



Crandall ISD

Instructional Philosophy, Assessment and Grading Handbook for Elementary Schools

Revised November, 2020

The Crandall Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, national origin, religion, orientation, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. Inquiries related to the policies of the Crandall ISD should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources.

CRANDALL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT GOALS

- Offer strong educational programs by equipping staff and students with tools and supports to prepare each Crandall ISD student to be a lifelong learner and productive citizen.
- Train, support and retain staff who are vested in educating all students through teamwork, resourcefulness, and problem solving.
- Provide an inclusive, safe and secure environment where staff and students thrive with Pirate Pride.
- Foster respectful, compassionate and honest communication between staff, students, parents and community to unify our school district.
- Allocate funds to develop all students to achieve the Crandall ISD Learner Profile.

MISSION STATEMENT

Crandall Independent School District will provide each student an exceptional education, in an inspiring environment, with caring people.

VISION STATEMENT

To empower each student to positively impact the world.

VALUES

Character, Compassion and Community

General Information

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 are based upon this 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 local curriculum. A full list of TEKS can be found at <http://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/teks/>

Local Curriculum (CISD EG Local)

The Board expects that learning shall be enhanced by adherence to a curriculum that promotes continuity and cumulative acquisition of skills and knowledge from grade to grade and from school to school. The curriculum should reflect the best knowledge of the growth and development of learners, the needs of learners based on the nature of society, the desires of the residents and taxpayers of the District, state law, and State Board of Education rules. The curriculum shall emphasize reading at grade level and mastery of the basic skills of writing and mathematics. Curriculum objectives shall be derived from state and national assessments. The curriculum is designed to provide teachers and students with the Board's expectations of what students are to learn. Teachers are expected to teach the curriculum of the District. Board policy can be found at <http://policyonline.tasb.org/Home/Index/755>

Instructional Practices

Instructional strategies and practices to ensure student success are based upon district philosophy and 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 as outlined in the curriculum guides for each subject. The objectives reflect the Texas Education Agency statewide standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (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. The student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course. (CISD EIA Local)

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.

Guidelines

Academic Practice: When a student learns new material, he or she goes through a time of wrestling with the material before eventually mastering the information or skills. It is expected that a student will make some mistakes during this learning process. Any work done during this learning period is considered Academic Practice. The purpose of Academic Practice is not to evaluate a student's final achievement of a topic, but to determine where he or she is in the learning process, diagnose any problems, and aid in getting the help needed to learn the material. Academic Practice could consist of many different types of assessments including, but not limited to:

*Quizzes	*Informal observations	*Oral Assessments	*Homework
*Notebooks	*Learning Centers/Stations	*Journals	*Portfolios
*Lab Reports	*Vocabulary Assignments	*Writing Processes	*CBAs
*Computer Activities			

Academic Achievement: After a student has had sufficient instruction and practice on a topic, it is then reasonable to evaluate his or her independent mastery of the information or skills. Any work done at that point is considered Academic Achievement. The purpose of Academic Achievement is to evaluate how well a student has learned the material. Some student work for Academic Achievement may take place outside of the classroom. Academic Achievement could consist of many different types of assessments including, but not limited to:

*Tests	*Presentations	*Book Reports	*Quizzes
*Chapter Tests	*Portfolios	*Performance	*Compositions
*Research Projects	*Special Projects (science fair)*Writings (essays/term papers)		

Recording of Grades

All grades taken on Academic Practice and Achievement shall be submitted in the electronic grade book within a week of being collected. However, major projects, research papers, and similar student work may take longer than a week to grade due to the nature of the grading process.

Homework for Elementary Grades

1. In the primary grades (K-1), homework should consist of a limited number of independent exercises to *reinforce previously taught basic skills*.
2. At the upper grades (2-6), homework should primarily consist of reading, practice in mathematics, application of writing skills, and beginning research. At this level, homework should be designed to *build independent study habits*.
3. For all grades (K-6), each student is expected to read (or be read to) for a minimum of 20 minutes each night. This minimum may increase with each grade level.

Percentages of Grade Categories and Minimum Number of Graded Assignments

Minimum Number of Grades:

At campuses serving grades 2-6, a student's six week grade shall consist of two-thirds daily and homework grades and one-third assessment grades.

A minimum of one daily grade per week in a six weeks shall be required for the six-week reporting period for the following subjects: language arts and spelling collectively, reading, and mathematics. In addition to these daily grades, two assessments* will be given each six weeks. A minimum of four grades shall be required for the six-week reporting period for social studies, science, physical education, art, music, and citizenship. The campus principal may adjust the number of required grades if extenuating circumstances occur.

*An assessment may consist of a unit test, major project, presentation or essay.

In grades 2-6, numeric grades shall be given for all core subjects. Letter grades shall be given in physical education, art, music, and citizenship as outlined below:

90-100	E	Excellent
80-89	S	Satisfactory
70-79	N	Needs Improvement
60-69	U	Unsatisfactory

Grading Scales

1. Grades PK: Developmental Checklists will document student's current level of proficiency at least two times per year.
2. Grades K-1: Objective based: Instructional reading level as well as an objective-based report card will be utilized for reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. Progress will be reported through a 1-4 scale.

