

SECONDARY GRADING AND REPORTING



San Marcos CISD
San Marcos, Texas

SAN MARCOS CISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mrs. Clem Cantu	President
Mrs. Anne Halsey	Vice President
Ms. Mayra Mejia	Secretary
Mr. Miguel Arredondo	Trustee
Mrs. Kathy Hansen	Trustee
Ms. Margie T. Villalpando	Trustee
Mrs. Mari Salmi	Trustee

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Michael Cardona.	Superintendent
Mr. Terrance Sanders	Assistant Superintendent for Teaching Learning & Assessments
Dr. James Barton	Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Marcela Baez	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

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 San Marcos CISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability.

SECONDARY GRADING AND REPORTING
2020 - 2021 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Marcus Alvarez

Maximo Castillo

Delia Cruz-Fernandez

Fallon Drennan

Lydia Englehardt

Taylor Hardy

Crystal Kelley

Emma Long

Lacye Matejowsky

CJ Odam

Cassie Polasek

Denisha Presley

Thomas Rogers

Debbie Smith

John Walsh

Laura Zunker

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
<u>Grading Philosophy</u>	ii
Mastery of Learning	iii
<u>State Assessments</u>	iii
I. Grading Overview – Determining the Student Grades	1
II. Grading Overview – Special Programs	2
III. <u>Academic Achievement Records</u>	
IV. <u>Transferring Grades</u>	4
V. <u>Guidelines for Determining Unweighted 4.0 GPA</u>	7
VI. Guidelines for Determining Weighted GPA (Class Rank)	7
VII. Grading Symbols	8
VIII. <u>Re-teaching and Re-testing</u>	9
IX. <u>Homework Policy</u>	10
X. <u>Make-up Work for Absences</u>	12
XI. <u>Late Work</u>	13
XII. <u>Common Assessments</u>	13
XIII. <u>Benchmark Tests</u>	14
XIV. Reporting Grades	
XV. Promotion/Retention of Students	
XVI. Interventions and Acceleration	
XVII. Communication with Parents/Guardians	

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, which motivates 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 this manual 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 San Marcos CISD Board policies and regulations.

This manual

- describes the district's grading system which all teachers will implement;
- encourages a better understanding of grading, reporting and promotion by teachers, parents/guardians and students; and
- fosters consistency in grading and reporting student achievement and in promotion and 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 retention [Board Policy EIE (LOCAL)].

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Effective teachers use grading as part of the intricate process of learning. Using the TEKS 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.

Standards-based tests and quizzes yielding numerical grades represent only one aspect of evaluating student learning. Complete grading calls for multiple assessment techniques, such as portfolios, projects, presentations/performances, learning logs, journals, surveys, interviews, simulations and role-playing. Using many different evaluation strategies will elicit more opportunities for student success.

As lifelong learners, students must be prepared for college and the workforce. The teacher will create and sustain a learning environment by basing grades on the student's knowledge and skills as demonstrated by a wide variety of assessments.

In compliance with [Texas Education Code §28.0216](#), grading in SMCISD

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; 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.

In addition, grading should help the teacher

1. Communicate progress to the student and parent/guardian on the mastery of the TEKS;
2. Appraise the effectiveness of teaching strategies and modes of instruction;
3. Evaluate strengths and needs of each student; and
4. Determine if credit will be awarded.

Grading should help the parents/guardians

1. Understand their child as a learner;
2. Be knowledgeable about the student's mastery of the TEKS;
3. Guide the student in making academic progress toward successful graduation; and
4. Encourage the student to give maximum performance in academic areas.

Grading should help the student

1. Evaluate and see personal progress on mastery of the TEKS and
2. Recognize how work may be improved.

STUDENT MASTERY OF LEARNING

As used in these regulations, the term *mastery* refers to the knowledge and skills necessary for students to be academically successful. Grades earned commonly reflect the degree to which students attain mastery in any given class. Further, student mastery implies foundational understanding necessary in developing skills and processes on a continuum from simple to complex.

To determine the content on which mastery is based, teachers will rely on the state Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as reflected in the District scope and sequences, curriculum guides and/or advanced course curricula. This mastery will be supported by research-based instructional practices, available technology, community resources and textbooks. Pulling from this vast range of resources, the teacher will create lessons that reflect the TEKS being targeted and include assessment strategies appropriate for the learning of all students.

Effective teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to determine mastery of content and skills being taught. Assessments may include, but are not limited to, student performances and projects, teacher observations of developmental skills, work samples, oral interviews and written assignments. Grading strategies will also differ depending on whether or not a teacher is instructing in skills, theory, processes or products.

Recording mastery at one point in time does not guarantee lifelong mastery, nor does it relieve teachers of the responsibility of reviewing content as part of ongoing instruction.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

For more than 25 years, Texas has had a statewide student assessment program. Over time, changes to state and federal statute as well as to the state-mandated curriculum, currently the TEKS, have required the Texas Education Agency to expand the state assessment program, making it more inclusive of and accessible to all student groups. Whether students are served through general education, special education or bilingual/English as a Second Language programs, the state tests provide a snapshot of the degree to which students are learning the TEKS. As a result of this snapshot, students can receive the additional help they need to strengthen their knowledge and skills in core academic areas; and districts and campuses can evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional programs. In this way, the state assessment program plays an important role in helping all students—no matter what their instructional setting—reach their academic potential.

