THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education (“Board”) amend Board Report 10-0324-PO1 Grade Change Policy be amended to update for appropriate titles and department names. The amended policy was posted for public comment March 24, 2021 to April 26, 2021.

PURPOSE: The objectives of this policy are: (1) to establish requirements to authorize changes to a student’s quarter, semester and final grades; and (2) implement the new grade change audit system; and (3) to establish audit requirements and accountability measures to ensure the integrity of the grading system.

POLICY TEXT:

I. Principal’s Responsibilities - General

1. The Principal is responsible for communicating grading requirements and standards to teachers and their school grading coordinators annually no later than the teacher institute days that precede the opening of each school year.

2. The Principal is responsible for designating a school grading coordinators and assigning them permissions to record and maintain student grades within the District’s system of record (“Aspen”).

3. The Principal is responsible for complying and for ensuring that all school staff comply with the requirements and procedures in this policy for implementing any changes to quarter, semester, and final student grades.

4. The Principal is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the grades recorded and issued by their school and for the maintenance of accurate grade records. The Principal must monitor grade reporting and grade changes to ensure accuracy and compliance with the requirements of this policy.

II. Teacher’s Responsibilities

1. Teachers are responsible for evaluating students and for determining students’ grades in the subject area or activity for which the teacher is responsible. Teachers must use the approved grading scale and system to evaluate pupil performance and progress and assign grades based upon the teacher’s professional judgment of the student’s work.

2. The teacher must keep written, accurate evaluation records for each student and maintain the records in compliance with the Board’s Records Management and Retention Policy, Student Records Management and Retention Policy, and related guidelines.

3. The teacher must timely submit marking period grades for each student in Aspen on or before the published deadline.

4. The teacher must be prepared to justify assigned grades.

5. Teachers are responsible for validating their students’ quarter, semester, and final must before they are posted.
III. Grade Coordinator Responsibilities

1. A school’s grade coordinator is responsible for making adjustments authorized by the Principal to quarter, semester, or final student grades in Aspen.

2. For grade change requests occurring before the grade is issued (for example, when a teacher fails to submit their quarter, semester, and final grades on or before the published deadline) the grade coordinator must record the teacher-assigned grade for each affected student in Aspen upon receipt of a completed Grade Change Authorization Form signed by the Principal.

3. For grade change requests occurring after the grade is issued, grade coordinators must only record grade changes in Aspen that comply with the requirements set out in sections V, VI, and VII of this Policy, as applicable.

4. This section III does not limit the Principal’s responsibility to ensure the integrity of all grades recorded in Aspen.

IV. Reasons for Grade Change

A quarter, semester, or final grade may only be changed after it has been issued for the following reasons:

1. miscalculation of test or assignment scores;
2. a technical error in assigning a particular grade or score;
3. the evaluation of an extra assignment which impacts upon a grade;
4. use of an inappropriate grading/evaluation system;
5. failure to meet grade posting deadline causes incorrect grade reporting; or
6. other valid reason when authorized in writing by the Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer that manages school oversight.

V. Procedures for Grade Changes Occurring Within 30 School Days

The procedures for approving and administering grade changes occurring within 30 school days from the date the quarter, semester, or final grade was originally issued are as follows:

1. The Principal must determine if the reason for the change is consistent with Section IV above and obtain written approval from their Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer for any changes described under Section IV.6 above;
2. The Principal must review all relevant information and to the extent practicable, confer with the teacher to discuss the grade prior to making a grade change determination;
3. Only the Principal is authorized to approve such grade changes;
4. If the Principal approves a grade change, the Principal must notify the teacher in writing within three (3) school days of the approval and explain the nature and reasons for the change. If the teacher is not in agreement with the Principal’s change of grade decision, the teacher may appeal by following the procedures in Section VIII below;
5. The Principal must notify the parents/guardians of the student of the grade change in writing, after the completion of any appeal filed by the teacher under Section VII below. In the case of an emancipated minor, the Principal must notify the student in the same manner.

