Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of Academic Policy & Systems

September 2016

Middle School Academic Policy Guide

Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

As part of our daily work to prepare our students for high school and beyond, we are required to adhere to important policies that govern the design and implementation of students' academic programs. These policies help ensure that all students have access to a robust program of academic experiences that prepare them for success in high school and beyond. This guide compiles relevant State and City policies, as well as links to related supplementary resources, into one reference tool.

I became intimately familiar with the academic policy guide during my years as a principal. Each day, our school community focused on delivering strong instruction and engaging curricula that met or exceeded State standards. But when questions came up about exactly what those requirements were, or the appropriate ways to track student progress, I found that referring to this guide allowed me to quickly find the answers I needed so that I could focus my energy on teaching and learning.

Schools should continue to use this guide as a resource as they program students, maintain student records, and ensure that students are provided with the opportunities they are entitled to in order to graduate ready for college and careers in the 21st century.

I encourage you and your staff to refer to this guide as you develop your academic programs for the school year. This guide, as well as additional resources on policies pertaining to academic requirements and programming, can be found on the Department of Education's academic policy and systems intranet page. Please contact your academic policy and systems lead for additional guidance on any of the topics described in these resources, and refer to *Principals' Weekly* for updates on additional programming and grade reporting processes.

As always, thank you for your hard work to offer our students a rich educational experience.

Sincerely,

Phil Weinberg
Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

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I. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) Commissioner's Regulations, New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Chancellor's Regulations, and supplementary academic policy resources provide guidance on policies pertaining to students in middle school grades, including their program requirements, formative and summative assessments, grading, and promotion. Middle schools that also serve elementary school and high school grades should refer to the Elementary and High School Academic Policy Guides, respectively, for information applicable to these grade levels.

The STARS suite of applications is the NYCDOE's official record of students' programs, grades, and progress toward completing academic requirements. STARS reflects academic information for all NYCDOE public school students in grades K–12. STARS data also reflects schools' alignment to the New York State and New York City academic policies described in this guide. To ensure that STARS data accurately captures students' academic programs and outcomes, schools must follow the procedures outlined in the Middle School Course Code Directory and on the STARS wiki. STARS is managed by the NYCDOE's Office of Academic Policy & Systems. See the section of this guide on Scheduling in STARS and visit the STARS wiki for more information.

A. REQUIRED UNITS OF STUDY

NYSED Part 100.4 defines the minimum program requirements for students in middle school grades. Part 100.1 defines a unit of study as 180 minutes per week throughout the school year, which is the equivalent of 108 hours of instruction per year, or 54 hours per semester. Throughout this document, a unit of study is based on the amount of instructional time the student receives from a NYSED certified teacher in a course aligned to NYSED learning standards.[1]

The sections below outline the program requirements for students in grade 6, 7, and 8. These represent the minimum academic program that a student in a public middle school in New York State is entitled to receive. Schools may exceed the requirements described below and offer supplementary experiences, including advisory, service-learning opportunities, and other youth development courses, that will enhance students' educational experiences and provide them with valuable life experiences. Middle schools also serving elementary school and high school grades should refer to the Elementary and High School Academic Policy Guides for the academic requirements applicable to those grades.

1. Grade 6

In grade 6, students must receive instruction aligned to NYSED intermediate learning standards in specific subject areas. Principals may determine the distribution of time among these subject areas based on their academic program and student needs, with the exception of physical education and health, both of which have more specific time requirements outlined by NYSED. Schools must provide instruction to all students in grade 6 in the following subject areas:

- English language arts (ELA), including reading, writing, listening and speaking;[2]
- Social studies, including geography and United States history;
- Math, including arithmetic, science, and technology;
- Physical Education (PE);
- Health;
- The Arts, including visual arts, music, dance, and/or theater;
- Language other than English (LOTE);

[1] Through NYSED's incidental teaching provision, there are specific instances where a teacher may teach one period per day in a subject area outside their certification area, provided that they teach within the same student population as their license area and have demonstrated subject matter competency in the subject.

[2] Courses previously referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) are now referred to as English as a New Language (ENL). English as a New Language (ENL) courses that meet ELA standards may count toward students' ELA instructional requirements. See Part 154 and the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide for middle school ENL requirements.

- Career development and occupational studies; and
- Bilingual education and/or ENL, where student need is established.[2]

2. Grades 7 and 8

In grades 7 and 8, middle schools must provide students with academic programs that enable them to complete specific units of study in required subject areas by the end of grade 8. A unit of study is defined as 180 minutes per week throughout the school year or the equivalent of 108 hours per year. In middle school, a unit of study must align to NYSED intermediate learning standards (and Common Core standards, where applicable) and be taught by a teacher certified in the subject area. In most cases, instructional time delivered in these subject areas during grade 6 or prior may not be counted toward the required units of study.[3]

The table below uses units of study to define the requirements. Schools may find it helpful to consult the appendix in for examples of how schools can reach the unit of study requirements depending on period length and term model.

Grade 7 & 8 Subjects	Total required time (1 unit = 108 hours)	Additional Information
English Language Arts (ELA)	2 units	• 108 hours in grade 7 and • 108 hours in grade 8
Social Studies	2 units	• 108 hours in grade 7 and • 108 hours in grade 8
Math	2 units	• 108 hours in grade 7 and • 108 hours in grade 8
Science	2 units	• 108 hours in grade 7 and • 108 hours in grade 8
Technology Education	1 unit	• 108 hours total, across grades 7 and/or 8[4] • Technology instruction provided in grades 5 and/or 6 by a certified technology teacher may fulfill this requirement.
Physical Education	1 unit	• 54 hours (90 minutes per week) in grade 7 and • 54 hours (90 minutes per week) in grade 8; see the section on PE for more details
Health Education	0.5 units	• 54 hours total, across grades 7 and/or 8; see the section on Health for more details • Health instruction provided in grade 6 may fulfill this requirement.
The Arts	0.5 unit in two different disciplines, for a total of 1 unit	• 108 hours total, across grades 7 and/or 8; see the section on Arts for more details
Library and Information Skills	One period per week in grades 7 and 8, or the equivalent[5]	
Languages Other Than English (LOTE)	1 unit	• 108 hours total any years prior to the end of grade 8; see the section on LOTE for more details
Home and Career Skills	0.75 unit	• 81 hours total, across grades 7 and/or 8[6] • Instruction in home and career skills provided in grades 5 and/or 6 may fulfill this requirement.

[3] As an exception, the health, technology, and home and career skills requirements may be delivered prior to grade 7.
[4] Schools may integrate the technology learning standards into other courses, provided teachers certified in technology teach the courses.
[5] It is recommended that library and information skills be taught by library media specialists and classroom teachers to ensure coordination and integration of library instruction with classroom instruction.
[6] Family and consumer sciences and/or career development and occupational studies learning standards may be delivered through standalone courses (e.g., advisory) or integrated into other academic courses.

Grade 7 & 8 Subjects	Total required time (1 unit = 108 hours)	Additional Information
Career Development and Occupational Studies	School determined.[7]	

B. PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH —Updated September 2016

Part 135.3 and 135.4 define the minimum requirements for schools to provide physical education (PE) and health education instruction, including five required annual HIV/AIDS lessons for students in grade 6 and six required annual HIV/AIDS lessons for students in grades 7 and 8.

1. Physical Education

Students in grades 6-8 must participate in an instructional physical education (PE) program in every semester throughout middle school for at least 90 minutes per week.[7] [8] Schools may not count time for dressing and traveling to an off-site facility toward the PE instructional time requirement.

Summary of PE time and frequency requirements			
Grade Level	**Which PE policies apply?**	**Minimum required time**	**Minimum required frequency**
Grade 6[8] In a K–6, K–8, K–12 school	Elementary school policies for grades 4–6	120 minutes per week	No less than 3 times per week, every term
Grade 6 In a 6–8 or 6–12 school	Middle school policies for grades 7–8	90 minutes per week[7]	Every term
Grades 7–8	Middle school policies for grades 7–8	90 minutes per week[7]	Every term

At a minimum, PE programs must be designed to meet NYSED PE learning standards at the middle school level. PE courses must be taught by a certified PE teacher; and class size shall not exceed 50 students to one certified PE teacher per the UFT contract.

As in all other courses, grading for PE must be based primarily on content area knowledge and skills and not on non-mastery measures. Students may not be graded solely on attendance, participation, or preparedness. See the Grading Policy: Frequently Asked Questions and Checklist for more details.

NYSED PE & Health Learning Standards

1. Personal Health and Fitness
2. A Safe and Healthy Environment
3. Resource Management

NYC FITNESSGRAM is the City's annual health-related fitness assessment. Schools must complete this assessment for all eligible students each year as part of their PE program; however, performance on this assessment cannot be used to determine student grades.

[7] The traditional PE scheduling model set by Part 135.4 is known as the "3/2 flip," in which students are scheduled for 3 days per week in one semester and 2 days per week in the other, or for a comparable time each semester when the school is organized in other patterns. See the PE FAQ for more information on scheduling and term models.

[8] Notably, K–6, K–8, or K–12 schools serving grade 6 students should ensure grade 6 students are following the elementary requirements in the Elementary School Academic Policy Guide. This allows for continuity in scheduling across grades K–6. In all other cases, students in grade 6 follow the typical middle school requirements. For more information, see the PE FAQ.

There are no waivers or exemptions from PE requirements in middle school. Students with chronic or temporary medical conditions or disabilities must participate in physical education. Students with temporary medical conditions must provide the school with a medical certificate of limitation that indicates the area of the PE program in which the pupil may participate. Students with chronic medical conditions or disabilities documented by a Section 504 Plan or IEP must participate in PE in the least restrictive environment, including general PE or an adapted physical education (APE) program if necessary, as indicated on their IEPs or 504 plans.

2. Health Education

All middle school students are required to complete one half-unit (54 hours) of comprehensive health education course that includes sexual health education.[9] The course must be aligned to NYSED health education learning standards at the middle school level, and must be taught by a certified health education teacher. It is strongly recommended that this course take place during grades 6 or 7, so that students are adequately prepared to make healthy and informed choices throughout middle school.

In addition to the half-unit of comprehensive health education, NYSED mandates HIV/AIDS education for every student, every year:

- Five lessons per year for all students in grade 6; and
- Six lessons per year for all students in grades 7 and 8.

