

# NOVATO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Board Policy

Series 5000

BP 5121

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### GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Governing Board believes that grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians identify the student's areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. Parents/guardians and students have the right to receive course grades that represent an accurate evaluation of the student's achievement.

The teacher of each course shall determine the student's grade. The grade assigned by the teacher shall not be changed by the Board or the Superintendent except as provided by law, Board policy and administrative regulation. (Education Code 49066)

(cf. 5125.3 – Challenging Student Records)

Teachers shall evaluate a student's work in relation to standards which apply to all students at his/her grade level. The Superintendent or designee shall establish and regularly evaluate a uniform grading system, and principals shall ensure that student grades conform to this system. Teachers shall inform students and parents/guardians how student achievement will be evaluated in the classroom.

(cf. 5124 – Communication with Parents/Guardians)

(cf. 6011 – Academic Standards)

Grades will be based on the following: careful, impartial and consistent observation and measurement of the quality of the student's work; the mastery of course content and standards and the degree to which course outcomes are achieved; demonstrated class work and participation, homework, projects, course assignments, tests and other assessments of student performance.

- Student behavior shall not be factored into a student's academic performance except as it relates to participation in class or in completing and turning in assigned work.
- If a student is excessively tardy to class, the teacher may lower the student's grade for nonparticipation.
- If a student misses class without an excuse and does not subsequently turn in homework, take a test or fulfill another class requirement which he/she missed, the teacher may lower the student's grade for nonperformance.

(cf. 6154 – Homework/Makeup Work)

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- If a student receives a failing grade because of unexcused absences, the student's record shall specify that the grade was assigned because of excessive unexcused absences. (Education Code 49067)  
cf. 5125 – Student Records)
- Students and parents shall be notified about performance and progress.
- Formal reports of student progress are communicated in accordance with Board Policy 5124.

Teachers shall inform students about the class grading system at the beginning of the semester and other times as appropriate

The grade given to each pupil shall be determined by the teacher and in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith including non-compliance with Policy 5124 or incompetency, shall be final. The Board or Superintendent shall not order a grade to be changed unless the teacher is given an opportunity to state orally, in writing, or both, the reason for the grade, and to the extent practical be included in discussions relating to changing the grade. (Education Code 49066)

### **Students on Suspension**

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the removal. A student shall be permitted to makeup any work missed within 10 days of his/her return to school. (Education Code 48913)

### **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

The Superintendent or designee shall recommend to the Board the methodology to be used in calculating students' grade point averages. The Superintendent or designee shall also recommend to the Board whether extra grade weighting will be assigned for honors courses that are substantially similar in depth, breadth and rigor to an Advanced Placement course, an entry-level college course or a community college level course. (cf. 6141.5 – Advanced Placement)

Legal Reference:

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### EDUCATION CODE

- 41505-41508 Pupil Retention Block Grant
- 48070 Promotion and retention
- 48205 Excused absences
- 48431.6 Required systematic review
- 49066 Grades; finalization; physical education class
- 49067 Mandated regulations regarding student's achievement
- 49069.5 Students in foster care, grades and credits
- 49601 Attendance and Absence

### CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

- 10060 Criteria for reporting physical education achievement, high schools

### UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

- 1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- 6101-6251 School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994

### COURT DECISIONS

- Owasso Independent School District v. Falvo (2002) 122S.Ct. 934
- Las Virgenes Educators Association v. Las Virgenes Unified School District (2<sup>nd</sup> Appellate District 2001) 86 Cal.App.4<sup>th</sup> 1
- Swany v. San Ramon Valley Unified School District (N.D.Cal. 1989) 720 F.Supp. 764
- Johnson v. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education (App. 2 Dist. 1986) 224 Cal. Rptr. 885, 179 C.A. 3d 593
- Johnson v. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education* (App. 2 Dist. 1986) 224 Cal. Rptr. 885, 179 Cal. App. 3d 693
- cf Policy 5124: Reporting Student Progress
- Policy 6145: Extra and Co-Curricular Activities

