



**ELEMENTARY
GRADING AND REPORTING
GUIDELINES
2019-2020**

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In accordance with Title VI-Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX-Education Amendment of 1972; Section 504 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title II - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, the Cleburne Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability.

FOREWORD

Grading is the process by which a teacher assesses student learning and progress towards mastery of course objectives as aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Grading is part of the teaching and learning process. This process must include establishing clear learning goals and setting standards and evaluative criteria which guide student learning so changes in instruction are based on assessment data. Additionally, the grading process should provide clear and consistent feedback to students that motivate them to focus on and ultimately take responsibility for their own learning.

Reporting is the process by which the teacher communicates information to students and parents/guardians about student mastery of course content and skills. While the reporting process includes report cards and progress reports, it may also require a combination of emails, telephone conversations, and conferences as appropriate.

The purpose of these regulations is to provide a consistent set of grading and reporting regulations. The regulations adhere to the Texas Education Code (TEC), The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) and Cleburne ISD Board policies and regulations.

This manual

- Describes the District's grading system which all elementary teachers will implement
- Encourages a better understanding of grading, reporting, and promotion for teachers, parents/guardians and students, and
- Fosters consistency in grading, reporting student achievement and promotion/retention practices across the District.

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

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Given the premise that all children can learn, we believe that grading and reporting should focus on student growth and learning in a climate of high expectations. Teachers use grading as part of the intricate process of learning. Using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills as the foundation of the curriculum, teachers begin by thoughtfully considering what the students already know and what they need to learn.

Teachers

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

Instructional emphasis should be placed on the accomplishment of defined district goals and not on the time it takes to accomplish these goals. Grading and reporting should be both formative and summative in nature and should utilize both formal and informal processes. Schools are accountable for structuring learning experiences, teaching processes, planning and evaluation, and utilization of materials and resources (including time) to result in optimum student learning.

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

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

PURPOSES OF GRADING

Grading serves the following purposes or functions:

1. **Information/Feedback** – to inform parents and students regularly of the student's success in learning and mastery of local objectives and the TEKS.
2. **Guidance** – to promote and maintain desirable patterns of behavior and achievement and to identify areas for re-teaching.
3. **Motivation** – to encourage the student toward maximum achievement and realistic self appraisal for future educational and occupational planning, and
4. **Administration** – to provide data for use in educational planning and decision making.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Report cards are only one of the many means of communicating with parents. Conferencing with parents is another way. Conferences are useful to improve understanding and communication among teacher, student, and parent. A conference may be initiated by a parent, teacher, student, or administrator.

If a parent desires a conference with his or her child's teacher(s) to discuss the child's progress, the parent must contact the teacher directly to schedule a meeting during the teacher's conference period or other acceptable time to the parent and teacher. Parents must report to the school office prior to meeting with the teacher.

Any notice required by policy to be sent to the parent(s) or guardian of a student will be written in the language spoken by the parent(s) or guardian. If the language of the parent(s) or guardian is other than English or Spanish, a reasonable attempt to find a suitable translation will be made.

Grades may take up to 5 school days to be posted in the Skyward Access System.

Progress Reports

In a six-week grade reporting period, progress reports will be sent to all students at the end of each three-week period [EIA (LEGAL)]. The teacher shall contact the parent/guardian by phone, email or conference of any student making below a 70 at the end of the three-week period. Teachers need to assure that they retain documentation of parental response/meeting.

THE GRADING SYSTEM

Texas Education Code 28.0216, and EIA (LEGAL) Policy dated 10/20/2015, teachers will no longer assign a student a prescribed minimum grade. The Cleburne ISD district grading policy and procedures reflect the new law which includes provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations including the following:

- Must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of concepts.
- May not require a classroom teacher to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work; and
- Shall allow a student a reasonable opportunity to complete make up assignments due to absences (per student handbook).
- Shall allow a student a reasonable opportunity to redo a class assignment or retake an examination for which the student received a failing grade (per student handbook).

Grade Indicators

1. Pre-K and Kindergarten students' mastery of the instructional expectations as aligned in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) will be assessed using a checklist report of student progress. Students in grades in 1-5 will receive numerical scores on a scale from 0-100 to evaluate each student's progress in the following academic subjects: mathematics, reading, writing and language arts, social studies, and science.

