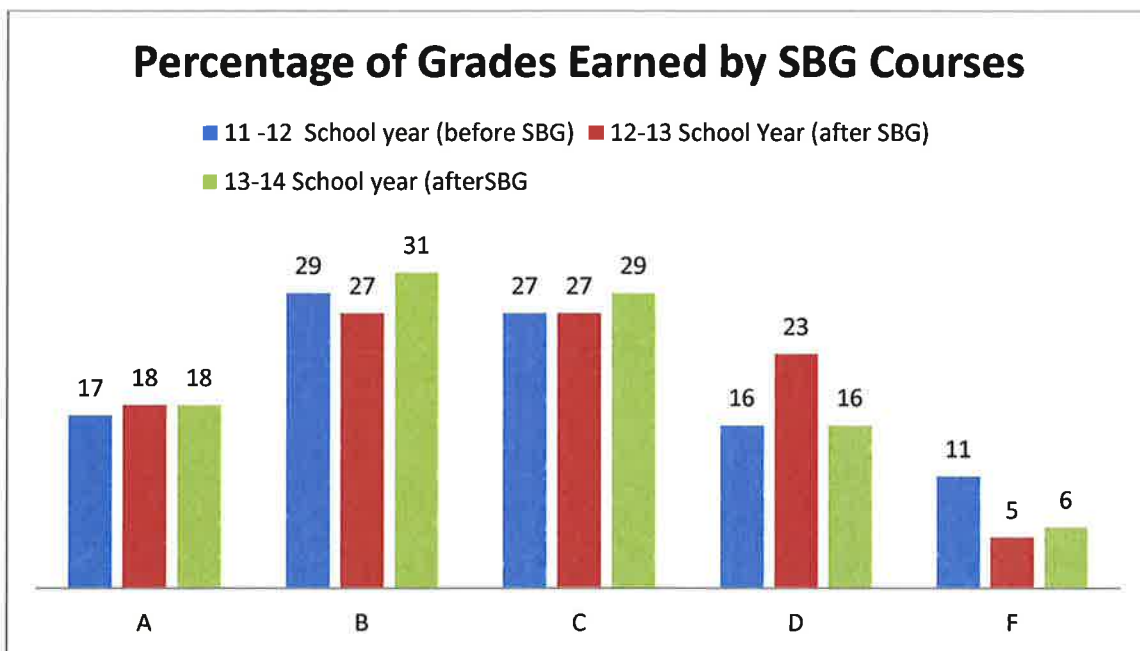


Dear Wildcat Community,

Over the past few years, the math and science faculty of Community High School has been in the process of blending grading practices known as "standards-based" into a portion of the overall semester grade. For a number of years, there has been a movement within the teaching profession to establish principles of grading aligned to what research has demonstrated to be one effective tool at increasing student knowledge and skills through targeted feedback and opportunities for learning. Community High School's academic course teams in math and science have worked to align their curriculum to a set of well-defined standards, objectives, and learning targets. We have also been moving toward instruction that embodies clear communication of learning targets, quality feedback, and practice with re-attempts encouraged. Teachers have been identifying instructional methods that motivate students. Using a "standards based" assessment approach has allowed us to better diagnose specifically how much a student understands a specific learning target or has acquired a skill of that discipline.

This approach has challenged staff, students, and families to reconsider what mastering content or skills looks like and what a letter grade should truly represent. It no doubt differs from what most had been accustomed to previously. However, by using this approach as part of the determination of a semester grade we have had some very positive results. Please see the chart below as evidence of such.



Students, staff and families have also informed us that the process is helpful in that it

- ☞ **Identifies learning progress rather than amount total points earned**
- ☞ **Provides content specific feedback to students and staff about current student academic achievement.**
- ☞ **Allows teacher to identify opportunities for re-teaching and differentiating instruction.**
- ☞ **Increases student understanding of what is important to be able to do and know.**
- ☞ **Increases student participation in assessment of learning.**

Please note that in all cases, the portion of Standards Based Grading is less than half of the semester grade with a traditional grading approach being blended to form the overall all grade. In addition, in the areas in which SBG is used, students are allotted re-assessments when mastery has not been reached. For further detailed information regarding grading policies, please visit our website.

Sincerely,

Scott Albright

  
Science Division Head

Steve Balhan

  
Mathematics Division Head