

# INSTRUCTION, GRADING, & REPORTING TO PARENTS

## GRADING SYSTEM

First six weeks' grades for Pre-Kindergarten are reported in a short narrative and as a checklist every six weeks after the first six weeks period.

First six weeks' grades for Kindergarten and first grade are reported in a short narrative and as letter grades after the first six weeks. Letter grade equivalents for grade averages are:

- E** - Excellent
- S** - Satisfactory
- N** - Needs Improvement
- U** - Unsatisfactory
- I** - Incomplete

For grades two through five, a numerical grading system is used. Numerical grade equivalents for grade averages are:

- 100 - 90** - Excellent
- 89 - 80** - Satisfactory
- 79 - 70** - Needs improvement
- Below 70 is failing** - Unsatisfactory
- I** - Incomplete

Conduct/Citizenship, and work habit (study habits) grades will be given as **letter grades**.

- |                |               |            |
|----------------|---------------|------------|
| <b>0 – 5</b>   | Conduct Marks | = <b>E</b> |
| <b>6 – 10</b>  |               | = <b>S</b> |
| <b>11 – 15</b> |               | = <b>N</b> |
| <b>16+</b>     |               | = <b>U</b> |

**Good Citizenship** is earned when a student receives an **E** (Excellent) in conduct in the homeroom classroom **and** either an **E** or **S** (Satisfactory) in Physical Education.

Physical Education grades are given as **letter grades**.

Retests will only be given for grades below 70, with the highest grade recorded on a retest being a 70. If both grades (the original and the retest) are below 70, the highest of the two grades is recorded. Our goal is to build student responsibility for studying and putting pride into doing their best the first time.

As an added encouragement for all Y.E.S. students to give their 100% best effort at all times, students who choose not to give their best effort on the original test given must attend an after school detention in order to complete their retest.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be distributed at the end of each six weeks period and are due back to the teacher signed by the parent/guardian the following week. A parent/teacher conference will be held for any subject failed by a student. During the fourth week of each six weeks in each student's Wednesday Graded Work Folder, **progress notices** will be sent to all parents. Progress notices will be sent home on the dates given on page 9. Students who are failing and/or close to failing subject mid-six-weeks will receive a separate progress report. These progress reports will be mailed home on the dates given on page 9.

Teachers follow grading guidelines approved by the principal that have been designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or the teacher did not follow the District's grading policy. The Board's decision is not subject to appeal. See policies at EIA.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

All parents are encouraged to attend a conference with the teacher upon request from the school. Parents are always welcome to request a conference with a teacher. Appointments should be made to coincide with the teachers' schedules. This should be done through the office. Call 564-2252, ext 4 to set up a conference.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Yorktown Elementary School provides special programs to meet the needs of all students, including gifted and talented students, homeless students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. A student

or parent with questions about our Special Programs should contact Patty Strieber at 564-2252, ext 4.

## **LEARNING DIFFICUTIES/SPECIAL EDUCATION**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of local education agencies to meet the needs of all struggling students.

### **What is Response to Intervention (RTI)?**

RTI is a process to provide support and interventions to students who are struggling with learning. To meet the needs of these students, Yorktown Elementary School has developed a three-tiered approach for use in this process. The progress that students make will be closely monitored. The results of this monitoring will be used to make decisions on whether or not the need for more intense instruction and/or interventions are necessary. Meetings with an RTI team will occur at every tier. Parents will be invited and strongly encouraged to attend these meetings.

The procedures followed in each of the three tiers are outlined below.

#### **Tier I:**

- All students will receive Tier I – Basic Instruction  
Basic instruction consists of the full amount of Reading instruction provided in the general education classroom.
- Student enters Tier I – Supplemental if identified as low-performing.
- Identified students receive supplemental instruction, or interventions, generally delivered in small groups during the student's regular school day in the regular classroom.
- Duration: 6 weeks

- Student may remain in, or exit Tier I – Supplemental based on progress as determined by the RTI committee.

