

# BARBOUR COUNTY SCHOOLS

## Grading Procedures & Student Progression Plan

2026–2027 School Year

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### 1. OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Barbour County Schools is committed to a fair, consistent, and transparent grading system that accurately reflects student mastery of Alabama College and Career Ready Standards. This document outlines the district’s policies on grading, promotion, retention, and academic integrity for all students in Grades K–12.

These procedures align with the **Alabama Literacy Act**, **Alabama Numeracy Act**, and **Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)** graduation requirements.

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### 2. GRADING SCALES

#### Grading Scale for K–6 grade students:

Barbour County Schools utilizes a Board-approved grading scale designed to ensure a high standard of academic mastery. While aligned with state reporting standards for excellence, our district establishes a minimum passing score of 60 to promote rigorous student achievement.

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Definition
A	90 – 100	Excellent
B	80 – 89	Above Average
C	70 – 79	Average
D	60 – 69	Below Average
F	0 – 59	Failure
I	N/A	Incomplete*

*\*Incomplete grades must be resolved within two weeks of the end of the grading period, or they will convert to a zero.*

## Grading Scale for 7–12 grade students:

Barbour County Schools utilizes a Board-approved grading scale designed to ensure a high standard of academic mastery. While aligned with state reporting standards for excellence, our district establishes a minimum passing score of 65 to promote rigorous student achievement.

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Definition
A	90 – 100	Excellent
B	80 – 89	Above Average
C	70 – 79	Average
D	65 – 69	Below Average
F	0 – 64	Failure
I	N/A	Incomplete*

*\*Incomplete grades must be resolved within two weeks of the end of the grading period, or they will convert to a zero.*

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### 3. CALCULATION OF GRADES

Student averages are determined by weighting specific categories of assignments.

#### Grades K–6: Elementary

Grades in elementary school are calculated as a **straight average** of all graded work. There are no weighted categories (e.g., tests vs. homework) for K–6 to ensure a balanced view of young learners' progress across all activities.

- **Minimum Grades:** Teachers must record at least **18 grades per subject** each nine-week grading period (average of two per week).

## Grades 7–12: Secondary

Secondary grades are weighted to emphasize mastery of content on major assessments, daily academic practice, and the development of essential employability skills. **Teachers must record at least two academic grades and one Professionalism grade per week.**

Grades are calculated using the following three categories:

- **55% Summative (Major Assessments):** Unit tests, projects, essays, research papers, and mid-term/final exams.
- **35% Formative (Daily Work):** Classwork, quizzes, labs, exit tickets, and other practice assignments. (*Note: Teachers are required to record a minimum of one formative assessment per week.*)
- **10% Professionalism & Work Ethic:** A weekly grade assessing student readiness and engagement.

**The Professionalism & Work Ethic Grade (10% of Overall Average)** To prepare students for college and the workforce, Barbour County Schools incorporates a standalone "Professionalism Grade." This grade treats the classroom like a professional workplace, evaluating the essential "soft skills" required for success in the real world.

- **How it is calculated:** Every student begins each week with a 100 Professionalism grade.
- **Deductions:** Teachers will deduct points throughout the week based on the following professional expectations:
  - **Focus Act Compliance (Cell Phones & Devices):** In strict accordance with the Alabama Focus Act, all personal wireless devices (including but not limited to: cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, etc.) must be turned off and stored in a designated area during the school day. Having a device visible, audible, or on the student's person during class will result in an immediate professionalism deduction.
  - **Punctuality & Attendance:** Unexcused absences (more than 2 per nine week grading period), unexcused tardies, arriving late to class, or wandering the halls.
  - **Preparation:** Failing to bring necessary materials (including but not limited to: charged school-issued Chromebook, notebook, pen/pencil, etc.) to class.
  - **Engagement:** Sleeping in class, refusing to participate, or being off-task.
  - **Respect:** Failure to follow teacher directives, or using unprofessional language.
- **Annual Schedule of Deductions:** To ensure consistency and high expectations, a specific Schedule of Deductions will be developed annually by the Barbour County High School Principal and staff. This schedule will outline the specific point values deducted for professional infractions.
- **Approval Process:** The proposed BCHS Schedule of Deductions must be submitted to and approved by the Superintendent prior to the start of each school year. Once approved, the schedule will be shared via the school website, social media pages, district email, and printed handouts to ensure full transparency regarding professional expectations.