The NYCDOE required curriculum for HIV/AIDS lessons are available here.

Students may be exempt only from the specific HIV/AIDS and sexual health education lessons that include methods of prevention; all students are required to receive instruction about abstinence, the nature of sexually transmitted diseases, and methods of transmission. Lessons that include abstinence but no other methods of prevention do not qualify for this exemption. The NYCDOE designates specific "opt out" lessons for each grade level in the provided HIV/AIDS curriculum.

For more information on academic policies and STARS programming for physical and health education courses, schools may contact their academic policy and systems lead; for guidance on the implementation of physical and health education instructional programs, schools may contact the Office of School Wellness Programs.

C. THE ARTS

In grade 6, the distribution and amount of time spent in the arts (visual arts, music, dance, and/or theater) may be determined by the school based on their academic program and student need. To ensure a balanced curriculum, NYSED recommends that students in grade 6 spend ten percent of their time weekly in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, with certified arts teachers or arts partners using curricula that align to NSYED learning standards for arts education.

In grades 7 and/or 8, students must receive two half-units of instruction (54 hours), taught by certified teachers of the arts, in any two of the four arts disciplines (visual arts, music, dance, and/or theater), totaling 1 unit of instruction (108 hours). Schools may choose to complete the requirement in either grade, or across both grades. For example:

- Students may take a semester (54 hours) of music in grade 7 and a semester (54 hours) of dance in grade 8.
- Students may take a full year of arts in grade 8, covering both visual arts (54 hours) and music (54 hours).
- Students may take arts courses consistently throughout middle school:
  - Students may take theater twice per week throughout grade 7, for a total of 54 hours; and
  - Students may take dance twice per week throughout grade 8, for a total of 54 hours.

[9] Comprehensive health education emphasizes skill development around multiple dimensions of health, including physical, mental, emotional, and social health. It also includes these essential content areas: physical activity and nutrition; HIV/AIDS; sexual risk; family life/sexual health; tobacco; alcohol and other drugs; unintentional injury; violence prevention; and other required health areas. For more information, schools should see the The State's Guidance for Achieving New York State Standards in Health Education or contact the Office of School Wellness Programs.

- Afterschool arts instruction can count towards this requirement only if it is taught by a certified arts teacher, aligns to the appropriate standards, and is scheduled as arts instruction in STARS using the Middle School Course Code Directory.

A student may meet the required half unit of study in music by participating in a school's band, chorus, or orchestra, provided that such participation is consistent with the goals and objectives for the school's music program for grades 7 and 8.

D. LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH (LOTE) —Updated September 2016

Instruction in LOTE may begin as early as kindergarten, but must begin no later than the beginning of grade 8. Courses in languages other than English provided as part of a home language arts program satisfy the LOTE requirement.[10]

While not required, middle schools may design their LOTE programs to culminate in the NYCDOE Second Language Proficiency (SLP) achievement-like exam.[11] This exam assesses proficiency of Checkpoint A learning standards and can be used to award accelerated high school credit when taken after completing an accelerated LOTE course in grade 8. See the SLP Guide for information regarding exam administration. Common middle school LOTE models include:

- Two years of study in LOTE in any grades prior to grade 9, culminating in the SLP exam. Students who successfully complete these courses and pass the SLP exam receive two high school course credits in STARS. Schools using this model should code the courses using the standard middle school LOTE course codes (e.g., FSNM8 for Spanish).
- One year of accelerated LOTE study in grade 8, culminating in the SLP exam at the end of grade 8. Students who successfully complete the course and pass the SLP exam receive two high school course credits in STARS. Schools using this model should code these courses using the accelerated middle school LOTE course codes (e.g., FSNM8A for accelerated Spanish).

Students who have completed three full years of LOTE study by the end of grade 8 may take the NYCDOE LOTE comprehensive exam and receive two high school credits for passing the accelerated LOTE course (e.g., FSNM8A) and the LOTE exam in grade 8. For more information about languages other than English, see the LOTE FAQ.

E. ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES (AIS) —Updated September 2016

Part 100.2(ee) defines schools' responsibility for providing Academic Intervention Services (AIS) to students at all grade levels. AIS is defined as "additional instruction which supplements the instruction provided in the general curriculum and assists students in meeting the State learning standards … and/or student support services which may include guidance, counseling, attendance, and study skills which are needed to support improved academic performance."

Effective July 27, 2016 NYSED has approved amendments to Part 100.2 that delineate a two-step process for identifying students who are eligible for AIS. In grades 3–8, principals must provide AIS to students who demonstrate need, as follows:

- First, schools must identify all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs, who scored below the State-designated performance level on one or more of the State elementary assessments in ELA or math. Students who score below the median scale score between level 2 and level 3 are preliminarily eligible for AIS.[12]
- Then, using additional assessments, schools may make local determinations about which students will most benefit from AIS. Schools must apply the same assessments uniformly across any given grade.

For more information, see the NYSED memo on this regulatory change.

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[10] Formerly known as native language arts (NLA). A unit of study or its equivalent in language arts in the student's home language. These units of study are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards.

[11] Because NYSED no longer offers SLP exams, the NYCDOE's locally-administered SLP exams are used to measure proficiency of the Checkpoint A learning standards.

[12] This procedure may also include diagnostic screening for vision, hearing, and physical disabilities.

Parents or guardians of students who have been identified to receive AIS must be notified, in writing, by the principal in English and in the preferred language or mode of communication of the parent, where appropriate. The principal must inform the family of the services the student will receive, the reason the student needs such services, and the consequences of not achieving expected performance levels. Ongoing communication regarding the students' AIS progress must include the following. Parents or guardians also must be notified when AIS ends.

- An opportunity to consult with the student's regular classroom teacher(s), and other professional staff providing academic intervention services, at least once per semester during the regular school year;
- Reports on the student's progress at least once each quarter during the regular school year; and
- Information on ways to work with the student to improve achievement, monitor his or her progress, and work with educators.

F. ASSESSMENTS

1. New York State Tests in English, Math, and Science

Each year, students in grades 3–8 in New York participate in State ELA and math tests. Students in grade 8 also participate in the State science test.

Schools administer New York State ELA and math tests to students according to their grade level. Students with disabilities (those with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 Plans) and English language learners (ELLs) may be eligible to receive testing accommodations on these assessments. Schools must base the decision to provide testing accommodations on students' individual needs, and the accommodations must directly address the student's documented diagnosis, disability, or language need. See the Testing Accommodations section for more information.

The following students are exempt from some or all of these tests:

- Students who participate in the New York State Alternative Assessment (NYSAA) are exempt from the ELA, math, and science tests.
- ELLs, including students from Puerto Rico, who, as of April 1 of the year in which the Common Core ELA exam is administered, have been attending school in the United States for less than one year are exempt from the ELA test.
  - Recently arrived ELLs may be eligible for one, and only one, exemption from the administration of New York State ELA Exam in grades 3–8.
  - Schools may administer the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in lieu of the New York State ELA Exam, for participation purposes only, to recently arrived ELLs who meet the criteria above. All other ELLs must participate in the New York State ELA Exam and the NYSESLAT. See the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide.
- Some students in accelerated math courses who are instead taking a math Regents exam as their culminating assessment may be exempt from the Common Core math tests ;
  - Students in accelerated math courses that culminate in a Regents exam are expected to take math Regents exam(s) as their culminating math assessment(s).
  - Students in accelerated math courses who also receive instruction in the grade 7 or 8 learning standards may also take the grade 7 or 8 Common Core math tests. See the double testing waiver guidance for additional information on the process schools must follow to receive permission to administer the grade 7 or 8 Common Core math tests to these students.
- Some students in accelerated science courses (per the NYSED testing manual) may be exempt from the grade 8 science test;
  - School principals may either require or waive the grade 8 science test for accelerated grade 8 students who did not take this test during the last school year, but who will be taking a Regents exam in science at the end of this school year based on the instruction provided to students.
  - For those accelerated students for whom the principal waives the grade 8 science test, the student's achievement in science will be measured by the student's performance on the Regents exam in science.
    - Schools may also administer the test to students in grade 7 who will have completed by the end of this

school year all of the material in the Intermediate-Level Core Curriculum and are being considered for placement in an accelerated, high-school-level science course when they are in grade 8.

- Principals have the discretion to include or exclude grade 7 students who meet these criteria. Schools can use the scores for these grade 7 students to help determine whether students should be placed in accelerated science courses. Students who take the test in grade 7 will not be permitted to take the test again in grade 8. Therefore, caution is advised in administering the test to grade 7 students.

2. Second Language Proficiency Exam (SLP) —Updated September 2016

Second Language Proficiency exams (SLPs) are designed to assess student mastery of the Checkpoint A learning standards for Languages Other Than English (LOTE). Middle schools may choose to administer the SLP exam to students as part of their LOTE programs. Students typically take the SLP in grade 8. The NYCDOE offers SLP exams in the following languages:

- Chinese
- French
- German
- Italian
- Spanish

Students who pass the SLP exam at the end of a middle school LOTE program after completing courses aligned to Checkpoint A learning standards may be eligible for high school course credits. See the Languages Other Than English section of this guide and the LOTE FAQ for additional information on middle school LOTE program options.

3. Regents Exams —Updated September 2016

NSYED Regents exams assess a student's mastery of commencement-level learning standards in a given subject area. All students who are enrolled in the course of study leading to a Regents exam have the right to be admitted to that exam. Students may not be barred from an exam for disciplinary reasons or because their achievement in a subject is considered unsatisfactory.[13]

Regents are designed to be culminating exams; the NYCDOE recommends that middle school students only register for a Regents exam after completing an accelerated unit of study in that subject area. The following additional eligibility criteria apply:

- To qualify to take a Regents exam in any of the sciences, a student must complete 1,200 minutes of hands-on laboratory experience in addition to completing the science course.
- To qualify to take the NYCDOE's Regents-like LOTE exams in middle school, a student must complete three years of a language other than English aligned to Checkpoint B. See the LOTE FAQ.

As of the 2013–14 school year, Regents exams in ELA and mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II) measure mastery of the Common Core standards. As of 2015–2016, all middle school students taking Regents exams are required to take the Common Core-aligned Regents exams; see the Common Core Regents FAQ for more information.

