

LA VERNIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



2017-2018 Junior High School (6-8) GRADING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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It is the policy of the La Vernia Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the civil rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972; and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

FOREWARD

This document is the product of much research and discussion by educators, parents, and students. These guidelines are in accordance with current practices and policies, as well as the Texas Education Code. An attempt has been made to provide a set of guidelines in those areas which will best meet the needs of students and provide assistance to the instructional staff. This handbook provides:

1. A tool which will foster consistency among teachers, disciplines and schools as students progress through the LVISD educational program.
2. A reference which will encourage a better understanding of grading, assessment, reporting and promotion for teachers, parents and students.
3. A description of the District's grading system.

DISTRICT VISION

Our vision is for every student to become a Creative Learner - Engaged, Educated, and Empowered.

DISTRICT MISSION

La Vernia ISD will empower every student to excel in their future by providing an inclusive environment that:

- Ignites innovation and creativity,
- Fosters individual growth, and
- Instills a passion for learning.

DISTRICT PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

Every La Vernia ISD graduate will exhibit:

- **CHARACTER:** integrity, respect, perseverance, and personal accountability.
- **APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE:** able to take risks and learn from failure.
- **CREATIVITY:** innovative problem-solving and global perspective,
- **TEAMWORK:** a spirit of collaboration where together, everyone achieves more.

Grading and Reporting Procedures

State and Local Curriculum

The District shall determine instructional objectives that relate to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for grade level subjects or courses. These objectives shall address the skills needed for successful performance in the next grade level or next course in a sequence of courses.

Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated District objectives.

Each secondary school maintains a balanced curriculum in the TEKS including English Language Arts, Reading, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Health/Fitness, Technology Applications, Physical Education/Wellness, Foreign Languages, and Career and Technology.

Curriculum content is prescribed by the Texas Education Agency. Local instructional plans are based upon State curriculum frameworks and program standards.

Curriculum consists of the defined scope and sequence of instruction, the instructional objectives for student mastery, the materials used (including textbooks and technology resources), the instructional strategies designed to promote student learning, and the assessment practices used to evaluate learning. The curriculum is based upon the TEKS.

Grading Roles and Responsibilities

Students

1. Complete assigned work on time and return it to the teacher.
2. Plan to schedule work on long-term assignments so assignments will be completed on time.
3. Initiate communication with the teacher when he/she does not understand the assignment or if he/she is experiencing difficulty.
4. Complete all assignments within the time limits given by the teacher or be subject to appropriate late work procedures.
5. Evaluate their own work for accuracy and seek clarification as needed from the teacher.
6. Exhibit academic honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty may result in behavioral and academic consequences.

Parents/Guardians

1. Establish a specific time, place and manner for homework to be completed.
2. Provide the supplies and materials necessary to complete homework.
3. Monitor as needed, but do not complete homework for the student.
4. Assist student in planning a time schedule for long-term assignments.
5. Initiate communication with the teacher when concerns arise.
6. Will access the Parent Portal to monitor student progress.

Campuses/Departments

1. A comprehensive assessment schedule will be established and implemented on each campus.
2. Each campus will design and designate exam schedules as needed.
3. Campus administration shall address issues surrounding the calculation of grades for the purpose of UIL eligibility.

Teachers

1. Teachers are required to develop daily lesson objectives and activities for each class.
2. Only teachers will record grades for assignments.
3. Grades will be posted in Gradebook within seven days of the assignment date; exceptions include essays and long-term projects.
4. Peer grading is allowable.
5. All records of grades and assessments become a part of the confidential record for the assessment of student performance.
6. Teachers will inform students of content covered on all major assessments.
7. Teachers must follow the LVISD Grading Procedures and ask for clarification from campus administrators as needed.
8. Teachers will provide students with a grading rubric with checkpoints for project completion for major projects. Partial/full credit will be awarded for work completed.

Return of Assignments

Teachers should return and/or review all graded work to students within a time frame that will benefit the student. Daily work will be graded within two to four scheduled class days and larger projects on a timely basis (within one week if feasible). This will allow the student to identify any areas of weakness and arrange for tutorials or extra study sessions prior to assessment.