2. A student who masters the instructional objectives as outlined by the district and the State of Texas must be given a passing grade.
3. In determining reporting period grades for academic subjects in grades 1-5, importance should be placed on accomplishment of defined educational objectives. Within this framework the following assessment (formal or informal) procedure is suggested:
 - a) Formal assessment may include unit tests, quizzes, chapter or skills tests, writing samples, and projects.
 - b) Informal assessment may include teacher-documented observations, extra practice assignments, class work, and skills demonstrations.
4. Yearly grades should be computed by averaging the six 6 week's numerical grades posted on the student's report card.
5. Letter grades using the symbols of "E," "S," "N," and "U" will be used to evaluate student progress in health education, technology, physical education, art, and music. The letter grade should reflect understanding of concepts, development of skills, and participation in activities.
6. If a student enters Cleburne ISD from another school district which uses letter grades, the letter grades will be converted using the table below.

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade
A	95
B	85
C	75
D	70
F	65

Explanation of Numerical Grades for Academic Performance or Achievement

The numerical grades and their meanings used on the report to parents are shown below.

90 -100	Outstanding Performance	A
80 - 89	Good Performance	B
70 - 79	Satisfactory Performance	C
69 and below	Failing	F
*I	Incomplete	
*The "I" is not an academic grade but indicates incomplete work.		

Explanation of Letter Grades for Academic Performance

Below is a general guide to the meaning of the letter grades for physical education, fine arts, and technology.

- E Excellent – Clearly outstanding; exceeds expectations and performs above and beyond the mastery of essential knowledge skills.
- S Satisfactory – Meets expectations; is mastering essential knowledge and skills.
- N Needs Improvement – Fails to meet expectations; clearly needs help to raise performance to mastery of essential knowledge and skills.
- U Unsatisfactory – Far below expectations; student is not mastering essential knowledge and skills and is failing.

Explanation of Letter Grades for Student Conduct

The following criteria are provided as a general guide for administering conduct grades

- E – Excellent
- S – Satisfactory
- N – Needs Improvement
- U – Unsatisfactory

Teacher must notify parents before lowering the conduct grade to an N. (*Weekly calendars that are signed, phone calls etc. Qualify for notification*)

Before a student receives a “U” in conduct, the teacher must document communication with the parent/guardian and submit such documentation to the student’s assigned Assistant Principal.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR GRADING

- Evaluations of academic achievement are not to be lowered because of poor conduct. Poor conduct should be reflected in the conduct report.
- The “curve” system or any other system of evaluation that predetermines grades shall not be used.
- Report cards must be signed by parents and returned to the homeroom teacher.
- Additional assistance will be provided in the areas of reading, English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science for students not passing a course at the end of a reporting period.
- Grade books and lesson plans will be monitored by the campus administrators on a regular basis.

- Progress reports and report cards are sent home approximately one week after the end of the grading period. Please see the District calendar posted on www.cleburne.k12.tx.us for exact dates for the release of report cards.
- Student's extra practice, daily grades, and assessments are all averaged to determine their final grade. Teachers will take a minimum of two grades per week in math and reading/language arts, one for social studies and science.
- Students will not grade another student's work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to redo the assignment. The grade penalty may include receiving no credit for the assignment or having to redo the assignment in a disciplinary setting such as In-School Suspension. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination or outside of class with students who have not yet tested or turned in work. Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing as one's own without giving credit to the true author. Plagiarism will be considered cheating and the student will be subject to disciplinary action that may include loss of credit for the work in question. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, on a preponderance of the evidence, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students. Teachers who have reason to believe a student has engaged in cheating or other academic dishonesty will determine the academic penalty to be assessed. The use of academic penalties is not governed by policies pertaining to student discipline, but students and parents may appeal the teacher's decision, using the student complaint policy.

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. If a student does not demonstrate 70% mastery of concepts and skills as specified in the TEKS and necessary for future learning, re-teaching and re-testing (or re-assessment) may be provided for the student.

