

Dripping Springs

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

DSISD Secondary Grading Guidelines

Grading Philosophy

Grading is the process by which a teacher assesses and communicates student learning and progress towards mastery of course objectives, as aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Grading is part of the teaching and learning process. This process includes establishing clear learning targets and/or goals along with evaluative criteria to guide student learning and educator understanding about the level of mastery students achieve. The grading process should provide clear and consistent feedback to students, encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning.

Grading shall not be based on non-academic criteria, such as behavior, discipline, attendance, or tardies. We acknowledge that teachers are ultimately bound by grade deadlines, however, we will separate behavior from grades whenever possible. However, students engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and [EIA \(LOCAL\)](#).

The purpose of these grading guidelines is to present a consistent set of grading and reporting regulations across DSISD Secondary campuses. The regulations adhere to the requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC), the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), and DSISD Board policies and regulations.

Grading Guiding Principles

Following are the guiding principles, which represent the secondary schools' philosophy on assigning grades to student work and reporting grades to students and parents.

- **We believe that transparent communication and timely and meaningful feedback are essential to the learning process.**
 - Parents and students will be informed of student progress through progress reports,

report cards, and Skyward Family Access.

- Grade reports should be an accurate assessment of the student's progress and will be based on a minimum number of grades in each subject.
- When a student is in jeopardy of failing, or is not making academic progress, the teacher will successfully contact the parents/guardians. Teachers, parents or guardians may request conferences at any time. When a personal conference cannot be scheduled, a telephone conference or email may be used as an alternate form of communication.
- Students and parents/guardians are informed how grades will be determined in a particular class via the teacher's syllabus/communication. Teachers will inform students of the evaluative grading criteria and/or rubrics that will be used in advance of all major assignments.
- **We are committed to designing learning experiences that lead to a student's demonstration of mastery of a standard or TEK.**
 - Students must complete all assignments.
 - Zeros may be recorded on interim reports. Every effort will be made to replace the zero with a grade which reflects the student's level of mastery.
 - The PLC/teacher has the discretion to determine which-coursework will be graded. Not all coursework need(s) to be graded; it is the feedback that is meaningful and necessary.
 - No "blanket" grades are to be used. A blanket grade is giving every student in the class the same grade for an assignment without regard to individual achievement.
- **We believe errors are intrinsic to the learning process.**
 - Students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery on an assignment and/or concept.
- **We believe students are responsible for ownership of their learning.**
 - The responsibility relies on the student to take advantage of tutorials, interventions and retake opportunities.
- **We believe consistent student attendance is essential to successful learning.**
 - A student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance at least 90% of the days for each semester after the first date of enrollment in the District. A student who is in attendance for at least 75%, but less than 90% of the days

a class is offered, may be given credit if the student completes a plan approved by the principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirement of the class.

Determining Student Grades and Course Credit

- The student's demonstration of mastery of the instructional expectations as aligned in 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 \(LOCAL\)](#).
- In grades 6-12, the actual numerical grade will be recorded in the student's permanent cumulative records. The grades recorded on the permanent record are semester averages. [EIA \(LOCAL\)](#)
- Teachers in grades 6-12 will have grades entered one week from the due date for daily work and two weeks from the due date for special projects and essays as determined by the teacher.
 - Some exceptions may apply in the event of a holiday or assessments.
- Grades will be entered/updated weekly and will consist of a minimum of one grade per week per subject.
 - Some exceptions may apply in the event of a holiday or assessments.
- Student mastery of subject matter TEKS and standards may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary for all grades to have written paper work as their source, nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every assignment produced. Although the teacher will monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity which they assign, the feedback does not always need to be in the form of a grade. All graded assignments (formative and summative) shall be recorded once and weighted once. Teachers will enter at least one formative or summative grade per week. Teachers will enter at least three summative grades each grading term/quarter, with at least two summatives being entered in the gradebook by the end of the second interim grading period

Types/Categories/Weighting of Grades 6-12

Formative = 30%

Summative = 70%

Practice = 0%

Semester 1: 45% of final grade if midterm/final exam is given (50% if no final/midterm given)

Semester 2: 45% of final grade (50% if no final/midterm given)

