

PK-12 GUIDELINES FOR GRADING

GRADING POLICY AND THEORY OF ACTION

Grading regulations are developed to clarify and ensure adherence to Board-approved grading policies [see EIA(Legal) and EIA(Local)] and to transmit the district's theory of action about teaching and learning into grading practices across all classrooms and schools. Grading should be both formative and summative in nature.

To ensure compliance with Board policy, these guidelines should be reviewed in conjunction with Board policy EIA(Local). These guidelines are intended to clarify Board policies, not to duplicate all policy requirements.

GRADING PURPOSES

Grades should reflect adherence to the purposes for grading outlined in policy EIA(Local) including equity and access to rigorous learning, communication, motivation, instructional decision-making, and documentation of learning.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ACCURACY, EQUITY, AND QUALITY OF GRADES

The accuracy, equity, and quality of grades as a measure of student learning are directly dependent on the quality of instruction provided, the alignment of student learning tasks to the content and pacing of the district's curriculum, and the quality and rigor of the student work that is used to determine grades.

GRADE/DEPARTMENT/ CAMPUS GRADING PROCEDURES

Teachers shall develop and consistently implement common grade level or department grading procedures in compliance with this regulation and will communicate the common grading procedures to parents and students in writing as directed by the campus principal. Campus principals shall approve grading procedures to ensure compliance with Board policies and regulations related to grading.

Principals shall develop procedures to communicate the campus grading practices and will report student learning progress to all parents, campus instructional staff, sponsors of extra curricular activities, and the Learning Community Executive Director.

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SIX- WEEKS AND SEMESTER GRADES

In compliance with grading policy EIA (Local), grade level/cluster guidelines for grading will be implemented across all classrooms, grade levels, and schools in grades PK-12. PK-12 guidelines shall apply to all teachers and students and additional grading requirements specific to grade clusters PK-1, 2-5, 6-8, and 9-12 shall apply.

GRADES PRE-K THROUGH 1 GRADING GUIDELINES

To ensure compliance with Board policy, these guidelines should be reviewed in conjunction with Board policy EIA(Local). These guidelines are intended to clarify Board policies, not to duplicate all policy requirements.

Reporting Learning Standards Mastery

Grading of student work should be based on District-required learning standards and provide clear expectations for mastery that are communicated to students so that they understand the learning expectations. Criteria for grading should be clearly communicated to parents and displayed in the classroom. Grades in core content areas should be derived from group and independent student class work and both formative and summative assessments.

Report cards are to be issued every six weeks, and grades will be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs.

Report cards for grades PK-1 shall indicate progress toward mastery of student learning standards by content area using the letter grades of E for Excellent/Consistent Progress, S for Satisfactory Progress, and N for Needs Improvement/Additional Time for Learning. For areas identified as Needs Improvement, narrative comments will be provided to indicate targets for growth and to request a parent conference.

In Pre-kindergarten, grades for art, music, and physical education are to be assigned by specialists for full-day students only. In grades K-1, art, music, and physical education teachers shall assign grades in their content area for each grading period of the school year. Art, music, and physical education teachers shall not be required to tutor students in foundation subjects during regularly scheduled enrichment classes.

Three-week Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued by the teacher every three weeks if a student's performance in any subject is not deemed satisfactory, and shall be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Teachers shall have the option, and are encouraged, to issue progress reports to all students to communicate standards mastery and provide specific feedback about effort exhibited by the student in their learning.

Homework

Homework should be used to reinforce and support mastery of learning, engage parents in the learning process, and when appropriate and possible, should be differentiated for students depending on their mastery of the objectives.

At grades PK-1, grades from homework assignments may not be recorded in the grade book or used in the calculation of six week grades, but teachers may assign homework that is engaging and reinforces classroom learning. Feedback should be provided regarding any assignment sent home for completion. Homework should be based only on content standards previously taught, assigned and completed during the same instructional week, and at a level of difficulty that can be completed independently by students.

