



## Waco ISD Secondary Grading Policy

# 2023-2024

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## Contacts

### Waco ISD Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

[deena.cornblum@wacoisd.org](mailto:deena.cornblum@wacoisd.org)

**Dr. Deena Cornblum**

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

(254) 755-9419

### Waco ISD Elementary Curriculum and

**Instruction** [karmen.logan@wacoisd.org](mailto:karmen.logan@wacoisd.org)

**Karmen Logan**

Executive Director for Elementary Education

(254) 710-9126

### Waco ISD Secondary Curriculum and Instruction

[david.hamilton@wacoisd.org](mailto:david.hamilton@wacoisd.org)

**David Hamilton**

Executive Director for Secondary Education

(254) 755-9473

## **General Overview**

Students in grades 6-12 are graded based on achievement of standards. The grading scale is numeric, on a 0-100 scale. Grades of 70-100 are considered passing, and no grade above 100 will be recorded. The grading scale is:

100-90	A
89-80	B
70-79	C
Below 70	F

The purpose of grade reporting is to inform parents and students about mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Six-week grades of 70 or greater indicate a student is meeting the required state and local passing standard. Any six-week grade below 70 indicates a student is failing to master the state student expectations (SE's). **Teachers shall contact parents of students with failing grades.**

For secondary elective courses including, but not exclusive to, fine arts, physical education, athletics, world languages, etc., the grading guidelines shall be followed below. In regards to the specifics of determining grades outside of the outlined regulations, it is up to the instructor to do so. In cases where performances outside of the school day are required for a grade, an alternative assignment shall be available if students do not attend.

### **Minimum Number of Grades per Course**

A minimum number of 2 minor/daily grades per subject, per week are required. For example if there are 5 weeks in a grading period, 10 minor/daily grades would be required, if there are 6 weeks in a grading period, 12 minor/daily grades would be required.

A minimum number of 3 major/test grades per subject per grading period are required, regardless of the amount of weeks in the grading period.

### **Grading Weights**

In averaging grades for each reporting period, the following formula shall be used in all subject areas:

1. Daily work = 50% of grade. Daily grades are obtained from daily papers; quizzes; homework assignments; teacher observation of demonstrated skills based upon a rubric that defines mastery, skills, demonstrations, or performance; short compositions; etc. These grades should all be at the independent practice or summative evaluation stage of the lesson cycle—not grades taken during guided practice. **No more than 20% (of the 50%) of daily grades in each grading period shall be homework.**
2. Major assignments and/or test = 50% of grade. This category includes unit, chapter, or skills tests and/or major assignments such as projects, major reports/ compositions, journals, and portfolios.
3. For Science: Tests shall be assigned a value of 30% (of the 50%); laboratory assignments

which are derived and performed solely by the students shall be assigned a value of 20% (of the 50%). Notebooks as major assignments cannot be simply a compilation of previously graded material.

No more than 1 major grade in each grading period shall be home projects.

For all AP and Pre-Advanced classes, the following formula shall be used:

1. Daily work = 40% of grade. Daily grades are obtained from daily papers; quizzes; homework assignments; teacher observation of demonstrated skills based upon a rubric that defines mastery, skills, demonstrations, or performance; short compositions; etc. These grades should all be at the independent practice or summative evaluation stage of the lesson cycle—not grades taken during guided practice. **No more than 20% (of the 40%) of daily grades in each grading period shall be homework.**
2. Major assignments and/or test = 60% of grade. This category includes unit, chapter, or skills tests and/or major assignments such as projects, major reports/ compositions, journals, and portfolios.
3. For Science: Tests shall be assigned a value of 40% (of the 60%); laboratory assignments which are derived and performed solely by the students shall be assigned a value of 20% (of the 60%). Notebooks as major assignments cannot be a compilation of previously graded material.

No more than 1 major grade in each grading period shall be home projects.

### Semester Averages – Grades 6-8

The semester average shall be calculated as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Six Weeks	33.3%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks	+ 33.3%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks	+ 33.3%
Semester Average	= 100%

#### Example:

1 <sup>st</sup> Six Weeks	89%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks	73%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks	92%
Semester Average (89% + 73% + 92%)/(3)	85%

If an end of year numerical grade is determined, it shall be the numerical average of the two semester grades.

