



**SMSD**

**Stafford Municipal School District**

*"The Best Little School District in Texas"*

# STAFFORD MSD GRADING GUIDELINES

Approved by DAC - March 16, 2016; Reviewed by the Board of Trustees - March 21, 2016

## **BELIEF STATEMENT**

Grading is reporting information about a student's mastery of the curriculum to students, parents, other campuses, universities and employers.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The purpose of grading and reporting student progress is to engage students, educators, and parents in the process of increasing student achievement. An effective system allows educators to clearly communicate student progress towards mastery of the state standards as outlined in the District curriculum in a form that is equitable, accurate and useful. Grading is a video rather than a snapshot.

## **GRADING PURPOSES**

Grades shall reflect individual student mastery of the content. Academic Work Habits or classroom behavior shall not be reflected in, nor influence, the Academic Mastery grade. Points shall not be added nor deducted to grades for behavior, format of papers (heading, name, date, etc.), attendance or tardiness, supplies, etc. Points may only be added or deducted for errors in format (heading, spacing, name, date, etc.) when format is part of the learning objective and students are notified ahead of time in writing.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ACCURACY, EQUITY, AND QUALITY OF GRADES**

The accuracy, equity, and quality of grades as a measure of student learning are directly dependent on the quality of instruction provided, the alignment of student learning tasks to the content and pacing of the District's curriculum, and the quality and rigor of the student work that is used to determine grades.

## **GRADING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Grading for students with disabilities is subject to modification by the Admission, Review and Dismissal committee(s).

## TEACHER GRADING GUIDELINES

The following general guidelines apply at all levels.

- Guided practice is to precede assessments for which grades are given.
- Teachers will record grades using the District's electronic grade book.
- Teachers will post assignment grades within four school days from the assignment due date; unless administrative approval is obtained for a special project or research paper.
- Teachers will enter assignment due date for each assignment in the electronic grade book.
- Teacher must update students' grade in the electronic grade book, weekly. This process will allow parent/guardians to have an accurate indication of their child's progress.
- The academic grade shall not be tied to discipline.
- Teachers will consistently implement common grade-level or department grading procedures in compliance with District regulations.
- Each teacher will distribute a copy of their grading procedures to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or semester and to all new students and parents, thereafter.
- Teachers must include, through collaboration with their elementary grade-level team or secondary campus department, late work and makeup work procedures that promote responsibility without denying students reasonable opportunities to exhibit mastery of curriculum concepts and skill.
- Teachers must include, through collaboration with their elementary grade-level team or secondary campus department, reteach and reassessment procedures that provide a reasonable opportunity for remediation to a student who earns a failing grade.
- Each teacher must be able to justify student grades using valid, District curriculum-related material.
- Each school, with support from the District, will provide alternative programs for students having difficulties, i.e., specialized interventions, tutorial support, mentoring, etc.
- Grades will not be taken on pre-Assessments.

As the instructional leader of the school, the principal has the ultimate responsibility to enforce fair and consistent grading procedures that are consistent with District policies and developed by the elementary grade-level team or secondary campus department in each school.

