

# A Guide to Grade Reporting

Elementary Schools  
Grades 1 - 5

**For Use During the 2020 - 2021 School Year Only**



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## **FOREWORD**

Principals, Teachers, Administrators:

Evaluating student performance is a basic part of the educational process and calls for the highest level of professional skill and understanding. Texas Education Agency regulations stipulate that academic grades must reflect the degree of student mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for a subject or course.

These TEKS have been translated into District philosophies, goals, objectives, and scope-and-sequence documents in the Fort Worth ISD Curriculum. Per EG and EIA LOCAL policies, each teacher shall be expected to use the FWISD provided curriculum documents including FWISD endorsed accelerated curricula in the planning of their daily lessons. Teachers are also to use FWISD adopted or approved instructional materials and resources. These curriculum guideposts, along with local board policies, form the basis for grading procedures. This guide will assist you in evaluating student progress and in making assignments of grades.

Our system of reporting student progress must continue to evolve and improve. In this regard, your ideas for further improvement are sincerely solicited and encouraged.

## PHILOSOPHY

Given the premise that all children can continue to learn and increase their achievement, we believe that grading and reporting should focus on student growth and learning in a climate of high expectations. Instructional emphasis will be placed on the accomplishment of defined District goals. Grading and reporting are both formative and summative in nature and should utilize both formal and informal processes. Schools are accountable for structuring learning experiences, teaching processes, planning and evaluation, and utilization of materials, resources, and time to result in optimum student learning. Grading should provide clear and consistent feedback to students.

Tests and quizzes yielding numerical grades are only one way to evaluate student learning. Complete grading requires multiple assessment techniques, such as performances, portfolios, projects, presentations, teacher observation of developmental skills, work samples, learning logs, journals, surveys, interviews, simulations, and role-playing. Using a variety of evaluation strategies will elicit greater opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery.

## PURPOSES OF GRADING

Grading serves the following purposes or functions:

1. **Information:** to inform parents and students regularly of the student's success in learning and mastery of local objectives and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.
2. **Guidance:** to promote and maintain desirable patterns of behavior and achievement and to identify areas of special ability as a basis for realistic student self-appraisal and for future educational and occupational planning.
3. **Motivation:** to encourage the student toward maximum achievement, and realistic self-appraisal for future educational and occupational planning.
4. **Administration:** to provide data for use in educational planning and decision-making.

This handbook provides a consistent set of grading and reporting regulations. The regulations adhere to the Texas Administrative Code, the Texas Education Code, and the Fort Worth ISD Board policies.

The handbook:

- Describes the District's grading system which all teachers will implement;
- Encourages a better understanding of grading and reporting; and
- Fosters consistency in grading and reporting student achievement.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS**

The Parent Portal is one means of communicating with parents. However, not all parents have access to it. Therefore, phone calls, parent conferences, written notices, and/or progress reports remain the preferred method of communication.

Conferences are useful to improve understanding and communication among teacher, student, and parent. A parent, teacher, student, or administrator may initiate a conference. Teachers are encouraged to schedule **virtual** conferences with parents/guardians of all students during the 2<sup>nd</sup> six-week grading period. Conferences can be spread out over the entire six-week grading period to accommodate parent and teacher schedules. Additional conferences, at other times of the year, can be scheduled as needed at the request of the parent or teacher. **All safety measures must be followed when scheduling a conference with a parent or guardian. Please refer to the District's safety protocols prior to scheduling a face-to-face conference.**

To assure effective communication, any notice required by policy to be sent to the parent or guardian of a student shall be written in the language spoken by the parent or guardian. If the dominant language of the parent or guardian is a language other than English or Spanish, however, such notice will be written in the dominant language of the parent or guardian only if a suitable translation is available. To arrange for translations, contact the Translation Services office at 817.814.2416.

### **Posting Grades Timely**

Teachers are required to post grades in the online grade book and provide feedback to students within five school days from the date the student submits an assignment. The date the student turns in the assignment is day 0. Complex assignments, essays, or assignments that require extensive feedback may require up to seven school days to return to students and post in the online grade book. Any deviation from this procedure requires principal approval and notification to students.