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

1. If 50% or more of students in a class fail to demonstrate 70% mastery of TEKS on a summative assessment, the teacher will provide an opportunity for re-teaching and re-testing. All students in the class will be given the opportunity for re-teach and re-test.
2. If fewer than 50% of students in a class fail to demonstrate 70% mastery of TEKS on a summative assessment, the teachers may provide re-teaching or re-testing to those students who did not demonstrate mastery.
3. Re-teaching should employ instructional strategies different from the original instruction.
4. Re-testing or re-assessment must include a more rigorous re-teaching exercise; these can include but are not limited to oral examination, additional practice activities, an essay or paper, a report or presentation, revision of a paper, or a formal test.
5. Simply making test corrections cannot be a substitute for re-teaching or re-testing.
6. Any student re-taking or redoing a major assignment must complete it within 5 school days.

REDO and RETAKE GRADE AVERAGING

- Students will receive the higher of the two grades up to a grade of 70.
- When the entire class retakes a summative assessment, students will receive the higher of the two grades.

EXTRA PRACTICE

Purpose of Extra Practice

Extra practice is extended independent practice for the reinforcement of basic skills and/or special projects designed to extend the student's class work.

Meaningful extra practice assignments serve several purposes:

- To reinforce concepts and skills which have been developed during classroom activities,
- To nurture the development of self-discipline and organizational skills, and
- To foster the use of independent research skills.

Teacher Responsibilities

1. Ensuring that students have been provided prior instruction to facilitate the completion of assignments successfully.
2. Considering extra practice as part of the total learning process by monitoring, collecting, reviewing and grading extra practice assignments, regularly and timely, to give students feedback on their learning.

3. Provide a process for missed extra practice assignments, substituting another activity for the missed assignment so that there are no gaps in the student’s learning.
4. CISD recognizes that family time is important; therefore, teachers will not assign extra practice immediately prior to extended holiday periods during the school year. Long-term projects will not be due on the first class day upon returning from extended holidays within the school year.
5. Extra practice should only be assigned for reinforcement of skills and concepts taught in class.

Types of Extra Practice

Independent practice assignments are an important extension of class work. These assignments are appropriate when students have demonstrated sufficient understanding of the material. The length of the assignment should be no longer than necessary to reinforce or practice the skill or concept or to accomplish the learning outcome.

Preparation assignments help students benefit from subsequent lessons: for example, reading new material or previewing and studying material previously covered in class. Preparation assignments are frequently followed by a daily activity that enables the teacher to evaluate student achievement. Failure to be prepared may result in the student’s inability to participate fully in the classroom learning experience.

Extension assignments or special projects should require students to use newly learned skills or concepts in a new situation: for example, synthesizing information and producing a unique written or other product- such as a research model, or a writing assignment. Some of these assignments are daily assignments, but others are equivalent to a major test and should be averaged as major grades for the six-weeks reporting period.

Guidelines for Assigning Extra Practice

Time needed on extra practice may vary pending the specific needs of individual children and the type of extra practice assignment. Minutes below represent a total amount of time that should be spent by a child on extra practice in all subjects per night. Teachers at each grade level should coordinate their extra practice assignments to reflect this total allotted time.

Pre-Kindergarten	10 minutes
Kindergarten	10 – 15 minutes
First Grade	15 – 20 minutes
Second Grade	20 – 25 minutes
Third Grade	30 – 45 minutes

Fourth Grade	40 – 45 minutes
Fifth Grade	50 – 55 minute

MAKE-UP WORK

Students will be given two days for the first absence, and one day for each additional absence to make up work. Essentially, one day more than the days absent [EIAB (Local)].

A six-weeks “Incomplete” (“I”) grade due to absences must be made up within the next reporting period, or the missing work will be given zero (“0”) credit and will be averaged with the other work. Teachers need to document attempts made to give and attain missing work from students.

LATE WORK

- A. Late work is defined as any assignment that is not submitted on the due date and class period with the exception of make up work for absences or approved school activities
- B. Late assignments will be accepted until the material has been assessed.
- C. 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 and/or appropriate administrator of any such circumstances so that an exception to the rule may or may not be granted. The teacher and/or appropriate administrator shall have the authority to render a final decision on the granting of any exceptions.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Individual Education Program (IEP) developed by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee for each student who meets eligibility criteria for Special Education services states responsibility for grade reporting for each special education student as follows:

If the student is taught solely in general education, the grade will be assigned by the general education teacher.

