
PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

April 24, 2018 Group Notes

ATTENDEES

School system staff present: Amy Hollstein, Deputy Superintendent; Marvin Jones, Executive Director of Schools; Michael Charlton, Principal, Thomas Stone High School; Joan Withers, Acting Director of Secondary Programs; and Angel Willett, Executive Assistant

Nineteen PAC representatives attended the spring meeting.

AGENDA

WELCOME

Marvin Jones, Executive Director of Schools

Mr. Jones opened the meeting by welcoming parents and thanking them for their continued commitment to their school communities and the school district. As a gesture of appreciation, parents enjoyed a light dinner before the meeting started.



GRADING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Amy Hollstein, Deputy Superintendent

Joan Withers, Acting Director of Secondary Programs

Mrs. Hollstein updated the PAC committee on revisions made to **Policy 6431, General Curricula: Extracurricular Activities and Athletics Eligibility Requirements for Grades 9-12**. She thanked parents for their feedback and recommendations on eligibility requirements for middle and high school students. (At the October 2017 PAC meeting, committee members worked in small groups to identify positive and negative outcomes for various aspects of eligibility requirements.) Mrs. Hollstein then spoke about the importance of a consistent grading policy for secondary schools. She introduced Joan Withers, Acting Director of Secondary Programs, who presented on grading.

Ms. Withers provided a range of information on grading. In particular, she highlighted current high school grading practices, recommendations from the secondary grading committee, effects of zeros on quarter grades, research, grading practices in other counties, and the next steps for the Grading Committee. (presentation slides, pages 2 – 5)

Secondary Grading Recommendations



Charles County Public Schools
April 24, 2018



Current Secondary Grading Practices

High schools vary in the numerical value behind an 'F'

- La Plata, McDonough, and North Point: Failure is indicated by an 'F' based on 0% to 59%
- St. Charles: Failure is indicated by an 'F' based on 50% to 59%
- Stone and Westlake: Failure in Quarters 1, 2, & 3 is an 'F' based on 50% to 59%; Quarter 4 failure is indicated by an 'F' based on 0% to 59%
- Henry E. Lackey: addressed on a case-by-case basis; for the most part, adheres to an 'F' based on 0% to 59%

Secondary Grading Committee

- 2010 – 2011 H. Lackey High School
- 2014 – 2015 Thomas Stone High School
- 2015 – 2016 Grading Committee
Westlake High School
- 2016 – 2017 St. Charles High School
- 2017 – 2018 Secondary Grading Committee

Secondary Committee Recommendations

Quarters 1, 2 & 3

- A failing grade at the end of Quarters 1, 2, & 3 is based on 50% to 59%
- Any percentage lower than 50% at the end the Quarter is converted to 50%

Quarter 4

- A failing grade at the end of Quarter 4 is based on 0% to 59%
- Any percentage lower than 50% at the end of Quarter 4 is not converted to 50%

Effect of Zeros on Quarter Grades

Brookhart, Susan M. *How to Use Grading to Improve Learning*

Figure 5.9
Illustration of the Effect of Zeros on Report Card Grades when grading scale is 100% - 0%

A. The effect of zero when the percentage (0-100) scale is used.

Student-Max Wilners	Test (counts double)	Quiz 1	Quiz 2	Paper (counts double)	Project	Quarter Grade
1. Max (C on paper)	78%	82%	64%	76%	96%	79% C
2. Max (high F on paper)	78%	82%	64%	58%	96%	73% C
50% lowest F	78%	82%	64%	50%	96%	71% C
3. Max (low F on paper)	78%	82%	64%	30%	96%	65% D
4. Max (zero on paper)	78%	82%	64%	0%	96%	57% F

Research

The zero is an "academic death penalty" and "mathematically unjust"—a student who earns a zero and 100% will end with a 50% F

Ineffective and inequitable grading practices include:

- Using zeros for missing work
- Weighting work all the same
- Deducting points for "misbehavior"
- Basing a grade on a single assignment
- Conflating academic learning with social-emotional factors, behavior, work habits, etc.

Catch up—not give up

Grading Practices in Other Counties

Anne Arundel

50% on assignments showing a good faith effort

Baltimore County

Teachers choose:
100% - 0% or 50 pt. scale

Calvert

Q 1, 2 & 3: 100% - 50%
Q 4: 100% - 0%

Harford

No grading guidelines

Kent

Teachers choose:
100% - 0% or 100% - 50%

Montgomery

50% on assignments showing a good faith effort

Prince George's

50% on assignments showing a good faith effort

Somerset

100% - 40%

Fairfax

50% on assignments showing a reasonable effort

Next Steps for Grading Committee

- Bring conversation to parents and students
- Discussion with teachers at the school level
- Using feedback, develop details of the grading guidelines
- Develop and implement on-going professional development on effective grading practices

Committee members worked in small groups to discuss and respond to the questions below.

(Responses to questions 1 – 4 appear as written to maintain authenticity of writer's text.)

1. What are your recommendations on students receiving a 50% at the end of the quarter?
 - Every 50% should be given on a case by case instance
 - Agreed there are extenuating circumstances
 - Kids who show true effort
 - No, needs to put in effort and try to complete work
 - Don't agree with current recommendation of 50%
 - Quarters 1 & 2 – 50%
 - Quarters 3 & 4 – get what you get
 - Interventions after each quarter

2. Should students be eligible for the 50% rule if they have not turned in assignments?
 - The 50% rule must be consistent for each school.
 - What is the criteria for eligibility? Ex. Students must turn in 70% of all assignments
 - Students must turn in 100% of all assignments
 - Are assignments weighted
 - No - ALL assignments need to be turned in on time (signifies effort)

3. What do you believe the concerns will be from the community if this practice becomes policy?
 - A/B student parents feel like standards are being lowered
 - Brings consistency across the board
 - More students eligible might lead to fees for participating in extracurricular activities
 - Removing decision-making out of teacher's hands (micro-managing)

4. Should schools be permitted to implement individual grading guidelines or should schools adhere to one set of guidelines?
 - All schools should adhere to one set of guidelines
 - Consistent, Consistent, Consistent