### MANAGEMENT RESOURCES:

#### CDE PUBLICATIONS

Elementary Makes the Grade!, 2001

#### WEB SITES

CDE: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

Advanced Placement Challenge Project: <http://www.apchallenge.net>

Board Adopted: April 23, 1996; July 27, 1999, Revised: December 5, 2000,  
Revised: July 17, 2001, Revised April 9, 2002, Revised April 1, 2003  
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### **GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

#### **Grades for Achievement**

General criteria for grades and evaluation of student achievement will be consistent among teachers at each grade level throughout the district and reflect the commitment of the district to high quality education, appropriate placement, and achievement of Board approved academic standards.

The purpose of grading and evaluation of student achievement is to:

- \* provide accurate information in terms of mastery of course content and State content standards and the degree to which course outcomes are achieved by the student
- \* provide a realistic representation of the quality of the student's scholastic performance compared to standards.
- \* inform the student of additional efforts and/or different learning strategies to improve scholastic performance, if needed
- \* help the student to plan for future educational experiences

Students, who have been identified as proficient in English through the CELDT testing process, are subject to the same requirements as English only students.

Special education students are also given the regular report card. To comply with law, documentation of progress specific to IEP goals and objectives will be reported to parents on IEP forms each reporting period.

#### **Elementary - Grades K-5**

Student progress and achievement shall be reported to parents at the end of each trimester in the following ways:

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### **1. Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences shall be held during the first trimester to review student grades. Report cards on student progress will be given to the parent. Other formal conference periods may be scheduled with permission of the Superintendent. Informal parent teacher conferences may be scheduled at any time at the request of the teacher or the parent.

### **2. Report cards**

The district approved standards-based report card is used to report student progress. Academic markings (1-4) are used to reflect student progress toward meeting grade level standards. Effort markings reflect student behavior and performance.

If any other system is used, approval by the Board of Trustees is required.

### **Academic Markings**

#### 4 Meeting standards with excellence

- Demonstrates a deeper understanding of grade level standards
- Independently extends grade level standards

#### 3 Meeting standards

- Consistent application of skills
- Independently applies grade level skills

#### 2 Approaching standards

- Progressing in understanding, however, the skills are not yet mastered
- Needs assistance to use grade level skills

#### 1 Below standards

- Working below grade level expectations
- Needs continued support, struggles even with assistance
- Needs intervention

Effort marks will be used in grades **1-5** in physical education, music, social-emotional development and overall effort as follows:

0 = Outstanding;      S = Satisfactory;      N = Needs Improvement

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### Secondary School Grades 6-12

#### 1. Progress Reports

Beginning in 2007-2008, grades shall be reported at the end of each progress reporting period. Progress reports will be mailed home and/or accessible to parents online approximately every five/six weeks. Whenever a student falls below a C- following the last progress report before the final semester grade, the teacher shall arrange a conference with the student's parent/guardian and/or send the parent/guardian a written report. (Education Code 49067)

*(cf. 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)*

*(cf. 5124 – Communication with Parents/Guardians)*

#### 2. Final Grades

The final grade shall be a reflection of the entire grading period (e.g., a semester grade would include both quarters).

When it becomes evident to a teacher that a student is in danger of failing a course, the teacher shall arrange a conference with the student's parent/guardian and/or send the parent/guardian a written report. (Education Code 49067)

*(cf. 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)*

*(cf. 5124 – Communication with Parents/Guardians)*

Teachers will notify parents prior to issuing a failing grade.

