



Best Practices in Grading: A Guide for Teachers

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Purpose and Committee Information

The purpose of this manual is to outline the information that teachers and administrators need to implement the board's vision for grading and assessment of student academic progress. Special thanks to Spring 2024 committee members listed below for their hard work on the manual.

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Introduction

Liberty STEAM Charter's Policy for Grading and Assessment Systems is that students respond more positively to the opportunity for success than to the threat of failure. The organization seeks, therefore, through learner objectives and its instructional program, to make achievement both recognizable and possible for students. The organization should emphasize achievement in its process of evaluating student performance.

Regularly issued report cards, combined with scheduled parent-teacher conferences, serve to promote a process of continuous evaluation of student performance. This process informs students and their parent/legal guardian and provides a basis for bringing about change in student performance if such change seems necessary.

Mission of Liberty STEAM Charter

Liberty STEAM Charter is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and high-quality educational environment that supports diversity and equips students for local and global success.

Vision of Liberty STEAM Charter

Liberty STEAM Charter is committed to educating, empowering, and enriching the lives of all students to reach their full potential.

Motto of Liberty STEAM Charter

To Educate, Empower, and Enrich!

Values and Beliefs of Liberty STEAM Charter

Commitment to Excellence: Educational excellence requires that all stakeholders strive for continual growth and improvement.

Unyielding Ethical Standards: Build and maintain an abiding sense of honor and integrity that is characterized by high standards.

Accountability: All stakeholders are accountable for their actions and will be responsive to the needs of others.

Educating the Whole Child: All students are granted the opportunity to succeed based on individual needs.

Providing a Safe Learning Environment: Students have the right to learn in an environment conducive to learning.

Collaboration and Support amongst Stakeholders: Pervasive and valuable collaborative efforts create meaningful strategies and solutions.

Scholar Core Values: Growth Mindset, Stand Up and Own It, Power of Team

Employee Core Value: Make the Impossible Possible, Urgently Pursue Excellence, & Bring the Joy

Liberty STEAM Charter Grading Philosophy

To achieve the goal of ensuring an accurate measure of progress and level of achievement, grades are used to reflect a student’s mastery across all educational settings within Liberty STEAM Charter. Grades reflect a organization-wide, standard representation of academic achievement in an educational setting and are vital in ensuring effective communication between school and home. Assignments and assessments that are meaningful, standards-based, fair, and a reflection of a student’s growth and mastery of grade-level standards are used for grading purposes. Grades are weighted to reflect the importance of assessments, classroom assignments, and student ability.

On February 9, 2015 the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) approved a list of various indicators and measurements to report on student academic performance. The Profile of the Graduate serves as the overall objective of the state’s public education system.

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate



World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills



Statewide uniform grading scale

On Tuesday, April 12, 2016, the State Board of Education (SBE) unanimously voted to implement a 10- point grading scale effective in the 2016–17 school year. The new uniform grading scale is accompanied by a new conversion chart that was implemented at the Elementary Academy in the 2023-24 school year.

The school will follow the statewide uniform grading scale as approved by SBE. This uniform grading scale and the system for calculating GPAs and class rank will apply to all courses carrying Carnegie units, including units earned at the middle/junior high level.

The uniform grading scale is as follows.

A	90 - 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	59 and below

All report cards and transcripts will use numerical grades.

Best Practices

1. Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery through a variety of channels such as assessments, class activities, homework, quizzes, essays, labs, projects, and portfolios.
2. Behavior, effort, and attendance are evaluated and reported separately from the academic grade.
3. Grades are based on impartial, consistent observation of the quality of student work and mastery of the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards and the South Carolina Academic Standards.
4. Grades will reflect student achievement toward mastery of course content standards.
5. Grades are based on students' demonstration of proficiency of course content standards at grade level rigor.
6. Students will receive assessment feedback that is timely, specific, understandable to the receiver, and formed to allow for self-adjustment on the student's part.

Marzano, R. (2000). *Transforming classroom grading*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

O'Connor, K. (2007). *A repair kit for grading: 15 fixes for broken grades*. Portland, OR: ETS.

Wiggins, G. (1998). *Educative assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wormeli, R. (2006). *Fair isn't always equal: Assessing and grading in the differentiated classroom*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Kindergarten through Grade One Reporting



Student progress in kindergarten is reported each quarter on a organization report card based on mastery of the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics and South Carolina Academic Standards for Science and Social Studies.

In addition, each kindergarten student's readiness for school will be measured within the first 45 days of the school year across multiple domains (social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics, and physical well-being and motor development) by the state mandated Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). The KRA provides a snapshot of a student's abilities at the beginning of the school year which helps kindergarten teachers best meet the child's needs.

Student progress at grade one is reported on progress reports and report cards for the core academic subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and all support areas (physical education, art, music, and Spanish). The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) results will be reported to parents three times a year. The following codes are used to report student progress on the academic and SEL (social emotional learning) standards:

- 1-Beginning** - Scholar does not yet present the skills necessary to understand the standard
- 2-Developing** - Scholar has some skills present in order to understand the standard/can complete only with support
- 3-Mastery** - Scholar has mastered the skills necessary to understand the standard/can complete with little to no support
- 4-Advanced** - Scholar has mastered the skills at the current grade level and can perform within the next 6 months to a year in this standard/can complete with no support

Special Education

Students will be instructed and graded on grade level with the accommodations outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), unless modified by their IEP.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Teachers are encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and should accommodate and adapt lessons and assignments so that English Language Learners (ELLs) can progress. However, a student may not be assigned a failing grade in a content area on the basis of lack of English language proficiency. Appropriate grading should be based upon appropriate instructional accommodations.

Elementary Grading

Grades 2-5 Reporting



Student progress at the elementary level is reported on progress reports, interim reports, and report cards for the core academic subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth results will be reported to parents. The following codes are used to report student progress on the standards:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	59 and below

Grades for assignments are based on mastery of South Carolina Academic Standards. Grades for elementary students are entered in the teacher’s grade book using percentage points. Teachers will update a minimum of one grade per week in PowerTeacher Gradebook. These percentages are averaged in the grade book to determine the report card letter grade. As grades are finalized each quarter, any quarter average (with the exception of the final quarter) below 50% should be manually adjusted to 50% to align with the State Uniform Grading Scale Conversion Chart. Again, this administrative rule is in place for each quarter except the last quarter of the course, which will reflect the earned average. The numerical average of 60% = 0.000 is used for computing the grade point ratios. Retakes will only be allowed for major assessments where the initial score earned by a scholar is 60 or lower.

***The lowest grade a scholar will receive in grades 2-5 for the first three quarters is a 50. For the 4th quarter, a scholar’s grade will reflect the earned grade.**

Weight of Grades

Box A: Reading, Math, & Language

Major – 40% (minimum of 2 per quarter)	Minor – 60% (minimum of 7 per quarter)
Major assessment of the mastery of standards, includes assessments such as: end-of-module/unit assessments (oral, written, and/or performance), summative presentations, demonstrations of proficiency, portfolios, formal/final draft writing assignments, on demand writing, summative large projects, major/formal labs, and major performances.	Minor assessments of mastery of standards such as quizzes, classwork, mastery homework, interactive notebooks, journals, exit slips, and quick writes. Note: Spelling checks, vocabulary checks, and math fluency checks are considered minor assessments and should be recorded in the minor category.

Box B: Science & Social Studies

Major – 40% (minimum of 2 per quarter)	Minor – 60% (minimum of 4 per quarter)
Major assessment of the mastery of standards, includes assessments such as: end-of-module/unit assessments (oral, written, and/or performance), summative presentations, demonstrations of proficiency, portfolios, formal/final draft writing assignments, on demand writing, summative large projects, major/formal labs, and major performances.	Minor assessments of mastery of standards, such as quizzes, classwork, mastery checks, interactive notebooks, journals, exit slips, and quick writes.

