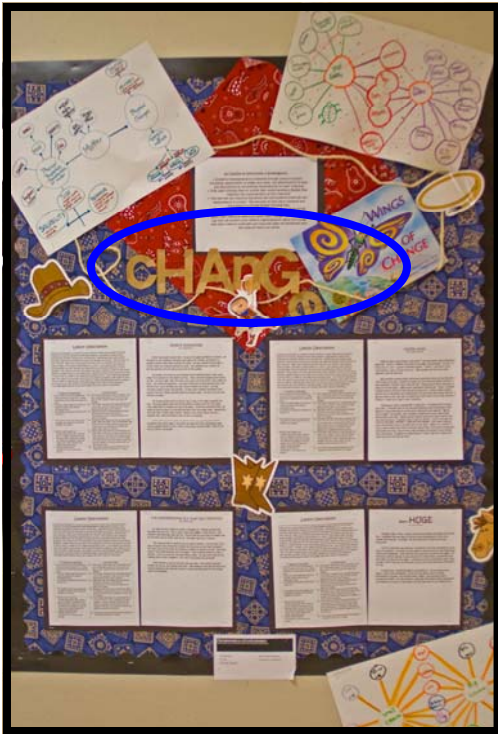


Standards-based Bulletin Boards in Northwest ISD

A standards-based format moves bulletin boards from “fluff” to teaching and learning boards. The idea is that a bulletin board is a window into the instruction in a classroom. The boards are used to show the teaching that is going on inside but are also used for learning as other teachers, classes, students, parents and visitors all stop to read the student work. Bulletin boards are one of the ways that we make our teaching visible, transparent.



The bulletin board shows the connection between a student's work, the standard the work is to meet, and the assessment that is used to decide when the work is good enough. Much of the work posted early in the year may not meet the standard or may be displayed as "a work in progress" but as the year progresses, more and more of the posted work will meet the standard and even exceed the standard.

For consistency, we encourage the use of specific criteria for bulletin boards. Basically a Standards-based Bulletin Board contains the following features:

- **Title** - Each board has a title that describes the big picture. Teachers sometimes use catchy phrases or a play on words to entice someone walking by the board to stop and read.

- **Standard(s)** - The standard(s) (student expectations) is/are reproduced exactly as it is written in the TEKS. Based on the assignment, more than one standard may be addressed. To maximize student understanding and increase the opportunity for success, it is recommended that a task address no more than three to five standards.
- **Task** - The task/lesson description is an explanation of what the class or student was asked to do. Teachers often include a list of the mini-lessons taught prior to the specific assignment so that the reader can easily see how the specific task fits into a string of lessons.

Lesson Description	
<p>Students participated in a hands-on Inquiry activity in which they worked with grow creatures to practice taking accurate measurements, using specific science tools, following the scientific method, and charting data. Additionally the students were working to describe the properties of matter by detailing the specific characteristics of their creature. When the creatures grew (the next day), the students returned and measured again, including all measurements in a chart. The students then created a Double Bubble Map that detailed the similarities and differences (before and after growing). The students took this information and, after reading our Book of the Month <i>Wings of Change</i> created a story about their creature and how it would adapt to survive in nature after a 'change' of this magnitude affected its life. The students were graded upon their ability to accurately use the tools of science to measure, their ability to use a chart to reflect collected data, their ability to create a Double Bubble map to compare and contrast, and their ability to creatively design a story about their experience (including a generalization about the 'change' that their creature underwent).</p>	
5 th GRADE STANDARD	COMMENTARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of tools and methods to conduct scientific inquiry (5.4). Collect information by observing and measuring (5.2b). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ This student effectively used a centimeter ruler and a triple-beam balance to find the size and mass of their creature (before and after the 'change').
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct simple tables and charts to organize, examine and evaluate information (5.2e). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ This student organized their collected data into a chart that was easy to read and use to make determinations about their creature.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify the physical properties of matter (5.7). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Adjectives used (on thinking maps) accurately describe the physical properties and characteristics of the creatures (before and after the 'change').
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student knows that adaptations (changes) may affect the survival of members of a species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Statements like "apparently this was their home sweet home" and when "Lucy, his little sister, was under his foot" he clearly demonstrated that he understands that adaptations (changes) may affect the survival of a species.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes a well thought out creative essay about their creature and its 'Change' (connecting to our Roanoke theme) using clear, precise and deliberate language to help the reader more clearly visualize the subject being addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ This student described the transformation of a spider into a creature who had to be kicked out of his home for the safety of his family and who eventually died when he grew to be even bigger. This demonstrated that the student understood how the change in size had a direct affect on the creature's life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows conventions of capitalization, punctuation and spelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ This student demonstrated mastery over the expected writing conventions in 5th grade.

