

Jr. High & High School Grading Guidelines



Mission

Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD provides a safe, secure and challenging learning environment, through the responsible use of all resources, to afford opportunities for all students to realize their individual potential and to become responsible and productive members of society.

Vision

Prepare EVERY student to be a productive citizen.

Priorities:

- P1: High Achievement for all Students
- P2: High-performing and Engaged Workforce
- P3: Effective and Efficient District and Campus Operations

Core Competencies:

With a commitment to district-wide Continuous Improvement, the Core Competencies at SCUC are: Students First; Valuing and Engaging our Workforce; Effective and Efficient Work Processes.

Board Policy

EIA (LEGAL) GRADING POLICY

The District shall adopt a grading policy, including provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations, before each school year. The District grading policy:

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 to the student's quality of work; and
3. May allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade. Education Code 28.0216

EIA (LOCAL) GUIDELINES FOR GRADING

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each campus or instructional level develops guidelines for teachers to follow in determining grades for students. These guidelines shall ensure that grading reflects a student's relative mastery of an assignment and that a sufficient number of grades are taken to support the grade average assigned. Guidelines for grading shall be clearly communicated to students and parents. In accordance with grading guidelines, a student shall be permitted a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which the student received a failing grade.

Student Mastery of Learning

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. To determine the content on which mastery is based, teachers will rely on the state TEKS as reflected in the district aligned Pacing Calendars, Unit Maps and/or course guides.

Table of Contents

Grading Policy.....3

Common Assessments.....3

Benchmark Tests.....4

Grading Philosophy.....4

Grading Overview.....5

Re-teaching and Re-testing.....5

Homework Policy.....6

Make Up Work for Absences.....6

Late Work.....7

Grading in Special Programs.....7

Transfer Grades.....7

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Effective teachers use grading as part of the process of learning. Using the TEKS as the foundation of the curriculum, they begin by targeting student expectations and use a variety of formative and summative assessments to provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery. Grading guidelines provide a uniformed system to consistently communicate each student's progress towards mastery of the learning standards. A grading system implemented with fidelity and transparency allows students, parents, and educators to partner in the success of each individual student.

Teacher expectations:

- Design classroom instruction that embraces higher levels of learning using research-based best teaching practices.
- Improve student achievement with lessons that engage students in TEKS standards.
- Set direction for student learning using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Aligned to Learning, Results Focused, Time Framed) goals and PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) cycles to drive student improvement
- Utilize a variety of formative and summative assessments in each grading period to assess student learning. Complete and effective grading calls for multiple assessment techniques, including performances, portfolios, projects, presentations, learning logs, journals, surveys, interviews, simulations and role-playing. Using many different instructional and evaluation strategies elicits more opportunities for student success and addresses multiple ways that students learn.
- Establish and apply clear standards and consistently to student work.
- Use results to make data-driven decisions regarding classroom instruction and to develop opportunities for re-teach and re-learn.

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
4. Determine if credit will be awarded

Grading should help the student -

1. Evaluate personal progress toward mastery of the TEKS
2. Recognize how work may be improved
3. Set personal learning goals
4. Predict future performance on classroom assignments and assessments

Grading should help the parents/guardians -

1. Understand their child as a learner
2. Understand the student's mastery of the TEKS
3. Guide the student in making academic progress
4. Encourage the student to give maximum effort

NOTE: This document reflects district and campus expectations. The Principal must approve any revisions or exceptions to these guidelines. Students' grades will reflect mastery of District objectives. Teachers will follow District-approved grading guidelines that have been designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the

Board determines that the grade was arbitrary, or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the District’s grading guidelines. Board Policies EI (LEGAL/LOCAL), EIA (LEGAL/LOCAL), and EIE (LEGAL/LOCAL) *Elementary Grading Guidelines and Secondary Grading Guidelines.*

Grading Scale

The grading system for secondary schools is as follows (This scale applies to language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies):

| | | |
|----------|----|--|
| 100 - 90 | A | Excellent Progress |
| 89 – 80 | B | Above Average Progress |
| 79 – 70 | C | Average Progress |
| 69 – 0 | F | Unsatisfactory Progress (Failing) |
| | I | Incomplete (do not use on withdrawal form) |
| | NG | No grade (See section – “Assignment of Nine Weeks Grades”) |

Grade Weights

| Grades 7-12th | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Category | Percentage | Number of Grades |
| Summative | 50% | 3* |
| Formative | 50% | 10* |
| Total | | 13* |

*Denotes minimum number of grades per grading period. Teachers/campuses have discretion to have additional grades in either category.

