

Teaching Tool

Grade Reform

Grade Reform

Grading Mission:

At Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School, we strive to ensure that the letter grade that a student achieves is based on true assessments and that the grade represents learning and student understanding of the standards/outcomes.

Goal

During the 2017-18 school year, all teachers at the Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School will work toward full implement the 5 identified grading and reporting changes.

1. Student behavior will not be used to determine grades.
2. Extra credit and bonus points that are not connected to learning outcomes will not be used to determine grades.
3. Group scores will not be used in grades.
4. Clear descriptions of learning outcomes will be provided in all courses.
5. Zero's will not be used to determine a grade when evidence is missing or as punishment.

We commit collectively and individually to improving our professional practice in the areas described below.

We believe that all grading practices should reflect student achievement only.

- Absences will be tracked and reported as required by policy. All attendance issues will be kept separate from grade determination.
- To the greatest degree possible, student behaviors (including, but not limited to, effort, participation, adherence to class rules) will be excluded as a factor in grade calculation.
- Extra credit or bonus points will not be used in determining a grade unless students have clearly mastered all learning outcomes and specific extension activities provide evidence of learning beyond the intended outcome.
- Group scores will not be included in the determination of a grade.
- When evidence of learning is missing, we will work to obtain evidence of that student's real achievement and will not use zeros as evidence unless there is no evidence of learning.
 - We will not use zeros as punishment.

We believe that behaviors that impede learning should be addressed directly and kept separate from academic grades. (Teaching through PBIS)

- Academic dishonesty (cheating) will be addressed as a disciplinary concern. Students who are found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be required to provide evidence of their actual level of learning.
 - If a student has cheated:
 - Student and teacher will talk about incident
 - Teacher will contact parents via phone call
 - Student will be assigned to Thursday night after school Tutor time
 - Student will re-due the work in front of the staff member in order to receive credit
- To the greatest degree possible, student compliance (completing homework, submitting assignments on time, etc.) will be addressed by teaching and reteaching of the behavior outside

the context of academic grades and systems will be in place to provide help to build skills in both academic and behaviors areas. (Academic Seminar Tier 2 Teaching)

We believe that students can and should achieve high academic proficiency if the (performance) goals are clear and well aligned with instructional activities.

- We will provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations for each activity, lesson, and unit of study. Grades will be based on each individual student’s mastery of these learning objectives.

District Goal: We will students with articulated learning goals for each lesson, so that they will meet disciplinary proficiency standards through reading, writing, speaking, and/or performing.

How does this affect me (the learner)?

Traditional Grading Practices	Reform Outcomes
Whole class - all students get the same instruction, same homework, etc.	Learning tasks for each student may look different, in order for ALL students to master topic
Time to learn is fixed/achievement varies	Time to learn varies/achievement fixed
One-shot learning Grades are permanent Teach - test - move on	Feedback loop: Teach, check, apply learning, feedback Assessment is continuous
Learning is expected to be error free - mistakes are punished	Learning can be hard and frustrating but achievable (making mistakes is part of learning)
Failure is a judgement and a validation of ability	Lack of understanding is a learning opportunity, not validation of intelligence Struggle is good - BUT with support
Grade is the goal	Learning is the goal (It’s okay not to “get it” right away.)
Many things are included in a grade (behavior, attendance, compliance, etc.)	Demonstrating knowledge/performance counts in the grade
Grades are permanent	Learning is continuous (It’s safe to make mistakes and take risks in learning.)

Homework and INCOMPLETES "I":

All homework is given so that students can meet the intended learning outcomes. Therefore, all homework is required for students to complete.

Employability Skills Evaluation Rubric

Definition: Employability skills are those habits valued by employers that increase individual & group productivity.

Purpose: To provide meaningful feedback for students, families and community on skills that reflect postsecondary and career readiness.

Action: Each staff member will use the rubric to report on your proficiency in each area listed. These reports will be included separately with your quarterly academic grade report.

Grade Reform Frequently Asked Questions:

What if I have an Incomplete at the grading period? Can I still participate in co-curricular activities?

No. The Incomplete must be changed to a passing grade before you can resume participation.