Tutorials

The purpose of a tutorial session is to provide one-on-one instruction to assist students who have not mastered the TEKS currently being taught. Tutorials also serve as instructional reinforcement for students needing assistance. All LVISD students are welcomed and encouraged to attend tutorial sessions; however, students who have not mastered the TEKS (or are currently failing) should be given priority during scheduled tutorial time.

1. Day and time of scheduled tutorials will be set by each campus. Some campuses may have mandatory tutorials within the school day.
2. Attendance at tutorials outside of the school day may be required and is not limited to those students having academic difficulty.
3. Teachers must be available to students during scheduled tutorial time.
4. It is recommended that the teacher keep a log of students attending tutorials.

Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences

1. A teacher will schedule one or more conference(s) with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student if the student is not maintaining passing grades, is not achieving the expected level of performance, or in any other case that the teacher considers necessary. Conferences may be handled by telephone or in person, and may be requested by indicating so on the three-week progress report.
2. The State and District require each teacher to notify parents/guardians of the need for a conference at the end of each grading period if the grade is below the level required for course credit or grade level advancement.
(See Effective Communication with Parents/Guardians)

Course Syllabus

All secondary teachers are required to submit to the Campus Administration a course syllabus for approval. The syllabus will then be posted and distributed for students during the first two weeks of the course and/or semester. The purpose of the course syllabus is to provide information, guidelines, and an overview of a teacher's requirements for successful completion of a course. The syllabus may be defined as a scope and sequence of each course's major projects and themes. It may be prepared by semester or full-year requirements. The syllabus is designed to give students and parents/guardians an overview of the course's major themes and approximate dates of major course projects, exams, or papers. Each teacher may develop his/her own format of a course syllabus, but the following elements must be included:

- Teacher name
- Course name
- Conference period
- School phone
- Outline or scope and sequence of major course units, themes, or projects
- Approximate timeline
- Appropriate due dates of long-term projects
- Department's grading criteria and homework expectations (in compliance with LVISD Grading Procedures)
- Late Work Procedures
- Classroom Rules
- Retesting & Correction Procedures

Teachers teaching the same course will use the same syllabus and will adhere to the same grading procedures.

Effective Communication with Parents/Guardians

Communicating with parents/guardians is one of the most important responsibilities of teachers. Conferences provide an arena for collecting developmental and personal information from parents/guardians that may affect a student's learning; developing rapport and encouraging parent/guardian involvement in their student's educational process; and reporting and discussing student progress with parents/guardians. Accurate and diagnostic reports encourage parents/guardians to participate in the education of their children, by increasing mutual understanding, goodwill and cooperation in the home and to aid in student guidance.

In addition to sending out the regular reports, teachers should inform parents/guardians promptly when problems appear. Any time a student's grade falls below 70 in an academic subject at the nine weeks reporting time, the student and parent/guardian should be notified.

Teachers are encouraged to confer with parents/guardians as well as counselors, especially in instances where the student is experiencing difficulty.

Reports to parents/guardians serve as instruments of student guidance. An effective report promotes better adult-child relationships because it helps the parents/guardians better understand the child.

An effective report will:

- inform parents/guardians of the progress of their children.
- help children accept responsibility for their own progress.
- assist parents/guardians in cooperating with the school to further the children's progress.
- bring about good relations between home and school.
- be meaningful to teachers, pupils and parents/guardians.
- encourage good human relations and eliminate antagonism, resentment, or other negative attitudes toward school or teacher.
- reflect a child's strengths as well as his/her weaknesses and failures.
- stimulate a desire on the part of parents/guardians and pupils to overcome weaknesses and to achieve greater success.
- focus on educational objectives.

Parents/Guardians want to know:

- whether or not the child is doing as well as he/she can do.
- how well the child is doing in terms of what the school expects for his/her chronological and mental age level and his/her grade placement.
- the child’s strong points on which he/she can build in the future.

