



Sweetwater
Independent School District

Grading Guidelines

2025-2026 School year

Sweetwater ISD GRADING GUIDELINES

GENERAL GRADING GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

INTRODUCTION

Sweetwater ISD is determined to empower students to commit to and achieve their goals. With a strong partnership between students, parents, guardians, and community members, SISD is committed to providing students with learning opportunities to master the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in all content areas. With regard to students with disabilities, accommodations and/or modifications will be implemented with fidelity to ensure students are successful in their learning. Within the process, interventions will be provided to students with identified learning gaps.

SISD's curriculum is designed to implement 100% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) adopted by the State Board of Education. For each grade level, subject, and course, the guidelines describe the means by which students relative mastery is determined. These guidelines shall ensure that grading reflects a student's relative master of the curriculum 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)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

A student 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.. EIA (LOCAL)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY 9-12

A student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and/or disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Interim progress reports shall be issued for all students after the third week of each grading period EIA(LOCAL). Progress reports shall be issued for all students in grades 3-12 after the third and sixth week of each grading period. The actual numerical average should be posted in the student's Ascender online progress report. Campuses will provide a printed copy of a student's progress report. When a student's grade drops from passing to failing after the third-week report teachers will:

1. Notify parents. (Parents may monitor their student(s) grade through Ascender.)
2. Ensure that any signed progress reports, accurate records of contact, and attempts to contact parents of students who are failing be kept on file by the teacher for the current school year.

A teacher may require any student whose reporting period grade average is below 70 or borderline to attend tutorial sessions.

REPORT CARDS

The District shall issue grade reports/report cards every six weeks for all students. Performance shall be measured in accordance with board policy and the standards established in EIE(LOCAL) and EIA (LOCAL). Six weeks average grades are not to exceed a 100 on the report card.

DAILY WORK AND QUIZZES (FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS)

The purpose of daily work and quizzes (formative assessments) is to help teachers and students monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning.

PROJECTS AND RESEARCH PAPERS

Projects and research papers provide students with opportunities to think critically, problem solve, and learn through hands-on activities. Projects and research papers will be assessed with feedback provided. When developing these assignments, teachers are required to limit the cost of materials and supplies to a reasonable amount and consider student access to technology outside of school. Additional requirements include:

1. Individual projects and group projects will use teacher developed rubrics to communicate expectations for grading in advance;
2. All projects should align with the district's scope and sequence for the subject and grade level;
3. No assignments or projects of any kind will be assigned to students over the fall, winter, and/or spring breaks.
4. Teachers may require that long-term projects be turned in on a certain day and are not required to accept these projects late. Teachers are encouraged to consider extenuating circumstances as appropriate;
5. Due dates for completion of projects or research papers should be communicated in advance. Grading and the return of assignment(s) should be within the same grading period the assignment

is due; and

6. Students may not be permitted to redo projects and/or research papers if they received a grade of zero or a reduced grade on the original assignment because they were found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty.

EXTRA CREDIT

Extra credit shall be awarded on the basis of an academic product that can be directly related to the Sweetwater ISD curriculum objectives. Extra credit assignments should apply equally to all students enrolled in the same content course. Extra credit shall not be given for students providing classroom supplies or materials, or awarded for any other non-academic work.

HOMEWORK

The District considers homework as a valued extension of learning beyond the classroom and an integral part of the instructional program. Depending on the course content, homework may be addressed in short-term and/or long-term assignments.

The teacher may assign homework or other outside class assignments. These assignments should be relevant and meaningful, and they should strengthen skills or new concepts taught in class. Discretion should be used in making assignments. Extended work such as reports and research papers should have an appropriate number of days in which to be completed. Homework is an acceptable learning technique; it is not mandatory to assign.

Assignments should be made with consideration given to a student's total schedule and should be coordinated across subject areas at each school to avoid overloading students at any particular time. Assigning more than 30 minutes of homework per academic level course on a typical night should be avoided or scheduled several days in advance.

