

PEBBLE HILL TRADITIONAL ELEMENTARY

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Principal's Message

Report Cards are coming home this week. Please sign and return the report card envelope to your child's teacher as soon as possible. You may keep the contents of the envelope at home.

This year the district has moved to achievement indicators for the report cards. I am including a few resources for parents interested in reading more about achievement indicators and reporting.

From my experiences, letter grades are not the best way of helping students learn. For those who earn an "A" it is a great reward system. For those who are not achieving an "A" letter grade, it is a system that does not help them learn. I have watched students look at their grade and toss their papers aside, ignoring the time and effort the teacher took giving them written feedback. The same mistakes are often made in the next paper. When the letter grade is removed from papers, and students only have feedback, they read the feedback and work on improving their skills.

Letter grades are also calculated by averaging out a students work. So if at the start of a unit, a student is struggling with a concept, their marks are usually low. If towards the end of the unit, the student understand the concept and demonstrates that they know the concepts, then they will have higher marks towards the end of the unit. When the higher marks are averaged with the lower marks, the representative letter grade does not show their learning – it shows a mediocre mark. Achievement indicators do not include the learning assessments; they show where the student is at the end of the unit or where they are at the time of the report card.

Calendar:

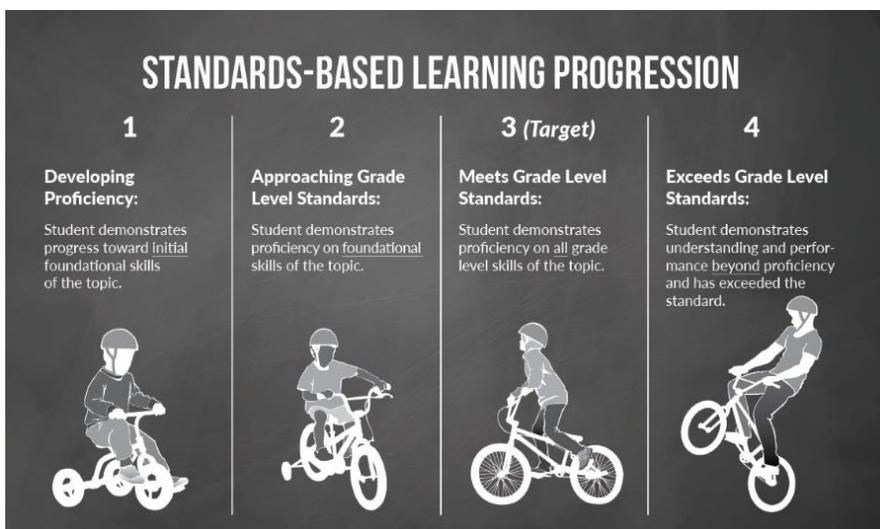
- Dec 7 Report Cards Distributed
- Dec 11 Band and Choir performances at 1:30 and 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 13 Gingerbread Houses 11:00 a.m. Red and Green Spirit Day
- Dec 19 Christmas Concert 1:30 and 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 21 Hot Lunch Last day of classes Non-school Activities Spirit Day (wear your team jersey, Sparks t-shirt, dance shoes, swim goggles, etc.)
- Jan 8 School Opens
- Jan 10 Gr 6 Ski Day
- Jan 11 Crazy Hair Spirit Day
- Jan 17 Gr 6 Ski Day PAC meeting 7p.m.
- Jan 24 Gr 6 Ski Day
- Jan 25 Hot Lunch Casual Day
- Jan 31 Gr 6 Ski Day

Here is an example from Math. The students are learning about decimals. Little T is struggling with the concept, so on his homework and quizzes, he is scoring 4/10 and 5/10. Getting these marks back are very deflating but Little T perseveres and towards the end of the unit is getting 8/10 and 9/10 on the homework and quizzes. Little T is meeting the learning expectation and on our report card would have a check in the “M” box. He understands the concept and is able to demonstrate his learning. In the old system, Little T would have an average of 6.5/10 which is a C. This mark does not really represent Little T’s learning.

I am including some articles that further discuss standards based vs. traditional grading. The full articles are available using the links.

The following is from https://ccisd.net/sbg/standards_based_grading_vs_traditional_grading/

How Does Standards-Based Grading Differ From Traditional Grading?



