

Secondary Grading and Reporting Handbook



Hutto ISD
2020-2021

Secondary Grading Guidelines

Employee Acknowledgement Form Hutto ISD Board Policy EIA (LOCAL) mandates that the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each campus or instructional leader develops guidelines for teachers to follow in determining grades for students.

The guidelines shall ensure that grading reflects a student's relative mastery of an assignment and that a sufficient number of grades are taken to support the grade average assigned. Guidelines for grading shall be clearly communicated to students and parents.

The Hutto ISD Secondary School Grading and Reporting Handbook is written to provide direction and equity in the evaluation and communication of student academic performance.

The information and policies in the Handbook are subject to change, and I acknowledge that revisions may occur. All changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing guidelines.

Only the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee has the ability to adopt any revisions to the information in the Handbook.

I understand that I should consult my principal regarding any questions I have regarding the Grading Handbook. I further understand that it is my professional responsibility to read and comply with the policies and guidelines contained in the HISD Secondary School Grading and Reporting Handbook and any revisions made to it during the academic year.

Please sign and give this form to your building principal.

Employee Signature

Date

Employee PRINTED Name

Campus

Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to delineate uniform grading and reporting guidelines for teachers and administrators. The guidelines outlined in this handbook adhere to the requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC), the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), and Hutto Independent School District (HISD) policies and regulations.

Grading is the process by which teachers assess student learning and progress towards mastering the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Reporting is the process by which teachers communicate information to parents/guardians about student mastery of taught subject matter and skills.

This handbook will be reviewed annually and adjustments will be made as necessary.

General Information

Courses of Study/Advancement

HISD follows the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) approved by the State Board of Education. Students are required to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to read, write, compute, problem solve, think critically, apply technology, and communicate across all subject areas.

Absences

Students must be in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days school is in session in order to receive credit for the school year. If students do not meet this requirement, only a principal or an official attendance committee can consider grade level advancement. (EI Legal)

Confidentiality Statement Regarding Student Grades

Although teachers may choose to involve students and/or others in certain appropriate monitoring tasks (e.g. checking if homework has been turned in), the responsibility for grading student classwork and homework is bestowed solely upon the professional staff of the school.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to promote high-quality student learning and achievement. Homework is an out-of-classroom learning experience assigned by a teacher to enhance student learning. It is to target specific learning outcomes, reinforce TEKS taught in the classroom, and provide practice in specific skills. Homework is to be reviewed by teachers to assess students' skills and knowledge in order to inform instruction. When assigning homework, teachers will ensure that students are provided with sufficient information and direction to complete the homework assignment independently, and that the assignment is not excessive for its intended purpose. In addition, homework is not to be assigned as a discipline consequence.

Effective Homework Assignments

- Are curriculum-based and meet the needs of students through differentiation;
- Are designed to require no additional teaching outside of the classroom;
- Are clearly articulated and designed so students know what is expected of them before leaving the classroom;
- Are engaging and relevant to student learning;
- Do not require resources or technology to which a student may not have access; and
- Do not require parents/guardians to teach new concepts.

Teacher Responsibilities

- Ensure students understand and know how to successfully complete assignments.
- Define work to be completed at home and make sure appropriate resources/materials are readily available.

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- Give instructions to parents/guardians, when appropriate, and explain how they may help students complete the assignment.
- Ensure any instructions going home are provided in the parent's native language whenever possible.
- Consider homework as one part of the total learning process by monitoring, collecting, and providing meaningful feedback to students.
- Review and grade homework assignments regularly to give students feedback on their learning.
- Inform students of homework assignments missed due to absences or substitute another activity for the assignment to ensure seamless learning occurs.
- Do not assign homework/projects over extended holidays within the school year that are due the first day of class students return from the holiday.

Student Responsibilities

- Understand the homework assignments before leaving school.
- Take home all necessary materials to complete assignments.
- Have organized means of keeping and carrying homework to and from school.
- Arrange a place to work and have a regular time to study.
- Schedule a time for homework that is compatible with family and/or afterschool activities.
- Complete homework with minimal parental help.
- Complete homework assignments carefully and neatly.
- Complete homework and turn it in on time.
- Budget time for long-term projects.
- Complete all work missed due to absences or school activities.

Parent Responsibilities

- Read and discuss the District's homework policy with the student and encourage good study habits.
- Communicate homework concerns and questions to the teacher.
- Encourage student to get additional help from the teacher when necessary.
- Provide an appropriate time and environment for the student to study and learn.
- Check homework for completion.

