

President PHILIP RUMORE



November 24, 2020

BUFFALO TEACHERS
FEDERATION, INC.

271 PORTER AVENUE
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14201
(716) 881-5400
FAX (716) 881-6678

MEMO TO: Dr. Kriner Cash, Superintendent, BPS
Members, Buffalo Board of Education

FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF

RE: Thank you

First, thank you for beginning to inform staff of Covid-19 issues at their schools/sites. While not alleviating them, it is helping to reduce concerns. We will continue to keep you apprised of any further issues.

The decision to extend the deadline for reporting grades until December 2, 2020, does not, however, solve the problem outlined in our November 20, 2020 correspondence. Many teachers will still have to go back and re-enter hundreds of grades and thousands of, what are called, data points.

I. Just some of the input from teachers:

- The issue for teachers in early elementary, the Infinite Campus Gradebook uses points/percentages and that is not how they grade. There is no option for an S or U in the gradebook. It seems pointless for teachers to use because it is not relevant to their grading. Why can they not give a "U" or Incomplete to K to 2? CSN (Continuing Support Needed) does not show the reality of the students' grades.
- The easiest way to address a student needing to make up missing work is to solely place an I for Incomplete in the student's 10-week grade and then change the student's grades as they turn in missing assignments. By allowing the missing grades to retain the missing or status of a zero does not affect the student's average.

When the student then turns in the missing work and the grade is entered, it allows for the teacher to see as well as the parents and the child to see the average change.

By changing grades to "I" in the gradebook assignments takes out the assignments from the denominator and does not allow parents, students or even the teacher to see the actual grade as it is improving.

Please see grading information teachers received after they had submitted grades. – (Document A)

Dr. Kriner Cash, Superintendent, BPS
Members, Board of Education

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November 24, 2020

Teachers are continuing to express the frustration with what they refer to as “those at City Hall in offices who don’t have to do the work”.

In addition, teachers without internet access are being denied hot spots by the District. – **(Documents B, C)**

PR:ls

Attachments: Documents A, B, C

**Academic Year 2020-21
Special Modifications to Grading Procedures Board Regulation 7210R
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

1. Q: Is the District grading policy for K-2 alpha or numerical?
A: K-2 teachers use Outstanding (O), Satisfactory (S), Unsatisfactory (U), or Needs Improvement (N) as a marking period grade. However, during the Pandemic teachers will use **Continued Supports Needed (CSN)** rather than an N or U.

Some buildings provide students with numeric scores or levels on individual assignments and record these in Infinite Campus Gradebook.

2. Q: When do I use a posted grade of Medical (MED)?
A: A teacher should assign MED for a quarterly or final overall average when a student has been placed on home instruction due to a documented medical situation and a home instruction teacher has not yet been assigned.

3. Q: Should an "I" be given to students who entered late in the quarter who would typically receive an NG? Some students do not have exit grades from their previous schools because they never attended this year or not long enough to earn a grade there.
A: If the student was recently enrolled prior to the close of the marking period, and the teacher is unable to collect sufficient work to provide an accurate assessment of student learning, and there is no available grade from the student's previous school, the student would receive No Grade (NG) for the quarter. This is the same process used during in-person instruction K-12. If a student in grades 3-12 receives a posted grade of NG, that quarter is not calculated into the student's final overall average.

Example:

Marking Period	Posted Grade
1	NG
2	75
3	90
4	80
	245/3
Final Average	82

Teachers can also use NG on the progress report if the student has not submitted sufficient work to provide an accurate grade. The teacher's chosen comment(s) should reflect this.

4. Q: In the event that a student has all Incompletes for grades, do I post a grade of 50 (as usual, if below 50%) or do I give a grade of 65% or an "I"?
A: A student with missing assignments that would cause the student's quarterly average to fall below a 65 would receive an Incomplete (I) for the marking period.

5. Q: What do we record if the student logs into class every day but does not submit any work?
 A: During this unprecedented time, many students may be experiencing difficulties in their personal lives or adjusting to the current learning environment. A student may or may not feel comfortable disclosing this information to school staff. It is in the student's best interests that we find ways to support them both academically and emotionally.

