

LANGHAM CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Cheryl Johns
Principal

Kristi Giron
Associate Principal



Rebecca Hayes
Director of Instruction

Dalia Gonzales
Lead Counselor

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

You are receiving this letter because your student is enrolled in one of the 14+ Langham Creek HS content areas that is using a Standards Based Grading (SBG) Model. CFISD curriculum leadership teams have been at work on the issue of grading and reporting in order to meet 21st Century student needs and new Texas State laws. ALL secondary schools will be implementing new grading practices for 2011-12. Our SBG model is supported by our district because it directly supports the new House Bill 2033 law, plus the new district grading expectation that grades must represent relative mastery and reflect classroom achievement on State Standards. We believe the primary purpose of grading is to inform students and parents of progress in the classroom and report learning.

Why make changes to grading?

The growing emphasis on standards and performance assessments ensuring students are ready for College & Career Readiness makes review of traditional grading practices critical. The new STAAR/EOC tests will measure the new State 'Readiness' and 'Supporting' Standards. We are implementing positive changes in grading and reporting that make grades more consistent, accurate, meaningful, and supportive of learning. Students and parents deserve to have accurate information about progress. Progress will be communicated through the web-based "Home Access Center" as well as through feedback on assignments, student tracking sheets, emails, phone calls, parent-teacher conferences, progress reports and report cards. Grades online should be an accurate reflection of student progress on each standard, based upon available student assessment data.

What changes will I see as a parent/guardian?

Grading scale scores (0-4) will replace percentage scores on progress reports and assignments or tests. A 4++ is the very top score, and 0 indicates no work was turned in. These scores are tied to descriptions of what the students know and are able to do. Students will continue to have scale scores translated to a final letter grade on the progress report and report card for each class. However, this final grade for a standard may not necessarily be the product of averaging. Recognizing that students learn during the instructional process, the grade for a unit of study will be focused on what a student "knows, understands and can do" at the end of the unit. Teachers will provide feedback to students and opportunities to redo and relearn information and skills. Teachers will assign a date range with opportunities to redo/reassess in order to delicately balance student opportunity with student accountability. Final grades will be determined based on the learning trend scores which indicate the most recent preponderance of evidence of student learning.

How are the Levels of Learning defined?

This method of grading looks at the depth of student knowledge. It is based on the steps for learning new material; in other words, material is broken down into the level of learning. In the initial stages, students learn basic information and skills that are needed for the next level of learning. Teachers are encouraged to provide multiple opportunities for the student to achieve along the way. Ultimately, a level 4 student has a solid mastery of the complex content. In K-Level, a level 4 student can take the knowledge, skills and processes

learned and apply it in new situations, relating it to his/her real world. All grades are based on the student's level (depth) of understanding per standard, not per assignment.

These scores will be converted to the following grading scale and guide:

4 = A = 90+	1 = D = 70 – 74
3 = B = 80-89	1- = F = 60
2 = C = 75-79	0 = F = 50

Teachers will provide a grading rubric for each standard that will clearly indicate the depth of understanding that needs to be demonstrated for each level of learning, plus the key terms for the standard, and what will be accepted as evidence of understanding. Students will also have a student tracker for each unit. Each six weeks could include 5-12 (or more) learning goals, or standards, each earning a score of 1- to 4++. The score for each learning goal is fluid and will change based upon the demonstration of learning. The final score for each standard reflects the depth of learning for each student. Your student must master EVERY standard (score of 1 or higher) to earn a passing grade for the six weeks in some contents, like science.

A score of 0 or 1- in any Texas State Standard will default to a failing grade (50 or 60, respectively) for the six weeks grade. Other content areas require students to pass designated Texas Readiness Standards in order to pass. Teachers will communicate the passing expectation each grading period, consistent by content area.

Assessment and Reassessment

Throughout each unit, your student will be constantly assessed by the teacher to determine if he/she is keeping pace within the unit. These “formative” assessments are designed to “inform” teacher and student as to progress and can consist of exit slips, classwork, quizzes, verbal conversations, student demonstrations and other ways that the teacher can determine your student's level of understanding. Each unit will likely conclude with a summative test or project for your student to show mastery of the learning goal(s). The final score for each standard is not entirely dependent on the grade of the summative assessment but rather on the preponderance of assessment scores behind each standard.

Over the course of each unit, students will have multiple chances to demonstrate their learning of the material covered. At the end of the unit, if students have not demonstrated learning at an acceptable level, they may have the opportunity to learn more about the material and demonstrate their new learning. Students must show initiative to relearn in order to reassess. Teachers will direct students to educational resources and inform students how they can show additional learning. No student requested reassessment should occur during the last week of the six weeks.

If you have additional questions about Standards Based Grading, we would encourage you to visit the LCHS website and click on the '21st Century Learning' tab for additional resources including this parent letter and a FAQ. For more specific questions about the classroom or your student, please contact your student's teacher.

We at Langham Creek are committed to your students and their highest level of learning and understanding!



Please sign and return to indicate your receipt of this Standards Based Grading overview for 2011-12.

Content Class _____ Teacher _____

Student Name _____ Signature _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____