Tier II:

- Students enter Tier II if adequate progress is not reached by the end of the Tier I – Supplemental process.
- Services are provided in addition to the basic reading instruction.
- Interventions will be provided in small group.
- Duration: 9 weeks
- Student may remain in or exit Tier II based on progress as determined by the RTI committee.
- Upon successful completion of Tier II, student will reenter Tier I for continued monitoring.
- Students who are not making significant progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier III.

Tier III:

- Students receive small group, intensive interventions that target the student's skill deficits.
- Services are provided in addition to the basic reading instruction.
- Duration: 11 weeks
- Student may remain in or exit Tier III based on progress as determined by the RTI committee.
- If the student does not make adequate progress in Tier III, the RTI committee will meet to discuss further options.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of their rights if they disagree with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of parents of Students with Disabilities*.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is:

Contact Person:	Patty Strieber
Phone Number:	564-2252, ext 4

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED**

At Yorktown ISD we are dedicated to helping our students discover and reach their potential from Kindergarten through twelfth grade. Our YISD Gifted and Talented Program provides students who qualify with a program that will encourage these students to develop innovative products and performances that are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment and challenge all students to work at their highest levels.

### **Yorktown ISD GT Student Identification Policy**

- Provides for ongoing screening and selection of students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment
- Includes assessment measures collected from multiple sources
- Includes data and procedures designed to ensure that students from all populations in the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services for the GT Program
- Provides for final selection of students to be made by a committee of at least three local district educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students
- Includes provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement

*If you feel that your child could benefit from a Gifted and Talented Program, please contact your child's school (Y.E.S., 564-2252, ext 4; Y.J.H.S., ext 3; Y.H.S., ext 2).*

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

*What is English as a second language?*

- English as a Second Language (ESL) is intensive English language instruction by teachers trained in recognizing and working with language differences.

- State law requires school districts to provide ESL:
  - In elementary school when there are fewer than 20 limited English proficient (LEP) students of the same language enrolled in the same grade in the district.

*What is an ESL program?*

- An ESL program provides intensive instruction that develops oral and written comprehension and reading and writing in English.
- An ESL program uses the academic and cultural experience of the student as a platform to provide the appropriate instruction in English.
- An ESL program teaches mathematics, science, and social studies using strategies and methodologies appropriate for second language acquisition.

*What is the purpose of an ESL program?*

- An ESL program develops competence in English.
- It prepares the student to be successful in all academic subjects.

*Who should be enrolled in an ESL program?*

- Students in prekindergarten through high school who speak or hear a language other than English in their home and who have difficulty in English are eligible.

*Will my child be taught the same subjects and learn the same skills as students in the regular program?*

**YES!**

All students in ESL must receive instruction in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in English using strategies and methodologies appropriate for them.

**YES!**

Language Arts, Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies are integral parts of the state mandated curriculum.

**YES!**

Music, P.E., and Art are all part of the balanced curriculum that children in the program are required to receive.

*Who is responsible for teaching in an ESL program?*

- Teachers, who are specially trained, tested and certified to teach in ESL programs meet the special language needs of these students.

*How is an ESL program different from English language arts instruction?*

- Teachers are appropriately certified by the state to teach ESL.
- State-adopted ESL materials are provided to help students learn through proven methods.

- The focus is on learning English for effective participation in other classes.

*How can parents help their child learn by participating in the ESL program?*

- Parents can volunteer for classroom activities.
- Parents can encourage their child at home to achieve, provide a place to study, and show interest in schoolwork.
- Parents can ask their child's teacher or principal about becoming a member of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), which helps determine how students will be taught.

## **DYSLEXIA**

The student who struggles with reading, writing, and/or spelling often puzzles teachers and parents. The student displays adequate intelligence and receives the same classroom instruction that benefits most children. Still the student struggles with some or all of the many facets of reading, writing and/or spelling. This student may be identified as a student with dyslexia.

### **As defined in the Texas Education Code 38.003:**

- "Dyslexia" means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence and socio-cultural opportunity.
  - "Related disorders: includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperceptions, developmental dysgraphia, dysphasia and developmental spelling disability.

