

Should Schools Change How They Grade Students During the Pandemic?

Would it help if your school switched to pass or fail? Would it be better not to have grades at all? Or do grades still play an important role during this time of remote learning?



Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in Cambridge, Mass., adapted its grading system because of the pandemic.
Credit...Cody O'Loughlin for The New York Times

- What new grading policies should high schools and middle schools adopt during these weeks or months of remote learning? Why?
- How important do you think grades are in motivating students to work hard? How important are they for you? If your school were to change its grading system to pass/fail, would you be less motivated to do your schoolwork?
- Carlos Polanco, a Dartmouth College student, says, “In reality, we go to school to learn, not really to receive a grade.” Do you agree with this statement? Do you think most of the other students at your school would agree with you?
- In your experience, how is online learning different from being in a classroom at school? How is it similar? Do you feel that you are working harder, less hard or about the same to learn new concepts?
- The idea has been raised that during this pandemic many students have other obligations that interfere with their ability to learn and possibly to do well academically, such as having to help take care of younger siblings. What are some of the various challenges that students might be facing right now as they try to do school from home?
- What, if anything, is making it harder for you to learn at home?