Smyth County Public Schools
Student Grades, Promotion and Monitoring

This document will serve as a guide to our instructional staff and also for parent information in regards to student grades, promotion and monitoring of student work during the reminder of the academic year. Please know we have examined many different methods regarding grading and we feel the document below outlines the most equitable plan for our students. Since the closure of school, we have been amazed at the different types of instructional methods being used by our staff, encouraged by the excitement shown by many of our students to be a part of this new style of learning, and hopeful everyone remains safe and well. The Smyth County Schools Team is here to support each of you in any way we possibly can.

Instruction during the COVID-19 Emergency Closing of Schools will utilize the following procedures for students enrolled in Smyth County Schools. Guidance from the Virginia Department of Education suggests that school systems focus on continuity of education with the focus on ensuring that students meet state standards, benchmarks, and competencies. This guide outlines what parents and students should expect from their school during this closure.

Teachers will hold remote office hours Monday-Friday from 9 am-12 pm and from 1 pm-3 pm. Teachers will utilize a variety of methods to reach students in order to assist with instruction during the closure. Please do not hesitate to contact your child’s school if you have questions or concerns about grades or instructional support.

**Elementary**

During the closure, students will be issued essential skills packets that can only be used to help raise their 3rd nine weeks grade. This extension will be based on teacher evaluation through weekly student contact. No grades will be entered into PowerSchool during the closure. Teachers will adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade on May 20, 2020. Teachers will then issue a final grade for the school year. A student’s 3rd nine weeks grade can only increase during the time that schools are closed.

**Grades PreK-5th**

For the 2019-2020 school year, student grades will consist of the first semester and then the 3rd nine weeks reported grades. Student grades will be based on a 3-nine weeks school year. A student’s grade will be the average of the 3 nine weeks which will give an overall grade for the school year. The 1st nine weeks will equal ⅓ of the grade, the 2nd nine weeks will equal ⅓ of the grade, and the 3rd nine weeks will equal ⅓ of the grade. The 3rd nine weeks grade will not be final until May 20, 2020. This extension will allow for teachers to adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade according to teacher evaluation of essential skills work completed during the closure.
Middle School
During the closure, students will be issued essential skills work through Google Classroom. The work that is submitted will be evaluated by the instructor and the instructor will give feedback to students based on work submitted. No grades will be entered into PowerSchool throughout the duration of the school closure. Instead of assigning grades, teachers will give feedback on student work submitted. Teachers will adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade on May 20, 2020, based on student work during the closure. The instructor will then issue a final grade for the school year. A student’s 3rd nine weeks grade can only increase during the time that schools are closed.

Grades 6th-8th - Yearlong Courses
For the 2019-2020 school year, student grades will consist of the first semester and then the 3rd nine weeks reported grades. Student grades will be based on a 3-nine weeks school year. A student’s grade will be the average of the 3 nine weeks which will give an overall grade for the school year. The 1st nine weeks will equal ⅓ of the grade, the 2nd nine weeks will equal ⅓ of the grade, and the 3rd nine weeks will equal ⅓ of the grade. The 3rd nine weeks grade will not be final until May 20, 2020. This extension will allow for teachers to adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade according to teacher evaluation of essential skills work completed during the closure.

Grades 6th-8th - Block Schedule Courses
A block schedule course is a course that students complete in a single semester. Students currently enrolled in a block class will receive a grade based on the 3rd nine weeks. The 3rd nine weeks grade will not be final until May 20, 2020. This extension will allow for teachers to adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade according to teacher evaluation of essential skills work completed during the closure.

High School
Grades 9-12
Student grades will be based on the type of course the student is taking: standard high school courses, dual enrollment courses, and AP courses; and the length of the course: yearlong or single-semester block schedule.

Standard High School Credit
During the closure, students will be issued essential skills work through Google Classroom. The work that is submitted will be evaluated by the instructor and the instructor will give feedback to the student, based on work submitted. No grades will be entered into PowerSchool throughout the duration of the school closure. The instructor will then issue a final grade based on the 3rd nine weeks grade and the essential work completed during the closure. A student’s 3rd nine weeks grade can only increase during the time that schools are closed. All standard high school credit grades will be counted in a student’s cumulative GPA.
Yearlong
For the 2019-2020 school year, grades will consist of the first semester and then the 3rd nine weeks. Student grades will be based on a 3-nine weeks school year. A student’s grade will be the average of the 3-nine weeks which will give an overall grade for the school year. Two-thirds of the final grade will be based on the first semester grade and the remaining one-third will be based on the third nine-weeks grade. The first semester includes the mandatory midterm exam grade. The 3rd nine weeks grade will not be final until May 20, 2020. This extension will allow for teachers to adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade according to teacher evaluation of essential skills work completed during the closure.

Block Schedule
Students currently enrolled in a block class will receive a grade based on the 3rd nine weeks. The 3rd nine weeks grade will not be final until May 20, 2020. This extension will allow for teachers to adjust the 3rd nine weeks grade according to teacher evaluation of essential skills work completed during the closure.

College Credit Courses
All Dual Enrollment/Governor's School/Elite Learning students must continue to work through the remainder of the semester. All work completed will be graded and entered into PowerSchool according to Community College guidelines. DE/Governor School/Elite students will have the option of receiving a letter grade (A, B, C, or D) or a P+ (Passed with a C or higher), P- (Passed with a D), W (Withdraw), or I (Incomplete). A withdrawal from any Virginia Community College System (VCCS) site must be requested before the last day of the site's school year. (Example: Last day to withdraw from WCC is April 27, 2020. Last Day to withdraw from NRCC is May 8, 2020. Last day to withdraw from VHCC is May 27, 2020). An incomplete will allow the student to continue working in the course over the summer. Students are encouraged to contact their individual instructor to find out specifics for their course. Grades will be based on VCCS guidelines for all DE, Governor School, and Elite classes. Students who choose a letter grade will have that grade figured into their overall GPA. A student who requests a P+, P-, W, or I will not have the grade figured into their overall GPA. This process will allow for consistency when figuring GPA in the future.

AP Courses
AP students will continue to work as other college credit bearing classes. Students must continue to work through the remainder of the semester. All work completed will be graded and entered into PowerSchool as other college credit bearing courses. Students will have the option of receiving a letter grade (A, B, C, or D) or a P+ (Passed with a C or higher), P- (Passed with a D), W (Withdraw), or I (Incomplete). Students who choose a letter grade will have that grade figured into their overall GPA. A student who requests a P+, P-, W, or I will not have the grade figured into their overall GPA. This will allow for consistency when figuring GPA in the future. The College Board (the agency that administers AP courses) is offering free resources to help students prepare for the exam. Students will be given the option to take the AP exam through alternative methods. For the 2019-20 exam administration only, these methods include:
- Secure 45-minute online free-response exams for each course.
- The exam content will focus on what most schools were able to complete by early March.
• Students will be able to take the exams on any device—computer, tablet, or smartphone. Students will also have the option to write their responses by hand and submit them by photo.
• Colleges support this solution and are committed to ensuring that AP students receive the credit they have worked to earn. For decades, colleges have accepted a shortened AP Exam for college credit when groups of students have experienced emergencies.
• The College Board knows that not all students have access to the Internet or a device. They are working on solutions to help students get what they need to show their best work. If you need mobile tools or connectivity or know someone who does, you can reach us directly to let us know.
• The exams will be secure. The College Board is using a variety of digital security tools, including plagiarism detection software.
More information about the College Board's response to COVID-19 is available here: https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/coronavirus-updates