



## **Crandall ISD**

# **Instructional Philosophy, Assessment and Grading Handbook for Middle School**

**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.

### **Official Grade Reports**

**Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences (CISD Handbook)**

Report cards with each student’s grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every six weeks. At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child’s performance in any course is near or below 75, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent should request to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the superintendent pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student’s relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district’s grading policy. [See policy EIA (LOCAL).]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG (LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 3 days.

**Academic Grading Scales (CISD EIA Local)**

Numeric grades using the following scale shall be required in all subjects, except where specifically exempted in this policy (CISD EIA Local):

90–100	A	Excellent
80–89	B	Good
70–79	C	Satisfactory
69 & Below	F	Failing

**At the middle school (7-8)**, a student’s six-week grade shall consist of 50% daily grades, and 50% test/major project grades. The six-weeks test, if given, shall count with other tests and major projects to total the 50% of tests/major projects. A minimum of one daily grade per week and two major grades/test grades per six week period. The campus Principal may adjust the number of required grades if extenuating circumstances occur.

**Semester Exams (CISD EIA Local)**

**In grades 7–12**, each six-week grade shall be one-fourth of the semester course grade, with the semester examination being the remaining one-fourth of the semester course average. Example: 1st six weeks, 93(1/4); 2nd six weeks, 87 (1/4); 3rd six weeks, 85 (1/4); Semester Exam, 88 (1/4) Total 353 Divided By: 4 Semester Grade = 88.25 = 88

**K-12 Benchmark Tests** A Benchmark Test is an assessment that is designed to assist students with mastery of the statewide assessment reporting categories. These assessments cover the TEKS addressed on STAAR tests and are administered throughout the school year. Benchmarks may contain objectives or readiness/supporting standards the STAAR tests measure that have not yet been covered in the sequence of the curriculum. The assessment is utilized to help students develop personal STAAR plans, to adjust instruction, and as a predictive measure. Benchmarks may only be administered two times per year.

**K-12 Curriculum Based Assessments (CBA)**

Curriculum Based Assessments are assessments designed to assess the learning of a specific set of objectives. These assessments cover the TEKS addressed on STAAR tests and are administered throughout the school year. CBAs only contain objectives or readiness/supporting standards the STAAR tests measure that have been covered in the sequence of the curriculum. The assessment is utilized to help students develop personal STAAR plans, to adjust instruction, and as a predictive measure.

**Academic Integrity (CISD EIA Local)**

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value of teaching, learning and scholarship. CISD has the primary responsibility for protecting and promoting the highest standards of academic integrity. Both students and faculty will thrive in an atmosphere where academic work is challenging, relevant and fair.

**Academic Dishonesty as defined in the Crandall ISD Policy (EIA Local):**

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 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.

**Cheating/Plagiarism (CISD Handbook)**

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Cheating is a means by which to take advantage by underhanded tactics to gain information that is not honest. Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. This would include using the following without giving credit:

- Another person's idea, opinion, or theory;
- Using any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge
- Quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words; or
- Paraphrase of another person's spoken or written words.

This will not be tolerated. Anyone caught using/copying another student's papers (this will include homework, tests, daily work and projects) will receive a zero for that assignment. The student allowing such an occurrence will also receive a zero unless in the judgment of the teacher the student was a victim of circumstance beyond his/her control. Students that fraudulently use someone else's assignments will receive a zero for those assignments. Plagiarism may also result in a zero for the assignment. Repeated infractions could result in failure of the course. The student is also subject to disciplinary procedures.