For Students:

- Learning targets are clearly defined and aligned with state standards.
- Students are offered multiple opportunities and ways through which to demonstrate proficiency
- Students monitor their own progress toward the achievement of specified targets
- Specific feedback on progress helps build self-esteem, pride, and motivation for students

For Parents:

- Report card grades are less mysterious and have more meaning
- Parents are aware of exactly what their child knows, is able to do, and next steps for progress
- Parents know in what areas their child needs more support
- Parents are empowered to increase their child's confidence and help their student set goals

For Teachers:

- Teachers know exactly where students stand in their progress toward learning targets and what support needs to be provided
- Teachers of the same courses have aligned expectations and standards
- Assessment results help teachers determine when students need extra help and when they need more challenging work

Standards-Based Grading

From:

[What is the Difference between Standards-Based Grading \(or Reporting\) and Competency-Based Education?](#)

Standards-based grading “involves measuring students’ proficiency on well-defined course objectives.” (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006). (Note: Standards-based reporting involves reporting these course objectives rather than letter grades at the end of each grading/reporting period.)

The visual below compares traditional grading with standards-based grading practices.

Traditional Grading System	Standards-Based Grading System
1. Based on assessment methods (quizzes, tests, homework, projects, etc.). One grade/entry is given per assessment.	1. Based on learning goals and performance standards. One grade/entry is given per learning goal.
2. Assessments are based on a percentage system. Criteria for success may be unclear.	2. Standards are criterion or proficiency-based. Criteria and targets are made available to students ahead of time.
3. Use an uncertain mix of assessment, achievement, effort, and behavior to determine the final grade. May use late penalties and extra credit.	3. Measures achievement only OR separates achievement from effort/behavior. No penalties or extra credit given.
4. Everything goes in the grade book – regardless of purpose.	4. Selected assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.) are used for grading purposes.
5. Include every score, regardless of when it was collected. Assessments record the average – not the best – work.	5. Emphasize the most recent evidence of learning when grading.

Art Smart: Motivational Magic

On November 14, Steve Harmer, a former teacher and retired Principal from Calgary entertained our school with his magical presentation on Friendship. The students were entertained while he made a dove appear, a puppet turned into a live rabbit and he was able to magically read the students minds. We appreciated his visit and later he sent a card to the school commending the incredible audience behavior our students demonstrated. I am proud of their polite, attentive and respectful behavior with our guest presenter.



Food Drive

Students are encouraged to bring in non-perishable canned or packaged food items over the next two weeks for our school's food drive. The food will be picked up by Deltassist on December 20 and included in their annual Christmas Hamper Program. They expect to hand out 650 hampers this year to less fortunate families in the Delta community. If you are planning to come to the Christmas Concert on December 19th, please bring an item for our food drive.

From Your Parent Advisory Council

The next PAC meeting is on January 17, 2018 at 7 p.m. in the library.

The PAC is working on providing more ways for parents to access information about the PAC and the school.



Join the Pebble Hill Traditional PAC page on Facebook. Information will be shared about activities in the school and community.

As well we now have a twitter account, @PebbleHillPAC and an Instagram account as PebbleHillPAC. Similar information will be shared across these three venues. Parents can pick which of these will help keep you informed of the school activities.



The PAC is holding a draw for an Organic Turkey. Thank you to Newman's Fine Foods for their support of our fundraiser.

Grade 7 vs Staff Volleyball Game

On December 6 at lunch time, the Grade 7 students challenged the staff to a volleyball game. Students coming to watch the game as spectators paid a toonie, which is going to support our sister school in Tekera, Uganda. Over \$200 was raised!



The money we send will be used to help educate students so that they can be self-sustaining in their village. It was an exciting set of games with the Grade 7's winning the first game, 25-17. The teachers were "saved by the bell" and pulled off a win for the second game, 15-13.



Great sportsmanship by all!

December 21

On December 21, students will have the choice of wearing casual clothes or clothes that represent a group that they belong to, or support. For example, if a guide, wear your guide uniform. If a scout, wear your scout uniform. If you play hockey, wear your jersey, if you participate in martial arts, wear your Gi. If you prefer, wear a jersey that represents a team you enjoy watching, for example a Canucks jersey. Students can also wear any Canada Day shirts, as we are nearing the end of the Canada 150 year, and since we live in Canada, we are all part of team Canada 150! Or, since it is casual day students may also choose to wear their casual clothes.

December 21 is our last day before the Christmas break. Students should be taking home most of their items for the break. Indoor shoes can stay at the school but they should look for any extra containers, clothes and belongings and take those home. Gym strip should go home until the New Year. The tradition at Pebble Hill is for students to watch a movie in the afternoon of the last day before the break. Intermediate students will watch one movie in the gymnasium and the primary students will watch a movie in the library. Students are welcome to bring a pillow and blanket with them to sit on to watch the movie.

Lost and Found

Don't forget to stop by the lost and found bin near the gymnasium to claim any of your child's missing items of clothing. All unclaimed items will be donated to charity on Thursday, December 21.

