



Zapata County Independent School District

Instructional Grading and Reporting Guidelines

(EIA Regulation)
Board Approved
July 26, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	Page 3
State and Local Curriculum	Page 3
Guidelines for Grading (Policy EIA Local).....	Page 3
ZCISD Curriculum Scope and Sequence.....	Page 4
Instructional Materials	Page 4
Instructional Practices.....	Page 4
Grading Guidelines	Page 5
Standards for Mastery (Policy EIE Legal)	Page 5
Parent Conferences	Page 5
Credit Recovery Course Grading and Credit	Page 5
Transfer Students (Policy EIC Local).....	Page 5
Grading System.....	Page 6
Grades Prekindergarten and Kindergarten.....	Page 6
Grades 1 st – 12 th	Page 6
Grading Procedures.....	Page 6
Confidentiality	Page 6
Dropping Grades.....	Page 7
Grade Calculation	Page 7
Participation in an Extracurricular Activity.....	Page 7
Maximum Weight of a Grade	Page 7
Minimum Number of Grades.....	Page 8
Homework.....	Page 8
Reassessment Guidelines	Page 9
Reasonable Opportunity to Redo an Assignment	Page 9
Reasonable Opportunity for Retesting.....	Page 10
Late Assignments/Late Work.....	Page 10
Make-Up Work	Page 10
Extra Credit.....	Page 11
Academic Dishonesty	Page 11
Report Cards/Progress Reports	Page 11
Teacher Acknowledgement Form.....	Page 12

INTRODUCTION

These Zapata County ISD Instructional Grading and Reporting Procedures & Guidelines reflect current District practices and policies, which have been enacted in accordance with the Texas Education Code, as amended.

This guide should serve as a reference for Zapata County ISD staff, so that they may gain a better understanding of the District's grading, assessment, reporting, promotion policies and procedures, and state law regarding the same.

STATE AND LOCAL CURRICULUM

State Curriculum

Curriculum content is prescribed by the Texas Education Agency through the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Local instructional plans (or scope and sequences) are based upon the State curriculum frameworks and state recommended program standards.

Curriculum content is not prescribed in detail by the Texas Education Agency, but provides a framework to draw upon for the development of the district's scope and sequence.

Local Curriculum (Policy EIA Local)

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. Each student's level of curriculum mastery shall be a major factor in determining the student's grade for a course.

GUIDELINES FOR GRADING (POLICY EIA LOCAL)

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.

The District shall issue grade reports/report cards every six or nine weeks on a form approved by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. Performance shall be measured in accordance with Policy EIA (Local), as well as the standards established in Policy EIE (Local).

District educators have the discretion to issue interim progress reports. It should be noted that notice of a student's consistent unsatisfactory performance shall be issued in accordance with EIA (Legal).

ZCISD CURRICULUM SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The District continuously develops a curriculum scope and sequence to align curricula PK-12 district-wide and a timeline of critical objectives for each six/nine weeks in each subject. Additionally, the District regularly reviews and revises curriculum to reflect real-world needs, depth and complexity, rigor and relevance, and to meet the needs of all students.

All Zapata County Independent School District curriculum scope and sequences are correlated to the TEKS to ensure coverage of the essential skills and concepts of each course. Further, District scope and sequences have been written to facilitate classroom instruction.

ZCISD scope and sequences have been developed by professional staff in coordination with the ZCISD Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. These documents have been developed for each course or subject and are updated as needed. The development, alignment, revision, and review of District scope and sequences are carried out under the direction of curriculum coordinators with a team of teachers.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

State-adopted textbooks and electronic media serve as one instructional resource to meet course and curriculum objectives.

The District is provided an instructional materials allotment by the Texas Commissioner of Education, which may be used to purchase state-approved instructional materials, technology, and training to support instruction. *See* 19 Tex. Admin. Code §66.1307.

Locally purchased instructional materials are selected by the District, campus and/or individual teachers to meet the needs of students.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Instructional strategies and practices to ensure student success are based upon campus and teacher analysis of student needs, effective teaching practices, student learning styles, and demonstrated success through the assessment process.