A student may not have submitted sufficient work to provide an accurate record of student performance, and missing assignment(s) will result in the student receiving a marking period average below 65 (or a CSN in grades K-2). In this case, schools will develop a plan to support the student's learning. The student will receive an Incomplete for the marking period and be granted an extension of one marking period to submit missing assignment(s). Once completed work has been submitted, the "Incomplete" for that marking period will be changed to a numeric grade that is reflective of the student's demonstrated learning.

6. Q: If a student's average is below a 65, do we give them an INC for the quarter?
 A: The lowest average that can be recorded in grades 3-6 is a 60. The lowest average that can be recorded for full year courses in grades 7-12 for Q1, 2 and 3 is a 50. Please see Board Regulation 7210R for additional information. Students should be encouraged to revise and resubmit assignments in order to meet the learning objectives of the lesson, and teachers should provide intervention as needed.

A student may not have submitted sufficient work to provide an accurate record of student performance, and missing assignment(s) will result in the student receiving a marking period average below 65 (or a CSN in grades K-2). In this case, schools will develop a plan to support the student's learning. The student will receive an Incomplete for the marking period and be granted an extension of one marking period to submit missing assignment(s). Once completed work has been submitted, the "Incomplete" for that marking period will be changed to a numeric grade that is reflective of the student's demonstrated learning.

7. Q: How do I know if I assign an Incomplete in the 4th quarter?
 If missing assignment(s) will result in the student receiving a Quarter 4 average below 65, and the Quarter 4 average below 65 will cause the student's overall final average to fall below 65, the student will receive an incomplete for Quarter 4 as well as for the overall average.

Example #1 (Student has passing Q4 and final average)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded
1	80	
2	80	
3	85	
4	75	75
Final Average	80	80

Example #2 (Student in grade 7-12 has Q4 average below a 65 but passing overall final average)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded	Notes
1	80		The Q4 grade below 65 is posted because the overall final average is passing.
2	80		
3	85		
4	50	50	
Final Average	73	73	

Example #3 (Student in grades 7-12 has passing Q4 average but overall final average below a 65)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded	Notes
1	50		The passing Q4 grade is posted, but the overall final average below 65 is posted as Incomplete.
2	50		
3	65		
4	65	65	
Final Average	58	I	

Example #3 (Student in grades 7-12 has Q4 average below a 65 and overall final average below a 65)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded	Notes
1	50		Both the Q4 and overall final average are below 65 and are therefore posted as Incomplete.
2	50		
3	50		
4	60	I	
Final Average	53	I	

8. Q: How do I know if I assign an Incomplete in the 2nd or 4th quarter for single semester class?
 A: By the end of Quarter 2 or 4, a student may not have submitted sufficient work to provide an accurate record of student performance, and missing assignment(s) will result in the student receiving a marking period average below 65 (or a CSN in grades K-2). If the Quarter 2 or 4 average below 65 will cause the student's overall final average to fall below 65, the student will receive an incomplete for Quarter 2 or 4 as well as for the overall final average.

Likewise, if a student receives an overall final average below 65 (or a CSN in grades K-2), the teacher will record an Incomplete for the overall average.

Example #1 (Student has passing Q2/4 and overall final average)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded
1 or 3	85	
2 or 4	75	75
Final Average	80	80

Example #2 (Student in gr 7-12 has Q2/4 average below a 65 but passing overall final average)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded	Notes
1 or 3	85		The Q2 grade below 65 is posted because the overall final average is passing.
2 or 4	50	50	
Final Average	68	68	

Example #3 (Student in grades 7-12 has passing Q2/4 average and overall final average below a 65)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded	Notes
1 or 3	50		The passing Q2 grade is posted, but the overall final average below 65 is posted as Incomplete.
2 or 4	65		
Final Average	58	I	

Example #3 (Student has Q2/4 average below a 65 and overall final average below a 65)

Quarter	Grade	Recorded	Notes
1 or 3	60		Both the Q4 and overall final average are below 65 and are therefore posted as Incomplete.
2 or 4	50	I	
Final Average	55	I	

9. Q: Do we change any zeros in gradebooks to an "I"? Are we supposed to mark any missing assignment as INC?

A: Moving forward, missing assignment grades will be reflected in Infinite Campus grade book as Incomplete (I). During the marking period a teacher must be sure to communicate to students

- when there is a missing assignment,
- that the missing assignment is not currently calculated into the student's average,
- that the missing assignment will have a negative impact on a student's average if it is not submitted, and
- that the teacher is available to support the student if the student is confused or needs additional instruction.

