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# **Breakout Session**

## **Grading and Reporting for Educational Equity**

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# Grading & Reporting

## For Educational Equity

October 27, 2020

# TODAY'S PRESENTERS

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## **From the Great Schools Partnership**

Kate Gardoqui, Senior Associate

Mark Kostin, Associate Director

Katie Thompson, Director of Coaching

# Outcomes

- Reflect on current practices and experiences.
- Deepen understanding of the tenets that move a school toward more consistent and equitable grading practices.
- Identify an action step toward implementing more equitable grading and reporting practices.

# Agenda

Reflections on Grading

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What's In A Grade?

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Tenets of Grading & Reporting for Equity

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Commitments



is a nonprofit school-support organization working to redesign public education and improve learning for all students.







**We believe**  
in equitable,  
personalized,  
rigorous learning for  
all students leading  
to readiness for  
college, careers,  
and citizenship.



**We believe** educational equity means ensuring just outcomes for each student, raising marginalized voices, and challenging the imbalance of power and privilege.





**TURN**  
**& TALK**



# Grading Experiences

1. Share a memory from your own experience of a time when a grade affected you deeply.
2. Share a memory of a time when grading got in the way of learning or a time when grading helped someone learn.

# What's in a Grade?

# What do Grades Mean?

The primary purpose of the grading system is to **clearly, accurately, consistently** and **fairly** communicate learning progress and achievement to students, families, post-secondary institutions, and prospective employers.

–Great Schools Partnership website



# What do Grades Mean?

Sometimes invisibly, grading systems work to create the culture within the school.

This will happen even if if no one has intentionally designed the grading system to shape culture.



Rethinking grading systems provides an opportunity to:

1. disrupt systemic inequities
2. build a vibrant and supportive culture of learning