### **Minimum Number of Grades Required**

A minimum of six grades is required per six weeks in PE, music, art, and health, and **a minimum of four grades in handwriting**. In fine arts and physical education classes where students attend on a rotating basis, teachers are required to enter a minimum of two grades every two weeks.

In English language arts, math, science, and social studies, there should be a minimum of two grades reported per week. In grading periods with six weeks, a minimum of 12 grades should be recorded. Grading periods with five weeks will have a minimum of 10 grades recorded, and grading periods with 7 weeks will have a minimum of 14 grades recorded.

### **Progress Report Frequency & Required Notification if a Student's Grade Drops 10 or More Points**

Board Policy EIA (LEGAL) requires the District, at least once every three weeks, or during the fourth week of each nine-week grading period, to give written notice to a parent if a student's performance in a foundation curriculum subject (English/Spanish language arts, spelling, mathematics, science and social studies) is consistently unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory performance, per state credit rules, is performance below a grade of 70 on a scale of 100.

However, all students should be issued a progress report during each six-weeks grading period.

In addition, the teacher must notify the parent or guardian by email, letter to the home, phone call, or personal conference at the end of the first three weeks of a grading period when there is a 10 or more point drop in the academic grade or a drop in letter grade below an S (Satisfactory) for conduct of the student.

## **THE GRADING SYSTEM**

### **Board Policy**

The Texas Education Code 28.0216 and Board Policy EIA (LEGAL) and EIA (LOCAL) states that teachers will not assign a student a prescribed minimum grade. Furthermore, the guidelines stipulate that:

- Grading must reflect a student's relative mastery of an assignment and that a sufficient number of grades must be taken to support the grade average assigned.
- Guidelines for grading must be clearly communicated to students and parents.
- A student must be permitted an opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which the student received a failing grade.
  - If the teacher fails to notify the parent of the drop in the grade below a 70 at the third week, as required, the student shall be afforded the opportunity to bring the grade up to passing.

### **Redoing Assignments or Retaking Tests**

Per Board Policy, when a student receives a failing grade on a test or assignment, the student must be given the opportunity to redo the assignment or retake the test according to the following parameters:

- The student will be provided an opportunity for tutoring or re-teaching prior to retesting. This may occur during class time, before or after school, or at another time agreed upon by the teacher and student/parent.
- The teacher may require the student to complete missed homework, test corrections, or other items as part of the re-teaching process.
- A student must redo the assignment or retake the test within five school days from the date the assignment or test was returned to the student.
- A teacher may provide longer than five school days if necessary.
- Any retests will be administered on the campus. **Students who are learning in a virtual environment do not have to retest on campus.**
- The grade the student receives on the redone assignment or retaken test will be no higher than a 70.
- If more than 50% of the students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery on a summative assessment, except a benchmark, it is recommended that the teacher reteach and retest the entire class. The higher of the two grades will be recorded. A student who passed the



original test can elect whether to retake the test. Reassessments should occur within five school days from the date the test is returned to the student.

## **Weighting of Grades**

Grades are calculated based on weights established by the teacher and approved by the principal.

Teachers are to provide parents and students with grading procedures that include the weighting of categories that make up the total grade, such as homework, class work, and tests. This information may also be provided in the campus generated Student Handbook or a class syllabus.

In Grades 1 – 5, Homework cannot count more than 10% of the six-weeks grade. There must be at least two summative assessments given during each six-weeks grading period, and summative assessments cannot count more than 40% of the six-weeks grade.

While in a virtual environment, a homework category should not be used in the calculation of a six-weeks grade. Work assigned to students should be placed in other categories, such as daily assignments, quizzes, tests, reports, reading assignments, writing assignments, portfolios, written responses, etc.

## **Homework**

The purpose of homework is to improve student learning and provide opportunities for extending learning time beyond the school day by providing practice, developing proper study habits, and fostering positive attitudes toward school work outside the school day.

