

Gladewater Independent School District 2016-2017 Grading Guidelines

I. General Grading Guidelines

The following general guidelines shall apply:

1. Guidelines for classroom grading procedures shall be clearly communicated to students on the first day of class and to parents at the beginning of the school year. All classroom grading procedures must be consistent with district grading policies and guidelines. Applicable parts of district grading policies and guidelines shall be distributed in staff and student handbooks and other appropriate publications.
2. Homework: Homework may be assigned on a regular basis. Certain assignments, such as written compositions or projects, may require extensive homework.
3. Make-up work: Normally, students shall be given one day for each day missed due to an absence in order to turn in make-up work within the prescribed time. Tests shall be made up within the prescribed timelines, and at a specific time designated by the teacher. Also, teachers may assign additional work to ensure 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 make-up work (including suspensions). The student shall be provided one day for each day absent for unexcused absences. No points may be deducted for the absence being unexcused if the work is turned in within the prescribed time. Students missing for UIL or other school related absences are encouraged to get work prior to absence.
4. Late work: When students fail to turn in assignments at the prescribed time, they shall be permitted to submit late work as indicated by grade level (see below). Extenuating circumstances shall be taken in consideration collaboratively between the principal and teacher of record.
 - a. K-5th - maximum grade of 70 after 3 days; after day 3 grade is entered as zero
 - b. 6th-12th - maximum grade of 70 within 3 days; after day 3 grade is entered as zero

5. Changing Grades: Teachers shall not change grades assigned for a grading period unless 1) an error was made in the calculation process or data entry, or 2) grading policies/guidelines were found to have not been followed in the assigning of grades. Such grade changes shall be documented and approved by the principal prior to the change being made.
6. Students from another district: Grades for students coming from another district will be averaged in by the teacher in the electronic grade book; however, these grades will not appear on the report card. The designated campus PEIMS personnel will receive the grades from the sending district. If the sending district does not submit the student's grades in 10 days, Data Management Information Specialists will report the district to TEA.
7. Second Language Learners: Grading of ELL students should occur as the student develops adequate proficiency in their second language to succeed in the classroom. Accommodations recommended in the LPAC committee must be followed. Teachers may assign a minimum grade of 70 to ELL students for a period of up to three consecutive six weeks.
8. Grade Adjustments: Grade adjustments to be imposed on the work made up by students who have been suspended or who have missed due to unexcused absences shall be decided at the campus level and shall be consistently applied within each building. Students who are suspended (including ISS) have one day for each day of suspension to complete his or her work and may be required to attend a tutorial each day they are assigned to ISS. This standard applies to daily and major work, including tests, projects, etc.
9. Disciplinary Purposes: Teachers shall not use grades for disciplinary purposes other than as permitted by District Policy regarding suspensions, unexcused absences, and cheating.
10. Incomplete Report Card Grades:
 - a. Incomplete report card grades should be assigned only when assignments have not been completed which are essential to the determination of mastery of the TEKS covered during the grading period. A student receiving an incomplete for a grading period has one week (Friday following last day of six week period) to convert the incomplete grade to an earned grade. Grades not completed in the allotted time will be averaged in as a zero. In unusual cases when the student has missed a large quantity of work, the time may be extended but only with written permission of the principal. In all cases, the teacher must communicate to the student the nature of the outstanding work and the time limitation for completing the work. If missing work is not completed, the student will

receive a grade earned based upon the total work that had been assigned for the grading period.

- b. If a student has an incomplete at the end of the school year, the teacher will leave directions with the principal for completing and evaluating the student's work.
11. Failing Grade Lower Limit: Teachers may give a grade of 50 on the report card. Grades below 50 shall be communicate to the campus principal.
 12. Cheating: Grading adjustments for cheating shall be at the discretion of the teacher within the campus guidelines approved by the principal. Guidelines shall be consistently applied within each building. Students may be given a zero or an alternate assignment for work on which they cheated.

I. Six-week Grade Averages:

The six-weeks grade shall reflect student performance from a variety of instructional tasks: projects, classroom activities, homework, and tests (daily, weekly, unit, etc.). The grade for the six-weeks period shall be derived by combining daily work and major grade components.

1. Daily work:
 - a. K-3rd: For Language Arts, reading, and math, minimum of 2 grades per week per subject shall be entered. For science and social studies, minimum of 6 daily grades shall be entered for the grading period.
 - b. 4th-12th: Minimum of 10 grades shall be taken from daily classroom and homework activities to reflect the student's performance over the grading period. Minimum of 5 daily grades shall be entered for 3 week progress report.
 - c. Major grades: Major grades shall include tests (chapter, unit, etc.) and may include special projects, and other such major assessments. Also, any classroom activity that by its very nature is considered to be a major component of the instruction (for example, science laboratory experiments, major written compositions, major presentations, etc.) may be designated by the teacher as a major grade. Rubrics should be provided. The teacher has the ability to designate special classroom activities as major grades. In the case of an on-going, long term project, such as a research paper, multiple grades may be taken from the steps within the project. Those grades for the steps within the project would be considered daily grades, while the completed project would be a major grade.