Retesting

Students shall be permitted to retake any major test that she or he has failed within 5 school days the failing grade was received or no later than 10 days of the date of the test.

Grade Weights

At grades PK- 1, the reported grade for each content area will be weighted at 50% for class work and 50% for assessments. Unless otherwise indicated on the report card, only one overall grade per grading period will be entered for art, music, physical education, and theater arts. Criteria for grading in these subjects will be based primarily on class work.

Guidelines for Standardized Test Prep/Remediation

Test prep practice for norm-referenced assessments, such as the ITBS or Logramos, or other standardized assessment is not appropriate in grades PK-1 and should not be practiced.

GRADES 2-5 GRADING GUIDELINES

To ensure compliance with Board policy, these guidelines should be reviewed in conjunction with Board policy EIA(Local). These guidelines are intended to clarify Board policies, not to duplicate all policy requirements.

Reporting Learning Standards Mastery

Report cards are issued every six week grading period, and grades will be recorded and communicated for all foundation and enrichment subjects using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Grading of student work should be based on State- and District-required learning standards and provide clear expectations for mastery that are communicated to and/or co-constructed with students. Criteria for grading should be clearly communicated to parents and displayed in the classroom. A grade of 50 is the lowest grade that will be recorded as a six-weeks grade. While 50 is the lowest six weeks grade recorded on the report card, teachers and teacher teams determine appropriate grades for daily work, homework, tests, etc.(which may include grades lower than 50).

Numerical grades should be derived from the following:

- Group and independent student class work and homework as outlined below
- Formative and summative assessments, and/or
- Project-based learning

Art, music, and physical education teachers shall assign grades in their content area for each grading period of the school year and shall not be required to tutor students in foundation subjects during the regularly scheduled enrichment classes.

Three-week Progress Reporting

Progress reports are issued by the teacher every three weeks if a student's performance in any subject or class is below 70 or whose average is deemed borderline according to District guidelines, and shall be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Teachers shall have the option, and are encouraged, to issue progress reports to all students to communicate standards mastery and provide specific feedback about effort exhibited by the student in their learning.

Determining Class work Grades

Class work should be rigorous, standards-based and document cumulative mastery of content area concepts. Expectations for grading class work should be clearly communicated to students and posted in the classroom. Mastery criteria for projects or other assignments that are used to evaluate multiple concepts should be clearly communicated to students, using tools such as rubrics or criteria charts.

Teachers may assign no less than 1 class work grade per week per subject or a minimum of 6 grades per subject per six weeks. Projects may assess multiple learning standards and therefore, more than one grade may be recorded for a project (based on the scoring rubric).

Determining Homework Grades

Homework can help families become more involved with the educational process, communicate high expectations for students and help students develop self-discipline and organizational skills. Homework should be based only on content standards previously taught, and at a level of difficulty that can be completed independently by students. At grades 2-5, grades from homework assignments will be counted only if they improve the student grade average, but feedback should always be provided on homework.

Students may be assigned no more than 1 hour per night of homework or no more that five hours per week for all grade level subjects/teachers combined. Departmentalized teachers should collaborate to determine homework assignments that meet this expectation. Student/parent reading time is not included in the homework time limit.

Test and/or Project Grades

Teachers should use a variety of assessment methods such as unit tests, project evaluation, six weeks tests, etc. There should be no fewer than 2 and no more than 4 test/major project grades per six weeks in each core subject area. District benchmarks are not graded but may be counted as ungraded tests in order to meet the number of required tests in a six weeks. Rubrics used for grading projects shall reflect mastery of identified content learning standards.

Retesting

Students shall be permitted to retake any major test that she or he has failed within 5 school days the failing grade was received or no later than 10 days of the date of the test. The higher score earned on either test will be recorded in the grade book, and the lower score removed (not averaged).

