



GAINESVILLE
I.S.D.

SECONDARY ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

Gainesville I.S.D. Secondary Assessment Handbook

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Foreword

The Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures outlined in this handbook provide:

- ☺ a tool which will foster consistency among teachers, disciplines and schools as students progress through the GISD educational program;
- ☺ a reference which will encourage a better understanding of grading, assessment, reporting and promotion for teachers, parents and students; and
- ☺ a description of the District's grading system.

State Curriculum

Curriculum content is prescribed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) through the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Local instructional plans are based upon this State curriculum frameworks and state recommended program standards. Curriculum content is not prescribed in detail by the TEA, but provides a framework to draw upon for the development of local curriculum.

Local Curriculum (EIE Local)

The District shall establish instructional objectives that relate to the essential knowledge and skills for grade-level subjects or courses. These objectives shall address the skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses.

Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated district objectives. The student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course.

Scope & Sequence of Instruction

The scope of the objectives under the curriculum documents reflects the TEKS and cannot be waived, altered, or portions eliminated. The sequence of objectives may be altered to meet the needs of an individual class or student. The curriculum documents are reviewed and revised regularly to reflect real-world needs, depth and complexity, rigor and relevance, and to meet the needs of all students.

Instructional Materials

State-adopted textbooks and electronic media serve as one instructional resource to meet course and curriculum objectives. In Texas, textbooks and electronic media are currently provided by the state from an approved list. District-adopted textbooks are selected through a formal committee process. Locally-purchased instructional materials are selected by the District, campus or individual teachers to meet the needs of students.

Instructional Practices

Instructional strategies and practices to ensure student success are based upon campus and teacher analysis of student needs, effective teaching practices, student learning styles, and demonstrated success through the assessment process.

Achievement grades should be fairly determined from a wide variety of information, which could include student performance on daily assignments/homework, tests, and/or special projects.

The information used in grading should be appropriate to the grade level and subject being considered. Prior to instruction, students should be informed of the class or course expectations, and the teacher must be prepared to document and explain how grades are determined.

Academic Achievement

CURRICULUM MASTERY

Promotion and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services. [See EHBC]

STANDARDS FOR MASTERY

Mastery shall be determined as follows:

Course assignments and formative/summative assessments shall be used to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.

Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit or final exams or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required. [EIE Local]

GRADES 6-8

In grades 6-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade-level standards (TEKS) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of four of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Changes in grade-level classification shall be made at the beginning of the fall semester for grades 6-8 [EIE Local]

GRADES 9-12

Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives on District-approved tests shall be required. Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9-12 shall be earned by course credits. Changes in grade-level classification shall be made at the mid-term for grades 9-12. [EIE Local]

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, students in grades 5 and 8 must meet the passing standard established by the State Board on the following assessments:

| GR. | STAAR Assessment(s) |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 5 | STAAR Reading & Mathematics |
| 8 | STAAR Reading & Mathematics |

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Promotion standards and appropriate assessment and acceleration options, as established by individualized education programs (IEP) or grade-level classification of students eligible for special education, shall be determined by the ARD committee.

LEP STUDENTS

In assessing students of limited English proficiency for mastery of the TEKS, the District shall be flexible in determining methods to allow the students to demonstrate knowledge or competency independent of their English language skills in the following ways:

- ☞ Assessment in the primary language.
- ☞ Assessment using ESL methodologies.
- ☞ Assessment with multiple varied instruments. [See EHBE]

Official Grade Reports

PROGRESS REPORTS/ REPORT CARDS

The purpose of the Progress Report is to inform students, parents/guardians, and campus administrators regarding progress in a subject, in conduct, or in both. The Progress Report reflects both satisfactory and unsatisfactory student progress.

Interim progress reports shall be issued for all students and mailed to the address on file after the third week of each grading period. Supplemental progress reports may be issued at the teacher's discretion.

The Report Card is a communication tool for parents/guardians and students. Report Cards provide information regarding academic progress, student conduct, absences, and are issued every six weeks.

Parents/guardians may also access student progress information through the student/parent grade book portal:

<http://rscweb.gainesvilleisd.org/txconnect/login.aspx>

District-Level Assessments

The purpose of district-developed Assessments is to ensure the complete alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum in order to drive instruction and to continuously improve the academic progress of all students.

Assessments aligned to the curriculum are **Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBA)**.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value of teaching, learning and scholarship. GISD has the primary responsibility for protecting and promoting the highest standards of academic integrity. Both students and faculty will thrive in an atmosphere where academic work is challenging, relevant, and fair.

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student code of conduct.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination.

The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students. [EIA Local]

[The following examples are adapted from Denton I.S.D.]

