

Academic Policies

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PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Student placement policies are based on the philosophy that students benefit most from an educational program appropriate to their academic ability, their physical maturation, and a student's social development. Most students make regular progress and are promoted to the next grade level. However, special individual circumstances may indicate a need for student retention or acceleration.

All academic classes are equally important. Grades earned in Armenian language, Armenian Studies, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies receive equal emphasis when promotion or retention is considered.

PROMOTION

The following policy makes up the minimum academic expectations of students:

Elementary (Grades K - 5):

Six chronological years of progress through grades is the standard expectancy from students. Students demonstrating difficulty in mastering basic skills usually are identified as early as in their primary grades (K-2).

To be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet the following criteria:

- a. Master the basic skills in all academic classes.
- b. Have no "F" grades at the end of the academic year in any class.
- c. Attend at least 85% of school days regularly, except in special circumstances.
- d. Receive Academic Director's recommendation for promotion.

Students who fail to meet the above criteria must repeat the class. Failing students will be given the opportunity to attend summer school and upon successful completion of the course material, will be promoted to the next grade level.

Middle School (Grades 6 - 8):

To be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet the following criteria:

- a. Achieve an overall GPA of "C" or better by the end of the academic year.
- b. Have no "F" grades in any course at the end of the academic year.
- c. Attend at least 85% of school days, except in special circumstances.
- d. Good Citizenship

Students who fail to meet the above criteria will repeat their grade. Failing students will be given the opportunity to attend summer school and upon successful completion of the course material, will be promoted to the next grade level. In some cases, upon approval of the Principal, a student may follow directed study instead of attending summer school.

High School (Grades 9 - 12):

To be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet the following criteria:

- a) Achieve an overall GPA of "C" (2.0) or better by the end of the academic year.
- b) Have no "F" grades at the end of each semester in any course.
- c) Attend at least 85% of school days regularly, except in special circumstances.
- d) Good Citizenship.

If a student's grade is "F" in a course at the end of any or both semesters, he/she must repeat the course through summer school before accelerating to the next grade level. Students with "D" grades and planning to attend a 4-year college must also repeat the "D" grade course to attain a "C" grade or better.

RETENTION

Retention is intended as a means to improve the student's potential success in the future and is not a punitive measure. A student will not advance to next grade level if he/she has less than 1.0 GPA and/or three (3) failing grades.

Students in grades K-8, who have attained failing scores during the first semester, must raise their grades to "C" or better at the end of the second semester to be able to move on to the next grade level. Failure to reach such level may be cause for class retention.

To retain a student, the following procedures are followed:

- At the end of the 3rd quarter, parents of failing students will be warned about possible class retentions.
- After the class retention warning, the academic advisor or a representative of the Administration will meet with the students to discuss the shortcomings and suggest remedies.
- Parents will be informed of the reasons for retention and they will be involved in the process to resolve the situation.
- A final conference among the parent(s), student, Academic Advisor, and the Principal will take place before students are retained.
- The Principal ultimately decides if a student will be retained.

ACCELERATION

Under special circumstances, the Principal, taking into consideration teachers' recommendations as well as student's level of achievement, age, maturity, and other factors, may allow acceleration.

GRADING POLICY

The grades assigned to students are based on their **academic progress** and their **classroom behavior**. Accordingly, students receive **Academic** and **Cooperation** grades for every quarter of the four-quarter academic year. Students also receive a mid-term progress report for each of these 9-10 weeklong quarters.

Besides the quarter grades, students in grades 6-12 are assigned semester grades for each class/course. These grades are computed based both on their quarter grades and the results of their mid-year or final exam grades. Mid-year or final exams are administered to students in grades 6-12 only.

Students in grades 6-12 are also assigned **Citizenship grades** that reflect their overall disciplinary behavior in the school in general. **Class ranking** is computed for graduating senior students only and it is based solely on students' academic grades.

Report cards and progress reports

Report cards and progress reports for grades 6-12 are mailed home and students in grades 1-5 take them home. Parents of the latter must sign both cards and return to their respective homeroom teachers in due time.

Academic Grade

The following grading scale is applicable to grades K-5.

Academic Grade Scale Grades K-5			
Letter Grade	Scale of 100	Scale of 4	
A+	100-97	4.3	Exceeds grade level standards
A	96-93	4.0	
A-	92-90	3.7	
B+	89-87	3.3	Meets grade level standards
B	86-83	3.0	
B-	82-80	2.7	
C+	79-77	2.3	Partially meets grade level standards
C	76-73	2.0	
C-	72-70	1.7	
D+	69-67	1.3	Below grade level standards
D	66-63	1.0	
D-	62-60	0.7	
F	59-0	0	Fail

The following grading scale is applicable to grades 6-12.

