

# Middle School Grading Procedures



2019-2020

**Nacogdoches ISD  
Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures**

# Middle Schools

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**Nacogdoches Independent School District  
Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures  
& Curriculum and Instruction**

*State and Local Curriculum*

## **State Curriculum**

Curriculum content is prescribed by the Texas Education Agency through the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Local instructional plans are based upon this state curriculum frameworks and state recommended program standards. Curriculum content is not prescribed in detail by the Texas Education Agency, but provides a framework to draw upon for the development of local curriculum.

## **Local Curriculum (EIA Local)**

The district shall determine instructional objectives that relate to the TEKS for grade level subjects or courses. These objectives shall address the skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses. Curriculum consists of the defined scope and sequence of instruction, the instructional objectives for student mastery, the materials used (including textbooks and technology resources), the instructional strategies designed to promote student learning, and the assessment practices used to evaluate that learning. Each middle school maintains a balanced curriculum including English Language Arts, Reading, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Health/Fitness, Technology Applications, Physical Education/Wellness, Languages Other Than English (LOTE), and Career and Technology Education (CTE).

## **NISD Curriculum**

The district has the responsibility for developing a curriculum map to align curricula PK-12 district wide and a timeline of critical objectives for each six- weeks in each subject. Additionally, the district is responsible for regularly reviewing and revising curriculum to reflect real-world needs, depth and complexity, rigor and relevance, and to meet the needs of all students.

All Nacogdoches Independent School District curriculum guides are correlated to the TEKS to ensure coverage of the essential skills and concepts of each course. District curriculum guides have been written to facilitate classroom instruction. NISD Curriculum Guides have been developed using TEKS Resource by professional teachers in coordination with the NISD Department of Instruction. These guides have been developed for each course or subject and are updated as needed. The development, alignment, revision, and review of District curriculum is carried out under the direction of The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction with a team of Teacher-Facilitators. Directions for the implementation of the curricula are outlined in District curriculum documents.

## **Scope and Sequence of Instruction**

The scope of the objectives under the curriculum documents reflects the TEKS and cannot be waived, altered, or portions eliminated. The sequence of objectives may be altered to meet the needs of an individual class or student. Campuses or departments desiring to alter the sequence of the curriculum document must consult and present the desired alteration in writing to the Chief Academic Officer.

## **Instructional Materials**

State-adopted textbooks and electronic media serve as one instructional resource to meet course and curriculum objectives. In Texas, textbooks and electronic media are currently provided by the state from an approved list. District-adopted textbooks are selected through a formal committee process. (See 19 TAC 66.104 and District Policy EFAA Local). Requests to select alternate textbooks or systems must be based upon analysis of alternate resources and student performance data; and must follow the applicable textbook waiver process. Locally-purchased instructional materials are selected by the district, campus or individual teachers to meet the needs of students.

## **Instructional Practices**

Instructional strategies and practices to ensure student success are based upon campus and teacher analysis of student needs, effective teaching practices, student learning styles, and demonstrated success through the assessment process. Student academic achievement shall be based on the degree of mastery of the district's instructional objectives as outlined in the curriculum for each subject. The objectives reflect the Texas Education Agency TEKS and address the skills and concepts needed for successful performance in the current grade and in the next grade. Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated TEKS. The student's mastery level shall be a

major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course. (See District Policy EIA Local) Achievement grades are determined from a wide variety of information, which could include student performance on daily assignments/homework, tests, and/or special projects. The information used in grading should be appropriate to the grade level and subject being considered. Prior to instruction, students should be informed of the class or course expectations, and the teacher must be prepared to document and explain how grades are determined.

**All NISD curriculum objectives are available on-line on the district website [www.nacisd.org](http://www.nacisd.org) under the instruction section.**

## ***Academic Achievement: Retention and Promotion***

### **Curriculum Mastery**

Promotion, grade-level advancement, and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services. [See District Policy EHBC]

### **Standards for Mastery**

Mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be given to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.
2. Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit, six-week, and final exams, or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required.

### **Grades 6-8**

To be promoted from grade 6th, 7th, or 8th grade to the next grade above, a student must have the following:

1. An average of 70 or better in composite language arts (language arts and reading)
2. An average of 70 or better in mathematics
3. An overall average of 70 or better in composite language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies

### **Grade 8**

A student shall meet the criteria above and also shall have passed the Student Success Initiative.

### **Required Attendance**

In accordance with State law, the student must have ninety percent (90%) attendance in each class.

