



# Grading Guidelines

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LITTLE ELM ISD GRADING GUIDELINES & INSTRUCTIONAL HANDBOOK

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**2021-2022**

## **Mission**

The mission of Little Elm ISD is to ENGAGE, EQUIP, and EMPOWER each student to realize their full potential.

## **Vision**

The Vision of the Little Elm ISD Community is to be “THE Destination District”

## **Core Values**

- A culture founded on the highest qualities of character
- Unleashing every individual’s highest potential
- Creating a community where every students loves to learn, every teacher loves to teach, and every person is proud to call home
- Embracing all our kids as all our kids
- Open, transparent, and timely communication

## **Board Goals**

### **Finance**

The Board expects District financial integrity and transparency.

### **Academic**

The Board expects LEISD graduates are prepared for college and career.

### **Facilities**

The Board expects the District to provide equitable facilities and develop a financial plan that accurately reflects system-wide needs for both present and future growth.

### **Communication/Community**

The Board expects the District to champion the ongoing development of groups and organizations that support the students of our District

### **Staff Development/Human Resources**

The Board expects the District to maintain an awareness of District employee satisfaction and organizational health

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## Overview

Little Elm ISD's Grading Guidelines & Instructional Handbook provides the framework for grading and instructional practices across the district in accordance with Board Policy (EIA LEGAL). This document reflects the beliefs that grades are a measure of what students know and do not yet know, can and cannot yet do, and articulates district expectations for planning and instruction in each classroom.

## Grading Information

We believe the monitoring of the academic progress of each student coupled with meaningful and timely feedback to students and parents is essential to foster academic success.

We believe in an instructional approach based upon progress and student growth as well as mastery learning that allows for multiple opportunities to demonstrate progress towards mastery of the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), standards, objectives, or established goals.\*

We strive to communicate a fair and accurate indication of the level of mastery of each student at the time the feedback is given. To this end, the district and campus instructional leaders have worked together to establish grading standards, procedures, and policies that represent our beliefs and core values.

- All grading practices should be used to promote learning and academic growth and grades should never be used as a punishment or used to measure conduct or compliance.
- Grading should help the teacher to communicate progress to the student and parent/guardian towards mastery of the standards or established goals, appraise the effectiveness of teaching strategies and modes of instruction, and evaluate strengths and needs of each student.
- Grade points shall not be awarded or reduced for any non-academic activities, ie, returning a report card, an incomplete paper heading, bringing or possessing supplies, or attending a school sponsored event.
- Grading should help the parents/guardians to better understand their child as a learner, be knowledgeable about their child's mastery of standards or established goals, and guide their child in making academic progress.
- Grading should help the student to set his/her goals for future learning, evaluate and track personal progress towards mastery of the standards or established goals, and recognize opportunities for growth and improvement.

*\*Students in specialized programs with an IEP will earn grades as described in their individual educational plans.*

### Grade Point Scale for GPA Calculation

The grade point scale charts for high school courses can be viewed on the following link to Policy EIC (LOCAL), pages 2-4. Note that there is a different chart depending on the year students started ninth grade. [Board Policy EIC \(LOCAL\)](#). Information regarding Advanced Placement courses can be found in the Little Elm High School Course Guide and on the LEISD website under Advanced Academics.

Grading Scale: Grades 03-12

Numerical Grade	Letter Equivalent
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
Below 70	F
I	Incomplete

Standards Based Grading Scale: Grades K-02

1	Rarely/Does Not Demonstrate Mastery of the Standard
2	Sometimes/Usually Demonstrates Mastery of the Standard
3	Consistently Demonstrates Mastery of the Standard
	Not Yet Assessed Not Assessed in this Quarter

For additional information regarding standards based grading practices, please see the district website.

### **Dual Language Considerations:**

Each subject area taught in dual language will be broken down on the student's report card dependent upon the language of instruction. This format will allow parents to see the student's progress in each subject area. Students in grades 2 - 5 will have the following subjects in their report card:

- *Reading*
- *Lectura* (Reading taught in Spanish)
- *Language Arts*
- *Artes del lenguaje* (Language Arts taught in Spanish)
- *Math*
- *Ciencias* (Science taught in Spanish)
- *Estudios sociales* (Social Studies taught in Spanish))

The teacher gradebook will also have separate fields to enter grades for each subject.

