

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Date: October 27, 2021

To: Principals

Subject: CHANGING GRADES & CHANGING COURSES ON A TRANSCRIPT

Department and/or Persons Concerned: All Administrators, Counselors, Site Techs & Registrars

Reference: AR 5121

Action Requested: Review guidelines and implement immediately

Attachment: **Grade Correction Authorization Form**

Brief Explanation:

GRADE CHANGE REQUESTS:

1. This circular provides guidance and the process to sites who have instances where an academic or citizenship grade correction is needed and no grade change appeal is requested. The attached *Grade Correction Authorization Form* template has been created for sites to use when developing their internal site procedures regarding a “grade correction.”
2. In addition, this circular provides guidance to sites who have instances where they feel a course change may be warranted.

Administrative Regulation 5121 references the process and includes the form for instances when a parent appeals a grade change.

Administrative Regulation 5121, references Ed Code 49066 indicating: “A grade given by a teacher is final and cannot be changed by others unless it was given fraudulently, in bad faith, because of incompetency, or because of clerical or mechanical error. A grade cannot be changed unless a teacher who determined the grade is, to the extent practicable, given the opportunity to state orally, in writing or both, the reasons for which such grade was given and is, to the extent practicable, included in all discussions relating to changing such a grade.”

The principal is responsible for communicating grading requirements and standards to teachers at the beginning of each school year. The principal is also responsible for ensuring all school staff complies with the requirements and procedures set forth in this policy.

Teachers are responsible for evaluating students and determining students’ grades in the subject area the teacher is credentialed in. Teachers are responsible for validating their students’ final

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quarter/semester grades in PowerSchool Gradebook in order for student grades to be stored by the deadlines.

The issuing teacher may only request to change a grade within the subsequent quarter/semester from when a final quarter/semester grade is issued for the following reasons:

- Miscalculation of test or assignment scores
- A technical error in assigning a particular grade or score
- Failure to meet grade storing deadline, causing an incorrect grade to be stored
- Demonstration of mastery of standards in the second quarter/semester of coursework

NOTE: Appropriate documentation must be produced and filed in order to make changes.

Grades **cannot** be changed:

- Solely to increase a student's GPA
- Solely to increase total number of credits if suppression occurred
- For one course when student is receiving passing grades in all other courses
- To help a student qualify for financial assistance or college/university admission
- To help a student qualify for scholarship or to join a school club
- To replace an "NC" or "NG" grade unless the student has proven mastery of standards in the second quarter/semester of coursework

Grade Changes Occurring Within the Subsequent Quarter/Semester:

The procedures for approving and administering grade corrections occurring within the subsequent quarter/semester from the date a final quarter/semester grade was originally issued are as follows:

1. The teacher completes the *Grade Correction Authorization Form*, specifying the reason for the request to change a grade. If there are multiple grade changes within a single class period, the teacher may submit one Grade Correction Authorization Form and attach a roster indicating the grade changes for each student.
2. The principal must determine if the reason for the change is consistent with the reasons stated above.
3. The principal shall review all relevant information and shall, to the extent practicable, confer with the teacher to discuss the grade prior to making a grade correction determination.
4. Only the principal is authorized to approve such corrections.
5. If the principal approves the grade correction, the principal will sign the *Grade Correction Authorization Form* and provide the teacher a copy.
6. Teacher must update Gradebook to reflect updated grade prior to submission of form to site tech or registrar.
7. The principal (or designee) will notify parent and student.
8. The original signed and approved *Grade Correction Authorization Form* will be routed to the site tech (or registrar) who will follow the process for making the grade correction.
9. Once the site tech corrects the grade, the form will be routed to the registrar, who will place the completed and approved form in the student's CUM file.
10. The principal must complete and sign the *Grade Correction Authorization Form* for all approved grade corrections and ensure the original form is filed in the student's CUM file.
11. If the principal does not approve the grade correction request, the student/parent may request an appeal. This process is identified in Site Operations Circular No. 2028.