## *Secondary (7-8) Grading and Reporting Procedures*



**Crandall Middle School**

# Grading Roles and Responsibilities

## Student

- Complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher.
- Plan to schedule work on long-term assignments so assignments will be completed on time.
- Initiate communication with the teacher when the student does not understand the assignment or if he/she is experiencing difficulty.
- Complete all assignments within the time limits given by the teacher or be subject to appropriate late work guidelines.
- Evaluate their own work for accuracy and seek clarification as needed from the teacher.
- Maintain academic integrity and honesty. Academic dishonesty may result in behavioral and/or academic consequences. (see **Academic Dishonesty**)
- Students participating in extracurricular activities have grade eligibility requirements for participation. (See Appendix: Extracurricular Activities and UIL Eligibility)

## Parent/Guardian

- Establish a specific time, place and manner for homework to be completed.
- Provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete homework.
- Monitor as needed, but do not do homework for the student.
- Assist student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments.
- Initiate communication with the teacher when concerns arise.
- Monitor student grades through progress reports, report cards and/or Skyward Family Access.

## Campus

- Each campus and/or department will adhere to the late work guidelines.
- Each campus will design and designate exam schedules as needed.
- Campus administration shall address issues surrounding grades for the purpose of regaining UIL eligibility at the three-week and six-week grade checks.

## Department

- Teachers will develop lesson plans based upon district guidelines and resources. Core content uses TRS curriculum framework.
- Six weeks and/or unit tests will be utilized.
- Departmental teachers will coordinate the sharing of instructional resources.

## Teacher

- Teachers are required to provide the lesson objectives for each class. If given verbally, they should also be written out so as to provide visual information.
- Only teachers will record grades for assignments.
- All records of grades and assessments become a part of the confidential record for the assessment of student performance.
- Teachers will inform students of content covered on all major assessments.
- Teachers must follow the Crandall ISD Instructional Philosophy, Assessment and Grading Procedures and ask for clarification from campus administration or department chairs as needed.
- Teachers will provide students with a rubric / grading guidelines for long-term projects/alternative assessments.

### **Teacher Records/Gradebook**

Grade records are an important record-keeping tool and should be accurately maintained. Teachers should be aware that many times grades will need to be verified; therefore, accurate record keeping is essential. All teachers will maintain the district-provided electronic gradebook.

- Grades recorded in a gradebook are documentation of a student's progress and mastery of the TEKS and curriculum objectives.
- Grades recorded in a gradebook represent a confidential record for assessment of student performance.
- The set of grades indicated in the gradebook shall be the complete set from which the student's average is determined.
- Only the teacher of record (or principal designee) will enter grades in the gradebook.
- Teachers will update electronic gradebooks on a weekly basis.

### **Return of Graded Work**

Feedback on assignments and assessments is a best practice and an important teaching tool that should be utilized in every classroom.

Students shall have the opportunity to review all graded work. Daily work should be returned within two to four scheduled class days. Larger projects should be reviewed and returned on a timely basis (within one week if feasible). This will allow the student to identify any areas of weakness and arrange for tutorials or extra study sessions.

### **Required Tutorials**

The purpose of a tutorial session is to provide small group instruction to assist students who have not mastered the TEKS currently being taught. Tutorials also serve as an instructional reinforcement for students needing assistance. All CISD students are welcomed and encouraged to attend tutorial sessions; however, students who have not mastered the TEKS (or are currently failing) should be given priority during scheduled tutorial times.

- Each teacher must offer at least two (2) tutorial sessions per week for the purpose of providing assistance to students.
- Day and time of scheduled tutorials will be set by each teacher and approved by campus administrator.
- Campuses may have mandatory tutorials before, during or after the school day. Truancy laws are applicable to mandatory tutoring.
- Teachers must be available to students during scheduled tutorial time.
- Teachers need to keep a log of students attending tutorials.
- Voluntary tutorials are not limited to those students having academic difficulty.

### **Lesson Plans**

The purpose of a lesson plan is to provide a written document outlining daily objectives and activities for instruction. The lesson plan shall include state objectives reflecting required TEKS.

- All secondary teachers are required to prepare weekly lesson plans to assist with planning for instruction.
- Lesson plans should be turned in on a scheduled basis. This schedule will be established by each campus.