CHEATING INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES:

- ☹ *Taking, stealing, and/or using an assignment from someone else and submitting it as one's own.*
- ☹ *Allowing another to take and/or use an assignment to submit as his/her own.*
- ☹ *Looking at another's test or essay with or without his consent for the purpose of duplicating that work and submitting it as one's own.*
- ☹ *Representing as one's own the work or words of a parent, sibling, friend, or anyone else.*
- ☹ *Discussing or revealing the contents of a test or quiz with students who have not completed the assessment.*
- ☹ *Unauthorized use of teacher test materials, answer sheets, computer files, or grading programs.*
- ☹ *Using any type of "crib/cliff notes" on your person, an object, or programmed within graphing calculators, cell phones, or other electronic devices without teacher permission.*
- ☹ *Receiving answers for assignments or exams from any unauthorized source.*

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- ☹ Working on assignments with others when not authorized by the instructor.
- ☹ Copying from other students during an exam.
- ☹ Giving answers to another student for an assignment or exam.

DISHONESTY INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLOWING EXAMPLES:

- ☹ Agreeing with other students to commit academic dishonesty.
- ☹ Falsification of results from research or laboratory experiments.
- ☹ Written or oral presentation of results from research which was never performed.

PLAGIARISM INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLOWING EXAMPLES:

- ☹ Directly quoting or paraphrasing all or part of another's written or spoken words without notes or documentation within the body of a work.
- ☹ Presenting an idea, theory, or formula originated by another person as the original work of the person submitting that work.
- ☹ Purchasing or receiving in any other manner a term paper or other assignment that is the work of another person and submitting that assignment as the student's own work.
- ☹ Repeating information, such as statistics or demographics, which is not common knowledge and which was originally compiled by another person.

Roles and Responsibilities

STUDENT

- ☹ Complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher.
- ☹ Plan to schedule work on long-term assignments so that assignments will be completed on time.

- ☹ Initiate communication with the teacher when he/she does not understand the assignment or is experiencing difficulty.
- ☹ Seek tutorials.
- ☹ Complete all assignments within the time limits given by the teacher or be subject to appropriate late work guidelines.
- ☹ Evaluate their own work for accuracy and seek clarification as needed from the teacher.
- ☹ Maintain academic integrity and honesty. Academic dishonesty shall result in academic and/or behavioral consequences. (See **Academic Integrity**).
- ☹ Maintain academic eligibility requirements to participate in extracurricular activities. (See page 17)
- ☹ Bring necessary materials and supplies as required by individual teachers.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

- ☹ Establish a specific time, place, and manner for homework to be completed.
- ☹ Provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete assignments.
- ☹ Encourage students to complete assignments independently and seek help as needed.
- ☹ Ensure student attendance as required by law.
- ☹ Assist the student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments.
- ☹ Initiate communication with the teacher when concerns arise.
- ☹ Utilize all forms of media to check students progress reports and report cards.

CAMPUS

- ☹ Each campus and/or department will adhere to the late work guidelines as established in this handbook.
- ☹ Each campus will design and designate exam schedules as needed.
- ☹ Campus administration shall address issues and ensure the accuracy of calculations of grades for the purpose of regaining UIL eligibility at the three-week grade checks.

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TEACHER

- ☞ Teachers are required to provide the daily lesson objectives and activities for each class. These should be visually displayed in the classroom.
- ☞ Assignments should be posted on the teacher's webpage so that students or parents/guardians can reference them as needed.
- ☞ Only teachers will record grades for assignments.
- ☞ All records of grades and assessments become a part of the confidential record for the assessment of student performance.
- ☞ Teachers will inform students of content covered on all major assessments.
- ☞ Per Policy EIA (Local), teachers shall not increase or decrease a classroom grade for participation or lack of participation in any extracurricular activity.
- ☞ Teachers must follow the GISD Grading and Reporting Procedures and ask for clarification from campus administration or department chairs as needed.
- ☞ Teachers will provide students with a rubric for long-term projects and/or alternative assessments.

Course Syllabus

All secondary teachers are required to prepare, post, and distribute a course syllabus for students during the first two weeks of the course and/or semester. The purpose of the course syllabus is to provide information, guidelines, and an overview of a teacher's requirements for successful completion of a course.

The syllabus may be defined as the scope and sequence of a course's major projects and themes. It may be prepared by semester or full-year requirements.

The syllabus is designed to give students and parents/guardians an overview of the course's major themes and approximate dates of major course projects, exams, or papers.