## Professionalism Grade: Legal Compliance & Exemptions

- A. Disability & Medical Protections (ADA/IDEA/Section 504) No student shall receive a grade deduction for behaviors, medical needs, or accommodations explicitly addressed in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. Protected instances include, but are not limited to:
  - Use of personal wireless devices for medical monitoring (e.g., glucose tracking).
  - Behavioral manifestations directly related to a documented disability.
  - Mandated sensory or medical breaks that may appear as "off-task" behavior.
  - Punctuality issues resulting from documented medical conditions or physical therapy.
- B. Constitutional & Religious Exemptions Deductions for "engagement" or "respect" shall not be applied to students exercising protected First Amendment rights. This includes opting out of the Pledge of Allegiance or expressing religious objections to specific non-core instructional activities.
- C. Alabama FOCUS Act (HB 166) Alignment In accordance with state law, the 10% Professionalism grade serves as a disciplinary consequence for unauthorized wireless device use. However, per state mandate, exceptions must be granted for devices used for emergency medical purposes or as part of a student's official instructional plan.

*(Note: The Professionalism Grade evaluates daily work habits and readiness. Severe infractions, as well as the physical confiscation of cell phones under the Focus Act, will still be handled simultaneously through office referrals in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.)*

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## 4. HOMEWORK, LATE WORK, & MAKE-UP WORK

### Homework Policy

Homework is designed for practice and reinforcement of skills taught in class.

- **Grades K–12:** Homework is generally **not graded for accuracy** but may be checked for completion to monitor student understanding. It should not be a punitive measure.

### Make-Up Work (Excused Absences)

Students with **excused absences** have the right to make up missed work.

- **Zeros:** Any assignment not submitted by the due date will be entered as a **zero (0)** in the grade book until it is turned in.
- **Time Limit:** Students have **three (3) days** from their return to school to turn in an excuse and arrange make-up work with their teacher. The work must be completed within **five (5) Business/School Days** unless other arrangements are made with the principal.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Teachers are **not** required to provide make-up work for unexcused absences.

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## 5. PROMOTION & RETENTION

### Grades K–5: Alabama Literacy & Numeracy Acts

Promotion in elementary grades is heavily governed by state law to ensure students are reading and performing math on grade level.

- **Alabama Literacy Act (3rd Grade):** By law, 3rd-grade students who do not demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state assessment (ACAP Summative) **may be retained** unless they qualify for a "Good Cause Exemption."
- **Alabama Numeracy Act (K–5):** Students participating in math intervention must make sufficient progress. Retention may be recommended if a student fails to master essential math standards.

### General K–6 Promotion:

To be promoted, a student must have a yearly average of 60% or higher in:

1. **Reading**
2. **Mathematics**
3. **Science OR Social Studies**

### Grades 7–8: Middle School Promotion:

To be promoted to the next grade level, students must pass (65% or higher) the following core subjects:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- *Failure of two or more core courses will result in retention.*

### Grades 9–12: High School Credits & Promotion

Unlike elementary and middle school, high school students are promoted to the next grade level based on the **total number of credits earned**, not the number of years they have been in school.

**How Credits are Earned (0.5 Credits per Semester):** High school courses at Barbour County Schools are designed as year-long classes. However, credits are awarded at the end of each semester.

- Students earn **0.5 credits** at the end of the Fall semester for each class they pass (final grade of 65 or higher).
- Students earn another **0.5 credits** at the end of the Spring semester for each class they pass.

**Failed Semesters & Credit Recovery Policy:** Semesters are **not** averaged together at the end of the year. Each 0.5 credit stands alone. If a student fails one semester of a year-long course, a high grade in the other semester will not "cancel out" the failing grade.

- *Example:* If a student earns a 55 in the Fall semester of Algebra I, they receive **0 credits** for the Fall. If they earn an 85 in the Spring semester, they earn **0.5 credits** for the Spring.
- To earn the missing 0.5 credit for the Fall, the student must successfully complete that specific half of the course through the district's **Credit Recovery** program.

**Grade Level Promotion:** At the beginning of each school year, a student's grade-level classification is determined by whether they have met the following total credit milestones:

Grade Level Status	Credits Required
Sophomore (10th)	6 Credits
Junior (11th)	12 Credits
Senior (12th)	18 Credits
GRADUATION	24 Credits

**High School Attendance Rule:** Students in grades 9–12 who accumulate more than **10 unexcused absences** in a specific course during a semester may receive a grade of "F" (No Credit) for that course, regardless of their numerical average, per ALSDE guidelines.

