



# **Secondary Academic Achievement Policy**

**Texas Leadership Public Schools**

3522 West Loop 306, San Angelo, TX 76904

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*Texas Leadership Public Schools will follow The Texas Education Code and The Texas Administration Code with regard to legal requirements for Academic Achievement. This guide is a general overview and not all requirements may be listed in this local policy.*

## **Course Failure and Grade Level Placement**

Students who fail a high school course for the year will not receive credit for that course. Students may make up lost credits by enrolling in an accelerated instruction program and provide a record of completion to make up lost course credits. To be classified a sophomore, a student must have at least six credits toward graduation, juniors must have at least twelve credits, and seniors must have at least eighteen credits.

There are no mid-year reclassifications with the exception of fourth-year students who have at least twenty-one credits and who are eligible to complete the remainder of necessary graduation credits during the regular school day. A director or principal may identify an extenuating circumstance where there could be a second exception but must receive approval from the superintendent before a student is reclassified.

## **Graduation Guidelines**

Seniors who do not pass all sections of exit-level state assessments after the third administration in the spring will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises and activities. However, students will not be issued a high school diploma until they have met all graduation requirements specified by the state of Texas, which includes the requirement of passing all sections of exit-level state assessments but does not exclude exception rules currently in place. *SB149 (See graduation exceptions section)*

Students enrolled in TLCA must have been continuously enrolled in the high school for the full two years immediately preceding graduation in order to be considered for valedictorian or salutatorian status in their class.

## **Academic Integrity**

PURPOSE: Texas Leadership's Academic Integrity Policy articulates the ways in which we promote academic integrity and honor, as well as the fundamental authenticity of student engagement and achievement.

Plagiarism, collusion and cheating are serious offenses and will be reported as misconduct. All offenses will be subject to Texas Leadership disciplinary consequences.

- Plagiarism: representing the ideas or work of another as your own, intentionally or unwittingly, without proper, clear, explicit acknowledgement.
- Collusion: supporting malpractice by another student, for example, allowing your work to be copied.
- Duplication of Work: presenting the same work for a different assessment.

## **Responsibilities of Campus Administration:**

- Provide teachers, students, and parents with the most up-to-date publications in regards to

Academic Integrity policies via the Texas Leadership Website.

- Provide teachers, students, and parents with definitions and examples of academic misconduct
- Provide teachers, students, and parents with clear expectations of the possible consequences for unethical conduct.
- Provide ongoing support for understanding and implementing the Academic Integrity Policy.

### **Responsibilities of the Campus Counselor and/or Campus Teacher:**

- Provide students with clear expectations for assignments. i.e. students should assume an assignment is their own original work unless specified by the teacher.
- Provide students with clear expectations for assignments that do allow for collaborative work.
- Provide students with clear guidelines as to the range of permissible resources used on a particular assignment.
- Provide students with ongoing support on the requirements for citing and acknowledging original authorship.
- Provide guidance on the distinction between valid collaboration and unacceptable collusion.
- Advise students on what constitutes intellectual property and authentic authorship.
- Provide students with clear expectations of the possible consequences for unethical conduct.

### **Responsibilities of the Student:**

- Follow ethical academic behavior as defined by the Texas Leadership Code of Conduct and Integrity Policy.
- Use proper academic citations and formats
- Request a clarification of expectations for assignments.

### **Examples of Plagiarism, Collusion, and Cheating:**

- Copying another person's assignment or allowing someone else to copy your assignment.
- Substituting synonyms for another person's word choices or restating someone else's ideas in your own words without crediting the source.
- Handing in another person's work as your own.
- Dividing questions on an individual assignment so that several students answer a portion of the assignment, permitting each other to copy answers. Although group work and cooperative learning are often encouraged, individual assignments must remain the work of the individual student. Always ask your teacher if an assignment may be completed with others. Do not assume it is allowed.
- Copying sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or pages from books, web sites, or other sources without providing documentation. Writing should be either original or attributed.
- Using intellectual property (pictures, graphs, diagrams, quotes, books, films, music recordings, television, or any other media) without proper citations.
- Taking answers from a classmate's quiz or test paper, using a cheat sheet, or sharing answers during a testing situation.

