

SKIDMORE-TYNAN ISD

SECONDARY

GRADING AND REPORTING GUIDELINES



Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District
Skidmore, Texas
2017-2018

Updated 8-21-2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Grading Philosophy	4
Student Mastery of Learning	5
State Assessments	5
I. Grading Overview - Determining the Student Grades	6
II. Grading Overview - Special Programs	7
III. Transferring Grades	8
IV. Grading Symbols	9
V. Citizenship	10
VI. Re-teaching and Re-testing	10
VII. Homework Policy	11
VIII. Make-up Work for Absences	12
IX. Late Work	13
X. Benchmark Tests	14
XI. Reporting Grades	14
XII. Promotion/Retention of Students	15
XIII. Interventions and Acceleration	16
XIV. Communication with Parents	17

FOREWORD

Grading is the process by which a teacher assesses each student's learning and progress toward mastery of course objectives as aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The grading of student work is a critical component of the teaching and learning process. This process must include establishing clear learning goals and setting standards and evaluative criteria which guide student learning. Additionally, the grading process should provide clear and consistent feedback to students, which motivates them to focus on and ultimately take responsibility for their own learning.

Reporting is the process through which the teacher communicates information to students and parents/guardians about student mastery of content and skills in the given course or subject. While the reporting process includes the dissemination of report cards and progress reports, it may also require other forms of communication such as emails, telephone conversations and/or conferences where parents and students meet individually with the teacher.

Most importantly, the teaching and learning process within the District's schools will promote and encourage a thorough understanding of a rigorous and aligned District curriculum and at all times focus on these four essential questions:

1. What knowledge and skills should each student acquire from the instruction provided?
2. How will the school know if each student has mastered the intended outcomes?
3. How will the school respond when a student has difficulty in mastering the standards?
4. What learning experiences does the school provide to those students who have already mastered the standards?

The purpose of this manual is to provide a consistent set of grading and reporting regulations for Skidmore-Tynan ISD. The regulations adhere to the Texas Education Code (TEC), the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) and Skidmore-Tynan ISD Board policies and regulations.

This manual

- describes the District's grading system which all teachers will implement;
- encourages a better understanding of grading, reporting and promotion by teachers, parents/guardians and students; and
- fosters consistency in grading and reporting student achievement and in promotion and retention practices across the District.

Teachers, students and parents/guardians should understand the impact of grades on high school class rank [Board Policy EIC (LOCAL)] and on promotion and retention [Board Policy EIE (LOCAL)].

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Teachers who are effective in the classroom use grading as part of the complex and intricate process of learning. Using the curriculum for the State of Texas, TEKS serve as the foundation and teachers begin the teaching and learning process by thoughtfully considering what the students already know and what they need to learn.

Teachers

- construct assignments and tests that will both teach and assess students' learning;
- establish fair, clear standards and criteria and apply those criteria consistently to student work;
- use previously disclosed rubrics when assessing the students' skills;
- offer feedback to their students in the form of comments and grades;
- provide meaningful opportunities within the classroom setting for their students to assess their own work; and
- apply what they learn from the grading process to improve their teaching.

Standards-based tests and quizzes yielding numerical grades represent only one aspect of evaluating student learning. Complete grading calls for multiple assessment techniques, such as portfolios, projects, presentations/performances, learning logs, journals, surveys, interviews, simulations and role-playing. Using many different evaluation strategies will elicit more opportunities for student success.

As lifelong learners, students must be prepared for college and the workforce. The teacher will create and sustain a learning environment by basing grades on the student's knowledge and skills as demonstrated by a wide variety of assessments.

In compliance with Texas Education Code §28.0216, grading in ST-ISD

1. Must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment;
2. May not require a classroom teacher to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard for a student's quality of work; and
3. May allow a student a reasonable opportunity to makeup or re-do a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

In addition, grading should help the teacher

1. Communicate progress to the student and parent/guardian on the mastery of the TEKS;
2. Appraise the effectiveness of teaching strategies and modes of instruction;
3. Evaluate strengths and needs of each student; and
4. Determine if credit will be awarded.

