**Grand Blanc Community Schools Grading Practices Policy**

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Why does GBCS have a grading policy?**

*Historically, great attention has been paid to curriculum, instruction, and assessment, but little paid to grading practices. In addition, teachers’ grading practices have had wide variation for what should be included in a grade and to what degree. In the past two decades, much research has been done that identifies effective grading practices which promote greater validity, reliability, and more clearly communicates a student’s level of mastery of the curriculum. Grand Blanc Schools has adopted a grading policy that is aligned with current research and promotes greater grading consistency across our district.*

1. **What is the purpose of a grade?**

*In GBCS, the purpose of a grade is to inform educators as they make instructional decisions as well as inform students and parents/guardians about what students have mastered and have yet to master.*

1. **Why are so much of my student’s grades based on tests, projects, etc.?**

*Tests, projects, and other types of “summative” assessments that typically take place at the end of a unit of instruction, indicate the degree of mastery that a student has attained of the concepts. Classwork, homework, and other types of assignments (or “formative” assessments) that take place during a unit of instruction happen while learning is taking place. These “formative” pieces provide students “practice” but should not be used to indicate mastery – this should take place at the end of a unit.*

1. **What is the difference between summative and formative assessment?**

*Summative assessments (tests, projects, etc.) “summarize” overall learning at the end of a unit. Formative assessments (classwork, homework, etc.) take place while learning is underway or as learning is “formed”. Using a sports analogy, formative assessment can be thought of as the “practice” while summative assessment is the “game”. Formative assessment provides both teachers and students information about how teaching and learning can be adjusted to improve summative assessment performance.*

1. **Why isn’t extra credit allowed?**

*If grades are to reflect a student’s level of mastery in a subject, then use of extra credit that is unrelated to the achievement of learning standards will distort the grade. Rather than use extra credit, it is more valid to allow students the opportunity to retake or redo when appropriate.*

1. **Is my child allowed to retake or redo assignments and assessments?**

*The academic goal of education is proficiency of learning standards. In alignment with this goal, students are allowed the opportunity to redo/retake assessments. The degree to which redos/retakes are allowed and/or possible depends upon the subject as well as developmentally appropriate practices for different ages. Each grade level/department will have a consistent policy which supports student learning and responsibility, yet addresses the unique needs within the grade level/department.*