- Falsifying data, conclusions, and answers and presenting them as fact.
- Taking images of assessments
- Discussing exam questions in any manner with students who have yet to take the exam.

### **Disciplinary Consequences for Breach of Academic Integrity Policy:**

- If malpractice is suspected, or the teacher has reason to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, the following steps will be taken:
  - The teacher will communicate the outcome of his/her investigation to the campus administrator.
  - The student will receive no credit for the assignment in question, but may be allowed to complete an alternate assignment for credit, and disciplinary action will be enacted by the campus.
  - The campus administrator will communicate, in writing, disciplinary consequences to the student and his/her parents. This letter will be placed in the student's file in the campus office but will not become a part of the student's permanent academic record.
- Consequences for academic malpractice range from the student earning a zero on the work involved to immediate dismissal from the IB Program, depending on the severity of the infraction.
- If a student enters a program with a record of malpractice from previous courses, that record constitutes the student's first incident of academic malpractice.
- If a student is allowed to remain enrolled following a first incident of academic malpractice, a second incident of any type, on any assignment, at any time during the student's enrollment may result in the student's dismissal from Texas Leadership.

## **Graduation Exceptions**

### **SB 213 (2019) - Individual Graduation Committees (effective through September 1, 2023)**

First enacted with SB 149 (2015), Individual Graduation Committees (IGC) allow students the option to graduate even though they've not passed all of their EOC exams. A student who has failed the EOC assessment graduation requirements for no more than two, out of the number they must take, may receive a Texas high school diploma if the student has qualified to graduate by means of an individual graduation committee (IGC) determination. (Source: TEA State Graduation Requirement page)

### **Updates on Individual Graduation Committees (as of May 2019)**

SB 213 (2019) updates SB 463 (2017), a piece of legislation that updated SB 149. SB 213 now extends the end date of this committee to September 1, 2023.

This legislation also allows the inclusion of TAKS students. Processes and procedures for STAAR IGC remain the same. There are currently some pieces of legislation in process for this.

Students will still be given the opportunity to retake any EOC for which a satisfactory performance was not achieved.

SB 149 also allows a student who did not pass Algebra I and/or English II EOC assessment(s) a second time to use the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment to meet the EOC requirement for the corresponding course. A student must receive a TSI score indicating readiness to enroll in entry-level freshman coursework.

According to SB673, students receiving special education services will receive a certificate of attendance and participate in commencement ceremonies if she/he has completed four years of high school, but has not completed the requirements of the IEP related to graduation.

In order to participate in the commencement ceremony, a student must complete all graduation requirements, including those requirements set forth in the SB149 exceptions. Any student not meeting the requirements as set forth above will not be allowed to participate with the class during commencement exercises.

Student diplomas will not be included in the diploma covers handed to them on stage. The behavior of students and parents will be monitored during the ceremony. Poor behavior by a student or his/her audience may result in a delay in receiving the actual diploma certificate.

### **Award of Credit**

The award of credit for a course affirms that a student has satisfactorily met state and local requirements. *19 TAC 74.26(a)*

### **Early Award of Credit**

The Charter School may offer courses designated for grades 9-12 in earlier grade levels. Credit will be awarded if the student demonstrates achievement by meeting the standard requirements of the course, including demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter, regardless of the time the student received instruction in the course or the grade level at which the proficiency was attained. The academic achievement record shall reflect that students have satisfactorily completed courses at earlier grade levels from grades 9-12 and have been awarded state graduation credits. *19 TAC 74.26(b)*

High School courses taken by students prior to high school where high school credit is awarded will be denoted on the high school academic achievement record (transcript), but will not be calculated into the student's high school GPA.

