

Academic Requirements (No Pass No Play)

• Eligibility for UIL Participants For The First Six Weeks

UIL participants are eligible to participate in contests during the first six weeks of the school year provided the following standards have been met:

- Students beginning grades nine and below must have been promoted from the previous grade prior to the beginning of the current school year.
 - Students beginning their second year of high school must have earned five credits which count toward state high school graduation requirements.
 - Students beginning their third year of high school either must have earned a total of ten credits which count toward state high school graduation credits or have earned a total of five credits which count toward state high school graduation requirements during the 12 months preceding the first day of the current school year.
 - Students beginning their fourth year of high school either must have earned a total of 15 credits which count toward state high school graduation credits or have earned a total of five credits which count toward state high school graduation requirements during the 12 months preceding the first day of the current school year.
 - A non-enrolled (home schooled) student seeking participation for the first six weeks in accordance with section 33.0832 of the Texas Education Code must demonstrate grade-level academic proficiency on any nationally recognized, norm-referenced assessment instrument, such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Stanford Achievement Test, California Achievement Test, or Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills prior to the first day of school.
 - A non-enrolled student demonstrates the required academic proficiency by achieving a composite, core, or survey score that is within the average or higher than average range of scores, as established by the applicable testing service. For purposes of this subsection, a school district shall accept assessment results administered or reported by a third party.
- **Exceptions:**
- (a) When a migrant student enrolls for the first time during a school year, all criteria cited above applies. All other students who enroll too late to earn a passing grade for a grading period are ineligible.
 - (b) High school students transferring from out-of-state may be eligible the first six weeks of school if they meet the criteria cited above or school officials are able to determine that they would have been eligible if they had remained in the out-of-state school from which they are transferring.

Students who are not in compliance with these provisions may request a hardship appeal of their academic eligibility through the UIL state office.

Local school boards may elect to adopt these standards for all activities in order to avoid having different standards for student participants (e.g., football, drill team, cheerleading, and all other extracurricular activities as defined by Commissioner of Education rule [19 TAC Chapter §76]).

• Eligibility for All Extracurricular Participants After First Six Weeks of the School Year

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 class (other than an identified class eligible for exemption) or a student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities for three school weeks. (See information for non-enrolled (home schooled) students below). An ineligible student may practice or rehearse, however. The student regains eligibility after the seven calendar day waiting period has ended following a grading period or the three school week evaluation period when the principal and teachers determine that he or she has earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all classes, other than those that are exempted.

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 the grading period whether it is six, nine, or twelve weeks in length. Students who pass remain eligible until the end of the next grading period. 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.

- In accordance with section 33.0832 of the Texas Education Code, the parent or person standing in parental relation to a non-enrolled (home schooled) student participating in a league activity on behalf of a public school must periodically, in accordance with the school's grading calendar, provide written verification to the school indicating that the student is receiving a passing grade in each course or subject being taught.
- All students are academically eligible during a school holiday of a full calendar week or more. When

the bell rings to dismiss students for the December holidays, all students are academically eligible until classes resume in January. The same is true for summer recess and fall and spring breaks provided those breaks consist of at least a full calendar week. (See example at the end of this document.)

- Students in year-round schools are academically eligible during inter-sessions.
- If a grading period or three school week evaluation period ends on the last class day prior to a school holiday of one calendar week or more (e.g. spring break, winter holidays), the seven calendar day grace period to lose eligibility and the seven calendar day waiting period to regain eligibility begin the first day that classes resume.
- Students lose eligibility for a three school week period. For purposes of the law, “three school weeks” is defined as 15 class days. Exception: One, but only one of the three school weeks may consist of only three or four class days, provided school has been dismissed for a scheduled holiday period. Two class days does not constitute a “school week” for purposes of this law except Thanksgiving week if schools are on holiday Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. A school district may request an exception from UIL officials to the two day school week in the event of a disaster, flood, extreme weather condition or other calamity as listed in TEC §42.005. In the event two of three school weeks are shortened, one of the shortened weeks may be counted as five days with ten other actual class days making up the fifteen class days. After the first six weeks of the school year, academically ineligible students in schools with six week grading periods have one opportunity to regain eligibility after the first three school weeks of the grading period; students in a nine week grading period have two opportunities, one at the end of the first three school weeks and one at the end of the first six school weeks. Students who fail to regain eligibility at the evaluation periods remain ineligible until seven calendar days after passing a grading period.
- Note: When computing eligibility calendars, it is helpful to remember that the seven day grace period after the grading period also contains school week one of the three school week evaluation period. Also, a seven calendar day grace and waiting period is always applicable after grading periods and evaluation periods.