Homework is not to be counted more than ten percent of the six-week grade and at the campus and teacher discretion, may only be counted if it improves the student's grade. While in a virtual environment, a homework category should not be used in the weighting of grades for a six-weeks grade.

- Assignments should be made with consideration given to a student's schedule and should be coordinated across subject areas at each school to avoid overloading students at any particular time.
- Feedback should be provided regarding any assignment sent home for completion.
- Homework should be based on only content standards taught, assigned, and completed recently or spiral review at a level of difficulty that can be completed independently by the student.
- Homework should be directly related to the TEKS and specific learning targets.
- Homework should be viewed as formative in nature, allowing for practice of new skills and knowledge.
- Homework may be provided as an enrichment activity to the material mastered in class.
- Homework expectations should be clearly communicated and homework should be differentiated according to student need. That is, not all students may need the same homework assignment.
- Homework should not be assigned as a punishment or consequence related to behavior. Recess may not be used to finish homework.

- Additional reading assignments, as outlined in the campus handbook, may be required and would not count toward cumulative total homework minutes.
- Homework guidelines, not including additional reading assignments:
  - K – 2; 10 – 20 minutes per day
  - 3 – 5; 30 – 60 minutes per day

### **Determining Yearly Grades**

Yearly grades are computed by averaging the six 6-weeks or four 9-weeks numerical grades posted on the student’s report card.

## **REPORTING GRADES**

### **Recording of Grades in Focus**

Teachers must post grades to FOCUS and provide feedback to students within five school days from the day a student turns in an assignment. The date the student turns in an assignment is day 0. Complex assignments, essays, or assignments that require extensive teacher feedback may require up to seven school days to return to students and post in the online grade book. Any deviation from this procedure requires principal approval and notification to students. .

### **Explanation of Numerical Grades**

Numerical grades on a scale of 1 – 100 will be used to evaluate student progress in the following academic areas: Language Arts (CLA), Reading (REA), Spelling (SPE), Mathematics (MAT), Science (SCI), Social Studies (SOC), and Health (HEA).

Beginning with the 2019 – 2020 school year, the numerical grades for elementary school students, middle school students, and high school students graduating in 2023 are shown below.

90 – 100	Above Average to Outstanding Progress
80 – 89	Satisfactory to Above Average Progress
70 – 79	Limited to Average Progress
0 – 69	Failing
I*	Incomplete/Failing
*	The “I” is not an academic grade, but indicates incomplete work or required number of grades not complete.

### **Grades for Composition & Language and for Reading**

The District’s elementary language program is designed to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These aspects of language ability and use develop simultaneously through natural language activities that require students to use the different language arts in combination. Therefore, the composition and language and the reading grades reflect a student’s ability to demonstrate all aspects of language acquisition in combination rather than student mastery of isolated skills. Growth in composition and language and in reading, then, is reflected in the

quantity and sophistication of the student’s use of reading and writing processes to communicate effectively and appropriately in both oral and written language.

**Spelling Grades**

Spelling grades should reflect the degree of mastery of spelling core words appropriate to the grade level.

**Grades for Physical Education, Art, Music, and Handwriting**

Letter grades using the symbols of “E”, “S”, “N”, and “U” will be used to evaluate student progress in physical education, art, music, and handwriting. A minimum of two letter grades are to be entered every two weeks, except in handwriting, where a minimum of four grades should be recorded for each grading period.

Evaluations are to be based on the understanding of concepts, development of skills, and participation in activities during the instructional day. The teacher must notify the parent or guardian by email, letter to the home, phone call, or personal conference at the third week of each grading period when there is one letter grade drop from the previous six-weeks period or a failing grade in the current six-weeks.

***Chart Showing Grading Scale Explanations for E, S, N, U Letter Grades for Elementary Art, Music, and PE Classes***

Symbol Entered into Focus and Seen on Report Card	Explanation
E-Excellent	Clearly outstanding; exceeds expectations and performs above and beyond the mastery of essential knowledge and skills
S- Satisfactory	Meets expectations; is mastering essential knowledge and skills.
N- Needs Improvement	Fails to meet expectations; clearly needs help to raise performance to master essential knowledge and skills.
U- Unsatisfactory	Far below expectations; student is not mastering essential knowledge and skills and is failing.

