GREAT SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Habits of Work Research Samples

"Although educators would prefer that motivation to learn be entirely intrinsic, evidence indicates that grades and other reporting methods affect student motivation and the effort students put forth (Cameron & Pierce, 1996). Studies show that most students view high grades as positive recognition of their success, and some work hard to avoid the consequences of low grades (Haladyna, 1999). At the same time, no research supports the idea that low grades prompt students to try harder. More often, low grades prompt students to withdraw from learning. To protect their self-images, many students regard the low grade as irrelevant or meaningless. Others may blame themselves for the low grade but feel helpless to improve (Selby & Murphy, 1992)." (Guskey, T.R. (2011). Five obstacles to grading reform. *Educational Leadership*, 69(3), 16-21.)

"Certain student actions and behaviors are unacceptable in learning environments and cannot be tolerated. But the consequences attached to these inappropriate behaviors should not be reflected in a grade that is intended to communicate information about what students know and are able to do. To report information about such behaviors in students' records or to include a record of them with the academic information on the report card is fine. But because they are not based on evidence of student learning, records of such behaviors must be kept separate from grades designed to reflect students' achievement or academic performance. (Guskey, T. (2015). *On your mark: Challenging the conventions of grading and reporting* (p. 100). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.)

"Compliance grading comes in two general forms. The first are practices designed to offer extra-credit. In other words, students who comply with the teacher's requests or take advantage of certain opportunities are given extra points or special consideration in order to enhance their grade. The second form imposes grade reductions that lower the grade of students who defy the teacher's rules or refuse to follow established classroom procedures." (Guskey, T. (2015). *On your mark: Challenging the conventions of grading and reporting* (p. 100). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.)

“Many notions I had at the beginning of my career about grading didn't stand up to real scrutiny. The thorny issue of homework is one example of how the status quo needed to change. I once thought it was essential to award points to students simply for completing homework. I didn't believe students would do homework unless it was graded. And yet, in my classroom, students who were clearly learning sometimes earned low grades because of missing work. Conversely, some students actually learned very little but were good at “playing school.” Despite dismal test scores, these students earned decent grades by turning in homework and doing extra credit. They would often go on to struggle in later courses, while their parents watched and worried. Over the past three years, I have radically changed how I formally assess homework—I don't. Of course, it is essential for students to do homework that is tied closely to learning objectives and for students to see those connections (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Systematic and extensive feedback on assignments sends students the message that they can and should do homework as practice.” (Scriffiny, P.L. (2008). Seven reasons for standards-based grading. *Educational Leadership*, 66(2), 70-74.)

“When I began analyzing my grading practices several years ago, I was embarrassed by what I found. Although I claimed I wanted my students to think more critically and engage with the world more fully, my grading practices communicated a different message. Students received so much credit for completing work, meeting deadlines, and following through with responsibilities that these factors could lift a student's semester grade to a B or an A, even as other indicators suggested that the student had learned little. My grading practices communicated clearly that, despite my claims to the contrary, students' willingness and ability to comply mattered most.” (Winger, T. (2005). Grading to communicate. *Educational Leadership*, 63(3), 61-65.)

"I cannot emphasize strongly enough that getting sidetracked with details of scaling (letters, percentages, or rubrics? Zeros or not? No Ds or Fs?) or policies (What should we do with late or missing work? How can we report behavior? What will we do about academic honors and awards?) before you tackle the question of what a grade means in the first place will lead to trouble. Logic, my own experience, and the research and practice of others all scream that this is the case. Grading scales and reporting policies can be discussed productively once you agree on the main purpose of grades. For example, if a school decides that academic grades should reflect achievement only, then teachers need to handle missed work in some other way than assigning an F or a zero. Once a school staff gets to this point, there are plenty of resources they can use to work out the details." (Brookhart, S.M. (2011). Starting the conversation about grading. *Educational Leadership*, 69(3), 10-14.)

"A grade is supposed to provide an accurate, undiluted indicator of a student's mastery of learning standards. That's it. It is not meant to be a part of a reward, motivation, or behavioral contract system. If the grade is distorted by weaving in a student's personal behavior, character, and work habits, it cannot be used to successfully provide feedback, document progress, or inform our instructional decisions regarding that student – the three primary reasons we grade." (Wormeli, R. (2006). Accountability: Teaching through assessment and feedback, not grading. *American Secondary Education*, 34(3), 14-27.)

“The most effective grading practices provide accurate, specific, timely feedback designed to improve student performance (Marzano 2000, 2007; O'Connor, 2007). In the best classrooms, grades are only one of many types of feedback provided to students… Contrast these effective practices with three commonly used grading policies that are so ineffective they can be labeled as toxic. First is the use of zeroes for missing work. Despite evidence that grading as punishment does not work (Guskey, 2000) and the mathematical flaw in the use of the zero on a 100 point scale (Reeves, 2004), many teachers routinely maintain this policy in the mistaken belief that it will lead to improved student performance. Defenders of the zero claim that students need to have consequences for flouting the teacher's authority and failing to turn in work on time. They're right, but the appropriate consequence is not a zero; it's completing the work—before, during, or after school, during study periods, at "quiet tables" at lunch, or in other settings.” (Reeves, D.B. (2008). Leading to change: Effective grading practices. *Educational Leadership*, 65(5), 85-87.)