


Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

June 7, 2007

MEMORANDUM

To: Secondary School Principals

From: Frieda K. Lacey, Deputy Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: INFORMATION: Procedures Relating to Grading and Reporting Questions, Summer Packets, and Academic Dishonesty

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide procedures to clarify the process for answering questions from parents on grading and reporting, to identify the expectations for summer packets, and to outline the grading procedure for incidents of academic dishonesty. These documents will support the implementation of the secondary grading and reporting procedures in Grades 6–12. They reflect the work of the Grading and Reporting Implementation Team (GRIT), which is an advisory group made up of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) central office and school-based staff, parents, and students. One of the team's tasks is to clarify procedures for the implementation of the grading and reporting policy and make recommendations to the deputy superintendent.

The following grading and reporting documents have been approved.

- *Procedures for Answering Grading and Reporting Questions from Parents.* This document outlines the process for answering questions from parents on grading and reporting (Attachment A).
- *Procedures for Summer Packets/Assignments.* This document states the expectations for communicating to students, staff, and parents the grading procedures and criteria for summer packets (Attachment B).
- *Procedures for Academic Dishonesty.* This document provides guidelines for grading students who exhibit academic dishonesty (Attachment C).

The *Procedures for Summer Packets* and *Procedures for Academic Dishonesty* are aligned to Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*, and the current secondary procedures for Homework, Reteaching/Reassessment, and Grading in Grades 6–12.

If your school assigns summer packets/assignments, these procedures must be communicated prior to the end of this school year. It is expected that you will provide time during your pre-service days to review the three procedures with your staff and that you will monitor implementation. It is important that this information is conveyed in writing to staff, students, and parents through the appropriate resources such as the staff handbook, student assignment books, discipline procedures, and other communication venues—school Web site, parent newsletters, school newspapers, summer mailings, and meetings.

All of the documents listed above are available on the MCPS Grading and Reporting Web site at <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/grading>.

I look forward to a productive school year as we continue to implement procedures to ensure consistent, accurate, and fair grading that will have a positive impact on learning. If you have questions about the documents, please contact Mrs. Linda Ferrell, acting director, Middle School Instruction and Achievement, or Mrs. Carol Blum, director, High School Instruction and Achievement, at 301-517-5007 or via e-mail.

FKL:csj

Attachments

Copy to:

Executive Staff

Ms. Bedford

Mrs. Blum

Ms. Cepaitis

Directors of School Performance

Mrs. Ferrell

GRIT Members

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Procedures for Answering Grading and Reporting
Questions from Parents in Grades 1–12 — July 2, 2007



www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to identify and respond to questions from parents about grading and reporting. There are two types of questions for which a parent may want assistance or clarification—questions that pertain to their child, and questions that pertain to policy and general procedures. Each school has a staff contact to facilitate communication and timely response to grading and reporting questions. The following procedures will be used:

Procedures for Questions Specific to a Student's Grade

1. Parents contact the teacher.
2. The teacher consults with the team, resource teacher, guidance counselor, or local staff contact to resolve unanswered questions.
3. The team leader, resource teacher, or local school staff contact refers unanswered questions to the school administrator.
4. Answered questions are disseminated to the student's parents, the student, and staff as appropriate.
5. For unresolved questions, parents may complete the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Form 270-8: *Complaint from the Public* and submit it to the principal. This form is available at the local school or on the MCPS Web site: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/forms/public.shtm. The form and the Web site provide detailed information on the process for filing a complaint and resolving differences.

Procedures for Questions about Policy and General Procedures

1. Parents contact the teacher.
2. The teacher consults with the team, resource teacher, guidance counselor, or local staff contact to resolve unanswered questions.
3. The team leader, resource teacher, or local school staff contact refers unanswered questions to the school administrator.

4. Answered questions are disseminated to parents, students, and staff, as appropriate.
5. Local school staff contact communicates unanswered questions to appropriate director of instruction and achievement (DIA).
6. Appropriate DIA either answers questions or logs unanswered questions, completes unanswered question form, and presents to the Grading and Reporting Implementation Team (GRIT).
7. GRIT recommendation goes to Steering Committee.
8. Steering Committee accepts, modifies, or rejects recommendation and provides rationale to GRIT.
9. DIA sends information to designated groups.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Procedures for Secondary Summer Packets/Assignments
July 2, 2007



www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the expectations for communicating to students, staff, and parents the grading procedures and grading criteria for summer packets/assignments. Teachers who assign summer packets will communicate expectations in writing to students and parents. This may include putting the information on the school Web site and attaching the information to the summer packet/assignment.

Rationale

Board Policy IKB, *Homework*, aligns with Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*, and affirms “homework is considered beneficial and important in a student’s overall program.” Homework prepares students for instruction, previews or practices skills and concepts, extends learning, and provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate skill and knowledge.

Alignment of Procedures for Summer Packets/Assignments to Homework Procedures in Grades 6–12

For teachers who assign homework to be completed during the summer in preparation for the next school year, procedures must be consistent with the document *Homework Procedures in Grades 6–12*.

1. Teachers will only assign homework that is related to the curriculum.
2. There are two categories of homework:
 - a. Homework for practice or preparation for instruction may account for a maximum of 10 percent of the marking period grade. When turned in by the deadline, this homework is given credit. Teachers will use professional judgment to determine the value assigned to partially completed homework.
 - b. Homework evaluated for learning counts toward the remaining portion of the marking period grade.
3. Teachers determine and communicate the extent to which the two categories of homework count toward the marking period grade.

4. Timely and meaningful feedback on both types of homework will be provided; feedback may take a variety of forms, as determined by the teacher.
5. School staff will communicate course-specific procedures in writing to students and parents at the beginning of a semester/school year, or when course-specific procedures change.

Procedures for Summer Packets/Assignments

- State the purpose of the summer assignment
- Provide a description of the task and identify supportive resources
- Share the relationship between the summer assignment and the first quarter course objectives
- Determine and communicate the category of homework (homework for practice or preparation for learning or homework evaluated for learning)
- Explain the extent to which the homework counts toward the marking period grade
- Explain how the assignment will be graded (grading criteria and rubric)
- Establish a due date and deadline

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Procedures for Addressing Academic Dishonesty
 July 2, 2007



www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to address grading procedures in cases of academic dishonesty. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following: the willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students using fraud, duress, deception, theft, trickery, talking, signs, gestures, copying, or any other methodology. If a teacher determines that a student engaged in academic dishonesty, thereby not meeting the basic requirements of the task/assessment, the teacher may assign a zero.

Rationale

It is important for students to learn that academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and a range of consequences can be administered to the student. The student's grade on the task/assessment may be affected.

Since teachers assess student learning in a variety of ways over time within a grading period, students will have other opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of course objectives.

Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*, states that the grading and reporting practices, as they pertain to grading procedures, must provide the following:

- Accurate reflection of student achievement outlined in the Montgomery County Public Schools curriculum
- Fair representation of a student's performance on a variety of measures over time

In addition, Policy IKA includes these essential concepts:

- All students are consistently held to high expectations (B.1)
- Grades are based on multiple and varied measures over time (B.2)

A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities, based on Policy JFA, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, and accompanying Regulation JFA-RA, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, emphasizes the importance of academic honesty:

- Academic honesty, not receiving or attempting to receive an unfair advantage in academic work, is an essential component of an effective learning environment. Therefore, the local school discipline plan should reflect the critical role academic honesty plays in creating and maintaining an effective learning environment.

Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate integrity by accepting responsibility for their learning and for the accurate evidence of this learning. These procedures are designed to ensure that grades are fair and accurately reflect student achievement.