

 **David E. Owens Middle School**

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 **GRADING PHILOSOPHY**

**Purpose of Grading:** As a rule, grades should be reflective of achievement, mastery, skills development, content knowledge and the status of learning goals. A grade represents a clear and accurate indicator of what a student knows and can do – mastery of learning objectives. Therefore, all teachers shall strive to grade students’ work in a way that is accurate, meaningful, consistent, and supportive of learning. With grades, teachers document the progress of students and our teaching, provide feedback to students and their parents, and make instructional decisions regarding the students.

**Multiple Forms of Assessment**: Quarter grades have to be comprised of multiple forms of assessment. The “marking period killer” assignment, which is one project, test, or another assignment that will make or break a student’s grade does not support our grading philosophy and therefore is not permitted (Reeves, 2008).

**Failure Floor**: Student grades are regularly recorded in PowerSchool. This practice supports student accountability and transparent communication between school and home. A failure floor of 50 has been established as the lowest score for all marking period grades in PowerSchool. This allows students to recover from a low marking period and gives him/her motivation to complete the course successfully. The following interventions will be available to our students:

* Evidence that grades are regularly documented.
* Documented contact (email, phone) with the parent/guardian as a student struggle arises. If contact cannot be made, notify the school counselor, case manager (if applicable), and administration.
* Extra Help sessions assigned to assist student understanding.

**Retakes**: It is our intent to create an environment where our students advocate for their own learning, including the acquisition of content or the development of skills. Your child may be asked to retake assessments in all or in part. The classroom teacher will work with your child to develop a plan for the retakes. These plans may vary among teachers and content; not all retakes are alike. In most cases, the student will be required to complete additional practice or attend extra help sessions. We acknowledge that student achievement is often the result of a partnership between parents, students and teachers. Subsequently, parents will be asked to sign off on the plan. In the end, we are looking to promote tenacity, hold students accountable for evidence of their learning, and ultimately, advance student achievement.