The K-1 report card for dual language students will include:

- *Reading* or *lectura* (depending on the student's dominant language)
- *Language Arts* or *artes del lenguaje* (depending on the student's dominant language)
- *Math*
- *Ciencias* (Science taught in Spanish)
- *Estudios sociales* (Social Studies taught in Spanish)

## **Texas Education Code**

In compliance with Texas Education Code §28.0216, grading in LEISD

- Must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment.
- May not require a classroom teacher to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard for a student's quality of work.
- May allow a student a reasonable opportunity to makeup or re-submit a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

## **District Communication of Progress & Mastery**

The district shall provide a progress report for all students during each grading period.

Each student receives a computer-generated report card at the end of each grading period. Parents are expected to return a signed copy of the report card. [EIA (LEGAL)]

In addition to the standard nine-week report card, students with disabilities must also receive a report indicating their progress on their IEP goals.

## **Communication between Teachers and Parents/Guardians**

All teachers will communicate with parents regarding student progress in a timely manner. Teachers and/or parents/guardians may request conferences at any time.

Since teacher web pages serve as communication tools for parents/guardians, teachers will maintain a current web page with all appropriate information as determined by the campus to provide one more communication avenue to reach parents.

Teachers should encourage students and parents to track their child's current academic progress online via Focus. Upon assigning an **"M"** for missing daily work or other assignment to a student in a course, the parent will receive an automated call and email to inform them of the missing assignment (Typically, these automated communications will be sent once a week on Wednesday). Documentation by the teacher for future reference is recommended. When a student is in jeopardy of failing or a failing average is reported for a course on a progress report, the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians through email, phone, or conference and maintain documentation of the communications.

As a general guideline, graded work should be up to date in the electronic grade book within 5 school days of the assignment being turned in by the student. The day an assignment is turned in is day zero. Parents and Guardians can sign up for grading alerts through the Focus grading system. Please see campus staff for more information.

If a failing average in grades 3 - 12 is reported for a course on a progress report, direct contact with a parent will be made through email, phone, or conference. It would be appropriate to



discuss the performance of this student with the school counselor, intervention teacher, or administrator. Early intervention is essential to student success. A teacher or campus administrator may require any student who has not yet demonstrated mastery or is in danger of failing to attend tutorial sessions.

In LEISD, students in grades K-2 are assessed through Standard Based Grading. Should a student have 30% or more 1's at the progress report, direct contact with a parent will be made through email, phone, or conference. It would be appropriate to discuss the performance of this student with the school counselor, intervention teacher, or administrator. Early intervention is essential to student success. A teacher or campus administrator may require any student who has not yet demonstrated mastery or is in danger of failing to attend tutorial sessions.

### **Grading for Extracurricular Activities**

Students participating in UIL activities must meet eligibility per UIL Guidelines. Please see the LEISD Athletic Guidelines and Code of Conduct for full rules and details on eligibility.

A student who earns below a 70 in any regular academic class or less than a 60 in an Advanced Placement class at grading periods, may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks as governed by No Pass No Play calendar set forth by UIL. A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.

[List of Advanced Placement Courses Exempt from Ineligibility 70%](#)

An ineligible student may practice or rehearse while suspended. The student regains eligibility when the principal and teachers determine that she or he has: (1) earned a grade of 70 or above in all academic classes; other than those classes designated as Advanced Placement in which a student must earn a grade of 60 or above (2) completed three weeks of ineligibility. A student must attend school at least 50% of the same day as the activity or be present for the count period in order to participate. Per UIL rules, each school must check eligibility at the first six weeks progress or grading cycle of the year. All subsequent eligibility is based on 3 week grading cycles.

### **Attendance and Grading**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. Please see FEC Legal and the campus Student Handbook for specific laws and full details regarding attendance.

### Academic Dishonesty

Honesty and integrity are essential elements of our core values in Little Elm ISD, therefore academic dishonesty is not tolerated. In an attempt to prevent these behaviors we educate students about what academic dishonesty is and how to avoid it. 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. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties. [EIA Local] Students found to have engaged in these behaviors will still be required to demonstrate mastery of the content and skills. Any academic dishonesty may impact a student's opportunity to participate in a retake opportunity for that assignment.