Homework may be assessed in a variety of ways. Student completion of homework for grading should be considered. It is considered appropriate to assign the reading or outlining of a chapter prior to class coverage. Effective homework includes the following:

1. Homework should be structured to ensure high completion rates;
2. Feedback of homework should be provided to students to identify their progress towards goal attainment;
3. Build upon concepts and skills previously introduced in the classroom;
4. Encourage independent learning, responsibility, and self-discipline;
5. Be assigned at the student's ability level;
6. Not be used as a disciplinary measure.

GRADING DEADLINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

All tests, quizzes, research papers, daily work, and homework assigned shall be graded, entered into Ascender, and returned to the student within 5 school days of the date received. Exceptions to the 5 school day return of quizzes, research papers, projects, daily work, essays, and homework will only be provided to

accommodate absent students grades 9-12. These assignments will be returned to students no later than ten school days following the initial test date.

Tests and copyrighted assessments may be reviewed, with the teacher at the parent's request.

Exams purchased by the district may be viewed, but not released to parents. These include, but are not limited to, the Cognitive Abilities (CogAT) and credit by exams, and other copyrighted materials.

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULING

Major tests should be coordinated so that students do not have multiple core exams on the same day. Principals will ensure that, to the extent possible, major tests are distributed over multiple days. Each campus will establish its own schedule. The final exam schedule will be communicated to staff, students, and parents two weeks prior to the testing dates on the website, via email, and Remind.

STUDENTS CHECKING WORK AND POSTING OF GRADES

Students may grade or check their own work at teacher discretion. Teachers or students are not permitted to call out grades. In addition, grades may not be posted in any manner where other students can identify individual student scores.

TIMELINE FOR POSTING GRADES IN GRADEBOOK

The following timeline is a maximum number of days for a teacher to post grades to Gradebook for student/parent viewing. Exceptions will be given to assignments that include a written component which would require additional grading time from a teacher. Such assignments may include but are not limited to research papers, written compositions, etc. In such an exception, teachers will communicate an intended timeline for grade posting.

- Teachers must post grades into Ascender no later than 5 school days from the day the assignment(s) were completed or turned in, with the exception of major projects or essays which must be posted no later than 10 school days.

REDO OR RETAKE OF MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS, MAJOR PROJECTS, AND TESTS (SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS)

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. [see District Policy EIA (LOCAL)] The following criteria may be considered when determining the opportunity to redo a major assignment, major project or test:

1. Students may not be permitted to redo a major assignment, major project or test if they received a grade of zero or a reduced grade on the original assignment because they were found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty;
2. Student participation in any reasonable reteach or reviewing activities assigned by the teacher in preparation for redoing a major assignment, major project or test at the agreed upon time;
3. 3rd - 12th grade teachers will allow a student to retake or correct a test. Students completing

test corrections may receive credit and up to a maximum grade of a 70. Students who retake a test will receive a new grade up to an 85.

4. 9-12 9th - 12th grade teachers will allow a student to correct a test. Students completing test corrections may receive credit and up to a maximum grade of a 70.

LATE WORK

Late work is when a student has been provided adequate time and instruction to complete student work and has not completed the assigned work by the assigned time and date. This includes all assignments included in a long-term assignment. Students with extended time accommodations written into their IEPs, IAPs, and/or LPAC documentation will be addressed on an individual basis.

Late Work for Grades 3-12

When a student does not turn in an assignment on the day it is due, he or she must submit the assignment as soon as possible. Late assignments will be accepted within THREE school days of the assigned due date for a maximum grade of an 80. After those three late days, the maximum possible grade for the late assignment will be a 50. All assignments must be turned in during their assigned six-week grading period.

