

High Tech High Grading Policy During Online Learning (DRAFT)

April 7, 2020

Dear High Tech High Students and Families,

Over the course of the last several weeks as our schools have been preparing for distance learning, High Tech High (HTH) leaders have also been in discussion with regards to grading policies and how students will be assessed during this period of online learning. HTH Schools are committed to student success, and this time, while extraordinary, is no different. To that end, our schools will maintain the policy of letter grades, and these grades will be a continuation of student progress since March 13th.

This decision was made with the varying needs of our students taken into account and with their best interest in mind both in the short and long term. Most immediately, students are in need of normalcy and continuity. To shift to a different grading policy than what we've had at this time we felt would disrupt consistency and add a layer of unnecessary stress. The longer-term impact on college admissions was another factor considered in maintaining the status-quo grading system. Amongst college admissions offices, HTH has established a reputation of rigor through progressive learning approaches and grades from our schools reflect that learning. We want to preserve this stature for our current and future graduates thus maintaining a letter grade policy was the most appropriate course of action to take.

We understand that the shift to distance learning may be challenging for some students. HTH staff will proactively engage with students and families to support students in this transition. In an effort to encourage our students as they transition into this new learning environment, we provide this message of support: If students show consistent effort and display behaviors of an actively engaged learner through the end of the academic year, it is likely that their grade at the end of the semester will not be lower than the grade they had as of March 13th. An intentional outcome of project-based learning is for students to "learn how to learn". Whether it be through projects, internships, or online learning we urge our students to embrace this mindset, engage with teachers and fellow students in this temporary environment as we join together as lifelong learners. If you have questions regarding these grading policies please don't hesitate to reach out to the director of your child's school.

Sincerely,
High Tech High Leadership