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

STAAR will assess both Readiness Standards and Supporting Standards. In general, Readiness Standards are essential for success in the current grade or course; are important for preparedness for the next grade or course; support college and career readiness; necessitate in-depth instruction; and address broad and deep ideas. In general, Supporting Standards may be introduced in the current grade or course and emphasized in a subsequent year; may be emphasized in a previous year and reinforced in the current grade or course; may play a

role in preparing students for the next grade or course but not a central role; and may address more narrowly defined ideas. Readiness and Supporting Standards are identified in the assessed curriculum documents. These documents are posted on the TEA Student Assessment website at [STAAR Resources](#).

At the Secondary Level, students enrolled in grades 6, 7, and 8 take STAAR Reading and Mathematics. Students in grade 8 will also take STAAR Science and Social Studies. Students in grade 7 will take the STAAR Writing. As of 2011, students entering high school are required to take five end-of-course (EOC) STAAR assessments as part of their graduation requirement. The STAAR EOC assessments will evaluate students on the skills associated with the TEKS curriculum as specified for individual courses. Students will be assessed in the following courses: Algebra 1, Biology, English I, English II and U.S. History. For additional parent information and resources, visit the [TEA webpage](#).

Beginning Spring of 2017, STAAR will be offered on paper and online in all grades and subjects. The enhanced online version of the STAAR is capable of being better tailored to a student's individualized needs. Available to students who meet eligibility criteria, the decision to provide online Designated Support(s) to a student is made by the appropriate team of people at the campus level (e.g., ARD committee, ARD committee in conjunction with LPAC, Section 504 placement committee, LPAC committee, RTI team, and student assistance team). For additional information, visit the [TEA webpage](#).

GRADING OVERVIEW

I. DETERMINING STUDENT GRADES

- A. The student's mastery of the instructional objectives as aligned in the TEKS for grade-level subjects or courses shall be the major factor in determining the student's grade for a subject or course [Board Policy EIA and EIE (LOCAL)].
- B. The evaluation of student knowledge and skills may not be appropriate in the initial stages of instruction and learning. In such situations, the teacher may base the grade on the student's ultimate improved progress and mastery for the grading period, rather than on a cumulative average.
- C. Grades will be sufficient in number and category (homework, quizzes, tests, etc.) to reflect an accurate measure of a student's progress and achievement. It is the responsibility of each campus to set the categories and a minimum number of grades per category to be recorded in a grading period. Standards may vary from course to course or level to level within a department. (Middle schools will use the same categories and minimum number of grades.)
- D. No single grade will count more than 20% of the nine weeks average or the semester average.
- E. No "blanket" grades are to be issued for a grading period. A blanket grade is giving every student in the class the same grade for an assignment without regard to individual achievement.
- F. In order to obtain a grade average for a particular grading period that is a fair assessment of the student's achievement, a teacher may employ any or all of the campus-approved options listed below:
 - 1. Canceling the lowest grade in a category before averaging;
 - 2. Allowing students the opportunity to do additional work within the grading period;
 - 3. Giving bonus points for completing additional or optional assignments/projects evolving from the course objectives;
 - 4. Providing special opportunities for a student to respond orally; and
 - 5. Including a participation grade when appropriate to the learning objective, e.g. for oral responses in a Spanish I class.
- G. The actual numerical grade will be recorded in the student's permanent cumulative records. [Board Policy FL (LOCAL)]. The grades recorded on the permanent record are semester grades. In a full year course, if the first semester grade is failing and the second semester grade is passing, the teacher will average the two semester grades and award full credit if the yearly average is 70 or above. When a student earns a passing grade in only one semester of a two-semester course and the combined grade for the two semesters is lower than 70, the District shall award the student credit for the semester with the passing grade. The student shall be required to retake only the semester in which he or she earned the failing grade [Board Policy EI (LOCAL)].

- H. Cooperative learning structures/Project Based Learning may be used as an instructional strategy in order to encourage academic achievement in a team context. The rubric or grading standards for a cooperative activity or project will be shared with the students in advance, indicating whether they will be graded for individual academic achievement, team academic achievement or both.
- I. The responsibility for grading belongs with the teacher. While peer review, e.g. peer editing and marking, can be a valuable learning activity, students will not grade tests, quizzes or other major assignments. Peer marking of homework and/or other assignments is acceptable, but the teacher must review the work before assigning the final grades. Students must not have access to other students' grades.
- J. Grades that are identifiable by individual students must not be posted or announced publicly by teachers or students.
- K. A student's academic grades will be solely measured by demonstration of mastery on assigned content Behavior and adherence to classroom rules will not be calculated as part of the numerical average.
- L. A student may not be given credit unless the student is in attendance at least 90% of the days the class is offered. (Exceptions for special populations and circumstances will be addressed with individual students as needed. i.e. newcomer
 - 1. Absences due to suspensions shall not be counted against the minimum attendance policy as prescribed by law.
 - 2. If a student is suspended, the student will be allowed to make up the work when the student returns to school.
- M. Students 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, 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. 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 standard, taking into consideration written materials, observation or information from students [Board Policy EIA (LOCAL)]. Teachers should use the Academic Dishonesty Referral to document any incident.

II. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

A. Fine Arts

1. Grades for Fine Arts students will be determined with regard to mastery of the TEKS for the particular course including performance. While performance is not the only component considered during assessment/evaluation, it is a legitimate part of assessment.

2. If a performance is the culminating activity based on implementation of the TEKS, a grade may be given for participation or nonparticipation. Extenuating circumstances shall be considered when a student misses a performance but shall not necessarily be the final determinative criteria.

B. English Language Learner

1. Grades for English Learners (EL) will take into consideration their English language proficiency. Teachers will implement the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) to improve student understanding of concepts. Time is needed for the student to adjust to the new sounds and demands of learning English.
 - The Exempt Grade (E) is recommended for English Learners, particularly new arrivals to the country, at the beginner and intermediate proficiency levels as determined by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC).
 - Linguistic Accommodations must be followed for any EL student.

C. Special Education/504/RtI

1. Any variations in District grading procedures should be related to the student's specific disability, which shall be determined by the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee and included in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
2. Consideration will be given for evaluating the academic progress of children who meet eligibility criteria for special education services so they will not be penalized because of their disability.
3. Grades for these students must be based on performance that demonstrates progress toward mastery of the TEKS following the application of the ARD-recommended accommodations (designated supports) and/or modifications intended to increase the potential for successful student learning.
4. It is important that the level of TEKS instruction and content expectations are clearly articulated in a student's IEP, along with accommodations and/or modifications related to measuring mastery. This information is critical for teachers to develop appropriate classroom evaluations and make decisions regarding statewide assessment.
5. Student work can be assessed by the special education teacher, the general education teacher and/or a combination of both teachers, but must be recorded by the teacher of record.
6. The ARD committee will include in the child's IEP a description of: How the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured; and when periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent

with the issuance of report cards) will be provided.

7. Accommodations must be followed for any 504 or Rtl student.

III. **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RECORDS**

- The District shall use the Academic Achievement Record (transcript) form designated by the Texas Education Agency. This form shall serve as the academic record for each student and shall be maintained permanently by the District. Any credit earned by a student must be recorded on the academic achievement record, regardless of when credit was earned.
- The first failing grade in a class remains a part of the high school transcript. If a course is retaken and passed, the numeric grade and credit are entered into the student's transcript. Both the failing grade and the passing grade are included in the transcript.
- Copies of the record shall be made available to students transferring to another district. The District shall respond promptly to all requests for student records from receiving districts, using the state required Texas Records Exchange (TREx) system.

TRANSFERRING GRADES

Transferring Between Levels of the Same Course

Transfers from a Pre-AP or AP class must occur within the first four calendar weeks of the course and a grade change form will document the transferred grade(s). This gives the student an opportunity to succeed in the course for that grading period. However, any remaining grades earned in the regular course will not receive any additional weight.

For class ranking purposes, if a schedule change involving a level change (i.e. AP/Pre AP to regular or regular to AP/Pre AP) occurs at the end of a semester, the grade weight of each course will be determined by the level completed at the end of each semester (i.e. First semester AP/Pre AP = quality points at the AP/Pre AP level. Second semester of the same course in a regular class = no quality points).

It is in the best interest of the student and the responsibility of the campus committee, i.e. counselor, administration, teacher, to fairly assess the student's need to be withdrawn, to counsel the student to remain in the course until semester, to seek out tutoring and support for academic success in this course, to promote college and career readiness, and to provide an accurate and transparent record to any college. Notification of the student's request will be provided to the parent.

- A. Transferring Into a Pre-AP or AP Course from a Regular Level Course (If a student transfers during the semester from Pre-AP/AP course to a regular level course, then the grade should stay the same with no weight attached.
1. If a student is moving into a Pre-AP or AP course from the regular level of the same course, the transferring average from the regular course will transfer as is.
- B. Transferring Into a Regular Course after the First Semester
1. The first semester grade remains as is and is given the appropriate weight for Pre-AP or AP credit. The second semester grade for the regular course will receive no additional weight.
 2. Transferring from one campus to another within the District and students transferring from out-of-district: When a student transfers grades for properly documented courses, the District shall assign weight to those grades based on the categories and grade weight system used by the District if the same courses are offered to the same class of students in the District. [Board Policy EIC (LOCAL)]
 3. If a student transfers from a district campus to the DAEP (Rebound) during a nine-week grading period, the grade average for each transfer course will be counted proportionate to the number of weeks in the grading period that the grade covers. For example, a student transfers during week five of the nine weeks with an 80 average in English. The 80 will be counted five times, and the average the student receives in the receiving school's English course (75, for example) will be counted four times. The total will be divided by nine to get the average. For calculating a nine-week average, utilize the following formula:

Student's transferring course average	x	Number of weeks in sending school	+	Student's earned course average at receiving school	x	Number of weeks in receiving school	÷	9	=	Current nine week average
[(80	x	5)	+	(75	x	4)]	÷	9	=	78

C. High School Courses Taken in Middle School

Spanish I, Health, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Touch System Data Entry, and any other course taken for high school credit at middle school are considered high school courses and any grade received will be calculated into the student's high school transcript and used to calculate high school class rank and Grade Point Average

(GPA.) Students who enroll in these courses while in middle school and score a grade of 70 or above will receive high school credit which will appear on the high school transcript EIC (Local). Effective with the 2013-14 school year, courses in Algebra I Pre-AP, Algebra II Honors, or Geometry Pre-AP will receive 5 quality points for high school class rank. This weighting of grades is only used for class rank and will not change the earned grade as it appears on the Academic Achievement Record (transcript.)

D. Transfer Grades from Other High Schools

1. Texas Public High School and Accredited Private Schools numeric grades from other Texas public high schools and accredited private schools will be posted on the transcript and calculated for GPA and class rank in the same manner as San Marcos High School grades are calculated.

2. Accredited Out-of-State High Schools

a) Numeric grades from accredited out-of-state high schools will be posted on the transcript and calculated for GPA and class rank in the same manner as San Marcos High School grades are calculated.

b) The following conversions will be used for students who transfer from out-of-state high schools with alphabetic grades: A grade of "A" = 95, a grade of "B" = 85, a grade of "C" = 75, a grade of "D" = 70, and a grade of "F" = 65. Individual transcripts will be evaluated for Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), and regular grade weighting.

3. Transfer students whose transcripts list a Pass (P) for a grade will be assigned a numeric grade of 75.

4. Students entering from non accredited private schools or home schools will be classified as freshmen until credits are gained at San Marcos High School. Students may accrue credits through taking courses, through online software programs (i.e., Edgenuity), and/or through credit by exam.

5. Students entering from accredited schools in foreign countries (i.e., Mexico) will have their transcripts translated and evaluated by Validate Me. Courses and grades earned on the foreign transcript will be posted on the Texas Academic Achievement Record (transcript) if they correspond to like courses offered in US schools.

E. Dual Credit College Courses

All dual credit college classes, including college level distance learning classes, taken for concurrent credit will be converted to the following scale if an official document with numerical grades is not provided by the collegiate institute: "A" = 95, "B" = 85 ,

“C” = 75, “D” = 70; “F” = 65. The numerical grade is recorded on the Academic Achievement Record for the dual credit high school course.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING UNWEIGHTED 4.0 GPA

- Numeric grades, class rank and GPA are three separate systems. In order to report a GPA to colleges and universities, all grades earned will be averaged and converted to an unweighted 4.0 grade point system. All high school state credit courses on the transcript will be calculated into the grade point average. High school courses taken at the middle school, dual credit college courses, college distance learning courses, and transfer grades from other high schools will be used in GPA calculations.
- Courses averaged into the 4.0 grade point average (GPA) also include summer school, correspondence courses, credit by exam, and transfer grades from other high schools.
- Conversion:
 - o Numerical grades of 100-90 receive a 4.0;
 - o Grades of 89-80 correspond to: 3.9, 3.8, 3.7, 3.6, 3.5, 3.4, 3.3, 3.2, 3.1, 3.0
 - o Grades of 79-70 correspond to: 2.9, 2.8, 2.7, 2.6, 2.5, 2.4, 2.3, 2.2, 2.1, 2.0
 - o Grades of 69-0 correspond to a 0 (zero.)

V. GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING WEIGHTED GPA (EIC Local)

Note: The following provision shall apply to students in the graduating class of 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022.

- The District shall categorize and weight eligible courses as Advanced Placement/Dual Credit, Pre-AP/Tech Prep, and Academic in accordance with provisions of this policy and as designated in appropriate District publications.
- Eligible Advanced Placement (AP) and dual credit courses shall be categorized and weighted as Advanced Placement/Dual Credit courses.
- Other eligible courses local designated as honors shall be categorized and weighted as Honors courses.
- All other eligible courses shall be categorized and weighted as Academic courses.

The District shall assign weights to semester grades earned in eligible courses and calculate a weighted numerical grade average, in accordance with the following:

Category	Weight
AP, Dual Credit	Plus 10

Pre-AP/Honors	Plus 5
Academic	Plus 0

No points shall be added to failing grades.

The District shall record unweighted numerical grades on student transcripts.

Note: The following provisions shall apply to students beginning with the graduating class of 2023

- The District shall categorize and weigh eligible courses as Advanced Placement/Dual Credit, Pre-AP, and Academic in accordance with provisions of this policy and as designated in appropriate District publications.
- Eligible Advanced Placement (AP) and dual credit courses shall be categorized and weighted as Advanced Placement/Dual Credit courses.
- Eligible Pre-AP courses shall be categorized and weighted as Pre-AP courses.
- All other eligible courses shall be categorized and weighted as Academic courses.