Each teacher may develop his/her own format of a course syllabus, but the following elements must be included:

- ☞ Teacher name
- ☞ Course title
- ☞ Conference time
- ☞ School/Teacher phone
- ☞ Outline or scope and sequence of major course units, themes, or projects
- ☞ Approximate timeline and due dates of long-term projects
- ☞ General method of assessment and grade calculation in compliance with GISD Grading and Reporting Procedures
- ☞ Average amount of homework
- ☞ Assigned reading/literary works

Lesson Plans

The purpose of a lesson plan is to provide a written document outlining daily objectives and activities for instruction. The lesson plans will include objectives reflecting required TEKS and are turned in according to the schedule established in each building.

Teacher WebPages

GISD campus teachers maintain their individual teacher webpages which include a variety of information for students and parents.

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Parent Teacher Conferences

- ☞ Grade six (6) through grade twelve (12) will conduct parent-teacher conferences at the end of the First Six Weeks.
- ☞ Teachers will schedule one or more conference(s) with the parent/guardian of a student if the student is not maintaining passing grades, is not achieving the expected level of performance, is presenting some problem to the teacher, or in any other case that the teacher considers necessary.
- ☞ Conferences may be handled by telephone or in person.
- ☞ The State and District require each school to notify parents/guardians of the need for a conference at the six-week grading period if the grade is below the level required for course credit or grade level advancement.

Return of Assignments

Teachers should review and return all graded work to students within a time frame that will benefit the student. Daily work should be returned within two to four scheduled class days. Larger projects should be reviewed and returned on a timely basis (within one week if feasible). This will allow the student to identify any areas of weakness and arrange for tutorials or extra study sessions prior to assessment.

Reteach-Reassess for Mastery

The goal of GISD is for every student to master all the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) specified for each grade level and the STAAR Exit Level. Each student should be provided instruction that allows for application and practice of the concepts and skills mandated in the TEKS, and then assessed for mastery. If a student does not demonstrate mastery of concepts and skills as specified in

the TEKS and necessary for future learning, reteaching and retesting (or reassessment) should be provided for the student.

Since the learning varies from one content area to another, it is not appropriate to mandate an all-inclusive policy on reteaching and retesting. It is the responsibility of the teacher to monitor student progress and to decide when reteaching and retesting is appropriate for all, most, or some of the students. The teacher's decision should be based upon a professional judgment of what is necessary for student success. Teachers may base the decision to reteach and retest on whether the curriculum provides sufficient future opportunities for most students to master a concept or skill.

Adherence to following recommendations for reteaching and retesting are strongly encouraged:

- ☞ Teachers will monitor and identify students who need reteaching.
- ☞ If 50% or more of students in a class do not demonstrate mastery of TEKS on a major assessment, the teacher should provide an opportunity for reteaching and retesting during class time. All students in the class should be given the opportunity for reteach and retest. The higher average of the two grades should be recorded in the grade book, no higher than a 70.
- ☞ If less than 50% of all students in a class do not demonstrate mastery of TEKS, the teacher may choose to provide reteaching and retesting outside of class time. The grade on the reassessment may be recorded as no lower than 70 if mastery is demonstrated. If mastery is not demonstrated, the higher grade should be recorded.
- ☞ In the event of unusual circumstances, an individual student can ask for the opportunity for reteaching and retesting. This request can be evaluated by a committee of the teacher, department head, and/or principal. In case of disputes, the final decision rests with the campus principal. The request for a retesting should

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be made within one (1) week after the test has been returned.

- ☹ The highest grade a student may earn on a retest is a 70.
- ☹ Reteaching should employ instructional strategies different from the original instruction.
- ☹ Retesting or reassessment may include, but is not limited to:
 - Oral examination
 - Additional practice activities
 - Essay or paper
 - Report or presentation
 - Test corrections
 - Revision of a paper or project
 - Formal test
- ☹ Retesting provisions do not apply to common assessments or semester exams.

Tutorials

The purpose of a tutorial session is to provide one-on-one instruction to assist students who have not mastered the TEKS currently being taught. Tutorials also serve as an instructional reinforcement for students needing assistance. All GISD students are welcomed and encouraged to attend tutorial sessions; however, students who have not mastered the TEKS (or are currently failing) should be given priority during scheduled tutorial times.

- ☹ Each teacher must offer at least two (2) scheduled tutorial sessions per week, one AM and one PM for the purpose of providing assistance to students for a minimum of 30 minutes for each session.
- ☹ Day and time of scheduled tutorials will be set by each campus. Some mandatory tutorials may be within the school day.
- ☹ Attendance at tutorials is not limited to those students having academic difficulty.

- ☹ Teachers must be available to students during scheduled tutorial time.
- ☹ The teacher will keep a log of students attending tutorials.

Awarding Class Credit

MASTERY OF OBJECTIVES

- ☹ Student academic achievement shall be based upon the degree of mastery of the district's objectives which reflect the TEKS.
- ☹ In order to be awarded a grade of 70 in a course or subject, a student must demonstrate 70% mastery of the District's objectives in any recording period.