Reporting Grades

Progress Reports

1. The Progress Report reflects both satisfactory and unsatisfactory student progress. Its purpose is to inform students, parents/guardians, and campus administrators regarding student progress in a subject, in conduct, or both.
2. Progress Reports are sent to parents/guardians of all students every three weeks. Parents must be contacted and a conference scheduled at any time it becomes apparent that failure is possible or if a student’s grade drops by 10 or more percentage points.
3. It is the student’s responsibility to deliver the progress report to the parent/guardian.
4. Telephone or electronic contact with parents/guardians should be made when a Progress Report is not returned with parents/guardians signature or when more immediate notification of possible failure is required. Teachers/academic teams should maintain telephone or electronic logs of contacts and attempted contacts with parents/guardians.

Report Cards

1. The Report Card is a communication tool for parents/guardians and students.
2. Report Cards are computer generated.
3. Report Cards are issued once at the end of the nine-week grading period.
4. Report Cards provide information regarding academic progress, student conduct, and attendance.

Grading Scales

The District will report grades to parents/guardians as numerical scores and letter grades. The following table relates the numerical scores and letter grades.

Numeric Average	Letter Grade	Description
90-100	A	Excellent Progress
80-89	B	Good Progress
70-79	C	Average Progress
69 and below	F	Failure

Types of Assessments

General

Student mastery of subject matter may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary, therefore, for all grades to have as their source written paperwork. Nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every paper produced. Although the teacher should always monitor and provide feedback to students for any activity that he/she assigns, the feedback does not always need to be in the form of a grade. Assessment should always follow a period of guided practice and/or independent practice.

In grading a group project, members of a group should not be penalized for an individual's non-participation. Conversely, a student who does not fully participate, but participates to a limited degree, will receive a grade reflective of his/her participation.

Performance assessments measure a student's progress toward mastery of essential elements or content. There are many forms of assessment that may or may not be utilized by individual teachers. Types of performance assessments include, but are not limited to:

Classroom participation	Teacher observation
Classroom discussions	Research project
Oral responses	Checklists of skills
Written responses	Portfolios
Homework assignments	Enrichment
Experiments	Group work/Projects

Performance-Based Courses

Performance-based courses may have assignments that differ significantly than other academic courses. Performance-based courses include courses within the following departments: Career and Technology Education (CTE), Fine Arts, Physical Education and Athletics.

In performance-based courses, the grading and assignments must reflect the TEKS and a measure of the student performance. In performance-based courses, a higher percentage of the grade may come from participation.

Major Grades

Major Grades will comprise 40% of the nine week average and may include test/examinations, projects, term papers, and other alternative assessments. A minimum of four (4) major grades shall be recorded during each grading period. No one grade/assignment may account for more than 15% of the total nine weeks average.

Tests/Examinations

Examinations measure performance based on the TEKS or content. They serve to evaluate mastery of the TEKS, concepts, understandings, District objectives and provide opportunities to demonstrate certain knowledge or skill.

1. Examinations are assessments designed to measure a student's successful attainment of the TEKS as expressed in the LVISD curriculum guidelines.
2. Major examinations or tests are chapter, unit, concept, or cumulative (weekly, three or nine-week) assessments.
3. Major tests must be scheduled and announced in advance.
4. Major tests are intended to take more than half of the class period to complete.

Nine-Week/Unit Tests and/or Assessments

1. A nine-week test *or* unit test will be administered in all core-area curriculum content and non-core classes. These tests may be District-developed, department-developed, or teacher-developed. Unit tests will be administered at the culmination of an instructional unit and may or may not occur at the end of the nine weeks grading period.

Term Papers/Special Projects

1. Term papers or projects are defined as lengthy class work or homework assignments that may take up to several weeks for a student or group of students, to complete.
2. Teachers may assign term papers or projects to an individual or to a group of students.
3. A rubric describing grading criteria and interim deadlines must be provided to the student prior to beginning the project/paper.
4. Term papers or projects assigned over a lengthy period and included on the course syllabus, are due on or before the due date. Students who are absent on the due date, including school business, must meet the deadline. Any exceptions for late term projects

must be approved by the principal or principal's designee after meeting with the classroom teacher.

