



GAINESVILLE
I.S.D.

**ELEMENTARY
ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK**

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Foreword

The Instructional, Grading, and Reporting Procedures outlined in this handbook provide:

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

State Curriculum

Curriculum content is prescribed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 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 TEA, but provides a framework to draw upon for the development of local curriculum.

Local Curriculum (EIE Local)

The District shall establish instructional objectives that relate to the essential knowledge and skills 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.

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

Scope & 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. The curriculum documents are reviewed and revised regularly to reflect real-world needs, depth and complexity, rigor and relevance, and to meet the needs of all students.

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. Locally-purchased instructional materials are selected by the District, campus or individual teachers to meet the needs of students.

Instructional Practices

Instructional strategies and practices to ensure student success are based upon campus and teacher analysis of student needs, effective teaching practices, student learning styles, and demonstrated success through the assessment process.

Achievement grades should be fairly 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.

Academic Achievement

CURRICULUM MASTERY

Promotion 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 EHBC]

STANDARDS FOR MASTERY

Mastery shall be determined as follows:

Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be used to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.

Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit or final exams or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required. [EIE Local]

GRADES 1-4

In grades 1-4, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade-level standards (TEKS) for all subject areas, a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. [EIE Local]

GRADES 5-8

In grades 5-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade-level standards (TEKS) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. [EIE Local]

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Promotion standards and appropriate assessment and acceleration options, as established by individualized education programs (IEP) or grade-level classification of students eligible for special education, shall be determined by the ARD committee.

LEP STUDENTS

In assessing students of limited English proficiency for mastery of the TEKS, the District shall be flexible in determining methods to allow the students to demonstrate knowledge or competency independent of their English language skills in the following ways:

- ☞ Assessment in the primary language.
- ☞ Assessment using linguistic accommodation.
- ☞ Assessment with multiple varied instruments. [See EHBE]

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, students in grades 5 and 8 must meet the passing standard established by the State Board on the following assessments:

| GR. | STAAR Assessments |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 5 | STAAR Reading & Mathematics |
| 8 | STAAR Reading & Mathematics |

Gainesville I.S.D. Elementary Assessment Handbook

Official Grade Reports

PROGRESS REPORTS/ REPORT CARDS

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.

Interim progress reports shall be issued for all students after the third week of each grading period. Supplemental progress reports may be issued at the teacher's discretion.

The Report Card is a communication tool for parents/guardians and students. Report Cards provide information regarding academic progress, student conduct, absences, and are issued every six weeks.

Parents/guardians may also access student progress information through the student/parent grade book portal:

<https://txcnt03.esc11.net/gvilleconnect/Login.aspx>

District-Level Assessments

The purpose of district-developed Assessments is to ensure the complete alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum in order to drive instruction and to continuously improve the academic progress of all students.

Assessments aligned to the curriculum are **Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBA)**.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value of teaching, learning and scholarship. GISD 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

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests 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. [EIA Local]

BEHAVIORS DEFINED AS CHEATING:

- ☹ *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:

- ☹ *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.*

Gainesville I.S.D. Elementary Assessment Handbook

Roles and Responsibilities

STUDENT

- ☹ To complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher
- ☹ To plan to carefully schedule work on long-term assignments so that assignments will be completed on time
- ☹ To communicate with the teacher when he/she does not understand the assignment or is experiencing difficulty prior to due date

PARENT/GUARDIAN

- ☹ To establish a specific time, place, and manner for homework to be completed
- ☹ To provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete homework
- ☹ To monitor as needed, but not do homework for the student
- ☹ To assist the student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments
- ☹ To initiate communication with the teacher when concerns arise

TEACHER

- ☹ To provide meaningful tasks that enrich and supplement work introduced in class
- ☹ To communicate homework assignments, both regular and long-range, in an appropriate framework
- ☹ To provide effective instruction prior to assigning homework that adequately prepares the child to do the task independently and successfully
- ☹ To provide course requirements and expectations at the beginning of each grading period to students and parents
- ☹ To consider available resources, materials, and home situations when assigning a task
- ☹ To review and return homework to students within a timeframe which enhances instruction and provides a benefit to the student
- Each campus and/or department will adhere to the late work guidelines as established in this handbook.

Teacher Records Grade Book

The grading record should be a teacher's record and/or file of evidence to support grades reported on the report card. Grades should be logical, justifiable, and sufficient in number to assure that the report card grade is an accurate measure of the student's progress and achievement.

Grades should reflect a balance of objectives covered. The teacher's grade record is a part of the official documentation portraying mastery of TEKS and District objectives. If possible, a description of the learning task should be included in this documentation. These records should be accurately maintained and teachers should be aware that many times grades will need to be justified. All grades should be recorded legibly.

