



SECONDARY SCHOOL OFFICE
AMERICAN NICARAGUAN SCHOOL

Rationale for Secondary Grading and Reporting Revision

Context: Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, we will implement changes to our grading and reporting policy based on research-based, best practice in education. After thoroughly reviewing current educational research, our secondary team formed a committee of teachers, learning support and administrators to revise our grading and reporting policy.

Below, is a detailed list of the shifts in practice that we have adopted to support our students to become self-directed, lifelong learners who will eventually be our future leaders. After careful consideration, we have developed a focus on student-centered learning, with an emphasis on growth, not grades.

Change in Practice	Reason for Change	Further Reading
Content to Conceptual Learning	Children are growing up in a world where information is at their fingertips, but processing and applying that information is what creates an educated person. Developing students who are solutionaries and can tackle real-world problems is what's expected for the 21st century student. Content builds the foundation, but concepts construct the house.	2015 Visible Learning Research- John Hattie 2016 Visible Learning Research- John Hattie 2017 Visible Learning Research- John Hattie TED Talk- Ken Robinson
From four quarters to two semesters	We believe learning takes time and should not be rushed. Superficial learning happens when teachers are required to communicate through grades and meet grading deadlines. Authentic assessment and grading occur once students have shown growth through performance and are ready for a grade to be reported.	TED Talk- Growth Mindset The Growth Mindset Short term vs Long term Growth
Student-Led Conferences	To shift the focus away from a transcript of grades, to artifacts of learning, we hold student-led conferences twice a year. Students showcase their learning during student-led conferences, with a measure of humility that allows for realistic goal-setting and continued self-improvement. Skills of reflection build a growth mindset, and will be called upon during the college application process and job interviews in the future	Why Students Should Take the Lead in Parent Teacher Conferences Beyond the Transcript



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Removal of semester/final exams	By removing semester and final exams, we increase our instructional time by 2 weeks and allow our teachers the opportunity to see growth over time instead of a snapshot in time by counting each semester equally. We feel this change makes our school more inclusive rather than exclusive for those who can recall facts/information the night or days before the exam.	Canada Killing Exams Changing Exams at Harvard Culture of Yes Vanishing Final Exams
Retake Policy vs Extra Credit	Many students and parents ask for extra credit, mainly to increase the number grade. We are more focused on standards-based learning, which forces students to show mastery of the standard in order to improve learning rather than completing additional assignments for points that do not align with the actual learning standard.	Redos and Retakes Done Right The Right Way to Do Redos
Assessing student dispositions	<p>Each student will be assessed routinely through a dispositions grade (determination, collaboration, commitment) documented in Rediker, but this will only be used as part of the learning process.</p> <p>Not all assignments will receive a grade, but all assignments, if turned in on time, will receive feedback. Deadlines are still part of the learning process, however, timelines are not part of our grading system. Student dispositions will not factor directly into performance tasks or the overall course grade.</p>	Deadlines Matter Enough with the Late Penalties Standard or Policy What should be graded? TED Talk- Daniel Pink
Overall grade based on performance tasks only, not a combination of formative and summative grades (performance tasks)	Formative assessment refers to an interactive process in which students practice and teachers provide descriptive feedback. Previously, we allowed the formative practice to be graded, which was unfair to some students because he/she needed more time to practice before being graded.	Value of Formative Assessment Should we grade formative assessments? Grade Reform Making Grades Meaningful