



Grading Guidelines

Aledo ISD Grading and Instructional Guidelines

2023-2024



Aledo ISD Grading & Instructional Guidelines

AISD Vision

Growing greatness through exceptional experiences that empower learners for life.

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Aledo ISD Grading & Instructional Guidelines

Overview

The Aledo ISD Grading and Instructional Guidelines provide a district-wide framework for grading and instructional practices that reflects expectations for grading, planning, and instruction.

Grading Philosophy and Practices

We believe monitoring the academic progress of each student, coupled with meaningful and timely feedback to students and parents, is essential to fostering academic success.

We believe in an instructional approach based upon student growth as well as mastery learning, which allows multiple opportunities to demonstrate progress towards mastery of the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). All guidelines apply in both face-to-face and remote instructional models, unless otherwise specified.

We strive to communicate a fair and accurate indication of student mastery.

- Grading practices should be used to promote learning and academic growth.
- Grading should never be used as a punishment or to measure conduct or compliance.
- Grading should help the teacher to communicate progress towards mastery of the standards or established goals to the student and parent/guardian.
- Grading should help the parent/guardian increase understanding of student mastery of standards or established goals and gain a deeper understanding of the child as a learner.
- Grading should help the student to set his/her goals for future learning, evaluate and track personal progress towards mastery of the standards or established goals, and recognize opportunities for growth and improvement.

Formative and Summative Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering information (evidence) that accurately reflects how well a student is progressing towards mastery of the identified learning targets, standards, or established goals. Assessment data serves to guide teachers in adapting instructional approaches to better meet students' needs. The overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices can also be evaluated through the assessment process.

Formative assessments should happen early and often in order to provide students the feedback they need, so they can progress towards mastery. Students should be given varied opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills; therefore, some formative assessments are utilized to guide instruction and not used as grades.

Summative assessments are cumulative in nature and summarize current individual student mastery of the TEKS or established goals after a period of student practice or work. Summative grades may include major tests or performance tasks (i.e., essay, oral report, lab practical, or project). A key component of summative assessment is teacher-provided feedback that guides students' efforts toward improved performance.

Students must receive timely and meaningful feedback on all assessments.



Assigning of Grades

- The assigning of a grade in a particular course shall reflect individual student mastery of the skills and concepts of the course.
- Summative grades may include major tests or performance tasks. Prior to assigning a summative grade, the teacher is to have adequately taught the concepts to be assessed, and the student is to have had sufficient opportunities to master the concepts before being evaluated. This process includes using appropriate checks for understanding, guided practice, and independent practice prior to a summative assessment.
- Formative grades may include daily work or practice, homework, quizzes, or checks for understanding. These grades should provide a balanced representation of the types of work completed during the course of the grading cycle. Students will be provided multiple formative assessments prior to summative assessment.
- Grade points shall not be awarded or reduced for any non-academic activities (i.e., returning a report card, an incomplete paper heading, bringing or possessing supplies, or attending a school-sponsored event).

Grading Scales for Kindergarten-Second Grade

In kindergarten and first grade, grading is based on mastery of the TEKS as demonstrated through skills assessed/observed by the teacher and individual student work. Mastery of specific skills will be recorded on report cards for individual standards in the core content areas of math, English language arts and reading, science, and social studies.

The reporting categories are as follows:

| Category | Description |
|----------|-----------------|
| M | Mastery |
| P | Progressing |
| C | Area of Concern |

Grading Scales for Third-Twelfth Grades

The grading scale for content area courses in second-twelfth grades is numerically based on the following 100-point scale:

| Grade | Letter Equivalent | Description |
|----------|-------------------|--|
| 90-100 | A | Outstanding progress and mastery of TEKS |
| 80-89 | B | Above average progress and mastery of TEKS |
| 70-79 | C | Average progress and understanding of TEKS |
| Below 70 | F | Below average progress and limited understanding of TEKS |
| | I | Incomplete |



Grade Weights for Report Card Calculation

| Grade Level | Formative Assessments (Daily Work) | Summative Assessments |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|
| PreKindergarten-2 | Please See Standards Based Grading & Reporting Chart on Page 5 | |
| 3-8 | 50% | 50% |
| 9-12 | 40% | 60% |

**Notes: All high school credit courses reflect the 9-12 grade weight expectations. In grades 09-12, semester exams count as 10% of the semester average.*

Minimum Grades per Grading Cycle

| Grade Level | Formative Assessments (Daily Work) | Summative Assessments |
|-------------|---|--|
| 3-5 | One per content, per week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two, per Grading Cycle – Reading and Writing • Three, per Grading Cycle – Social Studies, Math, and Science |
| | Social Studies (when integrated with ELAR)-Six minimum grades. Teacher teams determine the number of formative vs. summative. | |
| 6-8 | One per content, per week | Three, per Grading Cycle |
| 9-12 | One per content, per week | Three, per Grading Cycle |