Student academic achievement shall be based on the degree of mastery of the District's instructional objectives, which reflect the Texas Education Agency TEKS and address the skills and concepts needed for successful performance in the current grade and in the next grade.

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 TEKS. Each student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the student's grade for a subject or course.

Achievement grades should be fairly determined from a wide variety of information, which could include student performance on daily assignments, homework, tests, and/or special projects. The information used in grading should be appropriate to the grade level and subject being considered. Prior to instruction, students should be informed of the class or course expectations, and the teacher must be prepared to document and explain how grades are determined. A course syllabus may be prepared at the teacher's discretion—and in accordance with the District's curriculum standards—to inform students of these expectations.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course shall be clearly communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department staff and have been approved by the campus principal.

These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.).

Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade. [See **Reassessment Guidelines** on page 14]

Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed. [See **Makeup Work** on page 15]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher assigning the grade. If the question is not resolved by the teacher, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal.

Due to the nature of distance/virtual learning and dual credit programs, these programs may have different grading structure than the traditional face-to-face courses offered at Zapata County ISD.

STANDARDS FOR MASTERY (POLICY EIE LEGAL)

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. The District shall consider the recommendation of the student's teacher, the student's grade in each subject or course, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the District.

Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services. *[Refer to the Zapata CISD Student Handbook for further information.]*

PARENT CONFERENCES

All teachers will make a good faith effort to conference with parents of students experiencing academic difficulty at each progress reporting period.

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher and access the parent portal.

CREDIT RECOVERY COURSE GRADING AND CREDIT

Students enrolled in high school credit courses via the Credit Recovery program are subject to special grading procedures. Credit Recovery delivers instruction and assessments in a unique environment requiring specialized procedures.

TRANSFER STUDENTS (POLICY EIC LOCAL)

Grade averages for any student transferring into Zapata County ISD will be used in place of assignments, quizzes, and major grades that the student has missed during the current grading period.

Students transferring into the District shall receive the numerical grade that was earned in courses at another school.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grading and reporting student progress is intended to help increase student achievement. An effective grading system allows educators to clearly communicate student progress toward pre-defined curriculum standards in a way that is equitable, accurate, and useful.

As the instructional leader of the school, the principal has the ultimate responsibility to enforce fair and consistent grading procedures that are consistent with District policies.

Grading procedures will be based on the student's academic achievement or demonstrated mastery of the course (Tex. Educ. Code §28.021).

GRADES PREKINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN

Letter grades shall be used to report the progress for prekindergarten and kindergarten students.

- E (Excellent) – Indicates mastery of grade-level content above that normally expected of a student at the same instructional level (Advanced Development).
- S (Satisfactory) – Indicates mastery of grade-level content normally expected for the student's instructional level (Developing as Expected).
- N (Needs Improvement) – Indicates student does not yet meet expectations for mastery of grade-level content in one or more areas (More Development Needed).
- U (Unsatisfactory) – Indicates failure to perform at the expected instructional level (More Development Needed).

GRADES 1st – 12th

Grades for assignments will be based on mastery. Numerical student grades will be awarded on a scale of 0-100, based on course assignments and unit evaluation. A grade of 70 or above is considered a passing grade.

GRADING PROCEDURES

Posting of Grades

An electronic gradebook, TxGradeBook, will be used as the official district grade book at each campus.

The TxGradeBook application is an integrated classroom management system that allows teachers to maintain and post student data, including attendance and grades. The online software allows teachers to input, modify and monitor student's current progress in real-time at work or from home.

Teachers are expected to provide timely, meaningful, feedback on student work checked for accuracy.

Assignments should be graded and posted in the electronic TxGradeBook within the week the assignment was given with the exception of complex projects, essays, or assignments that require extensive teacher feedback or review.

