

# **New Lenox School District 122**

## **Grading Practices and Guidelines**

***Grades K-8***



***Communicating Student Achievement  
Increasing Student Success***

# Grading Practices and Guidelines

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***Teachers in District 122 should also fully realize the uniqueness of each child in the school and his/her needs. Whereas the guidelines in this report are based on the "average" child, individual differences among children must be taken into consideration by parents and teachers. Exceptions to these guidelines, therefore, must be expected when dealing with children in at-risk situations and students with IEPs and Section 504 plans, whether permanent or temporary. The importance of clear and concise communication between home and school cannot be over-emphasized especially in these situations.***

### **Goals of the Grading Practice Document**

- To provide specific guidelines on grading for teachers, parents, and students
- To help promote continuity and consistency with grading practices throughout the district
- To help promote and foster positive attitudes/experiences about grading
- To help increase the level of communication between home and school, especially as it relates to grades and homework assignments

### **Grading and Reporting Defined**

- ***Academic Meaning of the Grade:*** In District 122, grades reflect what a student knows and can do, as outlined in the New Lenox Curriculum and Curriculum Maps.
- ***Grading to the Standard:*** In District 122, grades also reflect what students know and can do independently in relation to grade level or course expectations.
- ***Academic Grades:*** Teachers in Grades K-8 should attempt to administer grades based upon academic achievement only. Grades may be based on a variety of assignments/assessments during a marking period. These assignments/assessments may take different forms, including tests, quizzes, compositions, exhibits, products, presentations, graphic displays, performance tasks, discussions, and simulations.
- ***Extra Credit:*** Extra credit should not be given. Anything that has points attached to it alters a grade's accuracy in terms of what students have mastered.
- ***Learning Behaviors:*** Teachers in Grades K-3 should report information about effort and behavior separately on the report card as learning skills. Teachers in Grades 4-8 should report information about effort separately on the report card through electronic codes.
- ***Participation:*** Student participation is considered a learning behavior and should not be assigned a grade.
- ***Whole Class Work:*** Guided work completed together with the teacher should not be taken for a grade.

- **Special Populations:** Students receiving services for special education, 504 disabilities, and limited English proficiency will be afforded all accommodations and modifications as documented by the students' IEPs, Section 504 plans, and EL plans. Modified curriculum will be noted on a student's report card.
- **Response to Intervention:** Students participating in the Response to Intervention process will receive interventions to assist them in their academic/behavioral weaknesses.

### The Rationale of Grading Practices in District 122

- In District 122 principals and teachers help to improve student achievement by focusing on four critical questions:
  1. What do students need to know and be able to do?
  2. How will we know they have learned it?
  3. What will we do when they haven't?
  4. What will we do when they already know it?
- Assessments help teachers plan their instruction so they can challenge and support all students.
- Assessments help parents know the academic areas in which a student meets expectations, needs challenge, or needs support.

### General Grading Practices-Recommendations

#### ***In the NLSD 122:***

- Grading practices should support effective teaching and learning.
- Teachers should clearly define grading practices using the common district language to students and parents at the beginning of the year at Expectation Night(s).
- Teachers, in conjunction with their building level administration shall create a building and/or grade level grading system that establishes due dates/deadlines, rewards, and consequences. However, the following concepts must be incorporated:
  - Assignments not turned in will receive a 50% or half of the credit in the case of points. All work **MUST** be turned in by the end of each trimester.
- When using percentages, teachers should assign a grade no lower than 50% to an assignment/assessment that meets minimum standards. **A student fails with a 50% or a 0. Students are not getting points for having done nothing. The student still gets an F. We're simply equalizing the influence of each mark in the overall grade and responding in a way that leads to learning.** (See Appendix A for rationale.)