Grading should help the parents/guardians

1. Understand their child as a learner;
2. Become knowledgeable about the student's mastery of the TEKS;
3. Guide the student in making academic progress toward successful graduation; and
4. Encourage the student to give maximum performance in academic areas.

Grading should help the student

1. Evaluate and see personal progress on mastery of the TEKS and
2. Recognize how work may be improved.

STUDENT MASTERY OF LEARNING

As used in these regulations, the term mastery refers to the knowledge and skills necessary for students to be academically successful. Grades earned commonly reflect the degree to which students attain mastery in any given course. Further, student mastery implies foundational understanding necessary in developing skills and processes on a continuum from simple to complex.

To determine the content on which mastery is based, teachers will rely on the TEKS as reflected in District-authorized scope and sequences, curriculum guides and/or advanced course curricula. This mastery will be supported by research-based instructional practices, available technology, community resources and state-adopted textbooks. Pulling from this vast range of resources, the teacher will create lessons that reflect the TEKS being targeted and include assessment strategies appropriate for the learning of all students.

Effective teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to determine mastery of content and skills being taught. Assessments may include, but are not limited to, student performances and projects, teacher observations of developmental skills, work samples, oral interviews and written assignments.

Recording mastery at one point in time does not guarantee lifelong mastery, nor does it relieve teachers of the responsibility of reviewing content as part of ongoing instruction.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

The statewide assessment program, the State of Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (STAAR) in grades 3-12, assesses both Readiness Standards and Supporting Standards. In general, Readiness Standards are essential for success in the current grade or course; are important for preparedness for the next grade or course; support college and career readiness; necessitate in-depth instruction; and address broad and deep ideas. In general, Supporting Standards may be introduced in the current grade or course and emphasized in a subsequent year; may be emphasized in a previous year and reinforced in the current grade or course; may play a role in preparing students for the next grade or course but not a central role; and may address more narrowly defined ideas. Readiness and Supporting Standards are identified in the assessed curriculum documents. These documents are posted on the TEA Student Assessment website at STAAR Resources.

GRADING OVERVIEW

I. DETERMINING STUDENT GRADES

- A. Student mastery of the instructional objectives as aligned in the TEKS for grade-level subjects/courses, shall be the major factor in determining the student's grade for a subject or course [Board Policy EIA (LOCAL)].
- B. The evaluation of student knowledge and skills may not be appropriate in the initial stages of instruction and learning. Teachers may base a student's grade on defined progress toward mastery during the grading period, rather than on a cumulative average. It is recommended that each campus reach consensus on when to assess student mastery.
- C. Grades will be sufficient in number and category (homework, quizzes, tests, etc.) to reflect an accurate measure of a student's progress and achievement. It is the responsibility of each department/campus to set the categories and a minimum number of grades per category to be recorded in a grading period. Standards may vary from course to course or level to level within a department.
- D. No single grade will count more than 20% of the nine weeks average or the semester average.
- E. "Blanket" grades are not to be issued during a grading period. A blanket grade occurs when each student in the class receives the same grade for an assignment without regard to individual achievement.
- F. 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 campus-approved options listed below:
 - 1. Canceling the lowest grade in a category before averaging;
 - 2. Allowing students the opportunity to do additional work within the grading period;
 - 3. Giving bonus points for completing additional or optional assignments/projects evolving from the course objectives;
 - 4. Providing special opportunities for a student to respond orally; and
 - 5. Including participation grades when appropriate to the learning objective, e.g. for oral responses in a Spanish I class.
- G. The actual numerical grade will be recorded in the student's permanent cumulative record. [Board Policy EIA (LOCAL)]. Grades recorded on the permanent record are semester grades. In a full year course, if the first or second semester grade is failing, the teacher will average the two semester grades and award full credit if the yearly average is 70 or above.
- H. Cooperative learning structures may be used as an instructional strategy in order to encourage academic achievement within a team context. The rubric or grading standards for a cooperative activity or project will be shared with the students in advance, indicating whether they will be graded for individual academic achievement, team academic achievement or both.
- I. The responsibility for grading student work belongs with the teacher. While peer review (peer editing and marking) can be a valuable learning activity, students will not grade tests, quizzes or other major assignments. Peer marking of homework and/or other assignments is acceptable, but

the teacher must review the work before assigning the final grade. Confidentiality requirements provide that students must not have access to the grades of other students.