Homework Expectations

Homework expectations for students are:

- Homework should be a review or reinforcement of skills already covered in the classroom and should not be new information for the student.
- Homework should not exceed 60 minutes nightly for all courses combined, with 15-30 of the minutes for reading.
- Assignments with grades reported as class work grades are to be completed in the classroom.

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- Work assigned to be completed at home must be evaluated as homework and recorded in the homework section of the grade book.
- Students should also practice math and writing weekly.
- Teachers are expected to coordinate homework to adhere to the maximum time frame.

Reteaching

Reteaching shall be defined as another presentation of content, usually to provide an additional opportunity for a student to learn. Reteaching may vary from subject to subject or from class to class, and even from student to student. It may be as simple as repeating the concept. If the student still does not understand the concept, the teacher might use different materials or modalities to present the concept again.

If the initial instruction was primarily visual, the reteaching activity might be manipulative. If the teacher used the deduction approach initially, the reteaching activity might use an inductive approach, thus allowing the student to gain a new perspective on the task. (EIA Local)

Reteaching shall be an integral part of the lesson cycle and may occur in many different situations. Teachers can check for understanding at any point during the lesson cycle. Teachers shall plan for reteaching at the same time they plan initial instruction, thereby ensuring that alternative instructional strategies are immediately available when needed. If initial reteaching efforts are unsuccessful, then the time outside of class may be necessary to reteach.

If instructional efforts are unsuccessful, further diagnosis of a student's needs using universal screens, data history and student work may be needed to intervene (RTI process). The teacher will provide reteaching and retesting during class time if 25% or more students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS on a summative assessment (below 70%).

Students will be given the opportunity to reteach and retest with the higher of the two grades being recorded, not to exceed 70%. Exceptions are outlined below.

Teachers should use professional judgment to differentiate for students who clearly mastered the content the first time (90% or higher). Reteaching to ensure that students master the material may include but shall not be limited to the following (EIA Local):

1. The student may be required to correct or rework unsatisfactory assignments. The grade earned, not to exceed 70%, shall replace the original grade.
2. The teacher may require the student to attend a tutorial program or remedial classes. Co-curricular or extracurricular activities shall not interfere with the requirement to attend these activities.
3. The teacher may work with small groups during class time while other students work independently.

Failing Assignments

Senate Bill 2033 states that a district's grading policy "may allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade." Students receiving a failing grade will be required (at minimum) to meet with the teacher regarding performance and to discuss recommendations for remediation within 3 days of the failing grade, or at the end of the six weeks, whichever is sooner.

At this time, the teacher will provide the student a reasonable opportunity to redo a class assignment or examination in accordance with the district approved campus grading policy. Major examinations and projects should be completed no later than five days prior to the end of the six weeks, thus allowing students a reasonable opportunity to redo or make up failing assignments.

Recovery of Daily Assignments/Homework -Academic Courses and PAP/AP Courses

Students must demonstrate their relative mastery on an assignment/assessment before they can retest or attempt to recover an assignment. Students will be given 3 school days from the time grades are posted on Family/Student Access to recover a daily/homework failing grade (69% or below).

In order for a student to recover a failing daily/homework assignment, the student must have made a good faith attempt on the original submission and on the recover submission. Recovery assignment grades will be awarded according to individual course criteria. The teachers shall choose one of the following methods for the student to demonstrate mastery:

- Providing an alternative assignment
- Allowing for corrections to the assignment
- Allowing the student to redo the original assignment

It is the responsibility of the teacher to communicate their recovery methods to the student and parent through their course syllabus, website, email, or direct communication. Grades will be updated every Monday; therefore, it is the student's responsibility to seek the opportunity to recover upon notification of a failing grade. And it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that grades are updated per campus policy. Failing grades not recovered within the 3 days will be recorded as the final grade earned. Recovered grades are eligible to receive a maximum grade of 70%.

Retesting-Academic Courses and PAP/AP Courses

The student must complete all of the following actions before they can retest:

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- Must attend tutoring prior to retest for reteach
- Must complete all missing homework/daily assignments prior to retest; no grade will be awarded
- Must correct the original test prior to retest

After a student has satisfactorily completed these actions, they may retest. They must retest prior to the next assessment administration. Semester final exams are not subject to retesting. Recovered assessments are eligible to receive a maximum grade of 70%.

The teacher will provide at least one opportunity for students to redo a failing class assignment or examination. The teacher is to record the higher of the two grades, not to exceed 70%, in the electronic grade book.

