

POLICY DRAFT 10/18/11

RELATION TO
ESSENTIAL
KNOWLEDGE AND
SKILLS

The District shall establish instructional objectives that relate to the essential knowledge and skills for grade-level subjects or courses. These objectives shall address the skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses.

Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that each student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated District objectives.

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.

The District shall permit a student who meets the criteria detailed in the grading guidelines a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which the student received a failing grade.

**END-OF-COURSE
ASSESSMENTS**

When required by state law, a student's score on the initial end-of-course (EOC) assessment shall count for 15 percent of the student's final grade for the course as reported on the student's transcript.

RETAKES

If a student retakes an EOC assessment, the District will include the retake score as 15 percent of the final course grade only if the retake score allows a student to gain credit for the course. After a student earns credit for the course, subsequent retakes will not be included in the calculation of the final course grade.

**SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

A student's ARD committee shall determine the type of assessment to be administered and how the score on an EOC assessment shall be used for final course grades, credit decisions, and graduation requirements.

GRADING

Calculation of grades with EOC assessment scores shall be in accordance with the District's grading guidelines.

[See EKB for further information regarding EOC assessments.]

ATTENDANCE

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	<p>Regular attendance is an academically related factor that can affect the determination of a student's grade. Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests after absences.</p>
WAIVERS	<p>Waivers from the grading policy may be pursued with TEA or the Board so that schools may pilot alternative grading systems.</p>
ONGOING FEEDBACK	<p>Throughout the six weeks, students should know how well they are doing; there should be no surprises on the report card. Evaluative feedback shall be as immediate as possible, ongoing through the grading period, and not delayed until the sixth week. Some major grades shall be given in earlier weeks to minimize dramatic drops in the grading during the final weeks.</p>
NOTICE TO PARENTS	<p>Teachers shall have a conference with parents as needed and shall send out written notice to parents every three weeks of a student's performance in each class or subject. At the end of the third week of the grading period, parents shall be notified if the student's grade is below 75 in regular courses and below 80 in kindergarten–grade 8, GT/Pre-AP classes, or 80 in grades 9–12 Pre-AP and AP classes. These reports shall be mailed to the student's home and provide for the signature of the student's parent and shall be returned to the District.</p> <p>Principals should help parents understand that failure to receive an unsatisfactory report does not guarantee a passing grade since a teacher cannot always foresee failing work that might occur at the end of the reporting period.</p>
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY	<p>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 the professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.</p>
RETEACHING	<p>The purpose of ongoing evaluation is to determine the student's mastery of instructional objectives as they are taught or shortly afterwards. If a student in the class fails to master the objective, the objective should be retaught in class using a different method.</p> <p>Reteaching is defined as another presentation of content, usually to provide an additional opportunity for a student to learn. Implementation of the District procedure for reteaching does not have to be detailed or prescriptive. Reteaching may vary from subject to subject or from class to class, even from student to student. It may</p>

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be as simple as repeating the concept. If the student still does not understand the concept, the teacher might use different materials or modalities to present the concept again. If the initial instruction was primarily visual, the reteaching activity might be manipulative; if the teacher used the deduction approach initially, the reteaching activity might use an inductive approach, therefore allowing the student to gain a new perspective on the task.

Reteaching is an integral part of the lesson cycle and may occur in many different situations such as during direct teaching as a teacher checks for understanding; guided practice as a teacher monitors; or during independent practice as students work individually or in cooperative learning groups.

Teachers shall plan for reteaching at the same time they plan initial instruction, thereby ensuring that alternative instructional strategies are immediately available when needed. Planning for reteaching may or may not be written and should not require excessive time or documentation. If initial reteaching efforts are unsuccessful, the more complex process of remediation may be necessary. Remediation implies analysis of the learning task and further diagnosis of a student's needs, including the identification of deficient prerequisite skills. Remediation may occur in many different situations.

Reteaching, to ensure that students master the material, may include but shall not be limited to the following:

1. The student may be required to correct or rework unsatisfactory assignments; the grade earned shall replace the original grade.
2. The student may be required to retake a major examination; the grade earned shall replace the original grade.
3. The teacher may require the student to attend a tutorial program or remedial classes. Cocurricular or extracurricular activities shall not interfere with the requirement to attend these activities.
4. The teacher may assign additional work on a particular unit for the student to complete.
5. The teacher may work with small groups during class time while other students work independently.

