

January 22, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This semester I will be using a different format for assessing student knowledge and understanding. Students are enrolled in courses following the North Carolina Common Core Math Standards. I have broken this course into learning goals based on these standards. The goal of this assessment program is to see what your child knows and can do independently, as well as to track their progress through the semester.

Instead of having large tests at the end of each unit, your child will also be assessed on his/her mastery of a specific skill. These “Skills Tests” will be graded on a rubric to determine your child’s level of mastery for each specific skill/concept. Grades will reflect this mastery level. On each skill, your child can earn a grade of Not Yet through Level 5. A “Level 5” means the student has mastered the objective with high school level understanding. If a student has near a high school level understanding with a few gaps a “Level 4” will be assigned. A grade of “Level 3” reflects a basic understanding of the concept, but one that is not yet at high school level and a “Level 1” reflects a remedial understanding of that skill. Finally, a “Not Yet” suggests that the student needs more practice and remediation of that particular skill. **This testing will comprise 50% of your child’s overall grade.**

Students will be able to retake previous skills tests at any point during the semester. Their highest grade for each skill will be entered into the grade book. Students will be keeping track of their progress on each skill and will be responsible for setting up appointments to re-take tests for skills that they would like to improve. **Re-takes will be available before and after school as well as during Tuesday CATS periods as long as arrangements have been made at least 1 day prior.**

We would like to remind you that you can access your child’s grade at any time online using PowerSchool. Do not be alarmed if the grade changes frequently or if specific grades change. I will do my best to insert a comment when a student moves up a level of mastery on a specific skill.

In addition to these skills tests, students will continue to take larger tests every three weeks, testing their retention of the previous information from the course. Despite mastering one skill in isolation, some students struggle when that same skill shows up in the middle of other unrelated topics. Math 1 is a semester course with a comprehensive End of Course test in June. These “Retention Tests” will help prepare students for this test.

If you have any questions about this grading program, feel free to email or call me.

Thank you,
Lindsey Walborn
walbornl@rss.k12.nc.us