

Grade Change Policy and Procedures

Purpose: *To establish requirements to permit changes to a student's final course grade and other grade changes and to adopt written policies and procedures for any change of a student's grade in compliance with NM State Administrative Codes [NMAC § 6.30.10.1 - .9].*

Policy: While a change in a student's final course grade should be the exception and not the rule once a classroom teacher has issued a final course grade, this policy is designed to provide a process that must be consistently applied should a student or parent/guardian contest a final course grade or any student grade change. Such a grade change should be granted only when it is warranted based on the procedures stated in this policy. Any school in the State of New Mexico is required to send student grades to the Public Education Department (PED) in the form of A, B, C, D, and F for the PED records. At Raíces, we will be using letter grades based on State and Common Core Standards and benchmarks mastered during each 9 week grading period. Grade changes on school or teacher-designed tests and projects may be evaluated in ways other than A through F letter grades (e.g., an assignment of "Excels, Acceptable, Needs Improvement" or a pass/fail grade). In either case, school personnel must follow the procedures specified in this policy to make parent/guardian requested grade changes.

Procedures for Student Final Course Grade or Other Grade Changes:

1. A teacher may change a final course grade due to a clear mistake or clerical error at any time by filling out the "Change of Grade Request Form" which has been approved by the Raices Governance Board (see form on page 4 of this policy). The form must be properly filled out and properly authorized by the Raices Principal and electronically filed by the Director of Operations in the state Student Information Records system.
2. No grade change for a final course grade shall be made unless this policy has been officially adopted or amended by the Raices Governance Board. The request must at a minimum meet the following procedural requirements:
 - a. A final course grade change will be considered upon the receipt of a signed written Change of Grade Request Form which is posted on the school website (www.raicesdelsaber.org) and appears on page 4 of this policy.
 - b. A written response to the grade change request will be provided to the parent/guardian within 10 days of receiving the request. The response will state whether the grade change was allowed or denied, the reasons for either decision, and the grade will be entered on the approved response form (page 5 of this policy) if the change is allowed.
 - c. A grade change will be based on articulated reasons that are stated in the response such as extenuating circumstances (e.g. a student health issue, consideration of a disability),

additional graded work submitted by the student, additional or make-up testing, or any other meaningful criteria related to the course work that can be verified.

- d. A grade change must be equally available to all other students in a similar situation.
 - e. The process for making the decision for a grade change must adhere strictly to the Raices FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) policy.
 - f. A good faith attempt must be made to obtain the input of the student's teacher who issued the grade in dispute, who shall state reasons for or against the requested grade change, and shall not be pressured into or retaliated against for making a certain recommendation.
 - g. If a grade change is approved, the final written response must be signed by the Principal and the teacher as well as the parent acknowledging their receipt of the response. Staff persons bear responsibility for assuring the procedures of this Governance Board policy are followed in making the response. The response will be delivered in person to secure the signature of the recipient or sent by certified mail with return receipt requested.
 - h. If a grade change request is made after a student exits the school, it must be made within 30 days of leaving the school.
 - i. Final course grade changes must be maintained in the student's permanent record for at least two years after the student graduates, transfers from, or otherwise leaves the school.
 - j. The process for requesting a grade change shall not limit or eliminate the rights afforded to parents/guardians under federal regulations 34 CFR Sections 300.618 through 300.621 under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act), and 34 CFR Sections 99.20 under FERPA, as these federal laws relating to the amendment of a student's educational records.
3. A Grade Change Committee - may be formed to address verbal input from a parent at the parent's request for a final course grade change. This committee membership shall include the Principal, the Director of Operations and Community Outreach, the teacher, and a Raices Governance Board Member. All members of the committee must adhere strictly to the Raices FERPA policy to protect the privacy rights of the student as well as those rights afforded a SPED student under IDEA regulations.
 4. Changing a Grade on a Test or Class Assignment - may or may not be allowed depending on the following criteria:

- a. Changes shall not be permitted on any test results on a statewide test used to determine adequate yearly progress unless there clearly has been a clerical mistake such as a student being misidentified.
- b. Upon discovering a clerical mistake has been made on a statewide test used to determine adequate yearly progress, the Raíces Director of Operations shall promptly notify the assessment and accountability division of the PED for guidance within 24 hours of the discovery by electronic transmission, followed by a phone call message by the next working day unless having already received an electronic confirmation of the request for guidance.
- c. Requests for a grade change on a teacher or school designed test or project must be made through filling out a grade change request form which is submitted to the Principal's office and passed on to the teacher. The teacher and parent may then meet to discuss the possibility of a grade change.
- d. The teacher must respond in writing within 5 days as to whether he/she agrees to change the grade.
- e. The teacher's decision on school or class designed tests or projects will be final with no opportunity to appeal the decision further.

Unprofessional Conduct Related to a Final Course Grade Change [6.30.10.9]:

1. It shall be considered unprofessional conduct pursuant to Paragraph (23) of Subsection C of 6.60.9.9 NMAC for anyone holding and or seeking to renew their licensure issued by the PED to:
 - a. Permit the changing of a student's final course grade contrary to the course grade change policy of the Raíces Governance Board;
 - b. Knowingly withhold material information when asked whether a student grade should or should not be changed; or
 - c. Provide written recommendation for, or make a final written response allowing, a final grade change knowing that a grade change under the circumstances is not warranted or that there has been a material non-compliance with the Raíces grade change policy.
2. Any adverse licensure proceeding commenced by the PED under this rule [Paragraph (23) of Subsection C of 6.60.9.9 NMAC] shall be conducted pursuant to the Uniform Licensure Act [Sections 61-1-1 through 61-1-31 NMSA 1978] together with any applicable rule of the PED. [6.30.10.9 NMAC – N, 7-16-08]

Change of Grade Request Form

Person making the request: _____
(Printed Name) (Signature)

Please check the appropriate boxes below:

- Parent Legal Guardian Teacher requesting an error/clerical correction
- Requesting a final course grade change
- Requesting a change of grade on a test (other than a required statewide test) or class project

Note: It is not permissible to change any grade on a statewide required test used to determine adequate yearly progress of a student's academic achievement.

Please explain below the reason(s) and/or extenuating circumstances for requesting a grade change:

**For Office
Use Only**

Date Received: _____ Principal Signature: _____

Change of Grade Request Response Form

To: _____

(person requesting the grade change)

Physical Address: _____ Zip Code: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Zip Code: _____

Description of requested change: _____

Grade Change has been approved

Grade Change was not approved

Reasons for approving or not approving the grade change are explained below:

If a grade change is approved complete the following:

Grade changed from _____ to _____

(Teachers' Signature)

(Principal's Signature)

(Signature of Person requesting Grade Change)

(Date response was received)