- J. Grades that are identifiable by individual students must not be posted or announced publicly by teachers or students.
- K. A student's academic grades will not be affected by non-academic behavior or adherence to procedural rules, e.g. using the proper heading or using a certain color of ink, bringing certain supplies to class or being tardy. Behavior and adherence to classroom rules will be evaluated under "Citizenship" on the report card for each subject.
- L. A student may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance at least 90% of the days the class is offered.
 - 1. Absences due to suspensions shall not be counted against the minimum attendance policy as prescribed by law.
 - 2. If a student is suspended, the student will be allowed to make up the work when the student returns to school.
- M. 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, but is not limited to, cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism and unauthorized communication between students during an examination or outside of class with students who have not yet tested or turned in work. 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, on a preponderance of the evidence standard, taking into consideration written materials, observation or information from students [Board Policy EIA (LOCAL)].

II. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- A. Fine Arts
 - 1. 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.
 - 2. If a performance is the culminating activity based on implementation of the TEKS, a grade may be given for participation or nonparticipation. Extenuating circumstances shall be considered when a student misses a performance, but shall not necessarily be the final determinative criteria.

B. English Language Learner

1. Grades for English Language Learners (ELL) 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.
2. Accommodations for English Language Learners (ELL) include, 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 and use of visual aids.

C. Special Education

1. For students receiving special education services, any variation in District grading procedures should be related to the student's specific disability, which shall be determined by the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee and included in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
2. Consideration will be given for evaluating the academic progress of children who qualify for special education services so that they are not be penalized because of their handicapping condition or disability.
3. Grades must be based on performance that demonstrates progress toward mastery of the TEKS following the application of the ARD-recommended accommodations and/or modifications.
4. It is important that the level of TEKS instruction and content expectations are clearly articulated in a student's IEP, along with accommodations and/or modifications related to measuring mastery. This information is critical for teachers to develop appropriate classroom evaluations and make decisions regarding statewide assessment.
5. Student work can be assessed by the special education teacher, the general education teacher and/or a combination of both teachers, but must be recorded by the teacher of record.

III. TRANSFERRING GRADES

A. Transferring Between Levels of the Same Course

1. Transfers from a Pre-AP, AP, or Dual Credit classes must occur within the first six calendar weeks of the course and a grade change form will document the transferred grade(s). This gives the student an opportunity to succeed in the course for that grading period.
2. It is in the best interest of the student and the responsibility of the campus administration to fairly assess the student's need to be withdrawn, to counsel the student to remain in the course until semester, to seek out tutoring and support for academic success in this course, to promote college and career readiness and to provide an accurate and transparent record to any college. Notification of the student's request will be provided to the parent.

Upon confirmation that the student will be required to stay in the class, the student may appeal the decision to the principal. The student may appeal with permission from the parent. The principal will hear the request within five (5) days and determine if there are extreme or extenuating circumstances that would provide for the student's withdrawal from the course.

- B. Transferring Into a Pre-AP or AP Course from a Regular Level Course
 1. If a student is moving into a Pre-AP or AP course from the regular level of the same course, the transferring average from the regular course will transfer as is.

- C. Transferring Into a Regular Course after the First Semester
 1. The first semester grade remains as is and is given the appropriate weight for Pre-AP or AP credit. The second semester grade for the regular course will not be weighted.

D. Students Transferring from Out-of-District

1. When a student transfers grades for properly documented Pre-AP, AP, and dual credit; the District shall assign weight to those grades based on the District’s grade weight system, if a similar or equivalent course is offered to the same class of students in the District. [Board Policy EIC (LOCAL)]
2. When grades of transfer students are received as letter grades, the following numerical values will be given:

A+ = 98	B+ = 88	C+ = 79	D+ = 74	F = 60
A = 95	B = 85	C = 77	D = 72	
A- = 91	B- = 81	C- = 75	D- = 70	

For all other conversions, counselors should consult the sending school district for the conversion scale.