SPECIAL EDUCATION
STUDENTS

Special education students are to be graded on the basis of the level specified in the individualized education program (IEP). The report card shall indicate the level on which the grade is based. If a special education student working below grade level consistently receives grades equivalent to an A or B, it is possible that the stu-

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dent should be working on a higher level and/or the pace of instruction should be increased.

CONVERSION SCALE The grade conversion scale for all grade levels shall be as follows:

- 90 – 100 = A
- 80 – 89 = B
- 75 – 79 = C
- 70 – 74 = D
- 69 and below = F
- 90 – 100 = Excellent
- 75 – 89 = Satisfactory
- 70 – 74 = Needs Improvement
- 69 and below = Unsatisfactory

TRANSFER STUDENTS Transfer students with letter grades that have pluses and minuses shall be converted to District numerical grades using the following scale:

- A+ = 98 C+ = 79 F = 69 and below
- A = 95 C = 77
- A- = 92 C- = 75 (lowest "C" allowed)
- B+ = 88 D+ = 74
- B = 85 D = 72
- B- = 82 D- = 70

HOMEWORK Homework assignments shall be meaningful and an extension of classroom instruction that should be taken seriously by the student. The teacher shall examine and correct the homework. It shall be emphasized to students that homework is a contributing factor in learning.

MAKEUP WORK It is the student's responsibility to schedule a makeup test just as it is his or her responsibility to complete makeup work after absences. Except for extenuating circumstances such as a prolonged illness, makeup work and tests shall be completed within the same number of school days as days absent after the student's return to class. Failure to do so shall result in a zero grade. Extenuating circumstances must be approved by the principal.

A student may make up work in essential knowledge and skills and other course requirements and earn a passing grade for the semester under extenuating circumstances that are approved by the principal.

ROUTINE Students shall receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an absence, including absences as a result of suspension, but shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allotted time.

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IN-DEPTH	Teacher(s) may assign additional work to ensure that students who have been absent have sufficient opportunity to master the essential knowledge and skills to meet subject or course requirements. The assignments shall be based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and may provide greater depth of subject matter than routine makeup work.
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES	Students shall receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an unexcused absence. However, the highest grade for satisfactory makeup work shall be a grade of 70.
INCOMPLETE GRADES	<p>Incomplete grades must be removed as soon as possible, and it is the student's responsibility to complete all requirements for a permanent grade. Incomplete grades shall be removed within five school days after the grading period except for extenuating circumstances that have been approved in writing by the principal.</p> <p>Students who have not completed required work prior to the end of the six weeks due to an excused absence shall not be given a failing grade. Instead, they shall receive an "incomplete" and be allowed a designated time to complete the work. Students with an "incomplete" grade are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the "I" is replaced with a passing grade, but they are entitled to the seven-day pre-suspension period (popularly known as the "seven-day grace period").</p>
ELEMENTARY GRADE PRE-K	<p>The District shall use the grading designations of "excellent," "satisfactory," "needs improvement," or "unsatisfactory" for determining student progress and reporting to parents at the prekindergarten level.</p> <p>Since many prekindergarten skills are of an observable nature, sufficient observation should be indicated in the gradebook to warrant the grade given on the report card.</p>
ELEMENTARY GRADE K	<p>The District shall use the grading designations of a check mark for mastery and an "X" for nonmastery or "N/A" for not assessed at this time for determining student progress in the content areas and reporting to parents at the kindergarten level.</p> <p>The District shall use the grading designations of "excellent," "satisfactory," "needs improvement," or "unsatisfactory" for determining student progress in work habits, conduct, physical education and fine arts and reporting to parents at the kindergarten level.</p> <p>Since many kindergarten skills are of an observable nature, sufficient observation should be indicated in the gradebook to warrant the grade given on the report card.</p>