Middle school students in grade 8 who attempt a Regents exam must earn a score of 65 or higher in order to pass the Regents exam. Students who pass an accelerated course and score a 65 or higher on the corresponding Regents exam will have fulfilled an exam requirement and credit requirement towards graduation. Students who receive a score of 65 or higher on a Regents exam prior to grade 8 will have fulfilled an exam requirement towards a diploma, but they are not eligible to receive high school credit. See the Grade 8 Course Acceleration section for more information.

In an effort to reduce the number of standardized tests that students take, the United States Department of Education has approved a waiver stating that seventh and eighth grade students who are in accelerated math courses and take a Regents exam as a culminating assessment are no longer required to also take the State math test. See the section on New York Tests for additional information.

[13] See page 9 of the School Administrator's Manual for Secondary Level Examinations.

G. PROMOTION —Updated September 2016

Promotion standards are the academic benchmarks students must meet in order to be promoted to the next grade level at the end of the school year. Throughout the year, teachers and principals regularly review academic performance and identify students who, even with additional support, are at risk of not meeting promotion standards for their grade level. Students' academic progress are assessed holistically, using multiple measures, such as State test scores, course grades, writing samples, projects, assignments, and other performance-based student work. While State test scores may be considered, they may not be the determining factor in assessing a student's readiness for the next grade.[14] Promotion standards are defined in Chancellor's Regulation A-501.

Students are held to different promotion standards based on their grade levels, the criteria specified on their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and/or their English language learner (ELL) status. The following groups of students are not held to the promotion standards outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-501:

- Students in pre-kindergarten;
- ELLs in grades 3–7 who have been enrolled in a United States school system (USSS) for fewer than two years;
- ELLs in grade 8 who have been enrolled in a USSS for less than one year; and
- Students with IEPs who do not participate in the standard New York State ELA and math tests (i.e. students with IEPs who participate in alternate assessments, such as the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA).

The promotion process includes multiple steps throughout the year, described in greater detail in the Promotion Guide:

- At the beginning of the school year, schools establish the multiple measures that will be used to assess students' progress at each grade level.
- In the fall, parent teacher conferences and report cards provide early notice of how students are progressing.
- In January, schools identify students who are at risk of not meeting promotion benchmarks and may be retained in the same grade next year (i.e. promotion in doubt).
- In February, schools send written notice (via promotion in doubt letters) to students and families who may be in danger of not meeting the benchmarks for their grade level.
- In the spring, report cards and parent teacher conferences keep families and students aware of their progress and expected promotion decision.
- In June, schools make promotion decisions, which they communicate via letters to families.
- In July, students attend summer school.
- In August, schools make any remaining promotional decisions and families receive written notice. Families may appeal these decisions to the superintendent in writing. The superintendent makes the final determination.

See the Promotion Guide and the Principals' Portal Promotion page for information on how to implement the promotion process throughout the school year. For information on how promotion criteria should be determined, applied and evaluated for students with disabilities, see the Promotion Criteria Guidelines for Students with Disabilities.

H. PARTICIPATION IN MOVING UP CEREMONIES —Updated September 2016

Middle school students may participate in their school's commencement ceremonies (i.e., 8th grade moving-up ceremonies) only if they have met promotion requirements. Schools must clearly communicate these expectations to students and families.

A school may prohibit a student who is already on suspension at the time of the graduation or other commencement-related activities from attending when he or she poses a real threat of violence or disruption to the event; the exclusion must be proportionate to the infraction committed. It may also be possible to bar a student from a commencement ceremony when his or her conduct has been particularly egregious, and where the school has previously advised the student and/or family in writing.[15]

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[14] See this historical FAQ document for information on the change in promotion policy and process that occurred in school year 2013–14.
[15] See Exclusion from Proms or Graduation Ceremonies.

II. POLICIES FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

A. ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLs)

Policies regarding English Language Learners (ELLs) are defined in Part 154. Students are identified as ELLs based on the results of the New York State Identification Test for ELLs (NYSITELL). For additional information on ELL identification and placement, including Students with Interrupted Education (SIFE), see the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide.

Once a student has been identified as an ELL, parent choice drives program placement. ELL parents view an orientation video in their language of choice, which describes the NYCDOE's three program options: Dual Language (DL), Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE), and freestanding English as a New Language (ENL), described further in the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide. The Bilingual Program Tracker allows school identify their bilingual programs and the students served by these programs. All parents are entitled to choose among these three options, regardless of whether their child's current school has their program of choice immediately available. The NYCDOE's website offers parents a variety of resources to better serve ELL students and families.

Schools may not refuse admission to zoned students or students assigned by the NYCDOE's Office of Student Enrollment based on their ELL status or program needs.

Schools are required to form bilingual programs in grades K–8 when there are 15 or more ELLs with the same language in one grade or in two contiguous grades, for whom parents/guardians chose a bilingual program placement. This threshold is the minimum requirement under the law but by no means limits schools that choose to open programs with fewer students. For example, when parents request bilingual programs in a small school, the school can pool resources and staffing with other schools (e.g., campus schools and neighboring schools) in order to provide wider access to programs.

For all ELL programs, the number of ENL, Home Language Arts, and English Language Arts units of study provided is based on English proficiency and all units must be standards-based.

1. New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL)

The NYSITELL is used to initially identify English Language Learners (ELLs). New entrants whose Home Language Identification Surveys indicate languages other than English spoken in the home and may have English language acquisition needs take the NYSITELL to determine if they are eligible for of bilingual and/or English as a New Language (ENL) services.[16] Based on NYSITELL results, students are categorized into one of five English proficiency levels:

- Beginner/entering
- Low intermediate/emerging
- Intermediate/transitioning
- Advanced/expanding
- Proficient/commanding

The student's level of English proficiency determines the number of service hours they receive. More information is available on the NYSITELL intranet page, in Assessment Memorandum #2, and on NYSED's website. See also the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide.

2. New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT)

All ELLs take the NYSESLAT every year to determine how well they are learning English and to determine continued eligibility for ELL services as part of the required annual assessment. The NYSESLAT assesses students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. For more information regarding NYSESLAT administration, see the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide.

[16] See English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide for additional information on these policies.

B. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The NYCDOE seeks to ensure that all students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are provided with access to his or her least restrictive environment (LRE). Regardless of their disability students should:

- Have access to a rigorous academic curriculum that sets high academic standards, enabling them to fully realize their potential and graduate prepared for independent living, college, and careers.
- Be taught in their "least restrictive environment," and, as often as possible, alongside students without disabilities.
- Receive special education services that are targeted to their needs and provide the appropriate level of support throughout the school day.
- Be able to attend their zoned schools or the school of their choice, while still receiving the supplementary services and supports required.

All students and families must feel welcome at every school. The School Implementation Team (SIT) facilitates the strategic planning to ensure that every school communicate appropriately and adequately serves all students. The SIT works with other school teams but is not intended to usurp the function of the school-based Committee on Special Education (CSE).

Schools review each new student's IEP upon entry. If a child's IEP recommends programs or services that the school he or she is entering does not currently have, the school should first make it clear to the parents and student that they are committed to providing the programs and services that are recommended on the IEP, beginning on the student's first day at that school. For questions related to programming for students with disabilities, schools should contact their Administrator of Special Education (ASEs). For other policies related to students with disabilities, see the sections on High School Admissions, Testing Accommodations, and NYSAA. For information on special section properties in STARS, which includes special education settings, see Scheduling in STARS.

3. New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)

The New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) is an assessment for students with severe cognitive disabilities who are unable to participate in general education assessments only; it is given in ELA, math, science and social studies.[17]

Students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may participate in a variety of assessment programs, depending on their needs and as specified on their IEPs. Student eligibility for NYSAA is determined on a case-by-case basis by the student's Committee on Special Education (CSE), and is documented on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) in the Special Education Student Information System (SESIS). The student's IEP must clearly state why the student cannot participate in the general assessment program and the rationale for NYSAA eligibility.

NYSAA-eligible students are assessed according to their chronological age and against grade level standards set by NYSED. The ELA and math NYSAA exams are administered each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. The ELA and math are exams are aligned to Common Core learning standards and are assessed using Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) computer-based assessments. The science exam is administered in grades 4 and 8 and once in high school, and the social studies NYSAA is administered once in high school.[18] The science and social studies NYSAA exams measure ability by collecting both baseline and final data points in a datafolio.

For more information on NYSAA policies and procedures, see the Alternate Assessment FAQ, the intranet assessment page, and the Students with Disabilities section of this guide.

[17] NYSED defines this as students who have limited cognitive abilities combined with behavioral and/or physical limitations and who require highly-specialized education and/or social, psychological, and medical services in order to maximize their full potential for useful and meaningful participation in society and for self-fulfillment. See section 100.1 (2.)(iv.). There is no one disability that automatically qualifies a student to participate in NYSAA.

[18] Students eligible for NYSAA must be assessed on the grade-appropriate content that is consistent with the student's chronological age.

C. TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Testing accommodations are changes to test format and/or administration procedures to support students in overcoming or working around their disability or English proficiency to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and abilities. Testing accommodations remove barriers and increase access to the general education curriculum. Testing accommodations do not change the skill or content that the test is measuring, nor are they intended to make tests less rigorous. Decisions to provide accommodations, as well as the specific accommodations themselves, are made on a case-by-case basis and are highly dependent upon individual student needs.

The following students may be eligible for testing accommodations:

- Students with disabilities, including those with IEPs and Section 504 Plans;
- ELLs and former ELLs;
  - Former ELLs are eligible to receive these testing accommodations for only an additional two years after testing out of ELL status.
- Occasionally, other students, in emergency situations and with special approval.
  - Students who demonstrate disabilities 30 days or fewer before the administration of a State or district-wide assessment may receive certain testing accommodations if authorized by the principal. For example, a student who breaks his/her arm days before an exam may be approved for a scribe. Such decisions must be carefully documented to NYSED Office of Assessment and the Borough Assessment Implementation Director (BAID).

Examples of testing accommodations include:

- Flexible test schedules or time limit extensions;
- Flexible test settings and special locations;
- Method of presentation, test directions, and assistive technology; and
- Method of test response, content, or physical support.

