



Smoky Hill High School ■ 16100 E. Smoky Hill Rd. ■ Aurora, CO 80015
Cherry Creek School District

Dear Smoky Hill High School Community,

We strive to develop and implement equitable grading practices that ensure mathematical accuracy, bias resistance, and academic motivation. We aim to create a school-wide grading system that focuses on student learning and supports students in developing a growth mindset relative to their academic performance.

Smoky Hill High School has adopted the following equitable grading practices for the 2023-2024 school year, and are based on strategies outlined in the book [Grading for Equity](#) by Joe Feldman:

Minimum Grade Policy: Smoky Hill High School has eliminated giving zeros and adopted a minimum grade policy that uses **Not Handed In (NHI) 40%** as the lowest possible grade a student can receive. Traditionally, schools give zeros to punish and motivate students to perform better. Numerous research studies ([Carifio and Carey, 2013](#); [Guskey and Bailey, 2001](#); [Feldman, 2019](#); [Reeves, 2004](#);) have found the opposite is true. Students who receive zeros and low Fs tend to become less motivated and often withdraw from learning. We have also adopted the following grade designations to distinguish the student who puts forth effort and fails from the student who does nothing:

- **No Evidence (NE) 50%:** The student attempts the assignment but shows no evidence of learning.
- **No Understanding (NU) 55%:** The student demonstrates MINIMAL evidence of learning.

Student Deadlines for Make-Up Work: Student work **MUST** be completed promptly. As such, Smoky Hill will have regular grading windows, determining whether original assessment task attempts may still be completed. **The remaining deadlines are March 8th, April 12th, and May 10th.**

Student Late Work: Must be completed during the grading window of the original due date. Late work is defined as work not submitted on the due date when the student was present in class.

Student Make-Up Work: Provided for any class in which a student is absent. **It is the student's responsibility to check Schoology for missing work during an absence and check with their teacher about work that was missed during their absence on the day they return to class.** If a student's absence falls during a grading window change, the student is expected to coordinate with the teacher for an appropriate turn-in date.

Improved Learning: Opportunities for students to demonstrate an improved understanding of content will be available for students **who have submitted a complete original attempt.** Students should communicate directly with their teachers for specific classroom policies as specified in their syllabus.

Progress Monitoring: Teachers are expected to update grades promptly throughout the school year to inform students and parents/guardians of academic progress in all classes. **School-wide grade updates will take place in PowerSchool on March 15th, April 19th, and May 17th.**

- **Parents/Guardians:** Please log in to your PowerSchool account to monitor your student's grades and attendance frequently. If you cannot access your account, please call Smoky Hill High School at 720-886-5646.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Andre Bala

Principal
Smoky Hill High School
HERD Forward

-Pride in the PRESENT. Success in the FUTURE. The BUFFALO WAY!