

Rethinking Your Grading System: Why and How (2409)

[Katie Smith-ksmith@lths.net](mailto:ksmith@lths.net)
[Scott Eggerding-seggerding@lths.net](mailto:seggerding@lths.net)
[Thomas Guskey-guskey@uky.edu](mailto:guskey@uky.edu)

Objectives:

- ❑ Examine the purpose of grading and reporting
- ❑ Learn how to align grading practices to the purpose of grading
- ❑ Explore ways to use multiple grades to report different learning goals
- ❑ Review a district's methodology for moving from traditional grading and reporting to a system of multiple measures

The Catalyst for Change



1) Student & Parent Complaints

My name is -----, and I'm currently in (Course). I really enjoy the class, but it's also probably the hardest class I've taken so far at LT. I completely understand that, it's a college paced course. However, the way that my teacher runs their class ensures that on every test we have the opportunity to add a maximum of usually around 10% on our test scores, and we also get two test retakes per semester; we're not being set up for failure. This is helpful, but I have learned that students with different teachers in the same class actually allow their students unlimited retakes on all tests, meaning that their kids can keep retaking until they get 100% on their tests. Clearly, this policy is very helpful - for the kids who get to take advantage of it. As someone intending to attend college after high school, I'd like my GPA to be as high as possible, and the fact that myself and many other students in these classes without unlimited retakes have to struggle and work significantly harder to achieve good grades than other students with different teachers strikes me as unfair and disadvantageous. To summarize, I feel that myself and many others are being cheated and disadvantaged by the differences in policy. I hope that this issue can be resolved promptly, whether that be through a departmental standardization of grading policy, or any other appropriate action. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

2) Survey Results

- Grading Scales included: 0-100, 0-50, 1-4, 1-5, Total Points
- 66% counting homework (53% completion; 49% accuracy)
- 44% were not
- 42% were allowing work to be turned in at any point;
- 47% penalized late work with point reduction;
- 8% wouldn't accept late work
- 32% did not offer retakes
- 41% provide retakes on all summatives

What would you think if you were a parent in the system and you saw these results?





94%

of 229 teachers agreed grades
should communicate student learning

3) Gradebook Review

	HOMEWORK	QUIZ	TEST	ASSIGNMENTS	GRADES
Teacher 1	80 (10%)	70 (20%)	65 (55%)	55 (15%)	D
Teacher 2	80 (25%)	70 (25%)	65 (50%)	n/a	C-
Teacher 3	80 (10%)	70 (30%)	65 (50%)	55 (10%)	D
Teacher 4	80 (15%)	70 (35%)	65 (55%)	n/a	D+
Teacher 5	80 (10%)	70 (30%)	65 (60%)	n/a	D+

3) Gradebook Review

	POSSIBLE POINTS: Quiz/Test	POSSIBLE POINTS: Homework	TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS (before final)	FINAL EXAM POSSIBLE POINTS
Teacher 1	50	200	250	50
Teacher 2	68	217	285	50
Teacher 3	60	213	273	50

	TOTAL POINTS BEFORE FINAL	TOTAL EXAM POINTS	FINAL POINTS	GRADE
Teacher 1	240/250	45/50	285/300	A
Teacher 2	240/285	45/50	285/335	B
Teacher 3	240/273	45/50	285/323	B+

WHAT DO YOU THINK?





**Where
we
began**



1) Built a Coalition of the Willing

Current Practices

- Our District
- Feeder Districts
- Neighboring Districts
- Colleges & Universities

Challenges to Grading

- *On Your Mark* by Tom Guskey
- *A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes to Broken Grades* by Ken O'Connor
- Site Visit

Standards Based Grading

- *Fast Grading: A Guide to Implementing Best Practice* by Doug Reeves
- *Standards Based Learning in Action* by Schimmer, Hillman, and Stalets
- Site Visit

Standards Based Grading

- Attended Solutions for Standards-Based Grading Workshop (Marzano's Research)
- Site Visit



100%

agreed “learning is a process that takes a varying amount of time and practice for each individual.”