Grading Overview

1. Work that is graded shall be returned and recorded in the district’s grade reporting software by the first workday of each week. Exceptions to this could include process writing assignments and long-term projects. This should be communicated clearly to students and parents. Grades will be entered weekly throughout the nine weeks to provide opportunities for improvement prior to the end of grading periods. Assignment titles listed in electronic grade book should be descriptive of the assignment given. Ongoing progress monitoring is a critical part of learning. This includes opportunities for students to have their work assessed and feedback given on progress without a specific grade being assigned on some tasks.
2. Teachers will contact parents/guardians regarding progress of students’ grades through progress reports.
3. If a student earns a failing grades on any major test or project (summative) during any grading period, the teacher should make a reasonable effort to call or send an email to notify the parent. SCUC Board Policy EIA (LOCAL)

4. No assignment can count more than once in a category within a nine weeks or semester.
5. Additional subdividing within a category is not permitted.
6. No “blanket” grades are to be issued for a grading period. A blanket grade is giving every student in the class the same grade for an assignment without regard to individual achievement.
7. If a student scores higher on a summative assessment than on a formative assessment(s) (other than homework) designed to prepare for that summative, then the teacher shall drop the lowest of the formative assessment grades associated with that summative assessment.
8. In order to obtain a grade average for a particular grading period that is an accurate assessment of the student's achievement, a teacher may assign additional academic assignments/projects related to the course objectives.
9. Cooperative learning may be used as an instructional strategy in order to encourage academic achievement in a team context. The rubric or grading standards for a cooperative activity or project will be shared with the students in advance indicating how they will be graded for both individual and team academic achievement. Students should receive an individual grade and may also receive a team grade.
10. The responsibility for grading summative assignments belongs to the teacher.
11. Behavior and adherence to classroom procedures will be evaluated and noted under “citizenship” and/or the comments section of the report card for each subject.
12. A student's academic grades will not be affected by non-academic behavior or adherence to procedural rules. Examples include points being deducted for not using the proper heading, using a color of ink other than black or blue, or coming late to class. Grades must reflect student’s relative mastery of assignments. (See number #2 in the Late Work section regarding an exception.)
13. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students. Grades resulting from academic dishonesty may not be dropped or made up.
14. Parents will be encouraged to monitor student grades through the district’s electronic portal.

Re-teaching and Re-testing

The District’s goal is for every student to master all 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.

1. A teacher shall reteach and retest a class when 40 % or more of that class has failed a summative assessment. The teacher shall record the higher of the two grades earned for each student. Reassessment must occur within 10 days of the original assessment.
2. When less than 40% of a class has failed any summative assessment individual students must be provided the opportunity to make-up or redo the assessment for which the student received a failing grade. The teacher shall record the average of the two grades. Before any reassessment occurs, a student shall receive appropriate remediation. If mastery is not demonstrated, the higher grade will be recorded.
3. A teacher at his/her discretion may allow individual students to make-up or redo any formative assignment they have failed. In this situation the teacher shall record the average of the two grades earned for the student.
4. Re-teaching should employ instructional strategies different from the original instruction.

5. Re-testing may include but is not limited to the original assessment, oral examination, additional practice activities, an essay or paper, a report or presentation, test corrections, revision of a paper or project, formal test or quizzes.
6. Re-teaching/re-testing will not exceed the end of the grading period unless a summative assessment was given/taken during the last week of a grading period. In this case the re-teach, re-test and grading should be completed by the Wednesday following the last day of the grading period in which the assessment was originally given.
7. Re-teaching/re-testing provisions do not apply to semester exams.
8. Teachers will provide established times for tutoring opportunities and post these times on teacher websites.