Grading in Special Programs

Bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs

All HISD expectations apply to English Language Learners (ELLs). In evaluating the progress of ELL students, teachers must recognize the critical processes and features of second language acquisition, including cognitive, affective, and linguistic. Teachers must also make sure to provide students with appropriate instruction to enable ELL students to meet these expectations at each student's level of proficiency in English.

In addition, teachers are responsible for ensuring that the ELPS are part of the planning process to ascertain that students have adequate support. Word walls, anchor charts, and exemplars should include graphic representation. Furthermore, ELL students are not exempt from grades and should receive a grade based on the state's TEKS in all subjects for each six-week grading period.

All ELL student grades need to reflect their linguistic accommodations and modifications determined by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) and should not have failing grades due to their inability to speak, read, comprehend, or write in English. Teachers should be aware of their students' level of English language proficiency and keep a list of language proficiency levels and required accommodations.

Talented and Gifted Program

Students participating in the HISD Gifted and Talented program must be provided with assignments for GT students that involve more depth and complexity of thought, not just an assignment with additional work or more assignments at the same level of peers.

Special Education Students

Students who receive special education services are expected to follow the TEKS as the basis for their educational program. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARD) may recommend changes in standard curricular expectations, content modifications, accommodations, and grading guidelines. Any variations in the District grading procedures should be related to the student's specific disability, shall be determined by the ARD committee, and included in the student's individual education plan (IEP).

Grades for special education students must be based upon performance that demonstrates mastery of the TEKS through the use of ARD recommended accommodations and/or modifications. Special education students' grades may be reported by the general education teacher, special education teacher, and/or a combination of both teachers as determined by the ARD. Joint or dual grading is an option that must be stated in the student's IEP

Grading Guidelines

1. The HISD report cards are to reflect each student's mastery of the TEKS.
2. Teachers are to maintain students' grades and progress on the District's electronic grade book program.
3. Teacher grade books are auditable documents and are maintained digitally by network services.
4. Final grades for a school year are to be maintained in the student's cumulative permanent record.
5. Formative assessments such as, common assessments, are to be taken for a grade.
6. Teachers are expected to record a minimum of one daily assignment grade per week for each content area. The first week of school, district-wide assessments, and state testing weeks are allowable exceptions. Schools may require more.
7. Teachers will have five (5) school days (with exceptions only for major projects) from the assignment due dates to enter its grade.
8. Each six weeks final grade must include an average of the following: the daily assignment requirements (listed in 6), quizzes, and a minimum of two tests. Project grades may also be included.
9. In order to allow students every possible opportunity for demonstrating mastery of the curriculum for the six weeks, teachers will continue to provide new assignments for a grade until at least three days prior to the end of the grading period.
10. Grades for retaught concepts shall replace the original grade, not to exceed 70%.
11. All grades recorded are to be the actual grade the student earned. There is no minimum grade. (EIA Legal & SB 2033)
12. Zero vs. Missing: In order to maintain accurate records, teachers will only use a "zero" for assignments which the students turned in and earned the grade of zero. Teachers will use the "*" classification for assignments not turned in by a student or assignments

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later than three days. Students missing several assignments are in need of an intervention as required by RTI (behavioral intervention).

13. Teachers shall provide all modifications and accommodations outlined in a student's IEP and 504 Plans. Those accommodations and modifications are to be documented in the grade book in order to reflect that the grade was achieved through the use of an accommodation or modification. Accommodations made for 504s and ELLs via a documented accommodation plan must also be reflected in the grade book. Teachers will utilize this opportunity to document effectiveness of accommodations.
14. Incomplete grades (defined as final averages for established grading periods) must be finalized within two weeks of the end of the grading period in which the student received the incomplete. After that time, students will receive a zero for all missed work, except in extenuating circumstances approved by the building principal. NOTE: A HISD student shall not be given the option to choose to fail by not completing work or turning in assignments. It is the expectation that all possible interventions will be done to assist students struggling with these expectations. Campus policy should reflect a specific process for identifying and supporting these students per RTI. Parents/guardians should be a part of this process.
15. Students are not to receive an academic grade or bonus points for any non-academic activity. In addition, students are not to be penalized for not bringing in classroom supplies.
16. Student grades are to be held to the confidentiality requirements outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the HISD Information Policy. Grades cannot be posted, even by student ID number.

Make-Up Work for Absences

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, unless prior approval is given by the principal or designee. Students will be given one day to make up work for each day they are absent (excused or unexcused), with exceptions made due to severe or prolonged illness. Students will not receive a grade penalty for makeup work from an absence due to suspension. Students will not receive credit for makeup work when the absence is due to truancy, instead, students will receive a "missing" for the assignment.