Academic Grade Scale Grades 6-12								
Letter Grade	Scale of 100	Scale of 4	Weighted Grade		Letter Grade	Scale of 100	Scale of 4	Weighted Grade
A+	100	4.4	5.4		C+	79	2.3	3.3
A+	99	4.3	5.3		C+	78	2.2	3.2
A+	98	4.2	5.2		C+	77	2.1	3.1
A+	97	4.1	5.1		C	76	2.0	3.0
A	96	4.0	5.0		C	75	1.9	2.9
A	95	3.9	4.9		C	74	1.8	2.8
A	94	3.8	4.8		C	73	1.7	2.7
A	93	3.7	4.7		C-	72	1.6	2.6
A-	92	3.6	4.6		C-	71	1.5	2.5
A-	91	3.5	4.5		C-	70	1.4	2.4
A-	90	3.4	4.4		D+	69	1.3	1.3
B+	89	3.3	4.3		D+	68	1.2	1.2
B+	88	3.2	4.2		D+	67	1.1	1.1
B+	87	3.1	4.1		D	66	1.0	1.0
B	86	3.0	4.0		D	65	0.9	0.9
B	85	2.9	3.9		D	64	0.8	0.8
B	84	2.8	3.8		D	63	0.7	0.7
B	83	2.7	3.7		D-	62	0.6	0.6
B-	82	2.6	3.6		D-	61	0.5	0.5
B-	81	2.5	3.5		D-	60	0.4	0.4
B-	80	2.4	3.4		F	0-59	0	0

Quarter Grade

A quarterly grade is assigned based on the following requirements:

Quarter Grade			
Tests and quizzes	50-70 %	Homework	10-15 %
Projects, labs, etc.	10-15 %	Class participation	10-15 %

Semester Grade

The semester grade determines whether a student passes or fails a class/course. High school students who fail a course in the first semester must make up that semester course even if they pass the second semester. The percent distribution of each semester grade is as follows:

1 st Semester Grade		2 nd Semester Grade	
1st Quarter grade	40%	3rd Quarter grade	40%
2nd Quarter grade	40%	4th Quarter grade	40%
Mid-year exam grade	20%	Final exam grade	20%
Total	100%	Total	100%

Grade Point Average

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated for grades 6-12 at the end of each quarter and semester on a 4.00 scale computed to two decimal places, rounded up to the nearest hundredth.

Students in Advanced, Honors or AP courses, earn one whole grade point that reflects on a student's report card. The additional weight given to Ferrahian-designated Advanced courses are not honored by UC/CSU systems. Only Honors and AP courses are given additional weight by UC/CSU systems.

The GPA reflects grades of all courses except Physical Education (PE).

Grading Policy for Concurrent Courses

Only courses taken for high school credit are reported on the student's transcripts. The new grade obtained for the repeated course will be reported on the report card and the values of both grades will be taken into consideration while calculating the GPA and the subsequent overall class ranking level. Grades for repeated courses in which the student initially earned a "C" or better will not be used without the prior approval of the Principal.

Please note that a student should take on the responsibility to report the grades for courses taken for **college credit** purposes to the university/college he/she plans to attend.

Cooperation Grade

The Cooperation Grade reflects a student's classroom behavior and work habits in the classroom. Therefore, the Cooperation Grade is assigned based on the number of violations committed relative to "Classroom Rules" section of this handbook.

Citizenship Grade

The Citizenship grade represents a student's behavior throughout the school. Therefore, the Citizenship Grade is assigned based on the frequency of infractions pertaining to "School-Wide Rules" and "Violent Acts" sections of this handbook.

The Citizenship Grade is assigned as follows:

- The student begins with an A+ Citizenship grade.
- For each behavioral detention received for violating the "School-Wide Rules" the Citizenship grade of a student is lowered by ONE WHOLE letter grade.
- For each one-day suspension received for violating the "School-Wide Rules" the Citizenship grade of a student will be lowered by TWO WHOLE letter grades.