Homework

1. Rationale for Homework
 - a. Research reveals that homework, when carefully designed, implemented and evaluated, is an effective tool for improving understanding, enriching learning, encouraging personal connections and providing opportunities to pursue special interests.
 - b. Value-added homework assignments should be designed to help students master the content and extend student learning.
 - c. Homework is a 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.
 - d. When a student demonstrates mastery of the TEKS on major assessments, homework alone should not be the cause of a failing grade. Formative assessments should be comprised of a variety of assessments, including but not limited to homework.
 - e. Homework will not be assigned as punishment.
2. Teacher Responsibilities
 - a. Homework will be evaluated in a timely manner and used as a method to provide students with specific feedback on their performance of the assigned tasks. Homework should only be assigned for reinforcement of skills and concepts taught in class.
 - b. Ensuring that students understand and know how to complete assignments.
 - c. Making sure appropriate resources and materials are available
 - d. Clarifying to parents/guardians, when appropriate, how they may help the student complete the homework
 - e. Reviewing and grading homework assignments to give students feedback on their learning
 - f. Avoiding homework/projects over extended holidays due on the first class upon returning
3. Student Responsibilities
 - a. Understanding the homework assignment(s) before leaving school and taking home all necessary materials to complete assignment(s)
 - b. Having a regular time to study that is compatible with family and/or after-school activities
 - c. Completing homework and turning it in on time
 - d. Planning and budgeting time for long-term projects
 - e. Completing all work missed because of absences or school activities
4. Parent/Guardian Suggestions
 - a. Discussing the district's homework policy with the student
 - b. Providing necessary assistance and encouraging good study habits
 - c. Communicating any concerns and questions regarding homework assignments to the student's teacher and providing notes for student absences

- d. Encouraging the student to seek additional help, if needed, from the teacher
- e. Providing an appropriate time and environment for study and learning
- f. Checking the homework for accurate completion
- g. Monitoring television, technology and outside activities to be sure the student has sufficient study time

Make-Up Work for Absences

Students are required to make up assignments, homework, and assessments missed due to absences. Students are allowed two school days for every day of class missed. If students do not complete make-up work in the time allotted, the late work policy will apply.

1. 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.
2. Make-up work and tests for all absences shall be of the same rigor, but not necessarily the same format, as the original activity, assignment or test.
3. Make-up tests or presentations may be scheduled before school, after school, during study hall or during the student's class period at the teacher's discretion to ensure that new and/or significant content is not missed.
4. Students should make prior arrangements with teachers for making up missed work when the absence can be anticipated, e.g. a dental appointment, court appearance or appointment, approved school-related activities, etc.
5. After a prolonged absence, the teacher may 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.

Late Work

1. 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 absences or approved school activities. Alternative assignments may be given if the original assignment has been assessed and returned.
2. Late assignments will be accepted within 5 school days, not to exceed the end of the grading period. When an assignment is submitted after a deadline, a maximum penalty of ten (10) points per class meeting may be deducted from the grade with a maximum of 30 points deducted.
3. Extenuating circumstances may occur that prevent the completion and turning in of assignments on the due date. It is the parent/guardian and/or student's responsibility to inform the teacher of any such circumstances so that an exception to the rule may or may not be granted. The teacher may grant exceptions based on these circumstances.

Promotion, Retention, and Award of Credit

Curriculum Mastery

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

Standards for Mastery

Mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be used to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.
2. Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit or final exams or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required.

Grades 6-8

In grades 7-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on the following:

- an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade level standards (TEKS) for all subject areas, and
- a grade of 70 or above in three of the following required areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

A student must pass both semesters or attain an average grade of at least 70 when averaging two semesters to be awarded credit for a high school credit course.

Grades 9-12 (Courses in which a STAAR EOC is not administered including courses taken in grade 8 for high school credit)

Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives on formative and summative assessments shall be required.

1. Grade level advancement for students in grades 9 - 12 shall be earned by course credits.
 - a. If a student earns a grade of 70 or above in a one-semester course, credit for the course shall be awarded.
 - b. If a student earns a grade of 70 or above both semesters of a full year course, credit for the course shall be awarded.
 - c. If a student earns a failing grade during fall or spring semester in a full year course, and the final average for the year is greater than or equal to 70, full credit for the course shall be awarded.
 - d. Credit shall be awarded for a failed semester when it is repeated and the student earns a grade of 70 or above. Both grades will be recorded on the transcript and both grades will be factored into the GPA. If a student repeats a semester in summer school, that grade is not factored in the GPA (see "Summer School" section in this document).