Enrichment Classes: Including Visual and Performing Arts, Health and Safety, and Physical Education

Student progress on the South Carolina Academic Standards for Visual and Performing Arts, the South Carolina Health and Safety Academic Standards, and South Carolina Academic Standards for Physical Education in grades 2-5 is based on a variety of assessments administered throughout the quarter & reported by the following grading categories:

- M = Met
- P = Progressing
- N = Not Met

All enrichment teachers, including health and safety, and physical education teachers will input one grade each quarter which is the final grade for the quarter. Related arts grades will be reflective of mastery of the following academic standards:

- Art and Music - South Carolina Academic Standards for Visual and Performing Arts
- Physical Education – South Carolina Academic Standards for Physical Education
- Health and Safety - South Carolina Health and Safety Academic Standards

Special Education

Students will be instructed and graded on grade level with the accommodations outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), unless modified by their IEP.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Teachers are encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and should accommodate and adapt lessons and assignments so that English Language Learners (ELLs) can progress. However, a student may not be assigned a failing grade in a content area on the basis of lack of English language proficiency. Appropriate grading should be based upon appropriate instructional accommodations.

Minor Assessment

The goal of a minor assessment is to monitor student learning in order to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, minor assessments:

- help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work
- help faculty recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately

Minor assessments are generally low stakes, which means they have low or no point value. Examples of minor assessments include asking students to:

- draw a concept map in class to represent their understanding of a topic
- submit one or two sentences identifying the main point of a lesson
- turn in a research proposal for early feedback
- exit slip
- journal
- quick writes
- spelling, vocabulary, math fluency checks

Major Assessment

The goal of major assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Major assessments are often high stakes, which means that they have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include:

- a test
- a final project
- a research paper
- a demonstration of proficiency
- final writing
- portfolio
- a presentation

Common Assessments

Common assessments are developed to inform instruction by measuring students' level of mastery and identifying concepts or skills which require re-teaching. Two to three common assessments will be administered per quarter per core content area on power/major standards. The grade will be recorded and the reteach/reassess option will be applied.

Homework

Homework provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding. Homework should be considered extended learning opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of concepts taught. Homework can be a necessary part of the instructional process that begins in the classroom, extends into the home, and provides a way for parents/guardians to become aware of the instructional program and their student's educational program. Liberty STEAM Charter Policy IKB states that homework should be assigned as reinforcement to classroom instruction by providing time for practice and application of knowledge.

Additionally, because homework can be used as a tool to aid in the development of positive behavioral traits such as self-discipline and intellectual independence, homework should be an expectation on all grade levels.

Homework assignments should be meaningful, relevant to the current lesson, carefully planned, and differentiated. Differentiated homework can provide a great opportunity for students to master missing skills, extend content, challenge advanced learners, and link applications of content to student interests.

Students should be assigned homework on a regular basis to reflect the following purposes:

- reinforce and supplement classroom learning experiences
- encourage accountability and responsibility
- foster student initiative and independence
- enable the successful completion of more curricular material
- reinforce home-school interaction
- extend the learning environment into the reality of the outside world
- should not be assigned for disciplinary reasons

Elementary level homework guidelines:

- Homework should be 10 minutes per night in the kindergarten and an additional 10 minutes per grade level thereafter
- Homework will be checked and feedback given to students.
- Homework will be formative in nature, and no grade will be recorded in PowerSchool.

Extra Credit

Providing extra credit opportunities is not a research-based best practice. Liberty STEAM Charter provides students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery over time through reteach/retest and other methods, when necessary.

Transfer Students

Transfer information is addressed in the uniform grading policy.

Reteach/Retake Opportunity

Students scoring below 60% on an assessment in the major grading category must be given an opportunity to be retaught and reassessed. A student who fails an assessment in the major category will be given one more opportunity to earn a passing grade on the same grade level standards after re-teaching has been provided. The teacher will determine, based on the circumstances, if a student should retake the entire assessment, a portion of the assessment, or an alternative assessment on the same grade level standards. The student will receive the higher of the two scores (original assessment grade v. re-assessment grade) not to exceed a passing grade of 60.

Communicating Progress

During each nine weeks grading period:

Online Record: PowerSchool Gradebook Portal

- Teachers will publish updated grades weekly to the portal (minimum of one grade per subject area) to keep students and parents informed of ongoing progress.
 - Principal or designee will monitor gradebooks.
- Parents/guardians may also access student progress information through the student/parent PowerSchool Parent portal.
 - Appendix C: PowerSchool Parent Acceptable Use Policy
 - Appendix D: Public Portal Parent Access Request Form
 - Parents may access the portal by logging on to <https://powerschool.sumterschools.net/public/home.html>
 - Parents/guardians may contact the school for additional access information.
- Individual Student Reports will be printed from the portal and sent home to parents:
 - Progress report at 2 ¼ week mark (2 – 4 grades included)
 - Interim report at 4 ½ week mark (4 – 8 grades included)
 - Progress report at 6 ¾ week mark (6 – 11 grades included)
 - Report card at 9 week mark (9 or more grades included)
- Individual Progress Reporting Calendar
 - Sep. 9, 2025 – Interim
 - Oct. 21, 2025 – Q1 Report Card
 - Nov. 18, 2025 – Interim
 - Jan. 13, 2026 – Q2 Report Card
 - Feb. 11, 2026 – Interim
 - Mar. 26, 2026 – Q3 Report Card
 - Apr. 28, 2026 – Interim
 - May 29, 2026 – Q4 Report Card
- Send D/F letters to parents at the end of the 1st Semester and at the end of the 3rd Quarter.

Make Up Work

In order to provide the total assessment "picture" of a student's academic progress a student missing classroom instruction should be given the opportunity to make up the missing assigned work. This will ensure instructional continuity and place importance upon consistent attendance and daily study.

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests following any absence.

Makeup Work Guidelines:

- Makeup work is available to all students.
- When students are absent, a zero will be recorded by the teacher until the student completes his/her makeup assignments.
- The zero is averaged by PowerSchool until the teacher updates the electronic gradebook after the student submits makeup assignments.
- A student should not, on the day of returning to school, be required to take a quiz or test that was announced during his/her absence.
- Makeup work, including tests, may be an alternate version to assess what the student has learned.
- Missed assignments must be turned in by the next grade progress report.
- Extenuating circumstances are at the discretion of the school.

Middle Level Grading Procedures

Grades 6 through 8

Grade Reporting

While LSC does not service scholars in these grades yet, our vision is presented below.

Student progress at the middle level is reported on progress reports, interim reports, and report cards. All nine-week averages will be calculated on a percentage system for each type (category) of assignment. Grades for assignments will be based on mastery of South Carolina Standards. Each department will communicate grading expectations to students and parents via the class syllabus with the categories listed below.



Middle school students taking high school credit courses will be graded on high school procedures for categories and weights. Teachers will update a minimum of two grades per week and a minimum of three major grades per quarter in PowerTeacher Gradebook.

In addition, the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) results will be reported to parents.

The following grade codes that align with the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy are used:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	59 and below

***Scholars at LSC in grades 6-12 will receive the grade that is earned on each assessment.**

Weight of Grades

Major – 40%	Minor – 60%	Homework – 10%
Major assessment of the mastery of standards. Includes assessments such as: mastery assessments (oral, written, and/or performance), major/formal labs, major presentations, summative presentations, demonstrations of proficiency, portfolios, formal/final draft writing assignments, on demand writing, summative large projects, major/formal labs, and major performances.	Minor assessment of mastery of standards such as quizzes, classwork, homework, interactive notebooks, journals, exit slips, and quick writes, fluency checks, vocabulary checks	See homework guidelines

Appropriate adjustments may be made for schools on A/B schedules.

Dressing Out (Physical Education)

Wear appropriate tennis shoes and socks, shirt, shorts that fit dress code, warm-up pants/sweat pants in school colors or school PE uniform. No leggings/jeggings.

Special Education

Students will be instructed and graded on grade level with the accommodations outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), unless modified by their IEP.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Teachers are encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and should accommodate and adapt lessons and assignments so that English Language Learners (ELLs) can progress. However, a student may not be assigned a failing grade in a content area on the basis of lack of English language proficiency. Appropriate grading should be based upon appropriate instructional accommodations.