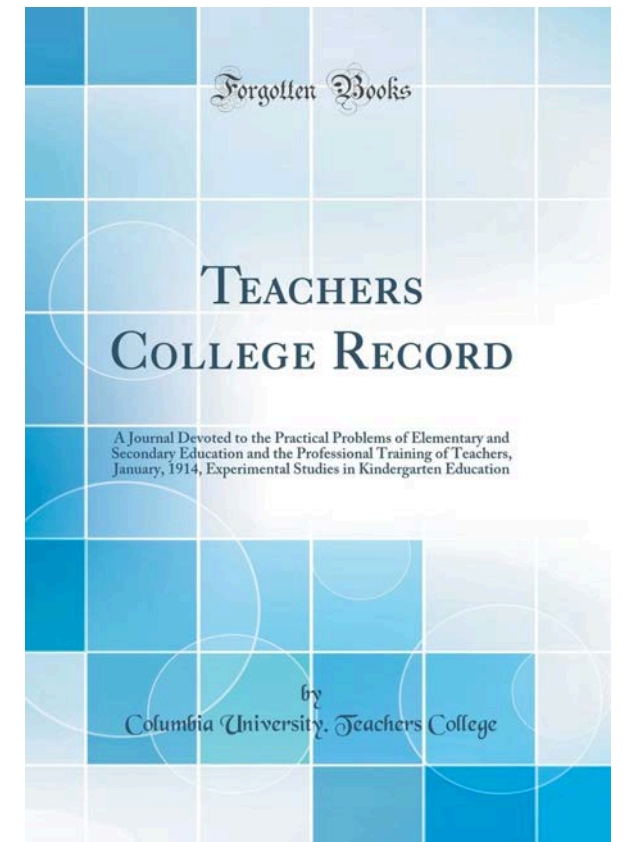
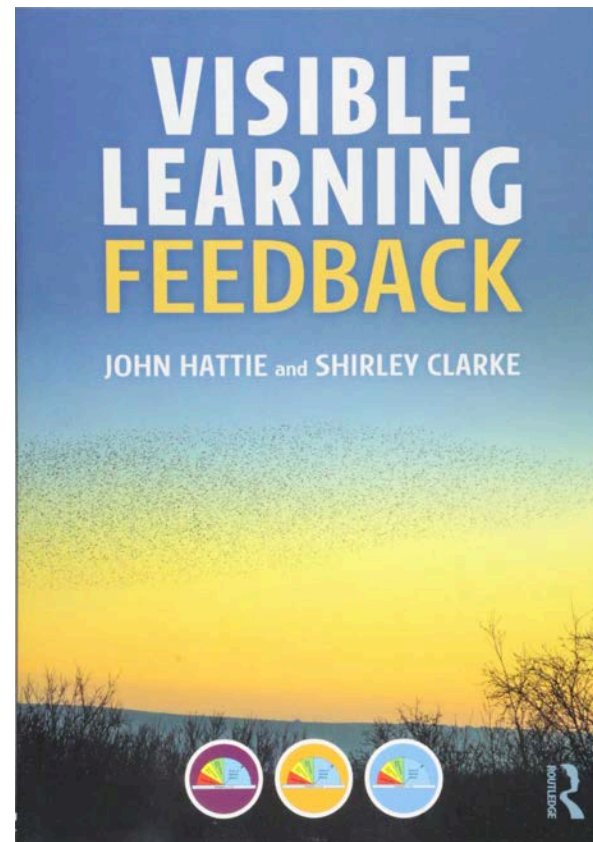
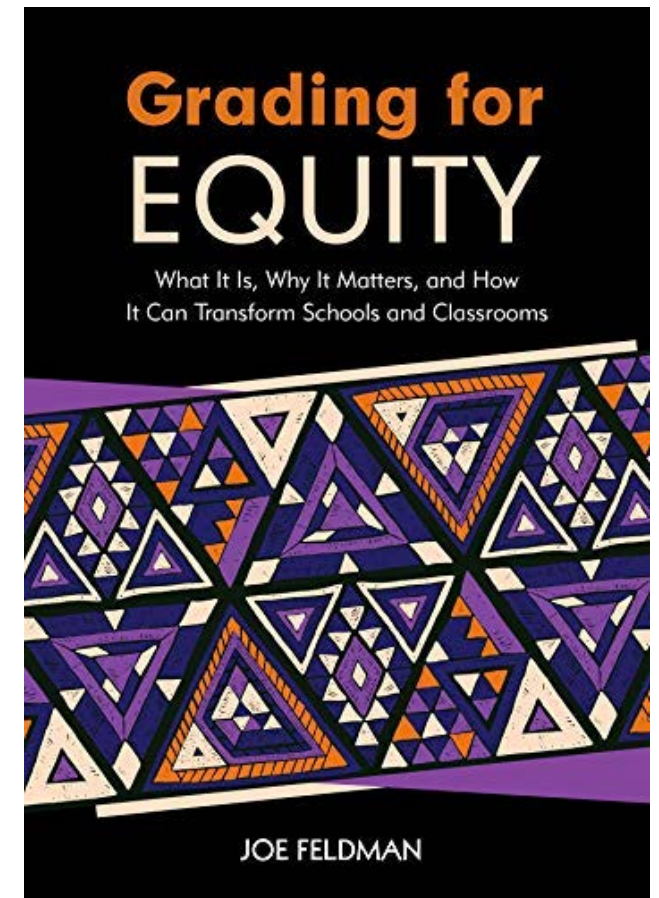
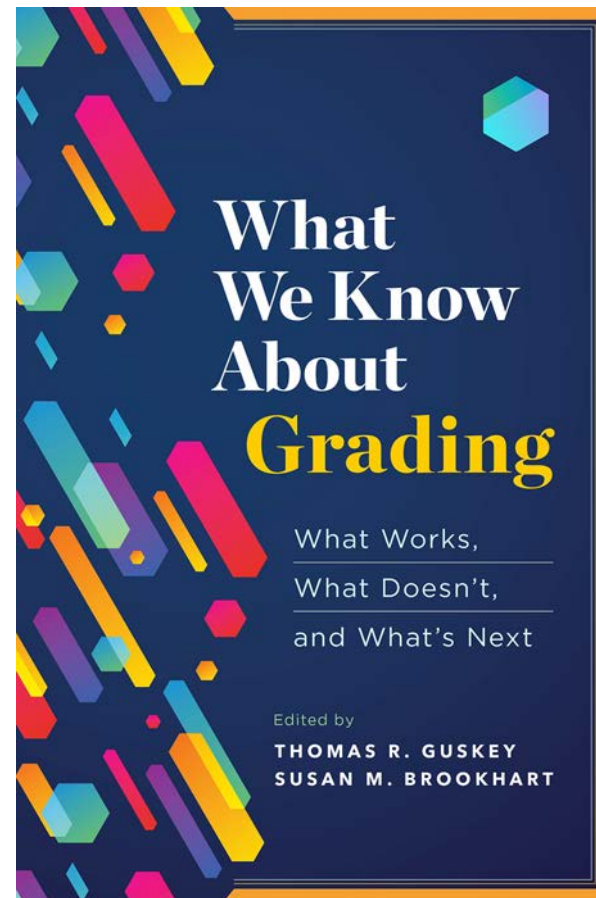
The point of improving the grading system is to make grading fair, informative, and transparent so students can focus on learning, creating, and growing.

# Eight Tenets of Grading for Educational Equity

Communicate Information About Learning	Design Clear Grading & Reporting Guidelines	Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides	Provide Low-Stakes Practice & Feedback
Report on Habits of Work Separately	Organize Grade Books Consistently	Report Grades Clearly and Consistently	Establish a Process for Determining Course or Standards Grades



# Grading that supports learning



# Definitions:

**Grading System:** The system that a school has developed to guide how teachers assess and grade student work *(In this workshop we will focus on grading systems)*

# Definitions:

**Reporting System:** The system that a school has developed for the organization of assignment scores in grade-books (either online or paper), and the determination of final grades for report cards and transcripts

Communicate Information About Learning	Design Clear Grading & Reporting Guidelines	Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides	Provide Low-Stakes Practice & Feedback
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The first six tenets describe approaches to classroom practice. These practices must be transformed first through collaborative work involving all educators.

