



Abilene Independent School District Grading Policy

Effective teachers.....

- take enough grades to form a true picture of a student's mastery of educational objectives. AISD urges teachers to exceed the one grade per week minimum.
- employ a grading policy that fairly considers class work and other assignments as well as test grades.
- use formative and summative evaluation. A student should be graded several times during the phases of a unit or a large project rather than just giving one grade at the end.
- make sure that students know in advance what objectives will be covered on any test. The purpose of testing is to determine to what degree a student has mastered course objectives.
- grade assignments as they are turned in rather than waiting to grade during the sixth week. Each student and parent deserves to know how a student is progressing during every week of a six-week period.
- evaluate students during the entire six-weeks period. The district urges teachers not to 'close out' grade books prior to the end of the six-week period. Effective teachers avoid giving six weeks and/or semester grades of 69.
- make an effort to notify parents if a teacher does not send a progress report at the three-weeks period and a student's grade drops below failing in the fourth week or after.
- do not deduct points for improper heading, type of writing instrument, or other mistakes that relate to classroom procedure. According to state law, grades are to be based on mastering educational objectives.
- do not give extra credit to students for bringing purchased items to school. If additional opportunities for extra credit are offered to students, the opportunities should reflect academic value.
- understand the importance of open communication with parents and make an effort to communicate with parents on a regular basis.
- recognize that zeros do not show how much a student has or has not learned.
- ensure that every assignment is relevant, meaningful, and a reflection of the students' mastery of the TEKS.

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ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

CURRICULUM MASTERY

Promotion and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum.* **Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated District objectives.** The student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course. [EIA (LOCAL)]

**The curriculum is the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) plus district, includes the TEKS Resource System, Year-At-A-Glance, Vertical Alignment Documents and Instructional Focus Documents. Additionally, Advanced Placement courses follow the College Board approved syllabus and content.*

STANDARDS FOR MASTERY

Mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be given to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade. [EIE (LOCAL)]
2. Mastery of the skills (TEKS) 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. [EIE (LOCAL)]

All grades should be based on mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Grades reflect mastery of course TEKS that teachers have taught. [For example: Accelerated Reader is an independent reading program not based on TEKS and not for direct instruction. It should be used as a motivational reading program, not for grades.]

Noncompliance with established classroom procedures shall be reflected in a student's 'work habits' grade. (For example: Improper or incomplete headings should not result in grade penalties or point deductions. This is a 'work habits or failure to follow directions' issue, not an academic issue.)

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, students in grades 5 and 8 must meet the passing standard established by the State Board on an applicable assessment instrument in the subjects required under state law in order to be promoted to the next grade. [EIE (LOCAL)]

ATTENDANCE

Unless credit is awarded by the attendance committee or regained in accordance with District policy, a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. [See FEC (LEGAL)]

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 average grade assigned. Guidelines for grading shall be clearly communicated to students and parents. [EIA (LOCAL)]

DATABASE FOR GRADES

Grades recorded in **FrontRunner** shall serve as the official basis for determining grades for each of the three six-weeks reporting periods of the two semester reporting periods.

A **minimum** of one grade per week for each six-weeks reporting period shall be recorded in **FrontRunner**. The teacher shall provide appropriate documentation as required by the administration for grades recorded. Grades recorded in **FrontRunner** and appropriate documentation shall be used in conferring with students and parents. **If a teacher records a grade lower than 70 on the report card, documentation of parent contacts and the interventions provided for a student must be available.**

COMPUTING AVERAGES FOR SIX-WEEK GRADES

Elementary School:

Six-week grades shall be determined by averaging grades in each subject area. Classwork, assessments, projects, etc., carry equal weight at the elementary level.

Middle School Grades 6-8:

Six-week grades shall be determined by averaging grades in two categories for all subject areas in **FrontRunner**. A minimum of two (2) graded assignments in each category per grading period must be entered in **FrontRunner**. Each assignment is only one (1) graded assignment in a category no matter how many times the teacher determines the assignment will count toward the six weeks average.

