

# Skyward Gradebook Audit

**Internal Audit Report**

**June 11, 2025**



Internal Audit

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Why We Did This Audit

Our objective was to evaluate the security and integrity of the Gradebook module in Skyward, and the effectiveness of the procedures used in compiling and maintaining Gradebook records.

This audit was included in the 2023-2024 Annual Audit Plan.

### Observations and Conclusion

Audit Results at a Glance			
Results and Observations	Risk / Impact Rating		
	Significant	Moderate	Minor
<u>Source</u> IA - Internal Audit or M - Management	IA - 1 M - 0	IA - 0 M - 0	IA - 0 M - 0
<u>Observation Category</u> D - Deficiency or O - Opportunity	D - 0 O - 1	D - 0 O - 0	D - 0 O - 0

Our overall conclusion is that the security and integrity of the Gradebook module, in terms of how the grade changes, are well handled. The Student Information System (SIS) database has tables that have primary unique keys/indexes which prevent duplicate records from being created that relate to the Gradebook module.

For security, we were not able to test the script from the SIS that prevents duplicate records from being created due to limitations of the environment where the application resides.

For the grade changes, we found significant inconsistencies in the completion and documentation of grade change forms across the sampled schools. While a portion of the forms reviewed adhered to the current revision and procedural expectations, the majority lacked key elements such as required

signatures, designee verification, and proper filing in student cumulative folders. Additionally, a substantial number of grade changes were processed using outdated forms or without full documentation, raising concerns about procedural compliance and record integrity.

### Results and Recommendations

We recommend the following actions:

- **Mandatory Use of Current Form:** Reinforce the requirement that all grade changes must be documented using the current Grade Change Form (REV 5/2023).
- **Staff Training and Communication:** Provide targeted training and clear communication with all instructional and administrative staff regarding the updated form and its proper use.
- **Monitoring and Compliance Checks:** Implement periodic audits or system checks to verify that only the current version of the form is being used.
- **Process Improvement:** Consider integrating a digital submission system that restricts the use of outdated forms and ensures proper documentation and approval workflows.
- **On-Site Verification of Grade Changes:** To further strengthen oversight and ensure consistent adherence to grade change procedures, we recommend that OPCS conduct periodic, unannounced school site visits.

This report has been discussed with management, and they have prepared their response which follows.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Risk / Impact Ratings**

Minor	Low risk with a financial impact of less than one percent and/or an isolated occurrence limited to local processes (low impact and low likelihood)
Moderate	Slight to moderate risk with a financial impact between one and five percent and/or a noticeable issue that may extend beyond local processes (low impact and high likelihood or high impact and low likelihood)
Significant	High risk with a financial impact greater than five percent and/or a significant issue that occurs in multiple processes and/or noncompliance with Florida Statutes or School Board Policies (high impact and high likelihood)

*We categorize risk/ impact as:*

- *Minor*
- *Moderate*
- *Significant*

**Observations Categories**

Opportunity	A process that falls short of best practices or does not result in optimal productivity or efficient use of resources
Deficiency	A shortcoming in controls or processes that reduces the likelihood of achieving goals related to operations, reporting and compliance

*We categorize our observations as opportunities or deficiencies.*

**Criteria for Observations Sourced to Management**

- Internal audit was informed of the issue prior to starting detailed testing
- Management identified, evaluated, and communicated the issue to appropriate levels of the district
- Management has begun corrective action with clear, actionable plans and targeted completion dates

None of the audit results are sourced to management.

*None of the audit results are sourced to management.*

**BACKGROUND:**

The Educator Access Plus (EA+) and Gradebook module in Skyward equips teachers with tools to manage attendance and track student performance, with the "My Gradebook" feature enabling grade entry and communication with families via Family and Student Access. Depending on grade level, teachers use either the Secondary Gradebook for academic grading in middle and high school or the Standards Gradebook—also known as the Academic, Personal, and Social Development Gradebook—for elementary students, focusing on broader developmental skills. Access is limited to assigned classes, and only grades from Canvas can be imported into the Secondary Gradebook.

**OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY:**

**Objective**

The objective of this audit was to evaluate the security and integrity of the Gradebook module in Skyward, and the effectiveness of the procedures used in compiling and maintaining Gradebook records.

**Scope**

The scope of the audit encompassed grade change transactions from the 2023-24 School Year.

**Methodology**

We conducted this audit in accordance with the *The International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF)* of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) which includes the *Global Internal Audit Standards (Standards)*. We performed procedures as deemed necessary to provide reasonable assurance regarding the audit objective. Internal Auditing is an independent, risk-based, and objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It strengthens an organization's ability to create, protect, and sustain value by providing the board and management assurance, advice, insight, and foresight. In accordance with the *Standards*, we are required to note any non-conformance with the *Standards* with reasons and impact on audit results and conclusions.

*Our scope included all grade change transactions from the 2023-24 School Year.*

*We conducted this audit in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework of the Institute of Internal Auditors.*

We are required to note any material deficiencies in accordance with Florida Statutes, School Board Policy and sound business practices. No material deficiencies were noted in this audit. We also offer suggestions to improve controls or operational efficiency and effectiveness.