Minor Assessment

The goal of minor assessment is to monitor student learning in order to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments:

- help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work
- help faculty recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately

Minor assessments are generally *low stakes*, which means they have low or no point value. Examples of formative assessments include asking students to:

- draw a concept map in class to represent their understanding of a topic
- submit one or two sentences identifying the main point of a lecture
- turn in a research proposal for early feedback

Major Assessment

The goal of major assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Summative assessments are often high stakes, which means they have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include:

- a midterm exam
- a final project
- a research paper
- a senior recital

Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark assessments are a school option. They were developed to inform instruction by measuring students' level of mastery and identifying concepts or skills which require re-teaching. If needed, re-teaching will occur for non-mastered indicators and students may then be re-assessed on those individual indicators. No grade will be recorded.

Common Assessments

School level common assessments will be given each quarter for each core content area on power/major standards which are embedded in the curriculum. The grade will be recorded and the reteach/reassess option will be applied.

Homework

Homework should be assigned as reinforcement to classroom instruction by providing time for practice and application of knowledge. Additionally, because homework can be used as a tool to aid in the development of positive behavioral traits such as self-discipline and intellectual independence, homework should be an expectation on all grade levels.

Homework assignments should be meaningful, relevant to the current lesson, carefully planned, and differentiated. Differentiated homework can provide a great opportunity for students to master missing skills, extend content, challenge advanced learners, and link applications of content to student interests.

Students should be assigned homework on a regular basis to reflect the following purposes:

- reinforce and supplement classroom learning experiences
- encourage accountability and responsibility
- foster student initiative and independence
- enable the successful completion of more curricular material
- reinforce home-school interaction
- extend the learning environment into the reality of the outside world
- Homework should not be assigned for disciplinary reasons.

Homework provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding. Homework should be considered extended learning opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of concepts taught. Homework can be a necessary part of the instructional process that begins in the classroom, extends into the home, and provides a way for parents/guardians to become aware of the instructional program and their student's educational program. Homework should never be a disciplinary measure, but should be used to enrich and strengthen classroom experiences.

Middle level homework guidelines:

- Homework for all subjects combined should not exceed 8 hours per week for grades 6th-8th.
- Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.
- Homework will be recorded in PowerTeacher Gradebook and be averaged as 10% of the nine weeks grade.

Extra Credit

Providing extra credit opportunities is not a research-based best practice. Liberty STEAM Charter provides students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery over time through reteach/retest and other methods, when necessary.

Transfer Students

Transfer information will be addressed in the uniform grading policy.

Reteach/Retake Opportunity (Grades 2 and Above)

Students scoring below 60 on an assessment in the major grading category are given an opportunity to be retaught and reassessed. A student who fails an assessment in the major category will be given one additional opportunity to earn a passing grade on the same grade level standards after re-teaching has been provided. The teacher will determine, based on the circumstances, if a student should retake the entire assessment, a portion of the assessment, or an alternative assessment on the same grade level standards. The student will receive the higher of the two scores (original assessment grade v. re-assessment grade) not to exceed a passing grade of 60.

Make-up Work

In order to provide the total assessment "picture" of a student's academic progress for a course, any student missing classroom instruction should be given the opportunity to make up the missing assigned work. This will ensure instructional continuity and place importance upon consistent attendance and daily study. Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests following any absence.

Makeup Work Guidelines:

- Makeup work is available to all students.
- Students are responsible for asking teachers for the makeup work upon returning to class.
- When students are absent, a zero will be recorded by the teacher until the student completes his/her makeup assignments.
- The zero is averaged by PowerSchool until the teacher updates the electronic gradebook after the student submits makeup assignments.
- A student should not, on the day of returning to school, be required to take a quiz or test that was announced during his/her absence.
- Makeup work, including tests, may be an alternate version to assess what the student has learned.
- Missed assignments must be turned in by the next grade progress report.
- Extenuating circumstances are at the discretion of the school.

Recording and Communicating Progress

During each nine weeks grading period:

Online Record: PowerSchool Gradebook Portal

- Teachers will publish updated grades weekly to the portal (minimum of two grades per subject area) to keep students and parents informed of ongoing progress.
- Principal or designee will monitor gradebooks weekly.
- Parents/guardians may also access student progress information through the student/parent PowerSchool Parent portal.
 - Appendix C: PowerSchool Parent Acceptable Use Policy
 - Appendix D: Public Portal Parent Access Request Form
 - Parents may access the portal by logging on to <https://powerschool.sumterschools.net/public/home.html>
 - Parents/guardians may contact the school for additional access information.
- Individual Student Reports will be printed from the portal and sent home to parents:
 - Progress report at 2 ¼ week mark (minimum of 4 grades included)
 - Interim report at 4 ½ week mark (minimum of 8 grades included)
 - Progress report at 6 ¾ week mark (minimum of 12 grades included)
 - Report card at 9 week mark (minimum of 18 grades included)
- Individual Progress Reporting Calendar
 - TBD
- Send D/F letters to parents at the end of the 1st Semester and at the end of the 3rd Quarter.

High School Grading Procedures

Grade Reporting

While LSC does not service scholars in these grades yet, our vision is presented below.

All nine-week averages shall be calculated on a percentage system for each type (category) of assignment. Grades for assignments will be based on mastery of South Carolina Standards. Each department will communicate grading expectations to students and parents via the class syllabus with two categories listed below. Teachers will update a minimum of two grades per week and a minimum of three major (summative) grades per quarter in PowerTeacher Gradebook. As grades are finalized each quarter, any quarter average (with the exception of the final quarter) below 60% should be manually adjusted to 60% to align with the State Uniform Grading Scale Conversion Chart. Again, this administrative rule is in place for each quarter except the last quarter of the course, which will reflect the earned average. The numerical average of 60% = 0.000 is used for computing the grade point ratios.



Weight of Grades

Major (Summative) – 60%	Minor (Formative) – 40%
Summative assessment of the mastery of standards. Includes assessments such as: mastery assessments (oral, written, and/or performance), summative presentations, demonstrations of proficiency, portfolios, formal/final draft writing assignments, on demand writing, summative large projects, major/formal labs, and major performances.	Formative assessment of mastery of standards such as quizzes, classwork, homework, interactive notebooks, journals, exit slips, and quick writes

AP/IB classes will continue to follow the program requirements for grading. Dual enrollment is based on the college criteria.

Special Education

Students will be instructed and graded on grade level with the accommodations outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), unless modified by their IEP.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Teachers are encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and should accommodate and adapt lessons and assignments so that English Language Learners (ELLs) can progress. However, a student may not be assigned a failing grade in a content area on the basis of lack of English language proficiency. Appropriate grading should be based upon appropriate instructional accommodations.

Formative Assessment

The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments:

- help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work
- help faculty recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately

Formative assessments are generally low stakes, which means that they have low or no point value. Examples of formative assessments include asking students to:

- draw a concept map in class to represent their understanding of a topic
- submit one or two sentences identifying the main point of a lecture

- turn in a research proposal for early feedback

Summative Assessment

The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

Summative assessments are often high stakes, which means that they have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include:

- a midterm exam
- a final project
- a research paper
- a senior recital

Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark assessments are a school option. They were developed to inform instruction by measuring students' level of mastery and identifying concepts or skills which require re-teaching. If needed, re-teaching will occur for non-mastered indicators and students may then be re-assessed on those individual indicators. No grade will be recorded.

Common Assessments

School level common assessments will be given each quarter for each core content area on power/major standards which are embedded in the curriculum. The grade will be recorded and the reteach/reassess option will be applied.

Homework

Homework provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding. Homework should be considered extended learning opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of concepts taught. Homework can be a necessary part of the instructional process that begins in the classroom, extends into the home, and provides a way for parents/guardians to become aware of the instructional program and their student's educational program. In order to ensure that homework practices are efficient and effective, consideration for the amount of time per night an average student should expect to spend on homework for all subjects combined, based on the research, should include the following:

- Homework should not exceed 10 hours per week in ninth through twelfth grades.
- Homework should never be a disciplinary measure but should be used to enrich and strengthen classroom experiences.
- Homework will be recorded as a Minor/Formative grade.
- Exceptions may apply for special projects and advanced academics. If a student chooses to participate in AP, Pre-AP, or Dual Credit classes, additional homework time may be required.