Categories and Percentages

- 70% Classwork (labs/quizzes/homework/classwork)
- 30% Assessments (tests/essays/presentations/projects/research)

High School Grades 9-12:

Six-week grades shall be determined by averaging grades in two categories for all subject areas in **FrontRunner**. A minimum of two (2) graded assignments in each category per grading period must be entered into **FrontRunner**. Each assignment is only one (1) graded assignment in a category no matter how many times the teacher determines the assignment will count toward the six weeks average.

Categories and Percentages

- **Regular and Pre-AP Classes**
 - 60% Classwork (labs/quizzes/homework/classwork)
 - 40% Assessments (tests/essays/presentations/projects/research)
- **Advanced Placement Classes**
 - 50% (labs/quizzes/homework/classwork)
 - 50% Assessments (tests/essays/presentations/projects/research)

SEMESTER EXAMS

Subject to board approval, semester exams will be administered in all core (Math, Science, English, Social Studies) high school credit courses. The semester exam will count as 10% of the semester grade. Semester exams will be given in the fall and spring. Courses tested by the End-of-Course state assessment (Algebra I, Biology, U.S. History, English I and English II) and Advanced Placement courses administering an AP exam will not give a semester exam in the spring. Seniors will be eligible for an exemption from the spring semester exams, if they meet eligibility criteria.

SEMESTER GRADES 6-12

A semester grade in grades 6 – 8 shall be determined by adding the three six-week averages and dividing by three. In grades 9-12 a semester grade shall be determined by adding the three six-week averages and dividing by three with the exception of core classes. As stated above, core classes will administer a semester exam that will count as 10% of the semester grade. Courses tested by the End-of-Course state assessment (Algebra I, Biology, U.S. History, English I and English II) and Advanced Placement courses administering an AP exam will not give a semester exam in the spring.

GRADE COMPUTATION FOR STUDENTS WHO WITHDRAW

Semester grades for students enrolled for fewer than 15 days shall be computed by accepting the withdrawal grade(s) from the school that the student last attended, with the option of increasing, but not decreasing, the grade if the teacher determines that the student has made progress.

If the student is enrolled 15 days or more, the withdrawal grade shall be averaged with those grades accumulated in the District to determine final grade averages.

WRITTEN NOTICE TO PARENTS

Teachers shall send out written notice to parents every sixth week of a student's performance in each class or subject. [EIA (LOCAL)] *Exception: prekindergarten, and kindergarten for first six-weeks grading period as detailed under Grade Reports to Parents.*

Prekindergarten: Achievement or progress in prekindergarten shall be reported as S, N and I.

Kindergarten: Achievement in kindergarten shall be reported with ratings that indicate the student is meeting grade level expectations, progressing, experiencing difficulties or exceeding grade level expectations as communicated through the standards on the report card.

Grade 1: Achievement for students in grade 1 shall be reported to parents as numerical grades for English language arts and mathematics. E, S, L and U shall be used for reporting student progress in all other areas.

Grades 2-5: Achievement for students in 2-5 shall be reported to parents as numerical grades for English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. E, S, L and U shall be used for reporting student progress in all other areas.

Grades 6-12: The District shall report all grades to parents as numerical grades.

GRADE REPORTS TO PARENTS

1. Prekindergarten, kindergarten will provide information to parents through parent conference during the parent's conference the first six-weeks grading period. Written grades or records of mastery should be kept for each six-weeks grading period. All conferences are to be documented.
2. The report card shall be taken home by the prekindergarten. Signatures are required for parent(s) or guardian, through the parent conference and for students whose parents do not attend a conference.
3. Kindergarten and Grade 1 – A computer generated report card will be mailed to the home of each student beginning with the second six-weeks grading period.
4. Grades 2 through 12 – A computer generated report card will be mailed to the home of each student at the conclusion of each six-weeks grading period.

THREE WEEK REPORTS

The District will continue the distribution of electronically generated progress reports for grades 1-12. These are to be sent home to the parents of students who are borderline passing (70-74) and/or failing (below 70). Reports will be sent by the Wednesday following the first three weeks of each six-weeks grading period. (Abilene ISD Administration Policy)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to disciplinary penalties and grade penalties on assignments or tests. 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 other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students. [EIA (LOCAL)]

MAKE-UP WORK

Students shall be expected to make up assignments and tests after absences within 3 school days. Students shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allotted time. The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up work after an unexcused absence or an absence due to suspension.

