



Marion Independent School District Grades 2-8 Grading Policy

District Grading Philosophy

Grading serves as a process to collect data and communicate a student’s level of mastery of the student learning expectations in each course. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) outline the student learning expectations for each course. As a district, we have developed curriculum documents that outline the scope and pacing of these student learning expectations across the four grading quarters. Each grading quarter targets specific student learning expectations, and the graded activities aim to communicate each student’s level of mastery of the student learning expectations.

In order for students to maximize their effort to gain mastery, teachers will design varied learning experiences that engage students with rigorous and relevant activities that align to the student learning expectations and promote student agency¹.

TEA Strong Start Guidance for 2020-2021

The school district’s grading policies for remote learning must be consistent with the school district’s grading policies for on-campus learning.

Students participating in remote learning during the 2020-2021 school year will be required to check in daily by 9:00 am to earn daily attendance. Students have one attendance check for in person attendance, so they complete one daily check in task. Failure to check-in on a given school day or for a given period equates an absence for that school day or class period. **The daily check in task is a non-graded activity; however, it is essential to earn attendance for the school day.**

The remaining portion of this guidance will outline the grading policy for the 2020-2021 school year. Adjustments have been made to accommodate and align the in person and remote learning settings, so students receive clear communication about their progress toward mastery of the student learning expectations for each course.

Board Policy

EIA (Legal) Grading Policy
Education Code 28.0216

¹ A focus on student agency is a focus on building critical thinking skills, growing student ownership of learning, and giving students choice and voice in the learning process.

The District shall adopt a grading policy, including provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations, before each school year. The District grading policy:

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 to the student's quality of work; and
3. May allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

EIA (Local) Guidelines for Grading

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.

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.

Calculation of Semester Average

All courses will calculate and report a semester average based on the average of the two nine weeks grading periods per semester. Calculated averages reported on progress reports and report cards may not exceed 100%.

Calculation of Year-long Average

For a two-semester course in which both semesters are completed in the same school year, the semesters will be averaged together to determine the student's final grade for the course. If the final grade averages to 70% or higher, full credit will be awarded. Half credit will be awarded each semester.

Grade Categories and Weight

Major Grades = 50%

Assessment activities that evaluate the student's mastery of student learning expectations from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

Minor Grades = 30%

Instructional activities that evaluate the student's progress toward mastery of student learning expectations from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

Daily Grades = 20%

Routine and/or ongoing learning activities that support the student's progress toward mastery of student learning expectations from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

Non-Graded Activities

Students will have a variety of assessment, instructional, routine, and ongoing activities that will not receive a grade. These activities support the process of learning but may not provide a quality evaluation of student progress or mastery of the student learning expectations.

Grade Determination

Teachers have the flexibility to determine which graded items fit into each category, ensuring adherence to the parameters outlined in the categories and weight section.

Grade DistributionGrades 2-5

For each grading period, a student should have a minimum of 3 major grades, 10 minor grades, and 2 daily grades in order to provide a balanced evaluation of student progress and mastery. To support students appropriately, a student should receive a major grade at least every three weeks and a minor and/or daily grade every week. To reach the minimum quantity of grades, some weeks will have more major, minor, and/or daily grades than required for the week.

Grades 6-8

For each grading period, a student should have a minimum of 3 major grades, 7 minor grades*, and 5 daily grades* in order to provide a balanced evaluation of student progress and mastery. To support students appropriately, a student should receive a major grade at least every three weeks and a minor and/or daily grade every week. To reach the minimum quantity of grades, some weeks will have more major, minor, and/or daily grades than required for the week.

*Updated on 1/5/21: The adjustment to minor and daily are for grades 6-12 only. This change is due to block scheduling, which does not allow classes to meet daily.

Weight of Single Grade

No single graded assignment (major, minor, or daily) should count for more than 20% of a student's quarterly grade average. This expectation applies when teachers wish to count an assignment in the gradebook more than once or break a single assignment into individual graded components. Both scenarios elevate the impact a single assignment has on a student's average for the grading period.

Quantity of Grades

For each grading period, a student should have a minimum of 15 grades as outlined in the grade distribution section. However, a student should not exceed 25 grades in total. Teachers have the flexibility of assigning up to 10 additional grades across the three categories. This expectation aims to support a focus on learning and building student agency.

Posting Grades

Graded activities need to be evaluated and posted within five school days, ensuring adherence to the grade categories, weight, distribution, and quantity expectations. Student grade checks will occur each Monday to determine eligibility and needed supports.

Note: Assignments and assessments due within the last three days of a grading period will be calculated in the following grading period to ensure students have a reteach/redo/retest opportunity.

Communication

Teachers shall make reasonable efforts to personally contact by phone or email parents/guardians of students who have missing assignments or are in jeopardy of failing. Communication needs to be made in a timely manner in respect to the assignment due date and/or grade posting. Teachers need to maintain a contact log of their communication with parents/guardians through the course of each school year. Each campus will have a defined communication documentation system, so this information can be shared easily between staff and administration.

Homework

Homework is a means of reinforcing the necessary skills of independent study and learning outside the classroom without immediate teacher supervision. Homework includes all assignments that the teacher expects the students to complete outside of class and should be designed to help students master the content. Homework, a form of formative assessment, may be taken as a minor grade. When a student demonstrates mastery of the student learning expectations on major assignments, homework alone should not be the cause of a failing grade.