Schools should determine which testing accommodations benefit each individual ELL and former ELL at the beginning of the school year so that the student becomes familiar with those specific testing accommodations. For students with disabilities, the IEP or 504 team should determine which testing accommodations benefit each individual student with a disability at an IEP meeting or 504 meeting, respectively. See the Testing Accommodations FAQ for more information.

D. HOME AND HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION

Home and hospital instruction programs provide educational services to students who cannot be accommodated in a regular school facility because of a medical or physical condition and/or a severe emotional, psychological, or behavioral disability that prohibits the student from attending school. Home and hospital instruction programs are interim, operated by District 75, that provide academic services to limit the educational effects of a long-term absence.

All students on home or hospital instruction must receive instruction that corresponds to courses required for promotion, as appropriate. Ideally, students receive instruction in courses that mirror their academic program. Students in secondary school who receive home or hospital instruction must receive a minimum of ten hours of instruction per week, to the extent possible given the student's condition.

Students who apply to and are approved for home instruction must be affiliated with a New York City school. The affiliate school is the public, parochial, or private school that the student will return to after home or hospital instruction has ended. The purpose of affiliation/shared instruction is to support the staff responsible for ensuring continuity of instruction so students remain on track to meet all academic requirements, and to ensure the student maintains a strong connection to the New York City school the student will return to after home and hospital instruction has ended.

While the affiliate school and home and hospital instruction programs are to form a collaborative relationship and communicate on a regular basis, each school is the primary owner of certain tasks and responsibilities. The affiliate school is primarily responsible for the student's academic programming while home and hospital instruction programs are primarily responsible for providing instruction. Specific roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Home and Hospital Instruction Programs: Academic Policy and Systems Guidance. These are suggested responsibilities and may

change based on the student's expected duration in home or hospital instruction. A change in responsibilities should be coordinated between the affiliate school and the home or hospital instruction program, specific to each student. Keeping an open line of communication is particularly important as students will return to New York City schools after home or hospital instruction has ended.

For information on student eligibility for home instruction, the process for referring a student to home or hospital instruction, and approval for a student to go on home instruction, see Chancellor's Regulation A-170 and the Home Instruction Schools webpage. For information on NYCDOE home and hospital instruction policies and implementation, see the Home and Hospital Instruction Programs: Academic Policy and Systems Guidance.

E. HOME SCHOOLING —Updated September 2016

When families choose to home school their children, a separate set of policies apply. For more information, see the Office of Home Schooling website and the NYSED FAQ on home schooling.

F. STUDENTS IN COURT-ORDERED SETTINGS —Updated September 2016

Students who are or have been involved with the juvenile court systems are entitled to specific educational rights:

- The right to enroll in school in a timely manner;
- The right to continue to receive appropriate special education services, where an IEP is in place; and
- The right to receive assistance from the NYCDOE in obtaining records and updating the student's DOE transcript to reflect credits earned while in a court-ordered setting. For assistance obtaining students' records, email reenrollmentsupport@schools.nyc.gov. For assistance evaluating non-DOE transcripts, schools should contact their academic policy and systems lead.

In this case, students in court-ordered settings refers to:

- Students who attend Passages Academy:
  - When students under age 16 are detained in New York City following an arrest, they are under the supervision of the Administration for Children's Services, Division of Youth and Family Justice (DYFJ) while in detention. These students attend a NYCDOE school at one of the sites of Passages Academy (79X695), a program operated by District 79. ATS will indicate that the student is on Passages Academy's register.
  - Under the Close to Home Initiative, some students may also remain under the supervision of DYFJ after they are adjudicated in Family Court. These students are considered to be in "placement." Most of these students remain in New York City and attend Passages Academy.
- Students in an Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) or Administration for Children's Services (ACS) placement:
  - Some students are placed by the Family Court or Supreme Court in the custody of OCFS, ACS, or OCFS/ACS-contracted facilities (e.g., Children's Village, Greenburgh-Graham, etc.) and receive educational programming from a non-DOE entity.
  - These students are discharged from 79X695 with a discharge code '10.' Upon the end of their court-ordered involvement, students are to appear at their Family Welcome Center to re-enroll in a DOE school.

See the J.G. Best Practices Guide and J.G. Checklists for information on these policies, including how to support a student's transition back to his/her NYCDOE home school.

G. TRANSFER STUDENTS AND GRADE PLACEMENT —Updated September 2016

Policies regarding the placement of transfer students are described in Chancellor's Regulation A-101.

Students transferring to a NYCDOE school for the first time after having attended school outside the district are placed based on the available education records from the student's previous school at the time of enrollment. If the principal determines another grade placement would be more instructionally appropriate, he or she must submit a grade change request to the superintendent via the RQSA function in ATS and provide evidence to justify any recommendation. The superintendent will make the final decision concerning the appropriate grade level for the student.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that transcripts in a language other than English are translated effectively so that programs can be programmed appropriately. Schools may use school- or community-based translators or the student's home country Embassy or Consulate for assistance. It is not appropriate for the family members or students to complete the translation, or to be charged for the cost of translation.

The NYCDOE Department of Translation does not translate student-specific documents. As such, it is not appropriate to send foreign transcripts to the Department of Translation. However, schools may use school- or community-based translators. When working with a translation vendor, schools should use the portion of the budget earmarked for translation services. Schools may not pass on the cost of translating these documents to the student or the student's family.

Grade placements are determined as follows:

- If a student is discharged from the NYCDOE public schools and returns within the same calendar year (on or before June 30th) the student will be placed based on consideration of the student's grade placement at his or her previous NYCDOE school and the available educational records from the student's last school that are presented at the time of enrollment.
- If no records are available, the student will be placed in the same grade level as when he or she was discharged in that school year.
- If a student is discharged from the NYCDOE and returns to the NYCDOE in a subsequent school year, the student will be placed in the same way as a student enrolling at a NYCDOE school for the first time.
- If a student transfers between NYCDOE schools within a school year, the student's grade placement does not change.

NYCDOE middle schools receiving students from other districts should not record grades or assessment outcomes from the student's previous school in STARS. However, schools should maintain clear policies regarding the extent to which previous academic outcomes factor into final course grades, if at all. This can have implications for the high school admissions process.

For example, if a student transfers to a NYCDOE school for the first time in the spring of grade 8, the school may choose to incorporate the student's report card grades from the fall semester into the student's final course grades. Alternatively, the school may choose to base the student's final grade only on the work completed by the student at the NYCDOE school in the spring semester. This should be written into the school's grading policy.

In rare cases, transfer students may have completed high-school-level courses at a previous middle school. In this case, the middle school should place the student according to the policies described above, considering opportunities for advanced or accelerated courses where available. The middle school should not award transfer credit for high school courses taken in middle school; however the student's subsequent high school may choose to award transfer credit for these courses in alignment with the policies described in the Transfer Credit section of the High School Academic Policy Guide.

III. PROGRAMMING AND SYSTEMS POLICIES

A. GRADE 8 COURSE ACCELERATION —Updated September 2016

Per Part 100.4(d), students in grade 8 have the opportunity to earn high school credits in subjects including mathematics, science, languages other than English (LOTE), social studies, English, art, music, and career technical education (CTE). Students in grades 6 and 7 are not eligible to earn high school credit through accelerated courses, except for in LOTE; see the section of this guide on LOTE and the LOTE FAQ for details.[19] There is no limit to the number of accelerated

[19] The NYCDOE obtained a waiver for students who were in grade 7 in 2009–10 or prior. These students may receive high school course credit if they passed both the accelerated course and corresponding Regents exam. The waiver did not extend to students in grade 6 or to current grade 7 students—only to those who were in grade 7 in 2009–10 or prior.

course credits a student may earn in grade 8, except that accelerated courses must meet all instructional time requirements to bear credit.[20]

It is the responsibility of the middle school principal to determine which courses to offer for high school credit, and to determine which students have demonstrated readiness to pursue such courses. For all accelerated courses, particularly those that typically require multiple years of study and/or are usually completed in grades 11 or 12, the middle school principal should consider the student's academic readiness for the course. Additionally, before programming accelerated courses the principal has a responsibility to consider the students future high school programming options and how the students will accumulate the credits needed for graduation. Students and families should be notified of programming needs and how this may inform high school application decisions.

There are two ways for grade 8 students to earn credits for high school-level courses:

- **Option 1:** In traditional grade 8 acceleration, students take an accelerated course in middle school aligned to high school level standards, culminating in a Regents exam. They earn credit after passing both the course and the assessment, provided they meet the policies described below.
- **Option 2:** In cases where a grade 8 class does not exist, individual students may attend a course at a high school with high school students and earn credit on the same basis as the high school students in that course.

For **option 1**, accelerated grade 8 courses in middle school must:

- Provide students the opportunity for 54 hours of instruction per credit (or 108 hours of instruction per two credits all year, since most middle schools are annualized);
- Address high school (commencement-level) learning standards; and
- Be taught by a subject-certified teacher.
- In addition, in order to earn high school credit, students must pass the accelerated grade 8 course scheduled in STARS and score 65 or higher on the corresponding Regents exam in June or August immediately following the course.[21]

Schools must program accelerated courses in STARS using the Middle School Course Code Directory and the appropriate accelerated course and exam codes (i.e. code accelerated courses with an 'A' in the sixth character and the associated exam code with a 'Z' in the third character) as outlined on the STARS wiki. This ensures that the equivalent high school courses and credits appear on the high school transcript, provided the student passes both the accelerated course and Regents exam in the appropriate timeframe. After passing a full year of accelerated study (i.e. 108 hours) and the associated Regents exam (with a 65 or higher), a student earns two high school course credits and can use the passing score toward exam requirements for graduation.

High school credit may not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- If a student passes the accelerated course, but does not pass the culminating Regents exam in the June or August immediately following the end of the course. In this case, neither the accelerated course nor the Regents exam will appear on the student's high school transcript. Even if the student passes the course in the following year the credit cannot be awarded retroactively.
- If a student passes the Regents exam, but does not pass the accelerated course. In this case, only the passing exam score will appear on the student's high school transcript. The student will have fulfilled a Regents exam requirement but will not receive high school course credit.