**Semester Averages – Grades 9-12**

**The semester average shall be calculated as follows:**

6 Weeks Average			
1 <sup>st</sup> Six Weeks	33.3%		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks	33.3%		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks	33.3%		
Six Weeks Average	100%		x 85%
Semester Final	100%		x 15%
Semester Average			100%

**Example:**

6 Weeks Average			
1 <sup>st</sup> Six Weeks	89%		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks	73%		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks	92%		
Six Weeks Average (89% + 73% + 92%)/(3)	85%		72.3%
Semester Final	92%		+13.8%
Semester Average (85% x 85%) + (92% x 15%)			86%

Teachers will apply standards that are consistent with policies and local grading regulations.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Any party found to be involved in academic dishonesty will receive a zero on the assignment or test on which academic dishonesty occurred and shall be subject to disciplinary action as specified in the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty can include several different actions undertaken by a student such as, but not exclusive to:

- Plagiarism
- Fabrication
- Deception
- Cheating

- Sabotage

*See EIA (Local)*

### **UIL Eligibility**

The campuses will generate a list at the end of the first six weeks of the school year and at the end of each six weeks thereafter of those students who failed one or more courses. These lists will be the official lists of students who are not eligible for extra-curricular participation. They must, therefore, be absolutely accurate. Each school shall develop a procedure to ensure that teacher-sponsors and coaches are provided a list of ineligible students at each eligibility checkpoint. In order to facilitate the list of eligibility for UIL, all grades shall be due by the end of the day for students each six weeks (i.e. if the school day for students ends at 1:00PM then grades shall be due at 1:00PM)

*See FM (Legal)*

*See FM (Local)*

### **Semester Examinations – Grades 9-12**

The semester examination shall be a comprehensive examination covering the essential knowledge and skills prescribed by the state and District identified student outcomes for the entire semester.

### **Semester Exam Exemption**

Any tenth or eleventh grade student who meets the grade and attendance requirements listed below may be exempted from the final exam in each class for the spring semester only. Any twelfth-grade student who meets the grade and attendance requirements listed below may be exempted from the final exam in each class both fall and spring semesters. The exemption applies to each class individually.

Additionally, students in an Advanced Placement course who have taken the Advanced Placement examination for that course will be exempted from its second semester examination. Students who were enrolled in an Advanced Placement course but did not take the Advanced Placement examination will be required to take the course instructor's second semester exam.

In lieu of taking the exam, students will be provided with alternate activities during their scheduled exam time. These alternative activities will be conducted on campus.

An actual grade average (unweighted) of eighty-five (85) or better for the semester in a particular class will be required.

A student may have no more than two (2) excused absences in the class for which the exemption is desired. Students with even one unexcused absence or one day of in-school or out-of-school suspension may not be exempted. Absence is defined as missing a specific class period, whether excused or unexcused, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension. A tardy of 10 minutes

or more is considered an absence for the purposes of exam exemption. Three unexcused tardies of less than ten minutes constitute an absence for the purposes of exam exemption. The only absence exceptions are school-related business such as extra-curricular activities or field trips and bona fide, documented college or university visits for which all make-up work is completed. The teacher's record (grade book) is the final authority; therefore, any questions about school related absences should be cleared up with the teacher as soon as possible after the absence.

Students who do not attend the alternate activities will be counted absent. If the absence causes the student to exceed the two (2) allowable excused absences for the grading period, or is an unexcused absence, the student's exemption will be revoked. The student will receive an Incomplete for all applicable subjects until the final examination(s) are taken.

A student who meets the exemption requirements for a class may choose to take the exam regardless of his/her grade in a particular class. However, if she/he takes the exam, the grade will be counted and averaged with the semester grades in order to determine the final course grade.

Students will be notified by each teacher of their exemption status the day prior to the first day of final exams. Absences will be counted through that day.

### **High School Credits**

1. Students who are at risk for losing credit due to excessive absences shall remain in class and receive grades for their academic work. The numeric average for the weeks and the semester will be computed. The semester average will be included in the student's overall grade point average, even if the student has lost credit.
2. A student who transfers to the District from another district may have to enroll in a course which he/she was not taking previously. Where feasible, counselors shall attempt to match TEKS from the previous district's course with a course offered in Waco ISD so that the student does not risk loss of credit. If such a matching of course TEKS is not possible and the student must be enrolled in a totally different course during the first or second six weeks of a semester, he or she shall have an opportunity to make up the missed work through individualized assignments designed to address the TEKS presented in the class prior to his/her entry into class, allowing two days for each day's absence.