The last two tenets describe technical aspects of grading. These should be addressed only after shifts in classroom practice have been made, and with the participation & agreement of the faculty.



# As we review:



Which of these tenets are strengths at your school, or at a school you are connected with?

Which would be most in need of further discussion and growth?

# Communicate Information About Learning

- Grades should help students be proactive, overcome failure and excel;
- Grades should never be used as rewards, punishments or tools to force compliance.

# Communicate Information About Learning

## **Waukesha, Wisconsin School District:**

- “multiple assessment opportunities will lead to more accurate grades;”
- “risk-free practice activities “should not be ‘counted’ towards students’ course grades.”
- “If homework is late or incomplete, the grade cannot be lowered.”



# Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides

- Clear, shared learning outcomes and common criteria for success;
- Descriptions of what mastery looks like guide learning, teaching, assessment design, and student self-assessment.



# Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides

## Maine School Administrative District #6, Bonny Eagle

- Teachers collaborated to define the standards, indicators, and criteria that are used in all schools and for all students.
- Teachers worked across the district's eight schools to align the work K-12, guiding the creation of curriculum and the feedback that students receive.



# Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides

## **Maine School Administrative District #6, Bonny Eagle**

- During the collaborative process, the teachers regularly review student work together, calibrating their judgements and crafting a shared vision of the skills that they expect all students to attain.



# Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides

## Champlain Valley Union High School, Vermont

- “Once we had created our common scoring criteria, we found that in some ways they were just as valuable as guides for assessment design as they were for scoring student work.”
- Common scoring criteria can help guide teachers to create authentic performance tasks that require transfer & application.



# TURN + TALK



**Use Common Rubrics or Scoring Guides**

**Communicate Information About Learning**

1. In your experiences with giving or receiving grades, where have you seen examples of these tenets at play?
2. How might the ideas in these tenets lead to more equitable grading practices in our current reality?

# Design Clear Grading & Reporting Guidelines

- Clear, collaboratively designed school guidelines, known and followed by everyone, can help create a school culture supports all students.



# Design Clear Grading & Reporting Guidelines

## Minnetonka Public Schools, Minnesota

- District-wide Secondary Grading and Reporting Pupil Achievement Policy includes clear expectations for the use of scoring criteria, alignment of grades with the standards, and the reporting of non-academic factors (such as habits of work or collaboration) separately from the achievement grade.
- It also provides a clear framework for how much weight formative and summative assessments have in the calculation of a final grade, how extra credit can and cannot be used, and when teachers can use zeros.



MINNETONKA  
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# Establish a Process for Determining Grades

- Agreed upon, consistent method for determining final grade from multiple assessment grades;
- The system contains some room for teacher judgement

# Process for Determining Grades

## Montpelier High School, Vermont

“Summative scores for content-specific indicators will not be averaged across marking periods. Instead, the highest score achieved on a summative assessment within a given content proficiency indicator will be the score given to that proficiency indicator for the course.”



# Process for Determining Grades

## Montpelier High School, Vermont

“This is called “high mark” scoring. When the course concludes, the highest achieved summative scores from each content proficiency indicator will be averaged equally, to make up 80% of the total grade. The remaining 20% of the course grade is determined by the Habits of Learning-Preparedness score.”

# Report Grades Clearly and Consistently

- Clear, easy to understand numerals, letters or codes to communicate levels of achievement;
- Codes are aligned with common scoring guides, used in a consistent way by teachers.



# Report Grades Clearly and Consistently

## **The Young Women's Leadership School in New York**

In this school's [school-wide grading guide](#), there are only three grading codes: MS (meets standard), ES (exceeds standard) and NY (not yet).

Member of New York's [Mastery Collaborative](#)



# Report Grades Clearly and Consistently

## **The Young Women's Leadership School New York**

The school's software platform (JumpRope) converts standards codes into a more traditional course grade. This has enabled The Young Women's Leadership School to focus course design, classroom instruction, and students' attention on the acquisition of skills and knowledge instead of the earned course grade, GPA, or class rank.

Member of New York's [Mastery Collaborative](#)



# TURN + TALK



**Design Clear Grading & Reporting Guidelines**

**Report Grades Clearly & Consistently**

**Establish a Process for Determining Grades**

1. How close is your school or district to having clear, consistent technical guidelines for grading?
2. What barriers might make this difficult to achieve?

# Questions & Discussion







**Share one next step you plan to take**





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# THANK YOU

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