

Guidance Document for Consideration in Awarding Pass/Fail Credit

Supported by the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS)

Friday, March 13, 2020 was the effective last day of school due to Governor Northam's order for schools to be closed for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. VDOE has provided guidance on awarding credits and continuity of learning that reiterates that the authority to award grades and to determine grade point averages rests with local school divisions.

As local school divisions consider how to apply the guidance by VDOE, the use of Pass/Fail, in lieu of the standard A-F, may be considered as an option. As teachers and others decide final grades for students, during an extraordinary time, collectively during this process the work must convey hope and encouragement for students and not be an additional burden or source of stress. Continuity of learning prior to closing out the school year should provide opportunities for students to make academic progress and to continue to learn and develop.

While some school divisions may provide a blanket Pass/Fail to all students and other school divisions will have variations of finalizing students' grades, assigning grades is a local decision and this document is to be used as guidance only. If a school division decides to offer Pass/Fail on an individual basis, the following methodology is supported by VSBA and VASS:

- Pass/Fail as an option should be agreed upon by the parents and the student.
- The parents and student should consider the application of Pass/Fail after all other work completed has been determined on the A-F scale.
- If the parents and the student select a letter grade, in lieu of Pass/Fail, no letter grade should be lower than the student's grade on March 13, 2020.
- The student's final grade would either be a letter grade or Pass/Fail.
- If the student's final grade in a course is detrimental to the student's GPA, the grade will be Pass/Fail. If the student's final grade enhances the student's GPA, the letter grade and resulting GPA will be maintained on the student's transcript.
- The course credit earned by passing, using Pass/Fail, will be excluded from the student's GPA calculation and a "P" or "F" will be recorded on the student's transcript. Promotion/graduation credit will be earned only by a "P".
- Exclusion of select courses (weighted courses, required credits for graduation, etc.) from the Pass/Fail option might be considered by local school divisions.
- Substitution of an "Incomplete" for a "Fail" with an appropriate timeline allowing students to demonstrate mastery of critical standards might be considered.

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