Example: Art grade as it will appear on the grade card, see displayed below.

Six Weeks	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
ART	S	N	S	S	E	E

## Handwriting Grading Scale for Letter Grades E, S, N, and U

Symbol Entered into Focus and Seen on Report Card	Explanation
E – Excellent	Clearly outstanding legible handwriting, using basic conventions of handwriting to form letters, and consistently includes spacing between words, sentences, and margins for readability. Student exceeds expectations in mastering essential knowledge and skills of handwriting.
S – Satisfactory	Meets expectations in writing legibly, using basic conventions of handwriting to form letters, and usually includes spacing between words, sentences, and margins for readability. Student is mastering the essential knowledge and skills of handwriting.
N – Needs Improvement	Fails to meet expectations in writing legibly with limited use of basic conventions of handwriting when forming letters and includes sporadic spacing between words, sentences, and margins for readability. Student clearly needs help in the mastery of the essential knowledge and skills of handwriting.
U - Unsatisfactory	Far below expectations in writing legibly, not using basic conventions of handwriting to form letters, and usually does not include spacing between words, sentences, and margins for readability. Student is failing to master the essential knowledge and skills of handwriting.

### Calculation and Display of Grades on Report Cards

Teachers enter numeric grades for each assignment (homework, quiz, test, etc.) into Focus.

To calculate a six-weeks grade, Focus uses each grade entered by the teacher and weights it based on the weighting system established by the teacher and approved by the principal.

All grades are displayed as whole number percentages on the report card. If the average results in a mixed number with a fraction of 0.5 or higher, the average will be rounded to the next higher whole number.

The grading scale showing the equivalent letter grade is printed at the bottom of each report card.

Example of a math grade as it will appear on the report card:

six weeks	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sem 1	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	Sem 2	Year
MAT	87%	85%	89%	87%	85%	91%	88%	88%	88%

## Explanation of Letter Grades for Student Conduct

During virtual instruction, students will not receive conduct grades.

A campus plan should be developed to ensure consistency regarding the administration of conduct grades.

The Letters E, S, N, and U will be used for conduct grades.

Use the information in the chart below to determine conduct grades:

Letter Grades	Explanation
E-Excellent	Overall clearly outstanding regarding behavior; exceeds expectations in following school/classroom rules.
S-Satisfactory	Overall meets expectations regarding behavior and in following school/classroom rules.
N- Needs Improvement	Overall fails to meet expectations following school/classroom rules; clearly needs help to improve behavior.
U- Unsatisfactory	Overall far below expectations following school/classroom rules; clearly needs help to improve behavior.

The teacher must notify the parent before lowering the conduct grade to an N or U

- N – The progress report may serve as documentation that the student’s parent was notified.
- U – A conduct mark of a U requires documentation of a conference with the parent and submission of documentation to the principal.

Conduct/Work and Study grades are listed as an actual “class” labeled as CON on the grade card.

Example: Conduct grade as it will appear on the grade card as displayed below.

Six Weeks	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
CON	S	E	S	S	S	S

Descriptive Conduct/Work Study skills are provided in a small chart on the elementary electronic grade card below the class grade listings.

The representative chart below lists the 12 descriptive indicators used as guidelines to determine the student’s progress across each six week period. This chart provides a place for letter grades, thus providing a comprehensive overview of the student’s progress in conduct and work/study. The respective letter grades provided by the teacher in this 12-item chart are provided as a guide and are not electronically linked to the grade the teacher provides for the Conduct “class” grade.