The District shall assign weights to semester grades earned in eligible courses and calculate a weighted numerical grade average, in accordance with the following:

Category	Weight
AP, Dual Credit	Plus 10
Pre-AP	Plus 5
Academic	Plus 0

No points shall be added to failing grades.

The District shall record unweighted numerical grades on student transcripts.

VI. GRADING SYMBOLS TO USE

The grades recorded on progress and report cards will be numerical averages.

100 - 90	A	Excellent
89 – 80	B	Above Average
79 – 70	C	Average
69 – 0	F	Failing

Additional notations seen on transcripts may include the following:

* = (No Credit)

After grades are posted, if a student is over the 90% attendance rule, the system automatically denies credit and assigns the TEA approved asterisk (*.)

E – Exempt

The Exempt Grade (E) is recommended for English Learners, particularly new arrivals to the country, at the beginner and intermediate proficiency levels as determined by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). After a prolonged absence, the teacher has the right to exempt a student from some assignments if the teacher determines that doing so will not have a negative impact on the student’s ability to master the content or unfairly bias his/her grade. An “E” has no effect on the grade average for the student.

I = Incomplete

The Incomplete Grade (I) is assigned by the teacher to indicate incomplete student work that must be made up within three weeks from the close of the grading period. An “I” must be recorded if a student is eligible for makeup work.

UIL rules specify that an “Incomplete” must be replaced with a passing grade within seven (7) calendar days of the close of the grading period in order for the student to be eligible.

Additional Information

Withdraws: If a student withdraws after a marking period where a grade has been given, that grade (either a 9 weeks grade and/or semester grade) stays in eSchool and is transmitted to other districts via the TReX records that are sent electronically. In addition, the withdrawal submitted to TEA shows the withdrawal date and the reason for the withdrawal (leaver records).

VII. RETEACHING AND RETESTING

The district’s goal is for every student to master all the TEKS specified for each grade level and the STAAR End-of-Course (EOC) exams. Prior to assessment for mastery, each student will be provided instruction that allows for application and practice of the

concepts and skills mandated in the TEKS. If a student does not demonstrate mastery of concepts and skills as specified in the TEKS and necessary for future learning, reteaching and retesting (or reassessment) should be provided for the student. Reteaching and retesting is considered a form of course or credit protection.

For the purpose of consistency and equity, the District will have a reteach and retest plan that is appropriate for student mastery. Campuses will ensure that teachers at each grade level in middle school and course in high school follow the district's reteach/retest procedure. It is the responsibility of the grade level or course teachers to monitor student progress and to implement reteaching and retesting for all, most, some or one of the students. Teachers will base their decisions to reteach and retest on whether the curriculum provides sufficient future opportunities for most students to master a concept or skill.

- If 50% or more of students in a class who have taken the assessment fail to demonstrate mastery of TEKS on a summative assessment, the teacher will provide an opportunity for reteaching and retesting during class time. All students in the class will be given the opportunity for reteach and retest. The higher of the two grades will be recorded in the grade book.
- If fewer than 50% of all students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery of TEKS on a summative assessment, the teachers will provide reteaching and retesting during or outside of class time. An alternate assessment will be provided for retest and the student will receive the grade earned. Reteaching should employ instructional strategies different from the original instruction.
- Retesting or reassessment may include, but is not limited to, oral examination, additional practice activities, an essay or paper, a report or presentation, test corrections, revision of a paper or project, or a formal test.
- Reteaching/retesting provisions do not apply to semester exams.

VIII. FORMATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Classwork Assignments/Daily Grades
- B. Homework Assignments

Note: Homework includes assignments that the teacher expects all students to complete outside of class. In contrast, classwork includes assignments that the teacher expects the majority of students to complete during the class period. Daily grades may include classwork, but may also represent other types of daily activities assigned for formative assessment.

1. The Campus Improvement Team (CIT) are responsible for and monitoring a homework/test policy alternating days so that multiple subjects do not compete for students' time and studies on the same evening.

2. Classwork/homework should be designed to help students master the content and extend student learning.
3. Homework will count no more than 20% of the grade for any grading period determined by campus guidelines.
4. In broad terms, homework could include written work, reading, studying, preparing for class and/or assessments and other activities related to classroom work.
 - a) Unfinished classwork is not considered homework if adequate time and appropriate resources were allowed for students to complete the classwork.
 - b) Teachers should consider extra time accommodations when assigning classwork and plan accordingly for those students who receive extra time as an accommodation. Allowing extra time for all students does not meet this requirement.
5. When a student demonstrates mastery of the TEKS on major assessments i.e. Common Assessments (CA), benchmarks, or other major tests, then homework alone will not be the cause of a failing grade [Board Policy EIA (LOCAL)].

B. Teacher Responsibilities

1. Ensuring that students understand and know how to complete assignments successfully.
2. Defining the work to be completed at home and making sure appropriate resources and materials are readily available.
3. Giving instructions to parents/guardians, when appropriate and explaining how they may help the student complete the homework.
4. Considering homework as one part of the total learning process by monitoring, collecting and providing meaningful feedback to students.
5. Reviewing and grading assignments weekly to give students feedback on their learning.
6. Informing students of assignments missed because of absence or substituting another activity for the missed assignment so that there are no gaps in the student's learning.
7. Avoid assigning projects over extended holidays or breaks within the school year.
8. Establishing consistency among grade-level departments and content.
9. Following the CIT recommendations for formative assignment frequency.

