Date: July 27, 2016
To: All OPS Principals
From: Dr. ReNae S. Kehrberg, Assistant Superintendent
Subject: IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Updates/Changes to our Grading Practices

Principals:

As many of you are aware, throughout the 2015 – 16 school year, Omaha Public Schools staff on the Common Grading Practices Committee worked to evaluate the grading practices across the district. We want to thank the committee of teachers, administrators, and OEA leadership for working together to improve our grading practices. We are eager to support the work of this committee as they look at some grading concerns with solutions in mind. Under the current grading scale, teachers and principals have expressed concern that some students can achieve a “proficient” grade in a course even though they have only completed minimal work in the course.

We want to address this and OPS is committed to providing students and families with an accurate representation of students’ learning. This summer we presented a grading update to our Board of Education and the committee has worked diligently since then to prepare materials for an exploration, on a small basis, of a potential new scale. We did not want to make a late summer shift to a district wide grading scale change; rather we all agreed that we should field test first. Therefore, we will be field testing an adjusted grading scale throughout the 2016 – 17 school year.

Field Testing

The limited field testing will include a variety of classes and grade levels. These classes were selected because they will provide a large enough sample size to help inform our decision on the change to the grading scale. Students enrolled in the field test classes will be graded using the field test grade scale for the duration of the course. The classes that are impacted by the grading scale field test are:

**Elementary**

- 4th grade Math *Including BSP

**Secondary**

- Social Studies 7 1 – 2
- English/Language Arts 8 1 – 2
- Modern World History 1 – 2
- English 3 and 4 and Honors English 3 – 4
- Algebra 1 and 2 and Honors Algebra 1 – 2 *Includes dual language
- Physical Science 1 and 2 and Honors Physical Science 1 – 2 * Includes dual language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPS Field Test Grading Scale 2016-17</th>
<th>Current OPS Grading Scale All Non-Field Test Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.51 – 4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.01 – 3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.51 – 3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>2.01 – 2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1.51 – 2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.76 – 1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00 – 0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Are there any other changes to grading?**

In addition to the changes to the grading scale, the committee also made revisions to the missing coursework, late coursework, weighting assignments using a multiplier, and redoing/revising coursework practices. These changes are in effect for all classes.

**Missing Coursework**

Work not turned in at all will be recorded in Infinite Campus (district grade book) as an M for missing which calculates to a score of zero.
Redoing/Revising Coursework
Students may be allowed redos and revisions of coursework for full credit during that unit of study based upon the teacher’s professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Scores for student work after retaking, revision or redoing work will not be averaged with the first attempt at coursework or assessment, but will replace the original student score.

Late Coursework
Students are expected to complete coursework on time. Late coursework may be accepted for full credit until the end of the unit based on the teacher’s professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Accepted late work will not result in a reduction, and the M (missing) will be replaced with the score earned by the student. The teacher or school may make exceptions depending up on student circumstances (such as prolonged absences due to illness).

Weighting Assignments (Using a Multiplier) *Secondary only
When entering grades in the grade book, teachers may assign greater weight to some assignments. For example, the final exam may impact a student’s summative grade more than a unit test. Teachers will have the option use the multiplier to weight both formative and summative assessments to a maximum of 4. If a weight of 2 or more is applied to an assessment, this information will be communicated to students at the time the assessment is announced.

Here is where we need your help!
We are providing all principals with a toolkit that includes all the information needed to help us communicate the changes to families. You will be receiving this toolkit shortly. In the toolkit you will find:

- Timeline of all communication taking place
- Responsibility checklist of the actions we need you to complete
- Powerpoint for you to share with ALL staff
- Communication documents (backpack letter, all staff email, newsletter blurb, flyers, brochure, parent FAQ, Teacher FAQ, teacher presentation, and more.) *Please note that some of the materials are still being finalized.

We will update all materials by August 5, 2016.

Principals can access the toolkit by clicking here. Within this toolkit, directions are provided on how to communicate the updates and field test information to your staff and families. You can also visit the Instructional Leadership section of the CIA SharePoint site. Under documents you will find, Grading Practices Documents. We are asking that all principals complete their responsibility checklist tasks by the dates on the checklist.

Field Test Feedback
Teacher, principal, student, and family feedback on the field test grading scale will be crucial. Throughout the fall semester, the grading committee will ask for feedback from teachers, principals, parents and secondary students regarding the field test grading scale. After the fall semester, all feedback will be analyzed. In addition, students in the field test group will have their field test grading scale grades compared to what their grades would have been with the current grading scale to see if it is reflective of their understanding. Lessons learned during field test implementation will inform any needed adjustments prior to full implementation of the new grading scale. Pending results, full implementation is planned for the 2017 – 2018 school year. We will keep you informed of the dates regarding feedback collection and appreciate your assistance in sharing the importance of the data collection with your teachers and parents.

We appreciate your help and support with this matter. Your help in communicating this information is crucial to the success of implementing the field test grading scale.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Anthony Clark-Kaczmarek, (secondary) and Kris Denton (elementary). We appreciate your help and support!