

Elementary Grading and Reporting Handbook



2023-2024

Montgomery ISD

2023-2024 Elementary Grading and Reporting Handbook

Handbook prepared by
MISD Teaching and Learning Department
in collaboration with campus leaders.

Montgomery ISD Administration
Dr. Heath Morrison, Superintendent
Carrie Fitzpatrick, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to foster consistency in grading practices among campuses, grade levels and courses. It serves as a guide in decision making at the teacher and administrator level.

Mission

Montgomery ISD, in partnership with families and the community, will grow and develop future generations of leaders and productive citizens by offering innovative academic programs responsive to every student's individual needs. The district will prepare all students for the college, career, or military opportunity of their choice and will educate the whole child by addressing student social and emotional well-being. The workplace culture of Montgomery ISD will be one of positivity, collaboration, and trust.

Montgomery ISD will accomplish this mission through an unwavering commitment to increasing academic outcomes for all students; providing safe school environments where productive academic instruction can occur; exercising fiscal transparency while being responsible fiduciaries of taxpayer dollars; offering world class educational tools, resources and facilities; recruiting, hiring, growing, and retaining high-quality educators and employees; and engaging in clear and consistent communication with parents, staff, and stakeholders.

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Grading and Reporting Symbols

A. Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 Standards-Based Grading

In grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Grade 1, reporting of progress will be marked using the codes below.

M = Mastery of Standard

The student consistently meets grade level expectations and standards. Performance is characterized by the ability to apply skills with accuracy and quality with minimal assistance.

⊕ = Making Sufficient Progress Toward Mastery of Standard

The student is progressing towards grade level standards and expectations. Performance varies in consistency with accuracy and quality.

— = Making Insufficient Progress Toward Mastery of Standard

The student has minimal understanding of the standard. The student will need additional practice and intensive support in order to meet grade level expectations.

B. Grades 2 through 5 Grading Scale

In grades 2-5, student proficiency will be determined using a traditional grading scale. Student proficiency shall be reported using a 100 point system as outlined below.

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade
A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
F	69 and below

C. Conduct Grades

E: Exemplary

S: Satisfactory

N: Needs Improvement

U: Unsatisfactory

General Grading Standards

A. Elementary Grading Philosophy

1. The primary purpose of grades is to evaluate and provide feedback to students, parents/guardians, and teachers on relative mastery of state standards.
2. Grades should be fair, timely, and actionable information which can be used for continued learning and improvement.

B. Grading Categories and Weight

Students receive a numeric grade in Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science each grading period. Grades shall reflect the students' progress towards proficiency of grade level learning standards, called the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Teachers should use various indicators to monitor and assess student progress; however it is not required that grades be assigned every time progress is assessed and feedback given.

In grades 3-5, grades will be reported in two categories:

1. Major grades will count as 50% of the student's grading period average.

Examples of major grades include major projects, cumulative assignments, unit tests, and written compositions. Before a major grade is assigned, the teacher is to have adequately taught the concept and the student is to have had sufficient time to master the concept being evaluated. This process includes using appropriate checks for understanding, guided practice, and independent practice before being given a major grade assignment. If a project or assignment merits more than one major grade (multiple grades), each grade should represent a different component of the project.

Example: Grade 1 Content Grade 2 Organization

2. Minor grades will count as 50% of the student's grading period average.

Examples of minor grades include daily assignments, quizzes, notebook/journal responses, interim work for projects, learning centers/workstations, lab reports, or phonics/word study, spelling, grammar (tests or assignments). These grades should be a balanced representation of the types of work completed during the course of the grading period.

In grade 2, graded assignments carry equal weight and, therefore, will not be categorized as major or minor.

C. Number of Assignments in each Grading Category

During each grading period, the following number of grades shall be recorded in each of the specified core subject areas:

Grade 2

Subject	Minimum Number of Grades
Math	9
Language Arts	9
Social Studies	6
Science	6

Grades 3-5

Subject	Minimum Number of Grades	Minimum Number of Grades per Category	
		Minor	Major
Math	9	6	3
Language Arts	9	6	3
Social Studies	6	4	2
Science	Grade 3 = 6 Grades 4 and 5 = 8	Grades 3 = 4 Grades 4 and 5 = 6	2

1. During Quarter 1 and 4 only, 2 major grades may be recorded in Math and Language Arts.
2. Campuses may determine to record additional grades per category in collaboration with grade level teams.
3. Except for unique circumstances, determining assignments to be graded and the content to which each assignment best corresponds, will be determined by content area/grade level teams at each campus.

D. Balanced Grading

During each grading period, teachers should provide for a balanced, well-rounded view of subject mastery.