Grading Homework

Homework should be assigned as reinforcement to classroom instruction by providing time for practice and application of knowledge. Additionally, because homework can be used as a tool to aid in the development of positive behavioral traits such as self-discipline and intellectual independence, homework should be an expectation on all grade levels.

Homework assignments should be meaningful, relevant to the current lesson, carefully planned, and differentiated. Differentiated homework can provide a great opportunity for students to master missing skills, extend content, challenge advanced learners, and link applications of content to student interests.

Students should be assigned homework on a regular basis to reflect the following purposes:

- reinforce and supplement classroom learning experiences
- encourage accountability and responsibility
- foster student initiative and independence
- enable the successful completion of more curricular material
- reinforce home-school interaction
- extend the learning environment into the reality of the outside world
- should not be assigned for disciplinary reasons

Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.

Extra Credit

Providing extra credit opportunities is not a research-based best practice. Liberty STEAM Charter provides students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery over time through reteach/retest and other methods, when necessary.

Transfer Students

Transfer information will be addressed in the uniform grading policy.

Make-up Work

In order to provide the total assessment "picture" of a student's academic progress for a course, any student missing classroom instruction should be given the opportunity to make up the missing assigned work. This will ensure instructional continuity and place importance upon consistent attendance and daily study. Students will be permitted to make up assignments and tests following any absence.

Makeup Work Guidelines:

- Makeup work is available to all students.
- Students are responsible for asking teachers for the makeup work upon returning to class.
- When students are absent, a zero will be recorded by the teacher until the student completes his/her makeup assignments.
- The zero is averaged by PowerSchool until the teacher updates the electronic gradebook after the student submits makeup assignments.
- A student should not, on the day of returning to school, be required to take a quiz or test that was announced during his/her absence.
- Makeup work, including tests, may be an alternate version to assess what the student has learned.
- Missed assignments must be turned in by the next grade progress report.
- Extenuating circumstances are at the discretion of the school.

Communicating Progress

During each 9 weeks grading period:

Online Record: PowerSchool Gradebook Portal

- Teachers will publish updated grades weekly to the portal (minimum of two grades per subject area) to keep students and parents informed of ongoing progress.
 - Each nine week period there should be at least 3 major grades.
 - Principal or designee will monitor gradebooks weekly.
- Parents/guardians may also access student progress information through the student/parent PowerSchool Parent portal.
 - Appendix C: PowerSchool Parent Acceptable Use Policy
 - Appendix D: Public Portal Parent Access Request Form
 - Parents may access the portal by logging on to <https://powerschool.sumterschools.net/public/home.html>
 - Parents/guardians may contact the school for additional access information.
- Individual Student Reports will be printed from the portal and sent home to parents:
 - Progress report at 3 week mark (minimum of 6 grades included)
 - Interim report at 6 week mark (minimum of 12 grades included)
 - Report card at 9 week mark (minimum of 18 grades included)
- Individual Progress Reporting Calendar
 - TBD
- Send D/F letters to parents at the end of the 1st Semester and at the end of the 3rd Quarter.

Reteach/Retake Opportunity

Students scoring below 60 on an assessment in the major grading category must be given an opportunity to be retaught and reassessed. The student who fails an assessment in the major category will be given one more opportunity to earn a passing grade on the same grade level standards after re-teaching has been provided. The teacher will determine, based on the circumstances, if a student should retake the entire assessment, a portion of the assessment, or an alternative assessment on the same grade level standards. The student will receive the higher of the two scores (original assessment grade v. re-assessment grade) not to exceed a passing grade of 60. (Exclusions: EOC tests and final examinations).

Final Examination Exemption Policy

An underclassman must have an 80 or above to exempt final exams. Seniors must have a 60 or above to exempt final exams.

Appendix A: Board Policy: GRADING/ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Purpose: To establish the board's vision for grading and assessment of student academic progress.

Students respond more positively to the opportunity for success than to the threat of failure. The organization seeks, therefore, through learner objectives and its instructional program, to make achievement both recognizable and possible for students. The organization should emphasize achievement in its process of evaluating student performance.

Regularly issued report cards, combined with scheduled parent-teacher conferences, serve to promote a process of continuous evaluation of student performance. This process informs students and their parent/legal guardian and provides a basis for bringing about change in student performance if such change seems necessary.

Statewide Uniform Grading Scale

The school will follow the statewide uniform grading scale as approved by the State Board of Education. This uniform grading scale and the system for calculating grade point averages (GPAs) and class rank will apply to all courses carrying Carnegie units, including units earned at the middle/junior high school level.

The uniform grading scale is as follows:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	59 and below

IKF.

All report cards and transcripts will use numerical

grades for courses carrying Carnegie units. Cf. IKAB, IKC,

Adopted 9/26/11; Revised 6/13/16

Appendix B: Administrative Rule: Grading/Assessment Systems

Grading Scales

Kindergarten through Grade 2

Student progress in kindergarten and grade one is reported for all subjects and all support areas (physical education, art, music, and computer) as follows:

Codes:

- 1-Beginning - Scholar does not yet present the skills necessary to understand the standard**
- 2-Developing - Scholar has some skills present in order to understand the standard/can complete only with support**
- 3-Mastery - Scholar has mastered the skills necessary to understand the standard/can complete with little to no support**
- 4-Advanced - Scholar has mastered the skills at the current grade level and can perform within the next 6 months to a year in this standard/can complete with no support**

Kindergarten through grade 2 teachers may recommend retention of students who are not developmentally ready to matriculate to the next grade. The principal and teacher will meet with the parent/legal guardian to discuss the retention and provide documentation of the student's progress.

Grades three through five

Student progress in grades three through five is reported for all subjects as follows:

Letter Grade	Numerical Average
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Student progress in grades three through five is reported for all enrichment areas (physical education, art, music, and digital literacy, foreign language, etc.) as follows:

- M = met
- P = progressing
- N = not met

Promotion decisions for students in grades three through five may consider the state-identified grade level test in determining promotion, acceleration, or retention. LSC will follow the separate board -approved retention policy.

Grades 6 through 12

Student progress in grades six through 12 is reported for all subjects as follows:

Letter Grade	Numerical Average
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

State Uniform Grading Scale (Grades Nine through 12)

Numerical breaks for letter grades, weightings for specified courses, and a conversion chart for computing grade point ratios follow:

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions

Numerical Grade	Letter Grade	College Prep Weighting	Honors Weighting	AP/IB/Dual Enrollment Weighting
100	A	5.000	5.600	6.000
99	A	4.900	5.400	5.900
98	A	4.800	5.300	5.800
97	A	4.700	5.200	5.700
96	A	4.600	5.100	5.600
95	A	4.600	5.000	5.600
94	A	4.400	4.900	5.400
93	A	4.300	4.800	5.300
92	A	4.200	4.700	5.200
91	A	4.100	4.600	2.100
90	A	4.000	4.600	5.000
89	B	3.900	4.400	4.900
88	B	3.800	4.300	4.800
87	B	3.700	4.200	4.700
86	B	3.600	4.100	4.600
85	B	3.600	4.000	4.600
84	B	3.400	3.900	4.400
83	B	3.300	3.800	4.300
82	B	3.200	3.700	4.200
81	B	3.100	3.600	4.100
80	B	3.000	3.600	4.000
79	C	2.900	3.400	3.900
78	C	2.800	3.300	3.800
77	C	2.700	3.200	3.700
76	C	2.600	3.100	3.600
75	C	2.600	3.000	3.600
74	C	2.400	2.900	3.400
73	C	2.300	2.800	3.300

72	C	2.200	2.700	3.200
71	C	2.100	2.600	3.100

70	C	2.000	2.600	3.000
69	D	1.900	2.400	2.900
68	D	1.800	2.300	2.800
67	D	1.700	2.200	2.700
66	D	1.600	2.100	2.600
65	D	1.600	2.000	2.600
64	D	1.400	1.900	2.400
63	D	1.300	1.800	2.300
62	D	1.200	1.700	2.200
61	D	1.100	1.600	2.100
60	D	1.000	1.600	2.000
59	F	0.900	1.400	1.900
58	F	0.800	1.300	1.800
57	F	0.700	1.200	1.700
56	F	0.600	1.100	1.600
55	F	0.600	1.000	1.600
54	F	0.400	0.900	1.400
53	F	0.300	0.800	1.300
52	F	0.200	0.700	1.200
51	F	0.100	0.600	1.100
0-60	F	0.000	0.000	0.000
60	FA	0.000	0.000	0.000
-	WP	0.000	0.000	0.000
-	P	0.000	0.000	0.000
-	NP	0.000	0.000	0.000
-	AU	0.000	0.000	0.000

When a student successfully recovers the credit for a failed course with a 60 or higher, a “P” will be recorded as the letter grade. When a student fails to recover the credit for a failed course with a grade below 60, an “NP” will be entered as the letter grade. When a student is allowed to audit a course, an “AU” will be recorded for the letter grade. The course and grade information will display on the student’s transcript.