## ***Official Grade Reports***

### **Progress Reports**

The purpose of the progress report is to inform students, parents/guardians, and campus administrators regarding progress in a subject, in conduct, or in both. The progress report reflects both satisfactory and unsatisfactory student progress.

1. All middle school students will receive a progress report at the end of the third week of a six-week grading period.
2. It is the student's responsibility to deliver the progress report to the parent/guardian.
3. It is recommended that the progress report be signed by the parent/guardian, indicating they have seen the progress report, and returned to the teacher/school.
4. If a student's grade falls below 70 after the third week of a six-week grading period, the teacher will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone or in writing.
5. Teachers should maintain a telephone or electronic log of contacts and attempted contacts with parents/guardians.

### **Report Cards**

The report card is a communication tool for parents/guardians and students. Report cards provide information regarding academic progress, student conduct, and absences.

1. Report cards are computer generated.
2. All middle school students will receive a report card at the end of each six-week grading period.
3. It is the student's responsibility to deliver the report card to the parent/guardian.

### **Online Records—Home Access Center (HAC)**

1. Parents/guardians may also access student progress information through the Home Access Center.
2. The Home Access Center displays individual assignment grades in the teacher gradebook (if applicable).
3. Teachers will update grades weekly to the Home Access Center portal to keep students and parents informed of ongoing progress.
4. Parents/guardians should contact the school regarding access information.

## ***Academic Grading Scales***

### **Grades 6-8**

The District will report six-week averages to parents/guardians as numerical scores.

**The following relates the numerical scores and letter grades used for reporting all academic progress.**

90-100	A	Excellent Progress
80-89	B	Good Progress
70-79	C	Average Progress
69 and below	F	Failure

Extra credit grade cannot raise the student's grade higher than 100.

## ***Academic Integrity & Academic Dishonesty***

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value of teaching, learning and scholarship. NISD has the primary responsibility for protecting and promoting the highest standards of academic integrity. Both students and faculty will thrive in an atmosphere where academic work is challenging, relevant and fair.

### **Academic Dishonesty as addressed in the Nacogdoches ISD Policy (EIA)**

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to academic and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes 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 judgment of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

## ***Grading Roles and Responsibilities***

### **Student**

1. Complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher.
2. Plan to schedule work on long-term assignments so assignments will be completed on time.
3. Initiate communication with the teacher when the student does not understand the assignment or if he/she is experiencing difficulty.
4. Complete all assignments within the time limits given by the teacher or be subject to appropriate late work guidelines.
5. Evaluate their own work for accuracy and seek clarification as needed from the teacher.

6. Maintain academic integrity and honesty. Academic dishonesty may result in academic **and/or** behavioral consequences (see **Academic Dishonesty**).
7. Students participating in extracurricular activities have met grade eligibility requirements for participation.

### **Parent/Guardian**

1. Establish a specific time, place and manner for schoolwork to be completed.
2. Provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete homework.
3. Monitor as needed, but do not do homework for the student.
4. Assist student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments.
5. Initiate communication with the teacher as soon as concerns arise.

### **Campus**

1. Each campus and/or department will adhere to the late work guidelines as established by Nacogdoches ISD policies, procedures, and guidelines.
2. Each campus will design and designate exam schedules as needed.
3. Campus administration shall address issues surrounding the calculation of grades for the purpose of regaining UIL eligibility at the three-week grade checks.

### **Teacher**

1. Teachers are required to post the content & knowledge objectives for each class. Homework assignments will be posted in the room.
2. Teachers are responsible for the grades in the gradebook.
3. Peer grading is allowable.
4. All records of grades and assessments become a part of the confidential record for the assessment of student performance.
5. Teachers will inform students of content covered on all major assessments.
6. Teachers shall not increase or decrease a classroom grade for participation or lack of participation in any extracurricular activity (i.e. athletics/academic UIL/etc). (See District Policy EIA Local)
7. Teachers must follow the NISD Middle School Grading Procedures and ask for clarification from campus administration or department chairs as needed.

### **Teacher Records/Gradebook**

Grade records are an important record-keeping tool and should be accurately maintained. Teachers should be aware that many times grades will need to be verified; therefore, accurate record keeping is essential. All teachers will maintain the District-provided electronic gradebook.

1. Grades recorded in a gradebook are documentation of a student's progress and of mastery of the TEKS objectives and curriculum objectives.
2. The set of grades indicated in the gradebook shall be the complete set from which the student's average is determined.
3. The electronic gradebook must adhere to the calculations outlines in the NISD Middle School Grading Procedures.
4. Only the teacher of record (or principal designee) will enter grades in the gradebook.
5. Teachers will update electronic gradebooks on a weekly basis.

