

GRADING GUIDELINES

OUR VISION

Strong Roots. Powerful Wings

OUR MISSION

The Decatur Independent School District is committed to providing a quality education where students will learn digitally, think creatively, and compete globally.

Decatur ISD Secondary Grading Guidelines

McCarroll Middle School & Decatur High School

2020-21 School Year

Grade-Level Classification (Grades 9–12 Only)

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation.

Credits Earned	Classification
6	Grade 10 (Sophomore)
12	Grade 11 (Junior)
18	Grade 12 (Senior)

Grading Guidelines

Purpose of Grades/Grading Guidelines

The primary purpose of grades is to measure and communicate what a student knows, understands, and can do as a result of the student’s learning; a secondary purpose for grades is to provide teachers with information for instructional planning. Additionally, grading guidelines promote consistency in grading practice throughout the district. The following guidelines will be in place at every campus. Utilizing the following guidelines, campus leadership will meet with each department and/or grade level to establish further grading best practices that focus on student learning (**EIA Local**). These campus meetings ensure consistency throughout departments and/or grade levels and standardization throughout on-level coursework. Guidelines for grading shall be clearly communicated to teachers, students, and parents.

Grades must reflect a student’s relative mastery of a concept/learning goal. There must be a sufficient number of grades taken to support the grade average assigned (**EIA Legal/Local**). Grades entered for academic work must reflect student achievement and communicate progress to parents. Grades shall NOT be given for extra credit, returning signed papers, attending school functions/events, bringing supplies, etc.

In DISD, no “minimum grade” will be assigned regardless of the quality of student work, product, or demonstrated mastery. Teacher shall record the actual grade a student earns; there is no minimum grade (**EIA Legal/TEC 28.0216**). Grades will not be reduced for disciplinary reasons. Grade penalties are specifically covered in the “Grade Penalties” section below.

Because student learning is our non-negotiable goal, we encourage teachers to examine the ability of the student to recover from failing work before assigning a numerical grade. Teachers know their students and are aware of the impact a non-recoverable grade can have on student learning, engagement and participation in the class.

For each six-weeks grading cycle, in each class, students will be given a minimum of 8 daily grades and 2 summative assessments (major project) grades, one of which may be a six-week assessment. No single grade may count more than 20% of a student’s six-week average.

The weighting for courses at the high school by course type are as follows:

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Regular Courses

- **Fifty percent (50%)** of a grade shall be based on summative activities such as major projects, cumulative assignments and tests. Major or long-term projects should be closely monitored and assigned two or three formative grades at set intervals prior to the summative grade. If a project or assignment merits more than one summative grade (multiple grades), each grade should represent a different component of the project.
- **Fifty percent (50%)** of a grade shall be based on formative activities such as class work, daily assignments, quizzes and/or homework. These grades should be a balanced representation of the types of work completed during the course of the six weeks.

Pre-AP Courses

- **Sixty percent (60%)** of a grade shall be based on summative activities such as major projects, cumulative assignments and tests. Major or long-term projects should be closely monitored and assigned two or three formative grades at set intervals prior to the summative grade. If a project or assignment merits more than one summative grade (multiple grades), each grade should represent a different component of the project.
- **Forty percent (40%)** of a grade shall be based on formative activities such as class work, daily assignments, quizzes and/or homework. These grades should be a balanced representation of the types of work completed during the course of the six weeks.

AP and Dual Courses

- **Seventy percent (70%)** of a grade shall be based on summative activities such as major projects, cumulative assignments and tests. Major or long-term projects should be closely monitored and assigned two or three formative grades at set intervals prior to the summative grade. If a project or assignment merits more than one summative grade (multiple grades), each grade should represent a different component of the project.
- **Thirty percent (30%)** of a grade shall be based on formative activities such as class work, daily assignments, quizzes and/or homework. These grades should be a balanced representation of the types of work completed during the course of the six weeks.

[See the **DISD 2020-21 Student Handbook; Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 85 for additional information on grading guidelines.]

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Student Expectations

Each student is expected to:

- Attend all classes: regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class. Take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Maintain honesty and integrity in all issues regarding school work and interaction with teachers and administrators.

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)

Grade Penalties

Late Projects: (EIAB Local)

- Teachers may assign a late penalty to a project turned in after the due date in accordance with previously established guidelines approved by the principal and disseminated to students.

