

CSBA Sample Board Policy

Students

BP 5121(a)

GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Note: The following **optional** policy may be revised to reflect district practice.

The Governing Board believes that grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians understand performance expectations and identifying 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 academic performance**.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)
(cf. 5125.2 - Withholding Grades, Diploma or Transcripts)

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a uniform grading system **based on standards that apply that shall be applied** to all students in that course and grade level. **Principals and teachers shall ensure that student grades conform to this system.** Teachers shall inform students and parents/guardians how **student achievement academic performance** will be evaluated in the classroom.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

Note: The following **optional** paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice. CSBA's governance brief **Research-Supported Strategies to Improve the Accuracy and Fairness of Grades** reviews research on the fairness, accuracy, and consistency of common grading practices. Based on research, the brief recommends that nonacademic factors (e.g., attendance, effort, behavior, work habits) not be incorporated into the academic grade, which is intended to be an indicator of a student's mastery of academic content.

A teacher shall base a student's grades **solely** on **impartial, consistent observation of** the quality of the student's **academic** work and his/her mastery of course content **and based on** district standards. Students shall have the opportunity to demonstrate this mastery through a variety of methods, **such as classroom participation, homework, including, but not limited to, homework,** tests, **projects, and portfolios, and/or class discussion as appropriate. Other elements that are not a direct measure of knowledge and understanding of course content, such as attendance, effort, student conduct, and work habits, shall not be factored into the academic grade but may be reported separately.**

Comment [mg1]: Added to include homework as a way to demonstrate mastery.

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)

GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (continued)

Effect of Absences on Grades

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.

Whenever a student misses an assignment or assessment due to either an excused or unexcused absence, he/she shall be given full credit for subsequent satisfactory completion of the assignment or assessment.

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 49067, the Governing Board may authorize teachers to assign failing grades to students with excessive unexcused absences, the number to be set by the Board. Districts using the following **optional** paragraph should fill in the blank to specify the number of unexcused absences for which students may receive a failing grade that the Board determines to be "excessive." Alternatively, districts may revise the following paragraph to limit the degree to which a teacher may reduce a grade for attendance reasons.

However, CSBA's governance brief Research-Supported Strategies to Improve the Accuracy and Fairness of Grades recommends that student absence be dealt with separately from grading and that absence should not be considered in determining a student's level of understanding of course content. See BP/AR 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy for further information about strategies to address excessive excused and/or unexcused absences.

The Board believes that _____ *(fill in number)* unexcused absences per grading period constitute excessive unexcused absences. Students with excessive unexcused absences may receive a failing grade and not receive credit for the class(es). **A teacher may assign a failing grade to a student who has 6 *(fill in number)* or more unexcused absences during the grading period.**

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.

Comment [mg2]: Added to include PSD language

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)
(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

Note: The following **optional** paragraph is for use by districts that maintain elementary schools and should be revised to reflect district practice.

Attachment I

Use CSBA sample "With Revisions"

Students in grades K-3 shall receive progress reports **at the end of each grading period** rather than letter grades.

Note: The following optional paragraph is for use by districts that choose to provide reports of academic performance on specific academic standards, and should be deleted by other districts.

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GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (continued)

At all grade levels, report cards may include reports of student progress on specific academic standards applicable to the course and grade level.

When reporting student performance to parents/guardians, teachers may add narrative descriptions, observational notes, and/or samples of classroom work in order to better describe student progress in specific skills and subcategories of achievement.

Note: The following **optional** paragraph reflects correspondence issued by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, Report Cards and Transcripts for Students with Disabilities, which clarifies that, because report cards are intended for parents/guardians and not for persons outside the district, they may contain information about a student's disability without violating the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g; 34 CFR 99.1-99.67). However, transcripts may not provide information about a student's disability because there is an expectation that these documents could be shared with persons other than the student and his/her parents/guardians. See BP/AR 5125 - Student Records for further information regarding the confidentiality of student records.

A report card for a student with a disability may contain information about his/her disability, including whether that student received special education or related services, provided that the report card informs parents/guardians about their child's progress or level of achievement in specific classes, course content, or curriculum. However, transcripts that may be used to inform postsecondary institutions or prospective employers of the student's academic achievements shall not contain information disclosing the student's disability.

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)

(cf. 6164.6 - Identification and Education Under Section 504)

Note: Education Code 49066 provides that the grade assigned by a teacher is final, absent any clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency. Pursuant to Education Code 49066, the Board and Superintendent cannot order a student's grade changed unless the teacher, to the extent practicable, is given an opportunity to state the reasons that the grade was given and to be included in all discussions regarding the changing of the grade; see AR 5125.3 - Challenging Student Records.

Attachment I

Use CSBA sample "With Revisions"

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

(cf. 5125.3 - Challenging Student Records)

Grade Point Average

Note: The following **optional section paragraph** is for use by districts that maintain secondary schools and may be revised to reflect district practice. Also see the accompanying administrative regulation.

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~~GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (continued)~~

~~The Superintendent or designee shall determine the methodology to be used in calculating students' grade point average (GPA), including the courses to be included within the GPA and whether extra grade weighting shall be applied to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, honors, and/or concurrent postsecondary courses.~~

Comment [mg3]: We do not have secondary school.

(cf. 6141.4 - International Baccalaureate Program)

(cf. 6141.5 - Advanced Placement)

(cf. 6172 - Gifted and Talented Student Program)

(cf. 6172.1 - Concurrent Enrollment in College Classes)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

Attachment I
Use CSBA sample "With Revisions"

BP 5121(e)

GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

48070 Promotion and retention

48205 Excused absences

48800-48802 Enrollment of gifted students in community college

48904-48904.3 Withholding grades, diplomas, or transcripts

49066 Grades; finalization; physical education class

49067 Mandated regulations regarding student's achievement

49069.5 Students in foster care, grades and credits

51242 Exemption from physical education based on participation in interscholastic athletics

69432.9 Cal Grant program; notification of grade point average

76000-76002 Enrollment in community college

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

10060 Criteria for reporting physical education achievement, high schools

30008 Definition of high school grade point average for student aid eligibility

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

~~6101-6251 School to Work Opportunities Act of 1994~~

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

COURT DECISIONS

Owasso Independent School District v. Falvo, (2002) 534 U.S. 426

Las Virgenes Educators Association v. Las Virgenes Unified School District, (2001) 86 Cal.App.4th 1

Swany v. San Ramon Valley Unified School District, (1989) 720 F.Supp. 764

Johnson v. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education, (1986) 179 Cal.App.3d 593

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Attachment I

Use CSBA sample “With Revisions”

Research-Supported Strategies to Improve the Accuracy and Fairness of Grades, Governance Brief, July 2016

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Aiming High: High Schools for the 21st Century, 2002

Taking Center Stage: A Commitment to Standards-Based Education for California's Middle Grades Students, 2001

Elementary Makes the Grade!, 2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS CORRESPONDENCE

Report Cards and Transcripts for Students with Disabilities, October 17, 2008

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

California Student Aid Commission: <http://www.csac.ca.gov>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr>

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Policy Reference UPDATE Service

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