

# Secondary Grading Procedures



2013-2014

Nacogdoches Independent School District  
Secondary Schools  
Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures

***Forward***

The Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures were developed after many months of research and discussion by the Secondary Education Task Force of Nacogdoches ISD. These guidelines are in accordance with current practices and policies, as well as the Texas Education Code. An attempt has been made to provide a set of guidelines in those areas which will best meet the needs of students and provide assistance to the instructional staff. This handbook provides:

1. a tool which will foster consistency among teachers, disciplines and schools as students progress through the NISD secondary educational program,
2. a reference which will encourage a better understanding of grading, assessment, reporting and promotion for teachers, parents and students, and
3. a description of the District's grading system.

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# Nacogdoches Independent School District

## **District Goals**

### Teaching and Learning:

1. Everyone will actively engage in authentic, rigorous, and inspiring learning experiences preparing them to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Personnel/Human Resources:

2. Foster a district-wide environment that will cultivate recruitment and retention of quality staff.

### Funding/Finance:

3. The District will optimize resources to ensure student success and financial stability, resulting in confidence from all stakeholders.

### Facilities:

4. Design and maintain facilities that will address population growth and expand state-of-the-art programs enhancing student performance and community involvement.

### Parent/Community Involvement:

5. The school, home, and community will develop a shared relationship that results in unity, mutual trust, and respect for all NISD campuses.

### Communications

6. Through collaboration, NISD and the community will promote a positive image.

## **District Vision Statement**

*Nacogdoches ISD will educate and inspire everyone to achieve excellence.*

## **District Mission Statement**

*Nacogdoches ISD will provide quality educational experiences for students to succeed in a competitive, diverse, and ever-changing society.*

# Nacogdoches ISD Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures

## Secondary Schools 2013-2014

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

## **NISD Curriculum and Instruction (Secondary Schools)**

### ***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 provide 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 secondary 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 Guides**

The District has the responsibility for developing a curriculum map to align curricula PK-12 districtwide 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 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 Executive Director 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 Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction prior to seeking approval of the Campus Advisory Council (CAC) and District Advisory Council (DAC).

#### **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.



## **On-line Instructional Materials and Resources**

Instructional Materials and resources available for use in NISD, both state-adopted and locally-purchased, may be made available to students only in an on-line format. These materials are considered to be an integral part of the instructional programs and may not have access denied through the waiver on the Parent Acknowledgement Form (see Student/Parent Handbook).

## **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 guides 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**

To be promoted to grades 6, a student shall have a grade average of 70 or better on a scale of 100 in the subjects of language arts composite (the average of language arts and reading) and mathematics, and an overall average of 70 or better in language arts composite, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, a student must meet the passing standard established by the State Board on an applicable assessment instrument in the subjects required under state law in order to be promoted to the next grade.

### **Grade 7**

To be promoted from grade 6 to grade 7, a student shall have a grade average of 70 or better on a scale of 100 in the subjects of language arts composite (the average of language arts and reading) and mathematics, and an overall average of 70 or better in language arts composite, mathematics, science, and social studies.

### **Grade 8**

To be promoted from grade 7 to grade 8, a student shall have a grade average of 70 or better on a scale of 100 in the subjects of language arts composite (the average of language arts and reading) and mathematics, and an overall average of 70 or better in language arts composite, mathematics, science, and social studies. [Students also shall have passed the Student Success Initiative.](#)

### **Grade 9**

To be promoted from grade 8 to grade 9, a student shall have a grade average of 70 or better on a scale of 100 in the subjects of language arts composite (the average of language arts and reading) and mathematics, and an overall average of 70 or better in language arts composite, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion students in grade 8, a student must meet the passing standard established by the State Board on an applicable assessment instrument in the subjects required under state law in order to be promoted to the next grade.

### **Grades 9-12**

Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9-12 shall be earned by course credits. Changes in grade-level classification shall be made at the beginning of the fall semester. (See District Policy EI)

## ***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 secondary 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. The progress report is to 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 secondary 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.
4. The report card is to be signed by the parent/guardian, indicating they have seen the report card, and returned to the teacher/school.