An "incomplete" recorded for the third six weeks of either semester as a result of number 2 above must be made up within 30 calendar days of the last day of the semester, or the missing work will be given zero credit and averaged with the other work. Under extenuating circumstances, the campus administrator may make other arrangements on an individual case by case basis. Attendance petitions, which may be affected by the incomplete, will be due at the end of the 30 calendar days and must include documentation from the teacher(s) that all assigned work has been completed.

### **Online Learning**

Students needing either to recover denied credits due to a failure to meet the grade average

minimum or to meet graduation requirements, can be assigned by their cohort counselor to a district approved online curriculum. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

1. Credit Recovery – Regaining lost credit after failing to meet the grade average minimum requirement that caused a loss of credit
2. First Time Credit – Completing a course for the first time without prior instruction
3. Electives – Varying courses not considered as “core” (English, math, science, or social studies).

### **Grading**

Final grades within the district approved online curriculum will be based upon the course grade, not the current grade. The course grade reflects an overall grade based on all activities within the course (complete and incomplete). This is what a student’s grade in the course would be if the student did not complete any further work in the course.

### **Credit Recovery (Not First Time Credit)**

A student will not be required to complete the coursework for the entire semester of the course to regain credit if a single six-week grading period could raise the student’s grade to passing for the semester and is a 60 or above. Counselors will evaluate what six-week grading period(s) caused the student to fail for the semester and will subsequently submit the student’s needs to the designated online curriculum person. Only the coursework within that six-week grading period(s) is required. Since students will not be redoing the coursework for the entire semester, credit recovery students may not be required to take the semester exam for the course unless this also is needed to improve the overall grade. Students must complete any coursework assigned by the completion of the school year.

Once assigned to the course, the student will take each Pre-test, Post-test, and the Semester Exam (unless otherwise noted) under the supervision of a WISD-approved proctor. The Unit Pre-Test allows the students to demonstrate proficiency. The student will be exempted from those parts of lessons as determined by the online curriculum. Non-exempted tests must be completed within the online curriculum under the supervision of the assigned teacher or approved WISD proctor.

In the case where a student is taking an entire course, if a student does not complete that course within the assigned school year, the student may not continue the course into a new school year and must retake the entirety of the course.

### **First Time Credit**

Students may complete online courses for First Time Credit to meet state and local graduation requirements. Once assigned to the course, the student will take each Pre-test, Post-test, and the Semester Exam under the supervision of a WISD-approved proctor. The Unit Pre-Test allows the students to demonstrate proficiency. The student will be exempted from those parts of lessons as determined by the online curriculum. Non-exempted tests must be completed within the



online curriculum under the supervision of the assigned teacher or approved WISD proctor.

Students that are taking a course for first time credit where the course has an End of Course exam (i.e. Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, US History) must complete the entirety of the online course before they can take the End of Course exam.

**Electives**

At the beginning of each school year, a list of approved courses within the electronic course curriculum will be provided to the counselors by the Curriculum Department. This list will only contain those aligned with the TEKS. Only courses approved may be assigned to students. If any specialized courses are needed, administrators or counselors should contact the Executive Director of Secondary Education.

**Special Education Students**

Accommodations (not modifications) are available for students and will be activated within the online curriculum system. ARD committees will determine what is appropriate for students to use with an online delivery system.

*Refer to Online Learning Guide for more details for Online Learning.*

**Honor Roll**

Students in grades 6 through 12 will be placed on the “A” Honor Roll each six weeks if they have achieved 90 or above in all subjects. Students will be placed on the “A-B” Honor Roll each six weeks if they have achieved 80 or above in all subjects.

**Class Rankings (Grades 9-12)**

*See EIC (Local)*

**Dual Credit**

Students may enroll in the partnership programs between the Waco Independent School District and McLennan Community College and/or Texas State Technical College. Students enrolled in dual credit courses earn college credit and high school credit simultaneously. Each dual credit grade from MCC, TSTC or any other community college will be considered a transfer grade. Dual credit grades transferring from community colleges will use the following guidelines:

Alpha to Numeric Conversion Chart:

Excellent		Good		Fair				Failing	
A+	100	B+	89	C+	79	D	70	F	60
A	97	B	87	C	77				
A-	92	B-	82	C-	72				

### **Credit by Examination**

*See EHDB (Local) if a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (All Grade Levels)*

*See EHDC (Local) if a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject*

### **Attendance**

#### **Attendance and Credit**

*See EI (Legal)*

*See FEC (Local)*

#### **Make-up Work**

Students will be given 2 days for the initial day of absence to complete and turn in make-up work. For each additional consecutive day of absence, students will be given 1 additional day (i.e. a student who is absent 3 days would have 4 days of allowance for completion and turning in of work. Students shall be expected to make up assignments and tests after absences. Teachers may extend the time allowed according to the individual circumstances of the student. This does not apply to unexcused absences.