100%

agreed “well written aligned assessments collect evidence of learning achieved at a point in time.”

75%

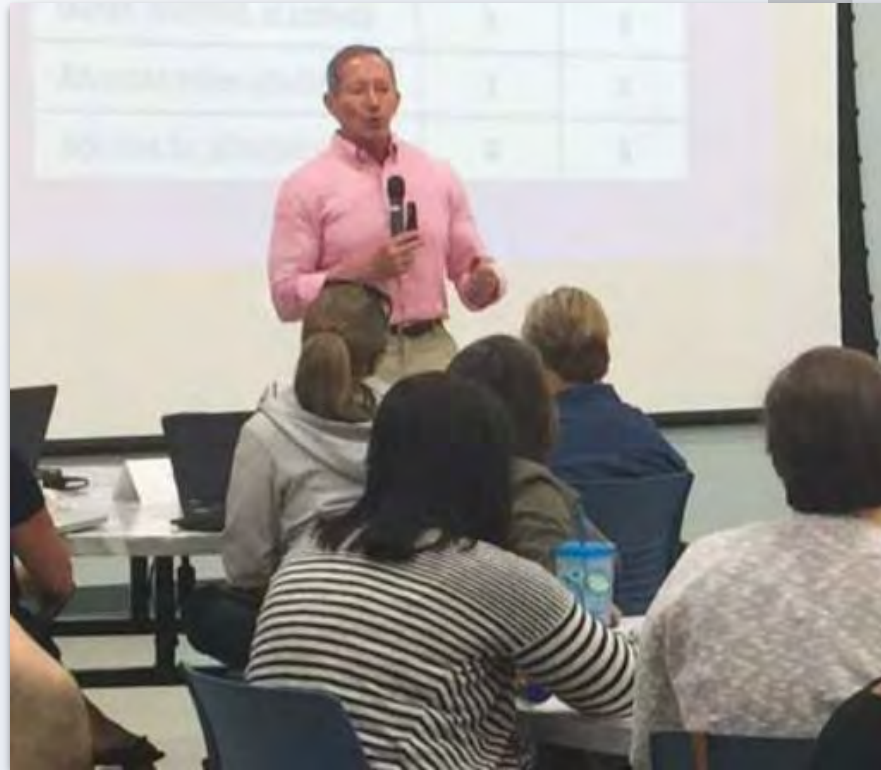
agreed LT’s next step was to create consistency in grading.

