



1101 SOM CENTER RD. MAYFIELD HEIGHTS, OH 44124

October 3, 2011

Dear Parents,

During the past few years, Mayfield teachers have been participating in professional development that is designed to help them understand how our assessment practices affect student learning. We have studied the work of prominent educational researchers including Robert Marzano, Rick Stiggins, Thomas Guskey and others who contend that our current assessment and grading practices must be reformed. New methods of assessment can encourage students to strive for deeper levels of understanding than the current points and percentages systems we traditionally use.

Because changing our assessment practice is a significant shift, we have chosen to pilot a model of assessment that permits a student to grow in their level of understanding over time. Teachers who are participating in the pilot (math teachers in grades 4 through 7) have been meeting regularly over the past two years in Professional Learning Communities to refine their assessments and validate test format and items. These collective decisions result in consistency in the evaluation of student achievement. Traditionally, no standard for evaluation exists. Without these standards, grades are relative to an individual teacher's decisions about a student's level of achievement.

The math teachers, our math specialist and the Curriculum Director have prepared documents to define the system for students and parents. These documents will be provided to you by the classroom teachers with the first progress report, in Friday folders, or via their electronic communications with you. During the last two weeks of September, 4th through 7th grade math teacher teams made the final revisions to the assessment and grading process. For this reason, you may see some minor changes in the information you receive. We do not feel these refinements have substantially impacted the assessment and grading practices with which you are already familiar in math grades 4-7.

Thank you for your support as we continue to explore research-based changes that will result in a better education for Mayfield students.

Sincerely

Phillip G. Price
Superintendent of Schools