*No material deficiencies were noted in this audit.*

We performed audit procedures to determine what controls exist to prevent material errors or irregularities, and whether they are effective. Also, we were alert to indicators of fraud.

Specifically, we performed the following tasks:

- Determine if grade changes are done without consent.
- Verified if there were duplication of records.
- Determine if the data from the Gradebook module is reliable.
- Determine if the grades were being posted on Skyward in a timely manner.

#### **RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Overall Conclusion:** Our overall conclusion is that the security and integrity of the Gradebook module in terms of how the grade changes are well-handled. The Student Information Systems (SIS) database has tables that have primary unique keys/indexes which prevent duplicate records from being created that relate to the Gradebook module.

*Security and integrity of the Gradebook module are well-handled.*

For security, we were not able to test the script from the SIS that prevents duplicate records from being created due to limitations of the environment where the application resides<sup>1</sup>.

For the grade changes we found significant inconsistencies in the completion and documentation of grade change forms across the sampled schools. While a portion of the forms reviewed adhered to the current revision and procedural expectations, the majority lacked key elements such as required signatures, designee verification, and proper filing in student cumulative folders. Additionally, a substantial number

*We found significant inconsistencies in the completion and documentation of grade change forms.*

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<sup>1</sup> The OCPS SIS Team does not have access to the database, tables or servers of any of the application's environment.

of grade changes were processed using outdated forms or without full documentation, raising concerns about procedural compliance and record integrity. Our detailed findings and recommendations follow.

### **1) Improving Adherence to Updated Grade Change Procedures**

*Significant (Risk or Impact), Opportunity*

#### Best Practice:

#### **Standardize and enforce use of the current approved grade change form**

This highlights the need for mandatory use of the current version of the OCPS Grade Change Form and clear communication and training to all staff on where to access the correct form and how to complete it properly.

#### **Provide Targeted Training and Ongoing Support**

Training materials currently focus on counselors and assistant principals. To improve consistency:

- Expand training to include all staff involved in grade changes, including teachers and data clerks.
- Use real case examples to illustrate proper procedures.
- Maintain a knowledge base or FAQ for quick reference.

#### **Establish a Monitoring and Feedback Loop**

To ensure continuous improvement:

- Use performance tracking tools like the one described in the internal audit strategy to monitor compliance trends.
- Discuss audit findings regularly in staff meetings.
- Encourage feedback from school sites to refine the process.

#### Audit Results:

We conducted a comprehensive review of grade change forms across 75 students at 10 schools. Our sample included 178 grade changes, focusing exclusively on forms using the current revision (Rev. 5/2023). Below are the findings:

- Only 7.87% of the sampled grade changes used the valid form (Rev. 5/2023), and just 34.15% of reviewed forms were compliant.

*A substantial number of grade changes were processed using outdated forms or without full documentation.*

*Best practices include:*

- *Standardize and enforce use of current approved grade change forms*
- *Provide targeted training and ongoing support*
- *Establish a monitoring and feedback loop*

*We sampled 178 grade changes at 10 schools.*

*Only 7.87% of sampled grade changes used the valid form.*

- Grade Change Forms Compliance:
  - Total Students: 75
  - Sample Size: 178
  - Forms Reviewed: 41 (23.03% of the sample)
  - Valid Grade Change Forms: 14 (34.15% of reviewed forms)
- Form Completion and Submission:
  - Top Portion Completed: 14 (34.15% of reviewed forms)
  - Hard Copy Printed: 14 (34.15% of reviewed forms)
  - Form Signed and Dated: 13 (31.71% of reviewed forms)
  - Form Submitted to Designee: 12 (29.27% of reviewed forms)
  - Designee Verified Completion: 12 (29.27% of reviewed forms)
  - Grade Change Entered in Skyward: 12 (29.27% of reviewed forms)
  - Designee Completed Section: 12 (29.27% of reviewed forms)
  - Print Screen Attached: 20 (48.78% of reviewed forms)
  - Form in Student's CUM Folder: 41 (100.00% of reviewed forms)

Recommendation:

To ensure compliance with OCPS standards and maintain the integrity of grade change procedures, we recommend the following actions:

- **Mandatory Use of Current Form:** Reinforce the requirement that all grade changes must be documented using the current Grade Change Form (REV 5/2023).
- **Staff Training and Communication:** Provide targeted training and clear communication with all instructional and administrative staff regarding the updated form and its proper use.
- **Monitoring and Compliance Checks:** Implement periodic audits or system checks to verify that only the current version of the form is being used.

*We recommend mandatory use of current form; staff training and communication; monitoring and compliance checks; process improvement and on-site verification of grade changes.*

- **Process Improvement:** Consider integrating a digital submission system that restricts the use of outdated forms and ensures proper documentation and approval workflows.
  
- **On-Site Verification of Grade Changes:** To further strengthen oversight and ensure consistent adherence to grade change procedures, we recommend that the Student Services department conduct periodic, unannounced school site visits. These visits may include:
  - Random sampling of grade changes for verification against the current Grade Change Form (REV 5/2023).
  - Review of documentation and approval processes to ensure compliance with district policy.
  - Follow-up support or corrective action where discrepancies are identified.