C. Student Responsibilities

1. Understanding the homework assignment(s) before leaving school.
2. Taking home all necessary materials to complete assignment(s).
3. Having an organized means of keeping and carrying homework to and from school.
4. Arranging for a place to work and having a regular time to study.
5. Scheduling time for homework that is compatible with family and/or after-school activities.
6. Completing homework with a minimum of parental help.
7. Completing homework assignment(s) as carefully and as neatly as class work.
8. Completing homework and turning it in on time.
9. Communicating with the instructor prior to the deadline should the student require clarity or help on an assignment.
10. Budgeting time for long-term projects.
11. Obtaining and completing all work missed because of absences or school activities.
12. It is the student's responsibility to obtain, complete and submit the missed work in the time allotted.
13. Students should make prior arrangements with teachers for making up missed work when the absence can be anticipated, i.e.e.g. a dental appointment, court appearance or appointment, approved school-related activities, etc.

D. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

1. Reading and discussing the district's homework policy with the student and encouraging good study habits.
2. Providing necessary assistance and a positive, supportive attitude and encouraging good study habits.
3. Communicating any concerns and questions regarding homework assignments to the student's teacher.
4. Encouraging the student to seek additional help, if needed, from the teacher.
5. Providing an appropriate time and environment for study and learning; checking the homework for completion and showing an active interest in it.
6. Monitoring television, technology and outside activities to be sure the student has sufficient study time.

IX. MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES

According to board policy, students are required to make up assignments, homework, projects, quizzes and tests missed due to absences.

The district distinguishes absences as excused and unexcused. Makeup work for absences will be eligible for full credit.

Students will be allowed reasonable time to make up assignments, homework, projects, quizzes and tests missed due to absences.

- At the secondary school level, reasonable time is defined as one class day per class missed.
- If a student is absent for two consecutive days, teachers will contact the parent to offer assignments that were missed.
- Teachers will provide the assignments to the students and inform students of the time allotted for completing makeup assignments, homework, projects, quizzes and tests.
- If a quiz or test was announced during the student's absence, students will not be required to take a quiz or test on the day returning to class.
- After their return to class, teachers are required to make arrangements with the student within two class days to take a test/quiz if the test/quiz was announced during the student's absence.
- Makeup work and tests for all absences should be of the same rigor, but not necessarily the same format, as the original activity, assignment or test.
- Makeup tests or presentations may be scheduled before school or after school, during lunch, or during the student's class period, at the teacher's discretion to ensure that new and/or significant content is not missed.
- Students should make prior arrangements with teachers for making

up missed work when the absence can be anticipated, i.e. a dental appointment, court appearance or appointment, approved school-related activities, etc.

- If a student is absent for an assignment, a zero (0) will be assigned as a placeholder in the grade book as an alert to the student/parent that an assignment is missing. Once the assignment is turned in, the zero (0) will be replaced with the assigned grade for each assignment.
- After a prolonged absence, the teacher has the right to exempt and enter an “E” in the gradebook for a student for some assignments if the teacher determines that doing so will not have a negative impact on the student’s ability to master the content or unfairly bias his/her grade. An “E” has no effect on the grade average for the student.

The District shall not impose a grade penalty for makeup work after an absence because of suspension.

X. LATE WORK

Late work is defined as any assignment that is not submitted on the due date and class period with the exception of makeup work for absences or approved school activities.

Students may demonstrate mastery until the material has been assessed summatively or a grade has been assigned for the missing work..

If the student demonstrates mastery on an alternate or summative assignment, the teacher has the following options:

- Choose NOT to accept late work and instead replace the assigned zero(s) for missing work with the grade earned from the summative assignment; or
- Grade late work and assign the earned grade.

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 an 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.

XI. COMMON ASSESSMENTS

Common assessments are created by district curriculum specialists to improve instruction and gain data to respond to the diverse needs of students. They are designed to measure student mastery of the taught curriculum (TEKS).

Common assessments are given periodically based on the district's scope and sequence or at the end of units of study, grading periods or semesters.

Semester exams will count no more than 20% of the semester grade as determined by the department and approved by the principal. Semester exams will not be removed from the campus or released to students or parents/guardians.

All students with disabilities receiving special education services will take either the STAAR, STAAR Online, or STAAR Alternate. These students will participate in

common assessment testing to the extent determined by the ARD committee. These students will also receive the testing accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified by the ARD committee.

Feedback from semester and/or district-derived common assessments should be shared with students and parents/guardians on campus in order to debrief the activity and the learning.

XII. BENCHMARK TESTS

Campuses will follow the district benchmark administration guidelines.

