Overview
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 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 and 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 work is good enough. Work that is posted will either meet or exceed the standards, and that will be indicated in the commentary that is written by the teacher. 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:**
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-lesson taught prior to the specific assignment so that the reader can easily see how the specific task fits into a string of lessons.

**Circumstance of Performance:**
This explains how the assignment was executed in the classroom.

**Rubrics:**
Rubrics tell the students exactly what the expectation is on the assignment.
**Student Work:**

Three to six 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 three pieces of work is recommended. Teachers discuss work before it is posted on the board to make sure they are judging work at the same standard. The work that is posted will often be displayed with flair, so it will stand out but that is not required. All of the students work is posted next to the Standards board.

In the picture above you see work from a 3rd grade Language Arts classroom. The students wrote about Fall using their 5 senses (hence the title). Displayed is the final piece of student work, but also something from each stage that led up to the final piece (plan, draft, revise, and edit).

**Commentary:**

For each piece of work displayed, commentary that is written by the teacher. Students in grades 3 and above also write commentary about their own work and work of their peer. Commentary explains why or how the particular piece meets or exceeds the standard. 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. As you can see from examples to the right; commentary is very specific to what the student has done. 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. This helps to push learning forward for students that did not meet the standard, or those that wish to exceed the standard.
A QR code is a great way to show people exactly what happened during the lesson or show a final product from the lesson. QR codes can take you to powerpoints, videos, animotos, or other applications used in technology.

In addition to the required parts listed, 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! On the top board the teacher included a menu that the students used to create their word problems. They also used literature in the lesson, so they included a picture of that too. In the bottom board the teacher used pictures of the forms that students had to use in order to get the proper stances to achieve the proper throwing form. These additions make the board easier to understand for those that are learning from it.

All teachers put up Standards-based Bulletin Boards. You will see them outside the gym, music, and art rooms as well as most classrooms. We use our boards as a learning tool by discussing what is on the boards and what each student needs to do to get on them.