Makeup Work and Incomplete Grades

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests without grade penalty after an absence. Giving zeros as a grade is not a best practice, and, therefore, a zero can be recorded only after a parent call/notification has been made, and the student has been given two days for every day missed or two days after parent notification to complete the assignments or tests. An incomplete (I) grade on the six week report card will be recorded if the make-up time has not elapsed prior to the end of the six weeks period.

An incomplete for a six-weeks grade should be made up prior to the end of the semester. An incomplete for a six-weeks grade that is not made up by the end of the semester will be recorded as a 50 (or the actual grade average earned if it is higher than 50). Semester grades of Incomplete must be reviewed by the school's attendance committee or grade placement committee. The campus committee will determine the method for students to remediate the incomplete grade.

Late Work

Students must be given at least one opportunity to submit late work not related to an absence. Grade penalty should be determined by grade level/department teacher teams and approved by the principal. Teachers shall develop and consistently implement common grade level or department grading procedures for late work in compliance with this regulation and will communicate the common grading procedures to parents and students in writing as directed by the campus principal.

Grade Weights

Class work/Homework*	50% (Homework grades recorded if they improve grade average)
Tests	20% grade weight
Projects/Products	20% grade weight (ex: composition, research paper, presentation, report)
Six weeks test grade	10% grade weight

Art, music, and physical education teachers shall assign grades for the subjects they are assigned, and criteria for grading in these subjects will be based primarily on class work.

Semester Grades

The three six weeks grades will be averaged to determine the semester grade.

High class/grade level/school failure rates

Teachers with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >10% in any subject area will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by the principal/designee.

Schools with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >10% in any grade/subject will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by the executive director of the learning community.

Continued school failure rates resulting in >5% retention of students in any grade level may result in additional required interventions/supports/consequences.

Teachers should be prepared to provide an update to the campus principal for students whose grade average is on the pass/fail borderline of 68-69 including strategies for academic supports for the next six weeks.

Guidelines for Standardized Test Prep/Remediation

Test genre practice for standardized state assessments may be a part of the preparation process for students, but should not take the place of rigorous instruction or more open-ended performance based assessments. Therefore, the following must be followed regarding the use of test prep materials.

1. Test prep formatted questions can be used as test format models after more rigorous assessments which should reflect higher level thinking.
2. Supplemental test prep materials can be used, but should be limited to students who are in need of intervention in a particular subject area rather than as a general practice for all students.

3. Students should be placed in tiered intervention programs based upon their learning needs, which requires scheduling of interventions during the school day.
4. Students should not be removed from any required core or enrichment TEKS-based instruction for the purpose of test preparation/remediation. Short-term focused intervention tutorials may be scheduled in the three weeks prior to the TAKS test, but should not remove students from other required instruction without the approval of the campus principal.
5. Parents must be notified if students are removed from any core or enrichment TEKS-based course or classroom for test preparation and grades for the missed course/class must reflect student absence from instruction.

GRADES 6-8 GRADING GUIDELINES

Reporting Learning Standards Mastery

Report cards are issued every six week grading period, and grades will be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Grading of student work should be based on State- and District-required learning standards and provide clear expectations for mastery that are communicated to and/or co-constructed with students. A grade of 50 is the lowest grade that will be recorded as a six-weeks grade. While 50 is the lowest six weeks grade recorded on the report card, teachers and teacher teams determine appropriate grades for daily work, homework, tests, etc.(which may include a grade lower than 50).

Grades shall not be entered, nor credit awarded, for subjects from which students have been pulled for instruction in another subject during a grading period. If a student is assigned to an academic intervention class, that student must be moved to the roster for that intervention class. For required coursework, such moves may only be made at the end of a semester so that students can receive credit for required coursework. For other courses, such moves may be made at the end of a six-weeks grading period.

Three-week progress report forms

Progress reports are issued by the teacher every three weeks if a student's performance in any subject or class is below 70 or whose average is deemed borderline according to District guidelines, and shall be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Teachers are encouraged to issue progress reports to all students to communicate standards mastery and provide specific feedback about effort exhibited by the student in their learning.

