

August 10, 2015

Dear Students and Parents,

We would like to welcome you to Gresham Middle School! Our goal is to prepare students for high school and to challenge our students to become life-long learners. With the revision and implementation of the Tennessee State Standards, it is important for all students to become proficient in each standard. With this in mind, our focus will involve implementation of a **standards-based assessment program**. The research and experts in the field have asserted that standards-based grading and reporting allows us to align our grading and reporting practices to our standards-based instructional practices. This allows us to more accurately and consistently report student achievement as it relates to state standards.

Grades are the ultimate form of feedback to a student about their progress toward mastery of the standards. Grades need to be accurate and meaningful. Students and parents/guardians need a precise picture of what has been learned and what still needs to be learned. Grading and reporting around specific standards has been shown to significantly boost achievement and motivation for students. Research by Black and Wiliam (1998) and Hattie (2009) demonstrates that high quality formative assessment and feedback have a powerful impact on student learning. As students progress in their mastery of standards, they feel motivated and more successful because enhancing perceived competence is motivating in and of itself. Students begin to think about grades and other assessments that teachers use to provide informational feedback as helpful toward their success.

Our students will be assessed on each standard multiple times throughout the year to ensure that they have learned the standard. We will be sending progress reports home that will keep you informed of your child's academic status. Within our program, students have the opportunity to remediate (redo) any of the standards that they want to improve. Students will receive various forms of additional instruction as well as the opportunity to be re-assessed on a standard as per subject policy. This may take place after school, before school, or during class when appropriate.

For each standard throughout the year, students can achieve one of the following levels:

Exceeding Expectations	93%-100%
Meeting Expectations	85%-92%
Approaching Expectations	75%-84%
Attempting Expectations	70%-74%
Insufficient Evidence	0%-69%

Assessments (quizzes, tests, projects, informal, etc.) will count for the majority of the student's grade, up to 95% in some classes. The remaining percentage of a student's overall average will consist of non-academic indicators such as homework, classwork, notebook checks, and participation with a focus on building reasoning, resilience, and responsibility.

Thank you.

Please fill out, sign, and return the following.

Standards Based Grading Letter

Yes, I have read the attached letter.

Student Name _____

Parent Name _____

Phone (Best # to reach you.) _____

E-mail address _____