

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Report cards can create a lot of stress, especially if your child is struggling in school. A good grade can offer a sense of relief and satisfaction, while bad grades can be disappointing, deflating even.

What we need to keep in mind is that grades – good, bad and average – are simply measures of progress. They don't define a student; they merely tell us how that student is doing in a particular subject at a given point in time.

Schools, like ours, also are graded. They have been for years, though the grading scale and accompanying comments change from time to time. For the past decade or so, the state has used AYP and language like "proficient" and "in need of improvement" to measure schools.

Now, the state is shifting to an A-F grading scale. Using a complex formula that relies heavily on reading and math scores on the Standards Based Assessment, the New Mexico Public Education Department has assigned each public school in the state a letter grade.

Some schools like us got a B letter grade overall. Others got A's, C's or other grades.

These grades are of intense interest and concern throughout the state. They'll continue to create headlines, labels and debate. Regardless, we will work within the framework of this system, and you can be sure that we will evaluate our grade in the coming weeks, make the necessary improvements, and continue to work toward success. In other words, we'll work to make ourselves better, just as we always have.

We at Seven Bar are all about improvement, achievement, consistency. No single factor – not a letter grade, not a headline nor a label – changes that.

We look to you as our partners in this effort to help our kids be better students, citizens and role models. You can help by encouraging your child to always do his or her best, avoid labels, seek assistance, voice concerns and keep the lines of communication open between home and school. In the coming weeks, as we prepare to take the SBA in March, get your child to school each day, on time and ready to learn. And most importantly have faith in your student.

We'll do the same. We promise.

Sincerely,

Nancy Lacher

Principal