### Use of Feature Films and Movies

A feature film or movie for entertainment purposes cannot be used in its entirety as a component of classroom instruction. Carefully selected sections of feature films or movies can serve as excellent teaching tools as long as they support the planned instructional activities and the applicable TEKS. No video, feature film, or movie should be shown without stopping as indicated below for instructional conversations or student activity. Instructional videos should be used to reinforce content by being shown in short sections followed by discussion or activity. For example, show a short section of 10-12 minutes and then stop for discussion or activity. With the accessibility to the variety of online video clips, educators must use professional judgement when selecting these as instructional tools.

### Special Programs

Grading for all students including those with disabilities should follow the District grading procedures and students should be graded based on student progress in the content of instruction and the student's response to instruction.

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 individual education plan (IEP). The ARD committee may make decisions in regard to what the student will be graded on and the weight applied but cannot alter the grading scale/system established by the District.

Grades for students in special education must be based on performance that demonstrates progress toward mastery of the TEKS following the application of the ARD recommended accommodations and/or modifications intended to increase the potential for successful student learning.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities may access the grade level standards using the TEA developed Vertical Alignment Document and Essence Statement for all grade levels and

subjects. The student's level of independence in completing tasks and the degree to which a student can generalize skills to a variety of settings are a required aspect of the STAAR-Alt system and can assist teachers in determining a student's progress toward mastery.

The level of TEKS instruction and content expectations must be 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 assessments.

Student work can be assessed by the special education teacher, the general education teacher, and/or a combination of both teachers as determined by the ARD, but must be recorded by the teacher of record.

"The District must provide students with disabilities report cards that are as informative and effective as the report cards provided to students without disabilities." (Section 504 and Title II). The student's grade is reported on the report card in the same way as grades are reported for all students. In addition to the report card, progress on individual goals and objectives will be individually reported for each student using the IEP progress report at a minimum of every nine weeks. This is a legal requirement.

#### **Grading for 504 and Dyslexia Programs**

Students identified for dyslexia programs which are served through special education will be graded under the guidelines described in the section above (Special Education Program).

Students identified for dyslexia programs which are served through Section 504 or other students identified as Section 504 will be graded as all other general education students with appropriate accommodations identified through their individual accommodation plans.

#### **English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs**

According to Chapter 89.1203 of the Texas Administrative Code, an English Language Learner (ELL) is defined as "a person who is in the process of acquiring English and has another language as the first native language." English as a Second Language is an intensive instructional program designed to develop an English Language Learners' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English.

Grades for English Language Learners (ELL) will take into consideration their English language proficiency. Teachers will implement the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) utilizing the Sheltered Instruction framework whenever possible to improve student understanding of concepts. Time is needed for the student to adjust to the new sounds and demands of learning English.

Accommodations for English Language Learners include but are not limited to extra time for assignments and tests, shorter assignments and tests, oral quizzes, peer assistance, use of bilingual dictionaries, reading the directions to the students and use of visual aids.

English Language Learners should not have failing grades based only on their inability to speak English. ELL students' grades should reflect their linguistic accommodations and modifications as determined by the student's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC).

ELL students are not exempt from grades. In order for ELL students to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and the enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated. The accommodations must be commensurate with the student's level of English language proficiency.

The LPAC representative must review teacher documentation of routinely utilized accommodations a minimum of once every grading period and make recommendations for additional appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations if necessary.

All ELL students participating in an ESL program must receive grades based on grade-level expectations and English Language Proficiency Standards. Teachers should consider the content being assessed, the linguistics accommodations checklist and the appropriate proficiency level descriptors.

When an ELL student is in jeopardy of failing a class (when his/her average is 75 or less), the teacher will communicate directly with the parents/guardians and maintain ongoing dialogue and documentation of the communications. An additional LPAC meeting shall be convened when a student fails for the nine-week grading period.

Before assigning an ELL a failing grade, the teacher must have documented the use of sheltered instruction and the ELPS. Specific accommodations should be addressed at the LPAC meeting to ensure the student is receiving appropriate support.