2) Convened an Operational Task Force



See handout: 1) Grading Task Force Recommendations

3) Built a Philosophical Understanding





First Setback

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



Actualizing the Change



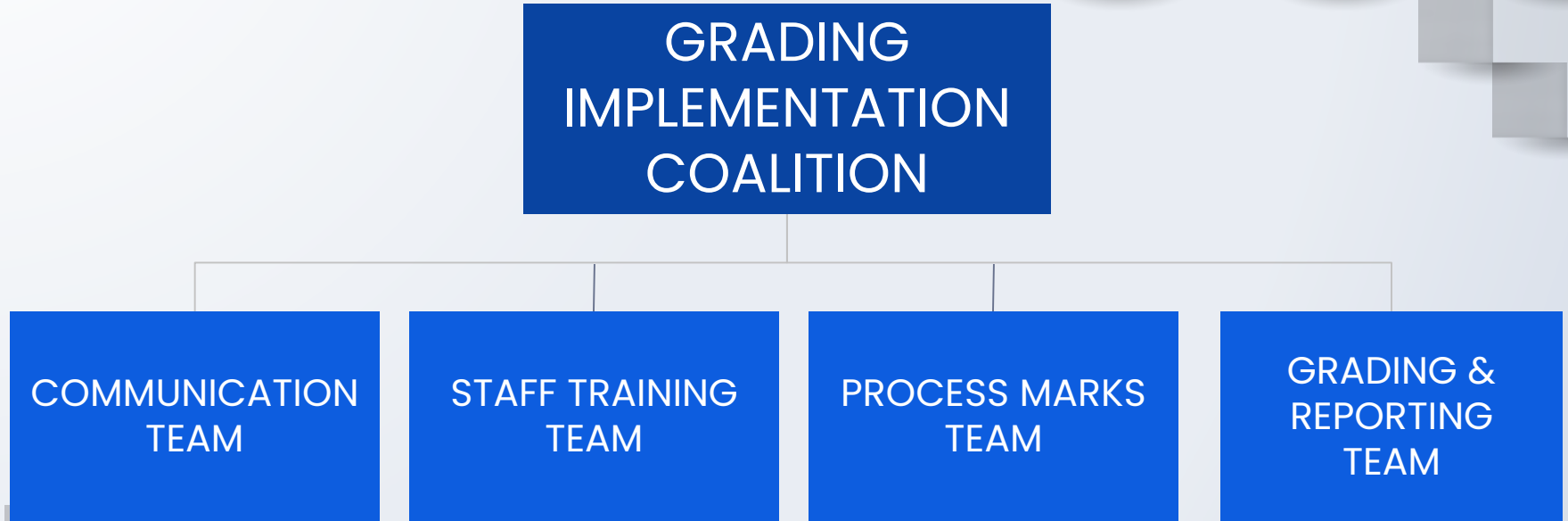
➤ Implementation Plan

A **grade (A-F)** communicates a student's level of achievement toward identified learning objectives at a point in time.

A **process mark (4-1)** communicates a student's demonstrated learning behaviors and will not be included in the academic achievement grade.



➤ Implementation Team



➤ Implementation Plan: 2020-2021

Quarterly Report Card:

Per subject:

- A-F for academic achievement
- 1-4 for Process Marks
- Narrative
- # of absences

Course Team:

- Same scale & calculation (if any)
 - 0-100, 50-100, or A-F (pilot)
- Same grading practices
- Allow at least 1 retake per summative
- Communicate on syllabus

The following practices will be eliminated:

- Extra credit
- Curving
- Group grades
- Including attendance in the grade
- Grading formative practice
- Using zeroes or imposing a penalty for late or missing work



➤ Implementation Plan: 2021-2022

Arriving at a Grade:

- The entire school will use an A-F scale (no %)
- The mean will not be used to calculate the grade
 - Preponderance (at a point in time) of evidence & professional judgement will be used to determine grade



Will the plan
support our
purpose
statement?



