

August 7, 2019

Dear Families,

We are excited for the opportunity to write to you as the Olympus High School Network junior highs. As many of you are aware, Granite School District has been discussing and working toward Performance Based Grading (PBG) for the last several years. Planning for a move to PBG has intensified in the last couple of years with many teachers across the district implementing it in their classes. The district took feedback from these pilot teachers and departments to help refine the PBG process prior to full implementation. Currently, all elementary schools in the district should have implemented PBG last school year. This year, all junior highs are implementing PBG. We felt that addressing PBG prior to the beginning of the school year would be helpful to everyone.

Philosophically, PBG is about making the learning process transparent, focused, and student-centered. PBG requires teachers to focus on the standards established in the core curriculum and to create learning activities and assessments that gauge students' proficiency in their understanding of the required learning for the standard. Student proficiency is determined only by how well they show what they have learned on their assessments, and students are provided the opportunity to re-do assessments when they feel they have improved their learning. In this approach, PBG is an empowering grading approach for students. Students should feel like they have quite a bit of control over their own learning, and they can see that learning is a continuous process and they can improve their learning toward any specific standard.

Teachers will still provide learning activities for students to help them learn the skills and content they will need to be able to become proficient on a given standard. This means that, yes, there will still be homework as part of PBG. The difference is in how the homework is used within the PBG classroom. Homework should be focused, purposeful, and geared toward moving student learning of a specific standard forward. Homework is a learning activity and not an assessment, and as such, it will not factor into a student's proficiency score. While homework will no longer be a graded portion of the classroom, it is important to teachers and students in helping the learning process. Homework completion will help students prepare to successfully show their proficiency level on assessments. Teachers should track homework completion and go over homework when it has been assigned as a way of formatively assessing student readiness for assessments.

Student PBG grades will be determined only by how they perform on standards-based classroom assessments. The district has worked with teachers to establish proficiency scales for all standards in all courses. The proficiency scales define the level of performance that will be commensurate to a 1-4 on the PBG grading scale. Teachers should define for students prior to assessing them what the requirements for a 1-4 will be for the assessment. A score of 1 is Below Proficient and a 4 is Above Proficient. Teachers will maintain the decision making for creating assessments for their classroom, they will just be determining student proficiency. The move to PBG grading and the focus on students learning and being proficient on standards also removes extra credit and bonus points from the

classroom. Students will earn their PBG grade based solely on their proficiency on the required standards they are being taught.

Functionally, teachers will report student progress in the new PBG Gradebook. Scores will only be entered for assessments given. In 7th and 8th grades, students will not receive a traditional grade; they will only be given a PBG score that will range from 1-4. The only exceptions will be any class they may be enrolled in that will appear on their high school transcripts (i.e. foreign language classes, advanced math classes). PBG scores will be determined using a decaying average. This simply means that a student will be assessed on a standard three times before a score is generated. The first score will count less than the second and the second will count less than the third. It makes sense to have the scores work this way as the first assessment is usually given when a student is first learning a new standard. By the time the third assessment is given, students should know the required content and be able to perform their best. Teachers may decide to give more than three assessments for a given standard, and, if they do, the decaying average just continues to make the earlier assessments worth less while the most weight is given to the most recent assessment. Students will be able to re-take assessments if they choose. Teachers will establish procedures for assessment re-takes and may require students to make sure they have completed previous learning activities prior to allowing a retest.

Olympus Jr. and Evergreen will make PBG optional in 9th grade classes this year. This decision is based on the high school being further behind in the implementation process for PBG. If the high school was going to have PBG next school year, we would require it for 9th graders this year. When teachers use PBG in 9th grade classes, their PBG score will be converted to a traditional letter grade so that a GPA can be generated for their high school transcript. For any PBG class that will convert the 1-4 PBG score to a traditional grade, the conversion table is:

A	3.51-4.00	B-	2.50-2.66	D+	1.66-1.99
A-	3.00-3.50	C+	2.34-2.49	D	1.33-1.65
B+	2.84-2.99	C	2.17-2.33	D-	1.00-1.32
B	2.67-2.83	C-	2.00-2.16	F	0.00-0.99

We are excited to move forward with PBG and watch students take more control of their learning. We anticipate that allowing students to have greater ownership of their learning will energize our schools and maximize learning.

Sincerely,

Wes Cutler and Emily Grunig
Evergreen Jr. High Administration

Josh LeRoy and Dusten Keppner
Olympus Jr. High Administration

