



# New Semester Grading Period

August 5, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Beginning with the 2019-2020 year, Limestone is changing its grading periods from two nine weeks to a single semester. The suggestion is one initially proposed by teachers on the Curriculum Council two years ago. A sub-committee of the council then investigated the proposal for the rest of that year. The 2018-2019 Council then voted unanimously in support of the proposal before submitting it to the Board of Education who officially approved it last spring.

Parents and students will receive two official grade notifications during the semester, a mid-term progress report in October, in conjunction with the Parent-Teacher Conference, and the final grade at the conclusion of the semester. As always, you can check your students' grades every day on Skyward, and teachers are available via email and during their planning hours to discuss student progress.

Semester assessment (finals) will be worth 20% of the semester grade. The same semester assessment will be used in all sections of a course. Teachers will determine the type of mid-term evaluation to be used for each class. The window for the mid-term will be two weeks long, reducing the likelihood that all assessments will occur over two days.

There are other benefits to our students as well. All students adjusting to new classes and grade levels have a full semester to offset any slow start, a benefit especially helpful to freshmen. Additionally, the two nine weeks during first semester were not quite balanced due to the number of shortened heat schedule days the first nine weeks. For students who plan to attend college, they have the opportunity to get used to the semester grading period. Finally, eliminating two mid-term assessment days where only half the classes meet does add instructional days back into our calendar.

Included in this website banner is the original proposal made to the Board of Education. We look forward to implementing this change, believing it helps with the transition into and from high school. Please do not hesitate to call me or send me an email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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## **Semester Grade Policy for 2019-2020**

**Both the Curriculum Council and the Cabinet have unanimously passed motions to move to semester grades. The motion passed at both meetings is as follows:**

1. Grades will be calculated by semester with the semester assessment worth 20%.
2. Term assessments at the nine weeks mark will be replaced with the following:

Each teacher will give at least one major assessment before the mid-term progress reports are posted. Giving a mid-term assessment will be determined by the teachers in the department who teach the course. Major assessments, whether tests or projects, will be common assessments given to students in all sections of a particular course.

3. Final Assessment schedule will be set up so that no more than three finals will be given on any one assessment day. These final assessments do not have to be an objective test, but students will be required to attend the class on assessment day. Final assessments will be common assessments given to students in all sections of the course.

4. Final assessments may be comprehensive, with the decision being made by those department members teaching the course.

### **Major Rationale:**

1. Reducing the number of assessment days, and therefore review days, increases the number of days of instruction.
2. Having a single semester grade is more in line with what colleges practice.

### **Administrative practice associated with this policy:**

1. Schedule parent-teacher conferences later in the semester.
2. Students will receive two grade reports: a mid-term progress report and a final report card.

## **Semester Grade Policy for 2019-2020**

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the length of the grading period for all classes other than physical development will be one semester. This policy replaces the two nine-weeks grading periods with a single-semester system. Due to state guidelines involving driver education, courses taught in the physical development department will remain on the nine-weeks system. The guidelines of the Semester Grade Policy are as follows:

1. Grades will be calculated by semester with the semester assessment worth 20%.
2. Term assessments will be replaced with mid-term and final semester assessments determined by department faculty.
3. Each semester, mid-term progress reports will be posted on Skyward and distributed at Parent-Teacher Conferences.
3. Mid-term Assessments are common assessments given to students in all sections of a particular course and will be administered during a two-week Mid-term Period.
4. Final assessments are common assessments given to students in all sections of a particular course and will be administered so that no more than three finals will be given on any one assessment day.
4. Final assessments may be comprehensive. Department members who teach each course will make this decision.