Time allowed to make up work after an absence

Students shall have at least three days to make up for one day absent. Long term projects such as research papers are not provided this extension. Projects must be turned in the day the student returns to class.

Any student that misses class due to a board approved or school approved activity must receive work before they leave and must turn in work upon the return to class. They will not be granted three days to make up work for a board or school approved activity. Extenuating circumstances will be addressed by each individual teacher.

LATE WORK

Points to be deducted for late work

An assignment is considered late if it is turned in after the due date. Late assignments will receive a maximum grade of 70 and will be accepted up to three (3) days late. Extenuating circumstances will be addressed by each individual teacher.

Clarification: A student turns in an assignment late and scores an 80; the grade to be recorded is a 70. If the student makes a 60, then a 60 is recorded.

RE-DO WORK

Policy for retaking or redoing failed assignments (classwork or assessments)

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. [EIA (LEGAL)]. The goal of this procedure is to ensure students learn the appropriate skills. It is also important for students to be responsible for doing the work to the best of their ability and to submit assignments in a timely manner.

Students who fail classwork or assessments will be given **one** opportunity to redo the work. The student will have three (3) school days after receiving the failing grade to complete the retake of the assignment or test. Extenuating circumstances will be addressed by each individual teacher. Work turned in late will not be granted the retake or redo opportunity.

Clarification: If a student makes 50 on an assignment and is re-assessed and makes an 80, the student will receive a 70. If a student fails the reassessment the student will receive the higher of the two grades made.

NOTE: A student may be given a replacement assignment when retaking or redoing failed assignments/tests at the discretion of the individual teachers.

PROMOTIONS AND AWARD OF CREDIT

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level. [TEC 28.021 (1)]

The award of credit for a course affirms that a student has satisfactorily met all state and local requirements. Course credit shall be awarded according to this policy. [19TAC 74.26 (a)]

A course may be considered completed and credit may be awarded if the student has demonstrated achievement by meeting standard requirements of the course, including demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter, regardless of the time the student has received instruction in the course or the grade level at which proficiency is attained. [19 TAC 74.26]

Grade K-1: Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on 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 **each** of the following areas: **English language arts (reading, English/language, word study) and mathematics.**

The recommended percentages for Kindergarten and Grade 1 English language arts are:	Reading	= 50%
	Writing	= 25%
	Word Study	= 25%

Grades 2 – 8: Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on 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 each of the following areas: **language arts (reading, English/language, spelling), mathematics, science and social studies. Students in grades 6-8 who fail more than two courses cannot earn promotion in summer school.**

The recommended percentages for Grades 2-5 English language arts are:	Reading	= 50%
	Writing	= 25%
	Word Study	= 25%

Grades 9-12: Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives in a course shall be required for credit. Grade level advancement for students in grades 9 -12 shall be earned by course credits for non-EOC and EOC courses.

Students shall earn a full year of credit if the yearly average of the two semesters equals 70 on a scale of 100. A student who earns a passing grade for one semester but fails the other shall only earn credit for the passing semester if the average of the two semesters is less than 70.

The final course grade will be calculated as below:

1 st Semester	+	2 nd Semester	=	Final Course Grade
50%		50%	=	100%

For core courses that have semester exams, the grade will be calculated as follows:

Each Semester Average:

Course Grade	+	Semester Exam	=	Final Course Grade
90%		10%		100%

Credit earned toward state graduation requirements by a student in an accredited school district shall be transferable and accepted by any other school district in the state. [19 TAC 74.26 (a) (1) (c)]

STAAR END OF COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Students entering grade 9 must take the *STAAR End of Course (EOC) Assessments* for the courses in which they are enrolled. In addition, these students must pass the required number of courses for high school graduation. Middle school students taking high school courses for credit will also be required to take the appropriate EOC Assessment. *Students are expected to be enrolled in the appropriate courses at each grade level in order to be successful on the required EOC Assessments.*

The District shall provide accelerated instruction to an enrolled student who has taken an end-of-course assessment instrument and has not performed satisfactorily or who is at risk of dropping out of school. *Education Code 29.081(b), 39.025(b-1) [EHBC (LEGAL)]*

GPA AND CLASS RANK

STAAR EOC scores will not be used in calculations of GPA and Class Rank. Grades received for the 1st Semester and the 2nd Semester of each course will be used in GPA and Class Rank.