Conversion Process

All report cards and transcripts will use numerical grades for courses carrying Carnegie units. Transcripts and report cards will show course title and level/type of course taken. The grading scale must be printed on the report card.

When transcripts are received from accredited out-of-state schools (or in-state from accredited sources other than the public schools) and numerical averages are provided, those averages must be used in transferring the grades to the student’s record. If letter grades with no numerical averages are provided, the conversion scale effective during the year the course was completed will be used. For courses completed during the school years 2015-16 and prior, the following equivalents will be used to transfer the grades into the student’s record:

A = 96

B = 88

C = 80

D = 73

F = 61

For courses completed in 2016-17 and thereafter, the following conversion will apply:

A = 95

B = 85

C = 75

D = 65

F = 60

If the transcript indicates that the student has earned a passing grade in any course with a numerical average lower than 60, the grade will be recorded as a "P" on the transcript.

If the transcript indicates that the student has earned a failing grade in any course in which he or she had a numerical average of 60 or above, the grade will be recorded as an "NP" on the transcript.

If the transcript shows that the student has earned a grade of "P" (passing) or "F" (failing), that grade will be converted to a numerical grade based upon information secured from the sending institution as to the approximate numerical value of the "P" or the "F."

If no numerical average can be obtained from the sending institution, an earned credit will be awarded and the receiving school will enter a "P" on the transcript.

If no numerical average can be obtained from the sending institution on the "F," the receiving school will enter an "NP" on the transcript.

The organization will consider a student's transcript along with additional supporting evidence such as course syllabi, lesson plans, schedules, textbooks, or other instructional resources to validate course credits from homeschools.

For international students, the organization will attempt to gather as much course information from the sending school including course syllabi, standards end of course assessment results, or other instructional resources to determine the course credits that are the best match.

End-of-Course Testing and the Credit Recovery Option

In courses requiring state end-of-course testing, the organization will apply the mandatory 20 percent weighting of the end-of-course test to the student's final grade. The student will be allowed to take the examination only once, at the end of the regular course duration and not at the end of an extended period granted through the credit recovery option. The school will treat students who repeat the course as though they were taking the course for the first time and all requirements will apply.

Honors Courses

Honors courses are intended for students exhibiting superior abilities in the particular course content area. The honors curriculum places emphasis on critical and analytical thinking, rational decision-making, and inductive and deductive reasoning. Honors courses should not encourage a student to graduate early, but should extend course opportunities at the high school level.

The organization may designate honors courses and give the assigned weighting under the following conditions:

- An honors course must have curriculum that extends, accelerates, and enriches the College Preparatory (CP) course study in rigor, complexity, challenges, and creativity as outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.
- Instructional practices for advanced learners must demonstrate appropriate differentiation that will enhance the delivery of instruction while strengthening the components outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.
- Assessments must align with the honors level curriculum and instructional best practices, to include pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment.

One-half of a quality point (.5) will be added to the CP weighting for honors courses that meet all three criteria listed above. These criteria apply to all courses, including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings as well as those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state-school accredited under the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency. This is applicable even if the organization does not offer the course being transferred.

Physical Education I, or any course that can be substituted for Physical Education I (e.g., Marching Band or ROTC), is not eligible to receive honors weight.

Transfer courses

Students transferring from schools not accredited under the regulations of the appropriate board of education of a state, regional accrediting agency, or by the U. S. Department of Education, including, but not limited to home school, private school, or out-of-state non-public school students, will have the opportunity to provide evidence of work to be considered for honors weighting when transferring to a public school. The organization will evaluate evidence provided by the parent/legal guardian or student before transcribing the course at honors weight. The receiving school may use the South Caroling Honors Framework criteria to evaluate such evidence and will make the final decision on whether to award the honors weighting.

Advanced Learning Opportunities (ALO): Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certificate of Education Courses

The following criteria apply to all ALO courses, including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings, as well as those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school accredited under the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency.

- Only ALO courses can be awarded a full quality point above the CP weighting. Seminar or support courses ALOs may be weighted as honors but not as ALO courses. Quality points awarded to ALO courses cannot be changed based on participation or nonparticipation in an ALO standardized final examination (i.e. AP examination).
- An ALO course can carry only one credit with the quality point above the CP weighting.
- An ALO course that required a minimum of 240 hours of instruction may receive one quality point of weighting per course (i.e. two weighted credits).

Dual Credit Courses

Dual credit courses, whether the course is taken at the school site where the student is enrolled or at a post-secondary institution, are defined as those courses for which the student has received permission from his/her home school to earn both Carnegie units and credit for those particular courses. One quality point will be added to the CP weighting for dual credit courses that are applicable to baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees, or certification programs that lead to an industry credential offered by accredited institutions.

College orientation classes for dual credit will be weighted as CP.

All dual credit courses earned in South Carolina should be transcribed with the 1.0 quality point weight when the student transfers to a new school. Dual credit courses earned out of state may or may not carry quality point weightings. When a student transfers, the weight applied at the sending institution according to that state's regulations will be applied to the student's transcript. The organization will not change the weight of a dual credit course to match South Carolina's process.

High School Credit for Middle School

- When approved by the principal and parents/legal guardian, a student promoted to the seventh or eighth grade who has demonstrated data-supported evidence of superior and/or gifted achievement may be permitted to earn Carnegie units of credit to be counted toward high school graduation prior to enrollment at the ninth grade level. The following will govern the granting of units of credit at the middle school level.
- A middle school student may only complete high school courses that are offered onsite in their current middle school building. These courses are limited to core, career and technology education and foreign language courses that are currently in the 9-12 sections of the Activity Coding System of the Student Information System. The courses must reflect full coverage of the standards associated with the high school course. Students taking courses for high school credit must have been taught and mastered the middle level school standards prior to taking the courses for high school credit.
- A student in the seventh or eighth grade may be awarded credit for high school courses completed at the middle school level. Credits may be awarded in 1/2 and 1 unit increments dependent upon the course.
- A student will be awarded one unweighted credit for each high school English and/or mathematics course successfully completed during middle school.
- A student in the eighth grade will be awarded 1/2 high school credit for successfully completing the computer applications course at the middle school level.
- Courses for which a student received credit toward his/her school graduation will become part of the student's high school transcript and will be included in calculations of the high school grade point ratio and class rank.
- A student who transfers to Liberty STEAM Charter from an accredited school will be allowed to transfer credits which the student has been awarded. The courses will become part of the student's high school transcript and will be included in calculations of high school grade point ratio and class rank.
- Middle schools may offer credit-bearing courses that are approved by the superintendent or his/her designee.
- Please see board policy JH, Student Absences and Excuses, and its accompanying administrative rule regarding required student attendance for Carnegie Unit credit.

Grade Point Averages (GPA)

The uniform grading scale and system for figuring GPA and class rank will apply to all courses carrying Carnegie units, including units earned at the middle/junior high school level.

As applicable, the organization will recalculate GPAs already earned by students based on the three-decimal- point scale as outlined in this administrative rule.

Grade point averages will be figured uniformly in all schools using the following formula. The formula will yield each student's GPA which can then be ranked from highest to lowest rank in class. Computations will be rounded to the third decimal place as outlined in the state's uniform grading policy. All diploma candidates are included in the ranking.

