

The Salk School of Science
School Year 2023 – 2024

At the Salk School of Science, we maintain a fair grading policy, accurately reflecting each individual student's achievement efforts based on the Next Generation Learning Standards. Each grade measures competency in course content by tracking students' academic progress and classroom performance.

Grades reflect a combination of classwork, homework, projects, papers, examinations, and participation in each subject area. Absence and excessive lateness may contribute to lower grades or course failure since they often result in a student's inability to participate in lessons and achieve full competency in course material.

Students receive a numerical grade for all of their core classes, art, drama and Spanish for each quarter. At Salk, we believe that students:

Exceed the Standard - when they perform consistently above grade level. Students at this level generally receive grades ranging from 91% to 100%.

Meet the Standard - when they perform consistently at grade level. Students at this level generally receive grades ranging from 80% - 90%.

Approach the Standard- when their work demonstrates partial understanding or a lack of consistent effort/commitment toward meeting the grade level standard. Students at this level generally receive grades ranging from 65% - 79%.

Fall below the Standard- when their work demonstrates little or no understanding or poor to no effort in meeting grade level expectations. Students at this level generally receive grades below 64%.

Grades from 65-90 are given in increments of 5 and grades 91-100 are given in increments of 1. A 55 is a failing grade. In some cases, non-core teachers may give grades of pass/fail for a quarter as we work to readjust to a "normal" school year.

Other grades:

PE classes for all students will be graded using the following system: "Excellent, good, satisfactory, Needs improvement and unsatisfactory.

If there are STEM, Independent reading and Advisory classes. They will be pass/fail for all.

Grade Composition:

Through curricular documents distributed at our Curriculum Night, teachers will fully explain how a grade is determined (weights accorded to each category and aligned with school-wide policy as outlined in this document). The overall categories and associated percentage range will remain fixed; however, teachers will have flexibility on the weights given to each subcategory and specific measures and assessments they utilize. Detailed explanations are provided below:

| <u>Summative Assessments (40 – 60 %)</u> | <u>Performance Assessments (20 – 40 %)</u> | <u>Classroom Standards (10 – 20 %)</u> |
|---|--|---|
| I. Standards-based tests (summative) II. Unit exams III. Portfolios IV. Research papers V. Term papers VI. Presentations (summative) VII. Final essays/projects | I. Formative assessments II. Chapter/unit quizzes III. Short projects IV. Classroom assignments V. Short presentations VI. Homework | I. Student readiness II. Class participation III. Class discussions IV. Class activities V. Collaborative teamwork VI. Student code of conduct |

1. Summative Assessments: (40 – 60 %)

All summative assessments will be aligned with the Next Generation Learning Standards and will be returned to students with constructive feedback and/or reflective questions to guide students in improving their understanding. The frequency and specific percentage value of these assessments are established by department guidelines and rubrics for all students.

2. Performance Assessments: (20 – 40 %)

Quizzes, short projects/presentations, classroom and homework assignments are an essential way for teachers to gauge students’ understanding of materials and allow the teachers to inform instruction. Formative assessments prepare students for the next day’s lesson, reinforce former lessons taught, and develop critical thinking skills.

Each teacher will determine a lateness policy for submission of assignments that will be made explicit to parents and students.

3. Classroom Standards: (10 – 20 %)

Students’ classroom readiness is determined by being on time to class, regardless of what class period of the day, and being ready to work when the class begins.

Classroom participation is determined by the quality and frequency of performance in class activities, including: written and oral assignments, presentations, as well as participation in group and individual activities, exercises, discussions, and projects in the class.

Individual teachers will share with parents and students the measures used to determine participation grades.

Timeline of Student Grades:

The Salk School of Science issues report cards four times a year, with the final grade given on the last report card issued. Eighth grade non-core grades are given on a semester basis (so eighth grade students will not receive grades during the

1st and 3rd quarters in non-core subjects.) At the conclusion of each year, final grades are entered onto students' middle school transcripts and serve as the permanent grade on record for that particular course.

In addition, students at-risk of receiving a **quarterly** grade of 80 or below will receive a "quarter monitoring support letter" in the mail. Eighth grade students who are at risk of receiving a grade of 80 or below in a non-core subject will receive a quarter monitoring support letter on a **quarterly** basis though grades will only appear on the 2nd and 4th quarter report cards. Parents can contact the grade team leader or the individual teacher to discuss this letter and to create an action plan for the student.

Appealing a Final Grade

To appeal a teacher's final grade in June, students/parents must present all documentation to the teacher to argue their case. If the teacher denies the appeal to change the final grade, the student/parent may appeal to the principal by **June 27th**. The principal will make a determination for the final grade based on evidence provided by both the teacher and the student/parent and share this decision with parents and the teacher in writing by **June 28th**. If the principal should decide to change students' final grades based on evidence provided, the principal will provide a written notice and rationale of the change to the teacher, in accordance with UFT agreement.

Timeline for Changing a Grade

A teacher may also change a student's grade up to 20 days after a marking period has ended for legitimate verifiable reasons such as a miscalculation or student submission of make-up assignments. These changes can be completed during these 20 days on the NYC Department of Education STARS system. After these 20 days, teachers must submit a 'Change of Grade' request form with appropriate documentation to support the grade change. After reviewing the documentation, the Principal may or may not approve the change.

Please note:

For the final quarter, there is a shorter window of time for grade changes. Changes can be made up to **June 28th**. After **June 30th**, all grade changes will be final unless the teacher has made an error and the teacher feels responsible to change a grade that will result in a higher grade for the student.

Make-up Assignments:

Students who have been absent from class for verified, legitimate reasons (such as illness, family emergencies, attendance at funerals, etc.) are to be given a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work, including examinations and quizzes. Handwritten notes from parents and/or physicians verifying legitimate absences will be accepted by teachers. Teachers will communicate make-up policy to students in the written curricular documents, and students will be responsible for making up their coursework.

Academic Intervention Services:

Teachers will offer academic recovery services to invited students with special needs. Students should make every effort to attend if invited. Parents should contact the assistant principal if you have any questions about these services.

Opportunities to Discuss Student Progress:

In addition to the two Chancellor's conference days, parents will have multiple opportunities to view and evaluate students' work. In addition, grade team leaders and individual teachers, counselors and supervisors can also be reached via email to discuss student progress anytime outside the scheduled conferences. Appointments to meet with grade teachers will be set up by team leaders. Please allow school staff 48 hours to respond to requests.

Promotion Decisions

Promotion decisions are made using multiple measures of student performance throughout the course of the school year and standardized State exams. If a student's promotion to the next grade is in jeopardy at the end of the school year, the main opportunity to make up the coursework is during summer school. For these students, failure to attend summer school may result in retention at the same grade level the following school year.