For **option 2**, an individual eighth grader in a school that does not offer a grade 8 accelerated course as described in option 1 may attend a course at a high school with high school students and earn credit on the same basis as the high school students in that course. Participation in high school courses as an eighth grader should be on a student-level basis; this option is only meant for students who have demonstrated their ability to participate in high school course work and be successful in a high school setting. These students will have high school level course codes and credits on their middle school transcripts.

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[20] Middle school students may not accelerate PE credits for high school. See the PE FAQ.

[21] For LOTE courses culminating in the SLP, students must pass the course and the SLP. Schools must reach out to their academic policy and systems lead if they wish to offer an accelerated course in a subject that does not culminate in a Regents exam.

In this scenario, the middle school should use the shared instruction (SHIN) function in ATS to connect that student with the school where they will be taking the course. The high school will then program the student and award grades for the course in STARS.

High schools may not refuse to accept accelerated credits or program students to repeat credits that have been appropriately awarded in alignment with City and State policies.

B. INTERDISCIPLINARY AND MULTI-GRADE COURSES

The section below provides policy guidance on the implementation of interdisciplinary and mixed-grade courses. Recording interdisciplinary and mixed-grade courses appropriately in STARS ensures accurate data for student promotion, teacher evaluation, and accountability. For additional support implementing these course models in STARS, schools should contact their academic policy and systems lead.

1. Courses Addressing Two Subject Areas

Interdisciplinary programming combines learning standards from two different content areas in a single course. For example, a school may offer a humanities course that integrates both English and social studies standards. The following policies apply to middle school interdisciplinary courses:

- The course must be overseen by a NYCDOE teacher certified in at least one of the two subject areas addressed in the course, provided that the teacher instructs the student population defined by his or her license area and has demonstrated subject matter competency in both subjects.
- In grades 7 and 8, the interdisciplinary course must align with both of the unit of study requirements. For example, an eighth grade humanities course covering English and social studies learning standards must provide 360 minutes of instruction per week (216 hours per year) in order to satisfy the requirements for one unit of study in each subject area.
- Both subject areas must be reflected in STARS, and grades must be awarded accordingly. Schools have two options for scheduling students and awarding grades for interdisciplinary courses:
  - Use the interdisciplinary mechanism to schedule students for a 'ZJ' coded course that is linked to two other subject area course codes. For example, students may be scheduled for a 'ZJ' course titled "Humanities," which is linked to the core English and social studies course codes. Marking period grades should be awarded in the 'ZJ' interdisciplinary course. Final grades should be awarded in the subject area course codes upon expansion of the interdisciplinary course at the end of the term. See the STARS wiki for more information about this mechanism.
  - If the course meets for a double period, schools should schedule students for the two courses separately, using the same teacher for both courses. For example, for a humanities course, students should be scheduled for English during the first period and social studies during the second period. The teacher should award grades for both courses. The grading policy must clearly indicate whether students receive the same grade for both subject areas or are graded separately.

2. Courses with Multiple Grade Levels

Schools may offer mixed-grade courses in a single subject area in order to meet students' academic needs. For example, a math course may group sixth and seventh grade students with similar math proficiency. The following policies apply to mixed-grade middle school courses:

- The course must be overseen by a NYCDOE teacher certified in the subject, provided that the teacher instructs the student population defined by his or her license area.
- Students must take the New York State assessment(s) corresponding to their grade levels. For example, sixth-grade students in a mixed sixth- and seventh-grade math course must take the sixth grade math test. Seventh grade students in the same course must take the seventh grade math test.
- In grades 7 and 8, the course must align with unit of study requirements described in the required units of study section.

- The course must be coded in STARS to reflect students' actual grade levels, using the interdisciplinary mechanism in STARS.
  - For example, in a mixed sixth- and seventh-grade math course, students should be scheduled for a 'ZJ' course, which is linked to the core sixth-grade and seventh-grade math course codes. Marking periods are awarded in the 'ZJ' course. Final grades must be awarded in the grade-level-specific core math course code corresponding to students' individual grade levels. See the STARS wiki for more information about this mechanism.

C. BLENDED AND ONLINE COURSES —Updated September 2016

A blended course is defined by instruction in a specific subject that occurs through a combination of classroom-based and digital and/or internet-connected media. An online course is defined by instruction in a specific subject that occurs almost exclusively through digital and/or internet-connected media. Schools are encouraged to consider students' academic readiness in designing online course offerings. Schools should ensure that students have access to the tools and technology required to participate in courses remotely. As in any course, schools should thoughtfully consider the extent to which various course components constitute instruction or homework. Online learning may not replace any portion of the 5.5 hours of required in-school instruction. Middle schools may incorporate blended and online learning experiences into their academic programs in alignment with the following policies:

- The course aligns with the applicable NYSED learning standards for the subject area, as outlined in the course syllabus;
- Instruction is provided or supervised by a subject-certified teacher from the NYCDOE;[22]
- The course includes regular and substantive interaction between the student and the teacher, which may occur in person and/or virtually; and
- For grades 7 and 8, instruction satisfies the unit of study requirements for instructional time.

Students must be scheduled for online and blended courses in STARS in the same way they are scheduled for traditional classroom courses in STARS. Blended and online classes must be identified in STARS using the section properties. For additional guidance on implementing blended and online courses, see the Blended and Online Courses FAQ.

D. HONORS COURSES —Updated September 2016

Schools may offer advanced or honors courses to provide opportunities for students to master more rigorous learning standards in a subject area, expand the scope of the learning standards addressed in core courses, and/or prepare for course acceleration in grade 8.[23]

Schools have discretion in how they offer honors courses, provided that schools' criteria and expectations for honors courses are clearly documented and communicated to students, teachers, and families at the school level. Schools are encouraged to use multiple measures to determine which students take honors courses; schools may not use State test scores as the sole, primary, or major factors in determining which students take honors courses. For example, schools may incorporate report card grades, school-based assessment scores, teacher recommendations, and other measures into their selection criteria.

Regardless of the rigor of these courses, students in honors courses are required to take the New York State standardized assessments corresponding to their grade levels, regardless of mastery of more rigorous learning standards. Students in honors courses are held to the same promotion standards described in Chancellor's Regulation A-501.

Honors courses must be coded in STARS using the Middle School Course Code Directory (i.e. use an 'H' in the sixth character and/or the course title to designate honors courses). Honors courses should be coded to indicate the grade level of the students taking the course, even if the standards addressed in the course exceed grade-level standards. For

[22] See the Blended and Online FAQ for additional information about the role of the teacher.
[23] Gifted & Talented (G&T) programs are offered within district elementary schools, beginning in kindergarten and ending in the school's terminal grade. Therefore, most middle schools do not have G&T programs.

example, a grade 7 honors English course that also addresses grade 8 standards must be coded with a '7' in the fifth character to represent that the students are in seventh grade, i.e. EENM7H.

E. SCHEDULING IN STARS

STARS Classroom, together with STARS Admin, comprises the STARS suite of course scheduling and grade management software applications used by the NYCDOE. STARS Classroom is an internet-based application that automates the collection of course marks for teachers. Teachers can use this system to view class rosters, access student data, and enter course marks which will appear on STARS generated student report cards. For more information, please see the STARS wiki.

A school's academic program is operationalized through its master schedule. The master schedule encompasses the locations and meeting times of all courses a school currently offers. Each course has the following six basic attributes that can be used in creating both student and teacher schedules:

- Course code
- Section number
- Period
- Rotation (i.e., number of days per week the course meets)
- Location
- Teacher(s) of record (i.e., the subject-certified teacher responsible for designing the syllabus, providing instruction, monitoring student progress, and awarding grades)

Once a master schedule is created and finalized, schools can schedule students for their courses.

Each school indicates the courses it currently offers by designating active course codes. These course codes provide important information about the subject, level, and instructional model for student schedules, report cards, transcripts, and other accountability systems. Codes may have up to eight characters. The use of the standardized Middle School Code Directory allows users within and outside the school community to understand what the course codes signify.

Prior to building the term's master schedule, schools should review their course offerings and active codes for the given year/term and ensure the courses will again be available.

Schools must use the section properties function to identify additional teachers and special class attributes for courses and sections defined on the master schedule.[24] This function allows schools to attribute other properties to courses, such as a secondary teacher, the language of instruction, the special education model, the ELL model (English as a New Language, Dual Language, or Transitional Bilingual Education), if the course is taught online or using iLearn, if the course is Computer Science for All and other applicable properties.

1. Push-in/Pull-out Instruction —Updated September 2016

Push-in and pull-out instruction occur when a teacher other than the primary teacher(s) delivers targeted instruction to a subgroup of students on a regular basis. Push-in and pull-out instruction can be used to meet a variety of instructional needs, including, but not limited to, intervention, enrichment, and services for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Push-in and pull-out instruction must always be programmed in STARS to reflect the content and subjects/codes delivered to students. It must be scheduled to reflect the frequency with which the push-in and pull-out instruction occur. Push-in/pull-out instruction records identify the teacher, the minutes and meet times, the subject of the instruction (using course codes), and any other important properties.

In push-in instruction, an additional teacher instructs a student or subgroup of students within the primary class. The subject indicated will always correspond to the content being delivered.

[24] 'Section properties' is found under the 'Master Schedule' sub-menu of the 'School Scheduling' drop-down on STARS Admin.

- Example: A second teacher assists an individual student within the classroom twice per week during ELA to provide additional support with literacy during the lesson.
  - The school creates a push-in record for the student, and indicates that the student is receiving ELA instruction from the second teacher.
- Example: An English as a New Language (ENL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher pushes into another subject area, i.e. math class, to assist one student or a small group of students with their language skills during math.
  - The school creates a push-in instruction record for the student, and indicates that the student is receiving math instruction. They link the ESL teacher, and choose ESL/ENL as a subject property. They also indicate the meet times and start and end date of the service.

In pull-out instruction, a subgroup of students leaves the primary class to receive instruction outside the classroom from a second teacher.

- Example: A second math teacher may pull a targeted group of advanced students out of math class twice per week to deliver more advanced content. The subject indicated will always correspond to the content being delivered.
  - The school creates a push-in record for the students, and indicates that they are receiving math from the second teacher. They also indicate the meet times and start and end date of the service.
- Example: A student's IEP requires him to receive SETSS in a separate location in math. The student meets with the SETSS teacher during his regularly scheduled math class for 30 minutes in the library.
  - The school creates a pull-out record for the student, and indicates that he is receiving math from the second teacher. They choose the subject property of 'Teacher Support Services' and indicate another other appropriate properties, including the start and end date of the services and the meet times.