### **Online Records—Student-Parent Connection**

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

## *Academic Grading Scales*

### **Grades 6-12**

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

### **Conduct Grading Scale (6-12)**

The student is assessed on conduct by each teacher. The conduct grade indicates how well the student is performing in classroom citizenship. Conduct marks may affect eligibility for participation in school activities; poor conduct interferes with a student's ability to learn in class. The following letter system is used to report a student's conduct:

<b>Mark</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	The student displays an excellent attitude, excellent work habits and overall conduct, is cooperative, and consistently observes school rules and regulations.
<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	The student displays a good attitude, good work habits and overall conduct, is cooperative, and generally observes school rules and regulations.
<b>N</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The student does not consistently display a good attitude, good work habits and overall conduct.
<b>U</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	The student displays a poor attitude and is consistently uncooperative. The student disrupts class and shows little respect for school and classroom rules and regulations.

## ***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***

### **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.

### **Behaviors defined as cheating:**

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Giving or receiving information, looking on someone else's work, or allowing someone else to see one's work during an exam, test or quiz.
- Unauthorized receipt or distribution of exam, test or quiz contents, materials, or answer key.
- Use of unauthorized resources such as notes during an exam.
- Taking an exam, producing a project, paper or assignment for another student or asking someone to take an exam or produce a project, paper or assignment for an individual.
- Copying work assigned to be done independently or letting others copy one's work.

### **Behaviors defined as plagiarism:**

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any misrepresentation of another's work as one's own, including the copying of sentences, phrases, images, entire essays, passages from an undocumented source, musical scores, and other similar works.

## ***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 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.

### **Department**

1. Teachers within a department will confer in the development of lesson plans.
2. A comprehensive Unit test schedule will be established in each department. This schedule must be adhered to for Unit tests.
3. Unit tests will adhere to established departmental/content area schedule.
4. Departmental teachers will coordinate the sharing of instructional resources.

### **Teacher**

1. Teachers are required to provide the daily lesson objectives and activities for each class in writing. 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 Secondary Grading Procedures and ask for clarification from campus administration or department chairs as needed.
8. Teachers will provide students with a rubric for long-term projects/alternative assessments.

## **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 and curriculum objectives.
2. Grades recorded in a gradebook represent a confidential record for assessment of student performance.
3. The set of grades indicated in the gradebook shall be the complete set from which the student's average is determined.
4. The electronic gradebook must adhere to the calculations outlined in the NISD Secondary Grading Procedures.
5. Only the teacher of record (or principal designee) will enter grades in the gradebook.
6. 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. 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). This will allow the student to identify any areas of weakness and arrange for tutorials or extra study sessions prior to assessment.

## **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. Teacher must keep a log of students attending tutorials.

## **Lesson Plans**

The purpose of a lesson plan is to provide a written document outlining daily objectives and activities for instruction. The lesson plan may include state, district, and campus objectives reflecting required TEKS.

1. All teachers are required to prepare weekly lesson plans to assist with planning for instruction.
2. Lesson plans should be turned in on a scheduled basis. This schedule will be established on each campus. A District-wide form is provided; however, individual campuses may create their own form.

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

1. A teacher will schedule one or more conference(s) 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 written communication.
2. The State and District require each school to notify parents/guardians 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.

## **Course Syllabus**

All secondary teachers are required to prepare, post, and distribute a course syllabus for students during the first two weeks of the course and/or semester. The purpose of the course syllabus is to provide information, guidelines, and an overview of a teacher's requirements for successful completion of a course. The syllabus may be defined as the scope and sequence of a course's major projects and themes. It may be prepared by semester or full-year requirements. The syllabus is designed to give students and parents/guardians an overview of the course's major themes and approximate dates of major course projects, exams, or papers. Each teacher may develop his/her own format of a course syllabus, but the following elements must be included:

- Teacher name
- Course title
- Conference time

- School/Teacher phone
- Outline or scope and sequence of major course units, themes, or projects
- Approximate timeline and due dates of long term projects
- General method of assessment and grade calculation in compliance with NISD Secondary Grading Procedures
- Average amount of homework
- Assigned reading/literary works

### **Teacher Webpages**

Nacogdoches ISD does currently host individual teacher webpages.