Class Ranking

- For school internal purposes, the final ranking for juniors and seniors is based on their weighted cumulative GPA in grades 9-12.
- For FAFSA, Cal Grant and College applications the High School GPA includes all coursework for the sophomore year (10th grade), the summer following the sophomore year, the junior year (11th grade) and the summer following the junior year.
- For UC/CSU college admittance applications the High School GPA includes all Honors/AP weighted for the sophomore year (10th grade), the summer following the sophomore year, the junior year (11th grade) and the summer following the junior year.

Grade Adjustment

The report card grades assigned to students are final. In the event a grade is in dispute, a student must petition the teacher and upon the approval and consent of the Principal, the grade may be adjusted.

ASSESSMENT

Test/Quiz Policy

Students take at least TWO tests per class/course per semi-quarter. Two to four quizzes may be counted as one test. It is up to the individual teacher to adopt a policy to drop the lowest test grade of a student in calculating the quarter grade. No more than two tests are scheduled on the same day. The test scheduled last will be automatically dropped.

Students, grades 6-8, must take home all administered and graded tests for parent/guardian signature and returned to the teacher the next school day.

Test/Quiz Make-Up

Students with **excused** absences shall have the opportunity to complete missed class work and make up all tests receiving full credit. The student is responsible to arrange for the make-up.

Students who miss a test/quiz because of an **unexcused** absence will receive a failing grade on that test/quiz, except when the teacher decides to offer the chance for make-up.

If a student misses a test/quiz while on suspension, he/she will not have the opportunity to make up the test/quiz and will receive an "F".

Cheating

Acts of cheating or plagiarism will result in suspension and the student will receive an "F" (20/100) on the test or the assigned work.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized tests are tools utilized to evaluate the students' academic performance and the school's academic standing statewide and nationwide. Our school administers a variety of grade-level standardized tests to grades 1-11 during an academic year. The following is a preview of the standardized tests administered.

Stanford 10

The Stanford 10 standardized test is used essentially in private schools. The test results provide information about the relative ranking of each student in reading, language, math, science, and social studies against a national sample of students. Our school administers the Stanford 10 Test to grades 1-8 during the month of April. For reference purposes, the test results are kept in the student's file folder and a copy is sent home for parents' information and records. Besides individual reports, grade-level teachers are provided with a copy of the group analysis. The teachers allocate the necessary classroom time to address the shortcomings as illustrated in the group analysis reports.

ACT and SAT-I

Besides being a measurement of academic performance for Junior- and Senior-class students, high school level standardized tests are also requirements for four-year college admissions process. Examples of such standardized tests are ACT and SAT-I. Taking either ACT or SAT-I does serve this specific purpose. ACT being standards-based assessment tool and curriculum-based measure of college readiness, is our choice for the 11th grade standardized test. ACT multiple-choice tests cover four skill areas of English, mathematics, reading and science, as well as writing. The ACT components besides being subject area tests as mentioned above include high school course information, student profile, and career interest inventory.

ACT has established the ACT College Readiness Benchmark scores. A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B grade or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C grade or higher, in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses, which include English composition, algebra, social science and biology. The school has adopted a policy that mandates all 11th grade students to take ACT in April. The score received in ACT in English constitutes 50% of the final exam grade in the 11th grade English course. The score received in ACT in mathematics constitutes 50% of the final exam grade in the 11th grade mathematics course.

SAT-II, known as subject tests are among the requirements for admission into certain four-year colleges. Examples are certain University of California campuses for certain majors. It is recommended that students take the SAT-II test immediately after the completion of the corresponding subject course.

EXPLORE and PLAN

Another benefit of the ACT is that it has College & Career Readiness System that includes EXPLORE typically for 9th grade and PLAN for 10th grade. Both tests measure the same four skill areas as ACT: English, mathematics, reading, and science.

EXPLORE serves to identify the student's areas of need for improvement early on and help make timely interventions. Taking EXPLORE provides further benefits to the students including:

- identifying where they need extra help or additional coursework
- suggestions for improving their skills
- a look at how their scores compare to the ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores
- the opportunity to begin exploring career areas that match their interests.

PLAN serves as a midpoint review of academic progress. Assessing students' academic strengths and areas of need at this time allows them to make timely coursework adjustments to get or stay on track in their educational goals. PLAN is also known as the Pre-ACT exam. Taking PLAN is an excellent way to prepare for the ACT.

Taking PLAN provides several benefits for our students including:

- an estimated ACT score
- a look at how their scores compare to ACT's College Readiness Benchmark Scores
- the opportunity to identify career areas that match their interests
- the opportunity to connect to more information about colleges & financial aid
- identifies the areas they need extra help or additional courses
- identifies the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in college.