Late Work for Grades 9-12

When a student does not turn in an assignment on the day it is due, he or she must submit the assignment as soon as possible. Late assignments will be accepted as follows

1 DAY LATE	MAX GRADE OF AN 89
2 DAYS LATE	MAX GRADE OF A 79
3 DAYS LATE	MAX GRADE OF A 69
4 DAYS LATE	MAX GRADE OF A 59
5 DAYS LATE	MAX GRADE OF A 50
WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER 5 DAYS LATE	

MAKE-UP WORK FOR STUDENTS

Students who are absent will be permitted to make up regular coursework and receive the actual grade earned. Students are given the number of days absent to make up all work assigned in their absence. Students will be responsible for obtaining and completing the make-up work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher.

EXEMPTIONS TO COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE RELATED TO MAKE-UP WORK FOR STUDENTS

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences. These include the following activities and events:

1. Religious holy days: Students who miss school due to a religious holiday must be allowed time to make up for the missed work, and receive full credit for the work that is turned in per district grading and reporting guidelines for make-up work. Please note that students are allowed one

- travel day before and one travel day after a religious holiday per state law;
2. Required court appearances;
 3. Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
 4. Service as an election clerk; and
 5. Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, if the student comes to school or returns to school on the same day as the appointment. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's arrival or return to campus. FEA (LEGAL)

HIGHER EDUCATION VISITS

A junior or senior student's absence of up to two days per academic school year related to visiting a college or university may be considered an exemption, provided the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed per policy.

TUTORIAL REQUIREMENTS

The campus will provide tutorial services. The principal will ensure that a student whose grade in a subject for a reporting period is lower than 70 attends tutorials in the subject during the following reporting period as appropriate. Unless a student is specifically exempted because he or she qualifies for an exemption from compulsory attendance, a student must attend tutorial classes when required by the campus administration. All teachers will provide tutorials on a regular schedule and will communicate the schedule at the beginning of the school year to students and parents in writing.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS FOR SPECIFIC COURSES

In various courses, students may be required to complete summer assignments in order to review and prepare students for the upcoming course. These summer assignments will be posted on the campus website. Students who are new to the district or transfer into a course requiring a summer assignment may be required to complete a summer assignment(s). Summer assignments for a student(s) new to the district or a student scheduled to a new course shall be provided a reasonable amount of time to complete the summer assignment(s).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SPECIAL EDUCATION/SECTION 504)

All teachers working with a student identified with a disability and served through Special Education or Section 504 shall follow the accommodations/modifications as determined and documented in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP). Instruction, assessment, and grading of students with disabilities shall be reflective of the accommodations/modifications documented in the IEP/IAP. When a student is in jeopardy of failing a class, the teacher must document parent/guardian/adult student communication and use of IEP/ IAP determined accommodations/modifications that have been implemented prior to assigning the failing grade.

STUDENTS INDICATED AS AN EMERGENT BILINGUAL (EB) with ESL SUPPORT

Teachers will implement the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and accommodations determined and documented by the student's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). These accommodations must be used in both instruction and assessment. Homework assignments should be accommodated in the same manner. Grading of ELs should not penalize the student for lack of language proficiency in English. Teachers will maintain high expectations for student learning, communication, sequence and scaffold instruction and assessments to ensure that ELs learn and demonstrate knowledge of the TEKS in the required curriculum. The following guidelines in combination with the student's English language proficiency level should be used to assist in assigning grades for EL students with ESL support.

- EBs are not exempt from grades. Grades for EBs will take into consideration their English language proficiency and be based on the use of documented LPAC accommodations.
- Accommodations for English Learners 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.
- When an EB student is in jeopardy of failing a class, the teacher must have documented the parent/guardian communication and information regarding the use of LPAC determined accommodations. An individual student LPAC meeting shall be convened when a student fails for the grading period.

PROMOTION GUIDELINES FOR GRADES K– 8

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. EIE (LEGAL)

Grades K-8: In grades K–8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based upon the student's performance on assessment instruments and shall be determined by the student's parent, teacher, an administrator, and appropriate District personnel in accordance with administrative regulations.