Midterm/Final Exams (optional): 5% each semester/10% of total/final grade

FORMATIVE, SUMMATIVE & PRACTICE

Formative Assessment - Formative assessments are designed to provide direction for both students and teachers while a student is still learning the curriculum. Formative assessment is ongoing and/or daily; (add:) *therefore, proficiency is not expected.* Students are given multiple opportunities to make errors and mistakes that are intrinsic to the learning process. For students, this may mean reviewing, additional practice, or confirmation that they are ready to move forward. For teachers, it may mean adjusting instructional strategies or providing additional practice. Examples of formative assessments may include teacher observation, quizzes, homework, rough drafts, peer editing, or notebook checks.

Summative Assessments (Academic Achievement) - Assessments conducted when a student has had adequate instruction and practice to be responsible for material mastery. Summative assessments are designed around clearly defined learning targets and success criteria that students can identify. Summative assessments provide information about the amount of learning that has occurred by a certain point.

Practice - Practice assignments are an important step in the learning process, but do not have any weight towards the final grade in the gradebook. Teachers may, however, offer student feedback on practice assignments; proficiency is not expected during practice assignments. Students are given multiple opportunities to make errors and mistakes that are intrinsic to the learning process via these practice assignments. Practice assignments are designed to provide direction for both students and teachers while a student is still learning the curriculum. For the students, practice feedback may indicate the need for additional practice, or may confirm that they are ready to move forward in their learning. For the teachers, practice results may mean changing instructional strategies, providing additional practice, or moving forward in the learning. Examples of practice assignments may include teacher observation, homework, rough drafts, peer editing, or notebook checks.

Missing Assignments

If a student does not turn in an assignment, the assignment will be marked as missing and assigned a zero. At each 3-week grade reporting period, if a student is failing due to zeros, the teacher will contact parents or guardians. If a student fails consecutive 3-week grading periods due to zeros, the teacher will refer the student to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Team (MTSS). A collaborative discussion and plan for student support will be created.

Term Grades due to Incomplete Assignments

If a student has incomplete work due to extenuating circumstances, such as prolonged illness, they can complete such work within two weeks of the close of the grading period. An "INC" is assigned for the term by the teacher to indicate incomplete student work due to extenuating circumstances, which should be made up within two weeks from the close of the grading period. Extensions beyond the two-week period must be approved by the principal and will be considered on an individual basis. UIL rules specify that an "Incomplete" must be replaced with a passing grade within seven calendar days of the close of the grading period in order for the student to be eligible; students with an "I" in the gradebook are considered ineligible to participate in UIL events.

Missing Assignments due to Absences

If a student is absent, the student is responsible for communicating with the teacher within two school days of their absence to obtain the work they missed. The student will be given two to five school days from their absence to complete any late work, depending on the time needed to complete the assignment.

- Students are required to do all work (assignments, homework, projects, quizzes, and tests) missed as a result of an absence. Though a student is given the opportunity to make up work missed by absences, it is impossible for him/her to regain the full benefit of the regular class; therefore, **absences should occur only when absolutely necessary.**

Academic Integrity/Dishonesty Procedures

Academic dishonesty may include: cheating, copying 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 \(LOCAL\)](#).

1st incident in any class: Student is given one opportunity to re-do the assignment, assessment, etc. without grade penalty. Student behavior is reported to the Assistant Principal via Skyward for disciplinary/behavior consequence

2nd incident in any class: Student is given one opportunity to re-do the assignment, assessment, etc. without grade penalty. Student behavior is reported to the Assistant Principal via Skyward for escalating disciplinary/behavior consequence and a behavioral referral to MTSS is initiated. Suggested removal from campus Honor Societies will come from Assistant Principal to sponsors.

3rd incident in any class: Student is given one opportunity to re-do the assignment, assessment, etc. without grade penalty. Student behavior is reported to the Assistant Principal via Skyward for escalating disciplinary/behavior consequence and revisit MTSS referral.

Progress Reports

6th–12th Grades: Progress reports are issued electronically via Skyward Family Access to all students at the end of the 3rd and 6th week checkpoints of each nine week grading period; paper reports are not issued unless directly requested by the parent. Progress reports may be distributed at any other time as determined by the student's teacher.