- Teachers may use letters, numbers, or other symbols on individual tasks/assignments.
- Teachers will record grades with the most precision appropriate for the assignments/assessments.
- If a student is failing a class, the teacher will contact the student's parents, complete the Failure is Not an Option form and provide a copy to the principal. (Appendix B)
- Assignments left in another room and/or locker should not receive a "full late" penalty.
- Each building will utilize an "academic assistance" (homework club, work room time, working lunch, academic detention etc.) system as assistance to students who have missing work.
- No points should be taken off of papers for clerical issues e.g., missing name; wrong color ink/pencil.
- Any given penalty should not be doubled e.g., cheating = two "zeros" for a single test.)
- Efforts should be made to minimize tests on multiple subject areas being given on the same day.
- Regular classroom tests and/or quizzes should not be given during TerraNova, IAR, ISA, or PSAT 8/9 testing days. Homework can be assigned in moderation.
- Major projects should not be due during TerraNova, IAR, ISA, or PSAT 8/9 testing days.
- Since grades communicate learning, grades will be inputted into PowerSchool in a timely manner.
- Missing and late work will be recorded in PowerSchool. Redos will be noted in the comment section.

### **General Homework Guidelines**

- Homework in the District122 should be used for the following reasons:
  1. to reinforce school activities
  2. to extend/broaden school activities
  3. to provide drill/practice for specific skills
  4. to complete unfinished tasks
  5. to provide parents with an opportunity to become involved in the child's learning
  6. to promote/foster regular study habits in children
- In addition, District 122 also recognizes societal influences on children must be taken into consideration. Many children at the school are facing family situations dealing with unemployment, parental separation, joint custody, etc. Teachers and parents alike

must be aware of the high levels of stress many children deal with on a daily basis. Homework tasks must be assigned with this in mind.

### **Homework Guidelines for Teachers**

- Homework should be assigned with specific instructional purposes and related to the classroom activities, themes, objectives and outcomes.
- Homework tasks should be appropriate to students' levels of achievement and individual differences in ability must be considered. Expectations for homework tasks must then be adapted accordingly.
- Teachers should be cognizant of factors such as extra-curricular activities, home/family support, and children's interests in assigning tasks.
- All tasks should be explained clearly, keeping in mind the varying ability levels of children within a class. Whenever applicable, concise written instructions would ensure parents have a clear understanding of the tasks involved.
- It is recommended that assignment notebooks, weekly newsletters, website updates, etc. be used to record daily homework tasks. Regular checks of assignment notebooks are essential. Parental signatures/initials each evening is strongly recommended.
- In addition to agendas, use of newsletters, webpages or website at all grade levels is recommended. Such calendars can keep an overall record of upcoming assignment due-dates, important events, physical education classes, music classes, etc. They can also keep parents informed of main themes/topics/objectives that children will be involved with.
- New concepts should never be introduced as homework tasks. Exceptions to this could include work assigned due to absence from school e.g., illness, travel, or pre-reading activities assigned prior to new units being introduced in class.
- When a student is absent the teacher, parent and student should decide on a reasonable/manageable amount of make-up work.
- A clear statement of expectations for homework at each grade level should be reviewed on Expectation Nights.
- The following time frames are given as a guideline for assigning homework tasks:

#### **General Time Allotments Per School Night**

Grades K-1	20 minutes maximum
Grades 2-3	30 minutes maximum
Grades 4	40 minutes maximum

Grades 5	50 minutes maximum
Grades 6	60 minutes maximum
Grades 7	70 minutes maximum
Grades 8	80 minutes maximum

*\*These allotments are based on school nights (i.e. Monday to Thursday). Teachers should be flexible in these assignments. Children should not be required to complete the maximum amount of time each school night.*

- Most homework should be assigned Monday to Thursday with limited amounts assigned specifically for the weekend.
- At the elementary level children should be given reasonable notice for the study of chapter tests/quizzes - at least 2-3 school nights is recommended. It is also recommended that students be given study guides for such tests outlining important concepts to review, (ii) important vocabulary, (iii) important pages, worksheets etc. to review. Study guides should be reviewed/graded a minimum of 2 nights prior to the test to ensure students have ample time to study the correct information.
- Review and correct study guides before the test, allowing students' time to study the correct material.
- When homework assignments are consistently not being completed, parental contact is essential (phone calls, notes in assignment notebooks, etc.). An appropriate plan of action should be developed between the student, parent, and teacher. This plan should be appropriate to the child's needs and home influences.
- If students are missing several homework assignments, they will be provided an intervention such as but not limited to homework clubs, work room time, working lunch, and/or academic detention.

