

## **Category Grading**

Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, teachers at Calera Middle School will use a universal grading system in which grades will be divided into 3 weighted categories: Gold (50%), Silver (35%), and Bronze (15%).

### **Gold 50% (summative assessments)**

This category will consist of major tests and projects, that reflect a final product of student. Each teacher will be required to have **at least 3 gold grades** over the course of a 9 weeks grading period including their benchmark assessment.

### **Silver 35% (formative assessments)**

This category will consist of quizzes, assignments that build to a gold level project or paper, collaborative work, lab reports, ongoing journals, etc. Each teacher will have **a minimum of 5 silver grades**.

### **Bronze 15% (practice/warm-up)**

This category will be made up of homework, bellringers, notebook checks, study guides, etc. Each teacher will have **a minimum of 7 bronze grades**.

## **FAQ's about Category Grading**

### **Why is Calera Middle moving to this grading system?**

We feel this system gives us a better understanding of a student's strengths and weaknesses. This is also the system used at Calera High School, and we believe that implementing this program will provide consistency and enable our students to be better prepared.

### **What are the benefits of the weighted grading system over the old total points system?**

Under the old "total points" system, the number of points in an assignment area could become disproportionate to its "value" as an indicator of student learning.

For example, if a teacher gave more homework or classwork, and fewer tests, a student's grades might be too greatly influenced by their homework and classwork scores. The opposite of this is true as well. If a teacher gave more tests and very little classwork or homework, a student's grade would be disproportionately affected by their test scores.

Situations described above would be limited in our new categories grading system. With the new system, no matter how many assignments are placed in each category, the value of the category remains the same weight in the total grade. This grading system better reflects what a student has truly learned.

### **Is Calera Middle the only school that is doing this new grading system?**

No, all high schools and most middle schools in Shelby County will be moving toward this model.