

## 1. How should an LEA show that they are complying with providing instruction to students when closed as a result of COVID-19?

For campuses that are “Closed, Instructing”, teachers will be continuing to review student work while they support the instruction being delivered off-site – whether done via an on-line learning system or from periodic phone check-ins with the students or parents. Schools should attempt to retain some documentation that instruction is happening. This could be grade books. For days when work isn’t being graded, this could also be done by retaining a small representative sample of student work (with appropriate notations for the date). In terms of what a small representative sample might mean, it could be a copy of one student’s work per grade level subject team per school per day, with attempts to add an example for students from different program types (e.g., bilingual). If you have on-line learning systems, it’s possible this would be done automatically in those systems.

## 2. What is TEA’s guidance regarding grading for districts doing distance learning with students during this time?

Each district has the authority to adopt its own grading policy. Districts may wish to modify grading policies to account for providing instruction in a distance learning format. Educators should try to focus on getting sufficient information to determine levels of proficiency for students to ensure they are prepared to be academically successful moving into the next school year.

Options to consider include the following:

- Districts may choose to delay recording of grades for a short period of time (e.g. the first week of implementation of remote learning) to allow students and teachers time to transition to a different method for teaching and learning.
- Districts may opt to record fewer grades than they would if school were open. However, educators should ensure they are able to monitor student progress through some means.
- Campuses/teachers may choose to require minimum/maximum number of assignments for which grades will be recorded.
- Districts may choose to provide self-addressed, stamped envelopes for students to return specific assignments for grading. See [Logistical Considerations for Paper-Based Packet Pick Up](#) for more information.
- Families who have mobile devices including cell phones and tablets may be able to take photographs of completed work and send the photos back to teachers for review and/or for grading.
- Districts may wish to implement a pass/fail approach to grading certain assignments.
- Districts/campuses may provide assignments for student completion with prompt feedback from the teacher but choose not record grades for assignments.

## 3. What are the best ways to get work back and fairly apply grades?

If districts are able to implement high-tech options for completion of work, they may be able to use their current student information systems to document grades. Districts using a low-tech option may arrange for work to be dropped off at regular intervals (e.g., weekly). Families who have mobile devices including cell phones and tablets may be able to take photographs of completed work and send the photos back to teachers.

Districts and charter schools should ensure that the evaluation of student work and assignment of grades be applied fairly and consistently and focused on student proficiency. Students should not be penalized for the following:

- the method used by the student to respond (i.e., apply the same criteria in grading assignments whether the student submitted digitally or in hard copy)
- inability to access resources to complete the assignment

#### **4. Do we need to record grades, or do we just need to show we provided lessons and some sort of monitoring?**

While decisions about the recording of grades for individual assignments falls under local district authority, thought should be given to the information that educators need to monitor student progress and determine students' preparation to be academically successful moving into the next school year and/or to be successful in additional high school courses. Additionally, districts must provide parents with notice of students' performance at least one every 12 weeks.

#### **5. How should we move forward with grading and completing report cards?**

Texas Education Code, §28.022(a)(2) requires school districts, at least once every 12 weeks, to give written notice to a parent of a student's performance in each class or subject. Districts have the authority to determine how they will provide this notice to parents for the remainder of the school year.

Texas Education Code, §28.022(a)(3) requires districts to, at least once every three weeks, or during the fourth week of each nine-week grading period, give written notice to a parent or legal guardian of a student's performance in a foundation subject if the student's performance in the subject is consistently unsatisfactory.

#### **6. How should districts calculate GPAs for graduating seniors for this year?**

Calculation of GPA is a local district decision and is not required. If a district chooses to modify the policy for calculation of GPA, care should be taken to ensure equity in the application of the policy for all impacted students.

#### **7. How should districts handle class rank for graduating seniors for this year?**

Class rank is a local district decision. Please note that while calculation of GPA and class ranking are not required, districts and open-enrollment charter schools must identify junior and senior students in the top 10% of their class for the purposes of eligibility for automatic college admission to a Texas institution of higher education.