Determining Class work Grades

Class work should be rigorous, standards-based and document cumulative mastery of content area concepts. Expectations for grading class work should be clearly communicated to students. Mastery criteria for projects or other assignments that are used to evaluate multiple concepts should be clearly communicated to students, using tools such as rubrics or criteria charts.

Determining Homework Grades

Homework is based on learning standards that have previously been taught in class that must be completed outside the regular school day and not during the regular class period. Homework can help families become more involved with the educational process, communicate high expectations for students and help students develop self-discipline and organizational skills. All homework assignments must be designed as a meaningful part of the educational process and be reviewed by the teacher. Feedback should be provided within 48 hours of the submission of the assignment, or as soon as reasonably possible given the rigor of the assignment. Feedback is defined as written comments, peer review, conference, grades, etc.

Homework assignments may or may not be awarded a grade at the teacher's discretion. When recording grades, primary consideration should be given to recording homework grades that raise a student's average, not lower it.

Students may be assigned no more than 1.5 hours per night or no more that seven hours per week for all grade level subjects/teachers combined. Department heads/CILT teachers should collaborate to determine homework assignments that meet this expectation.

Makeup Work and Incomplete Grades

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests without grade penalty after an absence. Students will be given at least two school days for every day missed to complete the assignments or tests missed after an absence. An incomplete (I) grade on the six week report card may be recorded if the allotted period has not elapsed prior to the end of the six weeks grading period. An incomplete for a six-weeks grade must be made up within ten school days, or a 50 will be recorded (or the actual grade average earned if it is higher than 50). Principals must be notified when an Incomplete is assigned.

Semester grades of Incomplete must be reviewed by the school's attendance committee or grade placement committee. The campus committee will determine the method for students to remediate the incomplete grade.

Late Work

Students must be given at least one opportunity to submit late work not related to an absence. Grade penalty should be determined by grade level/department teacher teams and approved by the principal. Teachers shall develop and consistently implement common grade level or department grading procedures for late work in compliance with this regulation and will communicate the common grading procedures to parents and students in writing as directed by the campus principal.

Giving zeros as a grade for late work is not a best practice, and, therefore it is recommended that a parent call/notification be made prior to recording a grade of zero, (especially for students for whom the zero will likely result in a failing grade). Efforts should be made to assist students in completing missed work.

Retesting

Students shall be permitted to retake any major test that she or he has failed, with the exception of ACPs, within 5 school days the failing grade was received or no later than 10 days of the date of the test. The higher score earned on either test will be recorded in the grade book, and the lower score removed (not averaged).

Test and/or Project Grades

Teachers should use a variety of assessment methods such as unit tests, project evaluation, six-weeks tests, etc. There should be no fewer than 2 and no more than 4 test/major project grades per six weeks in each subject area, including a required six weeks test and semester exam. Projects may assess multiple learning standards and therefore, more than one grade may be recorded for a project (based on the scoring rubric). District benchmarks are not graded but may be counted as ungraded tests in order to meet the number of required tests in a six weeks. Rubrics used for grading projects shall reflect mastery of identified content learning standards.

Number of Grades

Teachers should record no fewer than 2 class work/homework grades per week per subject, with a minimum of 12 grades per subject per six weeks, no more than ¼ of which can be homework. Grades should be documented weekly.

Grade Weights for Determining the Six Weeks Report Card Grade

Class work/Homework*	45% (no more than ¼ homework)
Tests	20% grade weight
Projects/Products	20% grade weight (ex: composition, research paper, presentation, report)
Six weeks test grade	15% grade weight

Semester and Yearly Grades

The Semester Exam/ACP will account for 10% of the semester grade, and the three six weeks grades will be averaged to account for the remaining 90% of the semester grade. Semester grades are averaged together to assign a yearly grade.

High class/grade level/school failure rates

Teachers with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >15% in any subject area will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by the principal/designee.

Schools with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >15% in any grade/subject will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by the executive director of the learning community.