### **Return of Assignments**

Teachers should review and return all graded work to students within a time frame that will benefit the student.

1. Daily work should be returned within two to four scheduled class days. Larger projects should be reviewed and returned on a timely basis (within one week if feasible).

### **Required Tutorials**

The purpose of a tutorial session is to serve as an instructional reinforcement for students needing assistance. All NISD students are welcomed and encouraged to attend tutorial sessions.

1. Day and time/frequency of scheduled tutorials will be set by each campus. Some campuses may have tutorials within the school day.
2. Each teacher must be available to students during scheduled tutorial times as determined by the campus.
3. Teachers must keep a log of students attending tutorials.

### **Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences**

1. A teacher will schedule one or more conferences with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student if the student is not maintaining passing grades, is not achieving the expected level of performance, is presenting some problem to the teacher, or in any other case that the teacher considers necessary. This conference may be requested by indicating so on the three-week progress report. Such conferences may be handled by telephone, in person, or in writing.
2. The state and district require each school to notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the need for a conference at the six weeks grading period if the grade is below the level required for course credit or grade level advancement.

## ***Types of Assessments***

### **General**

Student mastery of course objectives may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary for all grades to have as their source written paper work. Nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every paper produced. Although the teacher should always monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity that he/she assigns, the feedback does not always need to be in the form of a grade. Assessment should always follow a period of guided practice and/or independent practice.

In grading a group project, members of a group should not be penalized for an individual's non-participation. Conversely, a student who does not fully participate, but participates to a limited degree, will receive a grade reflective of his/her participation.

Performance assessments are measures of a student's progress toward mastery of course objectives or content. There are many forms of assessment that may or may not be utilized by individual teachers. Types of performance assessments include, but are not limited to:

- classroom participation
- classroom discussions
- oral responses
- written responses
- homework assignments
- experiments
- teacher observation
- research project
- checklists of skills
- portfolios
- enrichment
- group work/projects
- independent or group reading
  - lab reports

### **Performance-Based Courses**

Performance-based courses may have assignments that differ significantly from other academic courses. Performance-based courses include courses within the following departments: fine arts, physical education and athletics.

In many performance-based courses, the grading and assignments must reflect the TEKS and a measure of the student's performance. In performance-based courses, a higher percentage of the grade may come from participation.



Teachers of performance-based courses should work with the program-area coordinator/director to ensure that their grading system is in compliance with NISD Middle School Grading procedures and the expectations and guidelines of the program area.

## **Major Grades**

All major grades measure performance based on the TEKS or content. They serve to evaluate the mastery of the TEKS, concepts, understandings, and district objectives while providing opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skills.

### **Tests/Examinations**

Tests and examinations measure performance based on the TEKS or content. They serve to evaluate mastery of the TEKS, concepts, understandings, and district objectives, and provide opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skills.

1. Test/Examinations are assessments designed to measure a student's successful attainment of the TEKS as expressed in the NISD curriculum guides.
2. Major examinations or tests are chapter, unit, concept, or cumulative assessments.
3. Additional tests include Curriculum Based Assessments (CBAs), Benchmark Assessments, and Common Formative Assessments (CFAs).
4. Exams may be district or campus developed.

### **Common Assessments**

1. Common formative assessments (CFAs) are administered to check for student mastery of recently taught state standards. These assessments are teacher developed and commonly administered on the same day and are utilized for feedback concerning student learning during a unit of study.
2. Common assessments may not be substituted with previous assignments or an average of past performance assessments.

### **Performance Assessments**

1. Performance assessments will reflect real-world tasks and relate to instructional objectives.
2. This type of assessment often requires analyzing a task, developing a plan of action, gathering information, selecting the relevant information, and presenting appropriate information.
3. The method of presentation/product should be designed by the teacher based on the subject area and content objectives.

### **Special Projects/Major Essays**

1. Major essays or projects are lengthy class work or homework assignments that may take up to several weeks for a student or group of students to complete.
2. Major essays or projects, assigned over a lengthy period and included on the course syllabus, are due on or before the due date. Students who are absent on the due date, including school business, must meet the deadline. Any exceptions for late term projects for full credit must be approved by the principal or principal's designee after meeting with the classroom teacher.
3. Penalty for late projects will be the same as for all other late work. The teacher will accept all late papers/projects turned in up to two weeks after the due date for feedback purposes only. After two weeks, the teacher is under no obligation to read or comment upon late papers/projects.

## **Daily Grades**

### **Daily Work**

Classwork is any instructional activity defined/planned by the teacher to be completed during a class period to facilitate the learning process. There could be occasions where classwork becomes homework.