- **Four pieces of student work** - Four pieces of student work are posted that meet the standard, but often show a range of work. To maximize understanding for the person reading the board (student, parent, teacher), a minimum of four pieces of work is recommended. In some cases, two or more teachers will display work on one board. In these cases, each teacher should provide at least four pieces of work.



Lesson Description	
<p>The students were given the writing prompt "Tell about a time in your life you experienced change." Students told their story orally and their peer asked them "media" questions. They planned their papers using a 3 box planner, and then wrote a rough draft. They then conferenced with two peers then the teacher to take the paper to publication.</p>	
Uses language and structure flexibly and deliberately to achieve a specific response	
<p>Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrows the topic and sustains a specific focus to make a point Provides engaging support using a variety of strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *description/ explanation *cause-effect motivation *examples/ anecdotes 	<p>⇒ Lyndsy narrows her topic by setting her reader up with a snapshot of how her story ends. She provides a vivid description of her world on the soccer field. "...my feet moved about 100 miles per hour." "She got into a kickfest..." Lyndsy thinks if she would have been more careful, she would not have gotten hurt. She uses accurate cause and effect to ask others to "...be more cautious when playing."</p>
<p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieves cohesiveness and overall completeness Writes an engaging introduction and ending Guides the reader by linking ideas between paragraphs to move smoothly from one idea to another 	<p>⇒ Lyndsy achieves cohesiveness and overall completeness. She has a clear beginning, middle, and end to her paper. The beginning makes the reader wonder where she is located. "I felt like I was locked in a dungeon." Her ending gives her opinion and asks the reader to think before they act, so they won't get hurt. Lyndsy uses words and phrases such as: "it all started," and "fast forward," to move her paper through time.</p>
<p>Voice/ Word Choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies sentence structures and length to achieve rhythm and flow Exhibits voice in many text parts with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *strong verbs *vivid images *effective dialogue *natural, precise language 	<p>⇒ Lyndsy varies her types of sentences to achieve rhythm and flow. She has used interrogative, declarative, and exclamatory sentences. "...what do you think happened?" "When I looked down all I saw was grass and feet." "I will encourage you to think before you act!" She also uses words such as "petrified," "threshold," "experience," and "cautious" to exhibit her voice.</p>
<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses simple, compound and complex sentences with moderate control of advanced conventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *capitalization *punctuation *standard English *accurate spelling Writes legibly Uses marked paragraphs to organize ideas 	<p>⇒ Lyndsy uses simple and compound sentences throughout her paper. "I felt like I was locked in a dungeon." "She was in a lot of pain, and complained all the time." She has control of her conventions by using capitalization and punctuation correctly. She also has accurate spelling throughout her paper, and used Spell Check to check her document. Students were able to type their paper using Microsoft Word.</p>

- **Commentary** - For each piece of work displayed, commentary that is written by the teacher or by the student should explain *why* or *how* the particular piece meets the standard or does not. Sometimes the commentary includes "next steps" to show where the student should go next. The commentary can take many forms: written in paragraph form, bulleted or in writing. The commentary should not simply be a restating of the standard because that does not provide information as to *why* or *how* the work meets the standard. This component of the board is extremely important because it provides essential feedback to students and helps them understand what they must do to meet the expected standard.

In addition to the required parts above, the bulletin board might also include rubrics, artifacts such as photographs of the process, models or artistic representations of a product or experiment, charts, graphs and anything else a teacher may dream up! Risk-taking is encouraged and reinforced!

PRESENTATION IS EVERYTHING!

Bulletin boards are about the depth of the student work; however, the depth doesn't really matter if bulletin boards aren't attractive and interesting enough to make people stop and read. The following tips and suggestions should be considered when preparing displays;

- *Does my bulletin board have a title that brings all the pieces together?*
- *Is my board appealing?* (You slaved over it and now you want people to read it! Think about the boards in the building that catch YOUR eye and make YOU stop and say, "Wow- what is this?" You want that to be YOUR board)
- *Is my most important point displayed at eye level?* (That's where most people read)
- *Is my bulletin board easy to read and follow from left to right?* (most people read from left to right and top to bottom)
- *Do my bulletin board borders look new? Do my borders coordinate well with the theme or color of my board?* (anything bent or torn needs to come down - today!)
- *Are all papers securely fastened to the board?* (One staple or one clip makes the work look temporary)
- *Does all my work in the hallways look fresh and new?* (any work that is old or tattered needs to come down. Any seasonal work that is more than a month old should come down - no pumpkins in January!)
- *Is my commentary easy to read?* (font should be simple and .14 or larger so it is easily readable)
- *Are there any spelling or grammar mistakes on my board?* Check and double check spelling and then let a friend check it again. One minor error might be overlooked but many spelling and grammar mistakes will make the board look unprofessional)

If you ever want a second opinion before putting up your bulletin board, stop by and talk over your board with your coach or a colleague. Or... e-mail your commentary for a coach to review before you put it up. We all learn more when we depend on each other for collaboration!