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Welcome

Earning an A in Grading Policies and Procedures

Heather Lyon, Ph.D.

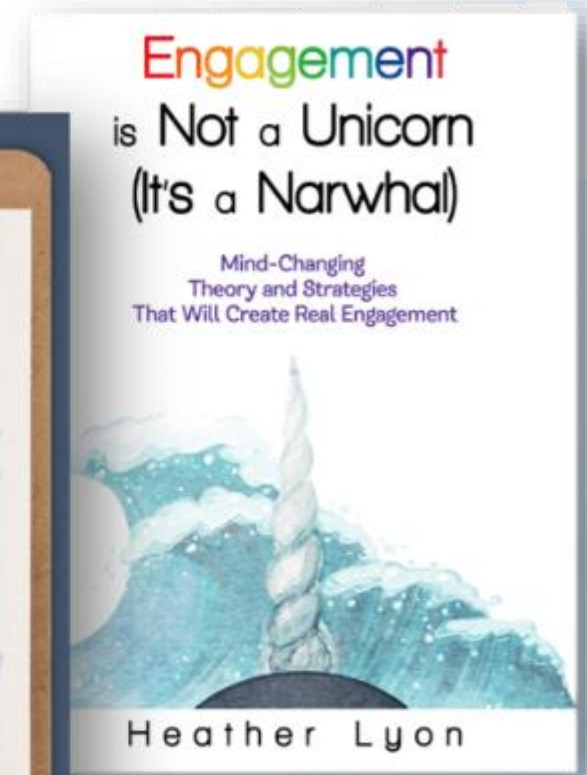
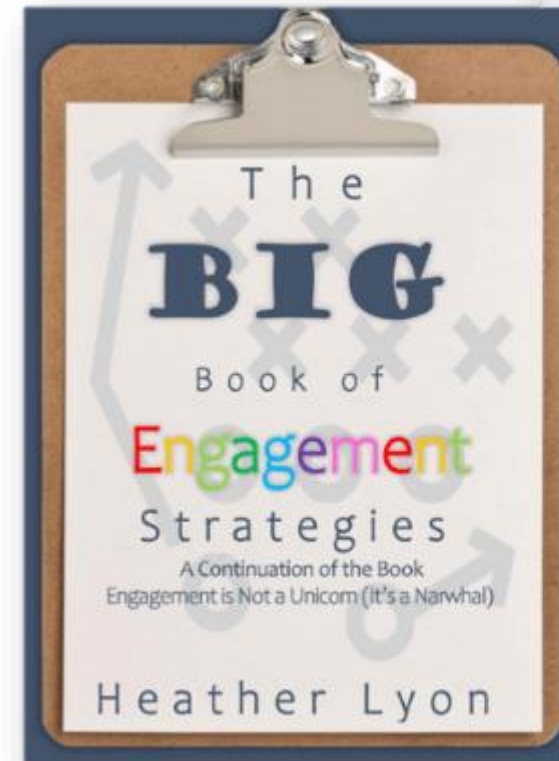
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Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology

Lewiston-Porter Central School District

Introductions

- 20+ Years in Education
- An Assistant Superintendent
- Educational Consultant
- Adjunct Professor for Niagara University
- Wife & Mom
 - Nolan - 17
 - Lilia - 15
 - Oliver - 13
- Author
 - *Engagement is Not a Unicorn (It's a Narwhal)*
 - *The BIG Book of Engagement Strategies*
 - *50 Ways to Engage Students With Google Apps* (out later this year)
- Blogger - www.lyonsletters.com



What is Learning?



Consultant for Solution Tree, author, and an assistant superintendent for the Cobb County School District in Georgia



What is Learning?

Learning=Change



Understanding Grades

Harsh Reality #1

Most teachers have never had even a single course on grading. Therefore, they approach grading in the same way they were graded as students with little thought or training in what would be better.



As a student, did you ever have a teacher who graded like this?



Two Questions...

1. What are grades?
2. Are grades valid and reliable?



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What are Grades?

Traditionally Grades Are...

Number or letters that include a students:

- Behaviors toward learning
 - Participation
 - Timeliness
 - Demeanor towards peers and/or adults
 - Neatness
 - Etc.
- Knowledge of the content

What Grades Should Be...

