

COMMUNITY
HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT

155

inspire . . . empower . . . nurture

Dear Families of District 155,

In an effort to make assessment more authentic and reflective of students' true progress towards mastery in a given course, committees of teachers and administrators have been collaborating to evaluate and revise the district's grading practices. After investigating various approaches to assessment, the district is ready to move forward with a new grading structure, and we wanted to take a moment to share this news with you and provide some information about the changes.

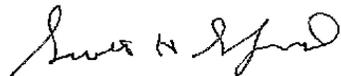
Previously, throughout the district, each semester grade was calculated based on the letter grade for each quarter and the final exam grade. These were weighted 40%, 40%, and 20% for each quarter and the final exam. Under the new structure, the two independent quarter grades have been eliminated. Instead, each course will track a student's progress over the length of the whole semester using three grade categories titled Formative, Summative, and Final Exam. These terms should be familiar to D155 families, as they have been used in classrooms for the past few years. As before, though the formative and summative assessments may be weighted differently in different classes, no course final exam will exceed 20% of the overall grade. It is also possible that a course not use a final exam; in this case, the semester long formative and summative assessments will determine a student's grade.

To help with communication, the district is adopting progress reports in place of midterm and quarter grades, which will be periodic checkpoints communicated to families through the Skyward portal. Although students' grades will be ongoing, these designated progress report periods will be points at which a student's grade is completely updated to reflect their progress in the course.

There are a number of benefits to the revised assessment system. First and foremost, it allows for the design of more meaningful assessments that are relevant to students and provide feedback that can more accurately inform instructional decisions and student goal-setting. Second, the new grading system makes room for more long-term skill building that can result in a variety of evaluative experiences, including presentations, debates, portfolios, etc. Third, under the old system, students' grades reset after the quarter, but, with the new system, there will be more opportunity for teachers to incorporate reassessments, editing, revision, and resubmission.

We are excited about the changes we have made to improve assessment, and we are looking forward to the positive impact it will have on the teaching and learning in our classrooms. Next school year, we plan on providing more information to students during the first few days of school and to families during Parents' Night/Open House. Until then, please have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Sincerely,



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Crystal Lake South High School
Prairie Ridge High School
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