



River Forest
Public Schools

Standards-Based Grading Practices 2018-19 Communication Plan

BACKGROUND

For about two years, District 90 has been reviewing the processes and protocols needed to adopt a Standards-based Grading (SBG) approach for student academic assessment. Standards-based Grading measures student academic proficiency against well-defined learning objectives and represents a distinct transition from traditional grading methods. District 90's SBG learning objectives are aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards. Much of this initial work has been advanced by the Superintendent's Leadership Council (SLC), the Strategic Plan's Student Growth and Achievement Action Objective Team, and the District 90 Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

This communication plan continues the effort to support the work and implementation of this District-wide initiative and represents the second year dedicated to this undertaking.

STANDARDS-BASED GRADING COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

The previously stated goals have not been changed and will remain as follows:

- All stakeholders and stakeholder groups - including students, parents, community members, faculty and staff, media, and others - will understand the rationale and purpose of transitioning to standards-based grading protocols
- All audiences and stakeholders will feel well informed about the vision for the standards-based grading approach and its contribution to the District's tradition of academic excellence.
- Faculty, staff, and students will understand the practical application of standards-based grading protocols in the classroom.
- Through all communications channels, District 90 stakeholders - including students, parents, community members, faculty and staff, media, and others - will discern the District's commitment to providing an equitable educational experience for all students facilitated by the use of a standards-based grading approach.
- Communication efforts will continue to affirm high-quality instruction, student achievements, faculty and staff professionalism, and the benefits of equity and inclusiveness through the use of standards-based grading practices.

TARGET AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS

- Students
- Faculty and staff
- Parents/guardians
- Board of Education members and administrators
- Community residents and other stakeholders (members of the media, civic organizations, government agencies, and interested others)

KEY MESSAGES

While the key messages will be tailored to the needs and interests of a specific target audience, all of the key messages for 2018-19 will focus on the following:

- The vision for standards-based grading in D90
- The rationale for standards-based grading in D90 (i.e., research, best practices, a prerequisite for equity, etc.)
- The planning and implementation process for standards-based grading in D90 over time

COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES AND CHANNELS

Along with leveraging the customary communication vehicles to advance the SBG communication goals, this initiative will include the following:

Targeted Social Media Campaign

- Bi-monthly messages on Facebook and Twitter, with a distinct message on the District's website a minimum of once per month

Development and Distribution of Collateral Materials

- Development of FAQs/Fact Sheet
- Selection of 3-Party Videos on SBG, which will be used to help stakeholders understand the various issues regarding SBG. For example:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4QVcghKsGY>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kRHC2WF8JI>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NRg68n5t38>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMf2FvBSi24>
- Crafting a briefing paper on SBG, which will be used as a stand-alone piece and as the basis for other communication efforts

This communication plan will also leverage current outreach channels to inform and reach out to the District's various audiences and stakeholders:

- Primer (general message to all stakeholders)
- School Messenger (targeted to specific audiences)

- Employee Connection Newsletter (targeted to faculty and staff)
- Community Information Brochure (targeted to community residents and other community stakeholders)
- The Patch (targeted to community residents and other stakeholders)
- Wednesday Journal, Forest Leaves, etc. (targeted to community residents and other stakeholders)
- Talking/Message Points for PTO and school newsletters (targeted to students and families)
- Promotional support of special events related to standards-based grading (Town Hall Forum, guest speakers, seminars/workshops, etc. will be targeted to specific audiences)
- District 90 website and social media sites, such as Facebook

INITIAL QUARTERLY TIMELINE

September '18 - December '18

- Development of FAQs/FACT SHEET
- Start a social media campaign
- Development and distribution of talking points for PTOs and school newsletters
- Select and review 3rd-party SBG videos to be used in various communication efforts, i.e., website, the Primer, and social media campaign
- Include SBG information in Employee Connection and the Primer

January '19 - March '19

- Continue social media campaign
- Distribution of School Messenger notice (topic to be decided at a later date)
- Publish a Wednesday Journal One View (Op-Ed) column
- Focus the February/March Community Information Brochure on SBG

April '19 - June '19

- Adjust communication initiatives and plans as needed

This communications plan is intended to advance the process of transitioning to a standards-based grading approach during the 2018-19 school year. As the transition process progresses, it will be updated annually, and adjustments will be made as needed.

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