An example of balanced grading:

Language Arts		Math		Science		Social Studies	
Reading Comprehension	3	Concept/Skill (TEK)	4	Concept/Skill (TEK)	3	Concept/Skill (TEK)	5
Written Composition	2	Fluency	2	Lab	2	Written Response	1
Phonics/ Word Study	2	Problem Solving	2	Written Response	1	TOTAL	6
Vocabulary	1	Written Response	1	TOTAL	6		
Grammar/ Conventions	1	TOTAL	9				
TOTAL	9						

E. Reteaching and Reassessment

The District's goal is for every student to master standards specified for each grade level. If a student does not demonstrate 70% mastery of concepts and skills on a major assignment/test, reteaching and reassessing shall be provided for the student.

1. Reteaching must occur whenever a student scores below 70% on a major assignment/test. Reteaching should employ instructional strategies different from the original instruction. Strategies for reteaching include, but are not limited to: small group instruction, use of alternate and differentiated materials, computer-assisted/online instruction, multisensory teaching techniques, hands-on and subject appropriate manipulative materials.
2. If a student scores above 70% on a major assignment/test, he/she has the opportunity to reassess.
3. All students are eligible for one reassessment per major grade.
4. Reassessment should cover the same content at the same level of difficulty as the original assessment. Reassessment may include one of the following methods:
 - a. Redo the assessment
 - b. Take a comparable alternate assessment
 - c. Complete a different project over the same learning standards
 - d. Corrections with justification for new responses
5. Reassessment does not constitute reteaching.
6. When recording re-assessment grades in the District gradebook program, the original grade must be noted by the teacher.
7. The higher of the two grades will be recorded.

8. If the class average for a major assignment/assessment is below 70% the class material will be retaught within the grading period, and a retest opportunity will be provided for all students.

F. Make Up Work

1. All students shall be allowed to make up work when they are absent from class.
2. Students have the total number of school days absent plus one additional school day in which to complete the assignments.
3. In certain circumstances where a prolonged illness or family emergencies are involved, an arrangement will be made between student and teacher for additional time to complete make-up work.
4. When an assignment is missing **during the make-up work timeline**, the teacher will place an “M” in the online gradebook in place of the numeric grade until the assignment is turned in.

G. Late Work

1. Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due date communicated by the classroom teacher to ensure students progress through the learning standards.
2. Late work may only be accepted during the current grading period.
3. When an assignment is submitted after a deadline, a maximum penalty of ten (10) points per school day may be deducted from the grade with a maximum of thirty (30) points deducted. Teachers will use professional discretion in determining when such a deduction is inappropriate.
4. When an assignment is missing/late, the teacher will place an “M”** in the online gradebook in place of the numeric grade until the assignment is turned in.

H. Grading Penalties

1. There will be no penalty for failure to include name, dates, headings or other formatting errors unless it is specifically tied to a learning standard.
2. A student will not receive a grade for another student's work when assigned to work in groups for a Major grade. Teachers will grade based on individual student achievement in relation to the learning standards.

I. Extra Credit

Grades should reflect mastery of the TEKS rather than work habits. Grades may not be given for parent signatures, extra supplies, or any type of student compliance actions.

J. Assigning Conduct Grades

1. The areas of attitude, behavior, and tardiness will not influence a student's academic grade.
2. Conduct grades should be a cumulative reflection of the student's conduct throughout the grading period.
3. Teachers shall make parent contact prior to reporting a conduct grade of **N** or **U** on the report card.

K. Art, Music, and Physical Education

Art, music, and physical education grades should reflect a student's progress on curriculum goals. Behavior and conduct for these courses will be addressed through a citizenship portion of the report card for each of these areas.

L. Homework

1. Homework may be assigned to reinforce and practice skills taught at school. Homework will not be graded or assigned for disciplinary purposes.
2. The total number of minutes of homework assigned each day shall not exceed:
 - Pre-K through Grade 1 = 10 minutes
 - Grades 2 and 3 = 20 minutes
 - Grades 4 and 5 = 30 minutes

M. District Assessments

1. Students in grades 2-5 will be administered several Unit Assessments throughout the year. Unit Assessments are designed to gather evidence of student learning and are used to identify students' strengths and areas for growth. Data gathered from various Unit Assessments will be used at the district-level to indicate any curriculum, instructional or programmatic implications. Unit Assessments may be used for a major or minor grade in grades 3-5.
2. In grades 3-5, one interim or benchmark assessment will be administered in each tested content area per year. The purpose of these benchmarks is to identify student progress towards mastery of learning objectives and to plan for individual and class instructional needs. STAAR Benchmarks will not be used as a grade.

Documentation of Grades

A. Grading and Posting of Grades

1. The District gradebook program provides parents an opportunity to be full partners with their child and their child's teachers in monitoring progress throughout the year.
2. Teachers shall post grades in the online gradebook within 5 business days of the due date or date the assignment is turned in.
3. It is best practice to have at least one major grade prior to progress report.