Integrated co-teaching (ICT) is not considered push-in or pull-out instruction. Instead, schools should indicated this as a section property, and applied this to the full course, because the co-teachers are instructing the full classroom.

Push-in and pull-out instruction should indicate the subject of the instructional content delivered to students and should be scheduled to reflect the frequency with which push-in and pull-out instruction occur. For details and instructions, see the STARS wiki page.

III. GRADING POLICIES

A. GRADING POLICIES —Updated September 2016

All schools must document grading policies that set clear expectations for learning and make them transparent to staff, students, and families. The goal of a documented grading policy is to provide students, families, and teachers a shared understanding of what is required in order to achieve a specific grade. Schools must share their grading policy with parents and students at the beginning of the school year.[25] As part of the process, schools are encouraged to create time for teacher teams to review and discuss policies before they share them. While grading policies should be tailored to a school's community, mission, and goals, all grading policies must explain, at a minimum, how courses are graded, the scale of marks awarded, and the timeline of when students receive grades.

Grades provide feedback to students on their individual understanding of and progression through a course or subject. Schools have discretion in deciding which specific measures are factored into students' grades. However, determinations of passing or failing must be based primarily on how well students master the learning standards, subject matter, concepts, content, and skills addressed in a class or course. This means that students may not pass or fail based solely on non-mastery measures (e.g. behavior, compliance, participation, conduct) but rather based on how well they

[25] The NYCDOE Student Bill of Rights and the Parent Bill of Rights include the rights to know and be provided with written documentation of grading policies and to receive grades based on those policies

demonstrate their understanding of the content and skills required in the course. Schools may not maintain quotas of students passing or failing courses. Student performance may result in passing grades for all students in a course, if all students demonstrate mastery of the learning standards addressed. However, a grading policy may not state that, by definition, all students must pass.

Schools may establish grading policies at the school, department, grade, or course level. However, grades are designed to assess student mastery of the Common Core standards. Grading policies must apply to all students in the school, including students with disabilities and ELLs.

- For students with disabilities, schools document annual goals, plans for progress monitoring, and promotion criteria in the IEP, while the report card documents progress made in the general education curriculum. All students, including students with disabilities, receive grades based on how well they master the subject matter, concepts, content, and skills addressed in a class or course. The IEP describes specially designed instruction and accommodations for an individual student that used to create access to grade-level standards and enable progress toward annual goals. All students, including students with disabilities, should be working toward grade-level standards.[22] Students' receipt of accommodations does not impact the grade that can be earned. Students with disabilities have the same opportunity to earn grades as all other students.
- Students with disabilities receive progress reports on their annual goals. Progress reports are usually distributed at the same time as report cards and reflect the likelihood that a student will meet their annual goals or has already met their annual goals. Progress reports do not replace report cards for students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities who participate in alternate assessments receive grades that reflect their mastery of the courses, skills and modified content of the general education curriculum presented. Due to the severity of the students' disabilities, the content of the general education curriculum and instruction needs to be modified to provide the students with access and allow for participation and progress. Modification results in a change in the expectation of what skills the students need to demonstrate that they have mastered. To accommodate for the difference in expectation, a school's grading policy should address how students with disabilities who participate in alternate assessment are graded.
- For ELLs, the grading policy should consider the student's English as a Native Language (ENL) proficiency level, and should include opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the NYSED learning standards in their native language.

For more specific details and guidance on how to develop and implement strong grading policies, refer to the Grading Policy: Frequently Asked Questions and Checklist.

B. COURSE MARKS —Updated September 2016

Schools may choose to award grades using one or more grading scales based on their grading policies. Grading scales available to middle schools include, but are not limited to, numeric grades (e.g. 1–100), alpha grades (e.g. A–F), and performance levels (1, 2, 3, or 4). Marks also have citywide pass/fail equivalents and default numeric equivalent; see the appendix for a full list of available course marks and their details. For alpha grades, the default numeric equivalent is used in the calculation of GPA, as described further on the STARS wiki. In some cases, a school may choose to change the numeric equivalent in accordance with its grading policy.

Schools may determine whether grading scales are set at the school, department, grade, or course level, and can use multiple scales provided they are clearly explained.

- Example: A K–8 school uses a 1–4 grading scale (which awards marks 1, 2, 3, or 4 based on performance level) for students in kindergarten through grade 5 and alpha course grades (A–F scale) for students in grades 6–8.
- Example: A middle school awards grades to all students using the mastery scale ('ME', 'MA', 'MT', 'MP', 'MB') in all courses.

[22] See the U.S. Department of Education's Dear Colleague Letter.

Schools may also award special course marks in rare instances when grades cannot be awarded:

- Incompletes: Schools may award a grade of Incomplete ('NX') if a student has a documented, extreme extenuating circumstance that prevents him/her from completing the subject in its established timeframe (e.g., surgery, death in the family). A student who receives an incomplete must successfully complete remaining coursework by the end of the semester following the termination of the subject in order to receive a grade, as applicable. NX does not have a pass/fail or numeric equivalent.
- New or Recently Admitted Students: Students who enroll in a subject after it has started may have missed assignments or assessments needed to generate a complete course grade for a given marking period. These students may be given a grade of 'NL' in STARS to indicate this circumstance. 'NL' does not have a pass/fail or numeric equivalent. Students who receive a grade of 'NL' must successfully complete remaining subject requirements by the end of the semester following the termination of the subject in order to receive a final grade, as applicable.
- No Show**:** A grade of 'NS' is given to a student who has not attended a subject for enough days to determine a grade. 'NS' has a pass/fail equivalent of fail and a default numeric equivalent of 45.[26] This mark should be used in egregious situations, when students have been given reasonable chances to make up missed work and their absences are so chronic that only a failing mark is appropriate.

See the Course marks table in the appendix and the Grading Policy FAQ for more information.

C. REPORT CARDS

Schools determine the number of marking periods to include within a year, semester, trimester, or cycle, depending on the model they use. Schools must give at least two grades (marks) in each course or subject per term. The last marking period in the term (e.g., year, semester, trimester, or quarter, depending on the school's model) is where final course grades for that term are recorded.[27] Schools determine these calculations according to their grading policies. Schools should have clearly defined procedures to ensure that students' final course grades are entered in STARS in a timely manner, up to four weeks after the end of the marking period.[28]

Report cards can be generated in STARS for each marking period, and must be distributed to students and families at least twice per term—one student progress report and one report indicating the student's final grades for the term. Schools may use the standard NYCDOE report card and/or school-developed materials to provide students and families with more information about their progress and performance. Schools may also print, complete, and distribute optional report card supplements to share more detail about student performance with families. Regardless of the type of report card the school chooses to use, schools must enter every student grade sent home on a report card into STARS. This includes both interim and final grades. This requirement applies to grades K–12 at all NYCDOE public schools.

For more information, see the Course and Exam Marks Tables and Student Report Cards.

D. TRANSCRIPT UPDATES —Updated September 2016

In specific circumstances, schools may use transcript updates to change student's final grades. Schools must complete all transcript updates in accordance with the policies listed below, by completing the transcript update form, and providing any necessary back-up documentation. The following are transcript update reasons that apply to middle schools:

- Changing an existing grade:
  - Teacher error calculating student's final grade, in accordance with the course's grading policy
  - Principal override, in accordance with CSA and UFT contracts (a teacher must be notified in writing of any principal override of his/her final course grades)

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[26] Schools that use numeric grading scales that extend below 45 should consider altering the NS numeric equivalent to align with the numeric scale they use.

[27] For additional information on generating final grades in STARS, see Grades and Exams.

[28] See the STARS wiki for more information on how to define terms and enter marking period grades.

  - Updating a grade of Incomplete (NX) or Recent Admit (NL) to a final grade
- In rare cases, adding an examination outcome:
  - Regents exams taken at a New York State school outside NYCDOE
  - Department-approved alternatives to Regents exams

For the specific documentation required to support each type of transcript update, see the transcript update form and the Transcript Update FAQ.

IV. ATTENDANCE, DISCHARGE, AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

A. SCHOOL CALENDAR

Each year, the school year calendar is centrally designed to meet the NYSED requirement of a minimum number of 180 State aidable days in all schools.[29] The school year calendar, including Chancellor's conference days for professional development, is pre-determined to ensure that schools do not fall below the minimum number of aidable days. According to NYSED:

- Aidable days must be between September and June.
- Classes or activities scheduled on Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays do not count towards the 180 aidable days.

Per NYSED's Attendance Memo, schools must take attendance on all days assessments are administered; these days count toward the required 180 days of instruction.

- For students with disabilities who participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) and therefore do not take the standard assessments, instruction must be provided during the days that other children are being assessed, regardless of which special education services the student receives or the setting in which the student's special education program is provided. Such individuals as a general education teacher, special education teacher, or teacher assistant may provide the instruction.
- All Regents exam days and rating days count toward the required 180 days of instruction. If grades 7–12 are housed in the same building, and the administration of exams disrupts the normal day of instruction for the middle schoolers, schools may request to treat select Regents days as non-attendance days. Schools may choose to "release" the entire testing and/or non-testing grade(s) for both middle and high school students if necessary. This requires approval through the calendar change request process.[30]
  - If middle school students take local final examinations during the Regents examination period in January or the Regents examination period in June, in a block-time format similar to the format for Regents examinations (i.e., exams are scheduled for both the morning and the afternoon), then minimum length of school day requirements may be waived on such days. Such days will count toward the 180 required days of instruction and attendance for the grades taking the tests need not be taken. This also requires approval through the calendar change request process. Schools are encouraged to program academic activities for students during this time, and this option should only be used if necessary.

To avoid the risk of a reduction in State Aid, and to limit the impact on bus scheduling and other services, schools may not open late, dismiss early, or treat any day as a non-attendance day (for one or more classes or grades) without prior approval by the Superintendent, and subsequently submitting a calendar change request. See the Instructional Time and Calendar Change Requests FAQ for more information about the calendar change process, eligibility requirements, and dates that are not permitted to change.

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[29] See NYSED's Attendance Memo.