6. The Principal must complete and sign a Grade Change Authorization Form for all approved grade changes and ensure that the form is maintained in the student's cumulative folder. The Principal must notify the grade coordinator of all authorized grade changes and ensure they follow all procedures established for making changes to the student’s electronic grade record in Aspen; and

7. The Principal must notify their Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer of all approved grade changes by providing a copy of the signed Grade Change Authorization Form or other documentation specified by the Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer. Nothing in this section V is to limit the
Network Chief’s or equivalent Network Officer’s authority to require a Principal to furnish additional information on proposed or completed grade changes.

VI. Procedures for Grade Changes Occurring After 30 School Days

1. If more than 30 school days have passed from the date the grade was originally issued, the Principal must provide a written grade change request to the Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer for approval.

2. To complete the grade change request, the Principal must complete the requirements in sections V.1 and V.2 above and submit the Grade Change Authorization Form to the Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer for approval along with a summary from the Principal and teacher, if available, of the basis and reasons for the change.

3. The Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer will review the matter and determine the appropriateness of the grade change within ten (10) school days of receipt of the Principal referral.

4. The Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer must record their determination on the Grade Change Authorization Form and notify the Principal and teacher, if available, in writing. The Grade Change Authorization Form must be provided to the Principal who will ensure that it is maintained in the student’s cumulative folder.

5. The student’s electronic grade record in Aspen must be updated only upon receipt of the fully executed Grade Change Authorization Form. The Principal must notify the parents/guardians of the determination.

VII. Procedure for Grade Changes Occurring After One Year

If more than one (1) year has passed from the date the grade was originally issued, the Principal and Network Chief/Officer must follow requirements 1 through 4 in section VI above. In addition:

1. The Principal must submit the Grade Change Authorization Form to the Department of Education Policy and Procedures for approval.

2. The Department of Education Policy and Procedure will review the matter and determine the appropriateness of the grade change within ten (10) school days of receipt of the Form

3. The Department of Education Policy and Procedures will record their determination on the Grade Change Authorization Form and notify the Principal and teacher, if available, in writing. The Grade Change Authorization Form must be provided to the Principal who will ensure that it is maintained in the student’s cumulative folder.

4. The student’s electronic grade record in Aspen must be updated only upon receipt of the fully executed Grade Change Authorization Form. The Principal must notify the parents/guardians of the determination.

VIII. Procedure for Teacher Appeal of Grade Change

1. If the teacher is not in agreement with the Principal’s determination on whether to change a grade, the teacher may submit a written appeal that includes information on why the grade change should or should not be made.

2. The written appeal must be sent within five school days of the notification from the Principal of the grade change decision.

3. The written appeal must be sent to the Principal and Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer.

4. The Principal must provide the Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer with a written explanation as to the reasons why the grade change should be upheld.

5. The Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer must make the final determination as to which of the two grades will stand within five (5) school days of receiving the appeal and will record their determination
on the Grade Change Authorization Form. The Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer must notify the Principal and teacher in writing of the determination.

6. The Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer must provide the Grade Change Authorization Form to the Principal who must ensure it is maintained in the student’s cumulative folder. The Principal must notify the parents/guardians of the final determination.

IX. Monitoring

The Network Chief or equivalent Network Officer must regularly monitor grade changes occurring in their assigned schools using the District’s grade change audit system. The Department of Education Policy and Procedures must also periodically monitor grade changes for compliance with this policy. Schools are subject to random grade change audits conducted by the Office of Internal Audit Services.

X. Guidelines

The Department of Education Policy and Procedures is authorized to issue guidelines for the effective implementation of this policy, including transcript modification guidelines that must include, at a minimum, the following:

1. documentation and approval requirements for updating transcripts to correct inaccurate entries:

2. additional entries for authorized courses and credits for transfer students; and

3. entries for authorized courses completed by CPS students outside of the Chicago Public Schools.

XI. Violations

Failure to abide by this policy or guidelines will subject employees to discipline up to and including dismissal in accordance with the Board’s Employee Discipline and Due Process Policy.

**Amends/Rescinds:** Amends 10-0324-PO1

**Cross References:** 07-0627-PO3; 96-0828-PO7

**Legal References:** 105 ILCS 5/10-20.9a.

**Public Comment:** Pursuant to Board Rule 2-6 this Policy was subject to Public Comment from 3/24/21 – 4/26/21.