## **Parent/Guardian – Teacher Conferences**

- A teacher will schedule one or more conferences(s) with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student if the student is not maintaining passing grades, is not achieving the expected level of performance, is presenting some problem to the teacher, or in any other case that the teacher considers necessary. This conference may be requested by indicating so on the three-week Progress Report. Such conferences may be handled by telephone or in person.
- The State and District requires each school to notify parents/guardians of the need for a conference at the six weeks grading period if the grade is below the level required for course credit or grade level advancement.

## **Awarding Class Credit**

### **Standards for Mastery (CISD EIE Local)**

In addition to the factors in law that must be considered for promotion, mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be used to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.
2. Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit or final examinations, or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required.
3. Mastery of required state-mandated assessments shall be validated with a passing score as defined by state guidelines.

## **Types of Assessment**

### **General Information**

Student mastery of course objectives 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 paper produced. Although the teacher should always monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity that he/she assigns, 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.

In grading a group project, members of a group should not be penalized for an individual's non-participation. Conversely, a student who does not fully participate, but participates to a limited degree, will receive a grade reflective of his/her participation.

Performance assessments are measures of a student's progress toward mastery of course objectives or content. There are many forms of assessment that may or may not be utilized by individual teachers. Types of performance assessments include but are not limited to:

- classroom participation
- oral responses
- homework assignments
- teacher observation
- checklist of skills
- enrichment
- independent or group reading
- classroom discussions
- written responses
- experiments
- research project
- portfolios
- group work/projects
- computer/technology based activities

### **Performance-Based Courses**

Performance-based courses may have assignments that differ significantly from other academic courses. Performance-based courses include courses within the following departments: Career and Technology Education (CTE), Fine Arts, Physical Education and Athletics.

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 assessment refers to assessments that take place during the process of learning and teaching. It involves 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.

### **Quiz**

A quiz is a formative assessment that is designed to assess student knowledge along the learning journey over small "chunks" or concepts. These short assessments are written or oral and are usually less formal than examinations. Quizzes usually consist of a few short questions and can be given without prior notification to the student.

### **Chapter/Unit of Study**

A formative assessment designed to test incremental skills and objectives from the curriculum utilizing a sampling of problems from a chapter or unit of study.

### **Unit Test**

A unit test is a larger formative assessment that is designed to assess student knowledge over a unit of study in the curriculum. Units of study contain manageable number of relevant content standards that are addressed around a concept, issue, problem, or theme that contains the essential understandings and questions. The unit test poses essential questions that address selected content strands, promote students' thinking, and result in active application of learning.

### **Benchmark Tests**

A District-Developed Benchmark Test is a formative assessment that is designed to assist students with mastery of the statewide assessment objectives. These assessments cover the TEKS addressed on a specific STAAR test. The benchmark may contain objectives that STAAR tests measure that have not yet been covered in the sequence of the curriculum. The assessment is utilized to help students develop personal STAAR/End of Course plans, to adjust instruction, and as a predictive measure.

### **Formative Curriculum Based Assessments – (District-wide)**

Formative curriculum based assessments are assessments that are designed to assess student performance of the mastery of the TEKS addressed in the scope and sequence for a specified period of the course. Instructional adjustments may be made based on the outcome of these assessments.

### **Summative Assessments**

Summative assessment refers to a culminating assessment, which gives information on students' mastery of content, knowledge, or skills. Summative assessment is the gathering of information at the conclusion of a grading period, semester, or course.

## **Summative Curriculum Based Assessments – (Semester/Final Exams) (Secondary Grades 7-12)**

Summative curriculum based assessments (Semester/Final Exams) are assessments designed to assess student performance of the mastery of the prescribed curriculum objectives for the semester or cumulative for the year. These assessments cover the TEKS addressed in the scope and sequence for a specified period of the course either semester or cumulative and are administered first and second semester for identified grades 7-12 courses. These assessments count as the semester/final exam grade.

## **Major Grades**

### **Tests/Examinations**

Major tests and examinations are a culminating assessment, which give information on students' mastery of content, knowledge, or skills tests and examinations measure performance based on the TEKS. They serve to evaluate mastery of the TEKS, concepts, understandings, and district objectives, and provide opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skills.