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{sum(quality point} \times \text{units attempted)}}{\text{sum of units attempted}}$$

The board will determine the criteria for determining honor graduates, to include valedictorian or salutatorian, and may establish earlier cutoffs (e.g., the seventh semester of high school, the third nine weeks of the senior year) when determining a rank for any local purpose. However, class rank for LIFE Scholarships is determined at the conclusion of the spring semester of the senior year.

Course Withdrawals

With the first day of enrollment as the baseline, students who withdraw from a course within three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course, or 10 days in a 180-day course will do so without penalty.

Students who withdraw from a course after the specified time of three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course, or 10 days in a 180-day course will be assigned a WF (as a 60) and the WF will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average.

The three, five, and 10-day limitations for withdrawing from a course without penalty do not apply to course or course level changes approved by the administration of a school. The organization will establish withdrawal limitations for distance learning courses.

Students who drop out of school or are expelled after the allowed period for withdrawal but before the end of the grading period will be assigned grades in accordance with the following:

- The student will receive a WP if he/she was passing the course. The grade of WP will carry no Carnegie units and no quality points to be factored into the student's GPA.
- The student will receive a WF if he/she was failing the course. The grade of WF will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 60.

If a student fails a course due to excessive absences and is unable to successfully make up the work or demonstrate proficiency in the course, the school will record an FA on his/her transcript. The grade of FA will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 60.

Retaking Courses

Students in grades nine through 12 may retake a course at the same level of difficulty if they earned a D, P, NP, WP, FA, or F in that course. If the same level course is not accessible, the course may be retaken at a different level or rigor. The student's transcript will reflect all courses taken and the grades earned. However, only one course attempt and the highest grade earned for the course will be calculated in the GPA.

The student may retake the course either during the current school year or during the next school year but no later than that second year. In addition, the student must retake the course before he/she has enrolled in the next sequential course (unless granted approval by the school administration to do so).

A student who has taken a course for a Carnegie unit prior to his/her ninth grade year may retake that course regardless of the grade earned. A student who retakes a high school credit course from middle school must complete it before the beginning of the second year of high school. In this case, although all attempts for credit must remain on the transcript, only the highest grade will be used in figuring the student's GPA.

Issued 7/1/13; Revised 6/13/16, 6/5/17, 7/22/19

Appendix C: Homework Policy

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for the assignment of homework to students.

Homework should be assigned as reinforcement to classroom instruction by providing time for practice and application of knowledge. Additionally, because homework can be used as a tool to aid in the development of positive behavioral traits such as self-discipline and intellectual independence, homework should be an expectation on all grade levels. At LSC, homework is given on a Monday and due on a Thursday.

Homework assignments should be meaningful, relevant to the current lesson, carefully planned and differentiated. Differentiated homework can provide a great opportunity for students to master missing skills, extend content, challenge advanced learners and link applications of content to student interests.

Students should be assigned homework on a regular basis to reflect the following purposes.

- Reinforce and supplement classroom learning experiences.
- Encourage accountability and responsibility.
- Foster student initiative and independence.
- Enable the successful completion of more curricular material.
- Reinforce home-school interaction.
- Extend the learning environment into the reality of the outside

world. Homework should not be assigned for disciplinary reasons.

Adopted 9/26/11

Appendix D & E: Promotion and Retention of Students

Performance, Promotion, & Exit Standards

General Philosophy Statement

LSC's goal, as part of its mission and vision, is to reduce the achievement gap as quickly as possible for each scholar. However, it may be necessary from time to time to determine if a child would benefit from spending a longer period of time learning material to keep them on a trajectory to grade-level achievement. In the event that a scholar's promotion is in doubt, the classroom teachers, in tandem with the Academy leadership team and the child's parent, will use a range of indicators to formulate the decision, including formative and summative assessment data, anecdotal observations and notes, standardized test data, MTSS data, and examples of scholar work (portfolios) to determine whether or not to retain the scholar. LSC will alert the scholar's parents about the Promotion in Doubt Evaluation process as early as January and no later than Spring break of the current school year. Once a child is identified as being in doubt of promotion, classroom teachers with the support of the grade level and academy leaders will create a more targeted academic plan to help prevent retention. Classroom teachers will also work with the family of the child to offer suggestions for out-of-school interventions and suggestions for practices and activities to do while at home.

Special Education Scholar Population

Scholars with IEPs and those being evaluated for special education placement will be promoted based on their individualized promotion criteria in addition to the indicators referenced above.

Promotion Policy

This policy articulates the specific criteria that define promotion from one grade level to the next for all scholars in the elementary grades at LSC. All scholars are expected to meet or exceed rigorous academic standards in performance-based core curriculum, aligned to the SC Learning Standards, and, ultimately, to be prepared for college and careers.

LSC is dedicated to meeting the educational needs of all scholars in a safe learning environment. Decisions regarding promotion and retention are based on state law and criteria defined in the current document.

All scholars at LSC are held to specific criteria that define promotion. Those criteria exist in the areas of:

- Meeting the grade level SC Learning Standards for Literacy and Mathematics.
- Scholars meet required annual attendance;
- Comprehensive classroom assessments that include portfolios, samples of scholar work, anecdotal notes, teacher assessments and observations.
- Progress reports; and benchmark assessments
- Summer school work, when applicable.
- Goals and mandated criteria on Individualized Education Program (IEP)

LSC reserves the right to make a decision for promotion or retention when standardized test scores do not match previous scholar achievement as seen through portfolios, anecdotal notes, or teacher assessments as defined by the promotional criteria.

The above criteria apply to the following groups of scholars in the following ways:

English Proficient General Education Scholars

- Grades K-2: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria. Promotion decision is made by the Academy Director.
- Grades 3-6: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria and State Test Scores. Promotion decision is made by the Academy Director.

Multi Lingual Learners (MLs)

- Grades K-2: Consideration of language development; limited English proficiency alone is not the sole basis for retention; consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria. Promotion decision is made by the Academy Director.
- Grades 3-6: Consideration of number of years enrolled in the United States School System; consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria, NYSESLAT and State Test Scores. Promotion decision is made by Academy Director.

Scholars with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services

- Grades K-2: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria, mastery of IEP goals. Promotion decision is made by Academy Director.
- Grades 3-6: Consideration of Grade Level progress, mastery of IEP goals, IEP promotional criteria, State test scores. Promotional decision is made by Academy Director.

Scholars That Aren't Responding to the Intervention

If, after interventions in the general education classroom & through the school's MTSS program,, the scholar continues to experience difficulty, school personnel may refer the child for a special education evaluation. Referrals for determination of eligibility for special education services may be initiated by:

- School personnel (including general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.);
- Child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s);
- Any other person involved in the education or care of the child.
 - The official referral begins the formal process of determining eligibility for special education services. Once a referral is provided, the school must obtain consent from the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to begin the evaluation phase of the referral process.

Announcement of Promotion-in-Doubt/Retention

Families are notified orally and in writing of possible retention through Family Conferences. The first indication of concern will be noted in by LSC staff to family of scholar and documents through a "Promotion-in-Doubt" notification by February 1. Families will be required to meet with the teachers and administrators to set goals for the scholar in this situation. If the scholar does not demonstrate improvement by May of the school year, they are identified for Retention for the following school year. Retention meetings are scheduled for the families to meet with the LSC Administration in May.

LSC will alert the student's parents about the Promotion in Doubt Evaluation process in the month of February for the current school year. Once a child is identified as being in doubt of

promotion, classroom teachers, with the support of the grade level and academy leaders, will create a more targeted academic plan to help prevent retention to review with the parent by the end of February and reviewed again with the parent between six and eight weeks after the plan's initial implementation.

During the second parent conference, the parent will be notified if the scholar is being dismissed from the promotion-in-doubt list, s/he will be conditionally promoted upon completion of summer PRIDE academy, or retention is still possible.

During the third parent conference, the teacher and parent will complete the Light Retention Questionnaire together to assess the current state of the scholar's total academic performance. Classroom teachers will continue to work together with the family of the child to offer suggestions for out-of-school interventions and suggestions for practices and activities to do while at home.