- i. 1st-3rd: Minimum of two major grades.
 - ii. 4th-12th: Minimum of three major grades. One of the three may be a special project.
 1. No less than three (3) grades may be used to calculate the major grade component for the six-weeks grade. A minimum of one major grade shall be recorded prior to the three week progress report.
2. Six-Weeks Grade Calculation: Six weeks grades shall be determined according to the guidelines listed as follows:
 - a. Elementary, grades PK- Standards based grading will be used. Students will receive marks that report student progress toward meeting content and performance standards two times per year. Still mastery is to be measured as developed or still developing.
 - b. Elementary K: Grades are weighted equally.
 - c. Elementary, grades 1 to 3: Weight shall be given to master tests, major projects, and other similar type assessments in determining the six weeks grade. The six weeks grade shall be determined by 85% daily grades and 15% tests/major grades. There will be a minimum of 2 major grades each six weeks. Six week examinations are required in grades 2 and 3 reading and math. Each six weeks the exam will cover that 6 weeks content.
 - d. Elementary, grades 4 to 5: Six week examinations are required in core subject areas. The six weeks grade shall be determined by 70% daily grades and 30% tests/major grades. There will be a minimum of 3 major grades each six weeks. Each six weeks the exam will cover that 6 weeks content.
 - e. Middle School, grades 6 to 8: Six week examinations are required. The six weeks grade shall be determined by the following percentages: daily grades – 50% and tests/major grades – 50%. There will be a minimum of 3 major grades each six weeks. Each six weeks the exam will cover that 6 weeks content.
 - f. High School, grades 9 to 12: Six week examinations are required. The six weeks grade shall be determined by the following percentages: daily grades—40% and tests/major grades – 60%. Each six weeks the exam will cover that 6 weeks content.

II. Semester and Final Course Grade Averages:

Grades 9-12 shall take a semester exam in each class. Semester 2 EOC course exams will be comprised of the three six weeks averages (4th SW + 5th SW + 6th SW / 3). Exemptions may be allowed for 11th and 12th graders during the second semester. Please see Gladewater High School Exemption Guidelines (Addendum A, p. 10).

Students, who are not enrolled for an entire grading period, semester, or course, shall be provided opportunities to earn credit for the semester or course, or a grade for the grading period. The campus administrator shall take into consideration the student's particular circumstances in determining appropriate opportunities, which shall include, but not be limited to: 1) testing, 2) tutorial session, 3) individualized work, 4) attendance makeup, and 5) summer school.

III. Mastery Level:

1. Mastery of a subject or course through performance on the TEKS is indicated by a grade of the equivalent of 70 or above. The acceptable level of mastery of TEKS in a course or subject is that level which is determined to be necessary for success at the next level or in the next course.
2. If reflected in the IEP, alternative achievement standards may be provided for identified students with disabilities, and the documentation of mastery and grades assigned may be based upon modifications to the TEKS. Otherwise, the TEKS must be used as the basis for awarding of a grade and certifying of mastery of TEKS.
3. Achievement in the TEKS shall be measured by a variety of assessments:
 - Observation of product or process;
 - Evaluation of product or process demonstrated in written or oral assignments;
 - Tests;
 - Teacher validation based on cumulative interaction with the learner.

The student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course.

IV. Modifications in Materials, Methods, and Pace:

1. Teachers are asked to make modifications in the materials they use, vary the methods employed to teach concepts and to adjust the pace of instruction to accommodate the learning styles and needs of students. Modifications are a means to ensure that students reach the appropriate level of mastery of the TEKS, and require notation on the report card.
2. The necessity of these modifications should not be interpreted as to require adjustments in the TEKS, or to lower the academic standards of a course or subject; the standards should stay the same, but the process used to achieve the standards can and should vary.
3. The primary focus of the teacher is mastery of learning for all students. Accordingly, every available resource should be used to bring about the learning, but the level of learning should not be compromised.

V. Reteaching:

When students have been unable to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS, the teacher will reteach. Reteaching shall be incorporated as a regular part of the instructional planning cycle. Students who fail to attain a 70 on an assignment shall have an opportunity for reteaching. The maximum grade that may be earned on a reteaching assignment is 70.

VI. Retesting

General (all grades): The test given as a retest shall be as similar to the same difficulty and cover the same concepts as the first test, but the structure of the test and question format may vary at the teacher's discretion. Teachers may prescribe a reasonable amount of work that must be completed prior to the student being able to take the retest, attend a tutoring session, complete a review sheet, etc. The retest may be taken before or after school and must be completed within 7 calendar days.

Reteaching and retesting shall be integral to instruction. Students who fail to attain a 70 shall have an opportunity for reteaching and retesting; the maximum grade that may be earned on a retest is 70, or the initial test whichever is higher.

Retesting shall be limited to one retest for each test failed.

No retests will be given for benchmarks, six-weeks tests or for semester examinations.

