



Hallsville ISD Elementary Grading & Assessment Guidelines

Philosophy

Grades are a reflection of the students ongoing learning process. All students can learn, yet not all students learn at the same pace. As students progress through their educational careers, they will demonstrate developmentally appropriate cognitive abilities, study habits, and behaviors. The ultimate goal is to produce self-sufficient scholars who take ownership of their own learning process.

Purpose of Grades/Assessment

1. Grades are a measure of a student's progress towards mastery of the grade level standards of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
2. Grades provide meaningful feedback to teachers, students, and parents to drive classroom instruction.
3. Grades reflect the students' ownership and accountability towards their learning.

Types of Assessment

General student mastery of subject matter may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary, therefore, for all grades to have written paperwork as their source. Nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every assignment produced. Although the teacher will monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity which they assign, 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. Students' work may be evaluated for more than one subject area as appropriate.

Screeners

PK-4th Reading and Math Assessments (screening data purposes only) - Fountas & Pinnell, Circle, TxKEA, TPRI, iReady, etc.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments take place during the process of learning and teaching. Formative assessment is the monitoring that occurs throughout the process of learning, providing students with feedback on how they are doing and informing the teacher on the next learning steps. Not all formative assessments will be placed in the gradebook. Formative assessments that are placed in the gradebook will be common across the grade level on that campus.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are culminating assignments, which give information on students' mastery of content, knowledge, or skills and are a collection of information at the conclusion of a unit, grading period, semester, or course. Examples of summative assessments include, but are not limited to:

- **Unit Assessments**: Each team is required to administer a Unit Assessment at the conclusion of each unit or at natural breaks in the unit (about every 3-4 weeks). Units may be combined as needed and will

be determined by each campus. Students in special programs must have individual plans followed. Assessments are to be no more than 10-15 questions (may include an Extended Constructed Response) and should reflect the standards. Unit Assessment data should align with the data revealed through the district assessment process and, ultimately, the STAAR. When that is not the case, the team re-evaluates the questions on the Unit Assessment to ensure alignment with the TEKS.

- **District Developed**: Distinct Assessments (DAs) and Mock Assessments are administered during a window of time established by the district. Both provide a more summative view of what students have mastered up to the date of the test. Students in special programs may only have STAAR allowable accommodations. They are also used to guide teachers on which skills students will need more work on in the next grading period. Ultimately, District Assessments help measure the effectiveness of the curriculum document and Tier I instruction. They are also predictive of STAAR performance.

Minimum Number of Grades

There must be a sufficient number of grades taken to support the grade average assigned. Grades entered for academic work must reflect student achievement and communicate progress to parents. Grades should NOT be given for returning signed papers, attending school functions/events, bringing supplies, etc. Each campus has established a minimum number of grades to be entered during each nine week grading period as follows:

Grades 2-4 Minimum of 7 grades per 9 weeks in each content area

- All grades are common, across grade level and campus
- Unit assessments will be taken as a standalone grade as decided by the grade level across the district.
- Campuses may increase the minimum number of grades as needed

Methods of Reporting Grades/Progress

All grades are standards-based as they directly align to the grade level standards (TEKS). All grades are common and agreed upon in common planning meetings, across grade level and campus.

- Name assignments by the title (focus skill in description)
- Grades for each assignment must be entered within 1 calendar week of the assignment due date
- Unit assessments must be taken within 3 days prior to the closing of the grading period
 - Unit assessment data may be used as a replacement grade to show progress of grade level standard assessed.
- Students will be given multiple opportunities as agreed upon by your grade level campus team

Independent Practice/Homework

Homework and practice are related, connected by the context when students are learning on their own and applying new knowledge. Teachers approach this kind of learning experience as any other—matching the planned activity to the learning goal.

Research on homework indicates that it should be approached not as an afterthought to the school day, but as a focused strategy for increasing understanding. Knowing which type of homework is needed helps teachers design appropriate homework assignments. Research also shows that the student should have a basic understanding of the concept being practiced prior to having it assigned independently. This prevents the student from practicing the incorrect process and creating misconceptions.

- Is common across campus grade level and content
- Is not graded
- Does not have disciplinary actions enforced for incomplete
- Is given on a Monday and due on a Friday
- Involves reading a minimum of 20 minutes every night in K-4
- Will consist of previously mastered skills
- Will be coordinated across the contents to stay within a reasonable amount of time spent on homework per night

Reassessment

As students may not learn at the same pace, additional opportunities to demonstrate mastery are sometimes given. The goal is to measure the student's progress toward objective mastery. Therefore, the grade or data taken for reassessment should reflect the full level of mastery of that standard over a given time period within the current 9 weeks.

Given the number of TEKS required in each course, it is not possible to reassess every skill. Grade levels have identified essential standards that students must master in order to be prepared for the next grade level, other content areas, and in general life application. Students are given continued opportunity to learn and demonstrate mastery on those standards.

Kindergarten-1st

- Skills are continuously assessed as concepts are retaught throughout each grading period.
- Data collected throughout the nine weeks is compiled to report progress to date on each report card.

Grades 2-4

- Correcting for a 70 is not re-teaching
- All students can raise their grade, not just if they are failing.
- Reteach for mastery of standard, not the test
- Grades are TEKS based, not for participation, etc.

All Grade Levels

At the conclusion of a 9-week grading period, grades on the report card will reflect mastery to that point. While teachers continue to work on that skill with students, the report card is not changed to reflect learning that happens after the grading period ends.

Grade change request is allowed past the marking period in response to extenuating circumstances (major illness, family crisis, etc.).

Projects/Project-Based Activities

Projects and project-based activities offer students authentic, engaging learning experiences with checkpoints for assessment and feedback. These are carefully designed in advance with a rubric that is aligned to the learning objectives. Time in class along with resources and teacher support are provided in order to support all students in the same ways. Grades/products are not dependent upon resources or support that parents may or may not have at home.

Extra Credit

To ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all, mastery of the standards is reflected through grades/activities that are assigned equitably to all students.

- Grades are standards based, not for participation (Kleenex, supplies, food items, parent attendance to meetings, etc.)

Make-Up Work

Make-up work is expected of all students when he/she is absent for any reason. Students will have no more than 2 class days per absence to return work. If a student knows of an absence, every effort should be made to collect work prior to the absence. After 2 class days, follow missing work guidelines.

Special Programs

Plans for special populations are always followed when assessing students. This includes students receiving Special Education services, Emergent Bilingual, students that receive Section 504 services, and/or are served through campus MTSS procedures.

Students are required to take benchmark assessments if they are scheduled to take the STAAR assessment. Students whose IEPs indicate that they will take the STAAR Alt-2 will take a benchmark that meets their IEP goals.