EOC RETESTING

HB 5 established clear regulations for the retest opportunities offered by the state. Students must retake any EOC Assessment as many times as the tests are offered.

STUDENTS TAKING HIGH SCHOOL COURSES WHILE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students who take high school core courses while enrolled in middle school will be required to take the End of Course Assessments required for those courses.

STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM HOME SCHOOLS OR OTHER DISTRICTS

Students transferring into the Abilene Independent School District from home schools, out of district schools, out of state or other national school systems must take the EOC Assessments for the courses in which they are enrolled and meet all graduation requirements required by the State of Texas.

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN NON-TRADITIONAL COURSES

Students enrolled in courses like Dual Credit courses, Summer School courses, On-line courses, Distant Learning courses, etc., are still required to pass the EOC Assessments that are required for the core courses under **HB 5**.

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN CREDIT RECOVERY

Students earning credit for graduation through credit recovery must also pass the appropriate EOC Assessments.

STUDENTS RECEIVING CREDIT THROUGH CREDIT BY EXAM

Students earning credit for graduation by taking credit by examination are not required to take an EOC Assessment in order to accrue credit. The district will award a student credit on the basis of a successful score on an examination and enter the examination score on the student's transcript. *Texas Education Agency STAAR Q&A*

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT SCORES THAT REPLACE END OF COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Abilene ISD will follow the TEA recommendations for the replacement of EOC Assessments with identified scores on the SAT, ACT or Advanced Placement exams when determined by TEA.

ONLINE COURSES IN PLATO

- Students who complete grade recovery for a six week period(s) in Plato with a passing grade of 70 or above will receive a 70 on the report card for the six week period(s).
- Plato students must pass all mastery, post and semester tests with a minimum grade of 70 to receive credit for an entire course.
- Students who complete credit recovery courses in Plato with a passing grade of 70 or above will receive the grade of 70 on the transcript and credit for the course.
- Students who complete Plato course(s) for acceleration will be assigned the grade earned, but will receive Pass/Fail on the transcript and the course grade will not be included in GPA calculations.
- Students who recover courses for graduation through credit recovery in Plato must also pass the appropriate EOC Assessments.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Promotion standards and appropriate and acceleration options, as established by the individual education program (IEP), or grade-level classification of students eligible for special education shall be determined by the ARD committee. [EIE (LOCAL)] Also, the ARD committee shall determine the type of assessment to be administered and how the score on an EOC assessment shall be used for, and graduation requirements. [EIA (LOCAL)]

DYSLEXIC

In measuring the academic achievement or proficiency of a student who is dyslexic, the student's potential for achievement or proficiency in the area must be considered. [TEC 28.021 (b) [See policies EIE (LEGAL) and EHB, EKB, and FB]

LIMITED ENGLISH

In assessing students of limited English proficiency for mastery of the TEKS, the District shall be flexible in determining methods to allow the students to demonstrate knowledge or competency independent of their English skills in the following ways:

1. Assessment in the primary language
2. Assessment using ESL methodologies
3. Assessment with multiple varied instruments [EIE (LOCAL)]

FACULTY TRAINING

Principals are responsible for providing training to all staff involved in evaluating students on their campus concerning:

- District grading policies
- District promotion/retention policies
- Consistent application of the district and campus policies by all involved staff

Policies that govern student grading (passing/failing) and student promotion/retention requirements must be included in the student handbook and/or letters to parents.

Student handbooks must be filed by the third Friday of September each year in the Elementary and Secondary Education office. This information must also be shared with students and parents during the first six-weeks grading period.

Teachers should work closely with principals on any grading and/or promotion and retention problems or concerns that may apply to students in special education, bilingual, ESL, etc. (Abilene ISD Administrative Policy and Domain III, Number 6 and Domain VIII-C, Number 9 of the PDAS state evaluation form.)