## DEFINITIONS FOR GRADING PRACTICES GRADES K-12

<b>ADVANCED PLACEMENT &amp; PREADVANCED PLACEMENT ACCOMMODATIONS</b>	Allowable accommodations for students enrolled in Pre-AP and AP courses are determined by the accommodations allowed by The College Board. Shortened assignments as an accommodation is not permitted as students prepare for AP tests. Allowable accommodations include extended time, large print and braille.
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	Assessment is the process of gathering information that reflects levels of student achievement.
<b>AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT</b>	A demonstration of performance of skills or knowledge in a real-life context
<b>BENCHMARK</b>	A district-wide assessment administered to all students in an identified grade or course. These assessments are designed to simulate the STAAR or EOC test for that grade or course, and to predict student performance on the up-coming state assessment.
<b>CBA</b>	“Content Based Assessment” or CBA is an assessment based on the curriculum (TEKS) as described by the Scope & Sequence for a specific time period.
<b>CLASSWORK</b>	Work that is assigned and intended for completion in class
<b>EVALUATION</b>	The process of judging the results of an assessment
<b>EXTRA CREDIT</b>	Extra points given for optional academic extension activities
<b>FINAL/SEMESTER EXAM</b>	Assessment conducted at the end of a semester or school year designed to assess achievement in a particular field of knowledge
<b>GROUP GRADE</b>	One grade given to all students in a group for their overall performance/product (see p.6)
<b>HOMEWORK</b>	Homework is any work assigned to be done outside of class for the practice and reinforcement of learned skills. Homework is a non-observable activity that is an extension of classroom instruction. Homework must be evaluated.
<b>INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)</b>	Individual Education Plan is designed for a student who meets special education eligibility criteria by the Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee (ARD). This plan may address student grading accommodations.
<b>INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATION PLAN (IAP)</b>	Individual Accommodation Plan is designed for a student who meets 504 eligibility criteria and has a 504 Plan in place. This plan may address student grading accommodations.
<b>INDEPENDENT GRADES</b>	Grades given for assigned student work other than tests (completed independently, without assistance) which are used for calculating grading-period averages
<b>INDEPENDENT PRACTICE</b>	Work/assignment given to a student to provide opportunity to reinforce skills
<b>MAJOR GRADE</b>	Unit tests, projects, presentations, lab reports, CBAs, etc.
<b>MASTER</b>	(verb: <i>to become skilled or proficient in the use of, to achieve mastery or command of, to gain a thorough understanding, grasp or knowledge of</i> ) In testing, to master means the student can demonstrate proficiency at a predetermined degree of success.
<b>NON-MAJOR GRADE</b>	Class work, short quizzes, lab reports, projects, journal writings, vocabulary tests, book reports, etc.
<b>PARENT NOTIFICATION</b>	Includes but is not limited to Parent Portal, e-mails, phone calls, face-to-face conferences, letters, and progress reports
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>	Contribution to the learning process of self and others by presenting other points of view, additional examples or illustrations or references, questioning, answering, etc.
<b>PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT</b>	An assessment based on performance of a task or product to demonstrate a skill or skills that have been learned
<b>POP QUIZ</b>	A short test given with no prior warning
<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	A collection of student work showing development of knowledge, understanding and application of skills in a given curriculum area
<b>PROJECT/EXHIBIT</b>	Product used to communicate understanding of a subject or area of learning
<b>SPECIAL EDUCATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b>	The Admission, Review and Dismissal committee (ARD) determines the instructional accommodations necessary for the classroom and testing environment. This committee will determine the specially designed instructional plan for each special education student. These accommodations may include grading, format of assignments, length of assignments, and location of instruction.
<b>TEST</b>	An example of an assessment device
<b>UNIT</b>	A specific topic within a course of study
<b>UNIT TEST</b>	The assessment conducted at the end of a unit of study

## ELEMENTARY (Pre K-4) GRADING GUIDELINES

### PRE-K & K

The report card is designed to assist teachers in evaluating the ongoing growth and development of students. Parent/teacher conferences are suggested during the first and third reporting periods.

The following symbols will be used to indicate a student's academic progress in all reported areas:

IA – Independently Applies Learning

P – Progressing

N – Not Progressing/Needs Additional Academic Support

Comments for all reporting periods are to elaborate on strengths and offer suggestions for students who need to improve in meeting expectations established by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

The kindergarten report card will include the student's reading development as assessed by the Texas Proficiency Reading Inventory (TPRI).

### GRADES 1 – 4

Grades 1-4 will use numeric grades for reading, language, math science, and social studies. . E (excellent), S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement) and U (unsatisfactory) will be used for art, music, and physical education.

Specific guidelines for grades 1-4 will be as follows:

- At least two grades must be entered into the electronic grade book for each subject, weekly. This provides for a minimum of 10 grades, per subject, by the end of the six weeks. \*
- A minimum of three (3) grades recorded should be major grades.
- A minimum of seven (7) grades recorded should be non-major grades.
- Weekly Spelling Tests Grades will be averaged for the six weeks and will become one major grade.
- Homework may not count more than 10% of a student's grade in a grading period.
- No major grades can be counted more than once.

*\*ELA will have only 8 grades per district literacy initiative (see chart below)*

Elementary School report cards will include the student's current reading level as a result of the most recent district assessment. (Texas Proficiency Reading Inventory – TPRI and DRA) See Primary Assessment Calendar