### **Homework**

Homework is a necessary part of the instructional process that begins in the classroom, extends into the home, and provides a way for parents/guardians to become aware of the instructional program and their child's educational program. Homework should be grade level appropriate.

Homework and classwork provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding. Homework and classwork should be considered extended learning opportunities for students to show mastery of concepts taught.

Students enrolled in advanced classes may be assigned more homework than their peers in non-advanced classes.

Homework should never be a disciplinary measure, but should be used to enrich and strengthen classroom experiences.

New concepts introduced through homework, should only be evaluated on effort.

A majority of middle school students should be able to complete homework within 60 minutes per night.

### **Grading Homework**

1. Homework may be graded in a variety of ways. At times, checking for completion is appropriate. At other times, a complete analysis of procedure, content, and/or correct answers is appropriate. Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.
2. Peer grading is allowable.

### **Quizzes**

Quizzes are short assessments designed to evaluate a student's level of understanding and progress towards instructional objectives. Quizzes do not have to be scheduled in advance.

### **Semester/Final Exam (High School Credit Courses)**

Students in courses for high school credit will follow the High School Grading Procedures.

### **Extra Credit**

1. All extra credit is to be academic.
2. If extra credit is offered, it must be offered to all students in the class and/or course.
3. Extra credit will not cause an excessive financial burden on the student or be given for bringing in basic school supplies.
4. Extra credit awarded will not account for more than 5% of the six week average.
5. Extra credit grade cannot raise the student's grade higher than 100.

## ***Calculation of Six Week Average***

### **Weight of Grades**

All six-week averages shall be calculated on a percentage system for each type (category) of assignment.

### **Major Grades**

Major grades will comprise (50%) of the six week average in all middle school courses, \*excluding middle school science (*see last paragraph under "Daily Grades" below*).

Major grades may include: Performance Assessments, Examinations/Tests, Projects, Major Essays, Common Assessments, Labs, and other similar assignments.

### **Daily Grades**

Daily grades will comprise (50%) of the six week average in all middle school courses, \*excluding middle school science (*see paragraph below*).

Daily grades may include: class work, homework, quizzes, labs, and other similar assignments.

\* Science grades are weighted accordingly:

1. Daily grades 25%
2. Labs 35%
3. Major grades 40%
  - a. Major grades consist of 2 assessments and 1 major lab.

### **Minimum Number of Grades**

Teachers are encouraged to provide a sufficient number of grades to allow multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS.

Teachers are required to take a minimum of one daily grade per week beginning the first full week of school.

In addition, teachers must take a minimum of three (3) major grades per six week grading period. The exception is the first and last grading periods when only 2 major grades are required.

When a grading period contains less than six weeks, only two (2) major grades are required.

Science must have a minimum of 2 lab grades per six weeks.

### **Minimum/Maximum Grade Reported**

The actual grade received on any assignment and for the six week average will be recorded in the teacher gradebook.

The actual grade earned on any assignment may exceed 100%; however, the calculated average on a progress report and/or report card may not exceed 100%.

### **Assignment Format**

The header, footer, cover sheet, or assignment format for any assignment may comprise no more than 3% of the grade on the assignment unless an objective for the assignment is format.

### **Incomplete Grades**

A student receiving an incomplete has two (2) weeks to change the incomplete grade to an earned grade.

In unusual cases, where the student has missed a large quantity of work, the time may be extended.

In all cases, the teacher must communicate to the student the nature of the outstanding work and the time limitation for completing the work (UIL required).

### ***Calculation of Semester Average***

All middle school courses will calculate and report a semester average. Calculated averages reported on progress reports or report cards may not exceed 100%. Grades recorded in a gradebook represent a confidential record for assessment of student performance.

### **Middle School Credit Courses**

The semester average will be the average of the three six-week grading periods.

- 1st Six-Week Average 33.33%
- 2nd Six-Week Average 33.33%

3rd Six-Week Average 33.33%

## ***Calculation of Year-long Average***

### **Middle School Credit Course**

Middle School credit courses that are a full year in length will calculate a year-long average. This year-long average (with required attendance) will determine credit for retention and promotion. The average will be determined using the semester averages.

1st Semester Average 50%

2nd Semester Average 50%

### **Transcript Recording from Non-NISD Schools (For Administrative Office Use Only)**

For semester transfer grades the following letter grade conversion table will be implemented.