Number or letters that include a students:

- Knowledge of the content



Harsh Reality #2



<https://thumbs.dreamstime.com/b/school-wings-dream-cheerful-smiling-child-blackboard-cute-boy-happy-face-expression-near-desk-school-supplies-149754366.jpg>



<https://images.subsplash.com/image.jpg?id=eb4f5d7c9e4bd4-a4c2-e07079352b48&w=1280&h=720>





Are Grades Valid and Reliable?

Reliability

VS

Validity

DEFINITION

RELIABILITY is the extent to which the outcomes are consistent when repeated

DEFINITION

VALIDITY is the extent to which the results measure exactly what you want to measure



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Are Grades Valid and Reliable?

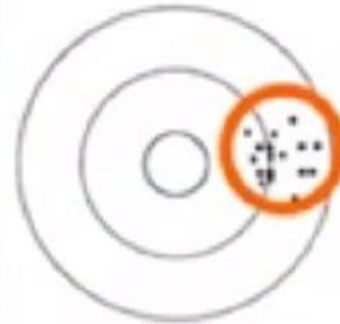
Never shows 98.6
and it's always a
different number

Not Valid

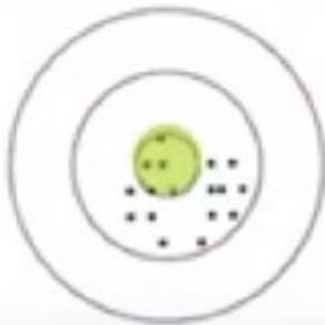
Not Reliable



Reliable



Valid



<https://img.myloview.com/stickers/digital-thermometer-icon-clipart-white-background-700-244469039.jpg>



Harsh Reality #3

Report card grades are one of the **least** valid and reliable measures of student performance...yet think about how often those grades are used:

- Sports eligibility
- Scholarships
- Rankings
- Graduation



Understanding Educational Lotteries

Educational Lottery

Educational Lottery: If the student's learning and/or assessment of learning are dependent upon the TEACHER the student has.



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Educational Lottery: Examples

Educational Lottery: If the student's learning and/or assessment of learning are dependent upon the TEACHER the student has.



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<https://flagarts.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Calendar-of-Events-2016-17-Poster.png>



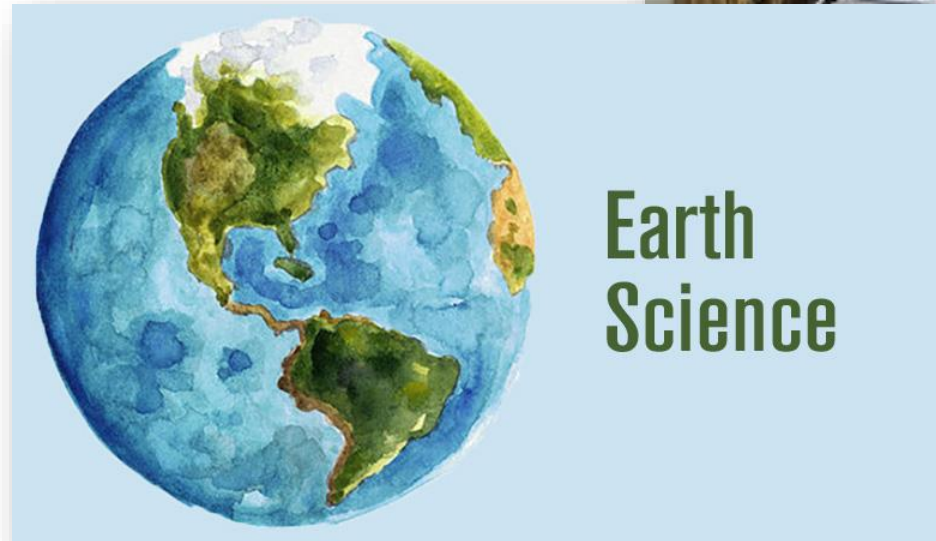
<https://foodbankonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/140206-FA-TX-0409-1024x683.jpg>



Educational Lottery: Examples

Educational Lottery: If the student's learning and/or assessment of learning are dependent upon the TEACHER the student has.

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<https://www.edc.org/sites/default/files/images/earth-science.jpg>



Educational Lottery: Examples

Educational Lottery: If the student's learning and/or assessment of learning are dependent upon the TEACHER the student has.