Conduct/Work and Study	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th		1st	2nd	3rd	4 <sup>th</sup>	5th	6th
Completes Assignments	S	S	E	E	E	S							

Does Neat Work	S	S	E	E	E	S								
Follows Directions	S	S	S	S	S	S								
Has Supplies & Cares for Materials	S	S	E	E	E	S								
Listens Attentively	S	S	E	E	E	S								
Obeys School Rules	S	S	S	S	S	S								
			Respects Authority				S	S	S	S	S	S		
			Talks at Appropriate Times				S	S	S	N	S	S		
			Uses Acceptable Language				S	S	S	S	S	S		
			Uses Self Control				S	S	N	N	S	S		
			Uses Time Wisely				S	S	E	E	E	S		
			Works/Plays Well With Others				S	S	N	N	S	S		

## Questions and Answers Regarding the Electronic Grade Book in Focus:

### *Can I default a numeric assignment grade to a 100 or another value?*

Yes, default grades can be given by using the Auto-fill function (under Add An Assignment in the teacher grade book).

### *I have entered all of my grades and I am not seeing the letter grades?*

The letter grade will not appear in the grade book until the grades are “submitted”. Once the user clicks submit after inputting the grades, the associated letter value and a percentage should be displayed for the courses having an A, B, C, and or F grades.

### *What can be seen by parents in the Parent Portal?*

The Parent Portal will show both the letter grade and the numerical percentage grade for the following subjects: English Language Arts(CLA), Read (REA), Spelling (SPE), Mathematics (MAT), Science (SCI), Social Studies (SOC), and Health (HEA).

Report card grades for PE, Music, Art, and Handwriting will display as an E, S, N, and U.

### *What do I do for Conduct Grades?*

Report card grades for Conduct will display as an E, S, N, and U.

## DETERMINING GRADES

- Evaluations of academic achievement are not to be lowered because of poor conduct. Poor conduct should be reflected in conduct grades only.
- The “curve” system or any other system of evaluation that predetermines grades shall not be used.

## **Grades for Coursework**

In determining grades for a course, emphasis will be placed on the accomplishment of defined FWISD instructional objectives that are aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. The FWISD-developed curriculum provides guidance by including a variety of both formal and informal assessment activities aligned to the required TEKS.

Such tools will assist in determining if students are learning the required knowledge and skills at the appropriate level of complexity. Within this framework of information, both types of assessments (formative/informal and summative/formal) are to be utilized to determine an individual student's mastery of the TEKS.

- Formative assessments may include teacher observations, classwork/samples of student work, skills demonstrations, checkpoints for projects, etc.
- Summative assessments may include unit tests, quizzes, chapter or skills tests, writing samples, individual/group projects, oral presentations, etc.
- There should be a minimum of twelve grades documented each six weeks (two grades per week) in foundation curriculum areas: language arts, math, science, and social studies. There will be at least six grades given each three weeks. For grading periods with five week, there should be a minimum of ten grades documented. Grading periods of seven weeks, should have a minimum of 14 grades documented.
- Benchmark tests are not to be used for grading purposes.
- District assessments included on the assessment calendar may be included in six-week grades with a weight equal to a homework grade (10%).

## **Documentation of Mastery**

Student grades should document the student's mastery of instructional objectives and are to be maintained for purposes of grade reporting and conferencing with parents.

## **Re-teaching**

Board Policy EIA (LOCAL) defines re-teaching as another presentation of content and additional strategies, usually to provide an additional opportunity for a student to learn.

Each teacher shall plan for re-teaching while planning the initial instruction, thereby ensuring that alternative instructional strategies are immediately available when needed.

Re-teaching should be practiced and should ensure fairness and promote student success. The teacher should document any efforts to re-teach and any reassessments.

## **Intervention Instruction**

Intervention instruction will be provided in the areas of reading, composition and language, mathematics, social studies, and science for students not passing a course at the end of a reporting period. A student may not be pulled out of a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation if, because of the removal, the student would miss more than ten percent of the time the class is offered. [See EC (LEGAL)]

Beginning with the second six-weeks reporting period, students who score lower than 70 in the subjects listed above may be required to attend intervention instruction.

## **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS/POLICIES**

### **Instructional Materials**

Parents have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to the parent's child.

