



**Weatherford Independent School District
Grades 7-12 Grading Guidelines
2013-2014**

Philosophy--Promotion, grade level advancement and credit shall be based on mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for each secondary course. The assigning of a grade in a particular course should reflect a student's mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. All grading policies are written in terms of minimums and maximums. Individual campuses and teachers' grading policies must fall within the parameters established in the district policies. After the teacher or campus has established criteria for grading within the confines of the district policy, the teacher shall communicate the grading expectation to the student and the parent/guardian. When the teacher, school or department establishes a grading policy or practice, these policies will be applicable to all students in the class. The WISD Secondary Grading Policies shall reflect:

- Fairness
- Effective communication to students and parents
- Flexibility to work with all subject areas
- Age appropriateness

Weight of Grades--No one grade taken during a six weeks period can account for more than 30% of the final six weeks average.

Number of Grades—Teachers will have a minimum of six grades for each six weeks grading period.

Communication of Grading Guidelines--Grading guidelines for each class should be clearly communicated to all parents and students during the first week of the class. All teachers' grading guidelines, as well as school and departmental grading guidelines will be in compliance with the district grading policies. District and school grading policies and guidelines should be clearly outlined in the student handbooks for each secondary campus.

Grades for Late Work-- Each teacher, as a part of the communication of grading procedures for the class, will outline his/her guidelines for the grading of late work. The teacher should allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade. The teacher, department, or school late work policy should be clearly communicated to students and parents during the first week of the class. The established late work policy shall be in effect for all students in the classroom after it has been clearly communicated. The teacher, department, or school shall create guidelines as to how the late work will be counted in the calculation of the grade.

Make Up Work Due to Absence from Class--Students who are absent from class will be allowed one day more than the number of days missed to complete make-up work for full credit. This includes tests, quizzes, homework, class work, daily work, labs, etc. Students may receive a grade penalty on assignments not returned on time after an absence, if not turned in to the teacher after make-up time has expired. After the allotted time, the teacher's late work policy will be in effect. Students who miss class for any reason will be expected to complete make up work.

Assignments of a long term nature such as a research paper or major project are not subject to the same make up policies as daily work, test, assignments or quizzes. Assignments with a completion date of more than one week from the date of assignment are considered a long-term assignment and shall be turned in on the prescribed day. Due to the long term nature of these assignments, students shall make arrangements to present the assignments on the due date. These long-term assignments and due dates shall be clearly communicated to students and parents. Should an extended illness occur during a

long-term assignment the teacher, parent, counselor and/or administrator will have a conference to determine the date the assignment is due to the teacher. This conference shall occur before the assigned due date. Only in extreme circumstances will any long-term project be accepted after the due date. In case of absence on the due date, it will be the student's responsibility to make arrangements to have the project or paper brought to school on or before the due date, before the end of the school day. Students who know in advance that they will not be in class on the date a project or paper is due must make sure that the project or paper is turned in before the absence. Effective teacher/student/parent communication during the term of a long-term assignment should reduce significantly the possibility of miscommunication about the due dates and procedures for long term assignments.

Re-teach/Retest/Rework of Assignments--Students who scored below "70" on a test will, with additional instruction, have the opportunity to request to retake the test. The student will indicate the desire to retake the test to the teacher. The teacher may require additional activities (re-teach) to determine the student's readiness for the retest, such as, but not limited to tutorial, test corrections, completed daily assignments, additional class work/homework, peer assistance, etc. Once the student has completed the required instructional activities (re-teach) to prepare for the test, the student will be given a retest. At the teacher's option the retest may be the same or another test or type of test on the same content as the original test. The student may elect to retake one test or re-do one assignment each six weeks. Additional retest opportunities will be provided at the teacher's discretion during the six-weeks. The re-teach and retest should take place within one week of the return of the test. Students may be required to do re-teach and retest activities outside of class time at the teacher's option. All retests should occur before the end of the six weeks grading periods. If the grade on the retest is higher than the original test grade, a "70" will be recorded. If the retest is lower than the original, then the original grade will be recorded.