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All Grade Corrections Must Occur by the End of the Subsequent Quarter/Semester:

If more than one quarter/semester has passed from the date the grade was originally issued, the principal must provide evidence with the *Grade Correction Authorization Form* to the **area superintendent** for approval.

The principal must submit the following documentation with the *Grade Correction Authorization Form*:

- Written statement from principal describing reason(s) for the late request
- Evidence from teacher, which may include but is not limited to:
 - A written statement indicating the specific reason(s) why the request is more than one quarter/semester past
 - Syllabus, with specific assignment deadlines
 - Gradebook copy with specific student assignment progress
 - PowerSchool data, as needed
 - Student's Personal Learning Plan, if applicable
 - Student work, if applicable
 - Student test scores, if applicable
 - Any other supporting documents

The area superintendent will review the matter and determine the appropriateness of the request within (10) ten school days of receipt. The area superintendent shall record the grade correction determination on the *Grade Correction Authorization Form* and shall notify the principal. The same steps from the process above (#6-10) must be followed, including the principal notification to the teacher of the final decision.

If more than two quarters/semesters have passed, a request for a grade change will not be accepted.

Grade Changes Occurring When Teacher is Unavailable:

In the event that a grade correction is requested, and the teacher of record is unavailable, the principal is responsible for investigating and providing the teacher, to the extent possible, the opportunity to state orally or in writing (or both), the reason(s) for which the grade was given. Documentation must be included with the *Grade Correction Authorization Form* in these instances if the principal determines a grade correction is warranted.

Documentation includes:

- Written documentation of dates/times the principal made efforts to contact teacher
- Principal conversation/meeting notes
- If the teacher is reached, outcome/teacher response
- Principal/Teacher reason(s) for change approval or disapproval
- If the teacher is not reached, evidence from teacher Gradebook of student work progress

Approval for these instances will be made by the Area Superintendent.

NOTE: Grade corrections will ONLY be considered for progress reports on a case-by-case basis, if the student's eligibility is at question.

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DROP/WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE:

Administrative Regulation 5121 also describes the guidelines when a student may be dropped/withdrawn from a course. Students may drop a course without having a grade entry recorded in their historical grades if they drop the course within the first four (quarter courses) or six (semester courses) weeks of the term.

Students may not be dropped from a course and enrolled into another course if the student will not meet the requisite of 60 hours of instruction required for first time credit. *Note: it is permissible to make a course level adjustment in the same content if done prior to 10 school days before a final term grade is issued i.e. Honors Chemistry 1 (6221) to Chemistry 1 (6211), Advanced IMI A (4165) to IMI A (4157), AP U.S. History 1 (6711) to U.S. History 1 (6701).*

COURSE CODE CHANGE REQUESTS:

Student transcripts are permanent records that should not be altered without good cause. The following are NOT VALID reasons for a course code change request:

- Scheduling error/Student placed in wrong course
- Student earns a low mark in an advanced level course, grade has been stored, and teacher recommends a change to a regular course
- A student was never enrolled in a course that is being requested to change (*no deleting of historical grades and no manual adding of grades*)
- As a result of passing a standardized exam (i.e. AP, CAASPP, IB, etc.)

Any request for a course code change the site feels may be warranted must be forwarded to the Office of Leadership and Learning. The following documentation is required for approval consideration (attach to email request):

- Principal email explaining reason(s) for the request
- Split teacher roster that includes courses taught during the period the student was enrolled in Teacher Gradebook reflecting student assignments and progress in the specific course code change requested

All evidence should be sent to Veronica Ortega, Office of Leadership and Learning at vortegal@sandi.net.

As a reminder, it is prohibited to alter a transcript outside of the stipulations contained within this circular.

For questions, please contact Veronica Ortega at 619.725.7284.

APPROVED:

Tavga Bustani
Chief of Leadership and Learning

Attachment: Grade Change Authorization Form