

**Dallas  
Independent  
School  
District**



**Grading Policy and Regulation Changes**

**Learning Community Meetings: Principals' Awareness Session**

**July/August 2008**

# **Policies, Tools, Protocols, and Practices Carry our Theory of Action**

**Principles of Learning**

**Curriculum Planning Guides**

**Disciplinary Literacy Principles (lens 5)**

**Protocol for Studying Student Work**

**Learning Walk Protocol**

**Case Studies**

**Halverson Leadership Rubric**

**Instructional Reform Policies:**

**Theory of Action AEA(Local)**

**Grading Policy EIA(Local) and EIA(Regulation)**

# Grading Policy EIA (Local)

- Effort-Based Grading Changes
  - Defined grading, homework and class work and their role in effort-based schools
  - Established parameters for incomplete and late work, including giving zeros as grades
  - Extended time for completion of work
  - Expanded retesting opportunities and clarified retest grading for students who miss exams
  - Maintained lowest grade of 50 to encourage students effort and give students an opportunity to recover from short-term failure
  - Changed semester and yearly averaging
  - Changed the % weight for ACPs

# Grading Regulation Components

(Big Ideas for Effort Based Grading Procedures)

- PK-12 (applies to all)
  - Philosophy (effort-based equity and access)
  - Purpose (communication, motivation, instruction and improvement)
  - Guidelines (test prep, six-week and semester grades)
  - Examples of appropriate use of homework
- Differentiated by PK-1, 2-5, and 6-12
  - Report cards and progress reports
  - Late/incomplete work and timelines for accepting late work
  - Grade determination (class work, tests/projects and homework, grading weights, negative effect of zeros)
  - High failure rate interventions (teachers and schools)

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: Homework

- PK-1:** Assigned infrequently; focus on parent involvement; literacy and math  
Reinforce and support mastery of learning  
Cannot not be recorded in grade book; feedback required
- 2-5:** Recorded in grade book if it improves the grade average; feedback required  
Focus on parent engagement, communicate high expectations  
No more than 1 hour per night / no more that five hours per week for all grade level subjects/teachers combined (not including “reading with parents” time)
- 6-8:** Feedback provided within 48 hours, or as soon as reasonably possible  
May or may not be awarded a grade at the teacher’s discretion  
Primary consideration given to recording grades that raise a student’s average  
No more than 1.5 hours per night or seven hours per week for all grade level subjects/teachers combined
- 9-12:** Feedback provided within 48 hours, or as soon as reasonably possible  
No more than 2 hours per night or 10 hours per week for all grade level subjects/teachers combined (For students in multiple AP courses, homework may be assigned up to one hour per day per AP course with a total per week for all subjects combined of not more than 20 hours.)

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: Make-Up Work/Late Work & Zeros

**PK-1:** Usually related to extenuating circumstances (long-term illness, etc.) and teachers will work individually with parents to develop a plan for missed concepts

**2-5:** Zeros:  
Giving a zero is not a best practice and can be recorded only after a parent call/notification has been made and the student has been given at least 2 days for every day missed to complete the assignment after parent notification

## Make up Work:

Students may make up assignments and tests without grade penalty after absence  
Students given at least two school days for every day missed to complete the assignments or tests missed after an absence

Late Work: Students must be given at least one opportunity to submit late work not related to an absence; grade penalty may be determined by the principal-approved grade level policy and must be consistently applied across the grade level, but primary consideration must be given to documenting learning mastery rather than consequences for behavior

## Incomplete Six Weeks Grade:

An incomplete for a six weeks grade on the six week report card may be recorded if the allotted time period has not elapsed prior to the end of the grading period. An incomplete must be made up within the semester in which the incomplete was recorded, 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.

# Grading Regulation

## Big Ideas: Make-Up Work, Late Work, and Giving Zeros

6-8

### Zeros:

and

9-12

Giving a zero is not a best practice; teachers are encouraged to contact parents prior to recording a grade of zero (especially for students for whom the zero will likely result in a failing grade), and efforts made to assist students in completing work

### Make up Work:

Students may 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

### Late Work:

Students must be given at least one opportunity to submit late work not related to an absence;  
Grade penalty may be determined by the principal-approved department grading policy and must be consistently applied across the department  
Primary consideration must be given to documenting learning mastery rather than consequences for behavior

### Incomplete Six Weeks Grade:

An incomplete for a six weeks grade on the six week report card may be recorded if the allotted time period has not elapsed prior to the end of the grading period. An incomplete must be made up within 10 days of returning to school, 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.

