

Grading Practices

School: Old Donation School

Subject(s): Music (Orchestra, Band, Chorus)

Grade Level: Middle School

Homework

Homework is defined as a task assigned to students intended to be completed outside the classroom, and which is an extension of regular classroom instruction. Homework shall be used as a tool to provide teachers with information on how well students understand the information being taught in relation to curricular objectives. At times, it is appropriate to differentiate homework assignments by content and / or quantity for particular students or groups of students. Homework should serve one of the following purposes:

- to practice material presented during classroom instruction
- to prepare for new learning or classroom instruction
- to promote extended and independent learning

When assigning a homework task, teachers shall

- consider students' readiness for a particular task and purpose
- align the assignment to current curricular objectives
- communicate the purpose of a particular assignment
- consider the purpose of the task when determining whether and how the homework will be graded

The music student's primary homework is to review and solidify information gained in class through reviewing and practicing his or her music. As such, the student's amount of practice, as indicated through practice logs or other measures, may account for not more than 10% of the student's final grade for the quarter.

Late Work

When an assignment is not completed by the date due, teachers shall exercise informed professional judgment to determine consequences and adjust deadlines if appropriate, taking into account the following:

- the nature and purpose of a particular assignment
- the timeliness of the assignment as it relates to the current instruction
- individual circumstances

Teachers shall strive to empower students to exercise developmentally appropriate responsibility through built-in processes, such as strategic planning for long-term assignments. Students who exhibit a chronic pattern of turning work in late need further evaluation and increased levels of support, such as

- parental notification
- classroom interventions
- referral for guidance support services
- SRT meeting

Late work will be accepted until the end of the grading period. However, when considering “the nature and purpose of a particular assignment,” a late penalty of 10% per day may apply according to the professional judgment of the teacher if a practicing professional in an authentic context would be penalized for missing the due date (for example: a musician missing a scheduled audition or a composer failing to submit his work to his publisher on time).

Explanation of Zeroes

In assessing student learning, all student work is to be carefully considered. Teachers should refrain from initially assigning zeroes for work that is missing as this distorts the cumulative grade and does not reflect what the student has learned. Every effort should be made to hold students accountable for completing missed assessments before assigning a zero. However, teachers can and should treat this as late work. These guidelines also reflect an understanding that teachers must provide summative grades quarterly and are not expected to assign grades for work not completed within a quarter.

Students who exhibit a chronic pattern of behavior around missing work need further evaluation and increased levels of support, such as

- parental notification
- classroom interventions
- referral for guidance support services
- SRT meeting

Teacher may use an “MI” for “Missing,” (which calculates as a zero) until the student produces the missing work and it has been evaluated and given a score OR until the quarter ends. The teacher has the authority to assign student lunch detention or after-school detention to complete late work in order to avoid a zero.

Should a student miss a performance with no advance notice to the teacher and it is excused, the student—of his or her own initiative—may ask the teacher for an alternate assignment that assesses the same learning objectives in a comparable setting (for example, a solo performance in front of the class). However, if a student misses the performance without prior

notice, and the absence is unexcused, the teacher is justified in assigning partial credit down to "0" for the performance grade.

See "Make-Up Work" section for information alternatively assessing students who miss scheduled performances for an excused absence WITH advance notice.

Reassessment

Departments, grade levels or schools shall establish and communicate clear processes and expectations for grading and planning for reassessment. Any student who receives a failing grade on a summative (unit test, end of quarter test, major projects or papers) assessment may be given an opportunity for additional instruction and reassessment provided that the student has

- participated in class
- completed assignments
- demonstrated evidence of best effort on the assessment and the learning leading up to the assessment.

In other instances, teachers shall exercise informed professional judgment to determine when additional opportunities for reassessment are appropriate and/or necessary in order to obtain evidence of student learning as it relates to curricular objectives.

Reassessment is a productive part of the learning process when teachers:

- provide targeted instruction between assessments
- incorporate student reflection of learning into the process
- focus the reassessment on that which the student did not know
- give credit for a student's most recent or most frequent evidence of learning

To encourage practice towards mastery and superior artistic expression, music students will have the opportunity to be reassessed for assignments if they seek teacher permission and coordinate with the teacher a time to complete the reassessment. The teacher will retain the higher of multiple scores for the grade book. However, there are also certain contexts—such as participation and professionalism in performances and rehearsals—that do not offer the reasonable possibility of reassessment.

Make-up Work

When a student is missing work due to an excused absence, teachers shall

- provide all relevant assignments
- consider the length and reason for the absence when determining which assignments will be assessed and when they are due
- accept and assess all assigned make-up work
- provide reasonable and flexible deadlines that take into consideration a student's individual circumstances

In the event the teacher does not have adequate assessment data to provide a nine-week grade that reflects the student's knowledge of the course learning objectives the teacher may consider assigning a grade of "I" for Incomplete due to a lack of required evidence.

Students who receive unexcused absences may make up assignments at the discretion of the teacher, subject to the requirements communicated (provided) by the teacher at the beginning of the year. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of established guidelines and to follow those guidelines to make up the assignment.

Students may make up classroom assignments and assessments for excused absences with no penalty. Students are expected to complete all missing classwork and assignments within two days of his or her return to school.*

If a student notifies the teacher in advance of an upcoming absence affecting his or her performance or rehearsal attendance for a grade OR becomes ill and is physically unable to attend the performance or rehearsal, the teacher will do his or her best to provide an alternate assignment for the student that assesses the same curricular objectives. This assignment must be completed within two days of the student's return to school. The teacher may also choose to excuse the student from the assignment in the grade book and leave a "blank" in place of a grade.*

See section regarding **Reassessment for information regarding how to proceed if a student is not satisfied with his or her performance on the make-up evaluation.*

Extra Credit

Extra credit will not be offered in the middle school music classroom as students may be reassessed as many times as they would like in order to achieve a satisfactory grade.

For additional information, please access the [VBCPS Grading Guidelines for Secondary Schools](http://vbschools.com) on vbschools.com.