- Test/Examinations are assessments designed to measure a student's successful attainment of the TEKS as expressed in the Scope and Sequence.
- Major examinations or tests are chapter, unit, concept, or cumulative (weekly, three, or six weeks) assessments.
- Major tests must be scheduled and announced in advance.

### **Alternative and/or Performance Based Assessments**

- Alternative assessments will reflect real-world tasks and relate to instructional objectives.
- This type of assessment often requires analyzing a task, developing a plan of action, gathering information, selecting the relevant information, and presenting appropriate information.
- The method of presentation/product should be designed by the teacher based on the subject area and content objectives.
- Alternative assessments may be substituted for major tests.
- Teachers will provide students with a rubric for long-term projects/alternative assessments.

### **Major Projects/Term Papers**

- Term papers or major projects are lengthy class work or homework assignments that may take up to several weeks for a student or group of students to complete.
- Teachers may assign term papers or major projects to an individual or to a group of students as determined by the teacher.
- A rubric must be provided to the student prior to beginning the project/paper.
- Term papers or major projects assigned over a lengthy period are due on or before the due date. Students who are absent on the due date, including school business, must meet the deadline. Any exceptions for late long-term projects must be approved by the principal or principal's designee after meeting with the classroom teacher.
- Penalty for late projects will be the same as for all other late work.

## **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. There could be occasions where class work becomes homework.

## **Homework**

Homework and class work provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding. Homework and class work should be considered extended learning opportunities for students to show mastery of concepts taught. Teachers will also be aware and considerate of other courses that require homework.

Homework can be a necessary part of the instructional process that begins in the classroom, extends into the home, and provides a way for parents/guardians to become aware of the instructional program and their child's educational program.

Homework should be used to enrich and strengthen classroom experiences.

## **Grading Homework**

- Homework may be graded in a variety of ways. At times, checking for completion is appropriate.  
At other times, a complete analysis of procedure, content, and/or correct answers is appropriate. Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.

## **Quizzes**

Quizzes are short assessments designed to evaluate a student's level of understanding and progress towards instructional objectives. Quizzes do not have to be scheduled in advance.

## **Semester/Final Exam (High School Credit Courses)**

- Semester/Final Exams are administered in all high school credit courses at the end of the fall and spring semester.
- Students may be exempt from Semester/Final Exams (see Crandall High School Exemption Policies.)
- Semester/Final Exams must be representative of the work of the entire semester.
- Any exceptions to this policy for the administration of Semester/Final Exams must be made at the department level with principal approval.

## **Extra Credit**

- All extra credit is to be directly related to the TEKS in that subject.
- Extra credit may be offered at the discretion of the teacher.
- If extra credit is offered, it must be offered to all students in the class.
- Extra credit will not cause an excessive financial burden on the student or be given for bringing in basic school supplies or for attendance at school related or non-school related events.

## **Incomplete Grades**

A student receiving an incomplete and/or a zero for a missed Semester/Final Exam has two (2) weeks to convert the incomplete grade to an earned grade.

In unusual cases, where the student has missed a large quantity of work, the time may be extended. In all cases, the teacher must communicate to the student the nature of the outstanding work and the time limitation for completing the work (UIL required).

## **Calculation of Six weeks and Semester Average (CISD EIA Local)**

A student's six-week grade shall consist of 50% daily grades, and 50% test/major project grades. The six-week test, if given, shall count with other tests and major projects to total the 50% of tests/major projects. A minimum of one daily grade per week and two major grades/test grades per six weeks period.