If significant progress has not been made in correlation to an improved score on the Light Retention Questionnaire by mid-May,, then a formal retention recommendation will be made by the Academy Director. A third and final conference must be held with the parent by late May followed by written notification from the Academy Director. Parents who wish to appeal the Academy Director's decision can only do so by formal written notification to the Executive Director by June 1. The Executive Director must notify parents of his/her appeal decision in writing by June 15.

Referral to Summer School

Students in Grades K-5, who do not meet the promotional criteria by late May are referred to summer PRIDE Academy (Pathways for Respect, Innovation, Discipline, & Excellence). The Summer PRIDE Camp is a minimum of two weeks for K-2 scholars and three weeks for scholars in grades 3-5. The summer PRIDE academy will offer intensive academic & culture support for scholars performing six months or more below grade level. A scholar who does not complete PRIDE will be retained in the same grade the following school year.

Appealing the decision for Retention

Parents who wish to appeal the Academy Director's decision can only do so by formal written notification to the Executive Director by June 1. The Executive Director must notify parents of his/her appeal decision in writing by June 15. The Executive Director will consider all relevant criteria for promotion and make a final decision for the new school year and may involve members of the relevant board committees.

Academic Promotion Benchmarks

The list below includes all LSCPA school-wide assessments & other criteria used in determining promotion. The chart outlines the expected benchmarks for each assessment, at each grade level, as well as other non-negotiable criteria used for promotion decisions.

Criteria	Time Period	Grade Level & Goal
Easy CBM (K-1 Common Formative Assessment)	Administered 4-6 X's a Year	Per Grade Level
xSEL Assessment	Administered 2x's a Year	Scholars ending the year in red could be considered a viable candidate for retention.
ELA & Math MAP Assessment	Administered 3x's a Year	All scholars should perform as follows on the EOY assessment: Red Group (CSI - Meets Growth Target) Yellow & Green Group (Meets Growth Target & Norm Percentile)
Response to Intervention (SIPPS/Bridges) Assessment	Administered 4 x's a Year	All intervention scholars must meet mastery benchmarks for each subtest.
ELA & Math SC Ready Assessment	Administered 1x a Year	All scholars are expected to "meet expectations." For any scholar who scores "does not meet expectations" or "approaches expectations" will automatically begin the following school year in MTSS. Scholars who do not meet expectations in 3rd grade reading are subject to summer camp based on the Read to Succeed guidelines in state statute.
Attendance	EOY	Scholars are expected to be present 95%. For any scholar who has 10 or more unexcused absences in a school year will automatically be retained.

Retention

Any decision to retain a student in the same grade level will be made following considerable deliberation and consultation. A student will be retained only when the student has not demonstrated appropriate grade level competencies and the action of retention would be in the best academic interest of the student and will be based on the professional judgment of the school-based instructional personnel, with the ultimate decision made by the principal.

Read to Succeed State-Mandated Retention

A student will be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the year as indicated by a score at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment. Parents/Legal guardians of each student not demonstrating third-grade reading proficiency will be notified in writing during the second grading period that the student is being considered for retention, and a conference will be held prior to a determination regarding retention.

Students eligible for retention under this requirement may enroll in a summer reading camp provided by the organization in an effort to meet the required reading proficiency level prior to being retained.

Parents/Legal guardians may designate another person as an education advocate to act on their behalf to receive notification and to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the child.

Good cause exemptions

A student may be exempt for good cause from mandatory retention but will continue to receive institutional support and services and reading intervention appropriate for their age and reading level. Students who may qualify for an exemption include, but are not limited to those:

- with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in an English as a Second language program
- with disabilities whose IEP indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions, and students with disabilities whose IEP or Section 604 plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still does not substantially demonstrate reading proficiency
- who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board of Education and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading
- who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained
- who demonstrate mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment through a reading portfolio
- who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a reading portfolio or an alternate assessment that the student’s mastery of the state standards in reading is equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment.

Information to Parents/Legal Guardians

The organization will distribute this promotion/retention policy to every student and parent/legal guardian at the beginning of the academic year. The organization will also make every effort to educate and inform parents/legal guardians and students of this policy through newsletters, student handbooks, PTO/PTA meetings, etc.

Adopted ^ _____

Legal references:

A. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 59-155-160 - South Carolina Read to Succeed Act, Mandatory retention.

B. State Board of Education Regulations:

1. R43-240 - Summer programs.

C. South Carolina Department of Education:

1. Intervention Guidance Document, Kindergarten through Grade Five (2017).
2. Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention Guidance Document, Fall 2016 (2016).

Adopted 9/26/11; Revised 6/5/17

Appendix F: Graduation Requirements

A student must earn 24 units of credit in state-approved courses for graduation.

The unit requirements are distributed as follows:

Subject	Credit Units
English/Language Arts	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3
U.S. History and Constitutions	1
Economics	1/2
US Government	1/2
Other social studies	1
PE or junior ROTC	1
Computer science (including keyboarding)	1
Foreign language or Career and technology education	1
Electives	7
Total	24

The student must pass a classroom examination on the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers and American institutions and ideals. This instruction must be given for a period of at least one year or its equivalent, either within the required course U.S. History and Constitution or within another course.

The student must take the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration test as part of the U.S. government class, provided there is no cost to the school or for administering the test. Students are not required to meet a minimum score.

The student must pass a high school credit course in science and a course in United States history in which an end-of-course examination is administered.

The student must be enrolled for a minimum of one semester immediately preceding his/her graduation except in case of a bona fide change of residence. Units earned in a summer school program do not satisfy this requirement.

The student must earn the required number of prescribed units.

Awarding of high school credit

A school also may award and accept credit towards a high school diploma for the following:

- in units of one-fourth, one-half and a whole; for example, an academic-standards based course that requires a minimum of 120 hours of instruction (one unit), 60 hours of instruction (one-half unit) and 30 hours of instruction (one-fourth unit)
- a course that has been approved by the South Carolina Department of Education in a proficiency-based system
- those gateway courses that are a part of the end-of-course examination program only if the student takes the course approved by the school in which he/she is enrolled and meets all the stipulated requirements of the program
- courses in summer programs that meet all the regulatory requirements for courses offered for students in grades nine through 12
- a course that is approved by the organization - whether the school offers the particular course or not - if the student receives prior approval

- a course that the student takes in an approved adult education program if the course is approved by the superintendent or his/her designee
- locally designed subject-area courses, elective courses and CATE courses under conditions as outlined in State Board of Education regulation
- the PE credit if the PE course meets all statutory requirements including the personal fitness and wellness component and the lifetime fitness component
- the one-half unit of credit carried by the keyboarding course for half the required computer science unit
- the American Sign language course as the required unit in a foreign language
- a college course that a student in grades nine through 12 takes under the organization’s dual credit arrangement

Adult education

For adult education students receiving a diploma, the unit requirements are distributed as follows:

Subject	Credit Units
English/Language Arts	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3
U.S. History and Constitutions	1
Economics	1/2
US Government	1/2
Other social studies	1
Computer science (including keyboarding)	1
Electives	9
Total	24

*Keyboarding may count up to one-half of the computer science requirement.

A student may transfer credit earned in the adult education program to a secondary school to count towards the units of credit required for a state high school diploma if, for each unit being transferred, the student has spent a minimum of 120 hours in class time in that subject at that level and the teacher was properly certified to teach the course.

High School Credit for College Work

Students in grades nine through 12 and/or adult education programs can earn credits for college course work that can be applied to the required number of units for a state high school diploma.

The following conditions apply:

- Courses may be offered through distance learning and cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education. One quality point will be added to the CP weighting for dual credit courses that are applicable.
- Only courses applicable to baccalaureate degrees or to associate degrees offered by institutions accredited by the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency (the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (AdvancED/SCACS CASI), North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Colleges and Schools or Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools) qualify.
- Tuition costs and any other fees will be the responsibility of the student or his/her parent/legal guardian.

Issued 9/26/11, Revised 6/5/17

Appendix G: Student Absences and Excuses

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for allowing and excusing student absences.

The board believes that attendance is a key factor in student achievement and that any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. However, the board recognizes that some absences are unavoidable.

Attendance

LSC's scholar attendance accounting system is in compliance with all laws, regulations, and South Carolina Department of Education rules governing attendance.

