

Distance Learning Grading

During this time of Distance Learning, we recognize the need to be flexible and understand that everyone's family situation and daily routines are different. Distance Learning will not be able to replace a “traditional classroom” nor will teachers be able to cover the fullness of the curriculum for the remainder of this school year.

During Distance Learning, teachers are providing academic opportunities for learning. We are asking parents & guardians to be engaged with this process in a manner that best suits them. We are mindful that engagement looks different in every home. We are all doing the best that we can as this is a new process for everyone. Flexibility and engagement are the key to supporting teachers, students, and families during this time of Distance Learning.

Somers Elementary School Distance Learning

The elementary school will not be grading Distance Learning assignments in the "traditional sense” but rather, teachers will be assessing assignments to gauge what the student is completing and their understanding of the assignments so teachers can provide support, feedback and adjust instruction to students as needed.

Throughout this trimester of Distance Learning, teachers will be using different ways to provide ongoing feedback to students and parents. Feedback may be provided through emails to students and/or families, phone conversations, Google Meet/ZOOM sessions, and/or through the learning platform used by your child on a regular basis. Feedback could include:

- Tracking work completion (collected/incomplete) and engagement on learning tasks
- Providing quantitative (number grades) or qualitative (narrative) feedback on select assignments
- Providing rubrics, continuums/progressions and other tools - feedback from the teacher and/or the student may self-reflect on their own work

Students at Somers Elementary School were able to complete the first two trimesters prior to beginning Distance Learning. For the last trimester of this school year, no term grades or evidence of standards-based mastery will be indicated on student report cards. Instead, teachers will provide anecdotal notes/comments for each subject and “DL” will be listed to indicate that students were involved in “Distance Learning” during this time.

Mabelle B. Avery Middle School

The outline below is intended to provide parents and teachers with a clear explanation of the grading plan for Mabelle B. Avery Middle School.

Quarter 3:

With the onset of COVID-19, Somers Public Schools needed to close on March 13. Quarter 3 officially ended two weeks later on April 3. Quarter 3 grades were largely completed prior to the school closure. Therefore, grades will be completed for Quarter 3, traditional grades will be reported on report cards, and report cards will be sent home electronically to families on April 17. Honor Roll will be calculated for Quarter 3 for students in 7th and 8th grades and will be noted on the child's report card.

Quarter 4:

Quarter 4 began Monday, April 13 and will continue through the end of the school year. We recognize the variety of hardships and traumas experienced by school community members. While many individuals will remain sheltered from the fullest experience of trauma, many members of the school community may experience the loss of a loved one, the sickness of a loved one, personal illness, financial hardships, increased stress in the household, anxiety, depression, and other situations private to each entity. Decisions regarding the academic grading during this crisis situation for our State must consider all possibilities of the human experience.

Mabelle B. Avery Middle School will be offering flexibility for families to individually self-identify the best option for handling their academic grading during this time. A questionnaire will be sent to families offering a choice between traditional letter grades and a Pass/Fail option. In addition, regardless of the choice in grading system, teachers will have the option of issuing an Incomplete grade. Each system is further defined below.

- ***Traditional Letter Grades:*** Teachers will continue to provide feedback and scores to students, and the grades earned will be calculated into the final grade as it appears in PowerSchool.
- ***Pass/Fail Grades:*** Teachers will continue to provide feedback and scores to students, and the grades earned will be calculated into an overall grade for the student. Grades 60% or higher will be reported as a P on the report card, and grades 59% and lower will be reported as an F.
- ***Incomplete Grades:*** For students who have shown a lack of performance or poor performance, teachers will have the ability to consider the circumstances surrounding the performance and mark the child's grade as Incomplete. This will indicate that there was some level of struggle for the child during this experience and that there should be knowledge of the possible gaps that may exist for the next school year. While the work will not be expected to be completed, the child may be recommended for some independent skills development over the summer.

Academic Grade Choice questionnaire: Parents and guardians will be asked to make the best decision about the format of grading for their individual child. This decision will need to be made by Friday, May 15. If a family does not respond to the questionnaire, the teacher will make the choice in the best interest of the child. Families should consider their own unique situations, the level of stress their child is experiencing and how it relates to grades, their child's performance while balancing emotional anxieties, and other factors when making this decision.

Progress Reports: Progress Reports will indicate the child's traditional grade. Grades do serve as a form of feedback and may be a helpful tool for parents/guardians to understand their child's progress. The school understands that there are many factors that may have contributed to a child's grade at the time of reporting. Progress Report grades are not final grades and do not form a permanent record. Progress Reports will be issued at the halfway point of the quarter which is Monday, May 4.

Final Exams: Due to the challenges associated with providing valid and reliable assessments during this time, there will be no final exams for students this year. Typically, exams only occur in World Language and Algebra 1. This year, these examinations will not take place.

Honor Roll: Because of the unique situation presented due to COVID-19, Honor Roll will not be calculated in Quarter 4. Eligibility requirements for Junior Beta Club will be reconsidered and communicated by the Junior Beta Club Advisor in the summer months.

Final Year Grades: For students who chose to include traditional grades on their report cards for Quarter 4, the quarters will be equally weighted. For students who choose to exercise their right for Pass/Fail grades, the final year grades for each class will be averaged between Quarters 1, 2, and 3. Students who earn Incomplete grades for Quarter 4 will have their final year grades averaged between Quarters 1, 2, and 3. Midterm exam grades (where applicable) will calculate as 10% of the final year grade.

Report Card Statement for Quarter 4: Due to the COVID-19 virus, a distance learning plan was implemented beginning on March 23, 2020. Quarter 4 grades reflect progress during this distance learning experience. No honor roll will be calculated for the Quarter 4 term.

2020-2021 Course Recommendations: Teachers will base course recommendations for next year (either for the high school or within MBA) on the child's academic experience through Quarter 3. If there are vast improvements in Quarter 4, those will also be taken into consideration. A vast decline in performance during Quarter 4 will not impact a child's recommendation for next year's classes.

Somers High School Grading Policies during Distance Learning

Upon consultation with the faculty of Somers High School, analysis of other systems' processes, district leadership discussion, and recent student survey information, the leadership team of Somers High School, which is comprised of administration and faculty team leaders representing all departments, has opted to continue to measure student performance through a traditional grading system. Traditional grades are represented in PowerSchool by letter grades and numerical averages. At the end of Quarter 4, should a student not attain a passing level, an Incomplete will be recorded. Opportunities for remediation of that grade will be provided after the conclusion of the school year.

The decision was made in an effort to sustain student motivation and recognizes' that **our staff has adjusted their curriculum and expectations to meet the needs of our students during the Covid-19 crisis.**" As always, we will continue to make the appropriate adjustments based on specific individual needs.

Honor Roll

Since grades will be tabulated based on numerical and letter grades for Quarter 4, students will be recognized for their accomplishments on the Honor Roll. However, we will not calculate honor roll until all incomplete grades are remediated over the summer months.

Final Exams and Final Course Grades

The high school leadership team, which consists of administration and departmental team leaders, has decided that because of the limitations distance learning can present, that Somers High School will **not** be administering final exams for the 2019-2020 school year.

Final course grades will be calculated based upon grades from Quarters 1-4 and the midterm exam. The final exam grade will be noted as "**exempt**" in the PowerSchool system.

Report Card Statement for Quarter 4: Due to the COVID-19 virus, a distance learning plan was implemented beginning on March 23, 2020. Quarter 4 grades reflect progress during this distance learning experience.

Course Recommendations for 2020-2021 School Year

Course recommendations and selections were entered into students' course selections in February. No changes will be made based on quarter 4 performance.