Districts may choose to calculate GPA and class rank for the first four six weeks of the school year only. However, any method for calculation of GPA and class rank should be applied to all impacted students equitably.

**8. If a district is closed for the remainder of the year, what options does a district have for awarding credits/graduation?**

Credit for courses for high school graduation should be awarded based on a student's demonstrated proficiency in the essential knowledge and skills for the course. If a district is closed for the remainder of the year, plans should be made to provide students with remote opportunities to receive instruction and demonstrate proficiency in the remaining content for a course so that students may be awarded credit for courses. If a student is unable to demonstrate proficiency in remaining content, districts have the authority to award proportionate credit if a student has successfully completed half of the course.

Credit by examination (CBE) is an option available to districts to determine demonstrated proficiency, should this option be useful in confirming proficiency in order to award credit. Texas Tech University (TTU) will be offering online proctored CBEs for a fee. For assistance with those seniors who need to earn credit and who do not have access to the internet to take a CBE online, please contact TTU directly at [ttuk12@ttu.edu](mailto:ttuk12@ttu.edu) or 1-800-692-6877. Visit <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/k12/programs/testing/cbe/> for more information. The University of Texas at Austin High School expects to begin offering online proctoring for CBEs for a fee in May. Visit [https://highschool.utexas.edu/credit\\_by\\_exam](https://highschool.utexas.edu/credit_by_exam) for more information.

**9. Is there direction on course credit for graduation, meaning would first semester work constitute meeting credit requirement?**

Districts have the option of awarding proportional credit to students who have successfully completed half of a course. Successful completion of half of a course would not constitute demonstrated proficiency for the entire course. Students may earn credit for the second semester by taking a CBE.

**10. Our district was in the process of allowing a graduating senior to make up credit that was not originally awarded due to lack of attendance. What should we do now? Are we allowed to continue that process?**

Yes. Districts should continue with processes to allow students to make up credit that was not awarded because the student was not in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class was offered in a prior school year or academic period (e.g. last semester). Processes should provide opportunities for students to meet the instructional requirements of the class by demonstrating proficiency in the essential knowledge and skills for the class. Please be aware that the waiver of the 90% attendance requirement of Texas Education Code, Section 25.092, now in effect only applies to students who lack the required days of attendance for a course taken in the current academic period (e.g. spring semester) of the 2019-2020 school year. The waiver does not affect students who lack credit for days missed for a course taken in a previous academic period (e.g. semester) or school year.

**11. What do we do if a graduating senior was scheduled to meet the requirement that students receive hands-on CPR instruction this spring?**

School districts and open-enrollment charter schools are required to provide instruction to students in grades 7 through 12 in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). This is not a specific graduation requirement for students. A district should plan to offer this instruction when the school reopens this spring. If a school remains closed for the remainder of the school year, the school district can request a waiver of the requirement from the Commissioner.

**12. What do we do if a graduating senior was scheduled to meet the requirement that students receive instruction in proper interaction with law enforcement this spring?**

This requirement applies to students who entered grade 9 in the 2018-2019 school year or later. Consequently, the requirement would only apply to a student who was in grade 9 last year and is graduating

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early. A student may access and watch the flashing lights video at <https://www.texasgateway.org/resource/flashing-lights-senate-bill-30> in order to meet this requirement.

**13. What do we do if a graduating senior was scheduled to meet the requirement that students demonstrate proficiency in speech skills this spring?**

A student must demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the following:

- Delivering clear verbal messages
- Choosing effective nonverbal behaviors
- Listening for desired results
- Applying valid critical-thinking and problem-solving processes
- Identifying, analyzing, developing, and evaluating communication skills needed for professional and social success in interpersonal situations, group interactions, and personal and professional presentations

A district has the authority to determine when and how a student demonstrates proficiency in these skills. It may be possible to confirm that some or all skills were addressed in the past. If not, a district would need to identify a way for the student to demonstrate proficiency in the skills in order to meet the graduation requirement.