#### **Make-up Tests**

Make-up tests should be administered and supervised by the teacher. It is recommended that make-up testing be done before or after school, or during the student's lunch period. Teachers do have the discretion to allow students to complete a make-up test during class time; however, the student may miss important instruction when making up the test during class time. Students shall receive a zero for tests not made up within the allotted time.

#### **Late Assignments/Late Work**

Late work is classified as work not turned in on time (see make-up work above in regards to absences that are not classified as unexcused). The penalties for late work apply to students not turning work in on time. Late assignments/late work penalties do not apply to make-up work/tests unless the make-up work is not turned in according to make-up work time allocations for excused absences. The late assignment/late work penalties do not apply to unexcused absences/truancy, only to students who are in attendance but fail to turn work in on time. For late assignments that are not considered make-up work, the following penalties apply:

Minus 10% for the first day

Minus 20% for the second day

Minus 30% for the third day

No credit will be given for work that is late from the fourth day forward

Students who have extended absences due to illness, pregnancy, etc. (i.e. excused absences due to medical reasons, 2 weeks or longer) will be allowed to complete a minimal number of individualized assignments that will ensure the students' exposure to and mastery of the essential knowledge and skills and district outcomes presented during their absence.

If a student transfers into the school from another school in Waco ISD or from another accredited

school, the grades in progress from the sending school will be used to calculate the student's six weeks, semester, or yearly average as appropriate.

Students who, through no fault of their own, are not enrolled for an entire grading period – semester or course – shall be provided opportunities to earn credit for the semester or course or a grade for the grading period. Teachers shall take into consideration the student's particular circumstances in determining appropriate opportunities, which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Testing (advanced placement, mastery, or early final examination tests) to verify mastery of the essential knowledge and skills.
2. Tutorial sessions for students who enroll late to catch up on essential knowledge and skills already covered in the class.
3. Individualized work for students, such as migrant students, who must withdraw early, to allow them to work ahead and ensure exposure to and mastery of essential knowledge and skills.

### **Retake/Retest**

TEC 28.0216 allows districts to permit students to retake/redo assignments within procedure established by the district. Waco ISD allows students a reasonable opportunity to retest/redo an assignment for which they received a failing grade (EIA-Local). Students will be allowed to redo a major grade or retake a test for which the student received a failing grade. Teachers may not retest a semester exam. Our goal is to provide another opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of essential knowledge and skills. We expect students to learn from the mistakes of prior tests through teacher consultation, focused preparation and study, and a timely scheduled retest. In doing so, we also allow students an opportunity to improve grades. Students who receive a zero because of academic dishonesty shall not be eligible to retest.

- **Retest Eligibility:** Retesting is available to students that score a grade lower than 70 on a major grade. Retesting will not be available for semester exams. Due to grade submission deadlines, this opportunity is not extended to those failing beyond the six week mark.
- **Procedures:** The student must notify the teacher that he/she wishes to retest. Since the goal is to reteach and retest, the student must consult with his/her teacher prior to the retest. A tutorial session may be required as part of the consultation.
- **Timeframe:** After a student receives notice of a failing test grade he/she has **five (5) school days** in which to complete a retest. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule a retest time with the teacher.
- **Frequency:** Students can only retest once for each failing grade on a major unit exam. Pre-AP and AP students may only retest once per six-week period per class.
- **Resulting Grade:** A 70% is the maximum grade a student can earn on the retest. Thus, if a student scores an 80% on the retest, the original grade will be replaced with a 70%. A student's grade can only be improved through the retest process. Thus, a student will keep the higher of the two grades if still failing. The teacher shall record in the grade management system that a retest has occurred.

### **Progress Reports**

Campuses will send written notice reports to parents of all students regarding the student's progress in each subject area. The notice must provide for the signature of the student's parent and be returned to the district (this can be done digitally when available).

All students will receive a progress report at the three-week cycle, as posted by WISD and approved by the UIL Campuses will send written notice reports to parents of all students regarding the student's progress in each subject area at the end of every three-weeks between grading periods.

Per Senate Bill 858, parents of students whose progress is "consistently unsatisfactory" (i.e. failing) in foundation courses must be notified by teachers, in writing, at least once every three weeks.

Teachers may provide additional progress reports at any time as a means of communicating student learning to parents.