[30] Calendar changes can be submitted via the intranet after a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) vote and SBO vote have been conducted. An SBO is the process whereby a Principal and his/her UFT chapter leaders agree to propose to the UFT represented school staff deviations from certain requirements of the UFT teachers' contract. First, the principal and UFT chapter leader must reach agreement on the SBO proposal. Next, the UFT chapter leader must arrange for a vote and notify all UFT staff members. The proposal must be approved by 55% of the staff who vote, and the SBO must specify which provisions of the contract will be altered.

Note that days of special events, such as PSATs, field trips, promotion ceremonies, etc. are days of attendance; impacted grades should not be released. State assessments for grades 4–8 are considered regular instructional days and attendance must be recorded.

B. DAILY SESSION TIME AND STUDENT SCHEDULES

Per Title IV, Article 65, Part I and Part 175.5, the minimum length of the school day for all students is as follows:

- Students in grades 1–6 must receive at least 5 hours of instruction per day (the equivalent of 25 hours per week).
- Students in grades 7–12 must receive 5.5 hours of instruction per day (the equivalent of 27.5 hours per week).

The required instructional time includes all time spent by students in instructional or supervised study activities, exclusive of lunch and extended time.[31]

While the majority of middle schools use an annualized schedule, schools may award final grades at other frequencies throughout the year. STARS accommodates the following term models:[32]

- Year-long or annualized (~36 weeks of instruction);
- Semester-based (~18 weeks of instruction);
- Trimester-based (~12 weeks of instruction); or
- Cycle-based (~9 weeks of instruction).

Schools should carefully consider the academic goals of their students when designing an appropriate calendar and schedule for completing course requirements.

A school's schedule is determined by the principal in alignment with contractual obligations. Changes to the schedule that deviate from the traditional eight-period day require a vote via the school-based option (SBO) process.[33] See the Programming FAQ for additional guidance.

To ensure that daily instructional time is accurately reflected in STARS, schools should address the following:

- The bell schedule defined in STARS should accurately reflect the school's schedule.
- Students' lunch periods should be accurately reflected in STARS. All students should be provided the opportunity for a daily lunch period; schools should not use lunch periods to deliver instruction or conduct required academic activities or services.[34]

For more information on how to reflect instructional time in STARS, see the Scheduling in STARS section of this guide.

C. ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance refers to attendance data collection, reporting of how many students are in school each day and the practices necessary to increase the number of students in school each day. The following are important elements of a school's attendance program:

- A protocol, standard routine and timeline for when and who manages and scans attendance rosters, checks and files them and updates attendance, as necessary.
- Clear school attendance policies shared with students, families and staff, including attendance goals, how absences or lateness impact course grades, what constitutes an excused absence, and what families and students do if they must miss school.

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[31] The NYCDOE has a teacher contract that, as a standard schedule, provides 27.5 hours of instruction to all Pre-K–12 students.

[32] A term is defined as the length of time before a teacher awards a final grade.

[33] An SBO is the process whereby a Principal and his/her UFT chapter leaders agree to propose to the UFT represented school staff deviations from certain requirements of the UFT teachers' contract. First, the principal and UFT chapter leader must reach agreement on the SBO proposal. Next, the UFT chapter leader must arrange for a vote and notify all UFT staff members. The proposal must be approved by 55% of the staff who vote, and the SBO must specify which provisions of the contract will be altered.

[34] For students who elect to take additional elective courses or extracurricular activities in place of a lunch period, schools should obtain consent from the student's parent or guardian.

- A plan to connect attendance and academic achievement: school-wide grading policies, teacher professional development on absenteeism, attendance topics for grade-level or content-area teams, and transition plans and lesson planning for absentees that supports continuity of instruction when student miss school.
- Systems to contact families for every absence and determine causes, including means to keep family contact information current and ways to log or track reasons for absences.
- Investigations whenever the cause of absence is unknown or when absences continue; connections with community services when barriers to regular school attendance cannot be overcome with school-site interventions.

Schools are required to communicate the standard of attendance that students are expected to maintain, and attendance is essential to full participation in all learning experiences. The following rules apply:

- A student who has attended at least one instructional period cannot be marked absent.
- A student cannot be excluded from school because the student arrived late.
- Students who miss 20 or more days the previous year are identified in ATS with a chronic absence indicator in ATS (CHRONIC ABS). These students can be targeted for specific interventions to help prevent further patterns of absence.
- Family vacations or travel are not discharges. Students are marked absent during these events.

The Transfer, Discharge and Graduation Guidelines (TDG) describe the correct discharge codes and evidence before a student is removed from a school's register. Each principal is responsible for following the contents of the Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation guidelines, which may be updated each school year.

For more guides to setting strong school attendance policies, systems and practices to decrease absenteeism please visit the Attendance Pages on the Principal's Portal for full details, samples, tools and updates. Also, reference Chancellor's Regulation A-210 Minimum Standards for Attendance Programs.

1. Expanded Learning Time

Many schools choose or are required to extend their school day beyond the required hours (at minimum, 5 hours of instruction per day for grade 6 and 5.5 of instruction for grades 7 and 8). This can be done with the help of community-based organizations/non-profits and special grant opportunities. Creative scheduling can greatly enhance learning and school culture for students and families.

In order for afterschool or extended time activities to count toward the unit of study requirements for middle school, they must be delivered under the supervision of a teacher who is certified in that particular content area, align to the appropriate learning standards, and be scheduled accurately in STARS. See the section of this guide on scheduling in STARS for more details.

D. DISCHARGING STUDENTS

The NYCDOE's Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation Code Guidelines describe the procedures required to discharge students. The guidelines are updated each year to reflect current standards and to increase alignment with the New York State reporting requirements. School staff members must be properly trained to administer the transfer, discharge, and graduation processes for students. They must collect and store the appropriate documents to support the discharge. Schools may find it helpful to review changes in the guidelines that went into effect for the current school year and common errors.

Schools must create a system for collecting, recording, and storing documents related to discharges. Teachers must be encouraged to provide any information that they have received from the child or family about moves, new phone numbers, or addresses. In addition, a process must be established for collecting information about new residence addresses and evidence of a student's enrollment in a new school. A standard discharge form with quick references to required documentation for each discharge is available on the Principal's Portal attendance page.

E. HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

In New York City, articulating students must participate in the High School Admissions Process to attend a public high school.[35] To do this, grade 8 students must submit one application, listing up to 12 programs ranked in order of preference each fall. Applicants are then matched to one of their ranked schools according to applicants' program preference order as well as each program's admissions priority structure, admissions method, and available seats.

Resources are available to help families explore these programs and learn about the High School Admissions Process:

- A high school enrollment overview.
- Tools including the New York City High School Directory and the High Schools At A Glance companion guide can be found on the High School Choices and Enrollment Resource Page. These resources contain detailed information about the high school admissions process, timeline, descriptions of schools, and overviews of admissions priorities and methods.
- The School Search Tool can help families locate schools by neighborhood.
- The Specialized High Schools webpage has information about admissions to the nine specialized high schools.
- Various workshops and events are available to help students and their parents learn about high school admissions.
- Family Welcome Centers offer a range of services for students and families related to high school admissions.

New York City's charter schools give families additional public school options. Visit the charter schools webpage to learn more about charter high schools and how to apply.[36]

Students with disabilities may apply to all programs listed in the High School Directory, subject to the same admissions requirements as their peers. They may take the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT) and apply for all audition-based programs, including Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. Testing accommodations will be provided during the SHSAT administration, as outlined in the student's IEP or 504 plan.

Every high school participating in high school admissions must admit and provide services for students with disabilities. Once a student is accepted to a high school, the school will implement the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. The IEP team at the school will welcome the student and family, and together will review the IEP to ensure that all of the student's needs are met. In some cases, the IEP team may convene to refine the IEP to better meet student needs. High school students receiving Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) or Special Class services do not necessarily attend classes as a cohort. Each student will have individualized services in accordance with the IEP or 504 Plan, and may have combinations of these services for all or part of the day, as appropriate.

District 75 students transitioning to high school who are considering a community high school should work with their District 75 school to participate in high school admissions. If a student's IEP currently recommends a specialized District 75 program, the student will be notified of his or her high school placement in June by the District 75 Placement Office. See the Guide for Families of Students with Disabilities.

ELLs can receive a range of programs and supports to ensure that they receive the services necessary to excel in high school. The High School Directory indicates which of the ELL program models (Dual Language, English as a New Language, or Transitional Bilingual Education**)** are currently offered in each high school, based on self-reported data. All high schools must issue the ELL Parent Survey and Program Selection Form at the parent orientation meeting. Parents will use this form to indicate their preferred ELL program, even if the high school does not currently offer it.[37]

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[35] This process is managed by the Office of Student Enrollment. See also the Choices & Enrollment page on the NYCDOE website.

[36] Charter school admissions are managed individually by each school.

[37] High schools must open up a Transition Bilingual Education or Dual Language program when there are 20 or more ELLs with the same native language in any single grade whose parent/guardian requests the program; see the English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide for details.

F. STUDENT RECORDS TRANSFER —Updated September 2016

Maintaining up-to-date, accurate student records is an important part of ensuring that students are programmed for the correct courses and exams, and receive the services they need. Middle schools are responsible for obtaining and maintaining relevant records electronically and in students' cumulative files. See the guidance provided in Records Retention and Disposition Schedule ED-1, Chancellor's Regulation A-820, and the records requests guidance.

NYCDOE's data systems automatically transfer the following information to high schools:

- ATS: biographical information, attendance data, health/immunization records, promotion data, disciplinary history, exam scores, and transportation eligibility;
- STARS: permanent records/transcripts; and
- SESIS (Special Education Student Information System): IEPs.[38]

Students' cumulative files should be transferred to high schools as follows:

- For students transitioning from NYCDOE middle schools to NYCDOE high schools, middle schools are responsible for transferring students' cumulative files to students' receiving high schools each spring once high school placement decisions have been finalized. Middle schools use the PLNT (general education) and PSPE (special education) reports in ATS to access students' high school DBNs, and distribute students' cumulative files accordingly. The PLNT and PSPE reports should be included with the records as a cover sheet. High schools can use the RQSA screen in ATS to request missing records as needed.
- For students enrolling from non-NYCDOE schools, high schools are responsible for confirming students' prior schools and contacting the schools to request copies of students' cumulative files in a timely manner in order to provide students with appropriate academic programs.