Grades 9-12 (Courses in which a STAAR EOC is administered including courses taken in grade 7 and 8 for high school credit)

1. EOC exams are used to certify mastery of the TEKS. Students in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 who are taking any of the courses below will be tested in 2014-15. Tests will be administered in the following areas:

| | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------|---------------|
| Algebra I | English I | Biology | U. S. History |
| | English II | | |

2. Students may retake an EOC assessment for any reason at any scheduled test administration.

Dual-Credit Courses

Students who are classified as juniors or seniors may earn credit toward high school graduation by completing a college-level course in any accredited college or university under the following provisions:

1. Students interested in taking a course for dual-credit must obtain a Dual Credit Agreement form from the student's counselor. This form will be signed by a school designee (counselor or administrator), the parent/guardian, and the student.
2. In addition to the completed Dual Credit Agreement form, the student must complete the college's Application for Admission and provide the college with an official high school transcript and recent TAKS/EOC scores. If the TAKS/EOC scores do not exempt the student from a college entrance exam, then the student must take a placement test such as the TSI. Contact the college for dates, times, and cost of placement testing.
3. Credit for a successfully completed one-semester college course(s) is earned in one-half credit increments.
4. If a student is enrolled in a dual credit course on the high school campus, the student's grade will be provided directly to the high school. Credit toward graduation requirements earned through college coursework approved by the Board for dual credit shall be factored into a student's grade point average. Grades recorded numerically from University or College teachers will factor at their numeric value. Grades recorded as a letter grade from University or College teachers shall be converted to a numerical grade in the mid-range of our scale as follows or as a Pass/Fail:
A=95 B=85 C=P D=P F=F
5. If the student is enrolled in an off-campus concurrent credit course, the student must provide the District with an official college transcript showing the grade received. Credit toward graduation requirements earned through college coursework approved by the Board for concurrent credit is not used in the computation of a student's grade point average for class ranking.

Other College Credit and Prep Courses

There may be certain courses offered during high school, such as but not limited to, AP, IB, dual -credit, college prep, and CTE which may have exceptions to the SCUC Grading Guidelines due to the district's Memorandum of Understanding agreement with providing institutions and/or assessments requirements. Any course in which there are exceptions will clearly communicate grading and assessment expectations through the course syllabus.

Correspondence Courses

Credit toward state graduation requirements may be achieved by approved correspondence courses under the following conditions and with the prior approval of the counselor and principal only:

1. The institution offering the course is The University of Texas at Austin, Texas Tech University, or another public institution of higher education approved by the Commissioner of Education.
2. The correspondence course includes the state-required essential knowledge and skills for such a course.
3. Students may only earn a maximum of two (2) state required credits through correspondence courses.
4. Seniors enrolled in a correspondence course must complete the course and submit a grade to the school by the end of the first semester of the year they plan to graduate.
5. Correspondence course grades are not included in the grade point average.

Credit Recovery Program

1. Students who previously failed a core class and/or are in need of making up lost credit or are in need of acceleration are eligible to apply for this program. Placements are based on student needs and seat availability. Fifth year seniors and upperclassmen are high priority and placed first.
2. Students must complete all required online and offline assignments with a grade average of 70 or better in a specified time frame.
3. Upon completion of requirements, a P for passed will appear on the student transcript indicating that credit for the specific course has been recovered. The P will then appear on the student's transcript, and the credit for the course will be restored. Grades received in the Credit Recovery Program are not used in computation of a student's grade point average (GPA).

Promotion and Reclassification

To be promoted:

From grade 9, a student shall have acquired six (6) credits.

From grade 10, a student shall have acquired thirteen (13) credits.

From grade 11, a student must have acquired nineteen (19) credits.

SEMESTER EXAMS

The following procedures are to be used:

1. Students should use semester exams to certify mastery of objectives. All semester exams shall be comprehensive in nature and must measure the mastery of the skills or content of the course.
2. The semester exam process should include each of the following:
Review - Review activities must be in a form that can be taken home for study. A variety of review activities may be used including, but not limited to, oral, chalkboard, and written activities.
Exam Suggestions - Exams should include objective-type questions as well as open-ended questions. Avoid objective questions over inconsequential details.
Exam Requirements - Semester examinations are comprehensive.
3. Missed semester exams shall be recorded as an Incomplete (I) and should be made up within a two-week period. (In extenuating circumstances, exceptions will be granted. In these situations, principal approval is required.) In those situations where a student does not make up a missed semester exam within the specified time frame, a grade of zero (0) will be recorded.
4. **High School (including middle school courses for high school credit):** Semester exams shall be administered in all classes in the fall semester and in non-EOC tested classes in the spring semester. The semester exam shall be counted as 20% of the semester grade.
5. **Middle School:** Semester exams shall be administered in all classes. The semester exam shall be counted as 10% of the semester grade.

