Dear Students and Parents;

At Caloosa Middle School we look forward to working together to provide your child with the knowledge and tools to be successful and to reach his or her fullest potential. With this in mind our 8th grade Science Classes are moving towards Standard Mastery Unit plans. The teachers are using common assessments to determine student mastery of each standard area, so there is consistency between teachers with regard to student progress on meeting the standards. Standards-based Unit Plans can give parents and students a clearer picture of the progress a student is making toward mastering the specific skills and knowledge to meet the standards at grade level. The purpose is to have the report card more accurately reflect to the parent the progress each child is making towards mastering the state standards.

The grade level standards are listed in the Gradebook, so instead of receiving for example an 89% in the general category of Classwork, the parent can see exactly the student’s level of mastery for each Science standard. Standards-based Unit Plans take more into account than whether a student completed a homework assignment or answered various questions in class; Florida standards are the essential learnings for that particular grade level that students need to show mastery in order to demonstrate preparedness for high school and end of year FCAT.

How this looks in the class at the beginning of a Unit

Students are given a Pre-Test over the standards to be covered in the upcoming Unit. Students receive a separate mark for each standard indicator in the gradebook. Scoring mastery on Pre-Tests (“Super Star Level”) indicates a student is meeting the expectation of skills and content identified at their grade level. The teacher will then provide differentiated instruction in order to move the student beyond the identified benchmark to a deeper level of understanding or apply that knowledge to new situations. This encourages students to demonstrate their ability to apply skills and knowledge beyond grade level expectations. Performance is characterized by self-motivation and the ability to apply skills with consistent accuracy, independence, and a high level of quality.

Students are not expected to achieve standard mastery upon every Pre-Test. These standards are 8th grade standards and have not been taught to them in middle school as of yet. When students score less than mastery on a Pre-Test (“Rock Star Level”) they will continue with a variety of classroom activities that will give them the knowledge they will need to learn content to achieve standard mastery as the unit concludes. Short quizzes will be given on each concept every week and a test will be given at the end of each section as well. Students will be expected to earn 80% or higher on all quizzes and tests to ensure mastery. If a student has not yet shown mastery after the initial lessons and standard quiz they will be allowed to further their learning to increase content understanding in effort to mastery the standard and re-take the standard quiz. Upon completion of the continued learning (“Evidence”) students will be allowed to re-take the test or quiz. Standard Mastery can take place at any point during the school year and is very student specific. Once a student demonstrates he or she meets the standard the original standard quiz will be replaced.

Measuring the Mastery of Standards for the sake of Student Achievement

Remember that you can go online and view student grades through Parent Link on the CMS website. Standards are available through my Bi-Monthly Newsletters and on your student’s Unit Plan Checklist provided to them in class and kept in their Science Folders. I welcome the chance to communicate and work with you as we ALL work for the success of your child.

Do not hesitate to ask for help if you do not understand something or have any concerns you wish to discuss. Please contact me by e-mail at AmyKm@leeschools.net.

Thank you for you continued support.

Website: by clicking here or typing: http://sites.leeschools.net/AmyKM/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/