EIC (Local) re: Grading Symbols

DSISD Grade Reporting Schedule/Calendar

Promotion/Retention

Board Policies [EIE\(LEGAL\)](#) and [EIE\(LOCAL\)](#) state that promotion, acceleration, and grade-level advancement shall be based on mastery of the grade level standards. The classroom teacher shall monitor and evaluate the progress of a student.

For grades 6-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a

scale of 100 based on course level, grade-level standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and skills) and a minimum grade of 70 in four content subjects: English Language Arts and Reading, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science per [EIE \(LOCAL\)](#).

Students in 6th-12th grade will participate in STAAR assessments. If a student in 8th grade is unsuccessful in passing reading or math STAAR, then the Acceleration Learning Committee (ALC), comprised of the student's principal, teacher, and parent/guardian, must develop an educational plan for a student that provides the necessary accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the conclusion of the school year. Students who do not meet standard on STAAR will be provided with accelerated instruction and tutorial opportunities to address gaps in mastery of TEKS.

Reteaching and Reassessment

DSISD's goal is for every student to master the TEKS specified for each grade level. Each student will be provided instruction that allows for application and practice of the concepts and skills mandated in the TEKS and then assessed for mastery.

Reteaching is a meaningful part of the learning cycle towards mastery of TEKS, skills or standards, and must occur before students retest. Reteaching employs instructional strategies different from the original mode of instruction.

Reassessment involves giving the student an additional opportunity to demonstrate his/her mastery of the TEKS.

- Educators shall provide the opportunity for students to reassess formative and summative assignments for which they received a failing grade, per [EIA \(LOCAL\)](#). Secondary campuses have committed to allowing all students an opportunity to reassess.
- Reteaching and reassessment may occur during class time, tutorials, before/after school, etc.
- Students shall participate in a relearning plan before reassessment. Relearning plans may include but are not limited to corrections, practice, teacher conference, and/or an alternative learning activity.
- The teachers will differentiate instruction to support students' mastery of the required content.

- Students will have 5 school days from the time the student has access to the assignment and feedback to attend a reteach session and reassess. Teacher discretion is always encouraged in the case of extenuating circumstances due to doctor's appointments, school related events, illness, etc.
- The reassessment will be different from the original assessment. It may include varied ways to demonstrate mastery of the previous misconceptions such as another similar assessment, independent corrections, etc.
- Assessments given the last week of the 9-week grading period will be recorded on the next 9-week grading period, allowing students time to reassess before grades are due. This should be clearly communicated to students and parents.
- Reassessment is limited to the grading quarter/term in which the original assessment occurred.
- Once reteach and retest opportunities are provided, the higher grade of the two grades will be recorded.
- A students' average shall not drop to failing the last week of the grading period, without the opportunity for reteaching and reassessment.
- Students may earn up to 100% on the reassessment.

Formative Assignments

- Homework is the practice of concepts and skills previously taught in the classroom or the gathering of information and ideas for an upcoming class. Teachers will ensure homework is purposeful, meaningful, and reasonable for the grade level and course (On-level, Honors, etc).
- Homework is a useful tool to reinforce learning and provide feedback, but not an adequate tool to measure what a student knows and/or can do, thus teachers should be cognizant when assigning numerical grades to homework.
- Homework should be directly related to classroom instruction, student needs, and structured to ensure high completion rates. Homework should not involve new learning that has not been taught, however may involve introductory materials.
- Feedback on homework should be provided in a timely manner.
- Homework is not to be assigned as a disciplinary measure or punishment.
- Student responsibilities include understanding that they have a homework assignment before

leaving school; taking home all necessary materials to complete the assignment(s); completing homework and returning it to the teacher on time.

- Parent/guardian responsibilities include encouraging good study habits by providing an appropriate environment and location conducive to studying; setting study time; providing necessary support; and, assisting the child in the return of the homework assignment(s) to the teacher on time.
- No assignments or homework/projects will be due on the first day following an extended holiday.
- Students may be assigned optional summer enrichment activities; these activities are not graded and not required for participation/registration in a course.

Transfer of Grades

For guidance on transfer of grades from other campuses and/or districts, see [EIC\(Local\)](#).