

October 16, 2009

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2033 School District Grading Policy

SB 2033, passed by the 81st Texas Legislature, requires each school district to adopt a grading policy, including provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations, before each school year. A district grading policy:

- (1) must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment;
- (2) may not require a classroom teacher to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work; and
- (3) 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.

TEA understands this legislation to also require honest grades for each grading period including six weeks, nine weeks, or semester grades for two reasons. First, if actual grades on assignments are not used in determining a six weeks grade, the purpose of the legislation has been defeated. Second, since 1995, Texas Education Code, §28.021, has required decisions on promotion or course credit to be based on "academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency." If the six weeks grades do not reflect the actual assignment grades, they would not reflect academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency.

This legislation permits a district, through local policy, to allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade. By allowing students to make up work, a district would ensure six weeks grades reflect relative mastery of assignments, even if making up a prior deficit, rather than awarding an automatic grade to a student who has received a failing grade.

If you have questions regarding SB 2033, please contact Monica Martinez, Policy Director in the Curriculum Division, at (512) 463-9581 or via e-mail at monica.martinez@tea.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

Robert Scott
Commissioner of Education

RS/mgm