## **Semester Exams (CISD EIA Local)**

**In grades 7–8**, each six-week grade shall be one-fourth of the semester course grade, with the semester examination being the remaining one-fourth of the semester course average. Example: 1st six weeks 93 (1/4) 2nd six weeks 87 (1/4) 3rd six weeks 85 (1/4) Semester Exam 88 (1/4) Total 353 Divided By: 4 Semester Grade =  $88.25 = 88$

## **Re-teach and Re-test/Re-assess for Mastery (Grades 7-8)**

### **Mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**

Crandall Independent School District provides a well-balanced curriculum on state prescribed Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students who participate in this curriculum will have the opportunity to master the knowledge, skills and competencies established by the district curriculum and the state standards.

CISD will utilize ongoing mastery assessment to determine which students are in need of remediation (re-teaching and accelerated instruction). The use of benchmark tests, teacher-made tests, performance assessments, and teacher observations will help determine which students are not mastering instructional objectives.

Upon request by a student, 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. The original assignment must be complete, attempted with genuine effort and turned in on time for the opportunity to redo. If 70% or fewer of the students in a section 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 gradebook. An alternate assignment may be used to replace the original assessment/grade. A student must score at least 70% on the re-evaluation to demonstrate mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

### **Late Work**

Late work is graded in the same manner in all classes at the middle school level. Middle School students are expected to submit all assignments by the date and time established by the classroom teacher. For assignments that are received up to two class days following the date and time established by the classroom teacher, the students will receive a maximum grade of 70% based upon the original grading scale used for the assignment. For Middle School students, an exception may be made by the teacher or principal if the work is completed in a tutorial setting.

Long-term projects and term papers are due on the announced due date. The student who is absent for any reason on the due date, including school business, must meet the deadline.

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional

objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A **student** will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. [For further information, see policy EIAB (LOCAL).]

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA (LEGAL).]

### **In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work**

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO (LEGAL).]

## **Appendix: Effective Communication with Parents/Guardian**

Communicating with parents/guardians is one of the most important responsibilities of teachers. Conferences provide an arena for collecting developmental and personal information from parent/guardians that may affect a student's learning, for developing rapport and encouraging parent/guardian involvement in their student's educational process, and for reporting and discussing student progress with parents/guardians. Accurate and diagnostic reports encourage parents/guardians to participate in the education of their children, help increase mutual understanding, good will and cooperation in the home, and aid in student guidance.

In addition to sending out the regular reports, teachers should inform parents/guardians promptly when problems appear. Any time a student's grade falls below 70 in an academic subject at the six weeks reporting time, the student and parent/guardian should be notified.

Teachers are encouraged to confer with parents/guardians as well as counselors, especially in instances where the student is experiencing difficulty.

Reports to parents/guardians serve as an instrument of student guidance. An effective report promotes better adult-child relationships because it helps the parents/guardians better understand the child.

### **An effective report will:**

- inform parents/guardians of the progress of their student
- help students accept responsibility for their own progress
- assist parents/guardians in cooperating with the school to further the student's progress
- bring about good relations between home and school
- be meaningful to teachers, students, and parents/guardians
- encourage good human relations and eliminate antagonism, resentment, or other negative attitudes toward school or teacher
- reflect a student's strengths as well as his/her weaknesses and failures
- stimulate a desire on the part of parents/guardians and students to overcome weaknesses and to achieve greater success
- focus on an educational objective

### **Parents/Guardians want to know:**

- whether or not the student is doing as well as he/she can do
- how well the student is doing in terms of what the school expects for his/her chronological and mental age level and his/her grade placement
- the student's strong points on which he/she can build in the future.

It should be remembered that what the student says and does when he/she arrives home from school often makes an impression upon parents/guardians that far outweighs any other report that the school might make.

Reports to parents/guardians should bring cooperation between the home and the school so that students will benefit. No matter what form of reporting is used, the information conveyed is highly personalized when it reaches the student. He/she is greatly affected by it and, unless it encourages his/her growth, it may be injurious to him/her.

