



## Staking A Claim in Our Students' Future

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Superintendent

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### **Guthrie Public Schools A-F Grades Released by Oklahoma State Department of Education**

The Oklahoma State Department of Education released the report cards for all school districts today. This follows a delay of over a week at the request of the State Superintendent. Guthrie Public Schools grades are as follows:

Cotteral	F
Central	F
Fogarty	D+
GUES	D
Junior High	D
High School	C

This release of grades for GPS also comes with a letter of explanation for the grades at Cotteral, Central and Fogarty from Dr. Janet Barresi, State Superintendent. In the letter, she notes the unique grade center configuration does not fit into the legislation as written. The letter is the product of several meetings with GPS administrators and Department of Education staff. Barresi and GPS Superintendent Dr. Mike Simpson had a face-to-face meeting two weeks ago to discuss different options for GPS. Those issues were again revisited last week as Barresi met with GPS students and staff. Unfortunately, no options were deemed legally acceptable for this school year. As an alternative, Barresi offered the letter of explanation.

According to Simpson, "There has been a lot said about this process and the labels that come with it. I was vocal last year about the irrelevance of the grades for Cotteral, Central and Fogarty Elementary schools. I communicated to the house and senate authors of the bill during the last legislative session but obviously it fell on deaf ears. Now we are continuing to work with any person or entity that can help. Senator A. J. Griffin has been a vocal supporter of our district and an advocate of exploring alternative grading options for Guthrie Public Schools legislatively."

Simpson went on to say, "I don't want the irrelevance of grades for three of our sites to overshadow my concerns with the grades of our other sites. Much of the reforms we continue to put in place locally will not surface in these grades this soon. We will continue to evaluate the results along with the additional measures we have in place. Included in that data are student ACT scores along with our newest tool, MAP testing. MAP is an acronym for Measuring Academic Performance which is a highly respected measure of student growth. MAP results will allow our teachers to better monitor our student progress throughout the school year. It gives us a greater diagnostic of our student mastery of the new Oklahoma Academic Standards. The support given by the LEAD Initiative and our relationship with the University of Virginia shows our recognition of these issues as well as the need to look at instruction differently.

My parents would not have considered these grades acceptable and neither do I. The grades are just one of the tools we will use to target improvement of instruction so our students are the ultimate winners at GPS."