

SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Academic Variance Alternative Grading

This policy is adopted as a temporary policy in accordance with the framework set by HSD Policy 1900 – Temporary Pandemic Policies and is intended to govern District operations for the period affected by a public health pandemic, when health and safety measures implemented by the District are in response to directives given by federal, state, or local authorities.

Teachers will grade students as usual in accordance with established classroom or course practices during the grading period in accordance with District Policy 2080, the school’s Student Handbook, and the Helena Public Schools Employee Handbook.

In collaboration with school principals, the Superintendent and/or designee will develop administrative procedures to implement the provisions of the above-noted grading variance options. The administrative procedures will further define processes for determining proficiency as well as the protocol for awarding an associated credit.

*Academic Variance and Promotion/Graduation*

Students earning a grade or demonstrating proficiency for grading periods affected by a public health pandemic, as declared by the Board through the Declaration of an Emergency, will be granted credit for any/all corresponding classes. For high school level classes, the corresponding credit will count towards promotion or graduation requirements and extra-curricular eligibility as informed by HSD Policy 3067.

It is expected that all students will strive to meet the current Helena Public Schools graduation requirements as informed by Policy 2085. However, given the unique circumstances and varied school phases utilized in association with a public health pandemic, high school principals may grant an academic variance to the current HPS graduation requirements for any student disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The variance may include, but is not limited to, substitution of a graduation requirement, granting of credit through demonstration of proficiency, and/or allowing students to participate in the commencement ceremony upon the finalization of their concurrent, summer enrollment.

No variance will be made for the requirements of the State of Montana graduation standards as defined in 10.55. 905 ARM. Students covered by a 504 or Individual Education Plan (IEP) may meet graduation requirements as stipulated by the provisions of their plan. The Superintendent and/or designee will develop procedures to implement the graduation variance.

Cross Reference:

- Policy 1900 COVID-19 Emergency Policies
- Policy 2080 Student Instruction: Grading, Progress Reports, and Instruction
- Policy 2085 Student Instruction: Graduation Requirements
- Policy 3067 Students: Academic Eligibility for Activities Policy

Legal References:

- Section 20-1-301, MCA School Fiscal Year
- Section 20-3-325, MCA Powers and Duties
- Section 20-7-1601, MCA Transformational Learning

- Section 20-9-311(4)(a)(b)(d), MCA      Calculation of Average Number Belonging
- 10.55.906, ARM                              High School Credit

Policy History:

Adopted:                      3.9.2021

Revised:

Reviewed