A+ 99-96	B+ 89-86	C+ 79-76	F 69 and below
A 95-93	B 85-83	C 75-73	
A- 92-90	B- 82-80	C- 72-70	

## ***Reteach and Retest/Reassess for Mastery***

### **Mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skill**

Nacogdoches ISD has provided a well-balanced curriculum based on state prescribed Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students who participate in this curriculum will have the opportunity to master the knowledge, skills and competencies established by the district curriculum and the state standards.

Nacogdoches ISD will utilize ongoing mastery assessment to determine which students are in need of remediation (reteaching and acceleration). The use of common assessments, teacher-made tests, performance assessments, and teacher observations will help determine which students are not mastering instructional objectives.

### **Required Reteach**

If 30% or more of the students in a single preparation per teacher do not demonstrate mastery of the TEKS on a classroom test, the teacher will provide the opportunity for reteaching and retesting. These opportunities will be provided during class time using different methods of instruction.

### **Required Retest/Reassess for Mastery**

The 30% or more of the students who do not demonstrate mastery are re-evaluated after they are retaught or after activities are provided. Re-evaluation may include, but is not limited to, oral examination, special assignment sheets, special homework assignments, test corrections or a formal test.

A student must score at least 70% on the re-evaluation to demonstrate mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge Skills (TEKS). A grade of 70 is the maximum that can be earned on the re-evaluation and is recorded to designate that mastery. If a student fails to demonstrate mastery on the re-evaluation of the TEKS, the higher of the two grades will be recorded.

### **Other Opportunities for Reteach and Retest/Reassess**

If less than 30% of all the students in a single preparation per teacher do not demonstrate mastery, the teacher is not obligated to reteach and retest during class time. Tutorial time may be used for reteaching.

In the event of unusual circumstances, an individual student can ask for the opportunity for reteaching and retesting. This request can be evaluated by a committee of the teacher, department head, and curriculum principal. In case of disputes, the final decision rests with the principal. The request for a retesting should be made within one (1) week after the test has been returned.

## ***Late Work***

Late work is defined as work done in the classroom and not turned in on time. Late work is graded in the same manner in all classes at the middle school. The table below shows the percent of the earned grade that a student will be awarded for late work:

### **Middle School**

<b>Days Late</b>	<b>Maximum Grade</b>	<b>Example(s)</b>
<b>1 day</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>Actual Grade 70 to 100 Given Grade 70</b>
<b>2 days</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>Actual Grade 60 to 100 Given Grade 60</b>
<b>3-5 days</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Actual Grade 50 to 100 Grade Given 50</b>
<b>After 5 days</b>	<b>No credit given</b>	<b>Grade of zero (0)</b>

All in-class assignments, due at the end of class, will not be accepted as late work.

Extenuating circumstances may occur that are out of the control of the student and which prevent him/her from completing and returning homework assignments. The student is to inform the teacher of any such circumstances that prevented the completion of the homework. Teachers may grant exceptions to this policy, as necessary.

Long-term projects and major essays that are included on the syllabus at the beginning of the fall and/or spring semester are due on the announced due date. The student who is absent for any reason on the due date, including school business, must meet the deadline. The teacher will accept all late papers/projects turned in up to two weeks after the due date for the purpose of providing feedback, but a grade of zero will be assigned.

## ***Makeup Work***

In order to provide the total "picture" of a student's academic progress for a course, any student missing classroom instruction should be given the opportunity to make up the missing assigned work. This will ensure instructional continuity and place importance upon consistent attendance and daily study.

### **Makeup Work Guidelines**

1. Makeup work is available to all students. Students are responsible for asking teachers for the makeup work upon returning to class. Students shall receive credit for satisfactory makeup work, including tests, after an absence, but may receive a zero for any makeup work, including tests, not made up within the allotted time. Any assignment not turned in within the allotted time falls within the late work guidelines.
2. Exceptions may be granted by the administration in extenuating circumstances.
3. The number of days allowed for makeup work to be completed for full credit will be equal to the number of times a class was missed.
4. On the day of returning to school, a student should not be required to take a quiz or test that was announced during his/her absence.
5. Makeup work, including tests, may be of an altered version to assess what the student has learned.
6. Teachers may assign alternate work to assure that students who have been absent have sufficient opportunity to master the TEKS or to meet subject or course requirements. The assignments shall be based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and may provide greater depth of subject matter than routine makeup work.

### **Unexcused Absence**

A note signed by the parent/guardian showing the dates and reason for the absence is to be submitted within three (3) days after the student returns to class. If this note is not sent within the allocated three (3) days, the absence will be unexcused. A student with an unexcused absence may make up all work missed for full credit.

### **Suspension**

A student suspended from his /her regular classes is to request makeup work when he/she returns to school.