10. Q: In the event that marking a missing assignment Incomplete in the grade book instead of using a numeric value makes a student's grade unreflective of their performance, what grade do I post (e.g., The student completed one assignment out of six and received a grade of 100 on that assignment)?

A: At the end of the quarter, the teacher will need to temporarily substitute a numeric grade for the missing assignment(s) in order to calculate a marking period average. If the marking period average falls below a 65, the teacher will post an Incomplete for the marking period average and replace the missing assignment scores with Incompletes, as well. The teacher will select a comment that explains why the student has received a marking period average of Incomplete.

If the marking period average is 65 or above, the teacher will post the earned numeric average and replace the missing assignment scores with Incompletes.

11. Q: Won't a student that hands things in but gets a low grade be adversely affected?

A: Every student will receive a grade reflective of their demonstrated learning, though some students may first receive an Incomplete as they work toward completion of missing assignments. All students should have the opportunity to revise/resubmit assignments to try to improve their score during the marking period.

12. Q: If a student has a final marking period average of 70 but has an Incomplete on a major assignment, what grade is recorded and can the student submit the incomplete work during the following marking period?

A: In this case, the missing assignment will not result in the student receiving a marking period average below 65 (or an Unsatisfactory in grades K-2). The student should be encouraged to submit the assignment during the marking period. However, the teacher is able to accept a missing assignment from a student with a passing average during the next marking period.

13. Q: Will the District or principals provide us with a list of who qualifies as a student who requires further consideration for the grade of Incomplete?
A: Students may receive an Incomplete for various reasons such as missing assignments that cause the student's quarterly average to fall below a 65.

A teacher may also be aware of an extreme circumstance in the student's life that has negatively impacted their academic performance. For example, the student may have contracted COVID-19 during the quarter, or have lost a close family member during the quarter. The teacher would consult with an administrator and counselor prior to assigning an Incomplete in this instance. Plans would be made to support the student both academically and emotionally.

14. Q: After multiple home visits with students who have inconsistent attendance or low grades, students have revealed that they are overwhelmed. Some have stopped engaging in school as online learning has become too stressful, and they have withdrawn. Is it ok to tell the students that they have an extra marking period to turn in late work? I think it would help reduce stress and keep some students engaged.
A: Yes, the student has an additional marking period to submit the work for Q1, 2 and 3.

15. Q: How long does a student have to complete work? If they have an Incomplete, do they have the year to complete it all? Does the incomplete stand if they don't do anything?
A: A student has the next consecutive marking period to complete missing assignments. Schools will develop a plan to support the student's learning. The incomplete will be replaced by the newly earned grade or the original in progress grade the student earned during the marking period in which they received the Incomplete.

16. Q: What process will be used to change incomplete quarter grades?
A: The teacher will update missing assignment grades in their grade book. A change of grade form or similar mechanism will be completed by the teacher and submitted to the principal and school counselor to modify the posted grade in Infinite Campus. The counselor will then change the quarter grades from Incomplete to a numeric grade.

17. Q: How long will the quarterly gradebook be open for teachers to update an Incomplete to a numeric grade?
A: The teacher Infinite Campus grade book is open all year. A teacher may go into grade book and update assignment grades at any time. However, the Infinite Campus posted grades are only open during the grading input window. Teachers will not have access to update the posted grade from the previous quarter.

18. Q: If the gradebook closes at the regular date, who is responsible for entering the new grade?
A: Counselors will update the posted grade.

19. Q: What documentation is required to have the grade changed?
A: A form or other mechanism will be provided to document the update.

20. Q: Is an incomplete converted to a 50 if no work is submitted?
A: If a student receives an Incomplete for Q1, 2 or 3 because no assignments have been submitted at all, and no missing assignments are submitted during the next consecutive marking period, the student would receive a mark of 50 (grades 7-12) or 60 (grades 3-6) for the quarter.

If a student turned in some assignments but still received an Incomplete for Q1, 2 or 3, and no missing assignments are submitted during the next consecutive marking period, the student would receive a mark between a 50 and 64 (grades 7-12) or 60 and 64 (grades 3-6).