## **Appendix: Grades for Students Assigned to DAEP at Crandall Alternative Center**

Students who have been assigned to DAEP at Crandall Alternative Center remain active in the roles and records of their home campus. The following are procedures that should be followed regarding these students:

### **Core-Area Subjects**

Students assigned to DAEP at Crandall Alternative Center receive direct instruction in the core curriculum areas (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies). Teachers within these subject areas are certified and follow the curriculum and TEKS as in any other school. These teachers record grades within a grade book and generate an average to report to the teacher at the home campus at the end of each grading period (Progress Report or Report Card). Teachers at the home campus should receive this grade and factor it in (based on percentage of time assigned to the Alternative Center) and enter it into their electronic grade books. For example, if during a six-week grading period a student is assigned to DAEP for three weeks, the final average should be reflective of counting the work at the home campus for 50% (3 weeks) and the work for Crandall Alternative Center for 50% (3 weeks). If the student is assigned to DAEP the entire grading period, the grade should **not** be “adjusted” by the home campus teacher.

### **Elective Subjects**

Students enrolled in electives are given assignments by the home campus teacher. Parents must pick up and return these assignments at the home campus for evaluation by the student’s home campus teacher. The home campus teacher is solely responsible for issuing the final grade in a fair and equitable manner. During the initial intake meeting, a “Parent Responsibility Form” is discussed and signed to ensure a student’s parent or guardian is aware of this procedure for elective courses.

## ***Appendix: Students Protected Under Section 504***

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states: “no qualified individual with disability shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

A qualified individual is any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- Has a record of such an impairment, or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

A Section 504 Committee will determine appropriate accommodations to enable qualified students to receive a free and appropriate education. These accommodations may change the presentation of material, the method of student response, or the setting, timing or scheduling of instruction. Students under Section 504 must still master the TEKS of a course. It is the classroom teacher’s responsibility to ensure that the accommodations are being implemented.

In summary, students who fall under the protection of Section 504 should be graded in such a way that their disability does not affect their ability to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter.

### **Students with Dyslexia**

A student with dyslexia may be eligible for protection under Section 504, Special Education services, or assistance through the campus Early Intervention Team. Accommodations will be determined by the appropriate committee for these students.

## **Appendix: Expectations and Guidelines for All English Language Learners and Recent Immigrants**

All academic and performance expectations apply equally to second language learners; however, it is imperative to recognize critical processes and features of second language acquisition including the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs as described in section **89.1210(e) of 19 TAC Chapter 89, Subchapter BB:**

- (1) **Affective.** Limited English proficient students shall be provided instruction using second language methods in English to introduce basic concepts of the school environment which instills confidence, self-assurance, and a positive identify with their cultural heritages. The program shall address the history and cultural heritage associated with both the students' home language and the United States.
- (2) **Linguistic.** Limited English proficient students shall be provided intensive instruction to develop proficiency in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language. The instruction in academic content areas shall be structured to ensure that the students master the required essential knowledge and skills and higher order thing skills.
- (3) **Cognitive.** Limited English proficient students shall be provided instruction in English in mathematics, science, health, and social studies using second language methods. The instruction in academic content areas shall be structured to ensure that the students master the required essential knowledge and skills and higher order thinking skills.

Accommodations will be based on TELPAS reports and/or entry assessments in order to implement the ELPS to guide differentiated instruction. **19 TAC 74.4**

It is also imperative to modify the **instruction, pacing, and materials** to ensure that English language learners have a full opportunity to meet these expectations. The expectations apply to the second language learner at his/her level of proficiency in English. **Students who have waived the services of the Bilingual/ELL Program will be graded according to CISD Grading and Reporting Procedures; however teachers are still required to implement the ELPS.**

## **Appendix: Expectations and Guidelines for All English Language Learners and Recent Immigrants**

All academic and performance expectations apply equally to English Language Learners (ELLs); however, it is imperative to recognize critical processes and features of second language acquisition and to provide appropriate instruction meet these expectations. The expectations apply to the second language learner at his/her level of proficiency in English. **Students who have waived the services of the Bilingual/ESL Program will be graded according to CISD Grading and Reporting Procedures; however teachers are still required to implement the ELPS.**

### **English as a Second Language**

#### **Promotions and Retention of English Language Learners :**

Students will be promoted or retained as specified below:

- English Language Learners making satisfactory progress in academic skills for their grade level should be promoted to the next grade level.
- The expectation of meeting the state and local curriculum as outlined by the TEKS apply to the second language learner at his or her level of proficiency in English [Texas Administrative Code Chapter 128]. An English Language Learner may not be retained due to lack of academic progress if the student is making progress in learning English. If the student has made progress as documented by required district testing instruments then the student should not be retained

regardless of academic progress.