Teachers can avoid increasing the stress load of students in this situation by:

- Praising all efforts of the student. (The completion of a portion of an assignment should be recognized.)
- Talk with and listen to the child. There may be legitimate reasons why the tasks haven't been completed.
- Avoid overload by not assigning more than one night's tasks to be completed in one night. Be flexible.
- Refrain from depriving children of any part of a recess period unless parent consent is granted. (Reference: The Schools Act, 1970, Section 81)
- Time should be made each day for students to record homework tasks and prepare materials for homework assignments. When two or more teachers are involved,

consistent routines for recording homework are essential. Students need to be aware of the expectations of all teachers involved.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Late Work Practices and Procedures**

- Students are responsible for their learning and homework is a way to reinforce work habits and learning objectives.
- Students are expected to turn assigned work in on the due date.
- Teachers will utilize various communication methods depending on the grade level, such as late forms, notes in a student's assignment notebook, email, call, or note to notify parents of multiple missing assignments.
- A late form should be sent home for each missing/late assignment. See Appendix C.
- Late work will be recorded in PowerSchool.
- A teacher may recommend a student participate in an academic assistance program to assist with work completion.
- Students will be allowed 6 late assignments before students are required to serve an academic detention.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> 2 lates will be accepted for full credit. These count towards the 6 late assignments that lead to an academic detention.
- Assignments turned in after 3 days may be subject to late penalty of 20%.
- All late work is expected to be turned in by the end of each unit and/or trimester.
- Assignments never turned in will result in a 50% and an intervention/consequence will be enforced.
- Students who are absent should work with their teachers to determine a timeline for turning in absentee work.

#### **7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Late Work Practices and Procedures\***

- Students are responsible for their learning and homework is a way to reinforce work habits and learning objectives.
- Students are expected to turn assigned work in on the due date.
- Teachers will utilize various communication methods depending on the grade level, such as email, call, or note to notify parents of multiple missing assignments.
- Late work will be recorded in PowerSchool.



- Students will be allowed 2 homework extensions to receive full credit for late work turned in within 2 school days per subject per trimester.
- Assignments turned in after 3 days or the third late assignment are subject to late penalty of 20%.
- All late work is expected to be turned in by the end of each unit and/or trimester.
- Assignments never turned in will result in a 50% and an intervention/consequence may be enforced.
- An intervention/consequence may be enforced after recurrent lates.
- Students who are absent should work with their teachers to determine a timeline for turning in absentee work.

\*See flow chart (Appendix D).

### Retakes

Students may request a retake from the teacher. However, students must complete the steps designated in the retake packet. Items in the packet include the following:

- Teachers may require a retake if the grade is 69% or below and the below steps are taken.
- Students will be allowed to retake up to 2 assignments per trimester for each subject area.
- Not all assignments can be retaken. For example, summative assessments and PBA's should not be retaken. Teachers can limit retakes if too much time has passed or the student has not taken the appropriate steps to retake the assignment.
- Students must have completed any missing assignments that are related to the unit that is being assessed.
- Students must complete the **TEST RETAKE FORM (Appendix E)** and have it signed by a parent.
- Students must demonstrate a commitment to learning the material to qualify for a retake.
- The highest grade from the test will be counted. Multiple tests should not be averaged.
- **Retakes will be at the teacher's discretion if a student is not following the spirit of the retake practice.**

## **Report Card Procedures**

At the end of each trimester, teachers record grades on the report card for each student in Grades K-8.

**Academic Grades:** Teachers in Grades K-8 will base report card grades on academic achievement only. In Grades K-8, the report card summarizes achievement on many assignment or assessments during a marking period. These assignments/assessments may take different forms, including test, quizzes, composition, exhibits, products, presentations, graphic displays, performances, discussions, and simulations.