**TELPAS-** All Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, including parent denials, must participate in the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Each student must be rated in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

### **State Assessments: STAAR, STAAR Alt 2, End-of-Course**

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) is designed to measure the extent to which a student has learned and is able to apply the defined knowledge and skills at each tested grade level. The STAAR assessments for reading and mathematics are designed as a growth measure. Each year each student's growth will be measured and compared to the district and state averages. Each STAAR test is directly and vertically aligned to the TEKS and is administered at the following grade levels:

Grade	Test Administration
3rd & 6th Grade	Mathematics, Reading
4th & 7th Grade	Mathematics, Reading, Writing
5th Grade	Mathematics, Reading, Science
8th Grade	Mathematics, Reading, Social Studies, Science
9th-12th Grade	End-of-Course: Alg I, Biology, Eng I, Eng II, US History

### Accelerated Instruction and Interventions for Elementary Students

Accelerated instruction promotes student success by:

- Implementing the support at the time the need is identified
- Allowing the student to progress systematically through content
- Offering a variation in instructional approach
- Providing frequent reinforcement and review

Under TAC §28.0211, each time a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered under Section 39.023(a) in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth grade, the school district in which the student attends school shall provide to the student accelerated instruction in the applicable subject area. Accelerated instruction may require participation of Revised August 2016 Page 26 the student before or after normal school hours and may include participation at times of the year outside normal school operations.

For students whose assessments indicate a need, interventions will be implemented to assist with progress toward their learning targets. Interventions may include differentiated instructional strategies, use of manipulatives, frequent reminders to stay on task, or small group settings, etc. As part of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process, a student's progress will be monitored on a regular basis. Data gathered through the RTI process will be the basis for decision making concerning whether a referral for evaluation of a suspected disability is needed.

### Summer School Eligibility

### Accelerated Instruction for High School Students

- The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) - Students who entered high school for the first time in 2011-2012 take the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness End-of-Course (EOC) exams as the examination requirements for graduation.
- EOC tests are given to middle school students taking high school courses. Graduation requirements for these students will be based on successful completion of EOC tests in English I, II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.
- TEC §39.025(b-1) requires school districts to provide accelerated instruction to each student who fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment (i.e., who does not achieve Level II: Approaching Grade Level).

- Students who have not met a minimum standard performance score will be provided accelerated instruction. It is the responsibility of the grade level or course teachers to provide Accelerated instruction BETWEEN ALL testing opportunities. There are three opportunities for students to reach mastery. If a student fails all three administrations, accelerated instruction will continue the first six weeks of the following school year.

### Grade 6-12 Interventions

For students whose assessments indicate a need, interventions will be implemented to assist with progress toward their learning targets. Interventions may include using varied instructional strategies, use of manipulatives, frequent reminders to stay on task, or small group work. As part of the Response to Intervention (RtI) process, a student's progress will be monitored on a regular basis. Data gathered through the RtI process will be the basis for decision making concerning whether a referral for evaluation of a suspected disability is needed.

### Student Success Initiative

Student Success Initiative (SSI) ensures that all students receive the instruction and support they need to be academically successful in reading and mathematics. Under this initiative, students are required to pass the Grade 5 STAAR reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to the sixth grade. Students in grade 5 have three opportunities to pass these tests. If a student does not pass the required tests, s/he will be given additional instructional support after each testing opportunity. Promotion/retention will be based on attendance at accelerated instruction opportunities and student mastery of the grade 5 Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. A student may advance to 6th grade only by passing these tests or by the unanimous decision of his or her Grade Placement Committee (GPC) made up of the student's principal, teacher and parent. The GPC must unanimously agree that the student is likely to successfully perform at the next grade level. Under this initiative, students are also required to pass the Grade 8 STAAR reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to the ninth grade. Students in grade 8 have three opportunities to pass these tests. If a student does not pass the required tests, s/he will be given additional instructional support after each testing opportunity. Promotion/retention will be based on attendance at accelerated instruction opportunities and student mastery of the grade 8 Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. A student may advance to 9th grade only by passing these tests or by the unanimous decision of his or her Grade Placement Committee (GPC) made up of the student's principal, teacher, and parent. The GPC must unanimously agree that the student is likely to successfully perform at the next grade level to advance.

### Students Receiving Additional Services

Some students require additional services during the school day. When a child is pulled from the general education classroom, they shall not be penalized for work missed. A child shall not be required to complete lessons/activities completed in their absence while attended services such as dyslexia, GT, special education, counseling, etc. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that students are exposed to the missed content and have ample opportunities to master the standards and learning objectives.

### Assessing and Reporting Work Habits

Non-academic performance, such as work habits and soft skills, in content area courses shall not be reflected in any portion of a grade or points in a content area. Any specific concerns related to individual student behaviors that are not in compliance with the LEISD Student Handbook & Code of Conduct, campus-based communicated standards, or a student's individual behavior plan, will be communicated directly with parents/guardians and/or reflected in the comments section of the report card, depending on the severity of the issue.

