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Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

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( ) Action Required  
(X) Informational

## BULLETIN NO. 088-20 OFFICE OF SYSTEM AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT/ASSESSMENT AND STUDENT INFORMATION

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents  
School District Superintendents  
School District Business Managers  
School Principals  
School Counselors  
Registrars  
Learning and Teaching

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: "Incomplete"/Grading

CONTACT: Kim Reykdal, School Counseling Program Supervisor Lead  
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### PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

During spring 2020, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) provided information within the Student Learning and Grading Guidance that a course grade of "incomplete" would be allowable for students who could not engage in an equitable way. Decisions on student learning and grading should lessen, not ignore or worsen, disparities. This bulletin contains updates to that guidance, including clarification that incompletes are allowable as a grade on high school transcripts in the 2020–21 school year and beyond. Incompletes should only be awarded on a student-by-student basis when the student is not on track for course completion or has not yet met proficiency. In the event that an "incomplete" is awarded, a plan for course completion should be developed and followed. Incompletes should not be awarded broadly.

### Grading

Districts are obligated to provide students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency in order to earn a passing grade. Even in a remote setting, students can

demonstrate learning in multiple ways that can minimize the need for incompletes as a grade. This bulletin is to clarify that a grade of “incomplete” is allowable for students in grades 9–12 and middle school students taking credit-bearing high school level work.

- Teachers may assign grades or assign an “incomplete” for students, on a student-by-student basis, who have not yet met proficiency.
- Students assigned an “incomplete” for a course will be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the learning standards based on local school district decisions in consultation with the student/parents/guardians. Those opportunities can include but are not limited to:
  - Formal course work during the summer, following term or year, or online
  - Competency-based assessments (exams, portfolios) of knowledge and skills earned outside of the classroom
  - Backfilling the incomplete grade with the letter grade obtained in the next course taken in that subject area aligned to grade-level standards.

Note: grades such as “fail” or “no credit” are allowable in addition to “incomplete.” Districts should prioritize tiered supports and multiple methods for students to demonstrate learning before issuing a failing grade. Decisions need to be transparent and communicated effectively to families as partners in student success.

The framework for students in grades K–8 is unchanged, and districts shall follow their established policies. Incompletes are allowable for middle school students taking credit-bearing high school level work.

## Transcripts

High school transcripts should show a value of “I” to indicate a course grade of “incomplete.” Courses with a final grade of “incomplete” are not to be included in Credits Earned or in the calculation of a student’s grade point average (GPA). If a student transfers to a different district and then resolves the incomplete, the receiving district should change the transfer grade to a letter grade and assign credit.

Every effort should be made to resolve any incompletes prior to graduation, using a course completion plan developed in consultation with the student and parents/guardians. If the incomplete is not resolved, it cannot be removed from the transcript.

The [High School Transcripts](#) user guide and FAQ contain additional specifications.

## Tiered Supports for Students who are not Completing Course Requirements

- OSPI recommends that districts provide multiple methods for students to access learning, outside of and beyond participation in live synchronous lessons, and including

additional means of demonstrating proficiency for students struggling to connect via technology.

- For those students who are attending and not completing work, districts should provide tiered supports that might include academic, behavioral, and/or social emotional supports.
- For students who are not attending and not completing work, districts are required to provide tiered supports to remove barriers for attendance. For more information see the OSPI [Attendance & Truancy: Questions & Answers for School Districts](#).

## District Policies Regarding Grading

Districts should review and update their grading policies and procedures to ensure consistent and transparent use of grading, including the use of grades categorized as “fail,” “no credit,” or “incomplete.”

## INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Kim Reykdal, School Counseling Program Supervisor Lead at 360-725-6168 or email [kim.reykdal@k12.wa.us](mailto:kim.reykdal@k12.wa.us). The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins](#) page of the OSPI website.

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