Example: School week ends on Friday - Students who are losing eligibility have a seven calendar day grace period, and students who are regaining eligibility have a seven calendar day waiting period. Eligibility is lost or regained the following Friday at the time the regular school day ends or would end if that day is a holiday.

Section 5 (b) of the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules defines calendar week as 12:01 am on Sunday through midnight on Saturday.

19 TAC §76.1001 (b) states: The school week is defined as beginning at 12:01 am on the first instructional day of the calendar week and ending at the close of instruction on the last instructional day of the calendar week, excluding holidays.

• Semester Grades

When students are enrolled in accelerated classes which grant them the opportunity to earn credit during nine school weeks and the school is using a nine week grading period and considers the semester to be nine weeks in length, eligibility may be determined by the cumulative report grade for the nine weeks since the nine weeks also constitutes a grading period, or schools may use a cumulative grade up to the final exam for the purposes of determining eligibility.

This is not intended to permit schools to select one method for some students and another method for others. School officials must decide which method they are going to use and apply it to eligibility for all students within that specific school.

Schools with traditional six week grading periods and 18 week semesters must continue to use the third six weeks grade of the first semester to determine eligibility since the law requires eligibility to be based on the previous grading period during the school year.

• Identification of Honors Courses under TAC §74.30

- (a) The following are identified as honors classes as referred to in the Texas Education Code, §33.081(d)(1), concerning extracurricular activities:
- (1) all College Board advanced placement courses and International Baccalaureate courses in all disciplines;
 - (2) English language arts: high school/college concurrent enrollment classes that are included in the “Community College General Academic Course Guide Manual (Part One)”;
 - (3) Languages other than English: high school/college concurrent enrollment classes that are included in the “Community College General Academic Course Guide Manual (Part One),” and languages other than English courses Levels IV-VII;
 - (4) Mathematics: high school/college concurrent enrollment classes that are included in

The courses referenced in section (b) above do not have to be submitted to the University Inter-scholastic League. They may be maintained at the local school district level.

It is important to remember that school districts may voluntarily impose stricter standards than those cited in this document. Questions and/or requests for additional information should be directed to the UIL Office: info@uilitexas.org

• Q&A •

1. **May a school district exempt locally adopted honors classes for No Pass No Play purposes for eighth grade and below?** Yes. It is not necessary to send a list of these classes to the UIL.

2. **Do school officials have the authority to refuse to exempt students who fail honors classes referenced in this document?** Yes. Local districts may adopt more stringent rules.

3. **If a student drops a course eligible for exemption with a grade lower than 70, is the student ineligible?** No. Dropping an honors class with a failing grade does not cause loss of eligibility because the class is exempt from No Pass No Play, unless the school has adopted a more stringent policy than state law or full-time status is affected.

4. **Is Pre-AP Pre Calculus a course that is eligible for exemption from No Pass No Play?** Not automatically. Pre-AP Pre Calculus is not listed as a course that can be automatically exempt from No Pass No Play provisions. In order for Pre-AP Pre Calculus to be eligible for exemption it must be identified by the school district as an honors course as explained in TAC 74.30.

• Dropping a Class with a Failing Grade

A student may not drop a class in which he/she has a grade below 70 after the end of the first four school weeks of the class without it being considered a failing grade for eligibility purposes.

Dropping an honors class which is exempted for No Pass No Play does not cause loss of eligibility at anytime unless full-time status is affected or the school has adopted a more stringent policy. Dropping a non-honors class with a grade lower than 70 at the end of a grading period causes a student to lose eligibility until seven calendar days after the end of the three school week evaluation period.

Dropping a non-honors class after the fourth week into the course with a grade lower than 70 causes the student to lose eligibility at the end of the grading period for the next three school week evaluation period. It is important to remember the following points:

- A school may have more stringent rules.
- Local school district policy determines how the drop is recorded for official transcript purposes. Dropping a class could cause a student to lose eligibility under the full-time student requirement. If the drop causes the student to be in class less than four hours per day, see #1, under "Enrollment Requirements."