		Grade Points		Semester Credits
		Grade Points	AP & Honors*	
	Earned			
<b>A</b>	Outstanding Achievement	4.00	5.00	5
<b>B</b>	Above Average	3.00	4.00	5
<b>C</b>	Average Achievement	2.00	3.00	5
<b>D</b>	Below Average Achievement	1.00	1.00	5
	Sufficient to earn credit			
<b>F</b>	Little or No Achievement	0.00	0.00	0

Grades issued at the end of the second semester for coursework for Algebra 1, Algebra 1A and Algebra 1B will be used to determine if the student has met the high school Algebra 1 standards graduation requirement. (EC 51224.5)

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\*Because of the extra work involved in advanced placement and honors courses approved by University of California for extra grade weighing, one additional grade point is given for grades of A, B, and C (EC 51220.3) in grades 11 and 12.

No grade of a student participating in a physical education class may be adversely affected due to the fact that the student, because of circumstances beyond his/her control, does not wear standardized physical education apparel. (Education Code 49066)

Student performance in high school physical education courses shall be based upon evaluation of the student's individual progress, attainment of goals in each instructional area, tests designed to determine skill and knowledge, and physical performance tests.

(cf. 6142.7 – Physical Education)

Grades for a student in foster care shall not be lowered if the student is absent from school due to either of the following circumstances: (Education Code 49069.5)

1. A decision by a court or placement agency to change the student's placement, in which case the student's grades and credits shall be calculated as of the date the student left school
2. A verified court appearance or related court-ordered activity.

The following marks may also appear on the report card:

(No grade points are issued.)

<b>I</b>	Incomplete
<b>P</b>	Pass
<b>NP</b>	No Pass
<b>CR</b>	Credit
<b>NG</b>	No grade
<b>W</b>	Withdrawal (with principal approval only)

### **Incomplete**

An "I" is given only when a student's work is not finished because of illness or some other excused absence. If the work is not made up within six (6) weeks the incomplete will be replaced with an F. For purposes of eligibility for participation in extra and co-curricular

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activities, an incomplete shall have no effect. (Policy 6145) (Note: the Marin County Athletic League treats an incomplete as an “F” grade, until the work is made up.)

### **Pass/No Pass (P/NP)**

These grades are used for student assistant courses only and for non-college preparatory courses taken in summer school, if agreed to by the teacher and the principal or designee. “Pass” grades earn credit towards high school graduation, but will not be counted in determining class rank, honor roll, or membership in the California Scholarship Federation. Students who receive an F grade shall not receive credit for taking the course.

### **Credit**

Credit may be used at Marin Oaks Continuation High School, Nexus Academy, NOVA and adult education in all classes.

### **No Grade (NG)**

“NG” may be issued under extenuating circumstances. Examples are enrolling or leaving within 3-4 weeks before the end of the semester or illness that cannot be accommodated through home instruction. NG can only be given at the teacher’s discretion and with the approval of the principal or designee. The use of NG shall be applied judiciously and on a case by case basis.

**Repeated Courses:** Students earning a D or F in a course may repeat the course. Students who earn a grade higher than D or F may repeat a district approved course in order to raise their grade point average under extenuating circumstances such as extended illness or upon recommendation of the teacher. The approval of the principal or designee is required. All repeated courses and grades shall be shown on a student’s record and transcript, designated by the letter R (repeated). The highest grade received shall be used in determining the student’s overall grade point average.

**Withdrawal from a Course:** A student may withdraw from a course during the first ten (10) school days of the semester without any entry on her/his permanent record. After ten (10) school days, course withdrawals will be permitted only after consultation with the teacher and with the approval of the principal or designee and the parent/guardian.

Teacher and other staff initiated course changes which transfer a student within a department, from one level to another, may be made at any time, as determined by the principal or designee provided that the change represents minimum level of disruption in the student’s schedule and parents will be notified.

### **Summer School**

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Summer school classes may be used to earn credit by students who have failed in academic core classes, or by non-graduating seniors, or by students identified as in danger of being retained. The course shall be identified as a summer school course on the transcript.

### **Communication**

- 1) School to home communication shall include a description of the district's grading policy. (e.g. parent guides, newsletters)
- 2) Students and parents will be informed of the standards by which their assignments will be evaluated by teachers before they begin their work.

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