Frequently Asked Questions about Grading

What is the reason for having two grades?

The purpose for having two grades (Achievement and Accountability) is to better communicate a student’s progress to the student, the teacher, and parents. By separating out the mastery of the content (Achievement) from the academic behaviors (Accountability), a truer picture of the student’s strengths and weaknesses can be seen. When all elements of a student’s performance are included in only one final grade, it is difficult to identify areas on which to focus. For example, a final grade of “C” may indicate that a student has an excellent mastery of the material, but that he or she does not submit work and homework on time. A grade of “C” could also indicate that a student has a poor mastery of the material, but is diligent with their work habits. By separating out the Achievement and Accountability grades, we can see a more complete picture of the student, and how we can best help them grow as learners.

My child is not a good test taker. Will this impact them unfairly in the Achievement grade?

The Achievement grade contains a range of different types of assignments. These include tests, but also include other assignments, such as quizzes, lab reports, writing pieces, graded classwork, or projects. There are three categories of assignments within the Achievement grade (Major Assessments, Minor Assessments, and Classwork), each of which has a range of percentage weights. This is to ensure that no single type of assignment, such as tests, unfairly affects a child’s grade. In order to provide an accurate and fair mathematical calculation of the Achievement grade, no grade lower than 50% will be entered into the gradebook for an individual assignment.

Are the criteria for Honor Roll and Principal’s Breakfast changing as well?

The criteria for Honor Roll has been “A” or “B” average in all classes. The criteria for Principals’ List has been “A”s in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd marking periods for the school year. Under the grading system, these same criteria apply, to both the Achievement and Accountability grades.

What about redos and retakes? If my child retakes a test or redoes an assignment, how will their grade be calculated?

It is every teacher’s goal to have their students master as much of the material as possible. However, not all students progress at the same rate with all material. Therefore, there may be circumstances when students are able to redo an assignment or retake an assessment if they did not perform well. Redos and retakes are at the teacher’s discretion, and will often require that the student meet with the teacher to develop a plan of action for improvement. The purpose of the retake is not to ensure that all students receive an “A”, but to ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have gained the understanding of the material. Teachers will determine how the final grade is to be calculated, but emphasis will be placed on the most recent results.

How will this affect honors recommendations for high school?

Memorial provides the high school with the grades for its 8th grade students at the end of the year. This process will not change. Only now, we will provide them with the two grades, rather than one. This should allow the high school to have the most complete information so they can determine the appropriate placements for the students as ninth graders.