### **Partial Award**

A student who is able to successfully complete only one semester of a two-semester course may be awarded credit proportionately. *19 TAC 74.26(d)* In this circumstance, the student shall be required

to take only the semester in which the failing grade was earned. Provided the two semesters average to at least 70, a credit will be awarded for the entire course.

### **Repeated Courses**

Once credit is awarded, students will not be able to retake a course in order to improve their grade. If a student fails a credit-awarding course, then the course will be repeated during summer school, the following semester, or the following school year, whichever is most appropriate for the student's graduation plan.

Transcript updates in accordance with Texas Leadership's policies will be completed by campus administration.

### **Attendance for Credit**

Unless awarded by an attendance committee, or regained according to a plan written by the principal, a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. *TEC 25.092*

### **Academic Achievement Record**

The Charter School shall use the academic achievement record (Transcript) form designated by the state board. This form shall serve as the academic record for each student and shall be maintained permanently by the Charter School. Any credit earned by a student must be recorded on the academic achievement record regardless of when the credit was earned. Copies of the record will be made available to students transferring to another school. The information may be provided to the transferring student, the new school, or both.

*TEC 28.025(e); 19 TAC 74.14(b)-(c)*

### **Automatic Admission to Higher Education Institutions**

According to TEC 61.003(3) general academic teaching institutions shall admit an applicant for admission as an undergraduate if the applicant:

1. Graduated with a grade point average in the top ten percent of the student's high school graduating class in one of the two school years preceding the academic year for which the applicant is applying for admission;
2. Graduated from a public high school in Texas accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization;
3. Successfully completed the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement High School Program, or satisfied ACT's College Readiness benchmarks on the ACT assessment applicable to the applicant or earned on the SAT assessment a score of at

least 1500 out of 2400 or the equivalent; and

4. Submitted an application before the institutions application filing deadline. *TEC 51.803(a); 19 TAC 5.5(b) \*\*\* There are exceptions to the University of Texas. See TEC 51.803(a-1)-(a-2)*

## **Valedictorian and Salutatorian**

Valedictorian honors shall be awarded to the graduating student with the highest grade point average (GPA), calculated in accordance with this policy. Salutatorian honors shall be awarded to the graduating student with the second-highest GPA. In addition, a student shall have completed either the recommended or the advanced/distinguished Achievement program to be eligible for the positions of valedictorian, salutatorian, or any other local graduation honors calculated by GPA.

In order to be eligible for this local honor, a student must:

1. Have been continuously enrolled at The TLCA High School for the two complete years immediately preceding graduation;
2. Be graduating after exactly eight semesters of enrollment in high school; and
3. Must have completed the distinguished level of achievement as defined by TEC

\*Any grades that may have been awarded on a 5.0 scale will be converted to fall within school policy.

## **Grade Point Calculation**

The calculation for determining class rank, honor graduates, and class valedictorian or salutatorian shall be made at the close of the fifth six-week grading period. The average of the fourth and fifth six-week grading periods shall be used as the semester grade for this purpose. This average is only for graduation ceremony purposes. The final GPA will be recalculated at the end of the year for all students to determine the Highest Ranking Individual for scholarship purposes.

## **Breaking a Tie**

A tie shall be broken by extending the decimal point of the grade point average until a winner can be determined. In the event a tie still remains, the Charter School will use the following in the order listed to determine the highest-ranking student.

1. ACT Scores
2. SAT Scores
3. Honors classes, if applicable
4. College hours earned
5. College hours GPA

## **Early Graduates**

A student who qualifies for graduation in fewer than four years shall be eligible for consideration within the top ten percent but cannot displace a student already ranked in the top ten percent or as the valedictorian or salutatorian. The early graduating student can tie for the spot they would land in ranking, provided it is in the top ten percent and not as valedictorian or salutatorian.

## **Honor Graduates**

To be recognized for Charter School's scholastic honors, a student shall be required to maintain a numerical average of 90 or above for the entire high school program, excluding the last six-week grading period of the senior year, and complete the recommended or advanced/distinguished achievement program.