### Missing or Late Coursework

Extenuating circumstances may occur that are out of the control of the student which prevent him/her from completing and returning assignments. The student is to inform the teacher of any such circumstances that prevented the completion of the work. Students who fail to complete coursework and classroom assignments will still be required to demonstrate mastery of the content and skills. If failure to complete classroom assignments becomes a behavior concern and the teacher(s) of record lacks the evidence to determine mastery of the standards or established goals, please refer to guidelines for parent/guardian communication. All students shall have ample opportunities to make up missing work due to absences. Assignments must be turned in within five (5) days of the due date. For Advanced Placement courses, late work results in a 5 point per day reduction.

### Absences

Per Board Policy FEA (LEGAL), the student shall be allowed a reasonable time to make up school work missed on the days absent. If the student satisfactorily completes the work, the days of absence shall be counted as days of compulsory attendance. Education Code 25.087(d)

### Grades for Specials in K-5 (Art, Music & PE)

Grades for Fine Arts or Physical Education will be determined with regard to mastery of the TEKS (including performance) for the particular course. Students rotate through these classes less often than core content courses so the minimum number of grades requirement does not apply. However, a sufficient number of formative assessments should be given and mastery of the content and skills should reflect student learning of the TEKS in art, music, and physical education.

### Recording Multiple Grades

An assignment or project may generate multiple grades if different portions are being graded to reflect mastery of different TEKS, standards, objectives, or established goals. One product, assignment, or project can be recorded in more than one subject area if it assesses student mastery of TEKS, standards, objectives, or established goals in more than one subject.

### Transfer Grades from Within the District

If a student transfers from an LEISD school, all of the grades will be recorded by the receiving teacher in his/her grade book as they stand.

### Transfer Grades from Other Districts

Grade(s) 03 – 08: Averages the student earned from the previous education opportunity of accredited schools will be accepted. (For standards based report cards, student's previous school report card will be attached if the teacher is unable to assess for mastery of all standards at time of reporting).

A student who transfers into the District high school from another accredited institution shall be credited in conformity with the policies applied to District students. The grading system of the sending school shall be used if official documentation is provided by the sending district. A student who transfers into the high school with courses from an accredited institution and designated AP, honors, GT, Pre-AP, or dual credit shall receive similar weighted credits counted toward the GPA in accordance with the District's weighted grade point scale and class rank policy. Credits earned in non-accredited schools shall not be used in calculation of GPA.

Transferred letter grades shall be awarded grade points as indicated on the District grade point scale.

A+ = 98	A = 95	A- = 93	B+ = 88	B = 85	B- = 83	C+ = 78	C = 77	C- = 76
D+ = 73	D = 72	D- = 71	F = 69	I = Incomplete				

### Learner Centered Lesson Design

Learner Centered Lesson Design requires intentional planning. All teachers in Little Elm ISD are expected to design lessons through the lens of Rigor, Relevance, and Learner Engagement using district provided rubrics as a reflective tool. Instruction should be authentic, collaborative, and research based. Deliberate consideration of the standards, instructional options, and students' needs based on the district provided curriculum and/or other resources is fundamental. Rigorous, relevant, and engaging lessons not only lead to mastery of the content standards but also provide students with opportunities to self-direct, manage complexity, think critically, communicate with peers, and solve problems using contemporary tools.

### Lesson Design with the PLC Questions in Mind

LEISD is a Professional Learning Community in which teacher teams meet regularly to discuss content and skills they want student to learn, how they will assess student mastery, what they will do as a team and individually if students do not master the content or skills, and what actions they will take if students master the content quickly or already knew it when the unit of study began. This cyclical approach to collaboration, data disaggregation, and action has become the culture in which we work for our students.

**The following questions are used to guide teachers through collaborative planning, lesson design, assessment, reteach and/or extension, and lesson reflection.**

**Question One: What do we want them to learn?**



- Does my planning reflect what students need to know and are able to do to demonstrate mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)?
- Have I created an alignment between the activities I have planned and the cognitive level of what I want students to know and be able to do?

**Question Two: How will we know if they have learned it?**

- Have I regularly encouraged students to assess their own work and others' work in terms of the standards set?
- Have I provided clear and compelling standards prior to demonstrations of learning (i.e., performances, products, projects, and exhibitions)?
- Do I routinely hold assessment conferences with individual students or small groups of students where the qualities of student products are assessed?
- Do I routinely use assessment primarily as a tool to promote student success and only secondarily as a means to justify the distribution of rewards and grades?