REQUIRED ATTENDANCE

- ☹ In accordance with State law, the student must have ninety percent (90%) attendance in the class during the semester.
- ☹ Students may have two college visits in their Junior year and two in their Senior year, with two week prior approval of their grade level assistant principal and a letter from the college or university verifying the visit. These absences for approved college visits do not affect exemption for final exams.

CREDIT RECOVERY COURSE GRADING AND CREDIT

- ☹ Students enrolled in high school credit recovery courses are subject to special grading procedures. Credit Recovery delivers instruction and assessments in a unique environment requiring specialized procedures.

Types of Assessments

GENERAL

Student mastery of course objectives may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary, therefore, for all grades to have as their source written paper work. Nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every paper produced. Although the teacher should always monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity that he/she assigns, the feedback does not always need to be in the form of a grade. Assessment should always follow a period of guided practice and/or independent practice.

In grading a group project, members of a group should not be penalized for an individual's non-participation. Conversely, a student who does not fully participate, but participates to a limited degree, will receive a grade reflective of his/her participation.

Performance assessments are measures of a student's progress toward mastery of course objectives or content. There are many forms of assessment that may or may not be utilized by individual teachers. Types of performance assessments include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| ✓ Classroom participation | ✓ Teacher observation |
| ✓ Classroom discussions | ✓ Research project |
| ✓ Oral responses | ✓ Checklists of skills |
| ✓ Written responses | ✓ Portfolios |
| ✓ Homework assignments | ✓ Enrichment |
| ✓ Experiments/Labs | ✓ Group work/projects |
| ✓ Independent or group reading | |

PERFORMANCE-BASED COURSES

Performance-based courses may have assignments that differ significantly from other academic courses. Performance-based courses include courses within the following departments: Career and Technology Education, Fine Arts, Physical Education and Athletics.

In many performance-based courses, the grading and assignments must reflect the TEKS and a measure of the student's performance. In performance-based courses, a higher percentage of the grade may come from participation.

Teachers of performance-based courses should work with campus administrators to ensure that their grading system is in compliance with both GISD Grading and Reporting Procedures and the expectations and guidelines of the program area.

Teacher Records Grade Book

Grade records are an important record-keeping tool and should be accurately maintained. Grades will be verified; therefore, accurate record keeping is essential. All teachers will maintain the District-provided electronic gradebook.

- ☉ Grades recorded in a gradebook are documentation of a student's progress and of mastery of the TEKS and curriculum objectives.
- ☉ Grades recorded in a gradebook represent a confidential record for assessment of student performance.
- ☉ The set of grades indicated in the gradebook shall be the complete set from which the student's average is determined.
- ☉ The electronic gradebook must adhere to the calculations outlined in the GISD Grading and Reporting Procedures.
- ☉ Only the teacher of record (or principal designee) will enter grades in the gradebook.
- ☉ Teachers will update their electronic gradebooks on a weekly basis.
- ☉ Teachers will maintain hard copies of all assigned grades for each grading period.

Grading

GRADING GUIDELINES

- ☺ A grade should represent an evaluation of a student's academic achievement and mastery of the TEKS.
- ☺ The responsibility for grading belongs with the teacher.
- ☺ At the beginning of the school year or later in the school year as new students enroll, the teacher will inform parents/guardians and students of how grades will be determined in a particular class. This information must include the weight each component of the academic work carries in the six weeks average as well as in the semester and year averages.
- ☺ Teachers will inform students in advance of the grading criteria or rubrics to be used in evaluating major assignments.
- ☺ In evaluating student progress, teachers should use a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate students with different learning styles and to assure student success.
- ☺ Student work will be graded and the grades recorded in a timely manner in order to provide feedback to students and parents. Student achievement is enhanced when feedback is immediate and precise, so teachers will grade work promptly and return it to students for review.
- ☺ Grades for Fine Arts students will be determined with regard to mastery of the TEKS for the particular course including performance.
 - ☺ While performance is not the only component considered during assessment/ evaluation, it is a legitimate part of assessment.
 - ☺ If a performance is the culminating activity based on TEKS, a grade may be given for participation or nonparticipation.