• Q&A •

1. **How many physical education credits may be counted in the credit requirements for academic eligibility the first six weeks of the school year?** Students may count only credits that may be applied toward state graduation requirements. Students are required to take one (1) unit in Physical Education (PE) toward state graduation requirements, but may take additional PE credits as electives. Therefore, students can count no more than two (2) PE credits toward the 5, 10, or 15 credits they must have earned.

2. **Are elementary/junior high students subject to No Pass No Play provisions?** Yes. State law for eligibility applies to all grade levels for extracurricular activities. In the case of UIL activities, a student who is retained for any reason in grades 8 is not eligible for the first six weeks of the following school year. A student who is academically promoted due to summer school courses or credit by examination (TEC §28.023) regains eligibility for the first six weeks of the school year. For non-UIL activities, check local district policies.

3. **May students earn credits in summer school, correspondence courses, or credit by exam to meet requirements for extracurricular eligibility?** Yes. Credits earned prior to the first day of the school year in summer school classes, in correspondence courses, or for passing credit by examination may be used to determine eligibility for extracurricular activities.

4. **Are 7th and 8th grade students eligible to participate in UIL activities the first six weeks of the school year if they were held back on parental request for reasons involving the student's emotional, psychological, or social development, even though the student has passed all subjects and would otherwise have been promoted?** No. These students are ineligible for the first six weeks because they were not promoted from one grade level to the next. A student held back one year in the 7th or 8th grade for athletic purposes shall lose the fourth year of eligibility after entering the 9th grade. A student held back for two years for athletic purposes shall lose the third and fourth years of eligibility after entering the 9th grade. One of the determining factors used in determining why a student repeats grades is an examination of the student's grades. Parents should be notified that it is likely that their child will be subject to the consequences listed above if the student was ready to be

academically promoted.

5. What is the Student Success Initiative (SSI) and how does it impact academic eligibility for the first six weeks of the school year? Enacted by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999 and amended in the 81st session in 2009 to include an accelerated instruction provision, the Student Success Initiative (SSI) grade advancement requirements apply to the STAAR reading and mathematics tests at grades 5 and 8. As specified by these requirements, a student may advance to the next grade level only by demonstrating proficiency on these tests or by completing all accelerated instruction required by the grade placement committee (GPC), and having the GPC determine, by unanimous decision, that the student is likely to perform at grade level at the end of the next school year given additional accelerated instruction during the course of the year. To assist districts and charter schools in meeting the accelerated instruction provision after the third administration of the test, TEA is allowing districts and charter schools to apply for an expedited waiver to adjust the timeline for providing accelerated instruction to students who fail the third administration. If you have questions or need further clarification about this information, please contact the Student Assessment Division or the State Waiver Unit at TEA.

The GPC would determine if a student advanced for purposes of academic eligibility for the first six weeks of the school year under No Pass, No Play requirements. If the GPC advances the student to the next grade on or after the first day of school, the student in question is academically ineligible for the first six weeks of school. If the student is passing all courses at the end of the first six weeks (other than identified honors courses), the student can regain academic eligibility after the seven calendar day grace period.

6. If students enroll in grade 9 for the first time at the beginning of the second semester, how many credits must they have to be academically eligible during the first six weeks of the following school year? At least two and one-half credits.

7. What standards determine the eligibility of special education students?

Academic standards for the first six weeks of school year: The ARD committee determines and specifies in the IEP what a student must achieve each year in order to be promoted or placed into the next grade level. The ARD committee also determines the number of credits needed to be eligible for UIL activities during the first six weeks of the school year.

Academic standards for weeks 7-36: A special education student is eligible if his/her IEP (Individual Education Plan) requirements have been met. *If a student who has received a failing grade is later referred for special education and found eligible for special education services, the ARD committee cannot restore the student's eligibility for extracurricular activities. In accordance with state law, the ARD committee will specify what the IEP requirements will be for the upcoming grading period, and the student will immediately begin work towards achievement of the IEP requirements. At the end of that grading period, the student would be eligible if the requirements of the IEP are met.*

Full-time status: For UIL activities, the ARD committee determines the number of courses a special education student must be enrolled in to be eligible, based on the student's individual educational needs.