When it is noted that a student continues to struggle with one or more components of reading, the YISD dyslexia procedures are activated.

For additional information concerning dyslexia, please contact your child's homeroom teacher.

### **Academic Programs**

The school counselor provides students and their parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices.

### **Other Scholarships and Grants**

Students who have financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the Recommended High School Graduation Program may be eligible under the Texas Grant program for tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and

technical schools, as well as to private institutions. *(For further information, see the principal or counselor and policies at EIC and FJ.)*

## **CELEBRATE FREEDOM WEEK**

To educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the values on which this country was founded, the week in which November 11 falls is designated as Celebrate Freedom Week.

Celebrate Freedom Week may include appropriate instruction, as determined by each school district, in each social studies class. Instruction should include study of the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, in their historical context.

Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a portion of the Declaration of Independence text. State law requires the recitation as part of social studies classes in grades 3-12 unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the District determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

## **CONSTITUTION DAY**

Congress has declared September 17 of each year, or if that date falls on a holiday or a weekend, a day during the prior week or following week, to be Constitution Day, on which each district receiving federal funds will provide an educational program to implement Constitution Day.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS**

A list of school supplies needed by your child can be acquired at the Y.E.S. office. **Please mark all school items with child's name**, and do plan to replenish the supplies throughout the school year.

## **SCHEDULE**

## Daily Morning Arrival Time on Campus-

The suggested daily arrival time for school at Y.E.S. is 7:40 a.m. Students who arrive before 7:30 a.m. are to go directly to the YISD cafeteria. The Y.E.S. breakfast duty person will dismiss students from the cafeteria shortly after 7:30 a.m. to go to their assigned grade level location on campus. Students who arrive on campus after 7:30 a.m. are to go directly to their assigned grade level location on campus.

## School Time-

A tardy bell rings at **7:50 A.M.** Y.E.S. daily morning announcements begin promptly after the 7:50 a.m. tardy bell. During this important time of our school day ALL Y.E.S. students, staff, and guests are to be listening to daily morning announcements with NO exceptions. During announcements the *Pledge of Allegiance*, the *Texas Pledge*, and the *National Anthem* will be led. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. Also our Y.E.S. announcements will include one minute of silence in which students can reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. Teachers will not admit tardy students to their classroom without a tardy note from the office. Parents must send an excuse with their child for the tardy.

The first bell of the day rings at 7:45 a.m. At this time teachers will accompany their homeroom classes into the building and to their homeroom class to prepare for morning announcements.

## Y.E.S. TARDY POLICY

Morning announcements begin promptly after the 7:50 a.m. tardy bell rings. Students who arrive at school after the morning announcements begin are monitored on the Y.E.S. front porch (weather permitting) until announcements are completed. During inclement weather these students are monitored in the front hallway area. Students who arrive after the 7:50 a.m. tardy bell are given a blue “tardy slip” from the Secretary’s Office.

### The following action will be taken for tardies:

<u>Number of Tardies</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>
1-3	Verbal Warning per tardy
4-7	One lunch detention per tardy
8-10	One after school detention per tardy
11+	One hour of Saturday School per tardy

**NOTE: Students in PK and Kindergarten will serve one lunch detention per tardy for all tardies accumulated after the 5<sup>th</sup> one.**

**Students are counted absent if they are not in attendance by 9:20 A.M.**

#### **Release of Students Before Dismissal Bell-**

A student must have a note from his/her parent-guardian requesting early dismissal. The **parent-guardian must come into the office of the principal's secretary and sign the student out on a sign-out sheet**. Students cannot sign themselves out.

Except for bus students, the school is not responsible for students after their dismissal time. It is your responsibility to arrange for your child's transportation home from school promptly at his/her dismissal time. This includes bus, car, bike, or walking. The school cannot provide childcare for your child after his/her dismissal time.

