

Dear Parents,

Please see attached information regarding grading expectations for students and changes for the upcoming school year. Teachers will be sharing this information with students as they begin the school year and we will continue to evaluate our process as we obtain input and further research different aspects through the upcoming school year. The rationale for any changes this year focuses on the consistency of expectations for all students as identified in the attached document.

As a school district, we are committed to the learning of the students who attend our schools. Please note the following assurances as we continue this path of reviewing the appropriate way to communicate the achievement of your children.

1. As we make this change in how we assess, we guarantee that your children will still receive a high quality educational experience.
2. You will have good information about your child's learning along the way
3. Finally, we will return to you at the end of this year for feedback so we can make the necessary changes and recommended improvements.

If you have questions regarding the attached information, please contact your building administrator or classroom instructor.

Thank you.

School District of New Berlin

District Identifies Changes in Assessment and Grading for 2010-2011 and Process for Continued Work to Implement Grading Policy for 2011-2012

The school district of New Berlin will be implementing some changes to grading and assessment in order to provide consistency in expectations for all students in a particular grade level.

Changes to grading and expectations for the fall of the school year 2010-2011 will include the following (Please see reference information below for more detailed descriptions):

1. Standardize the grading scale at the secondary and elementary levels (Grades 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12).
2. Clarify and implement specific and standard expectations for missing, incomplete, or otherwise late work for students.
3. Clarify, unify and implement expectations relative to the use of zeros in grading.
4. Clarify, unify and implement expectations relative to the use of extra credit in grading.
5. Provide an option for students to report or not report class rank to post-secondary school programs.

For the year 2010-2011, we will plan to continue discussions and possibly make recommendations regarding the following areas for the fall of the school year 2011-2012:

- Calculating grades
- Cooperative or group work grading
- Class rank
- Valedictorian/Salutatorian
- Standards-based grading
- Special Education
- ELL
- Separating achievement & behavior grades
- Report Cards and Transcripts

As we move forward with this part of the process, we will be seeking input from students, staff and parents in reference to the different areas being addressed. We will communicate a timeline for input into the discussions and a method for involvement into the continuing discussions in these substantive areas.

What will remain the same?

- Students will receive one letter grade, as they have in past school years, identifying their performance in a particular course/subject.
- The instructor will identify the weight to be placed on areas of grading such as homework, quizzes, tests, projects, etc.
- Advanced Placement Courses at the secondary level will continue to be weighted on a five point scale versus the four point scale for all other courses.
- Report cards and high school transcripts will remain the same and be reported in the same way.
- Class rank will be kept and students will be ranked as they have been previously.

What will change?

- All students and staff will follow a consistent grading scale that has been identified by the school staff by grade level. This grading scale is significant for students in that it will provide consistency in the scale and measure for achievement among all of their courses. Previously, students could have multiple grading scales for the various courses in which they were enrolled. Research shows that consistency in the grading scale is beneficial for students in their knowledge and understanding of the assessment and evaluation system. This system will provide clear understanding and less potential for confusion in the reporting of learning.

The scale for students was presented to staff for input and recommendation prior to making a final determination. Based upon their input, the grading scale will be consistent for students in grades 4-12 and is as follows:

98-100	A+
93-97	A
90-92	A-
88-89	B+
83-87	B
80-82	B-
78-79	C+
73-77	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
63-67	D
60-62	D-
≤ 59	F

- **Students in all classes will follow consistent expectations for late/missing work as follows:**

Work assigned to students is aligned with the curriculum-related learning targets identified for the grade level/course. Our goal for students is that they complete assigned work on time and to teacher expectations. Late/Incomplete work will be identified with an "I" (Incomplete). When work is not completed as expected, the student will be assigned to an intervention time to complete the assignment before and/or after school.

In determining summative grades, teachers must decide whether they have sufficient evidence of achievement. If not, the grade recorded shall be an "I" for Insufficient Evidence/Incomplete. When credits are involved, an "I" means no credit.

Zeros will be assigned after all intervention options have been exhausted as determined by the school. There will be no extension allowed for late work beyond the end of the unit or one week from the due date for the assignment. This is contingent upon student attendance for assigned intervention time(s).

- **Extra Credit Expectations and Implementation guidelines as follows:**

The purpose of extra credit is to motivate students to go above and beyond what is expected of them through extension opportunities. It can be awarded when students exhibit a higher level of understanding. It is not intended to cover up for earlier underachievement, as learning opportunities will be provided throughout the grading period to master content objectives.

- Extra credit should provide the same opportunities for all students
- Extra credit opportunities should be related to content objectives (not for such things as bringing in boxes of Kleenex, participating in spirit days, or attending school activities)
- Teachers are not required to offer extra credit

Concluding Information:

As we begin the school year, the consistency presented in these areas is expected to prove beneficial to all students in the learning process. As we made recommendations and make adjustments to our grade reporting system and expectations, we utilized the research and findings of Ken O'Connor, Robert Marzano and, most significantly, Thomas Guskey to support our work.

Each school will identify the appropriate support and intervention systems for students as we implement this process for the school year. These will include, but not be limited to, in-school intervention programs and learning assignments for students; before and after school intervention programs; school, student, and parent intervention conferences to inform and support the learning of students; school staffing; scheduled parent/teacher conferences and other means of support.

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this document or would consider involvement in providing input to the continued work and discussions of the grading task force, please contact your building principal/administration.