



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Peoria Public Schools is committed to gains in student achievement. We want to assure you and your child that we are continuously reflecting upon instruction and students' evidence of meeting grade level standards in an effort to make sure that the grades students receive accurately reflect proficiency at grade level. Our shift towards letter grades that reflect grade level proficiency comes from the belief that our previous application of grades may not have fully communicated what students are expected to know and be able to do as set forth in the Illinois Learning Standards. We believe that your genuine understanding of how well your student is progressing towards the grade level goals at his or her grade level is of the utmost importance.

Previously, letter grades were calculated by averaging an entire quarter's worth of work. Now, we will measure a student's mastery of grade level objectives by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus, a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a unit, when first encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of a grading period. That is the letter grade that will be reflected on the report card. In summary, the purpose of this shift is to identify what a student knows and is able to do, in relation to pre-established learning targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period, which can mask what a student has learned, or not learned, in a specific course.

To give an example, one student may have brought home a B because she did all her work, turned in her homework, and participated in class but didn't quite understand the necessary concepts. Another student might have brought home a B because he earned 100% on all the tests and quizzes but didn't do any of the homework and didn't participate in class. Each student could have earned the same grade but for very different reasons, and that grade didn't tell guardians very much about what their student truly understood. Letter grades should measure how well a student is doing in relation to the grade-level unit objectives which are aligned to the standards, not the work of other students. These will give students and parents a better understanding of the student's strengths and areas for growth and will encourage students to do their best.

Parents will still be able to access their students' ongoing academic information electronically in Family Access. These scores serve as guides in knowing how the student is progressing towards mastery of the grade-level standards. However, they do not indicate the ultimate, final grade for the quarter.

It is important that parents and teachers have honest conversations with students. Some concepts and skills are more difficult to grasp than others, but given time and motivation, students can continually challenge themselves. Attitudes are contagious, and it is important that adults involved convey to each student that learning is a process that needs to be respected. Peoria Public Schools is committed to providing your child with an exceptional education by providing high standards for achievement and cultivating a genuine passion for learning and academic growth.

Grade	Descriptor
A	Student has an excellent understanding of grade level concepts introduced during the quarter.
B	Student has a good understanding of grade level concepts introduced during the quarter.
C	Student has a basic understanding of grade level concepts introduced during the quarter.
D	Student has difficulty understanding grade level concepts introduced during the quarter.
F	Student is having great difficulty understanding grade level concepts introduced during the quarter.