

## **Questions Parents May Have About Grading & Skyward Family Access**

**I'm still having trouble getting set up with Skyward. What can I do?** Step by step help is available on our District website ([www.d107.org](http://www.d107.org)). You will need the password and login mailed to you earlier. If you can't locate that information, either call our assistant principal, Joni Sherman ( 708-245-7614 ) or talk to her at Curriculum Night . You can also drop into our office for help anytime.

**Why are there two grade books for each class? ( e.g. Math and Math LS ).** We wanted to communicate information about our students' academic achievement in a way that was entirely separate from how they are doing with the kinds of personal skills that aren't academic in nature but that will be equally crucial to their success in school and in life beyond school. We are calling these skills "Life Skills" and in that category we are rating the following: Participation, Behavior, Work Completion and Group Work. The grading scale for academics is the same as it used to be; a 100% scale that translates the final average to a letter grade. The grading scale for Life Skills is a scale of from 1-4 with four being the highest. Teachers will assign scores for life skills based on scales/rubrics that have already been shared with the students and are something parents can see on Skyward Family Access or at Curriculum Night. Note that scores for Life Skills are not visible on Parent Access at the present time. This is a software glitch that we expect will be fixed by early October.

**How will my child's GPA be calculated?** A student's GPA will be based entirely on their academic average. Our Honor Roll standards have not changed: Gold = 4.0, Silver = 3.75 – 3.99, and Bronze is 3.50 to 3.749. The only change in our grade reporting system from last year will occur when reporting the letter grade average for a particular class. Starting this fall we are dropping designations of pluses and minuses which never had an impact on GPA anyway. For example, any average from 83% to 91.99% will be reported as a "B".

**How will the final average, or trimester grade, be determined?** Each teacher's grade book lists scores under headings that represent the Mastery Outcomes for that course. Grades are arranged that way in order to show students and parents where the student's specific strengths and weakness within that subject may lie. The grade book and the report card will show the average for each of these Outcome areas. However, the final average for every academic subject will be calculated from a total of all grades the student received in that subject for the grading period. This average will reflect any weighting system for types of assignments the teacher may have set up. Information about weighting will be shared at Curriculum Night and on teacher web pages.

**How about “retakes” or “second attempts”; situations in which my child has arranged to redo a test?** Retake policies will vary from course to course. However, all teachers will adhere to the district’s “Mastery of Learning Guidelines” ( see attached ) in creating their policies. Teachers will be sharing information about their own classroom policies at Curriculum night and on their web pages. After a retake, the teacher will enter the new grade and add a comment which states that this is the grade for the second attempt and also say what the original grade was. A parent will be notified that a comment has been entered by a diagonal line in the upper right hand corner of the cell in which the grade appears.

**How can I see what homework my child has been assigned?** Homework assignments are recorded in the Message Center on Parent Access. When you go there, a list of your child’s courses will appear. To the right of each class you can see if the teacher has left you a message. If so, click the message for information about homework.

**I’ve heard about new District Assessments. What impact will they have?** District 107 has had what were called “District Assessments” for more than 10 years. With the upgrading of our curriculum goals – now called “Mastery Outcomes” - over the last several years, there was a need to rewrite assessments for those outcomes and to be sure they existed in all subject areas. This task was completed by our entire staff last year. These assessments will provide feedback to students about how successful they were in mastering specific curricular goals. Equally importantly, they will give teachers feedback about the status of our curriculum and instruction. At Curriculum Night and on their web pages, teachers will share information about what weight these “end of a unit” or District Assessments will have on a student’s total average in their class and how parents can see the results.

**I’ve also heard that report cards might look a little different.** Because we are using a new computer system to track and report grading information, the report card generated by this new program will look a little different. In addition, there will be information about Life Skills and an area for comments. As you can see from the sample sixth grade report card attached to this email, the changes are not extensive, but we feel they significantly increase the amount of information parents and students get from a report card.