**Notes: Spelling grades may not count for more than 20% of your overall writing average. Learning Center courses are mastered at 80%, and grades are not reflected in the student's GPA.*

Elementary Art, Music, and Physical Education Grades

Grades in the areas of art, music, and PE will be based on performance and/or participation, using the following scale:

- E=performs at excellent/above standard consistently
- S=performs at standard expectation consistently
- N=performs slightly below standard expectations, but with continuous progress
- U=Performs consistently at beginning or below standard expectation

**Note: Prior to assigning a "U," a teacher must have documented contact with the parent or guardian.*

Reteach, Redos, and Retakes

For reteaching to be effective, teachers must use a different approach from the one they initially used, one that builds on previous activities and focuses on the omissions or errors in student thinking that resulted from these activities (Adapted from Marzano, 2010).

- Correction of the original assignment is not considered a reteach, a redo, or a retake.
- Reteaching should employ different strategies than the original teaching method.
- Working through the Professional Learning Community (PLC), teachers work collaboratively to determine strategies for reteach by answering PLC Question Three, "What will we do if students have not learned the content or skill?"



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The opportunity to redo/retest is a one-time offering per **summative assessment**, on which the student earned a 79% or below. The higher of the two grades will be recorded in the grade book for a maximum grade of 80%. Reassessment must occur within ten instructional days of the original assessment.

- Opportunities for reteach will be provided prior to retest. The extent of tutorials or reteach opportunities is determined by the teacher.
- If 40% (four out of every ten students) of a class fails a summative assessment, it is evident that the class has not reached sufficient mastery of the TEKS; therefore, whole class reteach/reassessment is educationally appropriate and required.
- The assessment may be of an alternative variety from the original assessment, as long as it assesses the same TEKS at the same level of cognition as the original assessment.
- In order to participate in a redo/retake opportunity, students must complete the original assessment, complete all reteaching/relearning activities, and complete and submit any missing formative assignments.

The opportunity to redo a **formative assessment** is a one-time offering for students scoring lower than 80%. The gradebook will reflect the higher of the two grades for a maximum grade of 80%.

In order to take advantage of the redo opportunity, the following must occur:

- Student must have completed and submitted the original assignment as assigned.
- Student must complete extra practice and/or attend an opportunity for reteach on the same concept.
- Student will have 5 days from the date the grade is posted to begin the redo process.
- Students in grades 9-12 are responsible for initiating this process with their teachers within the 5-day window.

Extra Credit

Extra credit shall be awarded on the basis of an academic product that can be directly related to the Aledo ISD curriculum objectives. Extra credit assignments should apply equally to all students enrolled in the same level content course for that campus. Extra credit shall not be given for students providing classroom supplies or materials or awarded for any other non-academic work.

Recording Multiple Grades

An assignment or project may generate multiple grades if it assesses student mastery of different TEKS or established goals. The score may also count for more than one content area. For example, an essay written in science may receive one score for the quality of writing and a different score for accuracy of science content.

Missing or Late Coursework

K-12 principals are responsible for working with teachers to develop a campus late work policy that addresses procedures for submission of late work. Late work policies should be designed to show student mastery of learning and should be developmentally appropriate for the students it represents. Campus late work procedures must align with the district's philosophy of grading. Campus principals will have final approval for late work policies. A copy of the late work policy will



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be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction at least one week prior to the first day of school and shared with students and parents upon entry to the class.

See Campus Supplemental Handbook for details.



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Homework

The purpose of homework is to improve student learning and provide opportunities for extending learning time beyond the school day by providing practice, developing proper study habits, and fostering positive attitudes towards schoolwork beyond the classroom. Homework

should be reasonable in terms of student time and available resources. See

Campus Supplemental Handbook for details.

Absences

Students shall be expected to make up assignments and tests after absences. Students will have one day for each day absent to make-up work (i.e., absent 2 days, they have 2 days to make-up the work). A student shall be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher.

A teacher may give an alternate assignment in place of missed assignments that cannot be re-created. The assignment should reflect mastery of the content missed. Under extenuating circumstances, such as long-term illness or family emergencies, a teacher may give additional time or reduce the length or number of assignments.

Assignments or tests not made up within the allotted time will be subject to campus Late Work Policy.

