

SUBJECT: STUDENT GRADING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Student performance is assessed in many ways, but primarily through assigned grades. The BOCES will help ensure the integrity of student grades by controlling access to its grading information system and by approving modifications to grades where warranted.

The System

The BOCES utilizes an electronic software system that contains a record of student performance, credit accumulation, report cards, and a transcript. More specifically, the system includes class rosters where teachers enter student grades and track their students' academic progress. The system is used to generate student report cards and transcripts, and to maintain all student grading records.

To protect student data in the system, the BOCES will first establish who has the authority to grant, change, or terminate user access. The personnel with this authority will be very limited. Further, if the grading system has a feature that allows one user or account to assume the identity of another user or account, the BOCES will restrict or disable that feature. These types of features could allow a user greater access than intended, including inheriting permissions of another user that are greater than the user's.

System Access

The BOCES will create categories of system users and assign appropriate system permissions to each. Users' permissions will be compatible with and restricted by their roles and job duties; their access will be as restrictive as possible. Typically, teachers will have the ability to enter, update, and modify grades each marking period before a pre-determined lockout date. The lockout function will be consistently used throughout the school year to help prevent grade modifications without authorization after a marking period closes. Through increased system permissions, other individuals—such as non-classroom teachers, guidance counselors, information technology (IT) staff, clerical staff, and support staff—will be able to view or modify grades.

The BOCES will work with its IT, human resources, and other appropriate departments to determine how best to timely establish access rights, add users, deactivate or modify user accounts, and monitor user accounts. As appropriate, the BOCES will develop further IT controls that protect against improper access and promote data security. Further, the BOCES recognizes that system access is most secure when BOCES-owned devices are used. Accordingly, staff should only use BOCES-owned devices to view, enter, or modify student grades and comments.

Grade Changes

Once the lockout period begins, only authorized users identified by the BOCES may change grades, and only under certain circumstances. The system will recognize when grades change, and a log of modified grades may then be viewed and printed. Any grade mismatches will be reconciled before the next marking period closes or before the end of the school year, whichever is earlier.

(Continued)

SUBJECT: STUDENT GRADING INFORMATION SYSTEMS (Cont'd.)

The staff member seeking to change a grade will submit a grade-change form signed by the requesting party, the teacher who assigned the original grade, and the appropriate administrator. This form and all other documents supporting a grade modification will be electronically filed in the grading system or filed in a non-electronic system—if electronic filing is impossible or impractical—and maintained for six years. The personnel seeking the modification should specify one or more reasonable grounds for the grade change on the form. There must be reasonable grounds to alter a grade. The reasons may include:

- a) Data entry error;
- b) Computational error;
- c) A modification based on work submitted or considered after the lockout date;
- d) Changing an incomplete grade to a regular grade because a student completed course requirements;
- e) Credit recovery coursework;
- f) Administrative change; or
- g) Other acceptable justifications.

Audit Log and Monitoring

The BOCES' grading system will have an audit log or grade-change report function that records certain system activities, including modifications to grades. The BOCES will periodically monitor audit logs or grade-change reports to confirm the integrity of the system, to ensure proper access by personnel, and to confirm that modifications within the system are appropriate and completed in a timely manner. The BOCES will also periodically monitor user accounts and rights so that the permissions granted are proper and the minimum necessary for each user or user group. To the extent feasible, the BOCES will make sure that user accounts are current and updated regularly. The BOCES will be able to print user information, logs, reports, and other documents from the student grading information system, as needed.