April 20, 2020

STUDENT GRADES DURING CLOSURE

Dear Parents/Guardians of KHSD students:

As we begin our second month of school closures due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 health crisis, the Kern High School District continues its commitment to providing your student(s) with ongoing distance learning and access to quality education through its collaboration with our dedicated teachers and staff members, parents and guardians, and our remarkable and resilient students. Thank you again for all of your hard work, patience, and partnership with us as we navigate these unprecedented challenges.

Over the last several weeks we have received many questions about how our students will be graded for the academic work they perform from home during the second semester of this school year. The District has been working with state and local education officials, including receiving guidance from Governor Gavin Newsom and State Superintendent of Instruction Tony Thurmond, in order to determine the most effective and appropriate grading methods given the current circumstances. Not only are our students’ grades very important to us, but we have also been working to determine how these grades will impact our students’ future college and university ambitions and admission requirements.

Therefore, in order to ensure equitable and reasonable grading for all students, the Kern High School District will adopt a Pass/No Pass grading system for the 2019-2020 spring semester and the 2020 summer session.

KHSD Comprehensive High School Pass/No Pass Spring Semester Grading

Students’ grades at the comprehensive school sites are reflected on their transcripts by semester. Therefore, students receive final grades twice per school year – at the conclusion of the first semester (which begins at the beginning of the school year and ends before Christmas Break) and at the conclusion of the second semester (which begins in January and ends at the conclusion of the school year in the spring). Pass/No Pass grading means that a student will not receive a traditional letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F) for the spring semester this school year. Instead, students’ transcripts will reflect that a student either passed the course (P) or did not pass the course (NP). Whether a student passes or does not pass a class will be evaluated as follows:

A student will receive a Pass for the spring semester if the student had a grade of A, B, C, or D for the third quarter. (The third quarter ended on Friday, March 13, 2020.) However, students must continue their studies in the fourth quarter by working from home with the ongoing assistance of their teachers.
A student who was failing (receiving an F grade in a class) at the time of the school closure on March 18, 2020, will be given the opportunity to raise their grade during the fourth quarter in order to receive a Pass for the semester. Teachers will contact students who failed a third quarter class in order to develop a personalized plan for the student to review and learn the course’s academic content in order to receive a passing grade.

**KHSD Alternative Education Pass/No Pass Spring Session Grading**

Alternative Education, which includes Continuation School, Workforce, and Independent Study, delivers courses in several sessions throughout the school year that do not align with the comprehensive high school semesters. Alternative Education programs will not utilize third quarter grades to calculate session grades; students will need to complete the assigned course work for this current session to earn course credits. All Alternative Education students will receive a Pass on the transcript for the current session once the required course work is satisfactorily completed.

The University of California, California State University, California Community Colleges, and the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities recently met to discuss the impact of statewide school closures on high school students in order to ensure that students are held harmless from any negative impacts because of the closures. As a result, the college and university systems are willing to accept Pass/No Pass grades in lieu of letter grades for all courses. Grades of Pass/No Pass will not affect how the colleges and universities calculate students’ grade point averages for admission.

For the duration of the school closure, teachers will continue providing meaningful instruction and focus on teaching students the fundamental learning requirements for each course. Through distance learning, students have been provided, and will continue to receive, opportunities for remediation and improvement, and continued focus on essential learning and enrichment opportunities.

Continuing student learning through these remaining weeks of the spring semester or session is absolutely critical. Our goal is that our students return to school in August prepared for the new academic year, as unencumbered as possible due to the school closures. Your continued participation in ongoing distance learning is vital to this effort.

Finally, the District will soon publish a frequently asked questions page on its website at [www.kernhigh.org](http://www.kernhigh.org) in order to address the concerns and questions of our students, parents/guardians, and community.

Thank you again for your continued support of the Kern High School District and its incredible and dedicated teachers and staff who are working tirelessly to educate and serve students every day.

Sincerely,

Bryon Schaefer, Ed.D.
Superintendent