## ***Awarding Class Credit***

### **Mastery of Objectives**

Student academic achievement shall be based upon the degree of mastery of the district's objectives which reflect the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

### **Required Attendance**

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

Students may have two college visit days during their junior year and two during their senior year, with a letter from the college or university verifying the visit. These approved college visits do not affect exemption for Semester/Final Exams.

### **Credit Recovery Course Grading and Credit**

Students enrolled in high school credit courses via the Credit Recovery program are subject to special grading procedures outlined in the Credit Recovery Procedures Manual. Credit Recovery delivers instruction and assessments in a unique environment requiring specialized procedures.

## ***Types of Assessments***

### **General**

Student mastery of course objectives may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary, therefore, 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: Career and Technology Education (CTE), 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 Secondary 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.

All major grades must be scheduled and announced at least (3) days in advance.

### **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.

### **Common Assessments**

1. Common assessments are administered in all core content classes. These assessments may be district-developed or department-developed.
2. Unit assessments are administered in all non-core content classes.
3. 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.
4. A rubric must be provided to the student prior to the beginning of the assignment.



### **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. A rubric must be provided to the student prior to the beginning of the assignment.
3. 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.
4. 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 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.

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

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

### **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, intended to take no more than 20 minutes to complete, and 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)**

1. Semester/Final exams are administered in all high school credit courses at the end of the fall and spring semester.
2. In order to be exempt students must meet exemption criteria. (see Exam Exemption Guidelines below)
3. Semester/Final exams must be representative of the work of the entire semester.
4. Any exceptions to this policy for the administration of semester/final exams must be made at the department level with principal approval.
5. A student in grades 9-12, enrolled in an Advanced Placement course, passing that course, and taking the designated College Board Advanced Placement Exam for that course, will be exempt from taking the regularly scheduled semester/final exam for that AP course. The student may opt to take the course semester/final exam in addition to taking the College Board Advanced Placement Exam.

## **Exam Exemption Guidelines**

Students may earn exam exemptions by maintaining good academics and attendance. The number of eligible exemptions is based on the student's grade level. Ninth graders are eligible for one exemption, tenth graders are eligible for two exemptions, eleventh graders are eligible for three exemptions, and twelfth graders are eligible for four exemptions. ~~Students may earn extra exemptions by passing TAKS/STAAR EOC testing.~~

## **Academic/Attendance Exemption Criteria**

Any student in a one-credit course may be exempt from the final exam(s) of choice if the following requirements are met:

1. 80 or better yearly average for the course.
2. No more than 5 absences total for spring semester.
3. All seniors must be present for scheduled classes on ~~TAKS/STAAR EOC testing days.~~
4. All fines - library, athletics, clubs, textbook, calculators, etc. - must be cleared to be exempt.
5. Exemption request forms must be signed by the teacher and parent and returned to the exempting teacher during the period of the exam.

## **~~TAKS/STAAR EOC Exemptions~~**

~~Students who pass the TAKS/STAAR EOC test will earn an exemption in each subject they pass. Students will receive an E for their final exam and their grade will not be affected. Absences do not affect TAKS/STAAR EOC exemptions. In order to maintain the confidentiality of TAKS/STAAR EOC scores, grade level assistant principals will issue all exemption slips at a common time. There will be no distinction between academic/attendance exemptions and TAKS/STAAR EOC Exemptions slips.~~

## **General Guidelines**

Both excused and unexcused absences will count for exemption purposes. Absences that will not count against a student for exemption purposes are defined as 1) extracurricular, 2) co-curricular, and 3) religious and medical absences. (coded as EXT, COC, REL, MED by attendance; MED means the student came to school and left to attend a Dr.'s appointment, as defined by TEC 25.087)

No attendance waivers will be considered for exam exemptions.

There will be no exemptions from midterm exams for any student and no exemption from 1/2 credit courses. Dual credit/concurrent courses with SFA will not be considered for exemptions.

All students must attend class the day of the exams. Students who are exempt from exams will be dismissed by announcement to go to their designated area. Ninth graders will report to the ninth grade commons and upperclassmen will report to the main commons to study for their next exam.