3. If a student transfers during a nine-week grading period, the grade average for each transfer course will be counted proportionate to the number of weeks in the grading period that the grade covers.

IV. GRADING SYMBOLS TO USE

A. The grades recorded on progress reports and report cards will be numerical averages.

100-90	A	Excellent
89-80	B	Above Average
79-70	C	Average
69-0	F	Failing

B. Additional notations seen on reports may include the following:

1. I (Incomplete)

An "I" is assigned by the teacher to indicate incomplete student work that should be made up within three weeks from the close of the grading period. An "I" must be recorded if a student is eligible for makeup work.

UIL rules specify that an "Incomplete" must be replaced with a passing grade within seven (7) calendar days of the close of the grading period in order for the student to be eligible.

2. 0 (Zero)

It is appropriate to award a 0 when no grades have been earned. Otherwise, students will be assigned the grade earned.

V. CITIZENSHIP

A. Citizenship codes are as follows:

E = Excellent

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

B. The citizenship code is an indication of the student's daily behavior for a nine-week period and is based on an established discipline management plan.

VI. RE-TEACHING AND RE-TESTING

The District's goal is for every student to master all of the TEKS specific to each grade level and the STAAR and STAAR End of Course (EOC) exams. 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. If a student does not demonstrate mastery of concepts and skills as specified in the TEKS and necessary for future learning, re-teaching and re-testing (or re-assessment) should be provided for the student. Re-teaching and re-testing is considered a form of course or credit protection.

For the purpose of consistency and equity, the District will have a re-teach and re-test plan that is appropriate for student mastery. Campuses will ensure that teachers at each grade level in junior high school and in each course in high school follow the District's re-teach/re-test procedure. It is the responsibility of all teachers to consistently monitor student progress and to implement re-teaching and re-testing for all, most, or some of the students. Teachers will base their decisions to re-teach and re-test on whether the curriculum provides sufficient future opportunities for most students to master a concept or skill.

- A. If 50% or more of the students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery of TEKS on a summative assessment, the teacher will provide an opportunity for re-teaching and re-testing during class time. All students in the class will be given the opportunity for re-teach and re-test. The higher of the two grades will be recorded in the grade book.
- B. If fewer than 50% of all students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery of TEKS on a summative assessment, the teachers will provide re-teaching and re-testing during or outside of class time. The grade on the re-assessment will be recorded as no higher than 70 if mastery is demonstrated. If mastery is not demonstrated, the higher grade will be recorded.

- C. Best practice finds that efforts to re-teach should employ instructional strategies that differ from the original instruction.
- D. Re-testing or re-assessment may include, but is not limited to, oral examination, additional practice activities, an essay or paper, a report or presentation, test corrections, revision of a paper or project, or a formal test.
- E. Re-teaching/re-testing provisions do not apply to semester exams.

VII. HOMEWORK POLICY

A. Rationale for Homework

1. Homework, is an effective tool for improving understanding, enriching learning, encouraging personal connections and providing opportunities to pursue special interests.
2. Homework may include written work, reading, studying, preparing for class and/or assessments and other activities related to classroom work.
3. Homework assignments should always be designed to help student mastery of the content and to extend student learning.
4. Homework is one means of teaching the necessary skills of independent study and learning outside the classroom without immediate teacher supervision. Homework includes assignments that the teacher expects all students to complete outside of class. By contrast, class work includes assignments that the teacher expects the majority of students to complete during the class period.
5. Teachers have the discretion to allow extended time for some students to complete class work when additional time is needed. If the majority of students completed the work in class, the work taken home will be graded as class work and not homework.
6. Long-term, extended assignments, such as projects and research papers, although requiring work to be completed outside the classroom, should be distinguished from specific, short-term daily homework assignments that are regularly reviewed by the teacher and included in a homework average.
7. Homework will count no more than 20% of the grade for any grading period, as determined by campus developed guidelines.
8. When a student demonstrates mastery of the TEKS on major assessments, homework alone will not be the cause of a failing grade.
9. Homework is not to be assigned as punishment.