- ☺ Extenuating circumstances shall be considered when a student misses a performance.
- ☺ Grades for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students will take into consideration their English language proficiency. Time is needed for the student to adjust to the new sounds and demands of learning English.
 - Accommodations for LEP students are, but are not limited to:
 - *Extra time for assignments and tests;*
 - *Shorter assignments and tests*
 - *Oral quizzes*
 - *Peer assistance*
 - *Use of bilingual dictionaries*
 - *Reading the directions to the students*
 - *Use of visual aids.*

GRADING POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

- ☺ The student's mastery of the instructional objectives as aligned to the TEKS for grade-level subjects or courses shall be the major factor in determining the student's grade for a subject or course. [EIA Local]
- ☺ A grade in any subject should be an evaluation of the pupil's performance and progress in achieving mastery of the TEKS for a particular grading period.
- ☺ No single grade shall count more than 30% of the six-weeks average or the semester average.
- ☺ Semester exams are 20% of the semester grade.
- ☺ Grades should be sufficient in number and category (homework, quizzes, tests, etc.) to reflect an accurate measure of a student's progress and achievement.
- ☺ Cooperative learning structures may be used as an instructional strategy in order to encourage academic achievement in a team context. The rubric or grading standards for a cooperative activity or project should be shared with the students in advance so that they will know whether they will be graded for individual academic

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achievement, team academic achievement, or both.

- ☺ In order to obtain a grade average for a particular grading period that is a fair assessment of the student's achievement, a teacher may employ one or more of the following:
 - Canceling the lowest grade in a category before averaging;
 - Allowing students the opportunity to do additional work within the grading period;
 - Giving bonus points for completing additional or optional assignments/projects evolving from the course objectives
 - Providing special opportunities for a student to respond orally;
 - Including a participation grade when appropriate to the learning objective, e.g. for oral responses in a Spanish I class;
 - Allowing the student to participate in a credit recovery program.
- ☺ Grades which are identifiable by individual student **MUST NOT** be announced or posted publicly by teachers or students.

TRANSFERRING GRADES

- ☺ If a student moves to a regular level course from an advanced level of the same course (or vice versa), the student's transferring average or category grades from the advanced class shall be averaged with the regular level course grades for a final six-weeks grade.
- ☺ If a student transfers between regular and advanced level courses at the end of the first semester, the first semester grade remains as is and is given the appropriate weight or credit. The second semester grade will reflect the appropriate weighting for the level of course taken and will be averaged with the first semester grade for an overall year-end average.

REPORT NOTATIONS

| Notation | Description |
|-----------------------|---|
| NC (No Credit) | Assigned administratively as a result of excessive absences and is calculated as a "50" for the purpose of class rank. |
| WF (Withdraw Failing) | Assigned as a result of the student's request to withdraw from a course after the first four calendar weeks of a semester and is calculated as a "0" for the purpose of class rank. UIL rules state that students remain eligible if they drop a class in which the grade is below 70 before the end of the first four weeks of school. |
| I (Incomplete) | An "I" is assigned by the teacher to indicate incomplete student work which should be made up within 3 weeks from the close of the grading period. An "I" must be recorded if a student is eligible formakeup work. UIL rules specify that an "Incomplete" must be replaced with a passing grade within seven days of the close of the grading period in order for the student to be eligible. |
| NG (No Grade) | The student has not earned a grade, but was capable of doing so. An "NG" is calculated as a "0" for the purpose of class rank. |
| NR (No Rank) | "NR" is assigned by the teacher with administrative approval when no grade is possible in the case of students who have not been enrolled for a sufficient length of time, students who have documented medical reasons, beginning ESL students, or students with extenuating circumstances. NR does not affect class rank. |

Major Grades

TESTS/EXAMINATIONS

Tests and examinations measure performance based on the TEKS or content. They serve to evaluate mastery of the TEKS, concepts, understandings, and District objectives, and provide opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skills.

- ☺ Test/Examinations are assessments designed to measure a student's successful attainment of the TEKS.

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- ☹ Major examinations or tests are chapter, unit, concept, or cumulative (weekly, three, or six weeks) assessments.
- ☹ Major tests must be scheduled and announced in advance.
- ☹ Major tests are intended to take a substantial part of the class period to complete.

SIX-WEEK TESTS AND/OR ASSESSMENTS

- ☹ Six-week assessments may be administered in core and non-core content classes at the discretion of the campus administration.
- ☹ Six-week assessments may not be substituted with previous assignments or an average of past performance assessments.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

- ☹ Alternative assessments will reflect real-world tasks and relate to instructional objectives.
- ☹ This type of assessment often requires analyzing a task, developing a plan of action, gathering information, selecting the relevant information, and presenting appropriate information.
- ☹ The method of presentation/product should be designed by the teacher based on the subject area and content objectives.
- ☹ Alternative assessments may be substituted for major tests.
- ☹ Teachers will provide students with a rubric for long-term projects and/or alternative assessments.

SPECIAL PROJECTS/TERM PAPERS

- ☹ Term papers or projects are lengthy class work or homework assignments that may take up to several weeks for a student or group of students to complete.

