements the assessment for the student to demonstrate their mastery determines whether it is summative or formative.**

Additionally, ability testing will never be part of a student’s grade. Ability testing is any kind of standardized testing that assesses a student’s capabilities and proficiencies compared to their same age peers across the state or the nation. This nationally normed data is helpful in keeping our student’s learning competitive, as well as is mandated by the state in many cases. Ability testing could include, Universal Screener: STAR Reading/STAR Math, BAS (Benchmark Assessment System, WKCE(Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam), ACT Aspire, ACT, ACT WorkKeys,etc.

The final quarter and semester grades must be a summation of the students’ understanding. Therefore, these grades will reflect both formative and summative

assessments. Because formative assessments serve as practice, these scores will comprise a smaller portion of the grade.

Summative assessment or the student's demonstration of knowledge will be weighted heavier, but not to exceed a range of 50-80%, (including the final at the High School). Summative assessments must be differentiated so that students engage in a wide variety of means in demonstrating their proficiency of learning.

Ample opportunity must be provided for a student to show mastery in each course and content area. A preponderance of evidence must be present to determine an adequate reflection of mastery through the student's grade. This means that the number of "data points" collected throughout a course should be representative of the number of units of study. A final summative score can only be assigned when students have had ample opportunity to receive feedback on formative and summative assessments throughout the course.

Grading Scale

All teachers will use the following grading scale to determine students' grades:

A	93 – 100%
A-	90 – 92%
B+	87 – 89%
B	83 – 86%
B-	80 – 82%
C+	77 – 79%
C	73 – 76%
C-	70 – 72%
D+	67 – 69%
D	63 – 66%
D-	60 – 62%
F	BELOW 60%

Calculation Semester Grades (High School Only)

Semester grades will be a cumulative collection of points throughout the 18 weeks. There will be two primary categories that student scores will be entered: formative and summative. Teachers may create additional categories within these two primary categories. The teachers will use their professional judgment to determine the weighting of the formative category and the summative category within the guidelines

established. Summative assessments will be within the range of 50-80% of the total grade. The final exam is included within the 50-80% range of the summative category.

Corrective Assessment

Because the district feels grades communicate what students know and are able to do, all students, regardless of the grade earned on the initial assessment, will have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of content on summative assessments through corrective assessment. The following guidelines are in place:

- 1) Students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of that content within 5 school days from the time a student receives the corrected summative assessment back from their teacher. The more time that lapses, the greater likelihood that the learner will get further behind and not benefit from a re-take.
- 2) A student is required to complete all undone homework and any formative assessments and benchmark assessments that led up to the original summative assessment.
- 3) Multiple retakes are not permitted. One re-take after appropriate remediation relative to specific learning targets is expected.
- 4) The corrective assessment opportunity would not apply to things such as long-term projects or research papers/essays that had embedded formative assessments as part of the process. (Examples of these formatives could be: opportunities for feedback and corrections, submission of rough drafts, rewrites, check-ins, etc.) If a project is summative in nature, and students have completed it independently without ongoing feedback, then it would be open for corrective assessment. The process by which the teacher creates and implements the assessment for the student to demonstrate mastery determines whether it is summative or formative and therefore eligible for corrective assessment.
- 5) The grade on a corrective assessment would be the higher of the two grades earned.
Exception: If outside resources are used within the corrective assessment opportunity, partial credit will be awarded.
- 6) The opportunity to take a corrective assessment is not automatic. If a pattern seems to emerge where it is suspected a student is consistently unprepared for the initial summative assessment, the opportunity for corrective assessment could be denied. In this instance, the student's parents would be contacted to share the teacher's concern.
- 7) Teachers reserve the right to give alternative versions and ask follow up questions to see if the student really mastered the material.

Homework Guidelines

Research provides strong evidence that, when used appropriately, homework benefits student achievement. To make sure that homework is appropriate, teachers should follow these guidelines:

- Assign purposeful homework. Legitimate purposes for homework include practicing a skill or process that students can do independently but not fluently, elaborating on information that has been addressed in class to deepen students' knowledge, and providing opportunities for students to explore topics of their own interest. (Busy work is not acceptable. Homework is not punitive.)
- Design homework to maximize the chances that students will complete it. For example, ensure that homework is at the appropriate level of difficulty. Students should be able to complete homework assignments independently with relatively high success rates, but they should still find the assignments challenging enough to be interesting.
- Involve parents in appropriate ways (for example, as a sounding board to help students summarize what they learned from the homework) without requiring parents to act as teachers or to police students' homework completion. Assure that appropriate resources are available for the student to successfully complete the work.
- Carefully monitor the amount of homework assigned so that it is appropriate to students' age levels.

Meaningful Feedback

- We can learn without grades. We can't learn without descriptive feedback.
- Not all work completed needs to become a score in the grade book. However, if a student completes work, they need to receive specific feedback.

Examples:

- Probing questions that cause the student to think about the task

- Comments comparing the current work with what is expected on the assignment or assessment
- Correcting the assignment in class and students receiving that immediate feedback
- Online practice that provides corrections

Late work/Missing Assignments/Make-Up Work

Our goal is to assess how much students have learned. We do feel for this learning to be effective that it should take place within the same unit. The connection between teaching and learning are essential. We want to set students up for success by ensuring there is not too much time that passes between these two occurrences. The following guidelines are in place:

1. Late work will be accepted until the end of the unit.
2. When late work is turned in, a teacher may deduct the total points earned by up to 50%.
3. Teachers must be very clear regarding when each assignment is due.
4. Per Board Policy, if a student is absent from class and the absence is excused, a student is given two days for each excused absence to make up the work before it is counted as late.

Parent Communication

Needs to be identified and communicated by building.

When will a skyward message go home automatically?

When are grades pulled for privilege?

When are parents contacted by a teacher? How many D's F's prompt direct parent contact?