4. Whenever possible, the teacher shall be specific when naming the assignment in the gradebook to align with the skill/concept that was assessed. For example, “Forms of Energy” in lieu of a generic title such as “Lesson 5.1” provides a better understanding of the content of the assignment.

B. Progress Reports/ Report Cards Dates

In accordance with Board Policy, on a form approved by the Superintendent or designee, the District shall issue grade reports/report cards for each student every nine weeks for prekindergarten through grade 5.

Interim progress reports shall also be issued for students in grades pre-kindergarten through grade 5 each 4 ½ weeks. In addition to these requirements, supplemental progress reports may be issued at the teacher's discretion.

The schedule below is the grade reporting schedule for the 2023-2024 school year.

Grading Period	Progress Report Grades Due	Progress Report Delivery	Report Card Grades Due	Report Card Delivery
1	September 11, 2023	September 12, 2023	October 12, 2023	October 17, 2023
2	November 27, 2023	November 28, 2023	January 11, 2024	January 16, 2024
3	February 16, 2024	February 20, 2024	March 19, 2024	March 26, 2024
4	April 22, 2024	April 23, 2024	May 28, 2024	May 30, 2024

Grading Special Populations

A. Emergent Bilingual Student Guidelines

Emergent Bilingual (EB) students are at different stages of language acquisition. In assessing EBs for mastery of the essential knowledge and skills of the required curriculum, which includes the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), the District will be flexible with methods allowing EBs to demonstrate knowledge, or competency regardless of their oral or written fluency and skills in English.

Per Texas Administrative Code 89.1210(e), second language acquisition methods, which may involve the use of the students' primary language, may be provided in any of the courses or electives required for promotion or graduation to assist EBs to master the essential knowledge and skills for the required subject(s). The use of second language acquisition methods shall not impede the awarding of credit toward meeting promotion or graduation requirements.

B. Students with Disabilities

A special note as it applies to Students with Disabilities (SWD) who are identified and eligible to receive services through either Section 504 or Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committees:*

ALL students are expected to follow the scope and sequence for the enrolled grade level curriculum and to be assessed on their mastery of the enrolled grade level curriculum. SWD are often provided **accommodations** to ensure access to grade level instruction and/or assessment of their learning. Some students, however, require **modifications** to access and meaningfully participate in enrolled grade level instruction and/or assessments. These students require a change in the content, methodology, and/or delivery of instruction and/or assessment that changes the depth and/or complexity of the standard or skill all students are expected to acquire as a result of his/her disability. The more significant and compounded the disability/ies, the more likely the need for modification of standards, especially as the rigor of content increases as students get older. Section 504 and/or ARD Committees will make instructional and assessment decisions for students with disabilities in accordance with federal and state regulations.

- **Accommodation** - an accommodation allows a student to access and complete the same assignments and/or assessments as other students, but with changes in timing, presentation, formatting, scheduling, and/or response style without significantly or fundamentally altering the standard or objective or what the assignment or test is measuring.
- **Modification** - a modification is a change in the student learning objective (standard) specifically to the rigor, depth, and complexity of the expectation for mastery; in turn students who receive modifications to learning standards often require alternate ways to access grade level learning targets.

C. Homeless Student Guidelines

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act provides many important protections and rights for homeless children and unaccompanied minors. The Act offers guidance to educators in helping these students actively, fully, and successfully participate in and complete their education. In MISD, we recognize the difficulties these students face and strive to reduce obstacles to success while upholding the expectation of rigorous content and standards our students anticipate. Homeless students may need assistance with the completion of missed assignments, alternate assignments due to lack of technology outside the school day should be considered, and test makeup/retake opportunities provided during the school day.

D. Gifted and Talented Student Guidelines

Identified Gifted & Talented students should not be given additional assignments. Assignments developed for Gifted & Talented students should take the place of regular class assignments.

Promotion and Retention

A. Promotion Policy

1. In kindergarten and grade 1, promotion shall be based on a standards-based reporting system, which covers grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas. Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on demonstrated proficiency as referenced on the report card for the foundation subjects of reading, mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. In addition, results of the approved state reading diagnostic assessments and other assessments shall be considered. EIE (LOCAL)
2. In grades 2 through 5, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts and mathematics. EIE (LOCAL)

B. Attendance

1. State law requires students to be in attendance 90 percent of the days a class is offered in order to be considered for promotion. FEC (LOCAL)
2. When a student's attendance drops below 90 percent but remains at least at 75 percent of the days the class is offered, the student may earn credit for the class or a final grade by completing a plan approved by the principal. This plan must provide for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class as determined by the principal. FEC (LOCAL)