VII. Special Populations:

Special Education –

1. Students in special education will receive instruction based on the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP will address appropriate TEKS and will determine the need for modifications of levels and timelines for mastery. When no modification of the TEKS is necessary, the special education student will be instructed in the mainstream with the same level of mastery required for other students.
2. Teachers who have reservations about the progress of special education students assigned to regular education courses should state those concerns to the diagnostician, inclusion teacher, and/or principal as soon as they are noticed.
3. When students are in regular education classes yet receive support from special education programs, then the grade earned in the class shall be awarded by the mainstream teacher, unless otherwise stipulated by the ARD.

ESL –

Students served by the ESL program will receive content area and ESL TEKS based instruction. Assessment decisions will be made by the LPAC and ARD committees as appropriate as stated in TAC chapter 89. Language instruction will focus on listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

Dyslexia Students –

In determining a student's mastery of a subject area, the teacher shall base grades on a scale determined in the student's 504/dyslexia program plan.

VIII. Tutorials

1. Tutorials are intended to provide additional direct instruction and other intervention for students needing assistance in understanding the concepts presented in class.
2. Students and parents shall be advised of the times tutorials are available. Tutorials shall be held weekly. Frequency per week will be determined by campus principal and shall be consist across the campus.
3. Tutorials may be required for students who are scoring lower than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100. Transportation to and from tutorials will not be provided by the district.

IX. Grade Books:

Accurate, up-to-date electronic grade books shall be maintained weekly by each teacher. Final grade books shall be maintained electronically. For record keeping purposes, each teacher shall print a hard copy of their grade book each grading cycle. The grade books shall include the following information:

1. The number of recorded grades specified in the Grading Guidelines – Six- Week Grade Averages” will be required for each student for each grading period to justify the grade assigned.
2. Title of specified assignment will be noted at the top of each column.
3. Grading Scale
 - a. Academics

i.	90–100	A
ii.	80-89	B
iii.	70-79	C
iv.	69 <	F
 - b. Conduct
 - i. E
 - ii. S
 - iii. N
 - iv. U

X. Reporting Grades, Academic Progress to Students and Parents

Progress Reports:

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, a notice of progress shall be provided to the parent or guardian. Progress reports shall be issued no later than the Wednesday of the 4th week of each grading period. The teacher must make contact with the parent prior to the issuing of the report card if a student has a failing grade for the six weeks.

Report Cards:

Report cards shall be issued to students the week following the close of each of six-weeks of each semester, excluding holidays.

1. With the exception of the report card at the end of the year, PK-5 report cards shall be signed by the parent or guardian and returned promptly to the school. If the notice is not returned to the campus, then a copy of the report card shall be

mailed to the parent, or the parent may be notified of the student's grades by phone or personal contact.

2. The report card shall include the number of absences for the student for the six weeks period.
3. If the grade for the grading period is below the level required for course credit or grade level advancement, the report card shall state the need for a conference between the teacher and the parent. The teacher must make contact with the parent prior to the issuing of the report card if a student has a failing grade for the six weeks.

IEP Report Cards:

To be compliant with federally mandated IEP Report Card, each student who receives direct instruction through an IEP and a Special Education staff member will be provided an IEP Report Card. This document provides information concerning a student's progress towards mastery of his/her IEP goals and objectives. It is provided in conjunction with the regular education report card not in lieu. The IEP Report Card must be provided to the parents in the same manner and time frame that all students in the district receive their report cards.

The objective worksheet report serves the teacher well as backup documentation to support the notation of mastery codes on the IEP Report Card. The objective worksheet report allows teachers an opportunity to utilize the IEP objectives on an ongoing basis. This report is simply a chart listing the IEP objectives without the rest of the IEP information. The grid can be labeled with dates, weeks or any type of organizing notation. These may be used as grading sheets, objective mastery documentation, communication sheets, etc.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

A teacher should schedule one or more conference(s) with the parent(s) of a student if the student is not maintaining passing grades or achieving the expected level of performance, presents some other problem to the teacher, or any other case the teacher considers necessary. In attempting to schedule a conference between a teacher and parent, the parent shall be given at least two alternative dates for the conference.

Addendum A
GHS Exemption Guidelines

1. Exam Exemptions are for Juniors and Seniors only.
2. No student may be exempt in a class for which he/she has an unexcused absence.
3. Additional requirements related to exemptions:
 - a. Any student who is suspended, or placed in ISS or Saturday school as a result of disciplinary action is not eligible for any exemption from any semester exam. This includes ISS for tardies.
 - b. Determination of the grade average to qualify for an exemption will be accomplished by calculating the mathematical average of the three six weeks grading periods, which make up the semester.
 - c. Students may choose to take semester exams even though they qualify for the exemption. In this situation the grade average of the course shall not be lowered by the exam grade.
4. Exemption eligibility requirements for grades and attendance:
 - a. Students with an 80 - 84 average can have no more than one excused absence in each class for which an exemption is earned.
 - b. Students with an 85 - 89 average can have no more than two excused absences in each class for which the exemption is earned.
 - c. Students with a 90 or higher average can have no more than three excused absences in each class for which the exemption is earned.
 - d. Students with more than three absences are not eligible for an exemption.
 - e. Three tardies per semester in any class will equal one absence in that class for exemptions purposes only.

**This exemption policy does not pertain to dual credit courses.