<b>Reading– a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
30% - *3 Major	CBA, Presentations, Projects, Unit Tests
70% - *7 Non-major Grades	Book Reports, Classroom Assessments, Class Work, Homework, Quizzes
<b>English/Language Arts – a minimum of 8 grades</b> (Writing, Grammar, Spelling)	
30% - *3 Major Grades	CBA, Essays, Spelling Average, Unit Tests
70 % - *5 Non-major Grades	Classroom Assessments, Class Work, Homework, Journal Writings, Vocabulary Tests
<b>Mathematics – a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
30% - *3 Major Grades	CBA, Projects, Six Week Test, Unit Tests
70% - * 7 Non-major Grades	Classwork, Daily Assignments, Classroom Assessments, Homework
<b>Science – a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
30% - *3 Major Grades	CBA, Projects (Must include 1 project per six weeks), Unit tests
70% - *7 Non-major Grades	Classroom Assessments, Class work, Homework, Journal Writings
<b>Social Studies – a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
30% - *3 Major Grades	Projects, Six weeks tests, Unit Tests
70% - *7 Non- major Grades	Classroom Assessments, Class Work, Homework
*- Minimum number of grades in a category and grading period	

<p><b><u>Specials, Fine Arts, PE:</u></b></p> <p><u>Pre-K-4:</u> 40% Major (minimum=2 grades); 60% Non-major (minimum=2 grades)</p> <p>PE: 40% Major (minimum=2 grades); 60% Non-major (minimum=4 grades)</p> <p><u>Intermediate-High School:</u> 60% Major (minimum=7 grades); 40% Non-major (minimum=3 grades)</p>
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## Intermediate (5-6) GRADING GUIDELINES

Grades 5 - 6 will use numeric grades for all subjects. Specific guidelines for grades 5-6 will be as follows\*:

- At least two grades must be entered into the electronic grade book for each subject, weekly. This provides for a minimum of 10 grades, per subject, by the end of the six weeks.
- A minimum of three (3) grades recorded should be major grades.
- A minimum of seven (7) grades recorded should be non-major grades.
- Weekly Spelling Tests Grades will be averaged for the six weeks and will become one major grade.
- Homework may not count more than 10% of a student's grade in a grading period.
- No major grades may be counted more than once.

*\*ELA will have only 8 grades per district literacy initiative (see chart below)*

<b>Reading– a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
50% - *3 Major	CBA, Presentations, Projects, Unit Tests
50% - *7 Non-major Grades	Book Reports, Classroom Assessments, Class Work
<b>English/Language Arts – a minimum of 8 grades (Writing, Grammar, Spelling)</b>	
50% - *3 Major Grades	CBA, Essays, Spelling Average, Unit Tests
50%- *5 Non-major Grades	Classroom Assessments, Class Work, Homework, Journal Writings, Vocabulary Tests
<b>Mathematics – a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
50% - *3 Major Grades	CBA, Tests, Projects, Six Week Test, Unit Tests
50% - *7 Non-MajorGrades	Classroom Assessments, Class Work, Daily Assignments, Homework
<b>Science – a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
50% - *3 Major Grades	CBA, Projects (Must include 1 project per six week), Six Weeks Test, Unit Tests
50% - *7 Non-Major Grades	Classroom Assessments, Class Work, Homework
<b>Social Studies – a minimum of 10 grades</b>	
50% - *3 Major Grades	Tests, Six weeks tests, Projects
50% - *7 Non-Major Grades	Quizzes, Class work, Homework

\*- Minimum number of grades in the category

## MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL (7 – 12) GRADING GUIDELINES

ACADEMIC LEVEL	PRE-AP LEVEL	AP LEVEL
<p><b>Major grades</b> (unit tests, projects, research papers, skills assessments, six weeks exams, etc.) will count 60% of the grading period grade.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 major grades are required each grading period. No major grades can be counted more than once.</p> <p><b>Non-Major grades</b> (homework, class work, quizzes, guided or independent practice, etc.) will count 40% of the grading period grade.</p> <p>A minimum of 7 non-major grades are required each grading period.</p>	<p><b>Major grades</b> (unit tests, projects, research papers, skills assessments, six weeks exams, etc.) will count 65% of the grading period grade.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 major grades are required each grading period. No major grades can be counted more than once.</p> <p><b>Non-major grades</b> (homework, class work, quizzes, guided or independent practice, etc.) will count 35% of the grading period grade.</p> <p>A minimum of 7 non-major grades are required each grading period.</p>	<p><b>Major grades</b> (unit tests, projects, research papers, skills assessments, six weeks exams, etc.) will count 70% of the grading period grade.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 major grades are required each grading period. No major grades can be counted more than once.</p> <p><b>Non-major grades</b> (homework, class work, quizzes, guided or independent practice, etc.) will count 30% of the grading period grade.</p> <p>A minimum of 7 non-major grades are required each grading period.</p>
<p><b>Dual credit courses in all subjects will adhere to the grading procedures and policies as defined in each HCC course syllabus and will be weighted the same as AP level courses. All Stafford MSD policies regarding the District’s electronic grade book and grading timelines will be followed.</b></p>		

