



## New Waverly ISD

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Dr. Darol Hail  
Superintendent

Sheri O'Hagan  
Secretary

Dear Family and Community Members,

We all know that change continually occurs. Change is never easy, no matter if the change is a positive one or a negative one. This is true for the rules that govern education, just as it is in all areas of our lives. I am writing to you today to address an area of change that is coming soon to our schools: The A-F system for schools as adopted by the 84<sup>th</sup> legislature.

The system adopted by that legislature is supposed to take effect beginning in August of 2018. The main reason for addressing this topic centers on the fact that the state will soon be releasing a preliminary score that is based on a "WHAT IF" scenario. In other words, the state will release grades for schools on the system that is still nearly two years away and those grades will be based on "WHAT IF" it had been the system last year. There are numerous problems with this concept.

First and foremost, the statement "WHAT IF" is simply that, an imaginary scenario. **These are grades that don't exist.** The system in place currently is the one that we are legally bound by. That system is the one in which New Waverly ISD students surpassed state averages in 16 out of 22 areas and earned 7 separate campus recognitions. **The new system is not in place, and its guidelines and rules weren't even finished being developed until late December of 2016. Even more concerning is the fact that new legislature has suggested they aren't finished with what the final product will be!**

Secondly, the STAAR Assessments themselves are still in a phase in period. What this means is that many of the state developed tests are not fully functioning for students in a complete manner when it comes to scoring results. Yet, this "WHAT IF" grade is based on the final required standards for 2018.

Why address the issue at all? As you might expect, putting an arbitrary score on data from last year, based on a "WHAT IF" system that is still over 18 months away, gives results that are highly negative and highly inaccurate if they are interpreted as final "grades". We believe that these inaccurate reports can cause confusion that impacts all of us in a negative manner.

New Waverly ISD joins the many, many districts around the state who feel this system is unfair to our students, communities, and educators who work hard to be successful. To be clear, we are never opposed to high standards for our schools or our students. We believe our vision statement: New Waverly ISD is dedicated to empowering students for success. We completely believe that this vision is a process and not a one time score or grade. **We remain dedicated to empowering students for success no matter how that success is defined, providing that the definition is fair and accurate.** It is clear to us that an arbitrary grade given through a system that is not in place, covering data from last year, is neither fair nor accurate.

We plan to schedule a community meeting in the near future to explain these domains, and we will make many resources available through our web site as well. We also want to express that New Waverly will continue to use data from testing in the way it should be used: as a guideline for continual improvement in areas of weakness.

"Together We Can"



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Thank you for your time and as always please contact your campus principal or the NWISD Central Office if you have any questions that we can answer for you. We also encourage you to contact your state representatives to express your own thoughts on this system or any of the other issues that impact our students.

Sincerely,

Darol Hail, Ed. D.

Superintendent New Waverly ISD.