5. The special due date clause for term papers and long-term projects applies only to assignments included on the course syllabus. Long-term projects may be assigned at any time by the teachers, but the special due date clause will not apply.
6. Penalty for late projects will be the same as for all other late work. Please refer to the course syllabus and project rubrics.

Homework & Classwork Grades

Homework and Classwork Grades will comprise 30% of the nine week average. A minimum of ten (10) grades shall come from the categories of Homework & Classwork and Quizzes & Daily Grades combined. No one grade/assignment may account for more than 15% of the total nine weeks average.

Homework and Class Work

Homework and class work provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills, and processes from previous learning to display their understanding. Homework and class work should be considered learning opportunities for students to show mastery of concepts taught. Homework and class work should never be assigned as punishment.

Grading Homework

1. Homework may be graded in a variety of ways. At times, checking for completion is appropriate. At other times, a complete analysis of procedure, content, and/or correct answers is appropriate. Graded assignments should be returned to the student in a timely manner.
2. Peer and self-grading are allowable.

Class Work

1. Class work is any instructional activity defined/planned by the teacher to be completed during a class period to facilitate the learning process.
2. There may be occasions where class work becomes homework.

Quizzes & Daily Grades

Quizzes and Daily Grades will comprise 30% of the nine week average and may include quizzes, projects, participation, and other daily activities. Grades for classroom participation will be calculated utilizing a grading rubric and criteria established and communicated to students prior to the activity. A minimum of ten (10) grades shall come from the categories of Homework & Classwork and Quizzes & Daily Grades combined. No one grade/assignment may account for more than 15% of the total nine weeks average.

Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to evaluate a student's level of understanding and progress towards instructional objectives. Quizzes do not have to be scheduled in advance.

Extra Credit

1. All extra credit is to be academic.
2. The intent of extra credit is for enrichment in a class, not to gain mastery of TEKS.
3. Extra credit may be offered at the discretion of the teacher.
4. If extra credit is offered, it must be offered to all students in the class.
5. Extra credit will not cause an excessive financial burden on the student nor be given for bringing in basic school supplies or other non-academic reasons.
6. Extra credit awarded will not account for more than 5% of the nine-week average.

Late Work

Work submitted beyond the due date will result in a 10 point deduction per day with a maximum of 50 points off of the final grade. Work submitted beyond five days of the due date will be accepted at teacher's discretion.

Advanced Placement (Pre-AP, AP) and Dual Credit Courses

Pre-AP courses will adhere to the grading policies of the College Board. Students taking advanced courses may be required to complete assignments during the summer prior to taking the class.

Re-teach and Re-test/Re-assess for Mastery

Required Re-Teach

If 25% or more of the students in a single class period per teacher do not demonstrate mastery of the TEKS on a test, the teacher will provide the opportunity for re-teach and re-test. For students not demonstrating mastery using different methods of instruction, tutorials may be used.

Required Re-test/Re-assess for Mastery

1. The 25% or more of the students who do not demonstrate mastery are re-evaluated after they are re-taught or after activities are provided. Re-evaluation may include, but is not limited to, oral examination, special assignment sheets, special homework assignments, test corrections or a form test. Re-testing may occur outside of class time.
2. A student must score at least 70% on the re-evaluation to demonstrate mastery of the essential elements.
3. If less than 25% of all the students in a single class period per teacher do not demonstrate mastery, the teacher is not obligated to re-teach and re-test during class time. Tutorial time may be used for re-teach. Individual students accessing this opportunity for re-teach and re-test opportunities will have the highest of their two grades recorded with a maximum score of 70%.

Academic Responsibility Guidelines

In order to improve student achievement, teach for mastery, and foster a sense of responsibility, guidelines have been developed in the case of a student's failure to turn in assignments. Further information will be included in course syllabi and will be consistent throughout content areas.

Conduct

The student is assessed on conduct by each teacher. The conduct grade indicates how well the student is performing in classroom citizenship and is not a part of the academic grade.