- ☹ Teachers may assign term papers or projects to an individual or to a group of students as determined by the teacher.
- ☹ A rubric must be provided to the student prior to beginning the project/paper.
- ☹ Term papers or projects, assigned over a lengthy period and included on the course syllabus, are due on or before the due date.
- ☹ Students who are absent on the due date, including school business, must meet the deadline.
- ☹ Any exceptions for late term projects must be approved by the principal or principal's designee after meeting with the classroom teacher.
- ☹ The special due date clause for term papers and long-term projects applies only to assignments included on the course syllabus. Long-term projects may be assigned at any time by the teacher, but the special due date clause will not apply.
- ☹ Penalty for late projects will be assigned according to the late work section outlined on page 16 of this handbook. The teacher will accept all late papers/projects turned in up to two weeks after the due date for feedback purposes only. After two weeks, the teacher is under no obligation to read or comment upon late papers/projects.

Daily Assignments

- ☹ Classwork is any instructional activity defined/ planned by the teacher to be completed during a class period to facilitate the learning process.
- ☹ There could be occasions where classwork becomes homework.

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- ☹ Homework and classwork provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding.
- ☹ Homework and classwork should be considered extended learning opportunities for students to show mastery of concepts taught.
- ☹ Homework and classwork should never be assigned as punishment. Each teacher will prepare a syllabus that states the average amount of homework given weekly.

HOMework

- ☹ Homework can be a necessary part of the instructional process that begins in the classroom, extends into the home, and provides a way for parents/guardians to become aware of the instructional program and their child's educational program.
- ☹ Homework should never be a disciplinary measure, but should be used to enrich and strengthen classroom experiences.
- ☹ New concepts, which are introduced through homework, should only be evaluated on effort.
- ☹ Teachers will also be aware and considerate of other courses that require homework.

GRADING ASSIGNMENTS

- ☹ Homework may be graded in a variety of ways. At times, checking for completion is appropriate. At other times, a complete analysis of procedure, content, and/or correct answers is appropriate.
- ☹ Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.

QUIZZES

- ☹ Quizzes are short assessments, intended to take no more than 20 minutes to complete, and designed to evaluate a student's level of understanding and progress towards instructional objectives.
- ☹ Quizzes do not have to be scheduled in advance.

SEMESTER/FINAL EXAMS

- ☹ Semester/Final Exams are administered in all high school credit courses at the end of the fall and spring semester.
- ☹ Juniors and seniors may be exempt from spring Semester/Final Exams.
- ☹ Semester/Final Exams must be representative of the work of the entire semester.
- ☹ Any exceptions to this policy from the administration of Semester/Final Exams must be made at the department level with principal approval.

EXTRA CREDIT

- ☹ All extra credit is to be academic.
- ☹ The intent of extra credit is for enrichment in a class, not to gain mastery of the TEKS.
- ☹ **If extra credit is offered, it must be offered to all students in the subject area.**
- ☹ **Extra credit will not cause an excessive financial burden on the student or be given for bringing in basic school supplies.**
- ☹ Extra credit awarded will not account for more than 5% of the six-week average.

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Weight of Grades

All six-week averages shall be calculated on a percentage system for each type (category) of assignment.

MAJOR GRADES

| Middle School | High School |
|--|--|
| Major grades will comprise approximately 40% of the Six-Weeks average in all middle school courses. | Major grades will comprise approximately 40% of the Six-Weeks average in all high school courses. |

- ☺ Major Grades may include:
 - Exams/Tests
 - Alternative Assessments
 - Projects
 - Research Papers
 - Final draft/edited Compositions
 - District formative assessments
 - End of Six-Week Tests
 - Other similar assignments

DAILY GRADES

| Middle School | High School |
|--|--|
| Daily grades will comprise approximately 60% of the Six-Weeks average in all middle school courses. | Daily grades will comprise approximately 60% of the Six-Weeks average in all high school courses. |

- ☺ Daily Grades may include:
 - Class Work
 - Notebooks
 - Labs
 - Quizzes (short daily assessments taking no more than 20 minutes; do not have to be scheduled in advance)
 - Other similar assignments

EXTRA CREDIT

- ☺ Extra credit will not comprise more than 5% of the total six-week grade. Extra credit is offered at the discretion of the teacher. (see **Daily Grades—Extra Credit**)

MAXIMUM WEIGHT OF A GRADE

- ☺ When calculating a six-week average, no single assignment/assessment grade may count more than **30%** of the total average regardless of the grade category.