21. Q: Will an INC be able to be switched during the next consecutive quarter grade entry window if work is completed?

A: An incomplete assignment grade can be changed by a teacher at any time in their grade book. The posted Incomplete quarter grade can be changed by the school counselor at any time during the next marking period after a change of grade form or similar mechanism is completed by the teacher and submitted to the principal and school counselor.

22. Q: Can we add a remark on report cards that we have reached out several times and student still isn't attending?

A: Comments have been added to the report card bank that speak to low attendance rates and communication with families.

23. Q: Can a Regents exemption be given in January if a student has an Incomplete? Can it be awarded after the student makes up the work?

A: No. To qualify for the exemption, the student must meet one of the following requirements:

- Be currently enrolled in a course of study that would ordinarily culminate in the taking of a January 2021 Regents Examination and earn credit for such course of study by the end of the first semester of the 2020-21 school year; or
- Between September 1, 2020 and the end of the first semester of the 2020-21 school year, successfully complete a make-up program for the purpose of earning course credit; or
- Be preparing to take a required Regents Examination to graduate at the end of the first semester of the 2020-21 school year.

24. Q: Will an Incomplete grade affect the High School Ahead process?

A: The High School ahead process uses grades 6 and 7 final overall averages and the Q1 average of Grade 8. The applications this year will be submitted during second quarter which allows students time to earn a numeric grade for the first marking period of grade 8 if they received an Incomplete.

25. Q. What does a teacher record in the percent column if they post a final marking period grade of Incomplete?

A: The teacher will post the incomplete (I) in the Grade column. The teacher will leave the percent column blank at this time. When the modified numeric grade is entered the next quarter to replace the incomplete, that grade will be entered under the grade and percent column.

If a teacher would like assistance organizing their grade book, training is available through IC Support.

Infinite Campus Mark Reporting Characters and Abbreviations School Year 2020-21

Character Abbreviation	Meaning	Use
CSN*	Continued Supports Needed	In grades K-2, use CSN (Continued Supports Needed) to indicate that the student is not yet performing at expected grade level standards and will receive additional support. <i>*During the pandemic, teachers will use CSN rather than N or U.</i>
N	Needs Improvement	In grades K-2, use N (Needs Improvement) to indicate that the student is at risk of not achieving grade level standards by the end of the school year.
O	Outstanding	In grades K-2, use O (Outstanding) to indicate that the student is exceeding grade level standards.
S	Satisfactory	In grades K-2, use S (Satisfactory) to indicate that the student is meeting grade level standards.
U	Unsatisfactory	In grades K-2 use U (Unsatisfactory) to indicate that the student is at risk of not achieving grade level standards by the end of the school year.
AFE	Absent from Exam	Use AFE (Absent from Exam) to indicate that the student was absent for an exam.
DRP	Drop	Use DRP (Drop) to indicate that the student was dropped from class during the school year.
E	Exempt	Use E (Exempt) to indicate that the student has been exempted from an assignment. <i>Please note that Exempt can have a different meaning on a transcript, indicating that the student was exempted from a Regents exam during the Pandemic. Counselors make this determination.</i>
I	Incomplete	Use I (Incomplete) to note missing assignments and incomplete marking period or overall course averages. After working with a counselor and administrator, use I (Incomplete) for marking period or overall course average to indicate that submitted work has been negatively impacted by extreme circumstances beyond the student's control.

		<i>At the high school level, please note that no credit will be assigned if a student receives an overall I (Incomplete) for the course.</i>
MED	Medical	Use MED (Medical) to indicate that the student was absent due to a documented medical situation and a home instruction teacher has not yet been provided.
NE	Not Eligible	Use NE (Not Eligible) to indicate that the student is not eligible to sit for a specific exam such as a Regents Science Exam or a CTE Industry Exam.
NG	No Grade	Use NG (No Grade) on a progress report when it is not possible to provide a grade for a student because the student has not submitted sufficient work to provide an accurate record of student performance. Use NG (No Grade) when the student was recently enrolled prior to the close of the marking period, and the teacher is unable to collect sufficient work to provide an accurate assessment of student learning, and there is no available grade from the student's previous school. If a student in grades 3-12 receives a posted grade of NG, that quarter is not calculated into the student's final overall average.
S	Satisfactory	In AIS, RTI, or Lab classes, use S (Satisfactory) to indicate that the student is on track to meet specified standards or the objectives of the course by the end of the school year. Encore teachers can use S (Satisfactory) on progress reports to indicate that the student is meeting the objectives of the course.
U	Unsatisfactory	In AIS, RTI or Lab classes, use U (Unsatisfactory) to indicate that the student is at risk of not achieving specified standards or the objectives of the course by the end of the school year. Encore teachers can use U (Unsatisfactory) on progress reports to indicate that the student is not meeting the objectives of the course.