Reteach/Redo/Retest Opportunity

In grades 2-8, a student will be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make-up or redo ANY graded assignment or assessment, not just failed assignments. Each assignment or assessment shall have a minimum of one reteach/redo/retest opportunity. Additional support to ensure mastery is at the teacher's discretion. The teacher has discretion to develop a new assignment or give the original assignment to re-assess the student learning expectations not mastered. This reteach/redo/retest must take place within 5 school days of the posted grade. After the fifth school day, the reteach/redo/retest opportunity will be closed.

Students must be afforded opportunities to rework assignments up to 90% of the corrected grade*. [For example: 100%=90, 90%=81, 80%=72, 70%=63]. If mastery is not demonstrated, the higher grade will be recorded*.

If the majority of the class fails to demonstrate mastery of the student learning expectations on a major assignment, the teacher will provide an opportunity for whole class re-teaching and re-testing during class time for the specific student learning expectations not mastered. The higher of the two grades will be recorded.

When a small group of students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery of the student learning expectations on a major assignment, the teacher will provide re-teaching and re-testing for these students during or outside of class time. Students must be afforded opportunities to rework assignments up to 90% of the corrected grade*. [For example: 100%=90, 90%=81, 80%=72, 70%=63]. If mastery is not demonstrated, the higher grade will be recorded.

[*Updated 1/5/21: Clarifying language regarding 90%]

Makeup Work

When a student returns to school, the teacher needs to conference with the student to determine a makeup work plan. Students have a minimum of one day for each absence to complete the missed work. For example, if a student misses 5 days of school, the student has 5 days to complete the missed work. Teachers have discretion to give students additional days, so they can provide additional support. Teachers need to establish due dates within the scope of this makeup work guidance. Students who do not meet the established due dates in the makeup work plan may receive a zero on the missed assignments.

Assignments assigned far in advance (e.g, projects) are due within one day of the student's return. This one-day delay provides an opportunity for additional questions and guidance that the student may have missed in his/her absence.

For extenuating circumstances, principals may determine a student needs extended time to complete missed assignments.

Due Dates and Late Work

Due Dates

Due dates need to be established for each graded assignment and assessment within the grade book and Google Classroom. To help with communication, assignments and due dates can be entered in the gradebook system and Google Classroom.

Teachers have discretion on due dates for all assignments (major, minor, and daily). Assignments submitted after the established due date will be considered late.

Assessments given during remote learning may need to be assigned at independent times to ensure students are prepared for the assessment, and the assessments may need to be limited to a reasonable time limit and/or time frame to ensure mastery can be measured appropriately. Campuses may have additional guidance to support assessments given during remote learning.

Late Work

Assignments will be considered late when submitted after the designated due date. The following guidance needs to be utilized to determine points lost. Teachers have discretion to reduce the quantity of the point deduction; however, the point deduction cannot exceed the maximum for each day late.

In regard to the reteach/redo/retest policy, students may ask for a reteach/redo/retest opportunity after they receive their grade; however, the late points will be applied to the reteach/redo/retest grade.

The table below represents the maximum penalty that may be imposed for turning in late work:

1 Day Late	10 point deduction
2 Days Late	20 point deduction
3 Days Late	30 point deduction
4 or more Days	No credit given - Grade of 0

Zeros

Students have been afforded a number of opportunities to complete major, minor, and daily assignments with passing grades, 70 or higher. The opportunity to recover a grade of zero is not guaranteed; however, a teacher has discretion to grant the opportunity. If granted, a replacement grade for the zero cannot exceed a 70. Please note these opportunities are not guaranteed and will be considered on an individual basis.

Incomplete Grades

For extenuating circumstances only, teachers may issue a student an “Incomplete” for a nine week or semester grade. Incomplete grades must be made up within seven days from the end of the grading period/semester. After seven days, if the assignment(s) have not been completed, a grade of “0” shall be issued for each assignment missing and an average shall be calculated.

Tutorials

Tutorials are available to provide students in need of assistance with one-on-one instruction. All students are welcomed and encouraged to attend tutorial sessions. Days and time of scheduled tutorials will be designated on the teacher’s course syllabus.

Attendance outside of the school day may be required for those students having academic difficulty. Teachers will be available to students during scheduled tutorial times.

Academic Dishonesty

Board Policy: EIA Local

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.

Course Syllabus

All teachers are required to prepare and distribute a course syllabus for students during the first week of the course. The syllabus is designed to give students and parents/guardians an overview of the course. Each teacher may develop his/her own format of a course syllabus. Where applicable, the policies and procedures must be in compliance with the MISD Grading Policy. The following items must be included on the syllabus:

- Teacher name and contact information
- Google Classroom access code and directions
- Outline of major course units, themes, or projects
- Conference period
- Tutorials
- Grade Categories, Weight, and Distribution
- Posting Grades/Communication
- Homework
- Reteach/redo/retest opportunities
- Due Dates/Late Work
- Make-up Work
- Grade of Zero
- Academic Dishonesty
- Classroom Rules and Expectations