- I. Benchmark tests are designed to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, determine instructional effectiveness, guide instructional decisions and identify programmatic strengths and weaknesses.
- II. Scope and sequence and/or common assessment benchmarks for which instruction has been provided may be used in calculating student grades.
- III. All students with disabilities receiving special education services who take either the STAAR or STAAR Online will participate in benchmark testing to the extent determined by the ARD committee including the use of accommodations.
- IV. All English Learners/Emerging Bilinguals will receive testing accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified by the LPAC committee.
- V. Dyslexia and Section 504 students will receive accommodations that are used on a regular basis as identified in their Section 504 Student Services Plan.
- VI. Feedback from benchmark tests should be shared with students and parents/guardians on campus in order to debrief the activity and the learning.

XIII. REPORTING GRADES

A. Assignments

1. The electronic grade book is the legal repository and is an accurate record of each student's work and achievement; it is electronically archived at the district level.
2. To inform parents/guardians and students, major assignments, assessments and projects will be posted prior to the due date. This information will be communicated through Home Access. Other appropriate methods of communication may include School Status, email, Remind 101, Canvas messages, and announcements.
3. In order to maintain current information for parents/guardians, teachers are directed to grade and post assignments within seven (7) calendar days from the due date.

B. Grading and the Recording of Grades

1. Teachers will verify and edit student grades prior to the exporting of grades so

that the student's accurate average is printed on the progress report or report card.

2. After report cards have been printed, grade changes must be documented and entered by the data entry clerk. The data entry clerk must also update the electronic grade book to reflect the new grade change.
3. Teachers will update "Incomplete" grades within three weeks after the end of the grading period. For the student to be eligible for UIL participation, an "Incomplete" must be replaced with a passing grade within seven (7) calendar days of the close of the grading period.

C. Home Access Center

1. The parent Home Access Center contains data extracted from the District's electronic grading program and allows parents/guardians with Internet access to view recorded grades for the student at any time during the school year.
2. Teachers will update grades in the electronic grade book so that parents/guardians have an accurate understanding of the student's progress in each class.
3. In order to maintain current information for parents/guardians, teachers are directed to grade and post assignments within seven (7) calendar days from the due date.

D. Progress reports

1. Progress reports (IPR's) are sent home to parents/guardians approximately one (1) week after the third and sixth week of each grading period.
2. When a student is in jeopardy of failing, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and documentation of the communications via School Status.
3. Teachers should utilize the "Comments" feature of the progress report as an additional communication tool for a 70 or below.
4. Distribution dates of progress reports are announced in district publications and posted on the San Marcos CISD website.

E. Report Cards

1. Report cards are given to students to be shared with parents/guardians at the end of each nine weeks; end-of-the-semester report cards are mailed home.
2. Report cards indicate academic progress and attendance.
3. When a student is in jeopardy of failing, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and documentation of the communications via School Status. Teachers should utilize the "Comments" feature of the report card as an additional communication tool.
4. Distribution dates of report cards are announced in district publications and posted on the San Marcos CISD website.

XIV. PROMOTION/RETENTION OF STUDENTS

A. For middle school students, promotion is based on the following factors [Board Policy EIE (LOCAL)]:

1. Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 or above on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts, mathematics, social studies and science.
2. In addition, students in grade 8 must meet the state testing requirements or be recommended by the Grade Placement Committee (GPC) in order to be promoted to grade 9.

B. For high school students, promotion and classification are based on the following factors:

1. Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9 – 12 shall be earned by course credits.
2. Grade-level advancement requires the following earned state credits for all students entering the ninth grade after:
 - a) Students promoted or placed from grade 8 are classified as freshmen.
 - b) Students with 0-5 credits are classified as freshmen.
 - c) Students with 6-11 credits are classified as sophomores.
 - d) Students with 12-18 credits are classified as juniors.
 - e) Students with 18 credits or students who are able to enroll in all courses needed to graduate at the end of the current school year are classified as seniors.

C. Graduation and credit requirements are as follows:

1. All students graduating from high school must meet the minimum units required by Texas Education Agency (TEA) and any additional graduation requirements as set by the Board of Trustees.
2. In addition to satisfying all course and credit requirements, graduates must also meet state assessment requirements.
3. A student must maintain a semester grade average of at least 70 on a scale of 100 to be given credit for a course.
4. A student will not receive a credit due to excessive absences FEC (LOCAL). The number of absences considered excessive is determined at the beginning of each school year by campus using the following method:
 - a) Middle School - based on the total number of days in the school calendar year;
 - b) High School - based on the total number of days in each semester.
5. Course credit may be earned through special credit options such as Credit Recovery, Correspondence Courses, Credit-by-Exam, and Summer School.

XV. INTERVENTIONS AND ACCELERATION

- A. TEC Sections 28.0212 and 29.081 mandates that accelerated instruction be provided for all students in grades 6-12 who do not perform satisfactorily on any section of the STAAR exams, who are not likely to receive a diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9, or who are at-risk of dropping out of school.

- B. For all students in grades 6-12, a Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) must be developed

with the participation of the students and the parents/guardians.

