



**Responsible:** Office of Academics – Department of Assessment

## **PURPOSE**

This administrative procedure shall describe and define protocols related to final tests for high school (semester/term) and middle school.

## **PROCEDURE**

### 1. High School

- a. Cumulative semester tests are required of all students in all courses which award one-half credit or more. There are no exceptions.
- b. No exams will be given early without the consent of the principal.
  - i. District common finals will not be given early and may only be given during the prescribed testing window for each exam.
  - ii. Site-based Exception: If the principal of a school authorizes early administration of a final exam for a course tested by District common finals, the early-administered exam must be generated by the teacher of record and must match the blueprint or course guidelines for the District common final.
- c. Students who miss a semester test and who do not make it up within the first three weeks of the following semester will fail the course. The principal may waive this deadline if extenuating circumstances are demonstrated to his or her satisfaction.
- d. Unless otherwise authorized, semester test periods shall be 105 minutes in length, and students needing extra time may be permitted up to 15 additional minutes. The number of days set aside for testing may not exceed four days and are limited to the number of days required to allow all sections of a course to test. Students must not be released early from an exam.
- e. Principals are responsible for ensuring that every teacher administers a test or activity which appropriately uses the allocated test time.
  - i. Appropriate semester tests may consist of skill or performance tests as well as oral or written examinations depending upon the objectives of the course and the nature of the learning activities of the class.

- ii. The ability to express ideas is a significant goal of educational programs. Therefore, essay test questions should be included as part of the final examination in classes in which teachers have used written evaluation in the course of instruction.
- f. The semester academic grade is based on the WHOLE semester's work, not an average of two quarters. The citizenship grade for the semester may be based on quarter averages.
- g. The semester exam will not be curved.
- h. Semester final exams will count for a set percentage of the overall grade for all high school level courses and must be consistent for all sections of a course within the same school. If a range is permitted, each department will establish the grade percentage for the semester exam and communicate the grading guidelines through the course syllabus at the start of the school year. The Incremental increases in the weight of the semester grade are as follows:
  - i. For 2011-2012 the grade weight of the semester examination shall be between 10% and 25% and will be determined by the individual;
  - ii. For 2012-2013 the grade weight of the semester examination shall be 10% of the semester grade;
  - iii. For 2013-2014 the grade weight of the semester examination shall be 15% of the semester grade; and
  - iv. For 2014-2015 and each year after, the grade weight of the semester examination shall be 15-20% of the semester grade and will be the same for all sections of a course and determined by the department.
- i. A copy of each site-based semester test is to be reviewed and retained by the principal or his/her designee in advance of the test date. The copy of the semester exam submitted to the principal will include how the allocated testing period will be used. A copy of the semester test shall remain at the school for a minimum of one (1) year.
- j. Careful supervision must be implemented to prevent premature release of students from classes and to maintain an appropriate atmosphere for testing on campus.
- k. Final examinations are not to be graded by students.

- l. Students enrolled in classes for which they receive less than .5 credit (e.g. Repeatable Electives, Study Hall or TA) must report to that class's instructor and remain with that instructor for the entire testing period. Students who are not enrolled in a class during the testing period must not be on campus.
- m. Minimum day school hours are in effect for students and regular school hours are in effect for teachers during end-of-semester testing. No games, extracurricular activities or athletic contests should be scheduled during finals week. Games and events scheduled for the last day that finals are taken may be allowed, provided participating students not miss any time from the final schedule.
- n. Online courses are not subject to the same final test guidelines. Consult the guidelines for online and computer based instruction courses.
- o. Teachers administering District common finals must acknowledge in writing that they have been instructed in test administration and test security procedures as outlined in the *Primer* and other test specific guidelines. Irregularities in testing must be reported to the Site Test Coordinator and the Director of Assessment (HS Math) or ELL Assessment/Compliance Consultant (MS/HS ELL). A test may be invalidated for students with access to non-permissible electronic devices (e.g. cell phone, iPod, programmable devices) and incidents of cheating. Consult test specific guidelines for information about test administration, allowable accommodations and supports, and permissible tools.
- p. District common finals may not be modified. There are no retest/retake opportunities for District common finals.
- q. Accommodations listed in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must be implemented as written. However, in regard to assessments, the IEP team must be aware that accommodations written into the student's IEP may impact the student's ability to graduate high school with a standard diploma. It is important for IEP and 504 teams to know what type of accommodations can be made without invalidating a student's test scores and which accommodations the Nevada Department of Education and Washoe County School District permit.
  - i. The Nevada Department of Education identifies allowable accommodations and designated supports for students taking the End of Course exams. Accommodations written into an IEP or 504 Plan that are not allowed by the Nevada Department of Education and are provided to a student, will disqualify the student from receiving valid results and **meeting the graduation requirement**

**for passing** the End of Course exams, and impact the student's eligibility to graduate high school with a standard diploma. Therefore, testing accommodations and designated supports for students participating in regular state assessments should align with those allowed by the Nevada Department of Education.

- ii. Middle and High school students prepare for state and college-readiness assessments through classroom instruction and assessments. To this end, IEP and 504 teams are advised to align\* classroom assessment, including District common finals and core subject finals, accommodations and designated supports with those identified by the Nevada Department of Education for use on End of Course exams.

- 1) \*Note: Standardized college-readiness and entrance exams, including but not limited to ACT, SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate, may allow for changes in testing conditions ("testing accommodations") that are different from those identified by the Nevada Department of Education. Documentation of a disability and the need for requested changes is generally required when registering for commercially prepared assessments.

## 2. Middle School

- a. Final exams are recommended for all middle school academic courses, although a final exam is not required in order for a student to pass the course. Middle school students enrolled in a course that uses a district common final, must take the final exam in that course, and the final exam must be graded and weighted according to the standards for semester grading (second and fourth quarter) noted above.

## **IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This Administrative Procedure reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. Board Policy 6400, Assessment

## **REVIEW AND REPORTING**

1. This procedure and any accompanying documents will be reviewed bi-annually in even numbered years.

## REVISION HISTORY

| Date       | Revision | Modification  |
|------------|----------|---|
| 09/01/2012 | 1.0      | Adopted as Accepted Practice  |
| 01/03/2014 | 2.0      | Revised: converted to Administrative Procedure  |
| 08/19/2014 | 2.1      | Revised: online courses do not follow same guidelines; department name updated  |
| 12/02/2014 | 2.2      | Revised: clarify exception in #2  |
| 12/16/2014 | 2.3      | Revised: wording expanded in #13 to align with Activities and Athletics amended policy  |
| 06/08/2015 | 2.4      | Revised: <del>#4</del> "d" - number of days for testing expanded, limit extra time to 15 min; <del>#8</del> "h.iv" - weight of semester grade changed to range of 15-20% set by school for each course; ADDED--<br><del>#15</del> "o" - test administration training, <del>#16</del> "p" - no mod/no retest for District finals |
| 11/07/2016 | 3.0      | Revised: 2.a., replaced "8" with "1.f." to match with format of document/CSI formatting<br>Added: "q"- implementation of IEP testing accommodations; adherence to accommodations to approved NDE testing accommodations   |