<p><b>MAJOR GRADES</b></p>	<p>The primary purpose of assessments should be to measure the student’s successful attainment of the TEKS as expressed in the course objectives. Assessments of complex assignments typically requiring one to three days to complete are called major assignments. One of the three major grades should be project-based/performance based. Three days advanced notice must be given to students of any activity or test that constitutes a major grade.</p>	<p>The following are examples of major assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter or unit tests</li> <li>• Research paper</li> <li>• Special activities or projects, i.e., lab, artwork</li> <li>• Skills assessments, i.e., essays, performances, oral presentations</li> <li>• Six weeks exams</li> <li>• CBAs (Curriculum Based Assessments)</li> </ul>										
<p><b>NON-MAJOR GRADES</b></p>	<p>Assessments of assignments typically requiring only one day to complete are examples of non-major assignments. Feedback should be provided within 48 hours of the submission of the assignment or as soon as reasonably possible. Feedback is defined as written comments, peer review, conference, grades, and the like. Daily grades must be taken from a variety of different assessments of the curriculum.</p>	<p>The following are examples of non-major assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided or independent practice</li> <li>• Quizzes</li> <li>• Classroom Participation</li> <li>• Classroom Activities/Assignments</li> <li>• Teacher observation, i.e., small group participation, labs, oral presentations</li> <li>• Homework</li> </ul>										
<p><b>HOMEWORK</b></p>	<p>-Homework is any work assigned to be done outside of the class to enrich, reinforce, or support instruction. Homework should satisfy at least one following objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To give the student practice and extension of concepts/skills learned in class</li> <li>• To allow students to make up work after absences</li> </ul> <p>-Homework is included in the broad category of non-major grades.          -Homework should never be a disciplinary measure, but should be used to enrich and strengthen classroom experiences.          -No homework shall be assigned to be completed over Thanksgiving Week, Winter Break, Spring Break or religious holy days.          -Grades 1 – 6 – Homework should count no more than 10% of a student’s grade.          -Grades 7 -12 – Homework should count no more than 20% of a student’s grade.</p>	<p>Homework may be assigned not to exceed, daily:</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">K – 2<sup>nd</sup></td> <td>30 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup></td> <td>45 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup></td> <td>60 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup></td> <td>90 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup></td> <td>150 minutes</td> </tr> </table>	K – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	30 minutes	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	45 minutes	5 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>	60 minutes	7 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	90 minutes	9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	150 minutes
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9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	150 minutes											

<p><b>PROGRESS REPORTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports will reflect the grade through the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the grading period for all students.</li> <li>• Special Education students may receive both a progress report/report card and a copy of their progress on specifically designed goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Parent/Guardian notification of changes in a student's grade will be done at the point, after the progress report, that a student's grade becomes failing.</li> <li>• Progress Reports will be issued for Dual Credit Classes Taught by SMSD staff</li> </ul>
<p><b>GROUP PROJECTS</b></p>	<p>The following shall be used when determining an individual student's grade within a group assignment/project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a group assignment or project is assigned, clearly described criteria are to be established for each student in the group</li> <li>• When students are assigned a group project, each student is to know in advance the criteria to be used in assigning his/her grade.</li> <li>• From 95% to 100% of a student's grade will be determined by the student's performance in meeting assigned criteria</li> <li>• If an overall group grade is given, it is to count no more than 10% of each student's grade on the project.</li> <li>• No more than 5% of a student's final grade, semester or yearly, may be based on grades that are given for the performance of a group overall</li> </ul>
<p><b>EXTRA CREDIT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To receive extra credit, the work completed must be directly related to the curriculum, should be used for enrichment, and should not replace any missed work. All extra credit should be academic.</li> <li>• Extra credit should not be used to the extent that the grade does not accurately reflect the academic achievement of that student for the current grading period.</li> <li>• Extra credit should count for no more than 5 % of a student's grade in a grading period.</li> <li>• <b>If extra credit is offered, it must be offered to ALL students in the class.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>MAKE-UP WORK</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the teacher's responsibility to provide students with makeup work upon returning to class from an absence.</li> <li>• A grace period equal to the number of days missed, plus one, is allowed for make-up work.</li> <li>• At the teacher's discretion, make-up work may be made up before, during, or after school. Make-up work, including tests, may be of an altered version.</li> </ul>
<p><b>LATE ASSIGNMENTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are expected to submit all assignments, including electronic assignments, by the date established by the teacher.</li> <li>• Teachers will accept and award at least partial credit for late work turned in within three consecutive school days of the due date.</li> <li>• Late assignments will accrue 10 point penalty per day.</li> <li>• Teachers have the option of giving students an alternative assignment that will be due within the same time frame as the original assignment. Students will be made aware of the deadline established by the teacher.</li> <li>• Extenuating circumstances* will be given special consideration.</li> </ul>