- C. The PGP may determine the program of acceleration, or the Response to Intervention (RtI) team may assist in designing the accelerated instruction.
- D. Interventions should occur during the regular school day as well as during other times determined by each campus. This program may include:
 - 1. Elective or local credit courses to improve academic readiness;
 - 2. Tutorial assistance;
 - 3. Course and credit protection programs;
 - 4. Course and credit recovery programs;
 - 5. English Learner/Emerging Bilingual (EL/EB) programs;
 - 6. Summer school programs;
 - 7. On-line tutorials;
 - 8. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) designed by the ARD committee through Special Education; or
 - 9. When the electronic PGP is developed, the plan should be shared with all appropriate teachers and should be monitored, updated and revised each year as necessary.
- E. Course and Credit Protection

Course and Credit Protection are types of interventions that support students prior to having failed. Course Protection is used at the middle school level to protect students from failing at any point in a grading period prior to failing during the semester. Credit Protection is used at the high school level to protect the loss of semester credit.

- 1. Teachers may work during or outside of class with students who have failed or are in jeopardy of failing.
- 2. There should be a contract or agreement among the teacher, the student and his parents/guardians as to the specific requirements to pass.
- 3. The protection of course/credit does not change UIL eligibility.
- 4. The maximum grade allowed for an assignment, test, quiz or project under course/credit protection is 70.
- 5. Students who do not meet the requirements of the contract or agreement to protect the course or the semester credit shall receive a failing grade.

F. Course and Credit Recovery

Course and Credit Recovery are types of interventions that occur after the end of a semester. These programs are designed to allow students to gain a maximum grade of **70** for the semester grade. This provides the student with passing status for the course in middle school or for the semester in high school.

1. Teachers will work outside of class time with students who have failed with an average between 60-69 to master content at a minimum of 80% in order for students to earn a passing course/semester grade

of 70.

2. There should be a contract or an agreement among the teacher, the student and his parents/guardians as to the specific requirements.
3. Students who do not meet the requirements of the contract or agreement to recover the course or the semester credit may enroll in summer school.
4. The original failed grade recovered through course and credit recovery will remain in the student's academic achievement record. Upon successful completion of course or credit recovery, the grade of **70** (for the course or credit recovered) will be added to the student's Academic Achievement Record. The original failed grade will be used in the calculation of class rank.

G. Summer Course and Credit Recovery

Summer course recovery programs are available for middle school and credit recovery programs are available for high school.

1. These programs are designed to extend the second semester by 3 weeks so that students needing extra time and support can successfully complete requirements within core courses. The original failed grade will remain in the student's grade history file and will be used when calculating class rank.
2. Summer course recovery is designed for middle school students in designated grade levels who have failed a core course with an average of 60-69. Summer school, Edgenuity, is available for students who have failed with an average below 60.
3. Summer credit recovery is designed for high school students who have failed the second semester with a semester average of 60-69. Students who have failed both semesters of a course are not eligible for summer credit recovery. Summer school is available for students who have failed both semesters. Students who do not meet the requirements to recover credit may enroll in the second semester of summer school.
4. Students earn a maximum grade of 70 for the second semester by completing required assignments and assessments with a minimum passing standard of 80.

XVI. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- A. The parent/teacher conference is a valuable source of information for both the parent/guardian and the teacher. The conference provides the opportunity for parents/guardians and the teacher to become better acquainted and to combine efforts in the interest of the student. The conference also allows the student to understand that the school and the home are working together for his/her/their benefit.
- B. When a student's behavior is unsatisfactory and/or the student is in jeopardy of failing, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and documentation of the communications.

- C. Teachers and/or parents/guardians may request conferences at any time. However, when a personal conference cannot be scheduled, a telephone conference or email may be used as an alternate form of communication.

- D. The conference should occur for a specific time period and in a place that will assure privacy. This may include a virtual setting with parents if they are unable to physically attend an in-person meeting.
- E. When a parent/guardian requests a conference, the teacher should be given at least 48-hours advance notice.
- F. Since teacher Web pages are communication tools for parents/guardians, teachers should maintain a current web page with all appropriate information as determined by the campus.
- G. Informational meetings for parents/guardians and students may be scheduled when appropriate for program orientation and review.
- H. Parents will be contacted through School Status when a student earns a failing grade on any report card. Efforts to contact parents when students are in danger of failing should have occurred on multiple occasions prior to the failing grade being final

INDEX

Acceleration	16
Academic Dishonesty	2
Assessments	13
Benchmark Tests	14
Common Assessments	13
Communication with Parents/Guardians	18
Course and Credit Protection	17
Course and Credit Recovery	17
Determining Student Grades	1
Fine Arts Programs	2
Foreword	i
Grading Philosophy	ii
Grading Symbols	8
Interventions	16
Late Work	13
English Language Learner Programs	3
Make-up Work for Absences	12
Mastery of Learning	iii
Home Access Center	15
Parent/Guardian Responsibilities for Homework	12
Progress Reports	15
Personal Graduation Plan	17
Promotion of Students	16
Rationale for Homework	10
Recording of Grades	14
Report Cards	14
Re-teaching and Re-testing	9
Retention of Students	16
Special Education Programs	3
State Assessments	iii
State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)	iii
Student Responsibilities for Homework	11
Summer Course and Credit Recovery	18
Teacher Responsibilities for Homework	11
Transferring Grades	4