Virtual Learning Program Grading Policy

1. Core Tenets

The IDEA Public Schools ("IDEA") grading policy supports our mission of sending 100% of our scholars to and successfully through college, acknowledging that graduating from college is the single most effective anti-poverty strategy. The IDEA grading policy effectively evaluates student achievement, ensures equity across all schools, motivates and empowers students and is responsive to their context, signals an accurate level of mastery to all audiences, and prepares scholars' academic identities and college applications to succeed in the process of applying to colleges and universities. The grading policy is to be implemented in a non-discriminatory manner and applied equitably to all students, regardless of background or demographics, as IDEA does not discriminate in its educational program on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic.

IDEA's grading policy requires for grades to reflect the level of student mastery on grade-level work, including appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities whose individualized education programs ("IEP") require accommodations. IDEA's grading policy also provides campus leaders discretion to meet the unique needs of their students, while complying with the following standards:

a) classroom teachers must assign a grade that reflects a student's relative mastery of an assignment;
b) classroom teachers will not assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work; and
c) students will be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

2. Progress Reports

Progress reports should be provided, at a minimum, to parents by the fourth week of the grading period for all students in all courses. Schools and teachers may communicate more frequently about grades at their discretion.

3. Assessment Categories and Weights

The gradebook has **only two categories** of student tasks: Summative and Formative. **Summative assessments** determine student mastery after an instructional phase (e.g. a Unit) is complete, comparing against specific objectives, external assessments, and/or other students to accurately reflect cumulative learning. **Formative assessments and assignments** are used throughout a unit or instructional phase to inform instructional decisions, motivate, and teach students how to improve, and clearly signal academic expectations to determine how students are progressing towards a certain mastery goal. <u>The impact of Summative Assessments grows with grade level bands to match their increasing value in collegiate syllabi.</u> The table below provides categorical weights and examples of each type of assessment.

Category	Examples	Minimum Required	K-5	6
Summative *Summative assessments* evaluate the level of mastery after an instructional phase is completed.	**DI PK-2:** Mastery Tests **Non-DI:** Unit Assessments; End-of Module Assessments; Embedded Assessments; Papers, reports, presentations, and other compositions that conclude an instructional phase	Varies by course; only assessments listed should be summative	25%	35%

Formative *Formative assessments and assignments* provide ongoing feedback to teachers to improve instruction and to students to improve their learning.	**DI PK-2:** Independent work, fixups, checkouts, and Homework **Non-DI:** Quizzes; Classwork and Tasks; Mid-unit, Mid-Module, or biweekly assessments; Written work (e.g. journals, OERs or essays); Socratic Seminars; Dialogue; Practice Problems and Homework; Exit Tickets, etc.	2 per week	75%	65%

Within these categories, *teachers have the freedom to change the score type, assignment weight, and total points for individual assignments* within the gradebook to best represent the meaningfulness of each grade. Principals may require a specific number of homework assignments to be included in the gradebook. In addition, college preps have discretion to count a course's Final Exam as 15% of the final grade.

All grades that impact a student's cumulative grade should validly and reliably represent student mastery, not behavioral or other factors, and thus should not represent behavioral items such as attendance, homework or task completion, or participation (exempting, performance-based assessments with clear criteria for mastery, such as Socratic Seminars). To remove the impact on cumulative grades, teachers may record these items in the gradebook by selecting "Collected Only" as the *assignment score* or recording the *assignment weight* as 0. In Academies, there is a separate section on each report card to communicate represent behavioral development, where there will be a selection of comments that teachers can use to better inform and support families to provide meaningful feedback on non-academic growth.

4. Failing Grades and Missing Grades

The parents, teachers, and the school share responsibility for helping students succeed, and student grades entered in the gradebook should be an accurate reflection of the level of mastery of the student. IDEA's policy is to allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade so that the student can demonstrate relative mastery of grade-level work. In the event a student's IEP includes accommodations related to assignment or testing retakes, teachers are responsible for fully complying with the student's IEP.

A. Missing Grades Due to Absences

It is the teacher's/facilitator's responsibility to provide work for students who are absent and to support them in getting any needed re-teach, resources, and/or opportunities. In most circumstances, late work and assessments should be due within the same number of days that the student was absent, but teachers/facilitators may allow until the end of the unit or the end of the grading period, whichever occurs sooner, if the teacher/facilitator determines it is reasonable. Campus leadership and teachers should provide reasonable opportunities for students to make up assignments missed due to extended absences and/or extenuating circumstances within the grading period in which the student was absent. If assignments are not made up within the grading period, a written intervention plan should be instituted. After the intervention plan is written, the teacher is responsible for communicating the plan to the student, the student's parents, and campus administration. The teacher will work in collaboration with the student and the student's family to implement the intervention plan.

In case of missed assignments due to extended absence, such as three or more consecutive days, campuses and teachers may provide individualized alternative options and due dates or provide alternative programs, on a case-by-case basis. In the case of absences due to pull-out intervention, AR and Hotspot facilitators should create a plan to ensure they have sufficient quiz scores and remain on track for their progress benchmark, respectively.

B. Failing Grades on Assignments and Assessments

What determines a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a failing assignment or examination depends on the grade level, task, curriculum, and individual circumstances. Campuses may determine point deductions and timelines for retakes and make-up work and should implement a plan that proactively develops the skills needed to show more individual responsibility as students transition to upper grades. Students who have a failing assignment or assessment grade should be given an opportunity to redo a failing assignment or retake failed assessments at least one time, but not more than three times, within three weeks. In Direct Instruction coursework, student must have the opportunity to retake the assessment until they show mastery, which may be up to three times. Students in grades 6 through 12 should individually arrange with their teacher to retake failed summative assessments within three weeks and to plan any remediation prior to retaking. As with previous sections, campuses may determine point deductions and timelines for work turned in late (not due to an absence). They will ensure grade-level teachers are aligned in their practice and mindful of student development.