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: Type and Number of “Daily” Grades

- PK-1:** Criteria for grading communicated to parents and displayed in the classroom  
Grades from group and independent work  
One overall grade for art, music, and PE given by specialists (pending report card)
- 2-5:** Expectations for grading communicated to students and posted in the classroom  
Criteria for projects that evaluate multiple standards communicated (rubrics or criteria charts)  
More than one grade may be recorded for a project (based on the scoring rubric)  
No fewer than 1 grade per week per subject or a minimum of 6 per six weeks
- 6-8:** Expectations for grading communicated to students and posted in the classroom  
Criteria for projects that evaluate multiple learning standards communicated (rubrics or criteria charts)  
More than one grade may be recorded for a project (based on the scoring rubric)  
No fewer than 2 grades per week per subject or a minimum of 12 per six weeks (no more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of which can be homework)
- 9-12:** Expectations for grading communicated to students and posted in the classroom  
Criteria for projects that evaluate multiple standards communicated (rubrics or criteria charts)  
More than one grade may be recorded for a project (based on the scoring rubric)  
No fewer than 3 grades per week per subject or a minimum of 18 per six weeks (no more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of which can be homework)

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: Type and Number of “Test” Grades

- PK-1:** Criteria for assessments communicated to parents, students and displayed in the classroom  
Grades from group and independent formative and summative assessments
- 2-5:** Use a variety of assessment types; focus on high thinking demand; communicated to parents and students  
No fewer than 2 and no more than 4 grades per six weeks in each core subject area, including six weeks test (district benchmarks may be counted as 1 test for this purpose)  
Rubrics used for grading projects/tasks reflect mastery of learning standards  
Retest opportunity provided for any failed major test; higher grade awarded (not averaged)
- 6-8:** Use a variety of assessment types; focus on high thinking demand; criteria communicated  
No fewer than 2 and no more than 4 grades per six weeks in each subject area, including six weeks test (district benchmarks and ACPs (grades 7-8 only) may be counted as tests for this purpose)  
Required six weeks test (common assessments/CPG tests may be developed)  
Rubrics used for grading projects/tasks reflect mastery of learning standards  
Retest opportunity provided for any failed major test; higher grade awarded (not averaged)  
ACP 10% of semester grade (grades 7-8 only)
- 9-12:** Use a variety of assessment types; focus on high thinking demand; criteria communicated  
No fewer than 3 and no more than 5 grades per six weeks in each subject area, including six weeks test (district benchmarks and ACPs may be counted as tests for this purpose)  
Required six weeks test (common assessments/CPG tests may be developed)  
Rubrics used for grading projects/tasks reflect mastery of learning standards  
Retest opportunity provided for any failed major test; higher grade awarded (not averaged)  
ACP 15% of semester grade

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: Grade Weights

<b>PK-1:</b>	<b>Report card grade letter grade will be determined from 50% class work and 50% assessments</b>	
	<b>Unless otherwise indicated on the report card, only one overall grade per six weeks will be entered for art, music, physical education, and theater arts</b>	
<b>2-5:</b>	<b>Class work/Homework*</b>	<b>50% (homework recorded if it improves grade average)</b>
	<b>Tests</b>	<b>20% grade weight</b>
	<b>Projects/products</b>	<b>20% grade weight</b> (reports, research, compositions, presentations, etc.)
	<b>Six weeks test grade</b>	<b>10% grade weight</b>
<b>6-8:</b>	<b>Class work/Homework*</b>	<b>45% (no more than <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> homework)</b>
	<b>Tests</b>	<b>20% grade weight</b>
	<b>Projects/products</b>	<b>20% grade weight</b> (reports, research, compositions, presentations, etc.)
	<b>Six weeks test grade</b>	<b>15% grade weight</b>
<b>9-12:</b>	<b>Class work/Homework*</b>	<b>40% (no more than <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> homework)</b>
	<b>Tests</b>	<b>25% grade weight</b>
	<b>Projects/products</b>	<b>20% grade weight</b> (reports, research, compositions, presentations, etc.)
	<b>Six weeks test grade</b>	<b>15% grade weight</b>

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: Test Prep

## **PK-1:**

- **Test prep practice for norm-referenced tests and other standardized assessment is not appropriate in grades PK-1 and should not be practiced**

## **2-12:**

- **Test prep formatted questions can be used as test format models after more rigorous assessments**
- **Supplemental test prep materials can be used, but should be limited to students who are in need of intervention in a subject area rather than as a general practice for all students**
- **Students should be placed in tiered intervention programs based upon their learning needs, which requires scheduling of interventions during the school day**
- **With few exceptions (as determined by the campus principal), 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 with principal approval and teachers should be notified of the dates students will be absent from their class)**
- **Parents must be notified if students are removed from any core or enrichment TEKS-based course or classroom for test preparation that could negatively impact their grade**
- **Enrichment and core area teachers should collaborate to develop strategies for working together to support student mastery of TAKS-tested concepts prior to any test prep affecting enrichment area instruction**

# Grading Regulations Big Ideas: High Class/School Failure Rates

**PK-1:** -Grade/report card failure should very rarely occur at PK-1 and requires parent and principal approval

**2-5:** -Teachers with a six weeks and/or semester failure rate of >10% will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan monitored by the principal

-Schools with a six weeks or semester failure rate of >10% in any grade/subject will develop and submit an intervention support plan to their executive director -

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

-Teachers will be prepared to provide an update to the campus principal for students whose grades are on the pass/fail borderline of 68-69 including strategies for academic supports during the next six weeks

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## Questions and Next Steps