Other Codes Used Within Electronic TxGradeBook

- M = Missing
- I = Incomplete (When "I" is entered for any grade, the student's working cycle average will be "I" until a grade is entered.)
- X = Excluded

CONFIDENTIALITY

Grades are student records, and may only be made available to District staff members with an educational need for student information. The student's teacher of record is the only person allowed to enter and edit grades for his or her assigned students. Passwords and log-in information should not be shared by any District employee at any time.

DROPPING GRADES

As long as a student's teacher maintains the minimum number of grades for the student, the teacher has the discretion to drop the lowest grade(s) as long as this practice is consistent among grade level and subject/course. [See **Minimum Number of Grades** on Page 11]

GRADE CALCULATION

Types of Assessments, Assignments, & Weighting

	Elementary Examples	%	Middle Examples	%	High Examples	%
Major Assessments	Exam/Test Project Research Paper Composition Major Presentation Portfolio Lab/Reports	50	Exam/Test Project Research Paper Composition Major Presentation Portfolio Lab/Reports	50	Exam/Test Project Research Paper Composition Major Presentation Portfolio Lab/Reports	50
Classwork	Daily Class Work Quiz Journal Short Answer Writing Labs/Reports Homework	50	Daily Class Work Quiz Journal Short Answer Writing Labs/Reports Homework	50	Daily Class Work Quiz Journal Short Answer Writing Labs/Reports Homework	50

*Projects/Products may assess multiple learning standards and therefore, more than one grade may be recorded for a project/product based on the scoring rubric.

PARTICIPATION IN AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY

For students enrolled in a class in which participation in extracurricular activities is a reasonable expectation of the class, the teacher may consider the student's participation in the extracurricular activity when assigning the grade for the grading period during which the extracurricular activity or public performance occurred.

- A student may not fail a class solely based on participation in the extracurricular activity component of the class.
- The student should be made aware of the requirement to participate in extracurricular activities prior to or upon enrollment in the course.
- A student who is ineligible to participate in an "extracurricular activity" as defined by 19 TAC §76.1001(a) shall not suffer a grade penalty for failure to participate in the extracurricular activity or public performance.

MAXIMUM WEIGHT OF A GRADE

When calculating a six-week or nine-week average for a class, no single assignment or assessment grade may count towards more than 20% of the total class grade average, regardless of the grade category.

It should be noted, however, that some major projects may comprise more than one assignment.

The actual grade earned on any assignment may exceed 100%; however, calculated averages reported on progress reports or report cards may not exceed 100%.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF GRADES

- A minimum of 2 assignments per week per grading period:
12 assignment grades per six weeks or
18 assignment grades per nine weeks

AND

- A minimum of:
3 assessment grades per six weeks or
4 assessment grades per nine weeks

Recommended: A minimum of 1 assessment per every 2 weeks per grading period.

HOMEWORK

Homework is intended to reinforce and/or extend the learning process and the application of knowledge, skills, processes, and content from the classroom. Homework may help families become more involved with the educational process, communicate high expectations for students, and help students develop self-discipline and organizational skills.

Homework is defined as work that is completed outside of regular class time, and should be an extension of and/or extra practice related to concepts taught in class. Further, homework may serve as preparation for a future class. All District students should expect to have some homework assignments at any time during the school year.

- All homework assignments must be designed as a meaningful part of the educational process, and must be reviewed by the teacher assigning the homework.
- Homework will be assigned to students on a regular basis and with variances in length, according to the purpose and difficulty level of the assignment.
- Homework should be of a difficulty level that allows for independent study by the student, and the student should clearly understand the expectations of the assignment.
- Teachers are expected to provide feedback on homework assignments through comments or grading allocations that recognize the effort of the student and indicate the assignment's use as an instructional guide. Ungraded homework assignments are discouraged; grading based on completion is an acceptable alternative to ungraded assignments.
- Feedback on homework assignments should be provided as soon as reasonably possible after the student submits the assignment. "Feedback" includes, but is not limited to written comments, peer review, teacher-student conferences, and grades.
- Homework assignments which are assigned to be completed over a weekend or during District holidays should be of a reasonable length and complexity, as determined by the assigning teacher.