Absences and Suspensions:

- Students shall be expected to make up assignments and tests after absences. Students shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allotted time. (EIAB Local)
- An “M” for “missing” shall be recorded for absences, whether excused or unexcused, and students will be given a reasonable amount of time to learn the missed material and demonstrate mastery. It is recommended that the length of absence should determine the amount of time given for make-up work. For example, 3 days of absence equals 3 days to make up work. A teacher may make exceptions for extenuating circumstances.
- The grade for make-up work after an unexcused absence shall be zero. (EIAB local)
- The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up work after an absence because of suspension. (EIAB Local)

Failing to Follow Procedures:

- Grade penalties may not be applied for failing to follow classroom procedures (for example, no name on paper, failing to turn assignment into the correct location, writing on only one side of paper, not having the proper supplies for class), except in the case of Late Work as described above and in compliance with campus Late Work policies. This does not apply to failing to follow procedures required for completing a project, task, or assignment.

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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 (EIA Local).

Academic Dishonesty

- MMS: 1st Offense – detention & maximum grade up to 70%
- MMS: 2nd Offense – detention & maximum grade up to 50%
- MMS: 3rd Offense – detention & grade of 0
- MMS: High School Courses will follow DHS Guidelines
- DHS: 1st and following Offenses per school year – detention and/or mandatory before or after school tutorials; grade of 0

Teacher Expectations

Each teacher is expected to:

- Update grades in online gradebook by Tuesday of each week
- Assign, assess, and update a minimum of 4 formative/daily grades and 1 summative/major grade by each 3-week/midpoint of the six-weeks grading period
- Maintain honesty and integrity in all issues regarding school work, grading, and interaction with students.

Homework**(All Grade Levels)**

The teacher may assign homework or other outside class assignments. These assignments should be relevant and meaningful, and they should strengthen skills or new concepts taught in class. Discretion should be used in making assignments. Extended work such as reports and research papers should have an appropriate number of days in which to be completed. Homework is an acceptable learning technique; it is not mandatory at DHS.

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Late Work

Regarding late work at MMS for all courses, the teacher will utilize the following to determine the final grade of the student's assignment.

- *Secondary students will be subject to the following penalties:*
1-4 days late – maximum grade of a 70
5 or more days late – 0

Regarding late work at DHS for all courses, the teacher will utilize the following to determine the final grade of the student's assignment.

- *Secondary students will be subject to the following penalties:* *1*
day late – 10 point grade reduction
2 days late – 20 point grade reduction
3 days late – 30 point grade reduction
4 or more days late – 0

The teacher reserves the right and may extend the late deadline policy for an individual student or class should he/she feel extenuating circumstances exist.

Makeup Work

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student for mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be given 1 day + the number of days missed (e.g. If a student misses 2 days, he/she will be given 3 days to finish the work). The board has approved this policy.

Tests and projects assigned before the absence(s) will be due or completed on the day the student returns. Teachers may consider extenuating circumstances and adjust the timelines accordingly.

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Makeup Work***Makeup Work Because of Absence
(All Grade Levels)***

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold regarding the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grade.” [See the **DISD 2020-21 Student Handbook; Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 31.]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences. A student will get the required assignments in advance from the teacher and have one day to make up the work for the anticipated absences.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with timelines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

DAEP Makeup Work**Grades 9–12**

A high school student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy **FOCA(LEGAL)**.]

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In-School Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP. If a student is sent to ISS the work will be completed the assigned day. If OSS the student will have one day to complete the required assignments for each day assigned to OSS. If a student is sent to DAEP, the district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school.

Re-teach/Re-Assess/Re-Grade

For MMS & DHS:

- o The District shall permit a student who meets the criteria detailed in the grading guidelines a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which the student received a failing grade (EIA Legal/Local).
 - § If a student earns a grade below a 70 on a major grade, the teacher must re-teach, then re-assess.
 - § After the re-teach/re-assess the higher of the two grades will be assigned, with the maximum possible score of 70.
 - § In order to receive re-assessment options, students must turn in major grade assignments by the actual due date.
 - § Students must be re-taught through small group, tutoring, peers teaming, etc, before re-assessment. Re-teaching strategies include, but are not limited to: use of alternate and differentiated materials, collaborative/cooperative learning, hands-on and subject appropriate manipulative materials, computer-assisted/online instruction, multi-sensory teaching techniques, and presentation of materials in a modified modality (visual aides, taped reading materials, etc).
 - § Proposed by MMS: Test corrections in lieu of retesting as the preferred option. Re-Teach/Re-test may have to occur outside the school day.
 - § Proposed by DHS: Student must be re-taught/reassessed within 5 days of the original major assessment or original grade will stand.