**Question Three: What will we do if they haven't learned the content or skill?**

- What prescriptive teaching strategies for learning have I provided so each student can experience success?
- Do I plan success for each student? When students do not succeed, do I work directly with them to diagnose the causes of failure to correct the situations?

**Question Four: What will we do if they already know the content or skill or learn it quickly?**

- Do I assess student interests and utilize this information in planning units of work, creating meaningful tasks, or designing assignments?
- Do my choices of instructional resources reflect a diversity of formats that appeal to students?

**Student Responsibilities**

- Complete assigned work, return it to the teacher, and actively participate daily.
- Communicate with the teacher when she or he does not understand the material or is in need of help.
- Evaluate his or her own work.
- Maintain academic honesty.

**Teacher Responsibilities**

- Plan for learning utilizing the Rigor and Relevance Framework and provide engaging daily instruction.
- Participate and collaborate in Professional Learning Communities (PLC).
- Monitor students' mastery of the curriculum.
- Communicate progress in a timely manner through Focus, progress reports, report cards, and other means as appropriate.

- Provide additional instructional support interventions for students who do not demonstrate mastery, or are in danger of failing, following the Response to Intervention model.
- Provide differentiated instruction to ensure the appropriate level of instruction for each student.

### Coursework/Daily Work & Assessments

Coursework, or Daily Work, is defined as an assignment given to demonstrate student mastery under the supervision of a teacher. It may include independent work, pre-assessment, observation, oral or written demonstrations of knowledge and/or skill, or other practice activities at the mastery level. Ample classroom time should be provided and a teacher should make arrangements for individual students who need more classroom time for mastery, preferably under teacher supervision. Grades for the course should reflect the degree to which the student has mastered the objectives of the course.

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

### Projects

Projects are defined as an opportunity to plan and design with the purpose of demonstrating a deeper understanding of the standards or established goals. Examples of projects include book reports and reviews, dioramas, research papers, science or inquiry projects, reader's theater, and living museums. Projects must focus on the work of the individual student and their mastery of the appropriate TEKS, standards, or established goals. Though projects can be summative assignments, all students must be assessed individually. There are no group or team summative grades permitted for projects. All summative projects must be graded on a rubric which has been given to students at the start of the assignment. No projects shall be assigned over extended breaks such as Thanksgiving, Winter Break, or Spring Break and be due on the week of return.

### Formative & Summative Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering information (evidence) that accurately reflects how well a student is progressing towards mastery of the identified learning targets, standards or established goals. Assessment data serves to guide teachers in adapting instructional approaches to better meet students' needs. The overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices can also be evaluated through the assessment process.

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 observation of developmental skills, work samples, oral

interviews, and written assignments. Assessment strategies will also differ depending on whether or not a teacher is instructing in skills, theory, processes, or products.

Formative assessments should happen early and often in order to provide students the feedback they need so they can progress towards mastery. Formative assessments can be informal like checking student answers on individual whiteboards or formal such as a 5 question quiz tied directly to the standards. Students should be given varied opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skill without penalty, therefore, most formative assessments are utilized to guide instruction and not used as grades.

Summative assessments are cumulative in nature and summarize the current individual student mastery of the TEKS, standards or established goals after a period of student practice or work. It defines what a student knows and is able to do with the assessed standards or established goals. A summative assessment may include, but is not limited to, a multiple choice exam, an essay, an oral report, or a project. A key component of summative assessment is teacher provided feedback that guides students' efforts toward improved performance as the curriculum continues to scaffold.

Students must receive timely and meaningful feedback on all assessments.

#### **Grade Weights for Report Card Calculation**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Coursework/Daily Work</b>	<b>Summative Assessments</b>
Pre K-02	Please See Standards Based Grading & Reporting Chart on Page 7	
<b>03-05</b>	70%	30%
<b>06-08</b>	60%	40%
<b>09-12</b>	40%	60%

Grades 09-12: Semester Exams count as 15% of the semester average

#### **Minimum Grades per Grading Period**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Coursework/Daily Work</b>	<b>Summative Assessments</b>
03-08	One per Week	Two-Three per Grading Period
09-12	One per Week	Two-Three per Grading Period

#### **Reteach, Redos, & Retakes**

For reteaching to be effective, teachers must use a different approach from the one they initially used, one that builds on previous activities and focuses on the omissions or errors in student thinking that resulted from these activities. (Adapted from Marzano, 2010)

- Correction of the original assignment is not considered reteaching.
- Reteaching should employ different strategies than the original teaching.
- Working through the PLC team, teachers collaborate on methods to provide reteach by answering PLC question three, "What will we do if students do not learn it?"