District personnel responsible for extra-curricular activities will utilize progress reports for the purpose of student UIL eligibility.

*See EIA (Legal)*

### **Report Cards to Parents**

Report cards are distributed each six weeks according to each campus' plan for distribution to parents. The sixth six week's report card will be mailed to parents of secondary school students. However, parents are able to view grades through the parent portal at any time.

*See EIA (Legal)*

### **Incomplete Grades**

An "I" recorded on the report card indicates an incomplete grade that must be cleared within the appropriate specified time or will become a failing grade. It is recommended that an incomplete should be cleared within 5 days unless otherwise noted within guidelines or policy. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher to clear any grade of incomplete. For UIL purposes, an "I" has the same effect as an "F". Therefore, a student with an I at a grade checkpoint will become ineligible for play and/or performance. A student receiving an incomplete for a grading period has 3 weeks to convert the incomplete to an earned grade. The principal retains the authority to extend time for completion in extenuating circumstances.

### **Grade Changes**

1. Teachers must use the official form available from the principal for any necessary grade change. Absolutely no grades may be changed unless there is a scanning error, unless the teacher made an error in computing or recording a grade, or unless an incomplete grade is being removed.

2. The principal will require an explanation for any grade change, and none may be made except with his or her approval.

### **Grade Change Form**

An official campus grade change form must be used for all grade changes, including those necessitated by schedule errors.

1. The principal is required to review every requested grade change and either approve or disapprove. He or she may require further explanation from and/or a conference with the teacher in order to determine the legality or appropriateness of a requested change.
2. The teacher shall be notified if a change is not approved. As appropriate, the principal will clarify rules to teachers who request illegal or inappropriate changes.
3. If approved by the principal, appropriate campus personnel will input the change into the data management system. A copy shall be retained by the principal or designee.

### **Students with Disabilities**

#### **Instructional Delivery**

1. To ensure success for students with disabilities, the ARD Committee will determine the Individualized Education Program (IEP) necessary for each student to make progress in the general education curriculum. The IEP can include goals and objectives; accommodations, modifications, instructional arrangement(s), and support services.
2. Communication between the general education and the special education teacher is expected to be an ongoing process to monitor the progress of each student with disabilities.

#### **Grading\***

1. The IEP specifies the responsible parties for determining the grade, i.e. general education teacher, special education teacher, or a combination of both.
2. Unless otherwise stated on the IEP, minimum mastery levels for students with disabilities shall be the criteria for a passing grade of 70 in a subject/course.
3. If a student fails for two six week periods (which do not need to be consecutive), an ARD committee shall convene to review the student's IEP to determine the appropriateness of the goals and objectives.
4. Progress reporting for students with disabilities shall be on the same schedule as that for general education students.
5. Progress reports for each IEP area will accompany the general education report card for each grading period.
6. Building-level monitoring of students' progress in general education classes should be coordinated on a continual basis through collaboration between special education and general education staff.

#### **Assessments**

1. Level of participation in statewide assessments is determined by the ARD Committee.
2. Students with disabilities should participate to the greatest degree appropriate in district-

wide diagnostic measures for the purpose of progress monitoring.

3. The ARD committee will determine a student's participation in district-based assessments as well as determine any accommodation(s) necessary.

*\*Students shall not be penalized for grades received on assignments in which the accommodations or modifications prescribed in the IEP were not provided. However, periodic removal of accommodations or modifications is appropriate to determine the continued need for them or if additional supports may be necessary.*

### **Emergent Bilingual**

In assessing students who are Emergent Bilingual for mastery of the essential knowledge and skills, teachers should make every effort to allow students to demonstrate knowledge or competency independent of their English language skills. These efforts should include assessment in the primary language, assessment utilizing English as a Second Language (ESL) methodologies, and non-verbal assessment with multiple varied instruments. **Accommodations used for assessment should be reflective of daily instructional practices and aligned with those recommended by the student's LPAC as applicable.**

Teachers of Emergent Bilingual have the option of sending report cards in Spanish or English.

*See Commissioner's Rules §89.1210(a)(b)(h)(i)*

## **Waco ISD Core Beliefs**

- ✓ *We believe that all students shall reach their full potential*
- ✓ *We believe that race, ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic status should not result in achievement gaps*
- ✓ *We believe that all students should graduate ready for college, workforce, or the military*
- ✓ *We believe that parent and community involvement is fundamental to student success*
- ✓ *We believe a high quality teacher in every classroom is critical to student success*