



DEER VALLEY
Unified School District

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Dear Titan Families,

In our efforts to continue to expand and grow our academic progress in the Deer Valley Unified District, a large group of educators and parents have been working for just over three years to improve grading practices in the district. The guiding principle the teams utilized to make decisions was *authentic grading accurately measures and reflects a student's performance based upon mastery of the Arizona State Standards.*

Two major areas emerged as elements of grading that are critical to address: removing behavior from academic grades and addressing the complications of zeroes on the 100-point scale. Terramar will be one of ten schools implementing both updates to our grading practices next school year.

Behavior

In the 2021-2022 school year, all schools will adopt practices in which behavior is removed from academic grades. Since the goal is to ensure student grades are authentic and consistently reflect the mastery a student has of the standards, it is important that those grades are accurate and do not also reflect behaviors. The grade reported for the late work will be the actual grade earned. Teachers will no longer reduce the grade or cap the grade merely for the work being turned in late. The behavioral aspect of not having work ready to be turned in on time will be addressed by assigning disciplinary consequences (ex, conference, lunch detention, parent conference, counselor referral, etc.).

Grade Scale

To address challenges of the 0-100 grade scale, the team took a deeper look at grading scales. The traditional way of grading that most people are familiar with is a 100-point scale where 90-100 is considered an A, 80-89 is a B, etc. The problem with this type of grading scale is that, whereas each letter grade is made up of 10 points, an F accounts for 0-59 points. So, if a student is missing an assignment and gets a 0, that loss of 59 points has a dramatic impact on his or her overall grade and is extremely difficult to overcome.

The committee spent a lot of time researching many different types of grading scales and concluded that one that puts equal weight for each grade category would be best. Also instead of assigning a letter grade, the grading scale will reflect a level of proficiency of the learning so there is more consistency throughout the district. And whereas it is difficult to have any one policy fit from Kindergarten through 12th grade, the committee felt that there was a need to have two separate scales, one for K-6th grades and one for 7th-12th grades. The following will be the new grading scales moving forward:

Grading Scale For K – 6 th Grades	Grading Scale For 7 th – 12 th Grades
4 Independently applies skills and concepts with greater depth and complexity	4 Evidence demonstrates a high level of proficiency of the learning standard(s)
3 Demonstrates grade level proficiency independently	3 Evidence demonstrates proficiency of the learning standard(s)
2 Demonstrates grade level proficiency with support	2 Evidence demonstrates partial proficiency of the learning standard(s)
1 Demonstrates below grade level proficiency with support	1 Evidence demonstrates minimal proficiency of the learning standard(s)
	0 No evidence of proficiency of learning standard(s)

For students continuing on to the college and university level, high school transcripts will continue to include grade point averages based on the 4.0 GPA scale with opportunities for an added grade point for honors/IB/AP courses.

Phased-in Approach

There will be a phased rollout of the new grading scales with ten Phase 1 schools implementing the grade scales in the 2021-2022 school year and the remaining schools will begin using the grading scales in the 2022-2023 year. Once the grading scale has been implemented at your school, you will no longer see the traditional letter grades of A-F in PowerSchools, report cards and transcripts (for high school) but rather the numbers listed above. Also, when an overall class/course grade is determined at the quarter/semester/end of year, a student would need to have a score of at least a 2 in order to pass or earn credit.

More details and additional information will be coming throughout the summer, and early fall. Once our process and plan is finalized, we will have it posted in the 2021-2022 Terramar Parent/Student Handbook which we will post on our website. We know you will have lots of questions. Please periodically visit this web page for more information: <https://www.dvusd.org/Domain/10003>

We look forward to partnering with you and your student to implement these two adjustments to our DVUSD grading practices. Look for additional information coming throughout the next few months. In the meantime, feel free to submit your questions here: <https://url.dvusd.org/2d14ff49>. Questions will be addressed in a Frequently Asked Questions document published later this semester.

Respectfully,

Sharon Wleser
Principal

Julia Aaron
Assistant Principal

Graduating lifelong learners who will successfully compete, lead, and positively impact the world.

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