## **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.

## ***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 (70% Pre-AP/AP, 60% Regular) of the six week average in all high school credit courses. Major grades will comprise (50%) of the six week average in all middle school courses.

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

For students in a Career and Technology Education (CTE) program requiring employment, 60% of the six week average will reflect employer evaluation.

### **Daily Grades**

Daily grades will comprise (30% Pre-AP/AP, 40% Regular) of the six week average in high school credit courses. Daily grades will comprise (50%) of the six week average in all middle school courses.

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

\*Middle school science grades are weighted according to campus guidelines.

### **Reading/Writing Across the Curriculum**

Current research indicates that focusing reading assignments across the content areas improves students' skills in navigating effectively through nonfiction works (textbooks, primary sources, math problems, etc.). All teachers are responsible for helping students master the content of a particular course and for making content specific reading a more meaningful, valuable, and enduring learning experience. Therefore, all high school credit and middle school courses will administer one or more reading/writing assignments in the content area each six weeks.

### **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.

### **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 and/or a zero for a missed semester/final exam has two (2) weeks to convert 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).

## **Schedule Changes**

Schedule changes can have a significant impact on the calculation of the six-week average.

Schedule changes will be considered during the first week of the course for the following reasons only:

1. The student is a senior not scheduled in a course needed for graduation.
2. The student has already earned credit for a course in which he/she is currently scheduled.
3. The student does not have the prerequisite(s) for a class listed on his/her schedule.
4. The student has previously failed this course under the same teacher.
5. The student has been dismissed from a program for which approval must be granted for placement.
6. The student does not have a full schedule.
7. There is a data entry error (no lunch, class listed twice, free period, etc.).
8. Other as approved by building principal.

## **Course Level Changes**

Course level changes will be considered at the end of the first or second six weeks and the end of the first semester of each course. To be eligible for a course level change, a student must be misplaced in the current course. To transfer to a lower level class, the student must have made an effort to succeed by completing work and attending tutorials. If these conditions are met and the student is earning less than a grade of 75, that student will be considered for a change. Final approval will depend upon parent approval.

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

All secondary 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%

### **High School Credit Courses**

The semester average is determined using the six-week averages and the semester/final exam.

1st Six-Week Average	2/7	4th Six-Week Average	2/7
2nd Six-Week Average	2/7	5th Six-Week Average	2/7
3rd Six-Week Average	2/7	6th Six-Week Average	2/7
Semester/Final Exam	1/7	Semester/Final Exam	1/7

When a student is exempt from the final exam, the semester average will be the average of the six-week grading periods.

4th Six-Week Average 33.33%  
5th Six-Week Average 33.33%  
6th 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%

#### **Semester Averaging-High School Course Work**

Students in high school credit courses receive separate and independent grades for each semester for a year-long course.

However, semesters will be averaged to calculate an overall yearly average for course credit under the following criteria:

- State of Texas TEKS-based high school courses from the Fall and Spring semester of the same academic year apply
- Attendance requirements or a waiver must be met

#### **Course Category and Weight**

The District shall categorize and weight courses as Advanced and Regular as provided in District Policy EIC Local.

The District shall record unweighted numerical grades on student transcripts.

## **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  
A 95  
A- 92  
B+ 89  
B 85  
B- 82  
C+ 79  
C 75  
C- 70  
F 69

### ***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 25% (50% for pre-AP courses) 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. ~~(six-week tests, unit tests, and semester/final exams are excluded).~~

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

The 25% (50% for pre-AP) 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 two grades will be averaged (both grades should be recorded in the grade book).

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

If less than 25% (50% for pre-AP courses) 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 and high school levels. 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>

### **High School**

<b>Days Late</b>	<b>Percent of Grade Received by Student</b>	<b>Example(s)</b>
<b>1 day</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>100 records as 80 80 records as 64 60 records as 48</b>
<b>2 days</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>100 records as 60 80 records as 48 60 records as 36</b>
<b>3-5 days</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100 records as 50 80 records as 40 60 records as 30</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 assessment "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. A student should not, on the day of returning to school, 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. However, a student found to be truant (a student who stays away from class or school without permission) will receive fifty percent (50%) of the grade achieved on the assignment.

### **Suspension**

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