Exam Exemptions

The exam exemptions extend to only 36 week courses and include grades 9-12. Students may earn exemptions by a variety of methods, including course GPA/Absences, passing TAKS Testing, passing EOC Tests, and taking AP Exams.

- 1 A student with no more than 2 absences must have a minimum course GPA of 80 with no referrals to the office for tardies. A student can have no more than 4 absences with a minimum course GPA of 87 and no referrals to the office for tardies. If a student has no more than 6 absences he/she must have a minimum course GPA of 92 and no referrals to the office for tardies. Tardies apply only to the class for which the student would be exempt. Three tardies per class will be counted as 1 unexcused absence.
- 2 School related absences will not be counted toward the exam exemption. If a student has a medical appointment, he/she must bring an official note from the doctor and be in school for a portion of the day.
- 3 All exempt students must attend school for ADA accounting during final exams. This includes the classes exempted.
- 4 All students have the option of taking any final exams for which they are exempt.
- 5 Information and forms will be available approximately 2 weeks before exams.

To be eligible for EXAM exemptions, student financial accounts must be cleared. This may include but is not limited to Library fines, textbooks, equipment, uniforms, etc.

CONDUCT GRADES

Conduct grades reflect student behavior during a six-week period. The following grade designations will be used.

- E (Excellent)
- S (Satisfactory)
- N (Needs Improvement)
- U (Unsatisfactory)

A "U" must not be given unless the teacher has contacted the parent AND discussed the unsatisfactory conduct grade with a campus administrator.

TUTORIALS

All students are eligible for tutorials. Parents of students who meet one of the following criteria shall be notified on the report card of the need for tutorials:

- grade average is passing but whose performance in mathematics or reading/language arts is below expectations for the child's current grade level;
- grade average is failing.

For documentation purposes, student attendance at tutorials will be recorded.

Grading In Special Programs

1. Any variations 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. Grades for students in special education will be based on performance that demonstrates progress toward mastery of the TEKS following the application of the ARD recommended accommodations and/or modifications intended to increase the potential for successful student learning.
3. The level of instruction in the TEKS and content expectations should be articulated in a student’s IEP, along with accommodations and/or modifications related to measuring mastery.

Summer School Grades

1. A student failing the regular semester and attending summer school for that semester shall receive a passing grade for that course if the curriculum is mastered.
2. A grade received in summer school shall be reflected on the student’s transcript as Pass (P)/Fail (F) and shall not be calculated into the student’s GPA:
3. Students may take summer school courses for acceleration. In those situations, the grade the student receives in summer school will be factored in the GPA.

Transfer Grades

| Letter Grade | Equivalent Number Grade | Letter Grade | Equivalent Number Grade | Letter Grade | Equivalent Number Grade | Letter Grade | Equivalent Number Grade |
|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| A+ | 98 | B+ | 88 | C+ | 78 | D | 70 |
| A | 95 | B | 85 | C | 75 | F | 69 |
| A- | 92 | B- | 82 | C- | 72 | | |

| Number | Letter | Equivalent Grade |
|--------|--------|------------------|
| 4 | E | 95 |
| 3 | S | 85 |
| 2 | N | 75 |
| 1 | U | 65 |

GRADUATION, CLASS RANK, and HONOR DESIGNATIONS (Grades 7-12)

For further information on Class Rank and Honor Designations see Board Policy EIC (Local) EIC (Exhibit)

Progress Report Dates

TBA

Resources:

Guskey, T. (2009) *Practical Solutions for Serious Problems in Standards-Based Grading*

Guskey, T. (2009) *The Teacher as Assessment Leader*

Marzano, R. (2006) *Classroom Assessment & Grading that Works*

Stiggins, R., Arter, J., Chappuis, S., Chappuis, J. (2009) *Assessment for Student Learning: Doing it Right-Using it Well*

Wormeli, Rick (2006) *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*