**\*\*IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU BE ON TIME TO MEET YOUR CHILD FOR AFTER SCHOOL DISMISSAL AS WELL AS AT 4:00PM AFTER SERVING AN AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION (3:30-4:00PM). ALL STUDENTS SERVING AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION MUST BE PICKED UP BY AN ADULT FROM THE ASSIGNED DETENTION CLASSROOM.**

#### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All K-5 students are required to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity for a minimum of either 30 minutes daily or 135 minutes weekly. Y.E.S. shall assess the physical fitness of students in grades 3-5. For information regarding the District's adopted policies regarding elementary student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

If a child is not physically able to participate in the physical education program, one of the following procedures should be followed to obtain a release:

- For a period of three (3) days or less, a note from the parent/guardian to the **physical education teacher** is sufficient.
- For a period exceeding three consecutive (3) days, a **physician's statement** must be presented to the school nurse or the physical education teacher.

Students **must wear tennis shoes** for P.E. If they normally wear this type of shoe (no cleats), then they do not need an extra pair of shoes for P.E.

#### **U.I.L.**

Yorktown Elementary School participates in the University Interscholastic League contests. Notices are sent out prior to tryouts for student's participation in grades 2nd – 5th. A student must have a passing grade average in all subjects to participate in U.I.L.

For additional U.I.L. information please contact your child's homeroom teacher.

## **STATE ASSESSMENT**

Y.E.S. students at certain grade levels will take state assessment tests (such as TAKS) in the following subjects, as well as routine testing and other measures of achievement:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3-5
- Reading, annually in grades 3-5
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grade 4
- Science in grade 5
- Any other subject required by federal law

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next in grade 2 and above, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above. Averaging the final numerical score for language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science shall derive the overall average. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in language arts and in mathematics. Below grade 2, the District may grant promotions using assessment methods other than numerical scores.

### **Parent Notification of Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI)**

This information is being provided to inform you of the grade advancement requirements of the Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI), which was passed by the 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 1999. The purpose of this initiative is to support every student's academic achievement of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) on grade level or above by Grade 3 and throughout their schooling.

The SSI requires that Grade 3 students pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in reading before they can be promoted to Grade 4. These grade advancement requirements also apply to the reading and mathematics tests in Grade 5. Please note that these testing requirements are part of an overall system of support for student academic achievement.

*Parents of students in grades 3-5 who do not perform satisfactorily on their exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. These students will also have two additional opportunities to take*

*the test. If the student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the District, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. (See policy EIE.)*

Most of all, the SSI recognizes and supports the important role parents play in the education of their children. Yorktown Elementary School depends upon and looks forward to working with you to help your child succeed.

### **Accelerated Reader**

Accelerated Reader (A.R.) is a very important part of the reading program at Y.E.S. Students are given a specified number of minutes daily to read at school. Your child is encouraged to read a specified number of minutes daily at home. Practice will not only increase comprehension skills but also fluency.

At Y.E.S., your child will be assigned a weekly A.R. goal according to individual reading mastery. Students are encouraged to read a variety of texts within their reading range. Nonfiction books have more difficult vocabulary and are recommended to be read at lower reading levels. Due to the length of some books, completion of A.R. tests taken may vary therefore homeroom teachers will monitor student's progress weekly. Students who meet their overall goal for the six weeks will receive a 100 in the grade book. Students who do not meet their A.R. goals will earn a grade according to the number of points they have earned. For example, a student with an A.R. goal of 4 points who earns 3 points will receive a 75, 2 points will receive a 50, 1 point will receive a 25.

At the beginning of each six weeks, your child's weekly goal will be sent home. Every Wednesday, an A.R. summary will be sent home in the Wednesday folders to keep you informed of your child's progress.

The goal will be used for Book-It, Y.E.S. Club criteria (grades 3-5), and an "A.R. All Star" Pizza Party to be held at Yorktown Elementary School at the end of each six weeks in which 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will enjoy a pizza lunch from the cafeteria or a lunch brought from home during their regular scheduled lunch time.

All students who meet their A.R. goals for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> six weeks will be treated to a day in the park and a Hot Diggity Dog lunch.