A Parent is also entitled to request that the school allow his/her child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the child's teacher.

## **PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS ENTERING THE DISTRICT**

### **Accredited Schools**

The parent or guardian of a student enrolling in the District from an accredited public, private, or parochial school shall provide evidence of prior schooling outside the District. The student shall be placed initially at the grade level reached elsewhere, pending observation by the classroom teacher, guidance personnel, and the principal. Based on these observations and results of tests that may be administered by appropriate District personnel, the principal shall determine final grade placement.

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

Accredited is defined as accreditation by TEA, an equivalent agency from another state, or an accrediting association recognized by the commissioner.

### **Non-Accredited Schools**

A student enrolling in a District school from a nonaccredited public, private, or parochial school, including homeschools, shall be placed initially at the discretion of the principal, pending observation by classroom teachers, guidance personnel, and the principal. Criteria for placement may include:

- Scores on achievement tests, which may be administered by appropriate District personnel.
- Recommendation of the sending school.
- Prior academic record
- Chronological age and social and emotional development of the student.



- Other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal.

### **Conversion of Letter Grades to Numeric Grades**

If a student enters a Fort Worth school from another school district that uses letter grades, the letter grades will be converted using the table below.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Numerical Grade</b>
A	96
B	86
C	75
D	70
F	65

If a student enters a Fort Worth school from another school district that only has three grade standard categories, these categories will be converted in the following way:

- Highest Standard = 96
- Middle Standard = 75
- Lowest Standard = 65 or use a 70 if the student transfers in during the first six weeks and may not have a sufficient number of grades; this would allow the transfer student a start that is not failing.

### **MAKEUP WORK**

A student will ordinarily have one day for each day's absence (excused and unexcused) to make up work missed (Board Policy EIAB Local). A student who has an unexcused absence will be encouraged to make up work missed; a 10-point penalty will be applied after the time limit is exceeded

### **EVALUATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Individual Education Program (IEP) developed by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee for each student who meets eligibility criteria for Special Education services delegates responsibility for grading for each special education student as follows:

1. If the content is taught solely in General Education, the grade will be assigned by the General Education teacher.
2. If the content is taught solely by the Special Education teacher, the grade will be assigned by the Special Education teacher.
3. If the content is taught through collaboration between the Special Education teacher and the General Education teacher(s), the grade should be assigned jointly, but entered by the teacher of record. Exceptions to these guidelines, where applicable, will be specified within the IEP.
4. All accommodations and modifications for Special Education students must be followed as delineated in the student's IEP and as determined in the ARD Committee. All Special

Education and General Education teachers are responsible for assuring the implementation of accommodations listed in the student's IEP. Modifications to curricular content will be endorsed by the ARD Committee and implemented by Special Education teachers.

Unless otherwise specified in the IEP, the grading period and grading system to General Education will apply to students eligible for Special Education as well. Each student eligible for Special Education services will receive his/her IEP Progress Report, which will accompany the Report Card, at every designated reporting period (i.e. 6 weeks or 9 weeks). Special Education teachers are responsible for reporting IEP progress.

## **ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs)**

As specified in TAC §89.1201, each student's level of language proficiency will be assessed by a language proficiency assessment committee. Instruction is to be provided in a manner that is linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's level of English language proficiency. This accommodation in the pacing and materials is to be used to ensure that English Learners (ELs) have a full opportunity to master the essential knowledge and skills of the required curriculum.

High academic standards should be maintained for English Learners (ELs); **however, no grading policy should adversely affect a student based solely on his/her proficiency in English.** Grades should be determined in light of the program in which the student is served.

- For students served in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program, teachers should determine grades by taking into consideration the language(s) of instruction in the subject (whether Spanish or English or both) and by determining a fair grade that represents academic achievement in that subject in one or both of the languages. When students are receiving instruction in a subject primarily taught in English, it is expected that the teacher will use appropriate scaffolds and linguistic supports to enable the students to learn the content, but the grade should not automatically be lowered because these scaffolds and language supports are used.
- For students served in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program, teachers should determine grades by taking into account each student's level of English proficiency and by providing appropriate scaffolds and linguistic supports, both in instruction and in assessment situations (when possible), to enable students to demonstrate their understanding of content being taught. Grades should not automatically be lowered simply because scaffolds and language supports are used.