- Students who fail to make academic progress and fail to make progress in English could be retained provided that documentation of adaptations, pacing, and the use of appropriate English as a Second Language strategies including sheltered instruction and materials support the decision to retain. Retention should only be considered when extensive adaptations, instructional pacing, the use of appropriate materials and use of ESL methodologies have been unsuccessful as documented through the campus student success team.
- Teachers will report grades and conduct following CISD Grading and Reporting Procedures in all skill areas during each grading period.
- Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled to address individual student needs.

### **English as a Second Language (ESL) Grading (Secondary) 7-12**

It is very important for teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs) to differentiate between academic achievement and language proficiency. The students may be unfamiliar with the specialized English language that is unique to each subject area and will have little practice in using English as a medium of thought with the subject matter. The students may have more difficulty in mastering the content area because of the language demands required of the actual content material.

Some assessment instruments are not appropriate for assessing academic knowledge of an ELL. A large number of assessment instruments for content mastery assume native proficiency in English, in addition to knowledge of the content area. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students may score low on exams for the following reasons:

- Students may be unable to use English as a medium of thought;
- Students may require extra response time due to conceptual processing requirements in English;
- Students may be unable to understand the content-area vocabulary or syntax;
- Students may not have knowledge of the content area required to obtain a correct response.

Therefore, the teacher can design tests for LEP students that have reduced demands on English by:

- Simplifying the language used in the test by substituting less difficult words for demanding vocabulary the student may not know. (The teachers will not make substitutions for vocabulary words that are required by the content since these are taught during instruction.)
- Ensuring that grammatical constructions are uncomplicated by lengthy sentences. (Students can concentrate more on the curriculum if they are not required to process long and complicated syntactical structures.)
- Being aware of cultural difference that might make a difference.

Crandall ISD offers ESL as an elective for grades 7-12. This course is taught by an ESL certified teacher using ESL methodologies and Sheltered Instruction.

Crandall ISD also offers ESOL I and II for students that are at the beginning or intermediate level of their English Language proficiency.

## **Appendix: Special Education/Section 504 Accommodations – Pre-AP/AP**

The following guidelines are intended to apply to eligible special education and Section 504 students who enroll in Pre-AP or AP courses. While Pre-AP/AP courses are open to any student wishing to enroll, including special education and Section 504 students; counselors, parents, IEP Team and Section 504 Committees should be aware that these are high-level academic classes. In order to be eligible for accommodations in a Pre-AP/AP class, the student must be eligible for the same accommodations in a general education classroom. Accommodations will not be implemented if they alter the content or standards of the course. The following guidelines shall be applicable to all special education and Section 504 students who enroll in Pre-AP/AP courses:

1. Special education or Section 504 students must have equal opportunity to participate in Pre-AP or AP courses.
2. While IEP Team and Section 504 Committees may wish to consider Pre-AP or AP courses in connection with transition plans for students who will be attending college, IEP Teams and Section 504 Committees are not required to place students in Pre-AP or AP classes unless they can be reasonably expected to be successful there with the allowable accommodations described in the guidelines referred below.
3. Accommodations for special education and Section 504 students may not alter the content or academic standards of the Pre-AP or AP course. Thus, certain allowable accommodations may include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:
  - Extended time for testing
  - Preferred seating
  - Opportunity to repeat and explain instructions
  - Assignment notebook
  - Minimal distractions
  - Large print, Braille/peer to read aloud
  - Behavior intervention plan
  - Assistive technology as defined by the committee
  - Altered format of exams, such as highlighted instructions or alternative spacing of questions
  - Altered assignments as needed for person with motoric or visual impairment
4. The follow are examples of accommodations which would alter the content or the standards of the course, and are not allowed.
  - Reduced assignments
  - Special projects in lieu of assignments
  - Exams of reduced length
  - Open book exams
  - Peer tutoring/paired work arrangement (is not allowed except when offered to the entire class.)
  - Any reduction of content or standards of the course
  - Reduced mastery