4: Highly developed. Demonstrated exemplary understanding and application of skills. Is working independently after initial instruction.

3: Developed. Demonstrated proficient understanding and applies skills independently by the end of the six weeks.

2: Demonstrates initial stages of understanding. Applies skills but requires teacher intervention.

1: Not apparent at this time. Demonstrated lack of understanding. Inability to accomplish grade level tasks. Reteaching consistently required.

3. Grades 2-6: Grades may be calculated on Academic Practice and Achievement in one of the following methods:

a. **Numerical grades:** A 100 is the highest grade that can be recorded. The lowest passing grade is 70. The grading scale is:

A = 90-100 (Excellent)

B = 80-89 (Good)

C = 70-79 (Satisfactory)

F = Below 70 (Failing)

b. **Transfer-In Grade Equivalents:**

A+ = 100

A = 95

A- = 90

B+ = 88

B = 85

B- = 80

C+ = 79

C = 77

C- = 75

D+ = 74

D = 72

D- = 70

F = 69

Late Assignments/Late Work:

The Late Assignment/Late Work penalties apply only to students who are in attendance, but fail to turn work in on time.

Grades PreK-1st - No work is considered late if submitted within a six week grading period.

Grades 2-6 - Work that is submitted as Academic Practice must be accepted up to 2 days after the due date without a reduction in grade. After 2 days, a penalty may be assessed. Teachers within the same subject area or course must set the same timeframe and penalty for late work. Academic Practice work will not be accepted after the Academic Achievement date.

The penalty will be determined by the teachers within the same course level. Extenuating circumstances will be considered for late Achievement and Practice grades for all courses and grade levels (please refer to your teacher).

Retest/Reassessment:

Reassessment must be offered to allow a student another chance to show mastery on an exam. After reteaching occurs (if needed), the reassessment option may include a formal or informal measure deemed appropriate by the teacher/course level for evaluating the skill or concept. The teacher should make every effort to allow the student to be reassessed as soon as possible. The opportunity to be reassessed should be provided within one week after the failing grade is received. A reassessment must be completed prior to the next exam.

Only one reassessment may be taken per test grade. If the reassessment is administered, the higher grade must replace the lower one. Reassessment shall be optional on the part of the student.

If 50% or more of the students in an individual class fail to demonstrate mastery, the teacher will reteach and reassess all students during class time. 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, the teacher will provide re-teaching and re-assessing during or outside of class time. The higher of the two grades (the original assessment or the reassessment) will be recorded.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit must be related to the TEKS in that subject. If Extra Credit is offered, it must be made available to all students in that course by campus. Extra Credit may not be given for clerical tasks such as giving a student "100" for returning a report card or progress report, parent signatures, canned goods, fundraiser, etc. If the extra credit assignment creates a financial or transportation burden on the student, an alternative extra credit will be given.

Extra Credit Points:

Teachers may assign extra points to any assignment and/or give alternate assignments. The instructional process at the elementary level stresses multiple opportunities for student success.

Projects and Project-based Activities:

Effective long-term assignments require clear checkpoints along the way to monitor progress towards completion. For projects, papers, etc. of a large scope, achievement and/or practice grades will be provided throughout the process to assess student progress and assist the students in their learning. Project-based assignments should primarily be undertaken and completed in the classroom. Some portions of projects may be assigned as homework; however, these tasks should not require group participation, significant assistance from parents, or costly materials.

Make-up work for all absences (except School Sponsored activities):

Students shall be expected to make up assignments and tests after absences. Within this framework, the maximum time allowed shall be determined at the discretion of the teacher according to the individual circumstances with a minimum of 1 day for each day of absence plus at least one day to complete and turn-in make-up work for full credit. A penalty may be assessed for any assignments or tests not made up within the allotted time.

School Sponsored Activities:

All assigned work should be completed before the absence unless prior arrangements have been made with individual teachers. Students must be prepared for all assignments (including quizzes and tests) upon their return. Obtaining missed work is the student's responsibility.

Teacher Records/Grade Book

The grading record should be a teacher's record and/or file of evidence to support grades reported on the report card. Grades should be logical, justifiable, and sufficient in number to assure that the report card grade is an accurate measure of the student's progress and achievement.

Grades should reflect a balance of objectives covered. The teacher's grade record is a part of the official documentation portraying mastery of TEKS and District objectives. If possible, a description of the learning task should be included in this documentation. These records should be accurately maintained and teachers should be aware that many times grades will need to be justified.

Grade books for prekindergarten, kindergarten, first, and second grade may consist of checklists, anecdotal records, or individual portfolios. These materials should be evaluated using the curriculum guidelines.

Return of Assignments

Teachers should review and return all graded work to students within a time frame that will benefit the student. Graded daily work should be returned on a weekly basis. Larger projects should be reviewed and returned on a timely basis. This will allow the student to identify any areas of weakness and arrange for tutorials or extra study sessions prior to assessment.