A student's permanent pupil record must be changed to reflect a change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation that such legal name and/or gender have been changed pursuant to applicable law; for guidance on name changes without legal documentation, and for information on other records procedures affecting these students, see the NYCDOE Transgender Student Guidelines.

[38] It is not necessary to transfer a paper copy of the IEP.

V. APPENDICES

A. CALENDAR CHANGE REQUESTS

Each year, the school year calendar is designed centrally to meet the NYSED requirement of a minimum number of 180 State aidable days in all schools (see School Calendar). To avoid the risk of a reduction in State Aid, and to limit the impact on bus scheduling and other services, schools may not open late, dismiss early, or close without prior approval through a calendar change request. Schools must obtain staff and PTA approval through SBO[39] and PTA votes, respectively, prior to submitting a request. Schools submit requests at least six weeks prior to the first requested date change[40] and must provide a minimum of four weeks' notice of the calendar change to parents, once approval has been granted.

The Student Attendance Calendar published each year provides instructions for schools on reporting student attendance consistent with the central school year calendar. It sets the designated parent-teacher conference days, details instructions for coding shortened days already scheduled in the calendar, and describes the process for coding Regents exam days. Schools should consult the Student Attendance Calendar if they are considering a calendar change request.

Calendar change requests must be made in the circumstances outlined below, and must be approved annually; schools that have approval to implement any of the alternative schedules below from prior years must resubmit a calendar change request each school year.

- Professional development (e.g. any day(s) when school is in session for fewer than the required number of hours, exclusive of lunch and extended time, to enable additional professional development on that day):
  - Schools may request up to three shortened sessions per semester for staff development (e.g. days that fall below the State minimum of a 5.5 hour school day), provided all of the following conditions are met:
    - The weekly minimum instructional time requirement of 27.5 hours per week, exclusive of lunch and extended time, must still be fulfilled;
    - The school must have SBO approval; and
    - When a shortened session is scheduled during a 4 day week (for instance, when the week includes a holiday), grades 7–12 must still be in session for 22 hours of instruction over that week, exclusive of lunch and of the extra session of 37.5 minutes for targeted students.
  - Requests that exceed three shortened sessions per semester (e.g. weekly, biweekly or monthly shortened sessions) must adhere to the components outlined above for shortened sessions, and must be submitted in the spring for implementation in the next school year. These requests must also be submitted by the NYCDOE central office to NYSED for approval.
  - Full professional development days (e.g. switching an instructional day with a professional development day): Requests for non-instructional days are reviewed based on the number of available aidable days, which vary each school year. In order to minimize the potential impact to State aid that would result from schools falling below the minimum number of instructional days, principals are encouraged to utilize early dismissals.
- Changing afternoon parent teacher conference dates: a calendar change request is required to reschedule the citywide afternoon conference date.
  - Single-session schools may not re-schedule afternoon conference dates.
  - Multi-session schools with more than one grade level should select one of the set citywide dates.
  - Central approval is not required for the following: with SBO approval, schools may change evening conference dates, schedule afternoon and evening conferences on the citywide afternoon date, and (for

[39] An SBO is the process whereby a principal and his/her UFT chapter leaders agree to propose to the UFT presented school staff deviations from certain requirements of the UFT teachers' contract. First, the principal and UFT chapter leader must reach agreement on the SBO proposal. Next, the UFT chapter leader must arrange for a vote and notify all UFT staff members. The proposal must be approved by 55% of the staff who vote, and the SBO must specify which provision of the contract will be altered.

[40] In an emergency situation (e.g. severe flooding, power outage), if a principal believes there is a need to make a change to the regularly scheduled school day and had not previously requested a calendar change, she/he must make this request of the superintendent, who will get authorization from the Chancellor or her designee.

multi-level schools, e.g. K–8, 6–12) select one of the citywide afternoon conference dates.

B. COURSE AND EXAM MARKS TABLES —Updated September 2016

The table below outlines all available grade scales, and their associated marks in STARS, along with their pass/fail equivalents and default numeric equivalents. Schools have the option of displaying only the highest Regents exam score on the transcripts of students who have taken Regents exams multiple times.

Course Mark	Description	Default Numeric Equivalent	Pass/Fail Equivalent
IB1	International Baccalaureate scale	N/A	F
IB2–IB7	International Baccalaureate scale	N/A	P
1 (+/-)	Performance level: well below standards	N/A	F
2 (+/-)	Performance level: below standards	N/A	F
3 (+/-)	Performance level: proficient	N/A	P
4 (+/-)	Performance level: excels in standards	N/A	P
10–64	Numeric course grades (1–100 scale)	10–64	F
65–100	Numeric course grades (1–100 scale)	65–100	P
P	Pass	N/A	P
F	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	55	F
D-	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	60	F
D	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	65	P
D+	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	68	P
C-	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	73	P
C	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	75	P
C+	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	78	P
B-	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	83	P
B	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	85	P
B+	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	88	P
A-	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	93	P
A	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	95	P
A+	Alpha course grades (A–F scale)	98	P
E-	Excellent -	93	P
E	Excellent	95	P
E+	Excellent+	98	P
G-	Good-	83	P
G	Good	85	P
G+	Good+	88	P
S-	Satisfactory -	73	P
S	Satisfactory	75	P
S+	Satisfactory+	78	P
N-	Needs Improvement-	60	F
N	Needs Improvement	65	P
N+	Needs Improvement+	68	P
U	Unsatisfactory	55	F
ME	Mastery – Exceeds standards	95	P
MA	Mastery – Above standards	85	P
MT	Mastery – Meets standards	75	P
MP	Mastery – Approaching standards	65	P
MB	Mastery – Below standards	55	F
CR	Credit	N/A	P
NC	No Credit	N/A	F
NS	No credit – No show	45	F

Course Mark	Description	Default Numeric Equivalent	Pass/Fail Equivalent
ND	No credit – Fulfilled distribution requirement	N/A	NULL
NU	No credit – Audit	N/A	NULL
NX	No credit – Incomplete	N/A	NULL
NL	New/Recent Admit	N/A	NULL
NW	No credit – Course Waived (used only for PE for early graduates)	N/A	P

Exam Mark	Applicable Exams	Description	Default Numeric Equivalent	Pass/Fail Equivalent
0-64	Regents LOTE Regents-like exam LOTE SLP	The numeric exam score the student received on the exam	1–64	F
65-100	Regents LOTE Regents-like exam LOTE SLP	The numeric exam score the student received on the exam	65–100	P
ABS[41]	Regents LOTE Regents-like exam LOTE SLP	Student was scheduled to take the exam but did not show up on test day	N/A	F
INV	Regents LOTE Regents-like exam LOTE SLP	Student cheated on the exam; or Student became ill during the exam and was therefore unable to complete it	N/A	F
MIS	Regents LOTE Regents-like exam LOTE SLP	School/teacher mis-administered the exam	N/A	N/A
WX	NYSED-approved Regents Alternative	Student passed NYSED-approved Regents Alternative	N/A	P
P	PBAT	For Consortium Schools only; Corresponds to Consortium Rubric grades of Outstanding, Good, and Competent.	N/A	P
F	PBAT	For Consortium Schools only; Corresponds to Consortium Rubric grade of Needs Revision.	N/A	F

[41] Marks of ABS, INV, and MIS will not appear on transcripts. All Regents exam marks are maintained in the students' STARS permanent records.

C. UNIT OF STUDY PROGRAMMING ESTIMATES

A school's daily schedule should be designed to allow sufficient time to meet unit of study requirements. For middle schools, this means meeting the unit of study requirements, which are defined in Part 100.1 as 180 minutes per week of instruction throughout the school year, or 108 hours per year (54 hours per semester or per half unit). A unit of study is based on the amount of instructional time the student receives from a NYSED certified teacher[42] in a course aligned to NSYED standards.

The required number of minutes of class time each day necessary to meet the unit of study requirements in a given year depends on:

- The calendar: the number of instructional days in the year;
- The term model: whether a school uses semesters, trimesters, or cycles;
- The number of times a class meets per week and/or throughout the year if the schedule cycles;
- The day of the week a class meets on and how many of that day occur in the calendar; and
- The length of each class period.

The following page includes examples of minimum class times schools may use to earn one unit of study. The tables assume students are in class no fewer than 180 instructional days in the year.[43]

To use these tables, schools should first look up the minimum units of study required for a particular subject. For example, as outlined in the section of this guide on required units of study, schools are required to provide grade 7 and 8 students with 2 units (108 hours each, for a total of 216 hours) of math. Use the tables below to determine the combinations of period lengths and term models that will allow students to accumulate 216 hours.

Time Accumulated Over One Semester (expressed in total hours, rounded to the nearest hour)					
Days per every 5 class meets					
Minutes per period class meets	**1 day**	**2 days**	**3 days**	**4 days**	**5 days**
40	12	24	36	48	60
45	14	27	41	54	68
50	15	30	45	60	75
60	18	36	54	72	90
90	27	54	81	108	135
Time Accumulated Over One Year (expressed in total hours, rounded to the nearest hour)					
Days per every 5 class meets					
Minutes per period class meets	**1 day**	**2 days**	**3 days**	**4 days**	**5 days**

[42] Through NYSED's incidental teaching provision, there are specific instances where a teacher may teach one period per day in a subject area outside their certification area, provided that they teach within the same student population as their license area and have demonstrated subject matter competency in the subject. See NYSED's guidance on incidental teaching.

[43] The total number of actual days where students receive instruction will vary, so schools should be conservative in their estimates to be sure they will reach minimum unit of study requirements in any schedules they program for students. See the calendar for NYCDOE public schools published centrally on the NYCDOE page each year, which lists the number of instructional days.

40	24	48	72	96	120
45	27	54	81	108	135
50	30	60	90	120	150
60	36	72	108	144	180
90	54	108	162	216	270

Time Accumulated Over Two Years (expressed in total hours, rounded to the nearest hour)					
Days per every 5 class meets					
Minutes per period class meets	**1 day**	**2 days**	**3 days**	**4 days**	**5 days**
40	48	96	144	192	240
45	54	108	162	216	270
50	60	120	180	240	300
60	72	144	216	288	360
90	108	216	324	432	540