If the IEP stipulates, as determined by the ARD committee, that a subject be taught solely by the special education teacher, the grade will be assigned by the special education teacher.

If the special education and general education teachers collaborate, the grade should be assigned by the teacher who is responsible for the basic instruction of the subject.

The grading period and numerical grading system in general education will apply unless otherwise specified in the IEP.

In addition, as required by law, every special education student will receive his/her IEP Progress Report which will accompany the Report Card at every designated 6 week reporting period.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLs)

High academic standards should be maintained for English Language Learners; however, no grading policy should adversely affect a student based solely on language proficiency. The teacher must take into consideration the student's level of English proficiency when planning assessments for and assigning grades to ELLs. Modified and/or alternative assessments and special instructional methods should be used as appropriate and should be dependent on the level of English language proficiency of the student. Teachers will use the differentiation section from the curriculum framework to appropriately address the assessment of ELLs. All English Language Learners will receive testing accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) committee.

PROMOTIONS AND RETENTIONS

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, intensive, and/or accelerated services. The District shall comply with applicable state and federal requirements when determining methods for students with disabilities or students who are English language learners to demonstrate mastery of the curriculum.

Any modified promotion standards for a student receiving special education services shall be determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee and documented in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

In addition to the factors in law that must be considered for promotion, 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.

Students in kindergarten shall be promoted based on their mastery of the essential skills. Any decisions to retain a kindergarten student must be made with parent approval.

In grades 1–5, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in the

following areas: reading, English language arts, mathematics, and a grade of 70 or above in science or social studies.

In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, students in grade 5 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.

REDUCING STUDENT RETENTION

The district shall establish procedures designed to reduce retaining students at a grade level, with the ultimate goal being elimination of the practice of retaining students [EHBC (Legal/Local)].

A student, who has met the preceding criteria for promotion but has less than 90 percent attendance for the school year, shall not be given credit for promotion unless an attendance committee gives credit because of extenuating circumstances [FEC (Local)].

When a student's attendance drops below 90 percent but remains at least within 75 percent of the days the class is offered, the student may earn credit for the class by completing a plan approved by the principal. This plan must provide for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class as determined by the principal [FEC (LEGAL and LOCAL)].

If there are indications at the end of the first semester that the student may be retained, the principal or his/her designee should arrange a conference with the parent or guardian.

A conference must be held with the parent or guardian of any student recommended for retention at least 6 weeks prior to the close of school. The elementary teacher will recommend retention to the principal in writing and will include student progress data that support the recommendation.

The determination of promotion or retention will be made by the teacher with approval by the principal. A student who continues to work below grade level may be placed at the next grade.

Parents who are not in agreement with a student being promoted or placed to the next grade level must appeal the campus level decision to the superintendent or the superintendent designee.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

If a student is not in attendance at least 15 days of the reporting period, the following procedures apply in each of the cases indicated:

- When a student transfers into school with records from another school in the district or from another school outside the district, the grade-in-progress from the sending school will be used to calculate the student's six-weeks, semester, or yearly grade as appropriate.
- A student who enrolls with no records will receive a designation of "Insufficient Attendance" in place of a grade for the reporting period. The semester average will be calculated on the basis of the two grading periods or which grades are reported.

DISTRICT AND CAMPUS COMMON ASSESSMENTS

- Campuses will follow the district assessments guidelines.
- Assessments are designed to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, determine instructional effectiveness, guide instructional decisions, identify programmatic strengths, and weaknesses.
- Scope and sequence and/or campus common assessments for which instruction has been provided may also be used in calculating student grades.
- All Special Education students who take the STAAR will participate in district and common assessments. These students will also receive the testing accommodations that are used on a regular basis and identified by the ARD committee.
- All ELL students will receive testing accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified by the LPAC committee.
- Dyslexic and Section 504 students will receive accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified in their Section 504 plan.
- Feedback from assessments should be shared with students and parents/guardians on campus in order to debrief the activity and the learning.