LAUREL HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: ASSESSING AND REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

PROPOSAL 11-28-

1. Purpose	**ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING OF STUDENT PROGRESS** The Board recognizes that it is necessary to establish a system of assessing and reporting academic progress and achievement so that students, teachers, and parents/guardians are able to: 1. monitor progress toward educational goals; 2. understand students' strengths and weaknesses; 3. know where remedial work is required; 4. plan responsive instruction that addresses students' learning needs and capitalizes upon students' strengths; 5. determine students' attainment of established academic standards; and 6. arrange educational and/or vocational opportunities that offer students the greatest potential for success.
2. Authority	The board directs that the district's instructional program include a system of assessing all students' academic progress and attainment. The system shall call for the use of benchmark, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment measures. The assessment system shall also describe how achievement of academic standards will be measured and how this information will be used to assist students having difficulty meeting required standards. **Standardized State Assessment Guidelines:** The Laurel Highlands School Board shall delegate the responsibility of the implementation of the standardized state assessment and evaluation policy to the Superintendent of Schools or designee. This shall include: • Granting requests by parents/guardians to review the state assessments two (2) weeks prior to their administration during regular district office hours. The district shall ensure the security of the assessment documents. Parents/guardians must sign a locally prepared statement concerning the requirements of assessment security and confidentiality. • Granting parents/guardians the right to have their child excused from standardized state assessments that conflict with their religious beliefs, upon review of the state assessment, and receipt of a written request to the Superintendent or designee.
3. Definition	***Assessment*** is a vital part to the curriculum of the school district. It is the ongoing process of measuring student achievement before, during, and after instruction. The purpose of assessment is to: provide quality feedback of student progress and instruction, use assessment data to adjust instruction and improve student achievement, and provide challenging and engaging activities that promote student learning and academic growth.

Types of Assessment

- **Benchmark/Standards Assessments** provide feedback to the teacher and student about the student's progress toward proficiency on grade/course level standards and benchmarks. Examples including, but not limited to: *PA 4 Sight Assessment, PSSA, PASA, Terra Nova, etc.*

- **Diagnostic Assessments** are administered to determine students' strengths, weaknesses, prior knowledge and skills. Examples including, but not limited to: *Pre-test, Survey, K-W-L, Skills Check, Quick Phonics Screener (QPS), etc.*

- **Formative Assessments** are ongoing assessments during instruction that provide quality feedback to the teacher and student about student progress and instruction. Examples including, but not limited to: *quiz, questioning, observation, draft work, "think aloud," exit card, portfolio review, summary notes/discussion, Hand Signals, White Boards, Student Response Systems, etc.*

- **Summative Assessments** provide teachers and students with feedback in terms of the students' ability of retention of the enduring understandings, learning outcomes and unit/segment objectives. These summative assessments are completed at: the midpoint of a course, end of the course, or at the end of an instructional unit/segment. Examples including, but not limited to: *final exam, test, performance task, culminating project/performance, or portfolio*

The district's assessment system shall include a variety of assessment strategies which may include:

- benchmark/standards assessment
- research-based formative assessments
- written work by students
- scientific experiments & labs conducted by students
- works of art, musical performance, theatrical performance and dance performance by students
- various projected based assessments related to academic standards/course objectives
- demonstrations & presentations
- summative assessments developed by teachers to access academic standards/course objectives
- diagnostic assessments
- various technology enabled assessments
- national achievement tests
- other measures, as appropriate, which may include standardized tests

Grades *are indicators of mastery* and shall serve as the means by which summative assessment results are recorded and reported to school officials, students, and parents/guardians. The primary purpose of grading is to communicate the extent to which students have mastered content and/or skills on which they have received instruction, guided practice, and formative feedback.

GRADING SCALE:

Letter	Percent
A	100 - 95%
A-	94 - 90%
B+	89 - 87%
B	86 - 83%
B-	82 - 80%
C+	79 - 77%
C	76 - 73%
C-	72 - 70%
D	69 - 60%
F	59 - 0%
I	Incomplete

Weighting of Advanced Placement And Honors Level Courses:

In granting quality points, Advanced Placement Courses will be weighted using a 1.25 factor and Honors Courses will be weighted using a 1.125 factor:

GRADE	REGULAR Q Pts.	FACTOR		WEIGHTED QUALITY POINTS	
		AP	HONORS	AP	HONORS
A	4	1.25	1.125	5	4.5
A-	3.67	1.25	1.125	4.5875	4.12
B+	3.33	1.25	1.125	4.1625	3.74625
B	3.0	1.25	1.125	3.75	3.375
B-	2.67	1.25	1.125	3.3375	3.00375
C+	2.33	1.25	1.125	2.9125	2.62125
C	2.00	1.25	1.125	2.50	2.25
C-	1.67	1.25	1.125	2.0875	1.87875
D	1.0	1.25	1.125	1.25	1.1258
F	0	0	0	0	0
ME	0	0	0	0	0

QUALITY POINTS:

Grade	Quality Points
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D	1.0
F	0.0
ME	0.0

Honor Roll:
Average by grade point for Honor Roll Recognition
Highest Honors 3.9 – Plus
High Honors 3.5 – 3.89
Honors 3.0 – 3.49
Students receiving a "D", "F", or "I" in any course will not be eligible for the Honor Roll.