**Learning Behaviors:** Teachers in Grades K-3 will report information about effort and behavior separately on the report card as learning skills. Teachers in Grades 4-8 will report information about effort separately on the report card through electronic codes. In grades K-8, teachers observe students' learning skills and talk to them about how to improve or maintain these behaviors. Teachers report learning behaviors on progress reports and in parent conferences. When reporting learning behaviors teachers evaluate skills at the following levels: Meets Expectation and Does Not Meet Expectation.

## **Report Card Format Descriptors\***

K-3 Report Cards – Standards Based

Grades 4-8 – Traditional Grades

Math Report Cards Grades K-5 – Standards Based

\*See Appendix F & G.

## **Honor Roll Guidelines**

Liberty and Martino Junior High Schools will publish a trimester honor roll. The purpose of an honor roll is to honor those who have done outstanding work in their school subjects. As a result of their good work, we feel those students should receive recognition from fellow students and the community, in addition to the personal feeling of accomplishment.

**Honor Roll is for those students who have earned 3.66-4.33 grade point average.**

## **PowerSchool Grade Reporting**

- Students and parents will see the calculation of the 100-0 percentage scale in the grade book.
- Teachers will place a 50% in the grade book for any percentage score of 50-0.

This practice allows the District to continue implementing its philosophy of reducing the negative impact of zeros on a student's grade by adjusting the grading scale so that it is ethically justifiable.

In other words, each grade has an appropriate and equal amount of influence on the student's final grade. Marking zeros as fifties still means the student failed; it is just using the upper, more constructive and recoverable end of the "F" range.

## Appendix A

### “Zero” Rationale

The issue behind the “zero” versus 50 or 60 issue is the inequity created by giving an “F” more value than the other letter grades. Consider the proportional influences of the marks if the scale was reversed as depicted below:

$$\begin{aligned} A &= 100 - 40 \\ B &= 39 - 30 \\ C &= 29 - 20 \\ D &= 19 - 10 \\ F &= 9 - 0 \end{aligned}$$

That “A” would have a huge, yet undue, inflationary effect on the overall grade. Just as we wouldn’t want an “A” to have an inaccurate effect, we don’t want an “F” grade to have such an undue, deflationary, and inaccurate effect.

Keeping zeroes on a 100-pt. scale is just as inequitable as the scale seen here. A (0) on a 100-pt. scale is a (-6) on a 4-pt. scale. Consider the following scale:

100	4
90	3
80	2
70	1
60	0
50	-1
40	-2
30	-3
20	-4
10	-5
0	-6

If a student does no work, he should get nothing, not something worse than nothing. How instructive is it to tell a student that he earned six times less than absolute failure?

***Also, consider the following examples of averages:***

#### Example 1

A weather man is assigned the task of reporting an average temperature for a period of 5 days. He forgets to take the reading on a given day. (85, 87, 88, 84, 0) Therefore, his average temperature calculates to 68.8 degrees which is inaccurate because the average is really 86. His data is unusable.

#### Example 2

A student neglects to turn in an assignment. A “0” is assigned to the missing assignment and the final grade is an 83% (C+).

$$0, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100 \quad \text{Final grade 83\%}$$

If the missing assignment had been given a 60%, the final grade would have been a 92% (B+).

$$60, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100 \quad \text{Final grade 92\%}$$

The second average is a more accurate depiction of the student’s achievement.

Appendix B

**New Lenox School District 122  
Failure is Not an Option**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Current Percentage In Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Failing Grades (Document date when student began receiving a failing grade.)**

Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3

**Reason(s) for Failing Grades (Circle all that apply):**

<input type="checkbox"/> Failure to turn in or complete homework	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor test scores	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor quiz scores	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent absences
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor classroom participation	<input type="checkbox"/> Having difficulty grasping key concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> Failure to make-up work	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Teacher Strategies /Opportunities Provided for the Student**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Action Plan (What will students to assist themselves?):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Contact(s):**

Date:	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C  
New Lenox School District 122  
Late Assignment Form



## LATE ASSIGNMENT

### Grades 4-6

Dear Parents, this letter is to let you know that your student has received **a late** for his/her assignment. We would like to remind you that if your child receives a total of **6 lates** during a trimester, he/she will be required to serve an academic detention. To assist he/she with work completion, interventions such as Homework Club, Working Lunch, etc. may be recommended by the teacher.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class:            Math                             ELA   
                         Science                             Social Studies

What prevented me from completing my work?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To prevent another late/missing assignment, I will:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

This is your student's \_\_\_\_\_ missing assignment.