Academic Integrity

Honesty and integrity are essential to the culture of Aledo ISD because they set the foundation for future success. Accordingly, our district holds high expectations for all students and empowers them to hold high expectations for themselves, their classmates, and their teachers. Current learning models demand that students push the boundaries of their comfort zones to collaborate frequently while continually committing to the timeless principles of honesty and integrity.

Failure to Uphold Academic Integrity

Failure to uphold academic integrity includes cheating or copying the work of another student, allowing another student access to one's work, and unauthorized communication or collaboration. Plagiarism and cheating interfere with the assessment and feedback process that is necessary in order to promote academic growth. Education is based on learning specific skills, forming lifelong work habits, and developing mature coping skills according to each student's unique abilities. Stress sometimes propels students to make unethical choices. In Aledo ISD, students are expected to produce their own work except on projects designated by the teacher as cooperative efforts. Teachers will indicate which assignments are to be cooperative efforts and will establish guidelines for the use of such aids as calculators, computers, word processors, and published study guides. If a student is in doubt about the ethical standards applicable to a particular situation, s/he is responsible for clarifying the matter with the teacher. Remember, each student is responsible for securing his/her own work.



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Plagiarism and cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting material written by someone else or rephrasing the ideas of another without giving the author's name or source.
- Presenting the work of tutors, parents, siblings, or friends as your own.
- Submitting papers, or portions of papers, from the Internet written by someone else.
- Exchanging assignments assigned as independent practice with other students, either handwritten or computer generated, whether you believe they will be copied or not.
- Using any form of memory aid during tests or quizzes without the expressed permission of the instructor.
- Using a computer or other means to translate an assignment from one language into another language and submitting it as an original work.
- Giving or receiving answers during tests or quizzes.
- Photographing and/or distributing a photograph of a blank test.
- Taking credit for group work when you have not contributed an equal or appropriate share of the work.
- Accessing a test or quiz for determining the questions in advance of its administration.
- Using summaries/commentaries (Cliff notes, Spark Notes, etc.) in lieu of reading the assigned materials.

In remote learning, plagiarism and cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Taking and distributing screenshots of work intended to be completed individually.
- Sending DM messages while working on assignments, quizzes, or tests that are intended to be done individually.
- Opening additional browsers while taking a quiz or test online.
- Using any unauthorized applications or devices while taking completing assignments, quizzes, or tests.
- Getting help from others (tutors, siblings, friends, or parents/guardians, etc.) on work that is intended to be done individually.
- Misrepresenting one's identity on assignments.

The teacher will notify the student, parent/guardian, and Assistant Principal of any student who is caught plagiarizing or cheating, and the offense will be documented in the student's personal file. When work is plagiarized or copied from another student, one or both of the students may be penalized. The determination that a student has failed to uphold academic integrity shall be based upon the judgement of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, and/or witness statements.



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In addition, the following consequences must be assigned for cheating/plagiarism on **summative** assignments:

- **1st Offense:** Student will receive a zero on the summative assessment; however, the student will be assigned an alternate assignment/assessment to be made up outside of school hours. The maximum grade the student can receive on the alternate assignment/assessment to replace the zero will be a 70%. Retest policy will not apply.
- **Subsequent Offenses:** After the first offense, graduated disciplinary consequences may occur in accordance with the campus disciplinary plan, as they are often considered persistent misbehavior.

*Please see the campus addendum for more information regarding consequences for cheating/plagiarism on minor assignments/assessments.



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Aledo ISD Academic Integrity Affirmation

Honesty and integrity are essential to the culture of Aledo ISD because they set the foundation for future success. Accordingly, our district holds high expectations for all students and empowers them to hold high expectations for themselves, their classmates, and their teachers. Current learning models demand that students push the boundaries of their comfort zones to collaborate frequently while continually committing to the timeless principles of honesty and integrity

Upholding academic integrity is a reflection on our community values and is the responsibility of the entire Aledo ISD community: students, parents/guardians, teachers, and even our extended community.

My signature below affirms that I have read and understand the Aledo ISD Academic Integrity Policy.

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature



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District Communication of Progress & Mastery

The district shall report progress for all students during each grading period. Each student will receive a computer-generated report card at the end of each grading cycle.

Communication between Teachers and Parents/Guardians

All teachers will communicate with parents regarding student progress in a timely manner. Teachers and/or parents/guardians may request a conference at any time.

As a general guideline, graded work should be up to date in the electronic grade book within five school days of the assignment being turned in by the student. The day an assignment is turned in is day zero.

In first-twelfth grades, if a progress report contains a failing average, the teacher will make direct contact with a parent by email, phone, or conference. It would be appropriate to discuss the performance of this student with the school counselor, intervention teacher, or administrator. Early intervention is essential to student success. A teacher or campus administrator may require any student who has not yet demonstrated mastery or is in danger of failing to attend tutorial sessions.