## Transfer Grade Reciprocity & Conversion

Barbour County Schools (BCS) is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all students transferring into our district. We recognize that grading scales and passing thresholds vary by district and state. To ensure academic continuity and protect student progress, the following reciprocity policy applies:

- **Honoring Earned Credits (Accreditation Clause):** BCS will honor credits earned by students transferring from educational institutions accredited by recognized agencies (e.g., Cognia). If a transfer student's official transcript reflects a "Passing" status for a course, that credit will be accepted toward Barbour County graduation requirements.
- **Grade Conversion to BCS Standards:** If a student transfers into BCS with a numerical grade that was considered passing at their previous school but is below our local threshold of **65**, the grade will be recorded in our student information system as a **65 (Minimum Passing)**. This conversion ensures the student receives the necessary quality points for their GPA and is not penalized for the differing standards of a previous district.
- **Non-Accredited & Home-School Transcripts:** Grades and credits from non-accredited schools or home-school programs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In accordance with Alabama administrative code, the district reserves the right to require placement testing or alternative validation of mastery before awarding credit or determining grade placement for students from non-accredited sources.
- **Administrative Validation:** The high school counselor or registrar will verify the accreditation status and passing marks of the sending institution before any grade conversion is applied to the permanent record.

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## 6. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Barbour County Schools offers various pathways to graduation in accordance with the standards set by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). Under our district policy, the minimum passing score for any course is a **65**.

### The Alabama High School Diploma (Standard Pathway)

Students must earn **24 total credits** to graduate.

- **English:** 4 credits
- **Math:** 4 credits (Must include Algebra I & Geometry)
- **Science:** 4 credits (Must include Biology & a Physical Science)
- **Social Studies:** 4 credits
- **Physical Education:** 1 credit (Lifelong Individualized Fitness Education)
- **Health:** 0.5 credit
- **Career Preparedness:** 1 credit
- **CTE / Arts / Foreign Lang:** 3 credits
- **Electives:** 2.5 credits

## **The College and Career Readiness (CCR) Requirement**

In addition to earning credits, the State of Alabama now requires every student to earn a **College and Career Readiness (CCR) Indicator** to receive their diploma. Think of the CCR as a "Workforce Readiness Check Mark." It is the state's way of ensuring that every graduate is prepared for a career, the military, or college the day they leave us.

### **Our Preferred Path: CTE Completion**

While there are several ways to earn a CCR indicator (such as high scores on the ACT or WorkKeys tests), **Barbour County Schools prioritizes Career and Technical Education (CTE) Completion as the primary path for our students.** Testing benchmarks can be difficult to reach, but every student has the opportunity to succeed in a hands-on CTE program.

- **What is a CTE Program?** A student chooses a specific career field and completes a sequence of three specialized courses in that area.
- **Why it is Preferred:** Students who complete a CTE program not only earn their required graduation "check mark" (CCR) but also gain real-world skills and often earn professional certifications that lead directly to high-paying jobs.
- **The Commitment:** We encourage students to select a career track early and stick with it through all three levels to ensure they meet graduation requirements.

### **Alternative Diploma Pathways (Including "Option B")**

The State of Alabama now offers additional, flexible pathways to graduation, including the **"Option B" Diploma Pathway.** This pathway allows for even more focus on technical training and workforce credentials for students who are ready to enter a specific trade.

Because these pathways are highly customized and options are tailored to each student's future goals, **please see your high school counselor for the most up-to-date information regarding all diploma options and CCR requirements available in the State of Alabama.**

### **Additional State Requirements:**

- **Civics Exam:** Students must pass the Alabama Civics Test to graduate.
- **FAFSA Completion:** All graduating seniors must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or sign a non-participation waiver before graduation.

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## 7. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Barbour County Schools expects all students to demonstrate honesty in their academic work.

### Cheating & Plagiarism Policy:

- **Definition:** Copying another student's work, using unauthorized aids (cheat sheets, phones, AI tools) during tests, or submitting someone else's writing as your own.
- **Consequence:** Students caught cheating will receive a **zero (0)** on the assignment. Parents will be notified, and a disciplinary referral may be entered into the student's file.

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## 8. SPECIAL POPULATIONS

### English Language Learners (ELL)

- ELL students cannot be given a failing grade solely due to a lack of English proficiency.
- Grading must reflect the student's work with appropriate **accommodations** and **modifications** as outlined in their Individual English Language Plan (I-ELP).

### Students with Disabilities (IEP/504)

- Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan must be provided with the specific accommodations and modifications required by their plan.
- Grades should reflect mastery of the standards with these supports in place.

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## 9. PROGRESS REPORTS & COMMUNICATION

Parents play a vital role in student success.

- **Progress Reports:** Issued every 4.5 weeks (midway through the quarter).
- **Report Cards:** Issued every 9 weeks.
- **Parent Portal:** Parents are strongly encouraged to check grades and attendance weekly via the PowerSchool Parent Portal.
- **Conferences:** If a student is failing a core subject, a parent-teacher conference will be requested to discuss intervention strategies.