



The Richard Rodgers School of the Arts and Technology

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PS 166

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PS 166 COVID-19 Academic Grading Policy (K-5) ADDENDUM

March - June 2020

PS 166 provides a nurturing environment committed to achieving academic excellence, celebrating diversity, and fostering a climate of respectfulness and trust. Students, parents, and staff work together to establish an environment of equity, acceptance and growth where everyone learns and each person counts.

This past year has presented our community with unprecedented and unforeseen challenges due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Our lives were all disrupted as we experienced hardships and had to learn to navigate and adapt to a “new normal”. On a daily basis we heard and were affected by stories of family members who have been quarantined in isolation of one another, friends who have fallen ill, and loved ones who have passed on. Some of us have lost jobs, experienced financial instability and juggled various roles as we all attempted to tread water during this pandemic. At PS 166, our foremost concern has been the health and well-being of our students, staff, families and community.

Remote teaching cannot, and has not, replaced in person teaching. Having acknowledged that, we have worked hard to find the best balance for our school community, making thoughtful adjustments so that we can keep things as consistent and flexible as possible, while at the same time providing academic excellence. We have worked with teachers, parents, outside resources, and staff to provide guidance and adjust the curriculum so that we can best support teaching and learning in this new environment and make this a positive and effective experience for all.

In addressing the grading policies we also considered the following flexibilities:

1. Student Access to Devices:

We have taken into consideration students’ access to devices and how to best support them once they have received a device. Team members have been proactive in reaching out to families to support the completion of requests of NYC DOE devices as well as to support in technology needs and troubleshooting. Our technology teacher along with other staff reach out to parents and students and provide assistance with various technology and platforms. We have shared “how-to” videos, PowerPoints, step by step guides, and conducted one on one live sessions to support students and families.

2. Expectations for due dates and submission of late work:

There are differentiated assignments and we are responsive to individual families around specific needs and concerns. There is no impact for late assignments but communication is essential to plan for realistic timing expectations. Our engagement team is in constant contact with teachers to

make sure that students are completing work and engaging in learning. When students are not engaged, the team reaches out to families to provide supports and assistance and better understand the needs of the student.

3. The applicability of predetermined assignments:

Students are provided with differentiated assignments based on needs and hardships. Teachers and school staff meet with students in small groups and one on one to support their various needs. We have also have sent materials and books home to students that need physical tools and supports. Our staff constantly meets for professional development and grade meetings to ensure that the curriculum, teaching points, and strategies best support the remote learning structure.

4. The way in which assignments are scored:

Assignments are all reviewed and analyzed. Students are provided with glows, next steps and supports based on their understanding of the work. Staff communicates with parents and students to provide extra help when needed. Staff meets with parents and responds to emails to ensure the lines of communication are always open to support learning.

Grades

Grades communicate progress with students and families. They are not intended to serve as rewards or punishments. Grades provide feedback on student learning, clarifying student understanding and outlining supports for improve. Grades reflect holistic progress from the whole year and take into consideration November, January, March and June benchmarks.

During remote learning grades reflect a combination of:

1. Submission of assignments
2. Participation, to the extent possible, in check-ins, discussions, and other communication set up by teachers and staff
3. Student effort and perseverance
4. Formal and informal assessments: including but not limited to running records, on-demands, unit assessments and exit slips

Timeline of Student Grades:

PS 166 issues report cards two times a year, with the cumulative (not averaged) final grade given on the last report card issued. At the conclusion of each marking period, grades are entered onto NYCDOE STARS systems. Final report card grades will be distributed to parents at the end of the school year on the last school day in June.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, STARS report cards this June will take into consideration each individual student, the work completed during the 6.5 months that we were in our “brick and mortar” school building as well as the work completed during remote learning. However, instead of the typical grading scale 1, 2, 3, 4, teachers will assign a grade of either “MT” meets standard or “N” needs improvement for all subject areas. Along with these grades, standard based narratives will be included for all students.

Explanation of Grading Scale:

Meeting Standards (MT) will be defined as:

- After the teacher has reviewed multiple measures of performance throughout the school year, the student has demonstrated mastery of critical content and skills *or* has shown

sufficient progress to be ready for the next grade level. An “MT” is a grade that would previously have been designated either a level of 4 (above grade level), a level of 3 (at grade level), or a level of 2 (approaching grade level).

- Students are assessed holistically, using multiple measures, such as previous report cards and conference notes, writing samples and on-demands, running records and response to reading, unit assessments and exit slips, small group work, individual classwork, projects, assignments, engagement, participation, and all other performance-based student work.

Needs Improvement (N) will be defined as:

- What previously was designated a level of 1 (well below grade level standards) will now be designated as an “N” grade. Student receiving an “N” have been performing well below grade level expectations throughout the school year, with little or no progress through the end of the year.
- There is insufficient information to determine whether a student has met the standards as they have rarely engaged or completed work, assignments, and or assessments.

Promotion Decisions

Promotion decisions are made using multiple measures of student performance. In February, our school sent out written “promotion in doubt” letters to families whose children were at risk of not meeting the promotion benchmarks for their grade level. Additional meetings were held with parents and teachers to monitor student progress. At-risk students were provided with either intervention supports or Response to Intervention (RtI) and/or Academic Intervention Service (AIS).

No child will be held over solely based on work that was or was not completed during the remote learning time frame. When determining promotion, we consider the student’s entire body of work for the year as it is a holistic assessment of the student’s learning.