GRADES PREKINDERGARTEN – KINDERGARTEN HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- Homework may be assigned, but the estimated time to complete the assignment(s) should not exceed 20 minutes.
- Each student is expected to read, or be read to, 15 minutes each school night **in addition to** assigned homework.

GRADES 1-2 HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- Homework may be assigned, but the estimated time to complete the assignment(s) should not exceed 30 minutes.
- Each student is expected to read, or be read to, 20 minutes each school night **in addition to** assigned homework.

GRADES 3-5 HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- Homework may be assigned, but the estimated time to complete the assignment(s) should not exceed 40 minutes.
- Students are expected to complete all homework assignments by the assignment deadline.
- Each student is expected to read at least 20 minutes of subject-related instructional material each school night **in addition to** assigned homework.

- The total estimated time to complete homework assignments and assigned reading should never exceed one (1) hour per night.
- If two or more teachers are working with a single student, homework assignments should be coordinated to adhere to the one-hour time frame limit.

GRADES 6-8 HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- The cumulative time spent on homework must be reasonable, as determined by the teacher.
- Homework may be assigned, but the estimated time to complete the assignment(s) should not exceed 1.5 hours per night or 7.5 hours per week.
- The 1.5-hour nightly and 7.5-hour weekly time limit for homework applies to all subjects and teachers combined.
- If two or more teachers are working with a single student, homework assignments should be coordinated to adhere to the time frame limits.

GRADES 9-12 HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- The cumulative time spent on homework must be reasonable, as determined by the teacher.
- No more than 2 hours per night or 10 hours per week of homework should be assigned across all subjects and teachers combined, with the exception of students enrolled in multiple Advanced Placement, dual credit, or CTE courses.
- Students enrolled in multiple Advanced Placement, dual credit, or CTE courses may be assigned up to one (1) hour of homework assignments per day, **per course**, with the total number of hours per week for all subjects and teachers combined not to exceed 20 hours.
- If two or more teachers are working with a single student, homework assignments should be coordinated to adhere to the time frame limits.

REASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Zapata County ISD teachers will utilize ongoing mastery assessment instruments to determine which students are in need of intervention. The use of teacher-created tests, performance assessments, common assessments, and teacher observations will help determine which students are mastering instructional objectives and which students are in need of additional support.

- Teachers will identify and monitor students' level of mastery and progress.
- Teachers will re-teach core content to the entire class when data indicates that mastery as a classroom has not occurred.
- Students' progress will be monitored after re-teaching has occurred.
- Teachers will triangulate data to identify students who are in need of additional targeted intervention.
- For any average numerical grade lower than a 50 for the first grading period of each semester*, the teacher may record a 50 on the student's report card if such a grade is justified in the professional judgment of the teacher based on the student's attendance, effort, and any extenuating circumstances. [See Policy EIA (Local)] *Note: The first three weeks for nine-week courses.
- For any student receiving a grade lower than a 50 for the first grading period of each semester*, the teacher shall develop a plan for success for the student, which shall include make-up and redo opportunities, and when reasonably calculated, may result in the student passing the course with a minimum grade of 70. [See Policy EIA (Local)] *Note: The first three weeks for nine-week courses.

“REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY” TO REDO AN ASSIGNMENT

- Students will be given a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment for which a student received a failing grade. [See Policy EIA (Local)]
- All students may be given up to three (3) additional school days to re-do a *failing* assignment for a passing grade. The assignment(s) must be re-done before the end of the grading period in which the failing grade would otherwise be recorded.
- A teacher will have the option of assigning an alternative assignment in lieu of the original.
- Students must make arrangements to attend re-teaching/tutoring to assist with mastery of the assignment if scheduled by the teacher.

“REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY” FOR RETESTING

- Students will be given a reasonable opportunity to retake a test for which the student received a failing grade. [See Policy EIA (Local)]
- Reassessment is mandatory for summative tests that result in a class average of less than 70. In this case, the student will be able to substitute the retest grade for the failing grade.
- The student must participate in some form of re-teaching, tutoring, or both re-teaching and tutoring prior to the re-test.
- Reassessment is not available in Dual Credit classes.
- Students should be encouraged to make corrections to the original summative test and complete all formative assignments to be eligible for reassessment.
- Reassessments must be offered within the same calendar week of the date in which the original graded assessment was returned.
- Students must make arrangements to attend the reassessment date set by the teacher if reassessment is provided outside of school hours.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS/LATE WORK

Late Assignments/Late work applies to students *who are in attendance*, but fail to turn their work in on time.

- Because of differences in short-term assignments, teachers have the option of giving students an alternative assignment that will be due within the same time frame as the original assignment.
- Students will be made aware of the deadline established by the teacher.
- Advanced Placement courses will follow their own College Board-approved syllabus, which may include a late work policy.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests *following any absence*. All students will receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an absence, including excused and unexcused absences, and absences due to suspension from school. When determining what work is to be assigned for the make-up opportunity, teachers are encouraged to consider the instructional objectives for the subject or course, and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting the subject and course requirements.

- Teachers should ensure students have the necessary instruction required to successfully complete their make-up work.
- A student will be given as many days as he or she was absent to make up tests and other missed assignments.
- Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project or assignment in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.
- Teachers are required to provide assignments prior to an absence when requested by the student or parent, with advance notice of at least one (1) school day.
- If parents request assignments in advance of an *extended absence*, every effort should be made to provide the assignment(s). However, the campus maintains discretion regarding whether or not assignments will be provided ahead of time.
- A student involved in one or more extracurricular activities must notify his or her teachers ahead of time regarding any expected absences.
- **Note:** All absences account for the ninety percent (90%) threshold in regards to state laws pertaining to “attendance for credit or final grade”. [See Policy Series FEC]

EXTRA CREDIT

- All extra credit is to be based on academic criteria.
- The intent of extra credit is for class enrichment, not mastery of the TEKS.
- Extra credit may be offered at the discretion of the teacher.
- If extra credit is offered, it must be offered to all students in the grade level subject or course.
- Extra credit may not cause an excessive financial burden on the student.
- Extra credit awarded will not account for more than five percent (5%) of the six-week or nine-week average, and the final average recorded for reporting purposes on the transcript cannot exceed 100%.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty—including but not limited to plagiarism or cheating—shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests, and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. [See Policy EIA (Local)] Grade penalties shall be consistent across campus grade level and subject/course.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards or Progress Reports with each student's grades and absences in each class and subject are issued to parents at least once every three (3) weeks.

- If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject, as reflected at the end of the grading period, the student's parent will be contacted and a request will be made for the parent to schedule a conference with the teacher for the class or subject in which the student received the grade.
- An examination or course grade issued by a teacher is final and may not be changed unless the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with the District grading policy applicable to the grade, as determined by the Board. [See Policy EIA (Legal)]
- Work turned in after the grading period has ended may not be considered when determining a student's eligibility for extracurricular activities, except in the case of an "Incomplete" grade.
- 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.



Zapata County Independent School District
Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures
Teacher Acknowledgement Form

My signature acknowledges that I have read the **District's Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures** (EIA Regulation) and agree to abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced herein.

- 1. I am aware that the Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures EIA Regulation is available to me online at the District's website located at <http://www.zcisd.org>
- 2. I understand that changes in District policies may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this regulation.
- 3. As the District provides updated policy or procedure information to me, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes referenced in the updated materials.
- 4. I understand that I should consult my principal regarding any questions I may have regarding the Grading Guidelines referenced herein.

_____	_____
Print Name	Employee ID
_____	_____
Signature	Date

Campus	
_____	_____
Grade Level(s)	Subject(s)/Course(s)

Signed Forms are due to your campus principal on or before the end of the first week of school each year.