504 Eligibility: Eligibility standards for students identified as disabled under Section 504 are the same as for regular education students. However, Section 504 students are to be considered for IDEA eligibility if the Section 504 committee determines that because of his/her disability, the student cannot master the essential knowledge and skills in order to meet the regular academic standards as identified in §33.081 of the Education Code (i.e., the "No Pass No Play" law). If a Section 504 student meets the eligibility requirements to be served as a special education student, the information provided above applies in determining his/her eligibility.

8. Are students limited to regaining eligibility for one three school week period? No. After the first six weeks of the school year, students may regain eligibility through the school year. (TEC §33.081 [d].)

9. Should students who are ineligible according to No Pass No Play be reported on UIL athletic eligibility blanks? Yes. The students are not actually eligible until they pass all courses and the seven calendar day waiting period is over. However, it is wise to report all students who may play varsity athletics anytime during the season since UIL rules require students to be reported before entering any varsity contest.

10. When a student fails a course at the end of a grading period, is that course the only subject the student must pass to regain eligibility within three weeks? No, the student must be passing all courses other than identified honors classes at the end of the three school week evaluation period in order to regain eligibility. (TEC §33.081 [d].)

11. May students count TAKS and STAAR Review Courses toward the number of credits students need to be eligible the first six weeks of the school year? No. TAKS and STAAR Review Courses may not be counted.

12. If a student fails a TAKS or STAAR Review Course, does the student lose eligibility? No, failing a TAKS or STAAR Review Course does not cause loss of eligibility.

13. Under what conditions may a student receive an incomplete grade and how does it affect eligibility? A student with an “Incomplete” grade is ineligible at the end of the seven day grace period unless the “Incomplete” was replaced with a passing grade prior to the end of the seven day grace period. Students with an “Incomplete” grade either within or beyond the end of the seven day grace period may regain eligibility if the work is made up in accordance with district policy in regard to time allowed for make-up work and the conditions under which make-up work are allowed.

14. Can a student's grade be changed for eligibility? After a failing grade has been recorded, the situations in which a student's grade may be changed to passing and eligibility restored are only as follows: (a) an examination or course grade issued by a classroom teacher is final and may not be changed unless the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with school district grading policy, as determined by the board of trustees. The board's decision may not be appealed.

Extra credit work or work (including re-test) turned in after the grading period or evaluation has ended may not be considered when determining a student's eligibility for extracurricular activities except in the case of an “Incomplete” grade discussed above. According to Section 21 (e), the superintendent of a member school district shall provide the district executive committee with full disclosure when a student's grade, given by a teacher, is modified by an administrator in such a manner that affects UIL eligibility.

15. How are college courses handled for academic eligibility purposes? See section titled “Identification of Honors Courses” at the beginning of this document for college course exemption information. Students are not required to submit grades for college courses to the high school principal if those courses have no bearing on graduation requirements. Courses taken solely for college credit do not count toward the number of hours required to be considered a full time student for eligibility purposes.

16. How are online courses taken through the school district handled for academic purposes? Based on the understanding that any online or virtual class, taken via the Texas Virtual School Network (Tx-VSN) or other district and state approved provider, is handled through the local independent school district in which the student is enrolled, the following information would apply:

If the virtual course is for high school graduation requirements, and not eligible for exemption as an advanced class as discussed in this document, grades for the course must be submitted to the school at the scheduled high school grading periods and, if failing, will have an impact on academic eligibility. The grade report at the scheduled high school grading periods could be simply a pass/fail indication of the student's progress at the time.

17. How are correspondence courses handled for academic eligibility purposes? In regard to correspondence courses and potential ramifications toward No Pass No Play, the answer will depend on whether the course in question is being utilized toward high school graduation requirements.

If the correspondence course is for high school graduation requirements, and not eligible for exemption as an advanced class as discussed in this document, grades for the course must be submitted to the school at the scheduled high school grading periods and, if failing, will have an impact on academic eligibility. The grade reported at the scheduled high school grading periods could be simply a pass/fail indication of the student's progress at the time.

18. If a student achieves a grade of 70 or above in every class for the third six weeks (or second nine weeks) of the first semester, but is denied credit for the semester due to minimum attendance requirements (TEC §25.092), is the student eligible to participate in extracurricular activities during the next grading period? Yes, a student is eligible if he/she did not receive a grade lower than 70 in any course for the prior grading period. (TEC §33.081 [c].) However, the loss of credit could cause students not to meet the UIL requirement for eligibility during the first six weeks of the following school year.