Late Work

Late Work Policy– Academic Courses

An assignment is considered late if it is not submitted on the due date. A max of 70% can be earned on a late assignment if it is received within three school days after the original due date and has been completed with a good faith attempt and is 100% complete.

Students not turning in work within the 3-day period may be assigned additional interventions to include, recovery labs, tutoring, etc. Work completed at this time will receive a grade no higher than 70% provided the work is 100% accurate. Failure to report to recovery labs or tutoring

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could result in a discipline referral for insubordination or a zero for that assignment.

When a student submits an assignment late, the student has forfeited the opportunity to recover the assignment. Students who have an excused absence on the day an assignment/assessment is due or administered must turn in the assignment or complete the assessment on the day they return.

Late Work Policy–PAP/AP Courses

Late work is defined as any assignment that is not submitted on its due date, with the exception of make-up work for absences or approved school activities. Missing assignments will be assigned a grade of zero and cannot be recovered. If a student fails to turn in an assignment or complete an assessment, they will receive a zero. Students who have an excused absence on the day an assignment/assessment is due or administered must turn in the assignment or complete the assessment on the day they return.

In case of extenuating circumstances, it is the parent/guardian and/or student's responsibility to inform the teacher and/or appropriate administrator so that an exception to the rule may be considered. The teacher and/or appropriate administrator will have the final authority to grant any exceptions.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be offered at the teacher's discretion. If an extra credit assignment is offered, it must be purposeful, reasonable, and applicable to the curricular objectives, and available for all students. Extra credit assignments are to be completed at home, not during the school day. If a student receives an extra credit assignment, that grade is to be averaged with the rest of the grades in the homework category.

Academic Integrity Statement

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. All incidents of academic dishonesty will result in a disciplinary referral, parental contact, and a penalty of a zero on the assignment/test/project. Student may redo the assignment/test/project for a maximum grade of 70%. Further consequences might include removal from academic organizations including, but not limited to, National Honor Society.

Grading Symbols/Comments

90 -100 = A

* – Loss of Credit Due to Attendance

80 - 89 = B

NG – No Grade; Student Auditing Class

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70 - 79 = C
Below 70

P/F – Pass or Fail; Credit Recovery
Failing

Secondary Grading Weights:

Cores (except English) LOTE, Health:

- Homework/Daily: 45%
- Assessments: 55%

English:

- Homework/Daily: 40%
- Independent Reading: 10%
- Assessments: 50%

PAP/AP:

- Homework/Daily: 40%
- Assessments: 60%

FA:

- Daily: 40%
- Assessments: 60%

PE:

- Participation: 80%
- Daily/Skills: 20%

CTE:

- Varies by individual program

Categories:

- Homework-Daily assignments completed outside of the instructional time.
- Daily Assignments-Anything completed inside of the instructional period. Including, but not limited to: Lesson Activities, Formative Quizzes, Journal Entries/Reflections, Warm Ups, STAAR/EOC Prep, Labs, Notes, Skill Demonstration, others as approved by campus administration. Independent Reading- Reading (with assessment) to be completed in addition to prescribed curriculum. Book selection is based on student choice.
- Assessments-IA, Summative Assessments, Projects, Labs, Performances/Participation, Research Papers, Notebooks, Essay, others as approved by campus administration.
- Semester Exams: 15% of total grade

Reporting

Parent Communication

The Hutto Independent School District strongly values a parent/guardian's role in a child's education. It is through communication that teachers can help parents stay involved. In addition, ongoing communication helps parents stay informed about their child's academic progress. Parent contact or attempt to contact parents by phone, conference, or e-mail should be kept on file by the teacher. Records should include the date, student name, parent name, phone number, and notes concerning the contents and results of the conversation. For more information, contact your campus administrator.

Family Access

Hutto ISD provides parents with a means of staying up-to-date on their child's progress, the HISD Family Access. Family Access is a secure website that gives parents the opportunity to check grades, monitor attendance, and e-mail teachers. Since teachers are required to update student grades weekly, parents always have an updated picture of their child's academic progress. Grades must be input by the following Tuesday at 4:00 PM. Teachers will have five (5) school days (with exceptions only for major projects) from the assignment due dates to enter its grade.