<b>ZEROS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students shall not be allowed to “opt out” of their learning by choosing not to complete assessments/assignments.</li> </ul>
<b>HIGHEST GRADE ALLOWABLE FOR A GRADING PERIOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average of any grading period cannot be higher than 100.</li> <li>• Report cards will not report a grade higher than 100.</li> <li>• Grades are calculated on a 100 point scale.</li> </ul>
<b>RE-TEACHING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-teaching is a necessary component in the mastery of essential knowledge and skills. Re-teaching must occur whenever the teacher determines that a student has not mastered the objective(s) at the independent practice or assessment level.</li> <li>• There must be documentation of re-teaching when the teacher has determined that the student has not mastered an objective. Documentation that re-teaching has occurred must consist of entries either in the teacher’s lesson plans or grade book.</li> <li>• If 25% or more of the students in a single class per teacher do not demonstrate mastery of the TEKS on a major assessment, the teacher will provide the opportunity for re-teaching and retesting during class time.</li> <li>• If less than 25% of the students in a single class per teacher do not demonstrate mastery, the student may be required to attend tutorials, complete test corrections, or perform other tasks as directed by the teacher, prior to reassessment.</li> </ul>
<b>REASSESSMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who do not demonstrate mastery on a major assessment must retest. Retesting guidelines apply to major assessments only. Daily grades, quizzes, projects, six weeks exams and semester exams are not included in the retesting guidelines.</li> <li>• Retesting procedures should be consistent across grade levels/individual departments/ or the campus as determined at each campus.</li> <li>• The following guidelines apply to retesting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Re-teaching must be completed prior to the administration of the next major assessment in the course.</li> <li>✓ Retesting will occur within five school days of the date the failing grade was received or no later than ten days of the date of the original assessment.</li> <li>✓ The decision as to how to reassess objectives that are retaught is the option of the classroom teacher.</li> <li>✓ In order to retest, the student must have been retaught the non-mastered objectives.</li> <li>✓ Students will receive the higher of the two grades not to exceed a grade of 75.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>CONDUCT GRADES</b></p>	<p>The areas of attitude, behavior, and tardiness will not influence the student’s academic grade. These areas will influence a student’s conduct grades and reported as an:</p> <p>E- Excellent behavior  S- Satisfactory behavior  N- Needs improvement  U- Unsatisfactory behavior</p>	
<p><b>GRADE REPORTING</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers shall not cut off grades any earlier than two days prior to the end of the grading period.</li> <li>• If a numerical grade below 50 will be recorded on the report card, the teacher must submit documentation of the actions taken utilizing the “Student Summary and Progress Supporting Final Grades Below a ‘50’ Form.</li> <li>• Teachers should be prepared to provide documentation to the campus principal for students who do not meet the 90% compulsory attendance threshold and have received a passing grade of 70 or better.</li> <li>• Teachers should be prepared to provide documentation to the campus principal for students whose grade averages are on the pass/fail borderline of 68-69, including strategies and interventions for academic supports for the next six weeks.</li> <li>• Teacher with a six-week and/or semester failure rate of over 30 % in any subject area will be required to develop and submit an intervention support plan for struggling students that will be monitored by an administrator.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>DETERMINING FINAL GRADES</b></p>	<p><b>GRADES 1 – 5</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average the three grading periods to determine the semester average for a one-semester course</li> <li>• Average all grading periods to determine the final average for year-long courses.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>GRADES 7 – 12</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The semester exam for any course will count 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the semester average.</li> <li>• Semester exam exemptions applicable to 9-12 students only.</li> <li>• Dual credit final grades will be determined according to HCC’s policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AVERAGING SEMESTER GRADES FOR CREDIT</b></p>	<p><b>PRE-K &amp; K &amp; GRADES 1-5</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
	<p><b>GRADES 7-8</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students enrolled in a course for high school credit will receive high school credit for any semester with a 70 or above average.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>HIGH SCHOOL (Academic, Pre-AP, &amp; AP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student receives credit for any semester with a 70 or above average.</li> <li>• In a yearlong course, a student receives credit for both semesters if he/she passes the second semester and the average of the two semesters equals 70 or greater.</li> </ul>

