

Dear Parents:

In Denton ISD we take pride in the rich cultures and deep traditions of teaching excellence that are in each of our secondary schools. As one example of our commitment to preparing each student to achieve academic and personal success, we began a study two years ago around improving how we could most accurately communicate students' academic progress. This study culminated in the development of new grading guidelines for this school year.

Here at Calhoun Middle School we have had a number of positive experiences. Teachers have reported that student have taken ownership of their grades throughout the grading period. Our students have started monitoring the Home Access Center and know the progress they are making in their classes. Teachers report that student are able identify gaps in their own learning and have asked for help in filling the gaps. We feel very confident that our students are now learning at higher levels that they ever have before.

There have also been challenges and we are grateful for the feedback that we have received in this regard. Our teachers and I are committed to improving our implementation plan throughout the year so that our practices promote greater confidence and increased achievement for all of our students.

As a direct result of the feedback from parents, we have identified the following areas for prioritized action. We will:

- Systematically evaluate our implementation process to identify successes and areas for improvement so that concerns can be addressed quickly and effectively,
- Proactively communicate with parents and students in an effort to gather information and answer questions, and
- Support and build instructional expertise for all staff around our new grading principles.

We have already begun making improvements in these areas and will continue to do so throughout the year. Two immediate changes illustrate this commitment:

1. Student focus groups have been formed to gather students' ideas and concerns.
2. A two-way communication link that provides parents with quick answers to questions is being posted on our school website this week. It will be active by Monday and can be reached here.  
<https://docs.google.com/a/g.dentonisd.org/forms/d/1b5wQ-QG5zPBQYb3KLCsv2anEHkL3q9YHe1r0zjK7OH4/viewform>

Using the feedback you have provided as well as input from students, our teachers and I have been meeting to identify and prioritize other specific actions that we will begin implementing in the coming weeks.

As we continue to make adjustments to best support each student and communicate their academic progress, we will continue to seek feedback from you and share information through e-mail, phone outs, and web site updates.

Sincerely,

Paul Martinez

Principal/ Head of School