B. Teacher Responsibilities

1. Ensuring that students clearly understand and know how to complete assignments successfully.
2. Defining the work to be completed at home and making sure appropriate resources and materials are readily available.
3. Giving instructions to parents/guardians, when appropriate, and explaining how they may partner in helping the student complete the homework.

4. Considering homework as one part of the total learning process by monitoring, collecting and providing meaningful feedback to students.
5. Reviewing and grading homework assignments regularly to give students feedback on their learning.
6. Informing students of homework assignments missed because of an absence or substituting another activity for the missed assignment so that there are no gaps in the student's learning.
7. Avoid assigning homework/projects over extended holidays within the school year that are due on the first class upon returning from the holiday.

C. Student Responsibilities

1. Understanding the homework assignment(s) before leaving school.
2. Taking home all necessary materials to complete assignment(s).
3. Having an organized means of keeping and carrying homework to and from school.
4. Arranging for a place at home to work and creating a regular time to study.
5. Scheduling time for homework that is compatible with family and/or after-school activities.
6. Completing homework with a minimum of parental help.
7. Completing homework assignment(s) as carefully and as neatly as class work.
8. Completing homework and turning it in on time.
9. Understanding the need to budget time for long-term projects.
10. Completing all work missed because of absences or school activities.

D. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

1. Reading and discussing the District's Grading and Reporting Guidelines with the student and encouraging good study habits.
2. Providing the necessary assistance, positive support, and encouraging the development of good study habits.
3. Communicating any concerns and questions regarding homework assignments to the student's teacher.
4. Encouraging the student to seek additional help, if needed, from the teacher.
5. Providing an appropriate time and environment for study and learning; checking the homework for completion and showing an active interest in the work assigned.
6. Monitoring television, technology and outside activities to ensure that the student has sufficient study time.

VIII. MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES

It is essential that students complete make-up assignments, homework, projects, quizzes and tests missed due to absences.

The District distinguishes absences as excused or unexcused. Make-up work for excused absences will be eligible for full credit. Students shall receive a 20% deduction from the total grade earned for any assignment or assessment not made up within the allotted time. A truant absence is an unexcused absence with disciplinary consequences. Make-up work for unexcused absences will be penalized equal to late work. A 20% deduction from the total grade earned will be taken on make-up work for unexcused absences.

- A. Students will be allowed reasonable time to make up assignments, homework, projects, quizzes and tests missed due to absences.
 - 1. At the secondary school level, reasonable time is defined as one class day per class missed, e.g. a student who misses class on Tuesday has until the beginning of class on Thursday to turn in make-up work.
 - 2. For extended absences, make-up assignments shall be made available to students after two consecutive class days of absence.
 - 3. Teachers will provide the assignments to the students and inform students of the time allotted for completing make-up assignments, homework, projects, quizzes and tests.
 - 4. It is the responsibility of every student to obtain, complete and submit the missed work in the time allotted.
- B. Students will not be required to take a quiz or test on the day returning to class from an absence if the quiz or test was announced during the student's absence.
- C. After the student returns to class, the teacher is required to make arrangements with the student within two class days to take a test/quiz if the test/quiz was announced during the student's absence.
- D. Make-up work and tests for all absences should be of the same rigor, but not necessarily the same format, as the original activity, assignment or test.
- E. At the teacher's discretion, make-up tests or presentations may be scheduled before school, after school, or during the student's class period, to ensure that new and/or significant content is not missed.
- F. Students should make prior arrangements with teachers for making up missed work when the absence can be anticipated, e.g. a dental appointment, medical appointment, court appearance, or approved school-related activities.
- G. After a prolonged absence, the teacher has the right to exempt a student from some assignments if the teacher determines that doing so will not have a negative impact on the student's ability to master the content or unfairly bias his/her grade.
- H. The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up work after an absence because of suspension.