ATTENDANCE

State law requires students to be in attendance 90 percent of the days a class is offered in order to gain credit or be considered for promotion. When a student's attendance falls below 90 percent of the days the class is offered, after consideration of absences labeled as due to extraordinary circumstances, the student and parent(s) shall be notified in writing. A campus attendance review committee shall hear all cases when a student's attendance has fallen below the 90 percent threshold and an appeal has been filed in writing. In order to receive credit, the attendance review committee may assign one or more alternative learning activities to make up for work missed or credit lost.

UIL GRADE REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A student with an "Incomplete" grade is ineligible at the end of the seven-day grace period unless the "Incomplete" was replaced with a passing grade prior to the end of the seven-day grace period. Students with an "Incomplete" grade either within or beyond the end of the seven-day grace period may regain eligibility if the work is made up in accordance with district policy in regard to time allowed for make-up

work and the conditions under which make-up work is allowed.

GRADING FOR PREKINDERGARTEN

Prekindergarten students are progress monitored three times a year to evaluate what students know and what they still need to learn. Teachers will communicate the progress monitoring reports with parents at the fall teacher/parent conferences. Standards-based report cards will be shared with parents the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth six weeks. The Prekindergarten report card is based on the Texas Education Agency Prekindergarten Guidelines.

PreK Report Card:

Check = Mastery

Dash = In progress

GRADES FOR K - 5th GRADE

Minimum Number of Assignments per Grading Period	
Tests (includes major essays and major projects)	2 Reading/Language Arts 2 Math 1 Science 1 Social Studies
Daily Work/Quizzes	10 Reading/Language Arts 10 Math 6 Science 4 Social Studies

MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADING GUIDELINES

WEIGHTING OF GRADES FOR EACH GRADING PERIOD

Below is the method by which grades will be calculated by category to determine the grading period grades for a student.

Category Weighting	Minimum Number of Assignments per Grading Period
Tests (includes major essays, and major projects) 50%	2
Daily Work/Quizzes 50%	10

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT COURSES

Students who participate in Honors courses at the middle school will receive the same grade weight as high school courses. Grades will be calculated in the following manner for Honors coursework (see below):

- Tests (includes major essays and major projects) represent 60% of the six-week grade.
- Quizzes/Daily Work represent 40% of the six-week grade.
- The semester grade will be the three six-week grades averaged together.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADING GUIDELINES

Category Weighting	Minimum Number of Assignments per Grading Period
Tests (includes major essays, major projects) 60%	2
Daily Work/Quizzes 40%	10

WEIGHTED GRADING FOR ADVANCED ACADEMIC COURSES

See course syllabus for Honors courses where category weighting is provided based on each course.

LEVELS OF ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

- Honors– Challenging coursework that engages students at a high level in preparation for Advanced Academics courses.

WEIGHTED GRADE POINT AVERAGE FOR ADVANCED ACADEMIC COURSES

All Honors and Dual Credit courses are weighted when calculating the weighted grade point average (GPA). A course is labeled Honors if there is a subsequent Advanced Academics course offered. The District shall assign weights to grades earned in eligible courses and shall calculate a weighted numerical grade average in accordance with the following scale:

1. Students will earn 5 points per course, per semester for Honors and Dual Credit per the SISD GPA Grade Point System;
2. The weighted points are not added until the semester is completed; and
3. If a student is in a Honors course and moves to an on level course prior to the semester's end, no weighted points are added to the semester grade.

The District shall assign weights to grades earned in eligible courses and shall calculate a weighted numerical grade average in accordance with the following scale: (1) Honors or Dual Credit plus five; and (2) Regular, on level courses, plus zero. The report card will not reflect the plus five for Honors or Dual Credit courses.

AWARDING OF CREDIT IN HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT COURSES

Credits for students in high school credit courses are awarded on a semester-by-semester basis (1/2 credit per semester). However, if a student fails the first semester of a full-year course and passes the second semester, the two semester grades will be averaged to determine whether the student has earned a passing grade for the year. If the yearly average is above a 70, full credit may be awarded.

