

# Somerville ISD



# Comprehensive Grading Guidelines

Updated August 2018

# APPENDIX

## CONTENTS

Overview of Grading Guidelines	2
Responsibilities	2
• Student	
• Parent	
• Teacher	
Academic Dishonesty	2
Communication/Reporting	3
Conduct	3
Conferences	3
Grade Weighting for Report Cards	3
Homework	4
Late Work	4
Make-Up Grades after Absences	5
Mastery Learning	5
Minimum Grades per Grading Period	5
Parent Communication- Parent Connect	5
Progress reports	5
Promotion and Retention	6
Student Success Initiative	7
Report Cards	8
Special Education and §504 Students	8
Suspension (OSS) and Grades	8
Transfer grades	8
Tutoring requirements	8

## **Overview of SISD Grading Guidelines**

Monitoring of the academic progress and feedback to the students and parents is essential to foster academic success. The key is communication. The goal is to communicate a fair and accurate indication of the level of mastery of the subject by the student at the time of the feedback. To this end, the district has well established grading standards, procedures, and policies.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Student**

1. Complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher.
2. Communicate with the teacher when the student does not understand the material or is in need of help.
3. Evaluate his or her own work.
4. Maintain academic honesty.

#### **Parent**

1. Set and reinforce clear expectations for academic success.
2. Create an effective study environment in the home.
3. Provide school supplies and materials.
4. Monitor the student's homework and progress.
5. Help with, but do not do, homework and projects.
6. Communicate with teachers when concerns arise.

#### **Teacher**

1. Plan and provide daily instruction.
2. Monitor students' mastery of the curriculum.
3. Update grades in gradebook weekly and give timely feedback to students.
4. Communicate progress through Parent Portal (on-line grade book), progress reports, report cards, and other communication as appropriate.
5. Provide additional instructional support in the classroom for students who are struggling.
6. Provide tutoring for students who are struggling.
7. Provide differentiated instruction to ensure the appropriate level of instruction for all students.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

A student 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.

### **Communication with parents**

All teachers will communicate with parents regarding student progress. The system used is dependent upon the grade level cluster.

- Pre-K- K: Weekly Communication Folder.
- Grade(s) 1-6: Parent Portal in conjunction with teacher contact with parent(s) or guardian when a student's average falls below 70%. A weekly communication folder will be utilized.
- Grade(s) 7-12: Parent Portal in conjunction with teacher contact with parent(s) or guardian when a student's average falls below 70%.

**Parents should notify school of any changes with cell phone numbers and or email addresses that were not provided in the beginning of the year school packets.**

### **Conduct**

The district does not impose a grade penalty for student work as a result of student misconduct with the exception of academic dishonesty and unexcused absences.

### **Conferences**

Parents may request a conference with their students' teacher(s) at any time. Every student will have the opportunity to have a parent / teacher conference in the fall semester.

Students who are in danger of failing will be scheduled for a parent / teacher conference in the spring semester. Parents of students not in danger of failing may also request a parent / teacher conference during the spring semester of the school year. In addition to the conferences scheduled on the school calendar, conferences may be requested by a parent or teacher as needed.

The district will have 2 scheduled parent conference days in which teachers will meet individually with all parents to discuss their child's progress. These dates are October 8th and February 18th.

### **Grade Weights for Report Card Calculation**

The final report card grades are calculated using a system of weighted grades. Grades carry more or less weight (value) in the final grade depending on the type of grading category.

# Grade Weights for Report Card Calculation

1 <sup>st</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Levels	40% Daily Grades	60% Major Tests, Assignments, & Projects
Examples:	Classroom Assignments Formative Assessments Homework Assignments	Common Assessments Major Tests Summative Assessments Project Based Summative Assessments

## Homework

Homework will be carefully examined and constructed so that it becomes a meaningful part of learning.

Somerville ISD believes the purpose of homework should be to practice, reinforce, or apply acquired skills and knowledge. It should not be used for new learning. We also believe, as research supports, that moderate assignments completed and done well are more effective than lengthy or difficult ones poorly done.

Dual Credit: These are college level courses and by design, homework and other assignments are more rigorous and demand greater time and effort.

## Late Work

If a student does not turn in an assignment when due, a deduction in points may result. Extenuating circumstances may occur that are out of the control of the student and which prevent him/her from completing and returning their assignments. The student is to inform the teacher of any such circumstances that prevented the completion of the work. Teachers may grant exceptions to this late work penalty as appropriate. The usual penalty for late work is as follows:

	1 <sup>st</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grades
<b>1 day late</b>	-11 points
<b>2 days late</b>	-21 points
<b>3 days late</b>	-31 points
<b>4 days late</b>	Maximum grade of 50%

After the 4th day, the assignment will no longer be accepted and the student will receive a grade of zero.

## **Makeup Work after Absences**

Students are 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. Allotted time for students to turn in assignments following absences is equal to one day for each day of absences plus one additional day. For example, if a student is absent for 3 days, the student has 4 days (3 + 1 days) to submit assignments.

In grades 1st – 12th, the district shall not impose a grade penalty for makeup work after an unexcused absence.

For 1st – 4th grades, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide the student with the assigned makeup work. For 5th – 12th grades, it is the responsibility of the student to acquire the makeup work assignments.

## **Mastery Learning**

Mastery Learning provides the student with the opportunity to relearn certain academic objectives and retest for a passing grade. Mastery learning is intended as an opportunity to demonstrate learning when a test or major project has been failed.

Students will have one opportunity to recover a failed major grade (summative assessment) to a maximum grade of 70. The due date for re-testing and/or test corrections is to be within one week of the assignment. Students may be required to stay after school for re-testing.

