Q: What is Standards-Based Grading?
A: Standards-Based Grading is a refined way of reporting what students know and how they demonstrate their learning of standards.

Q: What is the purpose of Standards-Based Grading?
A: The purpose of Standards-Based Grading is to align grading with the national content standards as measured by consistent and accurate student achievement data and common criteria for grading.

Q: What is the goal of Standards-Based Grading?
A: The primary goal of SBG is to better communicate what each student knows and is able to do according to content standards and separately assess the influence of positive and consistent work habits on student learning.

Q: How does Standards-Based Grading work?
A: Traditional grading averages all of the work and other subjective factors that a student has done over a semester. SBG removes extraneous factors and solely focuses on proficiency. Standards-Based Grading assesses a student’s overall work and their most recent work so it really tells us what a student has learned and what they now know rather than what they knew walking into the class.

Q: Why did we change to Standards-Based Grading?
A: After many hours of researching standards based grading, we realized that we had to move in this direction for the benefit of our students. We feel that traditional grading does not accurately report a student’s knowledge of standards because there are so many of factors that go into a traditional grade that can either inflate a grade or deflate a grade. As educators, it is our responsibility to know exactly what our students know or what they do not know and go from that point to ensure proficiency. It is our responsibility to help students understand their own learning and also to accurately report to parents the knowledge a student obtains towards a standard.

Q: How does this differ from traditional letter grades?
A: Standards-based grading reports tell us what students have actually learned and know. Standards-based grading measures students’ knowledge of grade-level content over time by reporting the most recent, consistent level of performance. So, a student might struggle in the beginning of a course with new content, but then learn and demonstrate proficient performance by the end of the course.

For example: In traditional grading, the student’s performance for the whole quarter would be averaged and early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with proficient performance later in the course resulting in a lower grade. In standards based grading, a student who reaches proficiency would be reported proficient and the grade would reflect current performance level.

In addition, traditional grading often includes other subjective factors like attendance, effort, and attitude, which might influence the grade positively or negatively. In standards based grading, we
will report proficiency and work habits separately in order to give a more accurate report of student progress.

The new Marshall County Elementary Standards-Based grading system will provide two different reports: One will tell us what students know compared to the standards and the other will assess the more subjective factors like participation and effort.

**Q: When did Standards-Based Grading go into effect?**
**A:** Implementing SBG district-wide was a multi-year process that included teachers, principals, students, parents and district staff.

We implemented Standards-Based Grading at Central Elementary in 2011-2012. We have learned many lessons over the past 2 years of implementation at Central and by using input from teachers and input from parent surveys, we believe the report card that we will use district wide this year, it much more parent friendly.

We will use letter grades (A, B, C, etc.) to indicate academic knowledge of the standard and we will have a separate numerical rubric to report out work ethic, responsibility, participation, effort, etc. If a student scores below a B on any standard at the end of a 9 weeks grading period, the teacher will include a specific comment indicating the area where growth is needed.

**Q: What is next in the process?**
**A:** Developing Standards-Based Grading is a continually evolving process. We have the following processes in place to continually monitor and update SBG at our schools. We continually work on SBG in the following ways:

- Evaluate and update common evidence that students have met the standards.
- Support professional development through district and site-specific groups.
- Evaluate and update Standards-Based Report Cards and Grade Books.
- Evaluate and update our Evaluation Plans.
- Evaluate and update grade-based reporting through gradual levels of implementation.
- Continue to gather feedback from teachers, students, and parents to improve the process.