Gradebooks for prekindergarten and kindergarten may consist of checklists, anecdotal records, or individual portfolios.

Return of Assignments

Teachers should review and return all graded work to students within a time frame that will benefit the student. Graded daily work should be returned on a weekly basis. Larger projects should be reviewed and returned on a timely basis. This will allow the student to identify any areas of weakness and arrange for tutorials or extra study sessions prior to assessment.

Gainesville I.S.D. Elementary Assessment Handbook

Tutorials

The purpose of a tutorial session is to provide instruction to assist students who have not mastered the TEKS currently begin taught. Tutorials also serve to provide instructional reinforcement for students needing assistance. All District students may attend tutorial sessions; however, students who have not mastered the TEKS (or are currently failing) will be given priority during scheduled tutorial times.

- ☺ Tutorials will be offered on an as needed basis before or after school for students who are not mastering the state-mandated TEKS.
- ☺ Parents will be notified and records maintained by teachers that a student requires tutorial instruction.
- ☺ Attendance of students will be maintained by teachers.

Lesson Plans

Elementary teachers are required to prepare weekly lesson plans to assist with planning for instruction. The purpose of lesson plans is to provide a written document, which outlines daily objectives and activities for instruction. The lesson plan should include state, district, and campus objectives, which reflect the required TEKS. Lesson plans are turned in weekly.

Teacher WebPages

GISD campus teachers maintain their individual teacher webpages which include a variety of information for students and parents.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents shall be provided any relevant information concerning their child that will enhance their understanding of the child's ability, effort, success, or progress in the school program.

Communicating with parents is one of the most important responsibilities of teachers. Conferences provide an arena for collecting developmental and personal information from parents that may affect a child's learning. Developing rapport and encouraging parent involvement in the child's educational process; and reporting and discussing student progress with parents is an integral part of helping students be successful.

Parents have a right and a need to know whatever the school knows about the abilities, achievement, progress, and problems of their children in schools. The school has an obligation to communicate such information in an understandable and usable form.

A combination of report cards, progress reports and parent conferences is used to inform parents of their child's progress in school.

Teachers at all grade levels shall inform parents when a student's academic progress becomes unsatisfactory.

Please Note:

- ☺ Pre-K through grade six (6) will conduct parent-teacher conferences at the end of the First Six Weeks.
- ☺ Parent-Teacher conferences will be conducted at the end of the Fifth Six Weeks for students of need.

Types of Assessments

GENERAL

Student mastery of subject matter 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 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.

PERFORMANCE-BASED COURSES

Performance-based courses may have activities and assignments that differ significantly from other academic courses. Performance-based courses include courses within the Fine Arts and Physical Educational departments.

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, the grade may come from a higher percentage of participation.

Major Assessments

TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

Examinations serve to evaluate mastery of TEKS, concepts, understandings and District objectives. They provide opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skill. Types of examination include:

- ☹ CBA / ☹ SUMM.
- ☹ TEKS / ☹ BM.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

Performance assessments are measures of a student's progress toward mastery of TEKS and District curriculum objectives. There are many forms of assessment that may or may not be utilized by individual teachers. Types of performance assessments include:

- ✓ Classroom participation
- ✓ Classroom discussions
- ✓ Oral responses
- ✓ Written responses
- ✓ Experiments
- ✓ Teacher observation
- ✓ Research project
- ✓ Checklists of skills
- ✓ Portfolios
- ✓ Enrichment
- ✓ Group work/projects
- ✓ Chapter/Unit tests

COMPOSITIONS

In writing, compositions are formal writing assignments. Compositions often take a longer time to complete and are graded for many components. The evaluation of the writing process is the major determinant of the average.

Daily Grades

Classwork is any instructional activity defined/planned by the teacher to be completed during a class period to facilitate the learning process.

Gainesville I.S.D. Elementary Assessment Handbook

Homework

Homework is work that is assigned to be completed at home. No new concepts should be included in homework.

Homework is an effective tool in developing responsibility, study habits, and skills. It is an extension of the learning process and involves the home in the child's curriculum. It should be purposeful, related to classroom experiences, and be age and grade appropriate. The purpose and directions for the assignment need to be clearly communicated and should be preceded by instruction that adequately prepares the child to do the task independently and successfully.

☹ Homework is not to be assigned on weekends or before holidays with the exception of previously scheduled special reports and/or projects.

☹ Because students work at different paces, it may take some students more or less time to complete assignments. Teachers must use discretion about the amount of work given, so that homework does not consistently exceed these time limits.