Elementary Level:
At the elementary level, in addition to the district's grading scale, the following alternative academic performance indicators are used to report progress in the subjects of Handwriting, Art, Library, Physical Education, Music, and Computer/Technology Education Literacy. The alternative academic performance indicators include:

Kindergarten Report Cards Only:
O = Outstanding (Child is above Skill Level)
S = Satisfactory (Child is at Skill Level)
N = Needs Improvement (Child is approaching Skill Level)
U = Unsatisfactory (Child does not meet Skill Level)

Grades 1-5
O = Outstanding
G = Good
S = Satisfactory
U = Unsatisfactory

Responsibility:
The classroom teacher has the sole responsibility to assess student performance. The use of "peer assessment" shall be considered a teaching tool and shall NOT be used for grading student work. Any form of assessment used must measure the accomplishment or work of all students.

Accommodations & Special Needs:
The Laurel Highlands School District recognizes that all learners are not the same. Students with disabilities and/or identified as gifted shall be included in the district's assessment system, with appropriate accommodations when necessary as indicated by PA School Code Chapter 14, 15, or 16.

Assessment Guidelines:
This policy establishes that grades shall serve as indicators of content mastery and/or skill proficiency. The summative assessments from which grades are derived shall be administered following instruction and a sufficient amount of practice informed by formative feedback.

The Board of Education endorses the following expectations for grading practices:

1. Only taught or assigned material, identified under curricular objectives, is to be graded.
2. The practice of using grades to reward, coerce, or punish students is strictly prohibited.

3. The use of extra credit or bonus points (not to be more than 10% of the total grade) is reserved for instances in which the qualifying activity, assignment, or item affords students an alternative means of demonstrating content mastery or skill proficiency. Even in such instances, the highest score attainable shall not exceed 100%.
4. Academic dishonesty is to be treated as a disciplinary infraction. Consequences consistent with the level of the offense will be enforced. When academic dishonesty invalidates the measure of mastery and/or proficiency, the student's grade may be negatively affected and/or the student may be required to demonstrate mastery or proficiency using an alternative means.
5. Class Participation should not be more than 10% of the total grade

Additional Guidelines:

- Effective assessment systems clearly define what is to be measured / assessed and clearly define the rules, or rubric, for characterizing the attribute to be measured.
- Effective assessment systems maintain consistency.
- At the outset of any course, each student should be informed about the academic standards to be attained.
- Each student should be kept informed of personal progress during the units of a course of planned instruction.
- Students should be encouraged to assess and monitor their own academic achievements.
- Parents/Students will be able to access grades and attendance using the district's electronic format.
- Methods of assessment shall be appropriate to the planned instruction and maturity of students.
- Assessment strategies should objectively evaluate mastery of content and/or skill proficiency.
- All assessment systems shall be subject to continuing review and revision.

Final Grades:

The composition of students' final grades shall be as listed below. (Any exceptions must be approved by the building principal.):

	Full Year Courses with Finals	***Full Year Courses without Finals***
Quarter 1	22.5%	25%
Quarter 2	22.5%	25%
Quarter 3	22.5%	25%
Quarter 4	22.5%	25%
Final Exam	10%*	N/A

**Final Exams shall not be more than 10% of the final grade. If it is less than 10%, each quarter percentage will need to be changed in order to equal 100%.*

**If both a Mid-Term and Final Exam is utilized in the course, they shall not be more than 5% of the final grade (Not more than 10% of the final grade combined).*

	Semester Courses with Finals	*Semester Courses without Finals*
Quarter 1	45%	50%
Quarter 2	45%	50%
Final Exam	10% Maximum	N/A

Issuing zeros -- record a grade of 50% for the 1st half of any course when the percentage earned is < or = 50%. (Full year course = 1st and 2nd nine weeks and with a Semester course = 1st half of the course)

- While it is important to communicate true academic standing during the grading period, students must have the opportunity to recover in the cumulative sense. 50% is the lowest "F" attainable during the first half of any course. It qualifies as a failing grade and communicates that a student has failed to master the academic content in a given grading period, yet does not preclude the student from achieving a successful outcome.

The Board classifies certain grading practices as questionable and/or risky, and thereby upholds the following recommendations for best practice:

Homework:

1. ***Grading homework – should not be graded as a summative assessment***
   The risks associated with grading homework include:
   - Homework is intended to reinforce taught material and afford students practice, not to be utilized as a summative assessment.
   - It is difficult to ensure that the student, him/herself, completes homework.
   - Some students have an unfair advantage over others in that they can ask for and receive assistance with assignments.
2. ***Averaging averages -- utilize a carefully weighted point system***
   - When the averages don't carry equal weight, the average of averages will yield skewed results.
3. ***Homework should NOT be weighted the same as Tests.***
   - Students do not receive a true picture of their grade if a single 10 pt. homework assignment is graded the same as a single 100 point test.
4. ***Factoring in behavior-related points -- only when course objectives call for the application of performance-based skills with no regard to aptitude may points be issued for participation***
   - Grades must show a direct correlation to curricular goals and objectives.
5. ***Extra Credit / Bonus Points should be relevant to academic content.***
   - Issuing extra credit or bonus points for attending a basketball game does NOT relate to academic content.

Student Progress Notifications:

- Various methods of reporting appropriate to grade level and curriculum content shall be utilized.
- Both student and parent/guardian shall receive ample warning of a pending grade of failure, or one that would adversely affect the student's academic status.

	• Scheduling of parent-teacher conferences should occur at times that ensure the greatest degree of participation by parents/guardians. • Report cards shall be issued at intervals of not less than nine (9) weeks. • Review and evaluation of methods of reporting student progress to parents/ guardians shall be conducted on a periodic basis. **Reporting Grades in Percentages:** Other than previously identified letter grading at the elementary level, all grades should be recorded as a percentage. **Online Grade Reporting:** Each student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) should be kept informed on a regular basis of his/her personal progress during the course of a unit of study via the "parent portal" available through the district's electronic format. A link for parents and students will be located on the district's website.