## **Minimum Grades**

1 <sup>st</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grades	Per six week grading period for all subjects: Minimum of 10 daily grades Minimum of 3 major grades* Minimum of 13 <u>total</u> grades (daily and major combined)
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\*Only 1 of the 3 major grades can be a project.

Each assignment may only earn one grade, in the gradebook, in other words it may not count twice.

## **Parent Communication of Grades- Parent Connect**

Grades placed in the teacher's electronic gradebook system become immediately available to parents via Parent Portal. Teachers endeavor to provide feedback as quickly as their workload allows. Please understand that this guideline applies to standard assignments and not extended projects and assignments.

All grades will be posted every Monday by 4 p.m. from the previous week.

## **Progress Reports**

Notice of a student's performance in any course shall be issued after the third week of a six-week grading period for all grades. Progress reports will be sent home with student every three weeks or parents may view them on parent portal.

## **Promotion and Retention**

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, intensive, and/or accelerated services. The district shall comply with applicable state and federal requirements when determining methods for students with disabilities or students who are English language learners to demonstrate mastery of the curriculum.

Any modified promotion standards for a student receiving special education services shall be determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee and documented in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

In addition to the factors in law that must be considered for promotion, mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. To be considered for promotion a student has to be in attendance at least 90% of all class time.

Students in kindergarten shall be evaluated for mastery of grade-level standards. Promotion to grade 1 shall be based on an overall average of 3 on a scale of 4 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for reading, language arts, and mathematics.

In grades 1–2, 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) in each of the following subjects: reading, language arts, and mathematics.

In grades 3–4, 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) in each of the following subjects: reading, language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies.

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 on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts, mathematics, and

either science or social studies.

### **Student Success Initiative**

- Student Success Initiative (SSI): 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 an applicable assessment instrument in the subjects required under state law in order to be promoted to the next grade. For most students, this is the STAAR Reading and Math.

Grade-level advancement for students in grades 9–12 shall be earned by course credits.

If a parent initiates an appeal of his or her child’s retention following the student’s failure to demonstrate proficiency after the third testing opportunity, the GPC (grade placement committee) shall review all facts and circumstances in accordance with law.

The student shall not be promoted unless:

1. All members of the GPC agree that the student is likely to perform on grade level if given additional accelerated instruction during the following school year in accordance with the educational plan developed by the GPC; and
2. The student has completed required accelerated instruction in the subject area for which the student failed to demonstrate proficiency.

Whether the GPC decides to promote or to retain a student in this manner, the committee shall determine an accelerated instruction plan for the student for the following school year, providing for interim reports to the student’s parent and opportunities for the parent to consult with the teacher or principal as needed. The principal or designee shall monitor the student’s progress during the following school year to ensure that he or she is progressing in accordance with the plan.

When a student transfers into the district after having failed to demonstrate proficiency on applicable assessment instruments after two testing opportunities, a GPC shall convene for that student. The GPC shall review any available records of decisions regarding testing and accelerated instruction from the previous district and determine an accelerated instruction plan for the student.

If a parent initiates an appeal for promotion when a student transfers into the district after having failed to demonstrate proficiency after three testing opportunities, the GPC shall review any available records of decisions regarding testing, accelerated instruction, retention, or promotion from the previous district and issue a decision in accordance with the district’s standards for promotion.

In the event a student is not promoted to the next grade level, the district shall nevertheless assign the student to an age-appropriate campus, unless:

1. The student’s parent requests that the student be assigned to the same or a similar campus setting; or
2. The student’s GPC determines that it would be in the student’s best interest to be assigned to the same or a similar campus setting. Criteria to be considered for this

decision may include:

- a. Recommendations from the student's teachers.
- b. Observed social and emotional development of the student.

The district shall establish procedures designed to reduce retaining students at a grade level, with the ultimate goal being elimination of the practice of retaining students.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are sent home with the student to parents of all students, grades PK - 12, the Wednesday following the end of each grading period.

### **Special Education/ Section 504**

Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) Committees may designate classes and the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Goals that should be taken into consideration when determining a student's grades as part of the overall requirements for course/TEKS mastery. Also, as per Special Education, a student who fails two consecutive six weeks in the content areas, should have a staffing to review the student's IEP's, consider reason(s) for failure, propose interventions and/or accommodations that may include IEP amendments or modifications.

### **Suspension from School (OSS)**

The district shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up work after an absence because of suspension.

### **Transfer of Grades**

When a student transfers grades for properly documented and eligible courses, the district shall assign weight to those grades based on the categories and grade weight system used by the district if similar or equivalent courses are offered to the same class of students in the district.

### **Tutoring Requirements**

The district shall not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered without a parent's written consent.

For all tutoring, students and parents will be notified of the specific academic need for the tutoring. This information documents the need for tutoring and acts as a base-line to measure progress during tutoring. Teachers and tutors will inform the students and parents of the progress of tutoring by grading instructional work completed in tutoring, quizzes, or re-tests, etc. A record of progress will be communicated to the student and parents upon completion of tutoring.

A student who fails any state assessment in grades 3-8 must receive accelerated instruction in the applicable subject area, which may include instruction outside of normal school operating hours.

In addition, a student who fails to perform satisfactorily on reading and/or mathematics assessments at grades 5 and 8 may not be promoted to the next grade unless he or she completes all required accelerated instruction. This instruction may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours, during summer school, or before the beginning of the next school year. The law requires school districts to provide students up to three assessment opportunities during the spring and summer of the year, outlines the provision of accelerated instruction after each assessment opportunity, and describes parents' rights regarding promotion and retention. The entire text of the law is available online at the link below. <http://goo.gl/cj3rWi>