This measure will serve as a proactive deterrent to non-compliance and provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of training and communication efforts.

We wish to thank Student Services, ITS and ITS Leadership for their cooperation and assistance with this audit.



<b>Department / School Name</b>	<b>Student Services</b>
<b>Administrator / Department Head</b>	<b>Mary Bridges</b>
<b>Cabinet Official / Executive Leader</b>	<b>Tashanda Brown-Cannon</b>

<b>Audit Result / Recommendation</b>	<b>Management Response Acknowledgement/ Agreement of Condition</b>	<b>Responsible Person (Name &amp; Title) And Target Completion Date (MM/YYYY)</b>	<b>Management's Action Plan</b>
<p><b>Improving Adherence to Updated Grade Change Procedures</b></p> <p>We conducted a comprehensive review of grade change forms across 75 students at 10 schools. Our sample included 178 grade changes, focusing exclusively on forms using the current revision (Rev. 5/2023).</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> To ensure compliance with OCPS standards and maintain the integrity of grade change procedures, we recommend the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mandatory Use of Current Form:</b> Reinforce the requirement that all grade changes must be documented using the current Grade Change Form (REV 5/2023).</li> </ul>	<p><u>Mandatory Use of Current Form</u> Reinforce use at all academic trainings and communication with grades, and remove any old forms from use.</p>	<p>Mary Bridges, Senior Executive Director Karla Owens, Director May 2026</p>	<p><u>Mandatory Use of Current Form</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of each quarter, when grade changes may happen, ensure proper form is used by monitoring grade change folder in school transfer folders.</li> <li>• Grade change folders from 10% of middle and high schools will be randomly selected once per semester to ensure the proper form is used.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Training and Communication: Provide targeted training and clear communication with all instructional and administrative staff regarding the updated form and its proper use.</li> <li>• Monitoring and Compliance Checks: Implement periodic audits or system checks to verify that only the current version of the form is being used.</li> <li>• Process Improvement: Consider integrating a digital submission system that restricts the use of outdated forms and ensures proper documentation and approval workflows.</li> <li>• On-Site Verification of Grade Changes: To further strengthen oversight and ensure consistent adherence to grade change procedures, we recommend that the</li> </ul>	<p><u>Staff Training and Communication</u> Training and communication will take place at each API and counselor meeting that discusses grades and grade changes. Clear instructions will be provided in emails and trainings when grade change concerns are addressed.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and Compliance Checks</u> Academic Services will conduct periodic checks of grade change forms submitted to school transfer folders.</p>	<p>Mary Bridges, Senior Executive Director Karla Owens, Director May 2026</p> <p>Mary Bridges, Senior Executive Director Karla Owens, Director May 2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upload the current Grade Change form on the Academic Services SharePoint site.</li> <li>• Distribute a Deputy Superintendent Memo informing schools of the new grade change form, its proper use, and where to submit them.</li> </ul> <p><u>Staff Training and Communication</u> All ES, MS, and HS APIs receive transcript and grade changes training in their Academic Services meetings. Emphasis will be placed on the grade change form and its appropriate use. Clear messaging that can be used at all grade levels will be provided by Academic Services administrators.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and Compliance Checks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of each quarter, when grade changes may happen, ensure proper form is used by monitoring the grade change folder in school transfer folders.</li> <li>• Grade change folders from 10% of middle and high schools will be randomly selected once per semester to ensure the proper form is used.</li> </ul> <p><u>Process Improvement</u> Academic Services administrators will ask schools after peak times of grade changes (i.e., progress</p>
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<p>Student Services department conduct periodic, unannounced school site visits. These visits may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Random sampling of grade changes for verification against the current Grade Change Form (REV 5/2023).</li> <li>○ Review of documentation and approval processes to ensure compliance with district policy.</li> <li>○ Follow-up support or corrective action where discrepancies are identified.</li> </ul> <p>This measure will serve as a proactive deterrent to non-compliance and provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of training and communication efforts.</p>	<p><u>Process Improvement</u> <u>OCPS Grade Change Form</u> is accessible digitally. Schools will download the form to complete, and a scanned copy will be placed in the school transfer folder under Grade Change Forms.</p> <p><u>On-Site Verification of Grade Changes</u> Academic Services administration will visit schools throughout the year. Visits that take place after progress report or report card times will include a check with the school administrators and counselors on the use of the new grade change form. Follow-up support will be provided to schools that need assistance.</p>	<p>Mary Bridges, Senior Executive Director Karla Owens, Director May 2026</p> <p>Mary Bridges, Senior Executive Director Karla Owens, Director May 2026</p>	<p>report and report card times) to see their grade uploaded change forms to ensure they are using the digital version provided.</p> <p><u>On-Site Verification of Grade Changes</u> Academic Services administrators can pull the students who have a grade change in Skyward. Academic Services administrators will use this report when visiting schools and ask to see grade change forms of random students. Schools should show the grade change forms that have been uploaded to their school transfer folder. If schools are unable to do so, then one-on-one assistance can be provided during the school visit.</p>
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