MINIMUM/MAXIMUM GRADE REPORTED

- ☺ The teacher will record a **50** on the Report Card and permanent cumulative record for any average numerical grade that is lower than 50. [EIA Local]
- ☺ The actual grade earned on any assignment may exceed 100%; however, the calculated average on a Progress Report and/or Report Card may not exceed 100%.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF GRADES

- ☺ Teachers are encouraged to provide a sufficient number of grades to allow multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS.
- ☺ Teachers are required to take a minimum of two grades per week beginning the first full week of school.
- ☺ In addition, teachers must take a minimum of **two (2)** Major Grades per six-week grading period (this includes the six-week test/assessment).

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

- ☺ Teachers may deduct no more than **10%** of the assignment for proper formatting.

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INCOMPLETE GRADES

- ☹ A student receiving an incomplete and/or a zero for a missed Semester/Final Exam has two (2) weeks to convert the incomplete grade to an earned grade.
- ☹ In unusual cases, where the student has missed a large quantity of work, the time may be extended with administrative approval.
- ☹ In all cases, the teacher must communicate to the student the nature of the outstanding work and the time limitation for completing the work (UIL Required).

MAKEUP WORK

- ☹ Makeup work is available to all students. **Students are responsible for asking teachers for the makeup work upon returning to class.** If the assignment is extensive or requires hands-on-practice the student is required to attend a tutorial.
- ☹ Students shall be expected to makeup assignments and tests after absences. **Students shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allotted time.** [EIAB Local]
- ☹ Students have the number of days they were gone plus one day to make up an assignment.
- ☹ The Administration may grant an exception for extenuating circumstances.
- ☹ A student should not, on the day of returning to school, be required to take a quiz or test that was announced during his/her absence.
- ☹ Makeup work, including tests, may be of an altered version to assess what the student has learned.
- ☹ Teachers may assign alternate work to assure that students who have been absent have sufficient opportunity to master the TEKS or to meet subject or course requirements. The assignments shall be

based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and may provide greater depth of subject matter than routine makeup work.

- ☹ For students in grade 6, there shall be no grade penalty for makeup work completed after an unexcused absence. [EIAB Local]
- ☹ For students in grades 7-12, a **70** shall be the maximum grade for makeup work completed after an unexcused absence. [EIAB Local]
- ☹ The District shall not impose a grade penalty for makeup work after an absence because of suspension. [EIAB Local]

LATE WORK

- ☹ The penalty for late work is the same in all subject areas.
- ☹ Chronic abuse of the late work policy may result in additional consequences.
- ☹ Extenuating circumstances may occur that are out of the control of the student and which prevent him/her from completing and returning homework assignments. The student is to inform the teacher of any such circumstance that prevented the completion of the homework. Teachers may grant exceptions to this policy, as necessary.
- ☹ Include Policy: One (1) day will be -10 points, Two (2) days will be -20 points, etc.

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H.S. Exam Exemptions

For a student to qualify to be exempt from a semester exam, the student must meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

- ☹ Currently passing the exempted exam class AND an overall, non-weighted average of at least 80.
- ☹ **Saturday School does NOT count toward semester exam exemption attendance.**
- ☹ Three (3) tardies in a class during the spring semester counts as one (1) absence for exemption purposes.
- ☹ To be eligible for exemption, a student must be clear of all fines and detention halls. Students must not have served time in ISS or DAEP or been suspended from school. A list of students who qualify for exemptions will be distributed to teachers.
- ☹ Appeals of absences due to unusual cause that result in the loss of exemption must be submitted in writing to the campus principal for consideration for a waiver to these criteria.
- ☹ Students in their senior year of school may be exempted from a subject area exam during the SPRING semester if they have a 90% overall average and no more than three (3) absences for the semester.

UTL Eligibility

- ☹ A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (after the first six weeks of the school year), a grade below 70 in any academic class (other than an identified advanced class) or a student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- ☹ An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- ☹ The student regains eligibility when the principal and teachers determine that he/she has:
 - ☹ earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all academic classes, other than those that are advanced, and
 - ☹ completed the three school weeks of ineligibility.
- ☹ Schools must check grades for all participants at the end of the first six weeks of the school year. From that point, grades are checked at the end of each six-week grading period. Students who pass remain eligible until the end of the next grading period.
- ☹ All activity coaches and directors are responsible for obtaining official grade reports from the individual the principal designates as the keeper of official grades before the student represents the school.
- ☹ This provision applies to all grading periods. It also applies to all three school week evaluation periods for ineligible students.
- ☹ Eligibility rules are located at the following website:
<http://www.uil.utexas.edu/policy/constitution/index.html>

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Semester Averages

All secondary courses will calculate and report a semester average. Calculated averages reported on Progress Reports or Report Cards may not exceed 100%. Grades recorded in a gradebook represent a confidential record for assessment of student performance.