Continued school failure rates resulting in >10% retention of students in any grade level may result in additional required interventions/supports/consequences.

Teachers should be prepared to provide an update to the campus principal for students whose grade average is on the pass/fail borderline of 68-69 including strategies for academic supports for the next six weeks.

Guidelines for Standardized Test Prep/Remediation

Test genre practice for standardized state assessments may be a part of the preparation process for students, but should not take the place of rigorous instruction or more open-ended performance based assessments. Therefore, the following must be followed regarding the use of test prep materials.

1. Test prep formatted questions can be used as test format models after more rigorous assessments which should reflect higher level thinking.
2. Supplemental test prep materials can be used, but should be limited to students who are in need of intervention in a particular subject area rather than as a general practice for all students.
3. Students should be placed in tiered intervention programs, based upon their learning needs, which requires scheduling of academic intervention, tutorials, etc.
4. Students should not be removed from any required core or enrichment TEKS-based instruction for the purpose of test preparation/remediation. Short-term focused intervention tutorials may be scheduled in the three weeks prior to the TAKS test, but should not remove students from other required instruction without the approval of the campus principal.
5. Parents must be notified if students are removed from any core or enrichment TEKS-based course or classroom for test preparation and grades for the missed course/class must reflect student absence from instruction.

GRADES 9-12 GRADING GUIDELINES

Reporting Learning Standards Mastery

Report cards are issued every six week grading period, and grades will be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Grading of student work should be based on State- and District-required learning standards and provide clear expectations for mastery that are communicated to and/or co-constructed with students. A grade of 50 is the lowest grade that will be recorded as a six-weeks grade. While 50 is the lowest six weeks grade recorded on the report card, teachers and teacher teams determine appropriate grades for daily work, homework, tests, etc. (which may include a grade lower than 50).

Grades shall not be entered, nor credit awarded, for subjects from which students have been pulled for instruction in another subject during a grading period. If a student is assigned to an academic intervention class, that student must be moved to the roster for that intervention class. For courses carrying state credit, such moves may only be made at the end of a semester so that students can receive credit. For courses carrying local credit, such moves may be made at the end of a six-weeks grading period.

Three-week Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued by the teacher every three weeks if a student's performance in any subject or class is below 70 or whose average is deemed borderline according to District guidelines, and shall be recorded and communicated using district-approved reporting forms and/or software programs. Teachers are encouraged to issue progress reports to all students to communicate standards mastery and provide specific feedback about effort exhibited by the student in their learning.

Determining Homework Grades

Homework is defined as work that is completed outside of class time and is an extension and/or extra practice related to concepts taught in class or preparation for a future class. Homework may help families become more involved with the educational process, communicate high expectations for students and help students develop self-discipline and organizational skills.

All homework assignments must be designed as a meaningful part of the educational process and be reviewed by the teacher. Feedback should be provided within 48 hours of the submission of the assignment, or as soon as reasonably possible. Feedback is defined as written comments, peer review, conference, grades, etc.

The cumulative time spent on homework must be reasonable. No more than 2 hours per night or 10 total hours per week of homework should be assigned across all subjects/teachers combined, with the exception of students enrolled in multiple Advanced Placement courses who may be assigned up to 1 hour per day per AP course with total per week for all subjects/teachers combined of no more than 20 hours (considerations may need to be made based on campuses with block schedule, but the total number of hours should remain consistent for students). Department heads/CILT teachers should collaborate to determine homework assignments that meet this expectation.

Determining Class work Grades

Class work should be rigorous, effort-based and cumulative to show mastery of content area concepts such as in projects or rigorous tasks.

Expectations for grading class work should be clearly defined through rubrics, criteria charts, or other evaluative tools, etc. Project and/or problem based assignments that evaluate mastery of multiple concepts should be clearly defined in a rubric or criteria chart that is communicated to/co-constructed with and understood by students.

