

Hutto ISD Grading Guidelines During COVID-19



Philosophical Premises:

We understand this global pandemic has had **overwhelming and unprecedented effects** on our families and we want to extend grace to students during this uncertain time.

We understand that this shift to remote, on-line learning has affected our ability to deliver reliable instruction to all students and affected the **integrity of our traditional grading system**.

We understand that students have **varying levels of support and instructional resources at home**.

We **value teaching and learning** regardless of where and how it takes place.

Pass, Fail, or Incomplete Grades for On-Line Learning Assignments at All Levels

- **Pass** is the equivalent of a good faith attempt. Teacher indicates this with a 1.
 - **Incomplete**. Teacher indicates this with a blank, which is not the same as a zero in Skyward. The teacher provides feedback and sends the assignment back to the student. A blank in Google Classroom may also indicate the assignment has not been attempted, the assignment is excused, or the teacher wants the student to do more and has been working with the family.
 - **Fail** is the equivalent of no effort despite successful attempts to communicate with the family. The teacher indicates this with a zero. This grade is to be used only with administrative approval and when there has been no response from the student and the parent and every attempt has been made to work with the family.
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Secondary Grading Guidelines for the 5th Six Weeks

Rationale: We are accepting the grades for the first three weeks of the 5th six weeks to honor the work students completed at school during the grading period. This grade will be used to help the teacher determine whether a student receives pass/fail/incomplete at the end of the semester, but will not factor into GPA, which could negatively affect a student for the remainder of their high school career.

- All students will receive the numerical grade they had as of March 13th / IPRs (Interim Progress Reports) unless the student was failing.
- If a teacher believes the student should receive a failing grade, the teacher and the respective administrator will conference and discuss the circumstances for the failing

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grade. If the student receives special education services or 504 services, an ARD or 504 Meeting may be held to document how we provided accommodations before Spring Break and how we provided a commiserate educational opportunity to improve upon that grade after Spring Break.

Final Report Cards

- **Pass** = A good faith attempt
 - At the high school level and for high school credit courses at the middle school, a Pass is the equivalent of an 80. The 80 will be used for the purposes of averaging the first and second semesters and to determine overall pass/fail, which determines earning credit for the course. However, there will not be a numeric grade entered nor will the 80 be used in GPA.
- **Incomplete** = To be used by teacher and an administrator for unusual circumstances
- **Fail** = to be used with administrative approval only. Fail is used when there has been no response from the student and the parent and every attempt has been made to work with the family yet there continues to be a willful disregard to engage in learning. If the student is in Special Education or 504, the campus will involve the respective Directors no later than May 1st.

Note: We will not mail out 5th Six Weeks report cards this semester, but we will post the grade electronically.

GPA and Class Rank for HHS

Rationale: We have no reasonable, reliable way to assess students properly or accurately for the spring 2020 Semester. Therefore we will:

- Determine GPA and Class Rank at end of Fall Semester
 - Not factor the spring 2020 second semester into the student's GPA
 - Administer no final exams the Spring 2020 Semester
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FAQ's

1. Why Are We Opting for Grades in Google Classroom and not Skyward?

Answer: There is no reliable way we can guarantee a student had an equitable opportunity to access our instruction. We are adopting a 1, 0 or a blank. The advantage is that we do not confuse anyone by putting number grades into Skyward, which is not set up to accept a pass or fail grade.

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2. Why don't we take the existing grades from the 4th and 5th six weeks and use them for GPA and Class Rank?

Answer We have many students taking Dual Credit / REACH (10% of student population) courses who receive only semester grades from Temple College. If we used the existing grades from the 4th and 5th six weeks, these students could either be at disadvantage if Temple College decides to go with pass/fail grades or they could have an advantage if they can continue to improve upon their grades all semester if Temple College decides to give a numeric grade. We decided to remain consistent in our grading policy across all grade levels to avoid confusion.

3. Why are we using the grades from the 5th six weeks?

Answer: We want to honor student work and grades that were completed prior to the school closure as much as possible by including it in their grade for the semester credit, yet implement safeguards for students who could have made up their failing grades in the three weeks while we were in online learning.

4. Why do we bother to take any grades? Why not make it all optional?

Answer: We value teaching and learning and want students to continue growing and improving their skills. With a remote teaching and learning setting, many parents and educators believe in a certain level of accountability and responsibility is needed to ensure students attempt the learning. Moreover, the Texas Education Agency requires that educators provide feedback and document students' evidence of learning during online learning.

5. If we end GPA and Class Rank at semester, what happens if we go back to school May 4th?

Answer: We will continue with the Pass/Fail system for the remainder of the semester. Too much of the face-to-face instructional time in a classroom setting has been missed to accurately assess in a traditional way. GPA and Class Rank will only include the Fall Semester for the 2019-20 school year.

6. Why don't we make online assignments count as regular grades for GPA and Class Rank?

Answer: There are too many factors and variables we do not control to accurately assess student learning at home. We feel that it would be detrimental to students of all abilities to use traditional grades in this environment.

7. How can you fairly grade students who need accommodations or have disabilities in this online environment?

Answer: We are providing all accommodations possible for students who need them including text-to-voice, one-on-one check-ins, and in some cases, hand delivered paper copies of work. Teachers have also been instructed to consider these factors when assessing student work using the pass/fail/incomplete grading system.

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- 8. If a student does not do his or her work, will she fail? How do you know if it wasn't because of circumstances the child could not control?**

Answer: In order for a student to fail, there must be documentation regarding the reason work is not being completed. All students are being considered on an individual basis due to their specific circumstances. No student will fail without administrator review of the documentation.

- 9. How can you promote a student to the next grade level if they do not truly know the content for the current grade level?**

Answer: It will be based on teacher assessments of that student's demonstrated knowledge. The teacher is still providing meaningful lessons and content to each student in their respective courses and providing feedback on the progress or lack thereof.

- 10. If a High School teacher believes a student has not mastered the content enough to pass the course and get credit, can they really fail the students?**

Answer: Yes, but it has to have administrator approval. It must be documented that every opportunity was provided for the student to demonstrate mastery.

- 11. Regardless of the amount of effort put into online learning, students are going to have gaps when they return in August. What are you going to do about it?**

Answer: We know that our online learning system does not substitute for in school instruction. We are planning both summer activities (should we be able to return to normal operations in June) for students and changing the scope and sequence of the curriculum next year to take into account the loss of instructional time this school year.