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<p>GRADE 1 FIRST SIX WEEKS</p>	<p>The following procedure shall be used in grade 1 for reporting to parents and recording grades on the permanent record. For the first six-week period, the following grading system shall be used for all subjects including conduct and work habits.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">E = Excellent S = Satisfactory N = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory</p>
<p>REMAINDER OF SCHOOL YEAR</p>	<p>E, S, N, and U grading designations shall be used for the remainder of the school year in science, social studies, fine arts, physical education, health, handwriting, conduct, and work habits in the first grade.</p> <p>Beginning with the second six-week period and continuing throughout the year, numerical grades shall be given in language arts and mathematics in grade 1.</p>
<p>GRADES 2–5 FOUNDATION</p>	<p>In grades 2–3, numerical grades shall be used to indicate student progress in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In grades 4 and 5, numerical grades shall be used to indicate student progress in reading, language arts, spelling, mathematics, science, and social studies. The actual grades earned are to be recorded by the teacher.</p>
<p>ENRICHMENT</p>	<p>Teachers responsible for fine arts, health, physical education, conduct, and work habits shall use “excellent,” “satisfactory,” “needs improvement,” and “unsatisfactory” grades for the entire school year in grades 2–5.</p>
<p>GRADES 2–4 HANDWRITING</p>	<p>Teachers responsible for handwriting shall use “excellent,” “satisfactory,” “needs improvement,” and “unsatisfactory” grades for the entire school year in grades 2–4.</p>
<p>GRADE 5 HANDWRITING</p>	<p>For handwriting, student progress shall be indicated by “satisfactory” and “unsatisfactory.”</p>
<p>GRADES 1–5 NUMBER OF GRADES REPORTING</p>	<p>In grades 1–5, a minimum of nine grades per six-week period should be recorded in all subject areas.</p> <p>The actual grade earned on any work and daily or major test shall be recorded in the teacher grade book. Students not demonstrating mastery shall go through the reteaching process. The six-week grade shall be determined by the following:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">75 percent ongoing evaluation 25 percent major tests (magazine, chapter, unit)</p>

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MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 6–8	<p>The six-week grade shall be determined on a minimum of 12 grades calculated in the following manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">40 percent average daily grades60 percent assessment
SECONDARY GRADES 9–12	<p>Long-term projects, such as research papers, shall be graded at various stages of completion rather than only giving a grade for the final project.</p> <p>Each teacher shall develop a clearly defined grading procedure. A copy shall be distributed to students at the beginning of each course so they are aware of the way in which they will be evaluated.</p>
NONWRITTEN WORK	<p>With grades on nonwritten work (project, speech, group work), the teacher shall share clearly defined evaluative criteria with students before the exercise. These criteria shall serve as documentation, which is essential in a parent conference.</p>
SIX-WEEK GRADE	<p>The six-week grade shall be determined on a minimum of 12 grades with the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The average of all major assessments shall be weighted 60 percent.The average of all daily grades shall be weighted 40 percent. <p>Three of the 12 grades shall represent major assessments such as unit exams, projects, major papers, and the like.</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation shall represent homework, study guides, quizzes, daily participation, and the like.</p>
SEMESTER EXAM GRADES 9–12	<p>The purpose of the semester exam is to determine, in a formal way, the mastery and retention of instructional objectives. While all objectives are tested by ongoing evaluations, only the major ones, especially those basic to the future success of the student, shall be included in the semester exam. Teachers shall follow the semester exam schedule provided by the principal. The semester exam is counted as 20 percent of the semester grade.</p>
REPORTING GRADES 6–12	<p>The actual grade earned on any work and daily or major test shall be recorded in the teacher grade book. Students not demonstrating mastery shall go through the reteaching process.</p>
DROPPING COURSES	<p>Schedule changes should be made the week prior to the beginning of each semester. Necessary changes in courses may be made within the first five school days of a semester without the grade appearing on the transcript. The staff may change achievement levels in courses as needed. Students shall be responsible for mak-</p>

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ing up work missed on essential knowledge and skills and objectives for the new course.

In extenuating circumstances, the principal may allow a student to drop a course after five days. Students dropping a course after the second week, however, shall receive a failing grade in the course dropped and shall receive a failing grade for the new course for that semester.

CHANGING FAILING
GRADES

The only situations in which a student's originally recorded failing grade may be changed to passing and the student's extracurricular eligibility restored are as follows: [See FNG(LEGAL)]

1. There was a mechanical error in averaging or recording the original grade.
2. The teacher's grading procedure violated either local policy or state rule, and the student would have received a passing grade if the correct procedure had been followed.