Frequency of Grades

- Daily/Homework: Minimum of 1 per week but schools may require more
- Assessments: Minimum of 2 per 6 week grading period

Progress Reporting

Grade reports (report cards) shall be issued every 6 weeks at the Secondary School level. Interim progress reports shall be issued for all students at least once every three weeks. Additional progress reports may be issued at the teacher's discretion. (EIA Legal/Local)

In addition, any time a student's grades fall below 75% in an academic subject, the teacher must send an electronic progress report home weekly. Teachers are highly encouraged to have personal communication with the student's parent/guardian, preferably in the form of a parent/teacher conference. This communication must be documented and maintained by the teacher. (EIA Local)

Special Program Reporting

Progress reporting for students with IEPs, 504s, and ELL Accommodations must be issued at the same frequency as general education students. For students in special programs such as Bilingual/ESL, 504, GT, Dyslexia, or Special Education whose grades fall below 70%, a meeting with the appropriate committee (ARDC, LPAC, 504) shall be called to discuss the student's progress and to create an individual plan and/or make necessary adjustments to the student's current plan to help the student be successful.

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences give teachers the opportunity to discuss student progress with parents and allow parents to ask questions about their child's learning. While this takes some time and effort, research is clear on the importance of parental involvement to student success. A parent can request a conference at any time.

Conference forms are to be used and signed by both the parent and teacher. The parent is to be provided a copy of the conference form and the teacher is to keep the original on record. (EIA Local)

The conference should include the following discussion points:

- Review of grades
- Review of assessment data, explanation of the student's results, and student standing (below, at, or above grade level)
- Review of goals for the student (parent and teacher)
- Recommendations for helping the student at home
- Parent questions
- Attendance
- Tardies
- Discipline

If a student is working below grade level, the following should also be addressed:

- Reading universal screen expectations at mid-year and end-of year. Show parents samples of the required reading selections, the student's current level, and discuss the student's areas of difficulty.
- Math universal screeners, CBAs, etc.
- RTI Process

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. It shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services. (EIE Local)

A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level. (Education Code 28.021(a)) In determining promotion, the District shall consider:

- The recommendation of the student's teacher;
- The student's grade in each subject or course;

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- The student's score on an assessment instrument administered under Education Code 39.023(a), (b), or (l); and
- Any other necessary academic information, as determined by the District. Education Code 28.021(c)

Standards for Mastery/Promotion

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

- 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 examinations or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the TEKS shall be required.

Grades 6-8

In grades 6–8, 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 three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.(EIE Local)

Students with Disabilities

The ARD committee shall determine promotion standards, appropriate assessment, and acceleration options, as established by individualized education programs (IEP) or grade-level classification of students eligible for special education services.

Limited English Proficient Students

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

- Assessment in the primary language.
- Assessment using ESL methodologies.
- Assessment with multiple varied instruments

Student Success Initiative

In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, students in grade 8 must meet passing standards on an applicable assessment instrument in the subjects required under state law in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

Promotion/Retention Forms

The HISD Promotion/Retention Forms are designed to review student data and other pertinent student achievement information. Campuses are to use these forms in determining whether a student is promoted or retained in a particular grade level. Upon review of a student's promotion/retention/ placement criteria, the campus shall refer to the standards for mastery/promotion set forth in this document. Each decision is to be made on a case-by-case basis. For 8th graders undergoing the GPC process, campuses must use the HISD's GPC forms.

Grade Retention Plan

The HISD Retention Plan is an action plan to be completed each time a campus decides to retain a student. This form not only documents the reason for the retention, but it also provides a framework for campuses to create an individualized plan of action for the following school year geared to help the student be successful. For 8th graders undergoing the GPC process, campuses must use the HISD's GPC forms.

Grade Placement Plan

The HISD Acceleration Plan is an action plan to be completed each time a campus decides to accelerate a student who is performing below grade level instead of retaining him/her. This form not only documents the reason for the acceleration, but it also provides a framework for campuses to create an individualized plan of action for the following school year geared to help the student get on grade level. For 8th graders undergoing the GPC process, campuses must use the HISD's GPC forms.

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Retention/Promotion

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

BIRTHDATE: _____ GRADE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

TEACHER: _____ SCHOOL: _____

Has the child been retained before? Yes No If yes, when?

Has the child been placed before? Yes No If yes, when?

Date conference held with parents/guardians during the first semester to discuss expected level of achievement, students skill needs, teaching strategies in the classroom, and activities which parents can use at home to assist the child: _____

Date parents were informed in a conference of the possibility of retention by February: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Concluding Decision:

Date:

Promoted to Grade: Placed in Grade*: For the 20__-20__ School year

Retained in Grade:

*Reasons and interventions/services to be provided are described on attached report. One copy goes to parent, original in cumulative folder.

Principal's Signature: _____

Date: _____