While the decision to enroll in a Pre-AP/AP class is ultimately to be made by the parent or student, the ARD or Section 504 Committees may meet and recommend removal of the student from the classroom if the student is not meeting the standards applicable to students in that program and, as a result, is failing or at risk of failure.

## **Appendix: Grading Policies for Students with Disabilities**

### **Generally:**

Students with disabilities receive instruction in a variety of settings as determined by the Individual Education Plan Team (IEP Team). Each student with a disability must have an individualized education plan (IEP) that is properly developed, implemented, and maintained in the least restrictive environment that

is appropriate to meet the student's educational needs.

The Texas Education Code Section 28.002 states that all students shall participate actively in a balanced curriculum designed to meet individual needs. The TEKS represent the core knowledge, skill, and competencies all students should learn, in order to be effective and productive members of society. Students with disabilities shall be instructed in the TEKS in a manner appropriate to their needs. The student's IEP must include a statement of measurable annual goals designed to meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum. For students taking alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, the IEP must also include a description of benchmarks or short term objectives. The following guidelines are meant to ensure that grades convey meaningful information to parents regarding their child's progress.

**. Students participating in the general education classroom without curriculum accommodations:**

The IEP Team may determine that a student with a disability will be responsible for mastering the entire general education curriculum with accommodations only in the instructional strategies. Accommodations in instructional strategies alone, such as extra time or large-print textbooks, are not curriculum modifications and are not coded on the report card. Documentation reflecting the implementation of modifications of the curriculum is required. District grading policies will apply to students participating in the general education curriculum without curriculum modifications unless determined otherwise by the student's IEP Team.

**2. Students participating in the general education classroom with curriculum modifications:**

The IEP Team may determine that a student with a disability is responsible for mastering only specific TEKS of a course and not the entire District curriculum. This is a modification to the curriculum and will be documented in the IEP, with a copy provided to the teacher. Although students receiving curriculum modifications in a general education course will receive instruction in the entire curriculum, the student's grade will not reflect his/her performance on curriculum objectives not included in the student's IEP. Notwithstanding, the student with a disability must be provided with the same opportunities to earn grades as non-disabled students such as extra credit points or non-content related points such as participation grades. Students receiving a modified curriculum in general education classrooms will receive their grade from the general classroom teacher or jointly with special education teachers as determined by IEP Team.

**3. Students participating in the general education classroom for reasons other than mastery of course curriculum:**

Some students with disabilities may participate in general education courses for reasons other than mastery of the course content (e.g. socialization). Classes taken for no credit as part of the IEP will be graded solely based upon criteria outlined in the particular student's IEP such as progress in social skills or classroom participation.

**4. Students participating in special education courses:**

Students who receive instruction in special education classes shall receive the grade from the appropriate special education teacher. The student's grade is not strictly a function of the student's ability to demonstrate progress on the goals/objectives selected by the IEP Team but may include other measures as determined by the IEP Team. The IEP Team must determine how progress toward the IEP goals will be measured and how that progress will be reported to the parents.

In addition to considering how grades will be determined for students in categories 2, 3, and 4 with content area IEP's, the IEP Team also determines how the child's progress toward the IEP goals/objectives will be measured and how that progress will be reported to the parents. The report card may not be used as substitute for reporting progress on IEP goals/objectives. Teachers are responsible for collecting data to aid IEP Team in determining student progress on IEP goals/objectives.