The District shall permit a student who meets the criteria detailed in the grading guidelines a reasonable opportunity to retake a summative test one time, for which the student earned an 84% or below. The higher of the two grades will be recorded in the grade book.

- The student, at teacher discretion/campus procedure, may be required to attend tutorials prior to the opportunity to retest. The number of tutorials or reteach opportunities is determined by the teacher.
- Standards build upon each other during and between units, therefore it is the recommendation for summative assessment retests to occur within five (5) class days. However, the teacher will determine the retest due dates based upon the length of assessment and/or time-line for tutorials/reteach.
- The assessment may be of an alternative variety from the original assessment as long as it is coverage of the same TEKS and at the same level of cognition as the original assessment.
- The highest available grade on the retest for an assessment is an 85.

### Extra Credit

Extra credit must be awarded on the basis of an academic product that can be directly related to the LEISD curriculum objectives and standards. The purpose of extra credit should be for extension and enrichment of student learning. If a teacher makes extra credit available to one student, he/she must give all students in the same course the opportunity for extra credit so that it applies to all students equally. Extra credit shall not be given for classroom supplies or materials, or awarded for any other non-academic work. In the case of class-wide low scores, or missing assignments, extra credit may not be given. For class-wide low scores, the material should be retaught, learned at the appropriate level of cognition by the students and then reassessed. The goal must be student learning and not grade points, therefore the use of a "curve" is not permitted.

### Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated Instruction is an embedded concept that allows individual students to demonstrate their mastery of standards or established goals in different ways. Differentiation means tailoring instruction to meet individual needs.

"Whether teachers differentiate content, process, products, or the learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction. At its most basic level, differentiation consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual, or small

group, to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction.

Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile:

Scaffolding of Content– how the student will get access to the information (for example, using reading materials at varying readability levels);

Process – activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content (for example, developing personal agendas (task lists written by the teacher and containing both in-common work for the whole class and work that addresses individual needs of learners) to be completed either during specified agenda time or as students complete other work early);

Products – culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit (giving students options of how to express required learning, such as, create a puppet show, write a letter, or develop a mural with labels); and

Learning environment – the way the classroom works and feels (for example, setting out clear guidelines for independent work that matches individual needs.)”

Please note that differentiated instruction and intervention are not the same concept. An instructional intervention is a planned set of procedures that are aimed at teaching a specific set of academic or social skills to a student or students. *Excerpt from: Tomlinson, C. A. (August, 2000).*

### [Board Policy](#)

Little Elm ISD School Board Policy can be found online through the district website at <http://www.littleelmsd.net/> or at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/393>

## Little Elm ISD Grading Guidelines Teacher and Administrator Acknowledgment Form

LEISD Board Policy EIA (LOCAL) requires the Superintendent or designee to ensure that each campus or instructional level develops guidelines for teachers to follow in determining grades for students. Principals shall be responsible for ensuring that grades accurately reflect a student's relative mastery of an assignment and that a sufficient number of grades are taken to support the grade average assigned. In addition, the policy states that guidelines for grading shall be clearly communicated by teachers and parents. The Grading Guidelines Handbook is the written response to EIA (LOCAL). It also is intended to provide additional guidelines to ensure consistency between campuses with like grade configurations as well as horizontal alignment of grading and reporting practices on each LEISD campus. The goal is to provide teachers with direction to ensure all students are treated in an equitable manner when it comes to reporting academic performance. The guidelines within this document are subject to change. Should any changes occur, all teachers and administrators will be made aware of the changes and expected to follow the newest guidelines. Board policy supersedes the information contained in this document should there be a conflict in content or process.

I understand that I should consult my campus principal should I have questions regarding the Grading Guidelines Handbook. My signature indicates that I understand that it is my professional responsibility to read and comply with policies, procedures, and guidelines included in this Grading Guidelines Handbook as well as any communicated changes that are approved during the school year. PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR CAMPUS PRINCIPAL OR HIS/HER DESIGNEE.

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Teacher or Administrator Signature

Date

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Printed Name of Teacher or Administrator