LSC shall ensure that attendance policies are distributed to staff, scholars, and parents/guardians.

Absenteeism unavoidably affects the quality of a scholar's work, interferes with normal instructional procedures in the classroom, and places additional demands on the teacher to provide remedial assistance. It negatively impacts the child who is absent as well as other scholars in the class.

In order for scholars to be counted present for the day they must be present for half the day:
Monday-Thursday 51% = 226 mins and the scholar must be signed in before 11:44am or can't be signed out before 11:46am/Friday Friday 51% = 136 mins and the scholar must be signed in before 10:14am or can't be signed out before 10:16am.

Tardiness

Nearly all tardiness is avoidable and is excusable only in cases of illness or emergency. If a scholar arrives late to school, a parent must report to the school office to complete a tardy slip. **Warning letters will be given for excessive tardies and absences.** Repeated tardiness will result in disciplinary consequences as allowed by the Scholar Code of Conduct.

- 5 unexcused tardies result in a Tardy Intervention Plan (TIP) meeting,
 - Subsequent violations of the TIP will result in the AIP procedures being followed that include reporting to DSS & a board attendance hearing.

South Carolina State Board Regulation: 43-274 - Scholar Attendance

School districts must adopt policies to define and list lawful and unlawful absences.

(A) Lawful absences include but are not limited to:

- Absences caused by a scholar's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others,
- Absences due to an illness or death in the scholar's immediate family,
- Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the scholar's faith, and
- Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal.

(B) Unlawful absences include but are not limited to:

- Absences of a scholar without the knowledge of his or her parents, or
- Absences of a scholar without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.

(C) Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

Recognizing the importance of daily attendance, you should know that:

1. Children from ages 5-17 are required to attend school on all days that school is in session. Absences are to be used only for sickness and emergency situations.
2. A note from the parent/guardian or doctor should be sent to the school immediately following each absence (only five parent notes are accepted as excused per school year and five medical notes). Any notes or excuses that are submitted after three (3) days of absence will not be valid.
3. Parents will be contacted after three (3) consecutive or five (5) total unexcused absences.

Required Documentation of Absences

A scholar absent from school, upon his or her return, must provide a written note to the school that explains the absence within two (2) days of school. The note must either be signed by a parent, guardian, or the scholar if the scholar is over the age of 17 or emancipated

Excused Absences

LSC allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the scholar makes up all work. Aside from medical documentation to excuse no more than five (5) days for the year (with the exception of chronic illness or other documented medical needs) for excused absences, LSC will, only accept five (5) parent notes. In general, no more than 10 excused absences are allowed in one school year. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy day required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk;
- Documented health-care appointments for the scholar or a child of the scholar, including absences for recognized services for scholars diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the scholar's arrival or return to campus;
- Extended leave related to physical or emotional illness, a hospital stay, recuperation from an accident, or a contagious disease in the family;
- A death in the family (not to exceed one week) or mental health/therapy sessions;
- Prior school-approved travel for education or natural catastrophe and/or disaster;
- For scholars in the conservatorship (custody) of the state;
- Temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the teacher, Academy Director, or Executive Director; or
- Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the activity outside of school hours.

Absences of up to five days will be excused for a scholar to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. Absences of up to five days will be excused for a scholar to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. For religious holy days, required court appearances, activities related to

obtaining citizenship, and serving as an election clerk, one day of travel to the site and one day of travel from the site shall also be excused.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence not listed above or approved in advance by the Academy Director due to extenuating circumstances will be considered an unexcused absence. Vacations are not an acceptable cause for an excused absence from school.

Procedures for Excessive Absences

- 3 unexcused absences - Phone call made to family (teacher/leadership)
 - 4 unexcused absences - Excessive absence letter sent home
 - 5 unexcused absences or 3 consecutive - Truancy letter sent home with intervention meeting date
 - As absences continue, additional interventions are as follows:
 - 1st Violation
 - Follow up phone call from Academy Director or Academic Counselor
 - Home visit by leadership team and LSC/Overnight Suspension to Schedule a Mandatory Conference
 - 2nd Violation
 - AIP Revised, Office Referral #2, DSS Notified, Board Appearance
 - 3rd Violation = Referral to Family Court/Attendance Order
- *10 or More Unexcused Absences=Scholar will be retained.*

Appendix H: Liberty STEAM Charter PowerSchool Parent Acceptable Use Policy

PowerSchool will provide you access to your child's grades, attendance, and homework. Please read these guidelines carefully and fill out the "PowerSchool Parent Portal Custody/Identification Form".

Please read the following Acceptable Use Guidelines for PowerSchool:

1. Username and passwords are to be kept confidential.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to protect the security of the login and password. Liberty STEAM Charter accepts no responsibility in the event the username and password is shared, given, stolen, or in any other way, becomes the possession of a person other than the parent/guardian.
 - b. If a username/password is stolen or lost, the parent/guardian can contact the school to have the password changed. The parent/guardian will need to complete the, "Username/Password Request" form posted on the organization website or a form can be obtained at your child's school.
2. Only **one** username and password will be issued per student. It is the responsibility of the parent to determine which parent(s) or guardian(s) will be able to access records.
3. The school organization does not provide technical support for your home/work computer system. Some helpful documents are posted on the organization website for parents to utilize.
4. Users must realize that email and other communications via the Internet are not guaranteed to be private.
5. We will monitor Parent Access to PowerSchool. The Parent Access Log lists date of login, time accessed, and duration of login (in minutes).
6. Parents/guardians should remember that email and other communications over the Internet are not guaranteed to be private and are subject to State and Federal Law.
7. You should follow the following procedures with questions concerning your child's grades or attendance.
 - a. Talk to your child to ask them about their grades or attendance.
 - b. Check the teacher's grading policy. The information on PowerSchool is subject to change. The information posted is not the official Progress Report, Report Card or Student Transcript.
 - c. Please email teachers with your questions concerning grades, but please do not send excessive emails. Remember your child's teacher has many other students that they teach.
 - d. The parent or guardian may request a meeting with the teacher but should request the meeting using your child's school procedures for setting up the meeting.
 - e. You will be able to check grades 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Teachers should post their grades within approximately 7 school days of the date the assignment is due. Some assignments, such as, written reports may take much longer to grade.
 - f. Attendance is taken once a day in the elementary schools and each period at other schools. Attendance is updated as soon as the teacher enters it. If you have a question concerning attendance, please contact the Attendance Office at your child's school.
8. Please remember that Liberty STEAM Charter is providing this access as a privilege, and if it is abused, the account will be suspended and/or terminated.
9. Liberty STEAM Charter is not liable for any damages to my personal equipment when connected to the PowerSchool System.
10. I release Liberty STEAM Charter and its officers, employees, and agents from any claims and damages from my use or inability to use the system.
11. As a parent/guardian I have read and signed this policy and understand that access is designed for the educational support of my child's education.

Disclaimer: This system is provided only as convenience. The data is the property of Liberty STEAM Charter and is only available to parents/students currently in attendance. PowerSchool Parent Portal is not an official record and may not be correct at all times. For official student records contact your child's school.

Appendix I: Liberty STEAM Charter PowerSchool Public Portal Parent Access Request Form

**Please fill out this form completely.*

By signing this agreement, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to comply with the PowerSchool Acceptable Use Policy.

I wish to be granted electronic access to my students' grades and attendance through the PowerSchool Public Portal. I have read the PowerSchool Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to adhere to these guidelines. I understand that any violation of these guidelines will result in suspension and/or termination of my access.

Student(s) Name (Print)

_____	Year of Graduation: _____
_____	Year of Graduation: _____
_____	Year of Graduation: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name (Print): _____

Staff Verification (Initial): _____

Appendix J: Teacher Acknowledgement Liberty STEAM Charter Grading Guidelines and Teacher Acknowledgement Form

My signature acknowledges receipt of my personal copy of the Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Guidelines. I agree to read the document and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced herein. I am aware that the Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Guidelines manual is available to me on-line at the organization’s website located at www.libertysteamcharter.org. I understand that changes in organization policies may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this manual. As the organization provides updated policy or procedures information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

Printed Name

Signature

School/Department

Date

Signed forms are due annual to your direct manager by the first day of school for scholars.