

Del Mar News Flash

Weekly Del Mar Campus, PTA & Foundation News



We walk far together.

Key Dates:

Fri. Aug. 31

Principal Coffee
8:30-9:30 am

Thurs. June 6th

Back to School
Night 6:00-8:00
pm. Be sure to get
your child's
schedule and join
us promptly at 6.

Del Mar News

August 29, 2018

Dear Del Mar Community,

As professional educators, we have invested incredible amounts of time, resources and effort over the last 6-7 years to adopt and implement Common Core and NGSS Standards. These standards connect in so many ways across disciplines. From "*Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them*" (Math Practice Standard) to "*Asking questions and defining problems*" (NGSS, with connections made to Language Arts), we understand that optimal student learning comes from an ongoing cycle of feedback using clear success criteria to help students see how they can **grow**. But a major challenge to this growth-centered work is using an evaluation framework, specifically A-F grades, which developed back in the year 1897. Thinking of all the advancements since then (societal, technological, political) we see that it is difficult to be educational leaders using a metric from 120-plus years ago.

Rather than nuanced feedback on specific standards - both academic and non-academic - the A-F system combines every aspect of a student's work over the course of a trimester and delivers ONE percentage, along with its corresponding letter. It is difficult for a

student to make out subtleties in his or her learning over time when the final feedback report is "82%." Compare that to the following report card for English Language Arts and Social Studies (Humanities) from Gateway Middle School in San Francisco using a 1-4 scale from "Below" to "Exceeding".

Content Mastery Standards	T1
1. Engages effectively in academic conversations to deepen understanding of grade level content.	4
2. Uses historical thinking skills to analyze how people are shaped by their environment, culture and personal experiences	3
3. Effectively integrates new academic vocabulary, language & sentence structures in writing.	4
4. Writes narratives and arguments that meet that requirements of each genre.	4
5. Analyzes literature for structure, theme, and character development	3

We ask students to focus on learning and not the grade they receive - but that is extremely difficult, if not impossible, when we use a system that represents three months of learning in one letter grade. Rather than "How can I raise my grade?" we want to help our students ask "How can I deepen my learning and better show that knowledge through my work?" But students, parents and educators won't be able to do that unless we **change** the feedback system we use to report on student learning.

A growing number of schools are creating report

cards that reflect student proficiency on specific standards, including Ross School and Hall Middle School. Branson High School is a part of a nationwide consortium looking to end A-F grading in high school.

Prior to my arrival, the school community began work on the following Strategic Goal:

Students will receive grades that provide consistent and accurate information and feedback about progress toward standards and habits of engaged citizens and motivated learners.

Del Mar staff and the Strategic Planning Collaborative have had discussions over the past four years on how we can evolve our grading practices to create an accurate picture of student learning. In this time, our faculty has separated student behavior ([Habits of Learning](#)) from acquisition of knowledge and skills (Standards/Learning Outcomes); adopted more [accurate and equitable grading practices](#) into their classroom and aligned these policies within each department.

This year, we are beginning to implement practices of proficiency-based grading in many of our classes and will be spending the year continuing to develop shared language and rubrics on content standards and our habits of learning. While we continue to focus on this work this school year, teachers will still be assigning A-F grades at the end of each trimester. For information about the grading practices of your child's teacher, make sure to attend Back to School Night on September 6th or email the teacher directly. Please consider attending our October Principal's Coffee, Friday, October 19th to hear more about the

work Del Mar faculty is engaging in and to surface questions.

Sincerely,

Brian Lynch, Principal

(Please note some of this information is shared with permission from Eric Saibel, Principal of Hall Middle School)

Sincerely,

Brian Lynch

PTA News

JOIN THE PTA TODAY! The PTA subsidizes assemblies, field trips, library books and more for your kids. The PTA also puts on parent education events throughout the school year for parents and teacher appreciation events for our teachers - lunches, coffees, and more! The PTA relies upon annual membership dues and sales of yearbooks and birthday books to help fund all of these activities.

Please support your PTA and sign up for Membership, yearbooks, birthday books, spirit wear - all in one place!
<https://www.schoolpay.com/pay/for/Reed-Union-School-District-PTA-Program-Items-for-/McGA>

Another way to support the PTA is through **Choice Lunch**. A small portion from every lunch purchased on Choice Lunch is donated to the RUSD PTA. Order today via their website www.choicelunch.com

Thanks to your PTA membership donations, the RUSD PTA hosted lunch for all of our teachers the week leading up to school.

NEW! Follow the PTA on **Instagram at RUSDPTA** to see what the PTA does for our schools.



Foundation News

THE FOUNDATION
FOR REED SCHOOLS



We hope your first week back has been a smooth one! Please mark your calendars with these important dates:

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH@ 9:00 AM

Volunteer Board Meeting

Foundation for Reed Schools Office, The Reed School, 1199 Tiburon Blvd.

Please join us at our first volunteer board meeting of the year and learn more about volunteer opportunities at the Foundation! Visit our [website](#) for more information.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12TH

Run for Reed (R4R)

Downtown Tiburon

Join us for the annual RUN FOR REED, the Foundation's 2018-2019 Family Giving Campaign Kick-off! R4R is a 1 mile and 5K race. R4R is an opportunity for our community to come together to support our schools. Visit the [R4R website](#) for more information.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH

Pledge Day

We have once again made a \$2m commitment to RUSD, and our goal is 100% participation in the annual Family Giving Campaign! Join our generous community and invest in our schools. Early donations and pledges save valuable volunteer time and reduce fundraising costs.