

## Guidance on Grading

New  
4/21/2020

State law requires each district to adopt its own grading policy, including provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations, before each school year. A district policy

- must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment;
- may not require a classroom teacher to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work; and
- is permitted, but not required to allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

School districts determine the specifics of their local grading policies within the parameters listed above. While TEA does not have the authority over grading policies, examples of district grading policies that have been adopted to address the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year may be accessed in [Section 2.2](#) of the Instructional Continuity Planning Framework.

### 1. How should an LEA show that they are complying with providing instruction to students when closed as a result of COVID-19? [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

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? [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

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?** Posted March 25, 2020

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?** [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

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?** [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

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?** [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

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?** [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

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. **What options does a district have for awarding credits/graduation?** [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

Please refer to the *Graduation Guidance FAQ* on TEA's [COVID-19](#) web page.

9. **Is there direction on course credit for graduation, meaning would first semester work constitute meeting credit requirement?** [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

Please refer to the *Graduation Guidance FAQ* on TEA's [COVID-19](#) web page.

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10. **Can a teacher give a student a grade of incomplete for a grading period during remote learning?**

Each school district and charter school has the authority to establish its own local grading policy. If the local policy permits, an incomplete may be awarded for a grading period. Districts and charter schools are encouraged to establish timelines for students to make up incompletes so that students receive final grades and schools can make determinations regarding the award of credit for the course or promotion/retention for the grade level in a timely manner. High school students may be awarded proportionate credit if they complete only half of a course (TAC §74.26(d)). Districts and charter schools that do not have a policy permitting the award of proportionate credit may wish to consider awarding proportionate credit so that a student who has completed half of the course can be awarded partial credit rather than awarding an incomplete for the entire course.

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11. **If we receive a transfer student in the 2020-2021 school year with a grade of incomplete, can we award credit to or pass the student for the course or grade level?**

Credit for courses for high school graduation may be earned only if the student received a grade which is the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100, based upon the TEKS for each course. Elementary and middle school students may only be promoted on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the TEKS for the course or grade level. A district or charter school enrolling a student with a grade of incomplete would need to determine the student's academic achievement or proficiency in all the TEKS for the particular course or subject area in accordance with the standard used in the receiving district or charter school. If there is not enough information to make this determination, the district or school may wish to consider administering a [credit by examination](#) to the student to determine proficiency in the TEKS.

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12. **If a student was given a final grade of incomplete for the semester, how would the incomplete be noted on the student transcript?**

The transcript, or academic achievement record, is the official record of courses completed, grades earned, and credits awarded. All completed high school courses, regardless of the amount of credit earned, must be entered on the student transcript. A final grade of incomplete should not be noted on the student transcript as the student did not complete the course. Districts and charter schools are encouraged to establish timelines for students to make up incomplete assignments so that final grades can be given and a determination made for the award of credit for the course in a timely manner.