



BOARD MEETING DATE
November 18, 2013

GRADING AND REPORTING UPDATE

SITUATION

The following report is an update on Grading and Reporting.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the School Board review the Grading and Reporting Update

Teaching, as well as assessing, recording and communicating student learning is complex. For this reason, we must ensure effective and continuous communication on the topic of grading and reporting. Our efforts to improve learning and the ways we communicate about learning require increased communication and multiple avenues for gathering feedback in order to inform our improvement efforts. While we don't have a perfect answer or know exactly what our end product will be, we do know we have the expertise, leadership and community engagement that will guide us to a positive result.

Why focus on grading and reporting?

- Over the last several decades, as state and local standards began to establish a more consistent set of expectations for all students and direct more of the activities within our classrooms, teachers began to question the way we provide feedback on student progress and assess student performance.
- The BSD School Board Policy IK requires the teaching, assessing and reporting of academic standards, academic growth and behavior standards separately.
- Traditional grading and reporting practices do not always translate to best practices. We want the best for our students and know that effective grading and reporting practices can encourage greater learning.
- Students deserve a grade or cumulative mark which directly reflects their academic learning and growth.
- Providing students and parents with information concerning the student's progress towards each standard not only provides a clear picture of the student's strengths and weaknesses, it allows the student, parent and teacher to focus their efforts on improvement.

What is our intent?

- We are working to develop a grading and reporting system which meets the high expectations of the BSD School Board, rigorous standards, provides better information for students and parents, as well as supports greater student learning.
- We are working to develop grading and reporting practices which are aligned to our standards, are more consistent and provide students and parents with more information.
- We are confident that our current efforts, with continuous feedback and adjustments, will provide more accurate and understandable information to all our families about the learning and accomplishments of their children.

What are our communication and feedback plans for the Elementary & Middle School levels?

- We will continue to communicate with our community. Examples of these communications for the 2013-2014 school year are:
 - School newsletters and websites
 - A letter from Dr. Mead to all BSD households in mid-November
 - A letter from the BSD with all December report cards
- Feedback in the past has led to better practices and products. We are committed to expanding the opportunities for teachers, students and families throughout the year to help us shape our systems and tools. Examples of these future opportunities planned for 2013-2014 are:
 - Parent Information Nights at elementary and middle school sites
 - Survey of parents and teachers after the first report card in December, 2013
 - Survey of parents during Winter and Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Telephone survey of parents in June, 2014
 - Feedback will be used to refine the reports for 2014-2015
- We will continue to rely on our teachers to direct our improvement efforts and our community to tell us what works well and what needs adjustments.

What are our communication and feedback plans for the High School level?

- Though there will be no change to the high school report card for 2013-2014, we hope to begin reporting on the student progress in each standard beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. We plan to use the same report format being used at the middle schools and Health & Science School this year.
- We will continue to communicate with the community and reassure both students and parents that teachers retain the responsibility and authority to determine a student's level of proficiency on each standard and to determine the letter grade received in the course. Examples of these communications for the 2013-2014 school year are:
 - School newsletters and websites
 - A letter from Dr. Mead to all BSD households in mid-November
 - A letter from the BSD with all December report cards
- Feedback from the middle schools and Health & Science School communities on this year's report, as well as recommendations from the high school communities will help determine reporting for 2014-2015.
- Feedback opportunities for the high school communities during the 2013-2014 school year will be:
 - Survey of parents and teachers after the first quarter and semester reporting periods.
 - Telephonic survey of parents in June, 2014

Changes to our past practices have everything to do with improving our work with students. We all want the best for them. We thank our teachers for their focus and leadership, our community for their engagement and passion and our Board for their guidance and willingness to embrace change. We are committed to doing this well.