Lupe Sauer

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2020 3:49 PM
To: Lupe Sauer
Subject: Fwd: Tech

Please see this thread about internet access. Please advise
Thanks
Jesse

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Alvarez, Carlos" <CAlvarez@buffaloschools.org>
Date: November 16, 2020 at 1:59:59 PM EST
Subject: Fw: Tech

FYI

Carlos R. Alvarez Jr., Principal

Lewis J. Bennett High School of Innovative Technology

2885 Main Street

Buffalo, New York 14214

(716) 816-4250- office

(716) 838-7490- fax

Email: calvarez@buffaloschools.org

From: Myra Burden <MYBurden@buffaloschools.org>
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2020 1:44 PM
To: Alvarez, Carlos <CAlvarez@buffaloschools.org>
Subject: RE: Tech

Mr. Alvarez ~

No, there is no approval for teachers from the superintendent to receive hotspots. Thanks.

With gratitude,

*Myra Y. Burden
Chief Technology Officer
Buffalo Public Schools
807 City Hall
65 Niagara Square
Buffalo, NY 14202
myburden@buffaloschools.org
(716) 816-7112 (Office)
(716) 432-3591 (Cell)*

"Be the reason someone smiles. Be the reason someone feels loved and believes in the goodness in people." - Roy T. Bennett

From: Alvarez, Carlos <CALvarez@buffaloschools.org>
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2020 1:25 PM
To: Myra Burden <MYBurden@buffaloschools.org>
Subject: Fw: Tech

Hey Myra-
Please see below.
Are teachers getting hot spots yet?
Thanks
Carlos

Carlos R. Alvarez Jr., Principal
Lewis J. Bennett High School of Innovative Technology
2885 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 816-4250- office
(716) 838-7490- fax
Email: calvarez@buffaloschools.org

From: M... ..
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2020 11:17 AM
To: Alvarez, Carlos <CALvarez@buffaloschools.org>
Subject: Re: Tech

Hello-
I was just checking in about a requested hot spot. I do not have internet access at my house, and I don't think I can do my job from home very well without it. As you know I am here at school every day, but I am concerned that things might change with the recent spike in our area, either we are placed in lockdown, or god forbid I am forced into quarantine because of an exposure or worse I contract the virus. I am just trying

Document C

I will take your request to the Technology Committee

-----Original Message-----

To: Rebecca Pordum <rpordum@aol.com>
Sent: Wed, Aug 19, 2020 7:57 am
Subject: Fwd: BPS IT Department Incident Updated (Request BPS Equipment)

Becky,
This was the response I received from Sarah Edwards when I put in a request for a hot spot.
Thanks,
C

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sarah Edwards <notify@teamdynamixapp.com>
Date: August 19, 2020 at 7:30:26 AM EDT
Subject: BPS IT Department Incident Updated (Request BPS Equipment)
Reply-To: <Ticketsupdate@buffaloschools.org>

What Changed

Sarah Edwards updated this incident on Wed 8/19/20 7:30 AM Eastern Daylight Time.

Comments: Changed Status from "New" to "Closed".

Rejected this incident on the "Device Approval Step" step in the "New Laptop/iPad Approval" workflow.

The district is currently providing hot spots to students only. If this practice changes to include staff in the future, we will notify you.

Incident Updated

Acct/Dept

363 Lewis J Bennett Innov Tech

ID

1

Type

Request Type

Title

Request BPS Equipment

Description
I am requesting a hot spot for remote teaching as I have no internet at my home to be able to instruct my students
Created By
G
Location
School #363: 2885 Main Street, Lewis J. Bennett H.S. of Innovative Techonology @#200
Date Created
Tue 8/11/20 8:50 AM Eastern Daylight Time
Requestor
Status
Closed
Room Number
Contact Number:
Best time to contact
any
Employee #
Union
BTF
Subject Area/Position
Science Teacher
Request Type
Accessories (Describe current Equipment, Serial/Dtag#, purpose of item requesting)

To comment on this item, reply to this email.

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