➤ Process Marks

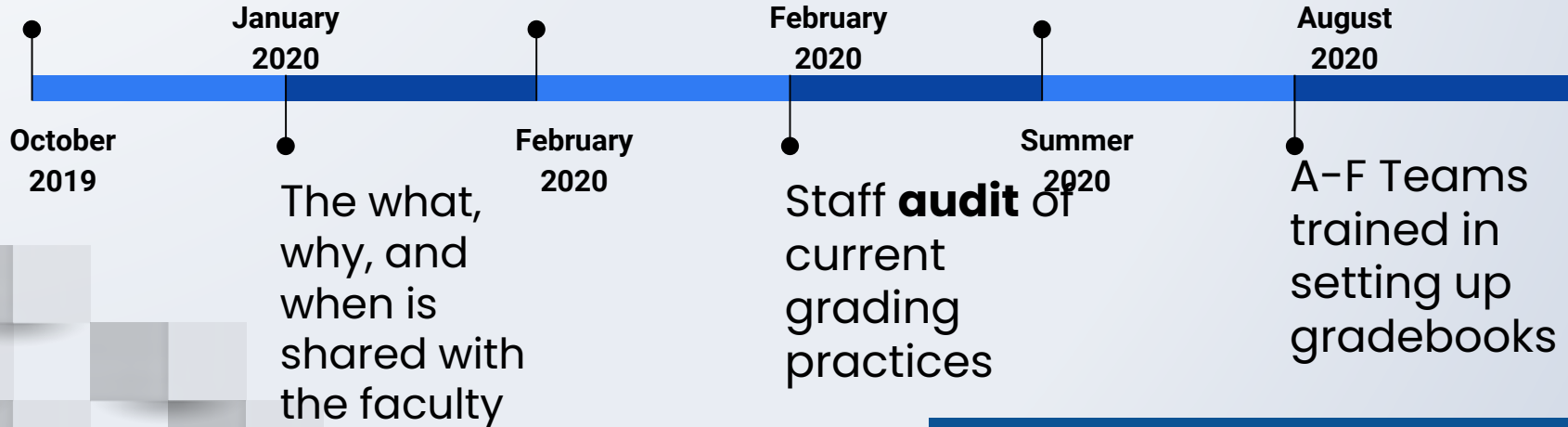
Process Mark	4	3	2	1
Preparation <i>How do I prepare for class?</i> SEL Standard: Goal 1, 3	I am always prepared for class with all required materials.	I am usually prepared for class with a majority of required materials.	I am sometimes prepared for class with few required materials.	I am rarely prepared with the required materials.
Participation <i>How do I participate in class?</i> SEL Standard: Goal 1, 3	I am always engaged in daily tasks and activities.	I am usually engaged in daily tasks and activities.	I am sometimes engaged in daily tasks and activities.	I am rarely engaged in daily tasks and activities.
Interaction <i>How do I interact with others in the classroom?</i> SEL Standard: Goal 2, 3	I always treat others and property with dignity and respect.	I usually treat others and property with dignity and respect.	I sometimes need reminders to treat others and property with dignity and respect.	I rarely treat others and property with dignity and respect.

➤ Staff Training

Dr. Guskey addresses the staff

Staff review of grading practices & policies 2020-2022

Course Team Summer Workshops to change grading practices



See handout: 4) Grading Practices Audit

➤ Community Communication

- Board Presentation
November 2019
- Emails in January, February,
and March
- Parent Forum in March
- Emails in fall 2020
- Board Presentation
November 2020



What do you think
is the greatest
community
concern?





Second Setback

➤ Adjustments: 2020-2021

Quarterly Report Card:

Per subject:

- ~~A-F for academic achievement~~
- ~~1-4 for Process Marks~~
- ~~Narrative~~
- ~~# of absences~~

Course Team:

- Same scale & calculation (if any)
 - 0-100, 50-100, or A-F (pilot)
- Same grading practices
- Allow at least 1 retake per summative
- Communicate on syllabus

The following practices will be eliminated:

- Extra credit
- Curving
- Group grades
- Including attendance in the grade
- Grading formative practice
- Using zeroes or imposing a penalty for late or missing work



➤ Timeline change... 2022-2023

Quarterly Report Card

Per subject:

- A-F for academic achievement
- 1-4 for Process Marks
- Narrative
- # of absences

Arriving at a Grade:

- The entire school will use **one scale (A-F?)**
- The mean will not be used to calculate the grade



**Where
we are
now**



➤ **Right Now**

Monitoring the Change

- Syllabus Audit
- Gradebook Audit

Managing Change (CBAM Model)

- Parents & Students
- Pandemic Affects vs. Grading Changes
- Staff

Preparing for 2022–2023

Hurdles



➤ Major Hurdles

- Communication
- Buy-In
- Infinite Campus/ Electronic Gradebooks (A-F)
- Course Curriculum
 - Formatives aligned to summatives
 - Varied and frequent summatives
- Thick Skin

TRADITION...TRADITION...TRADITION



QUESTIONS

*Please type your name
in the chat if you would
like to ask a question.*

Rethinking Your Grading System:
Why and How (2409)