ACT GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

All 11th grade students are required to take the ACT exam in May. The score received in English and Math constitutes 50% of the 2nd semester exam of the English language and Math courses consequently. For school grading purposes, please use the following conversion table for computing the ACT (or SAT-I) test scores.

Letter Grade	Grade 100 Scale	ACT Score 36 Scale	SAT Score 800 Scale	ACT Score 72 Scale	SAT Score 1600 Scale	ACT Score 108 Scale	SAT Score 2400 Scale
A+	100	36	781-800	72	1561-1600	108	2341-2400
A+	99	35	761-780	70	1521-1560	105	2281-2340
A+	98	34	741-760	68	1481-1520	102	2221-2280
A+	97	33	721-740	66	1441-1480	99	2161-2220
A	96	32	701-720	64	1401-1440	96	2101-2160
A	95	31	681-700	62	1361-1400	93	2041-2100
A	94	30	661-680	60	1321-1360	90	1981-2040
A	93	29	641-660	58	1281-1320	87	1921-1980
A-	92	28	621-640	56	1241-1280	84	1861-1920
A-	91	27	601-620	54	1201-1240	81	1801-1860
A-	90	26	581-600	52	1161-1200	78	1741-1800
B+	89	25	561-580	50	1121-1160	75	1681-1720
B+	88	24	541-560	48	1081-1120	72	1621-1680
B+	87	23	521-540	46	1041-1080	69	1561-1620
B+	86	22	501-520	44	1001-1040	66	1501-1560
B+	85	21	481-500	42	961-1000	63	1441-1500
B+	84	20	461-480	40	921-960	60	1381-1420
B+	83	19	441-460	38	881-920	57	1321-1380
B-	82	18	421-440	36	841-880	54	1261-1320
B-	81	17	401-421	34	801-840	51	1201-1260
B-	80	16	381-400	32	761-800	48	1141-1200
C+	79	15	361-380	30	721-760	45	1081-1140
C+	78	14	341-360	28	681-720	42	1021-1080
C+	77	13	321-340	26	641-680	39	961-1020
C	76	12	301-320	24	600-640	36	901-960
C	75	11	281-300	22	561-600	33	841-900
C	74	10	261-280	20	521-560	30	781-840
C	73	9	241-260	18	481-520	27	721-780
C-	72	up to 8	up to 240	up to 16	up to 480	up to 24	Up to 78

EXAM REGULATIONS

All mid-year and final exams for grades 6-12 are administered in classrooms. The following are important information and disciplinary guidelines regarding the mid-year exams:

1. Final days are minimum days. Students must be picked up from school the latest by 12:30 p.m.
2. Students must be in school uniform otherwise they will not be allowed to take the exams.
3. Students tardy to an exam for more than 15 minutes will not be allowed to take the exam and will get failing "F" grade for that exam.
4. Students absent for health or medical reason must bring a doctor's note to be eligible to take makeup exams. Without a doctor's note the absence is unexcused and the student will get a "F" grade for the missed exam(s).
5. There should be complete silence in the exam rooms. Any disturbance or any attempt to disturb the course of the exam including remarks within the context of "practical jokes" will not be tolerated. Failure to adhere to directives will result in "F" grade in that exam.
6. Students are not allowed to take books or notes to the classroom.
7. Students must remain seated after completing the exam. They will be allowed to leave the classroom only after the booklets and answer sheets are collected.
8. Examination periods are not extended.
9. Calculators are allowed in the classroom only by the permission of the course instructor.
10. Cell phones and other electronic or communication devices are not allowed in the exam room. All such devices must remain in the student's locker/car and in off position. Failure to follow the policy will result in penalties as described in the school General Handbook.
11. Students are not allowed in the balcony areas during the exam sessions. Students must be in the cafeteria.
12. All school disciplinary policies and regulations will be strictly enforced during the exams.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Homework is generally assigned every day to supplement class work. The estimated duration of homework for an average student is 20-30 minutes long for each class/course.

Parents are encouraged to cooperate with instructors in supervising the study habits of their children, but they should not do the homework for them. Homework is usually assigned to students in all grade levels every weeknight. Weekend homework may also be assigned for enrichment purposes only.

Late Work

Assignments not turned in on time or make-up work not completed within the required time limit will be graded down (See “Academic Infractions” section).

Summer Assignments

The school policy requires that Armenian and English Language teachers assign summer reading materials to students. Upon return from summer vacation, students’ work will be graded as part of the 1st quarter grade.