Types of Assessments

General

Student mastery of subject matter may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary, therefore, for all grades to have as their source written paper work. Nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every assignment produced. Although the teacher will monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity which they assign, the feedback does not always need to be in the form of a grade. Assessment should always follow a period of guided practice and/or independent practice. Students' work may be evaluated for more than one subject area as

appropriate.

Performance-Based Courses

Performance-based courses may have assignments that differ significantly from other academic courses. Performance-based courses include courses within the Fine Arts and Physical Education departments. In many performance-based courses, the grading and assignments must reflect the TEKS and a measure of the student's performance. In performance-based courses, a higher percentage of the grade may come from successful participation.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are assessments that take place during the process of learning and teaching. They involve gathering and interpreting evidence of student learning from at least one point prior to the end of the unit of study. Formative assessment is the monitoring that occurs throughout the process of learning, providing students with feedback on how they are doing and what their next learning steps are. Formative assessments may include but are not limited to:

- classroom participation
- oral responses
- experiments
- checklists of skills
- enrichment
- teacher observation
- classroom discussions
- written responses
- research project
- portfolios
- group work/projects
- chapter/unit tests

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are culminating assessments, which give information on students' mastery of content, knowledge, or skills. This type of assessment is a gathering of information at the conclusion of a grading period, semester, or course.

Benchmarks and Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBAs)

Benchmarks are common assessments given during the school year in order to evaluate students' knowledge and skills relative to a set of longer-term learning goals. They are used strictly to inform instructional planning and decision-making at the classroom, school, and district levels. These assessments may not cover material previously taught in class, thus, these assessments shall not be calculated as part of a student's grade.

Curriculum Based Assessments are those assessments given during the school year that reflect skills and standards that have been previously taught in the classroom setting. While these CBAs may also inform instructional planning and decision-making, they may also be used to

calculate a portion of a student's grade as these assessments should cover instructional content previously taught in class.

Major Grades

Test, Examinations, and Projects

Major tests, examinations and projects are culminating assessments, which give information on students' mastery of content, knowledge, or skills. These assessments serve to evaluate mastery of TEKS, concepts, understandings and district objectives. They provide opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skills.

Performance / Project Based Assessments

Performance assessments are measures of a student's progress toward mastery of the TEKS and District curriculum objectives. Performance assessment requires students to demonstrate knowledge and skills, including the process by which they solve problems. Performance assessments measure skills such as the ability to integrate knowledge across disciplines, contribute to the work of a group, and develop a plan of action when confronted with a new situation.

Compositions

In writing, compositions are formal writing assignments. Compositions often take a longer time to complete and are graded for many components.

Daily Grades

Daily Work

Class work is any instructional activity defined/planned by the teacher to be completed during a class period to facilitate the learning process.

Acceleration (Intervention)

Acceleration (Intervention) is an integral part of the elementary instructional program and is an ongoing process. Frequent evaluation, both formal and informal, will determine the need for acceleration. Accelerated instruction shall occur for any student not meeting minimum standards on state tests.

- Provides frequent reinforcement and review so that a student does not "get too far behind".
- Occurs at the time the need is identified.
- Allows the student to progress systematically through content without experiencing extended, frustrating periods of non-achievement.
- Offers a variation in instructional approach – uses a new technique, strategies, materials, opportunity for review, and practice.
- Includes, but is not limited to, targeted small-group instruction, tutorials, and summer school.

Grading Roles and Responsibilities

Student

- To complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher.
- To plan to carefully schedule work on long-term assignments so that assignments will be completed on time.
- To communicate with the teacher when he/she does not understand the assignment or is experiencing difficulty prior to due date.
- To actively engage in the learning process and purposely participate in a meaningful way including problem-solving.

Parent/Guardian

- To establish a specific time, place, and manner for homework to be completed.
- To provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete homework.
- To monitor as needed, but not do homework for the student.
- To assist the student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments.
- To initiate communication with the teacher when concerns arise.
- To partner with school.

Teacher

- To provide meaningful tasks that enrich and supplement work introduced in class.
- To communicate homework assignments, both regular and long-range, in an appropriate framework.
- To provide effective instruction prior to assignment homework that adequately prepares the child to do the task independently and successfully.
- To provide course requirements and expectations at the beginning of each grading period to students and parents.
- To consider available resources, materials, and home situations when assigning a task.
- To review and return homework to students within a timeframe which enhances instruction.

For further information, please use the following chart:

Topic	Location
Standards for Mastering Curriculum	School Board Policy EIA (Local)
Retention and Promotion Criteria	School Board Policy EIA (Local)
Report Cards/Progress Reports	Student Handbook
Academic Integrity	School Board Policy EIA (Local)
Academic Dishonesty	School Board Policy EIA (Local)
Cheating	Student Handbook
Plagiarism	Student Handbook
Lesson Planning	Employee Handbook
Required Conference Periods	Employee Handbook
Required Tutorials	Employee Handbook