

November 15, 2024

Dear PHA Families,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the fall season. Earlier today, you should have received an email with your child's first-quarter report card. This is an exciting time to reflect on the growth and progress your child has made so far this school year.

At PHA, we use a **Standards-Based Grading (SBG)** system. Unlike traditional grading, SBG focuses on communicating your child's achievement of the essential learning standards for each course. Our approach emphasizes what students know and can do, supporting the development of a growth mindset and empowering students as they build their academic identities.

In this grading model, report card grades reflect the level of proficiency your child has demonstrated on each standard by the end of the quarter. Unlike traditional grading systems, SBG does **not** include scores for work completion, participation, or behavior. Additionally, we do not base final grades on performance from the beginning or middle of a unit, but rather on what your child has achieved by the end.

It's important to remember that many standards are taught and assessed throughout the entire school year. Your child will have multiple opportunities to meet these standards beyond this quarter. There are also some standards that have not yet been introduced, and those will be assessed later.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. We look forward to working together to help your child grow and succeed.

The UE Leadership
Amy O'Connell & Nerecesa Pires

GET INVOLVED AT THE UE

- Join us online for **Wednesday Coffee Hour!** Every Wednesday morning a different team from our campus community will welcome families to an online event where they can gather information and ask about the learning their students are doing here at school. Please see below for event specifics and links. We hope to see you online!
 - **November 20th at 7:40 AM** - Coffee with 5th Grade: meet.google.com/abx-ciHz-tct
 - **November 27th at 7:40 AM** - Coffee with 6th Grade: meet.google.com/vhv-rwxs-otv
 - **December 4th at 7:40 AM** - Coffee with the Leaders: meet.google.com/vwy-cpcm-uiz
- **Uniform Donation:** If you have gently used uniforms in good condition that you no longer need, please consider donating them to our uniform supply closet. Once collected they will be cleaned and distributed to campuses based on size to be given out to students who need them. To donate, please drop off any uniform items to Ms. Scott in the UE front office. Thank you!
- **Join UE's Family Advisory Board!** Every PHA campus has its own Family Advisory Board (FAB). FAB's purpose is to create opportunities for, organize, and promote active involvement of parents, guardians, and family members to work with campus. If you did not get a chance to add your name to the FAB interest list at Schedules and Slices simply reply to this message to let us know of your interest!

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES: PHA & Beyond

- **Parent & Family FAB Hour (PreK-12) once a month!** Come learn and share about the latest PHA community events and activities, academics, and news. Bring your questions, experiences, and wisdom, and support other PHA families. Be part of this warm and welcoming virtual meeting space on the first Wednesday of each month* at 5:30 PM on Zoom: <https://bit.ly/PHAFABhour> Join the FAB Facebook group to receive reminders at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/797596680394866> Mark your calendars: December 4, January 8*, February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4.
- **Please join the Special Education Parent Advisory Council at PHA!** The SEPAC is a parent-run group for parents of students with disabilities. The SEPAC seeks to facilitate opportunities for parents of students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan to connect with and support each other. The SEPAC also supports the district in planning for and supporting the needs of our students. Please save the date for the 24-25 SEPAC meetings on the dates: Dec 18, Jan 15, Feb 26, Mar 19, Apr 16, May 21, June TBD. These meetings are held virtually from 6:00 - 7:00 on Wednesday evenings. Email the SEPAC leadership team at sepac@phacs.org to be added to the SEPAC Membership List.
- **The Massachusetts Department of Education** has [recently launched](#) the **“Your Presence is Powerful”** campaign as part of continued efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism. The Department is asking students, school staff, educators, and families in Massachusetts public pre-K-12 schools and adult learning classes to submit creative pieces of artwork, music, photography, videography, or writing to express what draws them to school. Submissions are due Friday, December 20.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Friday, November 15:** Quarter 1 Report Cards Sent Home
- **Friday, November 22:** Twin Dress Down Day
- **Wednesday, November 27:** Half Day - Noon Release
- **Thursday, November 28-Friday, November 29:** Thanksgiving Recess - No School
- **Friday, December 13:** Quarter 2 Progress Reports Sent Home
- **Friday, December 20:** Pajama Dress Down Day
- **Monday December 23-Friday, January 3:** Winter Recess- No School
- **Friday, January 31:** End of Quarter 2
- **Monday, January 20:** MLK Day - NO School
- **Friday, January 31:** Dress Like a Teacher Day
- **Friday, February 14:** Quarter 2 Report Cards Sent Home
- **Monday, February 17-Friday, February 21:** February Break - No School
- **Friday, February 28:** Celebrate Your Culture Dress Down Day
- **Friday, March 14:** Quarter 3 Progress Reports Sent Home
- **Monday, March 20:** Professional Development Day - No School
- **Friday, March 28:** Sports Dress Down Day
- **Friday, April 11:** End of Quarter 3
- **Friday, April 11:** Decades/Eras Dress Down Day
- **Friday, April 18:** Half Day - Noon Release

- **Monday, April 21-Friday, April 25:** April Break - No School
- **Friday, May 2:** Quarter 3 Report Cards Sent Home
- **Friday, May 23:** Quarter 4 Progress Reports Sent Home
- **Monday, May 26:** Memorial Day - No School
- **Friday, May 30:** Quarter 4 Progress Reports Sent Home
- **Friday, May 30:** Hat Dress Down Day
- **Friday, June 13:** Vacation Vibes Dress Down Day
- **Monday, June 19:** Juneteenth - No School
- **Friday, June 20:** End of Quarter 4 / Scheduled Last Day of School
- **Friday, June 27:** Quarter 4 Report Cards Sent Home

LINKS TO HELPFUL RESOURCES

- **[UE Frequently Asked Questions](#):** Please see this document for answers to common questions families have about the Upper Elementary Campus. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have additional questions that are not covered here.
- **[Counseling Referral](#):** Please complete this form if you believe your child requires extra support or check-ins, and a counseling team member will contact you shortly.
- **[Principal Office Hours Sign-Up](#):** Use this sign-up to add an appointment to my calendar. We can meet via phone, online, or in person. Feel free to ask questions, discuss your ideas for our school, or get to know one another!