

Kenmore-Tonawanda UFSD Middle School Grading Protocol

A. Overview

According to the Association of Middle Level Education, middle level learners should be engaged in active, purposeful learning around challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant curricula. Assessment should be varied and on-going in order to advance learning as well as to measure learning.

In the Kenmore-Tonawanda UFSD (KTUFSD), we share these beliefs about teaching, learning, and assessment. Our grading protocol reflects our commitment to a shared vision of teaching and learning and, most importantly, a commitment to the developmentally appropriate education of the middle level learner.

Grade reporting is based on individual progress toward achievement of learning goals. In the KTUFSD, a growth mindset guides our work with teaching, learning, and assessment. In order to nurture a growth mindset, our assessment practices are tied to student growth toward specific standards, include specific and meaningful feedback, and provide the opportunity for reflection and modification. Our grading protocol provides an overview of our shared practices.

This document is a work in progress and will be re-examined following the 2016-17 school year.

B. General guidelines

In the KTUFSD, the purpose of middle level grade reporting is for teachers to communicate with families about student achievement. The Parent Portal is a live gradebook that allows parents, students and teachers opportunities to regularly monitor and discuss student progress. Our students benefit from shared ownership of their progress as reported in grades. Please see directions for setting up your Parent Portal account at <http://www.KTUFSD.org/Page/12572> or email Tech services for additional support at ICportal@KTUFSD.org

One goal we have for middle level students is that they become more responsible for their schoolwork. Yet, it is necessary and important for parents to continue to be involved with their child's homework and study habits. The following services are available for all parents and their students to help facilitate communication between home and school:

- Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at various points throughout the year. Parents can request a conference with the teacher at any point in time by contacting the teacher.

- In addition to quarterly report cards, interim reports are issued every five weeks to provide current information on academic and behavioral progress.

Middle School grades are reported numerically for all students in grades 5, 6 and 7. As students transition from elementary standards-based grading to the middle school numeric grading, we follow a tiered grading system:

Minimum Report Card Grades			
Marking Period	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
1	65	55	55
2	65	55	Earned grade
3	65	55	Earned grade
4	65	55	Earned grade

If a grade earned is lower than the minimum grade (see chart above), a teacher comment will accompany the grade on the report card denoting that the “earned grade is lower than reported.”

Report card grades are based on in-class performance tasks such as assessments, projects, assignments and homework. These assignments are aligned with standards and grades provide information on student progress toward the standards.

Each district wide department/grade level collaborates to develop specific and consistent grading practices. Teachers engage in these conversations with the support of department chairs and building principals.

Comments relating to student participation in class, attitude toward work, thoroughness in preparation, or completion of homework assignments may be selected by a teacher to appear on the report card.

C. Make-up Procedures - Incomplete Grades

Regular attendance is essential to student success. In the event of an absence, students need to take ownership and communicate with teachers regarding the missed work. Both the teacher and student will arrange for a timeline for completion of the work within the quarter in which

absences took place. The timeline may require staying after school in order for the student to obtain instruction and complete assignments.

If a student fails to complete the missed assignments due to extenuating circumstances or the timing of the absence, i.e., near the end of the marking period, a grade of Incomplete (I) may be assigned with administrative approval. Again, both the teacher and student will arrange for a timeline within which the student must submit the outstanding work. If the outstanding work is not completed within that timeframe, the report card grade will revert to the earned numeric grade.

D. **Grading System**

Grading practices determined by each district wide department/grade level will be framed by the scale that follows:

Grading Scale	
Mastery	85-100
Proficiency	75-84
Developing	65-74
Not Yet Meeting Standard	Below 65

Calculating the Final Average for Core Courses

A final course grade is determined by averaging the four marking periods and a comprehensive final exam. In 2016-17, all core courses will administer a comprehensive final exam which will count as 20% of the overall final course average. In 2017-18, a mid term exam and a final exam for all core courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Grade 7 World Language) will be administered.

E. **Promotion Policy**

A review of placement, promotion, and/or retention will be conducted by a team of administrators, teachers, counselors, and parents for any student who does not meet the established criteria.