## **PROMOTIONS AND RETENTIONS**

In grades 1 – 5, promotion to the next grade level is based on attaining an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in the following areas: reading, composition and language, mathematics, science, and social studies. [EIE (LOCAL)]

In the event that a student is not promoted to the next grade level, the District shall nevertheless assign the student to an age-appropriate campus, unless:

1. This provision shall apply only when a student is 12 years or older on or before September 1 of the following school year and is retained in Grade 5.
2. The student's parents request that the student be assigned to the same or a similar campus setting; or
3. The Grade Placement Committee (GPC) determines that it would be in the best interest of the student to be assigned to the same or a similar campus setting. Criteria to be considered for this decision may include:
  - a. Recommendations from the student's teacher, or
  - b. Observed social and emotional development of the student.

### **STAAR Grade 5 Test Requirement**

Policy EIE (LOCAL) requires that students in grade 5 meet passing standards on applicable state-mandated assessment instruments in order to be promoted to sixth grade. Accelerated instruction is required for any student who fails the STAAR test.

### **MTSS - Response to Intervention**

Students who are having consistent academic difficulties in the classroom, as well as students whose screening data shows gaps in understanding, should be entered into the RtI process and interventions should begin. The MTSS committee, which includes the teacher, will plan interventions that broaden instructional options and maximize achievement for the student. Records/documentation of the intervention plan and activities should be documented in the district's online management system (Branching Minds) and must include the following:

- Documentation of MTSS committee meetings
- Parent contact logs
- Intervention/strategy recommendations
- Time/duration and length of the intervention(s)
- Progress monitoring data that will show academic gains for each student
- Fidelity checks of instructional delivery

Parents must be notified when a student receives an intervention (SB 1153) and should be given:

- a reasonable description of the assistance that may be provided to the child, including any intervention strategies that may be used,
- information collected regarding any intervention in the base tier of a multi-tiered system of supports that has previously been used with the child,
- an estimate of the duration for which the assistance will be provided,
- the estimated time frames within which a report on the child's progress with the interventions will be provided to the parent, and
- a copy of the Guide to Grade Reporting Statement.

The grading period and grading system in General Education will apply to a student receiving interventions *unless* otherwise specified in the 504 Plan, IEP, or by the MTSS committee.

### **Reducing Student Retention**

The District is committed to reducing retention of students. The practice of retaining students twice in Elementary School *is prohibited. The sole exemption would be an additional retention due to Policy EIE (LOCAL). See above (STAAR Grade 5 Test Requirement).*

A student who has met the preceding criteria for promotion but who has attended school less than 90 percent of the time school is in session cannot receive a final grade. (See the Attendance Section for further details about completing a plan approved by the principal to receive a final grade).

If there are indications at the end of the first semester that the student may be retained, the principal or his/her designee should arrange a conference with the parent or guardian.

A conference must be held with the parent or guardian of any student who is recommended for retention at least 12 weeks prior to the end of the school year. The elementary teacher will recommend retention to the principal in writing and will include student progress data that supports the recommendation.

The teacher and/or the grade placement committee will make the determination of promotion or retention with approval by the principal. A student who continues to work below grade level may be placed at the next grade with a designation on the report card of “alternative placement.”

The teacher or principal shall fully inform the parent or guardian that the student was not promoted, but alternatively placed at the next grade level.

### **HONOR ROLLS**

Any practice regarding honor roll is at the discretion of the principal. Parents and students need to be made aware of these guidelines at the beginning of the school year.

Administration advises that principals use caution when establishing honor roll guidelines.

If an honor roll is established, it is advised that it have categories for which all learners have the opportunity to access:

- Attendance
- Effort
- Progress
- Comportment
- Academic Achievement