IX. LATE WORK

- A. Late work is defined as any assignment that is not submitted on the due date and class period with the exception of make-up work for excused absences or approved school activities.
- B. A 20% deduction from the total grade earned will be taken for late assignments.
- C. Late assignments will be accepted until the material has been assessed summatively or within a three-week grading period.
- D. Extenuating circumstances may occur that prevent the completion and/or submission of assignments on the due date. It is the parent/guardian and/or student's responsibility to inform the teacher and/or an appropriate administrator of any such circumstances so that an exception to the rule may or may not be granted. The teacher and/or appropriate

administrator shall have the authority to render a final decision on the granting of any exceptions.

X. BENCHMARK TESTS

- A. Benchmark tests are designed to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, determine instructional effectiveness, guide instructional decisions and identify programmatic strengths and weaknesses. According to rule, benchmarking shall be used on a limited basis, providing the majority of class time for instruction.
- B. Benchmarks are STAAR-formatted for grades 2-12 and strive to provide current data on the mastery of grade level TEKS. Benchmarks also provide timely data necessary to determine the level and type of differentiated interventions designed to meet student needs.
- C. Scope and sequence and/or assessment benchmarks for which instruction has been provided may be used in calculating student grades.
- D. All Special Education students who participate in the STAAR assessment program will be included in benchmark testing as determined through the ARD committee.
- E. All English Language Learners will receive testing accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified by the LPAC committee.
- F. Dyslexia and Section 504 students will receive accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified in their Section 504 plan.
- G. Feedback from benchmark tests should be shared with students and parents/guardians on campus in order to debrief the activity and the learning.

XI. REPORTING GRADES

- A. Assignments
 - 1. The electronic grade book is the legal repository and is an accurate record of each student's work and achievement; it is electronically archived at the District level.
 - 2. To inform parents/guardians and students, due dates for major assignments, assessments, and projects will be posted prior to the due date.
 - 3. In order to maintain current information for parents/guardians, teachers are directed to grade and post assignments within seven (7) calendar days from the due date.
- B. Grading and the Recording of Grades
 - 1. Teachers will verify and edit student grades prior to the exporting of grades so that the student's accurate average is printed on the progress report or report card.
 - 2. Teachers will also verify and edit grades in the District's grading system.
 - 3. After report cards have been printed, grade changes must be documented and entered by school administrators.
 - 4. Teachers will update "Incomplete" grades within three weeks after the end of the grading period. For the student to be eligible for UIL participation, an

"Incomplete" must be replaced with a passing grade within seven (7) calendar days of the close of the grading period.

C. Parent Portal

1. The Parent Portal contains data extracted from the District's electronic grading program and allows parents/guardians to view recorded grades for the student at any time during the school year.
2. Teachers will update grades in the electronic grade book so that parents/guardians have an accurate understanding of the student's progress in each class.
3. In order to maintain current information for parents/guardians, teachers are directed to grade and post assignments within seven (7) calendar days from the due date.

D. Progress Reports

1. Progress reports are sent home to parents/guardians approximately one week after the third week of each grading period.
2. When a student's behavior is unsatisfactory and/or the student is in jeopardy of failing, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and document any communication that has occurred.
3. Teachers are strongly encouraged to utilize the "Comments" feature of the progress report as an additional communication tool.
4. Distribution dates of progress reports are announced in District publications and posted on the District's web site at stbobcats.net.

E. Report Cards

1. Reports cards are issued to students to be shared with parents/guardians at the end of each nine week grading period; Report cards are also mailed home.
2. Report cards indicate academic progress, citizenship, tardies, and attendance.
3. When a student's behavior is unsatisfactory and/or the student is in jeopardy of failing, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and document and communication that has occurred.
4. Teachers are strongly encouraged to utilize the "Comments" feature of the report card as an additional communication tool.
5. Distribution dates of report cards are announced in District publications and posted on the District's website.

