

NEPN/NSBA CODE: **IKAB**

TITLE: **REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS**

AUGUSTA CODE/TITLE: IKA/GRADING SYSTEMS

Augusta's current manual contains a policy coded IKA and titled "Grading Systems." Although it says "the administration and professional staff shall devise systems for evaluating and recording pupil progress" and that "the Board shall approve the evaluating and reporting systems as developed by the faculty, upon recommendation of the Superintendent," it does not say anything about how information will be reported to students and parents.

We have replaced Augusta's existing policy with the MSMA sample that was among the Learning Results policies published in the February 2005 special policy bulletin. ^{-IKAB}

This policy focuses on the reporting of student progress. Traditionally, this is accomplished through report cards, interim progress reports and communication with parents.

The Board should note there is optional language allowing for the use of a dual reporting system that reflects both traditional grades and standards-based reporting. Whether or not the Board chooses this option, the internal note (in bold print) should be deleted before the policy is adopted.

Effective communication with parents will be particularly important if Maine transitions from a solely credit-based high school diploma to one based in whole or in part on achievement of content standards. At all levels, progress toward mastery of skills and knowledge should be documented as students progress through the sequential instructional program. Timely, meaningful communication is also necessary if students are to take full advantage of available remedial or additional instructional opportunities.

Whether traditional course or credit accumulations or standards-based diploma requirements apply in the future, the same principles apply: 1) the system for communicating information regarding student achievement/academic progress to parents and students should be easily understood; 2) it should clearly show how the student is progressing in acquisition of skills and knowledge; and 3) it should support the goal of student achievement of the content standards of the system of Learning Results.

There is nothing in policy or the student handbook that indicated that the Augusta schools use a weighted grading system. If weighted grades are employed, the Board should be clear in regard to the courses in which grades are weighted and whether it is the original or weighted grade for each course that appears on the report card. Whatever system is used, it is important that students and parents clearly understand the grading and ranking system and the purposes for which weighted grades will be used. The Board may wish to discuss the subject of weighted grades as it considers this policy.