Teachers may not assign a student a "0" grade for a missing or incomplete assignment. Research on the practice of awarding a zero on a 100-point scale for missing work suggests that it 1) disproportionately punishes students in poverty, minority students, lower performing students, and students with disabilities; 2) conveys inaccurate information about the students' level of mastery; 3) typically fails to effectively motivate or develop personal accountability; and 4) disproportionately negatively impacts the calculation of cumulative grades. Students must be given the opportunity to turn in a missing assignment or redo an incomplete assignment in accordance with this policy. If a student has three or more "Incompletes" in the gradebook for a grading term, the teacher will write an intervention plan.

C. Failing Grades on Report Cards

We monitor cumulative grades during grade verification to ensure that students have sufficient opportunities to show mastery throughout the year. Our system will automatically flag grades that make a student unlikely to succeed in subsequent terms, by checking whether it is still possible to pass the semester/year if the student were to earn "A's" in subsequent semesters. The system will send a list of students who are receiving a term grade below 50 to the principal to monitor and communicate. "Inc" or "Incomplete" may be temporarily used on the report card grade until a student, who needs to complete certain mastery tasks, is held accountable for those assessments or assignments. For each student whose Report Card grade is below a 50 or has "Inc" or "Incomplete" showing for a particular grade / course, the teacher, with assistance and input from campus leadership, will create a written intervention plan to ensure that the student has opportunities to improve academic performance to reach the passing standard for the course. The principal will evaluate the quality of the plan, including the content, timeline, intended outcome, communication, and the mechanism for delivery. This plan should be ready prior to finalizing the grades, so it can be communicated to relevant students, families, and/or teachers. Students who are on track for retention must be considered for and documented for response to intervention ("RtI"). To change a grade for a previous term after Report Cards have been issued, teachers must request a *Historical Grade Change* form from the SIS/Registrar.

5. Grading of District-Normed Assessments and Instruments

Because of the variance in assessment designs and scales, acceptable performance on assessments can vary greatly by assignment. For example, an AP score of 2 denotes that a student is ready to take that course in college, but to show mastery that would earn the student college credit, a student needs to earn a 3 or greater on the AP exam. For some AP tests, a student will earn a 2 with a demonstrated mastery of 27% of the assessment content and 40% mastery of the assessment content would earn the student a qualifying score of 3. These grades would both represent failing grades on a 100-point scale, so adjustments would need to be made to represent that mastery from the performance bands required of the standards to align to letter-grading. These adjustments will be needed for any assessment where the performance band does not align to the letter grading. In the table below are examples of how one could use Mastery Bands to select an appropriate letter grade, based on the alignment of the

assessment. For example, Student A in AP Biology showed 21% correct on his AP-aligned unit exam, and, since that is equivalent to a Level 1 score, the teacher entered a 55 in the gradebook to represent the level of mastery.

Student B had 88% mastery on her STAAR-aligned assessment for 5th math, and the teacher used the "Masters" level to indicate As, entering a 91 in the gradebook. Student C is 1 grade level behind in reading in 1st grade, but is meeting progress each week at mastery, so the teacher input a 69 in the gradebook. ***Consult your manager for guidance*** *about how match letter grades to mastery, as the examples in the table below are examples and not prescriptions*.

TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF SELECTING A STUDENT GRADE ON A 100-POINT SCALE BASED ON RELATIVE STUDENT MASTERY

STAAR-aligned assessment example: 5th Math (Student B)	
Raw % Score	STAAR Mastery Bands
86-100	Masters
72-86	Meets
65-71	Approaches
47-64	Approaches
0-46	Does not Meet

6. Assignment Weights for Blended Spaces

The assignment weights for the Blended Spaces align to the students' program goals and the honor roll status for the campus. These key metrics determine student success and maximize the impact of the Blended Spaces programs. Data show that when students meet AR Zone and iLearning Hotspot goals, they experience the most substantial improvements in reading and math comprehension and test results.

	AR		Hotspot	
Grade	**1-5**	**6-8**	**1-5**	**6-7**
Summative	*None*	*None*	*None*	*None*
Formative	Word Count– 100%	Word Count – 100%	DreamBox lessons completed – 100%	Dreambox lessons completed – 100%

7. Grading for Students with Disabilities

Rise teachers should grade students based on formal and informal assessments, and in accordance with any IEP requirements for issuing grades. Below is a chart to help guide teachers on various types of assessments that will be utilized to measure the progress students demonstrate. Gradebooks are set up with the following weight categories.

Category	Examples	PK - 21
Summative *Summative assessments* are for evaluating the level of mastery after an instructional phase is completed	**DI PK-2**: Mastery Tests **Non-DI**: Unit tests, Embedded Assessments, End of Module Exams, reports, presentations, and other compositions that culminate an instructional phase	25%
Formative *Formative assessments and assignments* provide ongoing feedback to teachers to improve instruction and to students to improve their learning.	**DI PK-2**: Independent work, fix ups, and homework **Non-DI**: Quizzes, classwork tasks, mid-unit assessments, written work (journals, OERs, essays), Socratic Seminars, Dialogue, practice problems, homework, exit tickets	75%

<u>CERTIFICATION</u>

The Undersigned, being the Secretary of IDEA Public Schools, hereby certifies that the foregoing represents a true copy of the Virtual Learning Program Grading Policy, as originally adopted by the Board on October 22, 2021, which Policy is in full force and effect and has not been revoked or amended.

DocuSigned by:

Ryan Vaughan
D8651776BD7A4C2...
_____

Ryan Vaughan, Board Secretary

10/27/2021
_____

Date