19. What determines grading requirements? Grading procedures should be based on the student's academic achievement or demonstrated mastery of the course (TEC §28.021). Factors may include class work, homework assignments, tests, participation, final examinations, or other academically-related requirements. It is important that districts establish clearly defined procedures for awarding grades, as this remains a very controversial and questionable area. A student cannot be denied credit for a class based on non-academic reasons; however, the minimum attendance requirements required for credit remain in statute.

20. Are students required to be eligible to be included in or participate in team, organization, or club photos, homecoming courts, senior trips, senior proms, banquets? No. These activities are considered social activities. They do not meet the definition of an extracurricular activity.

21. Are ineligible students permitted to travel to competitive events with the school group? No. Students

must be eligible to travel to competitive events.

22. Are ineligible students permitted to participate in scrimmages? Yes. A scrimmage is considered a practice, and therefore not a competitive event.

23. Are ineligible students permitted to travel on school designated educational trips? All students may travel with school groups on school designated educational trips. On such trips, ineligible students shall not take part in or assist with performances unless the performance is permitted according to the provisions in 19 TAC §76.1001 (a) (2). (See “Extracurricular Absences.”)

24. Are student managers, photographers, scorekeepers, trainers, statisticians, stage crews, and others who assist the coach, director or sponsor, but do not participate in the performance or contest, required to meet No Pass No Play requirements? Yes. Students who assist with contests or performances are required to be eligible under No Pass No Play. (19 TAC §76.1001 [a] [1] [B].)

25. May a (fine arts director, coach, or academic sponsor) teacher or extracurricular sponsor responsible for posting a student's grade give points or subtract points from a grade when a student (excels in or) does or does not (fully) participate in an extracurricular activity? The teacher of a class is responsible for assessing students for promotion based only on “academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level” (TEC §28.021). The board of trustees of a school district may adopt a policy governing methods of assessment in the district. Unless prohibited by local policy, if a student is enrolled in a class in which participation in extracurricular activities is a reasonable expectation of the class, the teacher may consider the student’s participation in the extracurricular activity when assigning the grade for the grading period during which the extracurricular activity occurred. A student may not be failed in a class solely on participation in the extracurricular activity component of the class.

The student should be made aware of the requirement to participate in extracurricular activities prior to or upon enrollment in the course.

An exception to this provision is that a student who is ineligible to participate in an extracurricular activity as defined in 19 TAC §76.1001 (a) shall not suffer a grade penalty for failure to participate in the extracurricular activity or public performance.

26. Are ineligible students permitted to be introduced during parent night activities? Yes. Ineligible students may be introduced as members of the team or group. However, they may not be in uniform or seated with the student organization they represent during the event.

27. May ineligible students attend pep rallies and homecoming parades? All students may attend. Only eligible students may actually take part in pep rally performances, leading cheers, participating in dance routines, playing in the band, giving speeches, etc.

28. Do students have to be eligible to march in parades? Parades are considered to be public performances, therefore, eligibility is required.

29. When does a student who enrolls after the first six weeks of the school year become academically eligible? The student may gain academic eligibility at the end of the seven calendar day waiting period by passing all courses either for the school’s next three school week evaluation period or the grading period.

Admission

Texas Education Code §25.001 (b) (5) ensures that homeless children (individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate residence or whose primary nighttime residence is a shelter, an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a place not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings) are eligible for prompt access to enrollment. Residency requirements, guardianship requirements, or school record requirements cannot be used to prohibit or delay the enrollment of homeless children and youth. Additional information and resources relating to homeless students can be obtained from The Dana Center: <http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/>.

Homeless students need their school administrator to apply to the UIL for a waiver of residence if the student plans to participate in varsity athletics.

Residence rules for athletic varsity eligibility are found in Section 440 (b) and 442 of the *Constitution and Contest Rules*. They are applicable to UIL varsity athletic eligibility the first year the student attends the school.

Student athletes could be eligible for varsity athletics their first year of attendance if their parents have abona fide residence (Section 442 [h]) within that school’s attendance zone, or if the student fulfills one of the exceptions in Section 440, or is granted a hardship waiver (Section 465) of the residence rule through the UIL office. Otherwise the student is ineligible for all varsity sports for one calendar year from the time of initial en-