August 30, 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Starting this school year, the Salem School District will implement two changes to our elementary grade reporting procedures.

First, we will implement a new “standards-based” report card in Grades K-5. The new report card, which was piloted across the grades last winter/spring, identifies students’ levels of progress with regard to grade level expectations. It highlights areas of strength and areas where growth is needed throughout the year. There is no traditional letter grade on a standards-based report card; instead, progress is reported using symbols and descriptors, such as M - Meets grade level expectations. In addition, the report card will provide information about behaviors that support learning such as self-management, self-direction, and collaboration.

Second, we will move to a trimester reporting system from the four quarters system of the past. There will be three 12-week marking periods in the elementary schools, with report cards being distributed on the following dates: Tuesday, December 5, 2017; Friday, March 16, 2018; and the last day of school. Parent conferences will be held on November 9, 2017. Because the date does not coincide with the end Trimester 1, report cards will not be distributed prior to conferences but rest assured that conferences will include a discussion of student progress as well as strategies to support learning at school and home.

We value a reporting system that allows students and their families to understand progress toward grade level expectations and we look forward to positive change with the new report card. You will hear more at your school’s Open House, but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your child’s teacher, principal, or myself at any time. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Maura E. Palmer
Assistant Superintendent