Conduct marks may affect eligibility for participation in school activities; poor conduct interferes with a student's ability to learn in class. The following letter system is used to report a student's citizenship:

Mark	Assessment	Description
E	Excellent	The student has an excellent attitude, displays excellent work habits and overall conduct.
S	Satisfactory	The student has a good attitude, is cooperative, and generally observes school rules and regulations.
N	Needs to Improve	The student has a poor attitude, is at times uncooperative, at times disrupts class, and shows little respect for school and classroom rules and regulations.
U	Unsatisfactory	The student has a poor attitude and is uncooperative. The student disrupts class and shows little respect for school and classroom rules and regulations.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty is defined in the LVISD Policy (EIA).

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade 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.

Academic Dishonesty will result in academic and/or behavioral consequences.

1. A grade of zero will be given on the work involved, and the grade of zero will be averaged with the other grades.
2. An administrator will be notified of all incidents of academic dishonesty.
3. Other disciplinary actions may be determined by a campus administrator.

Make-Up Work

In order to provide the total assessment “picture” of a student’s academic progress for a course, any student missing classroom instruction should be given the opportunity to make up the missing assigned work. This will ensure instructional continuity and place importance upon consistent attendance and daily study.

Makeup work is available to all students. Students are responsible for asking teachers for the makeup work upon returning to class. Students shall receive credit for satisfactory makeup work after an absence. The allotted time for makeup work completion is based upon the number days absent + 1 additional day; For example, 1 day excused absence = 2 day extension. Makeup work submitted outside of the allotted time frame will be considered late and will be subject to late work grading procedures.

A student who has an extracurricular absence must meet with each teacher to collect assignments prior to the absence. The assignment(s) will be due upon return to school unless otherwise stated by the teacher.

Exceptions in extenuating circumstances may be granted by the administration.

Makeup work, including tests, may be of an altered version to assess what the student has learned.

Teachers may assign alternative work to assure that students who have been absent have sufficient opportunity to master the TEKS or to meet subject or course requirements. This may provide greater depth of subject matter than routine makeup work.

Assignment Format

The header, footer, or cover sheet format for any assignment may comprise no more than 5% of the grade of the assignment unless the sole objective for the assignment is format.

Incomplete Grades

1. A student receiving an Incomplete for a grading period has two (2) weeks to convert the incomplete grade to an earned grade.
2. In unusual cases where the student has missed a large quantity of work, the time may be extended, per administrative approval.
3. In all cases, the teacher must communicate to the student the nature of the outstanding work and the time limitation for completing the work (UIL Required).

Extracurricular Activities and UIL Eligibility

Grades and Extracurricular Activities

Per policy EIA (Local), grades shall not be increased or reduced for participation or lack of participation in any extracurricular activity. Teachers, coaches, directors, and sponsors should refer to Texas Education Code §76.1 for definition of extracurricular activities.

University Interscholastic League (UIL) Eligibility

(Refer to UIL website <http://utexas.edu/admin/uil/admin/side/acad.html>)

1. A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (after the first six weeks of the school year), a grade below 70 in any academic class (other than an identified advanced class) as per local policy or a student with disabilities fails to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks. However, an ineligible student may practice or rehearse. The student regains eligibility when the principal and teachers determine he/she has: (1) earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all academic classes, other than those that are advanced, and, (2) completed the three school weeks of ineligibility.
2. All schools must check grades for all participants at the end of the first six weeks of the school year. From that point, grades are checked at the end of each nine-week grading period. Students who pass remain eligible until the end of the next grading period.
3. All activity coaches and directors are responsible for obtaining official grade reports from the individual the principal designates as the keeper of official grades before the student represents the school. This provision applies to all grading periods. It also applies to all three school week evaluation periods for ineligible students.
4. A student that is unsuccessful in a Pre-AP class at the time of an eligibility check can seek a waiver for that class. **A student is allowed only one waiver per advanced class per school year. A Pre-AP course waiver is good for only 10 points to a failing average.** The completion of a waiver request form, with signatures, is required.

Grading Guidelines for Special Populations

Students who receive services through Special Education (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act will be held accountable to the same grading standards as students who do not receive services unless otherwise specified in their Individual Education (IEP) or 504 Plans.