## **Weighted Honors**

For the purpose of selecting inductees for the National Honor Society (NHS) and determining class rankings and honor graduates, the following system shall be used:

- Honor graduates and NHS members must be graduating under the Foundation High School Plan with endorsement.
- Ten points shall be added to the high school semester average for dual credit courses taken where college credit is awarded (maximum grade of 110).
- Five points will be added to the semester average for students receiving high school credit for Honors or AP/IB classes as approved by the principal (maximum grade of 105).
- Five points will be added to the semester average for students receiving high school credit in the third year of a foreign language; provided that credit was previously awarded for the first two years of that same foreign language (maximum grade of 105).
- No other classes will receive additional weight; including those taken by correspondence or through credit by exam.

The GPA for all students, including those transferring to the Charter School shall be based on this Academic Achievement Policy.

## **Honors Criteria**

### **8th Grade - Algebra I**

- Automatic - Masters Grade Level of 7th grade Math STAAR, 85+ average in 7th-grade math, and teacher recommendation letter
- Appeal - Meets Grade Level on 7th-grade Math STAAR and 90+ average in 7th-grade math, and teacher recommendation letter

### **9th - 12th Grade**

#### **Honors English I**

- Automatic - Masters Grade Level on 8th-grade ELAR STAAR, 85+ average in 8th-grade ELAR, and teacher recommendation
- Appeal - Meets Grade Level on 8th-grade ELAR STAAR, 90+ average in 8th-grade ELAR, and teacher recommendation

#### **Honors English II**

- Automatic - Masters Grade Level English I EOC, 85+ average in English I, and teacher recommendation
- Appeal - Meets Grade Level on English I EOC, 90+ average in English I, and teacher recommendation

#### **Honors Biology**

- Automatic - Masters Grade Level on 8th grade Science STAAR, 85+ average in 8th grade Science, and teacher recommendation
- Appeal - Meets Grade Level on 8th grade Science STAAR, 90+ average in 8th grade Science, and teacher recommendation

#### **Honors Chemistry, Principles of Technology, or Anatomy and Physiology**

- Automatic - Masters Grade Level on Biology EOC, 85+ average in current science class, and teacher recommendation
- Appeal - Meets Grade Level on Biology EOC, 90+ average in current science class, and teacher recommendation

### **Honors World Geography or World History**

- Automatic - Masters Grade Level on 8th grade Social Studies STAAR, 85+ average in current social studies class, and teacher recommendation
- Appeal- Meets Grade Level on 8th grade Social Studies STAAR and 90+ average in current social studies class, and teacher recommendation

### **Dual Credit Criteria**

Dual Credit courses are college courses taken for high school and college credit. A grade average of 70 or higher in a Dual Credit course earns credit toward graduation. Texas Leadership has Dual Credit agreements with local colleges. Students may take no more than 3 dual credit courses per semester.

Students who earn a “C” in one or more of the courses taken for dual credit will be placed on academic probation with Texas Leadership Public School for the following academic semester. If the student should earn a “C” in any dual credit course during the semester of academic probation, the student will not be allowed to take dual credit courses as part of their instructional day the following semesters unless the student and/or parent request a review by the placement committee for eligibility, and the placement committee gives approval.

If a student should fail a dual credit course during the semester, the student will lose the privilege to take dual credit classes unless the student and/or parent request a review by the placement committee for eligibility, and the placement committee gives approval.

### **Excluded Courses**

The following courses shall not be used in the calculation of GPA:

1. Yearbook
2. Concert/Marching Band/Choir/Dance
3. Physical Education and Athletics
4. Teacher/Office Aide
5. Driver’s Education
6. High School courses taken prior to freshman year
7. Any other “local” credit that might not be listed
8. College Courses that are taken during the summer term
9. Self-Paced Correspondence or online courses unless being used campus-wide as curriculum