GRADES K-1 HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- ☹ Homework should be a review or reinforcement of skills already covered in the classroom. It should not be new information for the student.
- ☹ Each student is expected to read, or be read to, 15 minutes each school night in addition to assigned homework.
- ☹ Parents are provided with mathematical activities to use with their children to help strengthen number recognition at the kindergarten level and addition/subtraction at the first grade level.

GRADES 2-5 HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- ☹ Homework should be a review of reinforcement of skills already covered in the classroom. It should not be new information for the student.
 - ☹ Students are expected to complete all homework assignments.
 - ☹ Each student is expected to read, or be read to, at least 20 minutes each school night in addition to assigned homework; and
 - ☹ Each student is expected to practice grade appropriate math facts (*addition, subtraction, multiplication, division*) each school night in addition to assigned homework.
- If your child's total homework exceeds one hour, please contact his/her teacher.
- ☹ If two or more teachers are working with a student, the homework should be coordinated to adhere to the one-hour time frame limit.

GRADING HOMEWORK

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.

EXTRA CREDIT POINTS

Teachers may assign extra points to any assignment as long as all students have the same opportunity for such points; however, no "additional" assignments are given solely as extra credit. The instructional process at the elementary level stresses multiple opportunities for student success.

Gainesville I.S.D. Elementary Assessment Handbook

Weight of Grades (Gr. 1-5)

- ☹ All assignments, including daily work, tests, quizzes, and major projects are weighted evenly for the student's average.
- ☹ It should be noted, however, that some major projects may comprise more than one assignment.
- ☹ Calculated averages reported on Progress Reports or Report Cards may not exceed 100%.

Minimum Number of Grades

For grades 1-5, a minimum of **TWO (2)** grades per subject area per week should be given in each core academic area (Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies) during each six-week grading period.

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

Recording of Failing Grades

The District shall record a 50 in the permanent cumulative record for any average numerical grade that is lower than 50. [EIA Local]

Transfer Grades

Students new to the District or who enroll in a school after the start of a grading period shall be treated fairly in awarding grades. Grades shall be computed using a combination of grades from the former school and grades earned for the time the student has been enrolled in the new school.

Grades 2-5 Late Work

Late work penalties are ten points deducted each day for the first three days that work is late. A zero is recorded after the third day.

| Days Late | % of Grade Received by Student | Example(s) |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 Day | 90% | 100 records as 90 (100 x 0.10 = 10 points off) |
| 2 Days | 80% | 100 records as 80 (100 x 0.20 = 20 points off) |
| 3 Days | 70% | Not to exceed 70% |

Make Up Work

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests following any absence.

All students receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an absence, including excused and unexcused absences and absences due to suspension from school.

- ☹ A student will be given as many days as he/she was absent to make up tests and other missed assignments.
- ☹ If a student does not complete the work assigned after the allotted number of days has passed, the actual grade will be recorded in the grade book.
- ☹ Teachers are not required to provide assignments prior to an absence, unless the absence has been approved by the building principal in advance.
- ☹ Students should not be required, on the day of returning to school, to take a quiz or test that was announced during the student's absence.

Gainesville I.S.D. Elementary Assessment Handbook

Reteach-Reassess for Mastery

GISD 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.

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

- ☺ Teachers will monitor and identify students who need reteaching.
- ☺ Teachers will provide reteaching as necessary.
- ☺ Students will be reevaluated after reteaching has occurred. Reevaluation may include, but is not limited to, oral examination, special assignments or a formal test.
- ☺ After reteach and reassessment, the teacher may give the student up to a grade of 70, or average the grades together, depending upon what is outlined in the teacher's grading expectations.

Acceleration (Intervention)

Acceleration (Intervention) is an integral part of the elementary instructional program and is an ongoing process. Frequent evaluation, both formal and informal, will determine the need for acceleration or intervention.

Acceleration / Intervention:

- ☺ Provides frequent reinforcement and review so that a student does not regress or have gaps in learning.
- ☺ Occurs at the time the need is identified;
- ☺ Allows the student to progress systematically through content without experiencing extended, frustrating periods of non-achievement
- ☺ Offers a variation in instructional approach—uses a new technique, strategies, materials, opportunity for review, and practice
- ☺ Includes, but is not limited to, targeted small-group instruction, tutorials, and summer school

Academic Achievement Awards

Students will be recognized for their academic achievement at the end of each school year with the following awards:

| Award | Criteria |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| GOLD | All "A"s 5 out of 6 six weeks |
| SILVER | All "A"s 4 out of 6 six weeks |
| BRONZE | All "A"s 3 out of 6 six weeks |

NOTE: If grades from previous schools are available for students transferring into the district during the middle of the school year, they may be used in combination with GISD report card grades to determine if students meet the above criteria.