XII. PROMOTION/RETENTION OF STUDENTS

A. For junior high school students, promotion is based on the following factors [Board Policy EIE (LOCAL)]:

1. 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 on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

2. In addition, students in grade 8 must meet the state testing requirements or be recommended by the Grade Placement Committee (GPC) in order to be promoted to grade 9.
- B. For high school students, promotion and classification are based on the following factors: [Board Policy EIE (LOCAL)]
1. Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9-12 shall be earned with successful completion of course credits.
- C. Graduation and credit requirements are as follows:
1. All students graduating from high school must meet the minimum units required by Texas Education Agency (TEA) and any additional graduation requirements as set by the Board of Trustees.
 2. In addition to satisfying all course and credit requirements, graduates must also meet state assessment requirements.
 3. A student must maintain a semester grade average of at least 70 on a scale of 100 to be given credit for a course.
 4. A student receiving no credit due to excessive absences will not receive credit in that class regardless of the grade average.
 5. Course credit may be earned through special credit options such as Credit Recovery, Online Courses, Credit-by-Exam, or Summer School.

XIII. INTERVENTIONS AND ACCELERATION

- A. TEC Sections 28.0212 and 29.081 mandates that accelerated instruction be provided for all students in grades 6-12 who do not perform satisfactorily on any section of the STAAR assessments, who are not likely to receive a diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9, or who are at-risk of dropping out of school.
- B. For students in grades 6-12 who have failed any STAAR assessment or who are not likely to graduate before the fifth year following enrollment in grade 9, a Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) must be developed with the participation of the students and the parents/ guardians.
- C. The PGP may determine the program of acceleration, or the Response to Intervention (RtI) team may assist in designing the accelerated instruction.
- D. Interventions should occur during the regular school day as well as during other times as determined by each campus. This program may include:
1. Elective or local credit courses to improve academic readiness;
 2. Tutorial assistance;
 3. Course and credit recovery programs;
 4. English Language Learner (ELL) programs;
 5. Summer school programs;
 6. On-line tutorials;
 7. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) designed by the ARD through Special Education; or
 8. Before/after school courses.

E. When the PGP is developed, the plan should be shared with current teachers and should be monitored, updated and revised each year as necessary.

F. Course and Credit Recovery

Course and Credit Recovery programs are designed to assist students in gaining credit for failing a semester course, or one or both semesters of a year-long course. This provides the student with passing status for the course in middle school, or, by the semester in high school.

1. Teachers will work outside of class time with students to master content in order for students to earn a passing course/semester grade of 70.
2. There should be a contract or agreement as to the specific requirements between the teacher, student and his/her parents/guardians.
3. Students who do not meet the requirements of the contract or agreement to recover the course or the semester credit may enroll in Summer School.
4. The original failed grade recovered through course and credit recovery will remain in the student's grade history file. Upon successful completion of course or credit recovery, the grade of 70 (for the course or credit recovered) will be added to the student's final grade. The original failed grade will be used in the calculation of class rank.

G. Summer Course and Credit Recovery

Summer course/credit recovery programs are available for middle school and high school students.

1. These programs are designed to extend the second semester so that students needing extra time and support can successfully complete requirements within core courses. The original failed grade will remain in the student's grade history file and will be used when calculating class rank.
2. Summer course recovery is designed for middle school students in designated grade levels who have failed a core course.
3. Summer credit recovery is designed for high school students who failed the first, second, or both semesters of courses.

XIV. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- A. The parent/teacher conference is a valuable source of information for both the parent/guardian and the teacher. The conference provides the opportunity for parents/guardians and the teacher to become better acquainted and to combine efforts in the interest of the student. The conference also allows the student to understand that the school and the home are working together for his/her benefit.
- B. When a student's behavior is unsatisfactory and/or the student is in jeopardy of failing, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and documentation of the communication that has occurred.
- C. Teachers and/or parents/guardians may request conferences at any time. However, when a personal conference cannot be scheduled, a telephone conference or email may be used as an alternate form of communication.

- D. Conferences should occur at a designated time period and in a place that will assure privacy.
- E. In the event that a parent/guardian requests a conference, the teacher should be provided at least 24 hours advance notice.
- F. Web pages are communication tools for parents/guardians; teachers should maintain a current web page as determined by the campus.
- G. Informational meetings for parents/guardians and students may be scheduled when appropriate for program orientation and review.