Learner-Centered Lesson Design

Learner-Centered Lesson Design requires intentional planning. All teachers in Aledo ISD are expected to design lessons through the lens of Rigor, Relevance, and Learner Engagement using district provided rubrics as a reflective tool. Instruction should be authentic, collaborative, and research-based. Deliberate consideration of the standards, instructional strategies, and students' needs--based on the district provided curriculum and/or other resources--is fundamental. Rigorous, relevant, and engaging lessons not only lead to mastery of the content standards but also provide students with opportunities to self-direct, manage complexity, think critically, communicate with peers, and solve problems using contemporary tools.



Special Programs

Special Education

Grading for all students, including those with disabilities, should follow District grading procedures. Students should receive grades based upon student progress in the content of instruction and their response to instruction. Any variation in District grading procedures should be related to the student's specific disability, determined by the student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee, and included in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The ARD committee may make decisions concerning the assignments for which a student will receive grades and the specific weight applied, but cannot alter the grading scale/system established by the District.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities may access the grade level standards using the TEA-developed Vertical Alignment Document and Essence Statements for all grade levels and subject areas. The student's level of independence in completing tasks and the degree to which a student can generalize skills to a variety of settings are required aspects of the STAAR-Alt system and can assist teachers in determining progress toward mastery.

The level of TEKS instruction and content expectations must be clearly articulated in a student's IEP, along with accommodations and/or modifications related to measuring mastery.

This

information is critical for teachers to develop appropriate classroom evaluations and make decisions regarding statewide assessments.

All students receiving special education services in an academic area must have corresponding annual goals, based upon the content standards for the grade-level in which the student is enrolled. The reporting of progress toward IEP goals is distinctly different than the issuing of grades for a course. A student's progress or mastery toward his/her IEP goals is never the basis for his/her grades, e.g., mastery of an IEP goal does not automatically constitute passing a course.

A classroom teacher must assign grades that reflect the student's relative mastery of an assignment. Effort, attendance, work habits, and participation are not directly related to the demonstration of mastery of an assignment, nor do they give a clear picture of the student's academic learning.

Alternative or modified grading is not at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

As determined by the ARD committee, student work can be assessed by the special education teacher, the general education teacher, and/or a combination of both teachers, but must be recorded by the teacher of record.

"The District must provide students with disabilities report cards that are as informative and effective as the report cards provided to students without disabilities" (Section 504 and Title II). Grades for students with disabilities are reported on the report card in the same way as grades are reported for all students. In addition to the report card, progress on individual goals and objectives will be individually reported for each student according to the District's grade reporting timeline. This is a legal requirement.



504 and Dyslexia Programs

The District's Special Programs Department serves students identified under Section 504 and those receiving support for Dyslexia. For information on grading policies for students receiving support for Dyslexia, see the Special Education section of this handbook (above). Curriculum for students receiving 504 services may not be modified.

Students Receiving Additional Services

Some students require additional services during the school day. When a child is pulled from the general education classroom, they shall not be penalized for work missed. A child shall not be required to complete lessons or activities completed while they were receiving additional services; such as, Dyslexia, GT, special education, counseling, etc. Teachers must ensure that students are exposed to any missed content and that they have ample opportunities to master the standards and learning objectives.



Lesson Design with the PLC Questions in Mind

AISD is a Professional Learning Community in which teacher teams meet consistently to ensure that all students learn at high levels. The following questions are used to guide teachers through collaborative planning, lesson design, assessment, reteach and/or extension, and lesson reflection.

Question One: What do we want students to learn?

- Does my planning reflect what students need to know and are able to do to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS?
- Have I created an alignment between the tasks/assessments I have planned and the cognitive level of what I want students to know and be able to do?

Question Two: How will we know if students have learned it?

- Have I regularly encouraged students to assess their own work and others' work in terms of the standards set?
- Have I provided clear and compelling standards prior to demonstrations of learning (i.e., performances, products, projects, and exhibitions)?
- Do I routinely hold assessment conferences with individual students or small groups of students where the qualities of student products are assessed?
- Do I routinely use assessment primarily as a tool to promote student success and only secondarily as a means to justify the distribution of rewards and grades?

Question Three: What will we do if students have not learned the content or skill?

- What differentiated teaching strategies for learning have I provided so each student can experience success?
- When students do not succeed, do I work directly with them to diagnose the causes of failure to correct the situations?

Question Four: What will we do if students already know the content or skill or learn it quickly?

- What differentiated teaching strategies for learning have I provided so each student can experience success?
- When students do succeed, do I work directly with them to extend or enrich their learning?



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