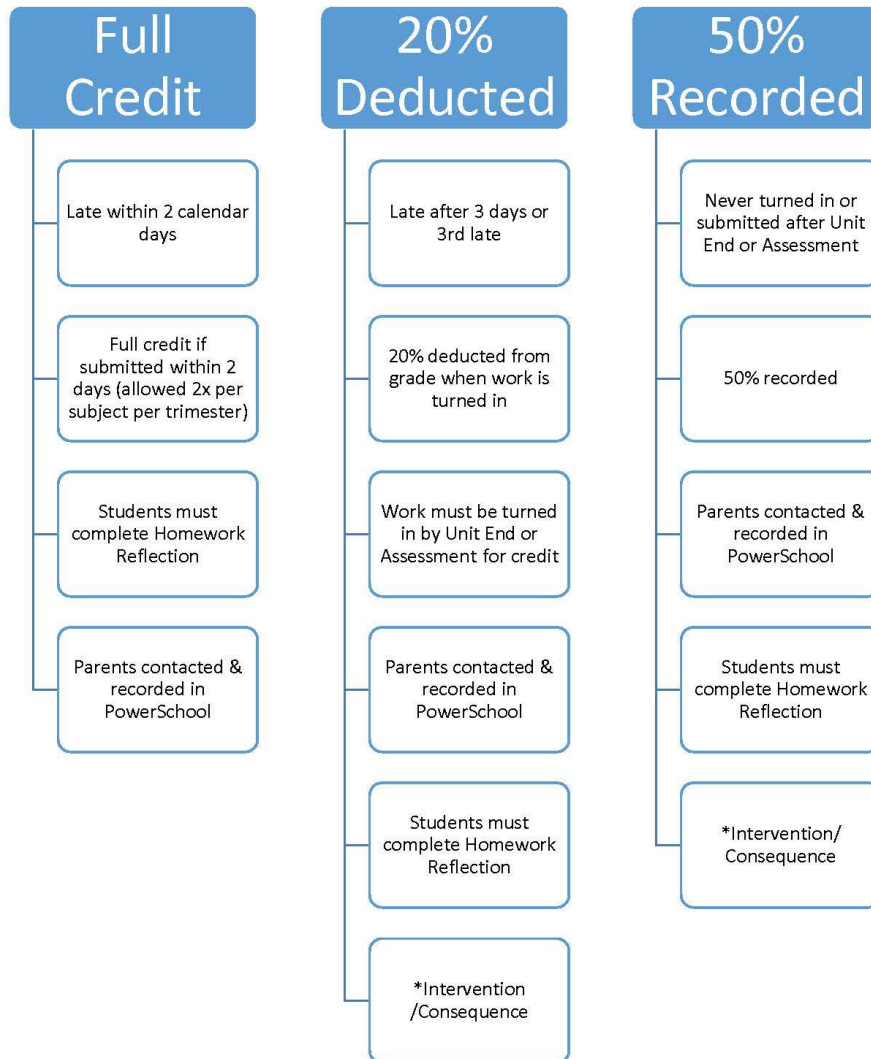
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D Late Flow Chart



### LATES – Grades 7 - 8



\*Varies by school (Academic Detention, Homework Club, Working Lunch, Lunch Club, Work Room)

## Appendix E Redo/Retake Form



### NEW LENOX SCHOOL DISTRICT 122

### REDO/RETAKE FORM

Student Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Subject: Click or tap here to enter text.

Teacher: Click or tap here to enter text.