Makeup Work and Incomplete Grades

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests without grade penalty after an absence. Students will be given at least two school days for every day missed to complete the assignments or tests missed after an absence. An incomplete (I) grade on the six week report card may be recorded if the allotted period has not elapsed prior to the end of the six weeks grading period. An incomplete for a six-weeks grade must be made up within ten school days, or a 50 will be recorded (or the actual grade average earned if it is higher than 50). Principals must be notified when an Incomplete is assigned.

Semester grades of Incomplete must be reviewed by the school's attendance committee or grade placement committee. The campus committee will determine the method for students to remediate the incomplete grade.

Late Work

Students must be given at least one opportunity to submit late work not related to an absence. Grade penalty should be determined by grade level/department teacher teams and approved by the principal. Teachers shall develop and consistently implement common grade level or department grading procedures for late work in compliance with this regulation and will communicate the common grading procedures to parents and students in writing as directed by the campus principal.

Giving zeros as a grade for late work is not a best practice, and, therefore it is recommended that a parent call/notification be made prior to recording a grade of zero, (especially for students for whom the zero will likely result in a failing grade). Efforts should be made to assist students in completing missed work.

Retesting

Students shall be permitted to retake any major test that she or he has failed, with the exception of ACPs, within 5 school days the failing grade was received or no later than 10 days of the date of the test. The higher score earned on either test will be recorded in the grade book, and the lower score removed (not averaged).

Test and/or Project Grades

Teachers should use a variety of assessment methods such as unit tests, project evaluation, six-weeks tests, etc. There should be no fewer than 3 and no more than 5 test/major project grades per six weeks in each subject area, including a required six weeks test and semester exam. District benchmarks are not graded but may be counted as ungraded tests in order to meet the number of required tests in a six weeks. Rubrics used for grading projects shall reflect mastery of identified content learning standards.

Number of Grades

Teachers should record no fewer than 3 class work/homework grades per week per subject, with a minimum of 18 grades per subject per six weeks, no more than ½ of which can be homework. Projects may assess multiple learning standards, so one project may result in multiple grade book entries. Grades should be documented weekly.

Grade Weights for Determining Six Weeks Grades

Class work/Homework*	40% (no more than ½ homework)
Tests	25% grade weight
Projects/Products	20% grade weight (ex: composition, research paper, presentation, report)
Six weeks test grade	15% grade weight

Determining Semester and Yearly Grades

The Semester Exam/ACP will account for 15% of the semester grade, and the three six weeks grades will be averaged to account for the remaining 85% of the semester grade. Semester grades are averaged together to assign a yearly grade.

High class/grade level/school failure rates

Teachers with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >20% in any subject area will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by the principal.

Schools with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >20% in any grade/subject will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by the executive director of the learning community. Continued school failure rates resulting in >15% retention of students in any grade level may result in additional required interventions/supports/consequences.

Teachers should be prepared to provide an update to the campus principal for students whose grade average is on the pass/fail borderline of 68-69 higher including academic supports for the next six weeks.

Guidelines for Standardized Test Prep/Remediation

Test genre practice for standardized state assessments may be a part of the preparation process for students, but should not take the place of rigorous instruction or more open-ended performance based assessments. Therefore, the following must be followed regarding the use of test prep materials.

1. Test prep formatted questions can be used as test format models after more rigorous assessments which should reflect higher level thinking.
2. Supplemental test prep materials can be used, but should be limited to students who are in need of intervention in a particular subject area rather than as a general practice for all students.
3. Students should be placed in tiered intervention programs, based upon their learning needs, which requires scheduling of academic intervention, tutorials, etc.
4. Students should not be removed from any required core or enrichment TEKS-based instruction for the purpose of test preparation/remediation. Short-term focused intervention tutorials may be scheduled in the three weeks prior to the TAKS test, but should not remove students from other required instruction without the approval of the campus principal.
5. Parents should be notified if students are removed from any core or enrichment TEKS-based course or classroom for test preparation and grades for the missed course/class must reflect student absence from instruction.