Examples:

Test 55
Retest 89

Test 42
Retest 65

Test 65
Retest 45

Grade Recorded 70

Grade Recorded 65

Grade Recorded 65

Variety of Assessments—A variety of assessments shall be used to determine a student's grade in the course. Promotion, grade level advancement and credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum for the course as described in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Indicators of mastery may include, but not limited to, the following:

- teacher observations based on specific criteria
- class discussions
- daily practices
- homework
- checklists
- rubrics
- cooperative groups (grade must reflect individual student's work in group)
- composition
- oral interviews
- projects
- demonstrations
- teacher made test and quizzes
- research products
- collection of works
- portfolios

Weight of Exam for Semester Grade & Calculation of Semester Average/Yearly Average—All students enrolled in core content courses in the secondary schools will have a significant comprehensive final exam covering all the material taught during the semester unless the student is exempted by a district approved exemption policy. The grade on the final exam will count 1/7th of the semester grade. Yearly averages will be determined by averaging the two semester grades, and a “70” or better shall indicate mastery of the TEKS for the course.

Comprehensive Exams/District Common Tests—All core content courses in secondary schools will have a comprehensive semester exam that covers all the material presented during the semester. Teachers will administer all core content district-developed assessments as indicated in the district assessment calendar. All other teachers may at their discretion give a six weeks test. A six weeks test, if given, may not be weighted more than 30% of the six weeks average.

Academic Dishonesty—Academic dishonesty shall include 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 professional judgment of the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students. A student may be given a grade penalty and/or a discipline referral to the administration for academic dishonesty. If the academic dishonesty occurs on a test there will be no opportunity for a retest.

Zeros—Teachers shall evaluate work, effort, and/or previous work history on the assignment or project to determine if a grade of zero accurately reflects the student’s knowledge of the TEKS for the topic or subject.

Homework Philosophy—Homework, when assigned, shall be evaluated in a timely manner and used as a method to provide students with specific feedback on their performance of the assigned tasks. Homework should only be assigned for reinforcement of skills and concepts taught in class. Homework is a vital part of the educational process and should be assigned on a regular basis to allow students the opportunity to practice and hone skills learned during class time. Homework should never be assigned as punishment and will be of reasonable length.

Modified Grades for Special Education/Grade for Inclusion Students—Will be determined by the student’s ARD committee and indicated on report cards.

Conduct Grades—Each secondary student will receive a conduct grade in each class.

- E—Excellent-Observes rules consistently
- S—Satisfactory-Observes rules frequently
- N—Needs Improvement-Observes rules infrequently
- U—Unsatisfactory- Observes rules almost never

Teacher must notify parents before lowering the conduct grade to a U. A conference with parent must be documented before a student receives a “U” in conduct.

Grade Penalties for Conduct in Class—A student’s academic grades may not be lowered as a result of discipline problems in the classroom. Problems with student discipline will be reflected in the student’s conduct grade, not in the academic grade for the course. Grades shall be based only on mastery of the curriculum. Grades shall not be awarded for any non-academic activities such as a grade for returning a report card, progress report, paper, signature, etc.

Parent Notifications of Failure/Progress Reports—At the mid-point (three weeks) of each six weeks cycle, progress reports will be given to every student. For any student whose average is “70” or below at any time after the mid-point of each six weeks, the teacher will initiate parent contact by conference, letter, phone and/or note. Every effort shall be made during the time period between the third and sixth week to monitor a student’s cumulative grade. Documented effort shall be made to communicate

to the parent if a student's grade falls below "70" during this critical time. A six weeks grade below "70" should not be given unless the teacher has made a documented contact with the parent. A parent's first notification of failure of a course for the six weeks shall not be the report card. Parents are partners in the educational process, and this type of communication will allow the parent to intervene with the student if they choose and prevent any surprises.