Due Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Classwork/Homework	Required if Checked	Student Completed	Why didn't you meet the standards on the original assignment/assessment?
Correct and Return (use different colored pen to show new answers)			
Complete Correction Form			
Redo completely			
See me for instructions			
Other:			
Quizzes and Tests	Required if Checked	Student Completed	How do you plan to improve?
Use your book and/or study guide to correct and return			
Complete Test Correction Form			
Retake on ___/___/___			
Parent or Guardian Signature on Test			
See me for instructions			
Other:			

Parent Signature Required \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Other: Homework Club  Workroom Time  Working Lunch  Academic Detention

Appendix F  
**New Lenox School District 122**  
**Grading and Reporting**  
**Grades K-3**

**Academic Grades**

Teachers will assess student learning in a variety of ways over time.

Grades will reflect what a student knows and is able to do in relation to the NLSD 122 curriculum.

The report card grades at Grades K-3 use B (Beginning), D (Developing), and S (Secure) to report achievement.

Meets (M) and improvement needed (I) will be used to report achievement in Science and Social Studies.

Feedback on individual tasks/assignments may include letters, numbers, or symbols.

Teachers will record grades with the most precision appropriate for the tasks/assessments (e.g., percentages, points earned, plusses and minuses).

When using percentages, teachers assign a grade no lower than 50% to a task/assessment that meets minimum standards.

**Homework**

Teachers will only assign homework that is related to the curriculum.

Teachers determine and communicate the extent to which the two categories of homework count toward the marking period grade.

Timely and meaningful feedback on both types of homework will be provided; feedback may take a variety of forms, as determined by the teacher.

**Learning Skills**

Learning skills are reported separately from academic grades.

Learning skills include

- Behavior
- Effort
- Participation

\*Students receiving services for limited English proficiency, special education, or 504 disabilities will be afforded all accommodations and modifications as documented by English Language Learner (ELL) plans, individualized education programs (IEP's), or Section 504 plans.



Appendix G  
**New Lenox School District 122**  
**Grading and Reporting**  
**Grades 4-8**

Procedures for reteaching/reassessment, homework, and grading will be applied consistently within and among schools. The administration at the building level will ensure compliance with the NLSLD 122 Grading Policies. School staffs will communicate course-specific at expectation/open house nights.

### **Reteaching/Reassessment**

Reteaching occurs when the teacher or student determines that students are not meeting learning goals.

Reassessment opportunities are identified by the teacher before the original task/assignment, occur within an instructional unit, and only one opportunity is offered per task assignment.

Reassessment opportunities will be offered in every course.

When tasks/assignments are reassessed, they may be reassessed partially, entirely, or in a different format, as determined by the teacher.

The following tasks/assessments that indicate a final measure of learning may not be reassessed:

- End-of-course or semester exams
- Performance Based Assessments
- Assessments that end an instructional unit or period of study
- Final research papers, reports, or essays
- Culminating projects or performances.

When task/assignment is reassessed, all students may be reassessed, regardless of grade on original assignments/task, if they meet the following requirements: Complete the original task or assessment, complete required assignments, and complete the reteaching/relearning activities, as determined by the teacher.

- Only 2 retakes per trimester per subject are allowed.
- Some assignments do not qualify to be retaken.
- Reassessment grade replaces original grade.

### **Homework**

Teachers will only assign homework that is related to the curriculum.

Teachers determine and communicate the extent to which the two categories of homework count toward the marking period grade.

Timely and meaningful feedback on both types of homework will be provided; feedback may take a variety of forms, as determined by the teacher.

### **Grading**

Teachers will assess student learning in a variety of ways over time.

Grades will reflect what a student knows and is able to do in relation to the NLSLD 122 curriculum.

The report card grades will remain a letter grade.

Feedback on individual tasks/assignments may include letters, numbers, or symbols.

Teachers will record grades with the most precision appropriate for the tasks/assessments (e.g., percentages, points earned, plusses and minuses).

When using percentages, teachers assign a grade no lower than 50% to a task/assessment.

Behavior and Effort and Participation will be noted through electronic codes and not averaged into the academic grade.

\*Students receiving services for limited English proficiency, special education, or 504 disabilities will be afforded all accommodations and modifications as documented by English Language Learner (ELL) plans, individualized education programs (IEP's), or Section 504 plans.