- ☹ For **Middle School** students, the semester average will be the average of the three six-week grading periods.
- ☹ For **High School** students, the semester average is determined using the six-week averages and the Semester/Final Exam.

| Grade | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| 1 st Six-Week Average | 26.6% |
| 2 nd Six-Week Average | 26.6% |
| 3 rd Six-Week Average | 26.6% |
| Semester/Final Exam | 20% |

- ☹ When a student is exempt from the Semester/Final Exam, the semester average will be the average of the six-week grading periods.

Year-Long Average

Middle School credit courses that are a full year in length will calculate a year-long average. This year-long average (with required attendance) will determine credit for retention and promotion. The average will be determined using the six-week averages (not the semester averages).

High School credit courses receive separate and independent grades for each semester for a year-long course. However, semesters will be averaged to calculate an overall yearly average for course credit under the following criteria:

- ☹ State of Texas TEKS-based high school courses from the Fall and Spring semester of the same academic year apply;
- ☹ Summer School (when offered) and alternative delivery (e.g. computer assisted, on-line, Credit Recovery correspondence, etc.) may not be considered for semester grade averaging;
- ☹ A minimum of 50% for any semester grade recorded; and
- ☹ The attendance requirements or a waiver must be met.

Petition to be exempt from semester averaging must be made within one week of the notification of a failed semester.

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Grade Point Averaging Class Rank

The weighting of grades falls into three categories:

✓ **ADVANCED**

- English I (Pre-AP/Honors)
- English II (Pre-AP/Honors)
- AP Language & Composition
- AP Literature & Composition
- Algebra I (Pre-AP/Honors)
- Geometry (Pre-AP/Honors)
- Algebra II (Pre-AP/Honors)
- Pre-Calculus
- Pre-Calculus (Pre-AP/Honors)
- AP Calculus AB
- Biology (Pre-AP/Honors)
- Chemistry (Pre-AP/Honors)
- Physics
- Physics (Pre-AP/Honors)
- AP Environmental Science
- World Geography (Pre-AP/Honors)
- World History (Pre-AP/Honors)
- Spanish III & IV
- French III & IV
- Dual Credit Core Classes—College level grades will be converted to a numerical grade using the following scale:

A = 98 B = 88 C = 78
D = 70 F = 0

✓ **BASIC**

- Special Education Classes
- Vocational Adjustment Course (VAC)
- Reading

✓ **REGULAR**

- All courses not listed as **Advanced** or **Basic**.

PLEASE NOTE:

- ✓ Dual credit core courses taken during the second semester of the senior (or final) year **WILL NOT** be counted for valedictorian, salutatorian, top ten, and top ten percent. Grades earned in dual credit classes during the spring semester of your final year will be included in your GPA and final class ranking after graduation.
- ✓ For two school years following their graduation, district graduates who rank in the top ten percent of their graduating class

are eligible for automatic admission into four-year universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- *Completes the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP); or*
- *Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.*
- ✓ Students and parents should contact the counselor or principal's office for further information about how to apply and the deadline for application.
- ✓ [For further information, see policies at EIC].

Class rank and grade point average (GPA) will be assessed according to the following weighted scale:

| Grade | Advanced | Regular | Basic |
|-------|----------|---------|-------|
| 100 | 6.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 |
| 99 | 5.9 | 4.9 | 3.9 |
| 98 | 5.8 | 4.8 | 3.8 |
| 97 | 5.7 | 4.7 | 3.7 |
| 96 | 5.6 | 4.6 | 3.6 |
| 95 | 5.5 | 4.5 | 3.5 |
| 94 | 5.4 | 4.4 | 3.4 |
| 93 | 5.3 | 4.3 | 3.3 |
| 92 | 5.2 | 4.2 | 3.2 |
| 91 | 5.1 | 4.1 | 3.1 |
| 90 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 |
| 89 | 4.9 | 3.9 | 2.9 |
| 88 | 4.8 | 3.8 | 2.8 |
| 87 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 2.7 |
| 86 | 4.6 | 3.6 | 2.6 |
| 85 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 2.5 |
| 84 | 4.4 | 3.4 | 2.4 |
| 83 | 4.3 | 3.3 | 2.3 |
| 82 | 4.2 | 3.2 | 2.2 |
| 81 | 4.1 | 3.1 | 2.1 |
| 80 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| 79 | 3.9 | 2.9 | 1.9 |
| 78 | 3.8 | 2.8 | 1.8 |
| 77 | 3.7 | 2.7 | 1.7 |
| 76 | 3.6 | 2.6 | 1.6 |
| 75 | 3.5 | 2.5 | 1.5 |
| 74 | 3.4 | 2.4 | 1.4 |
| 73 | 3.3 | 2.3 | 1.3 |
| 72 | 3.2 | 2.2 | 1.2 |
| 71 | 3.1 | 2.1 | 1.1 |
| 70 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 |