Please detach this page from the syllabus and return it to [REDACTED] no later than Monday, September 12^h along with your required class materials. (for a grade)

If you are unable to acquire or find the required materials, please see me by Friday, September 10th.

b. Late grading policy:

10% late points will be deducted each day the assignment is late. No assignment will be accepted after 5 days after the original due date.

This policy applies to both short term (overnight or 2 to 3 days) and long-term assignments.

****Note: If you miss class but are in school the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for turning in your work, or you will be subjected to the late assignment policy.**

****Illegal absences are unacceptable under all circumstances! Any class work assigned the day of an illegal absence will be given a zero.**

Harsh Reality #4

Each teacher is essentially their own school district able to decide how they want to assess student behaviors and learning.



Analogy

Complete this Analogy

Dog: Puppy :: Cat: _____

- A. Bird
- B. Tiger
- C. Snake
- D. Kitten



Complete this Analogy

Soccer Practice: _____

::

Homework: A Test

A. Scrimmage

B. Game

C. Try Outs

D. Tournament



Complete this Analogy

Dress Rehearsals: A Performance

::

_____ : A Project

A. Rough Drafts

B. SATs

C. Participation

D. Group Work



Complete this Analogy

Karate Lessons: A New Belt

::

Formative Assessments: _____

- A. Homework
- B. Entry Ticket
- C. Thumbs Up Assessment
- D. Unit Test



Formative and Summative Assessments



Harsh Reality #5

We grade things that shouldn't be graded because we teach kids to focus on the score instead of the learning. WHY? Our learning isn't very engaging so we have to motivate students somehow, right?

“Engagement is how you feel about WHAT you're doing and motivation is how you feel about WHY you're doing it.”

~Heather Lyon



Harsh Reality #6

Since we throw all grades into an average, kids need to do well 100% of the time and that means we need to make things easy enough to do well the first time...however outside of school, we fail a lot before we do well.



Harsh Reality #6



Let's Talk About Homework Grades

The Score is 80%

The student did the homework and the score at the top is 80%

What should that score tell us about what the student knows?



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The Score is 80%

What Does Each Student Know?

Student A	Student B	Student C
Turned in the work early	Turned in the work on time	Turned in the work late



The Score is 80%

What Does Each Student Know?

Student A	Student B	Student C
Turned in the work early	Turned in the work on time	Turned in the work late
Bonus for being early	N/A	Penalty for being late



The Score is 80%

What Does Each Student Know?

Student A	Student B	Student C
Turned in the work early...	Turned in the work on time...	Turned in the work late...
And answered 70% of the questions correctly	And answered 80% of the questions correctly	And answered 100% of the questions correctly
Bonus for being early	N/A	Penalty for being late



The Score is 80%

	What Does Each Student Know?		
	Student A	Student B	Student C
Timeliness	Early	On Time	Late
Accuracy	70%	80%	100%
Grade	?	?	?



The Score is 80%

The student did the homework and the score at the top is 80%

What should that score tell us about what the student knows?



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Let's Talk About Grading Practices

Question...

Teacher A and B collaboratively plan and give the same assignments and assessments.

Should students who respond identically to those assignments and assessments earn the same grades? Why or why not?



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Which Teacher Do You Want?

Six Different Teachers' Grading Policies

1. Nothing lower than 50, then average what's left
2. Drop 0, then average what's left
3. Drop lowest, then average what's left
4. Count assessment twice
5. Average all grades
6. Assessment only

Which Teacher Do You Want?

Six Different Teachers' Grading Policies

1. Nothing lower than 50, then average what's left
2. Drop 0, then average what's left
3. Drop lowest, then average what's left
4. Count assessment twice
5. Average all grades
6. Assessment only

Students	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Assessment
A	0	85	90	95
B	40	100	80	60
C	45	70	75	80



Which Teacher Do You Want?

- Six Different Teachers' Grading Policies
1. Nothing lower than 50, then average what's left
 2. Drop 0, then average what's left
 3. Drop lowest, then average what's left
 4. Count assessment twice
 5. Average all grades
 6. Assessment only

Students	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5	Teacher 6
A						
B						
C						



Question...

Teacher A and B collaboratively plan and give the same assignments and assessments.

Should students who respond identically to those assignments and assessments earn the same grades? Why or why not?



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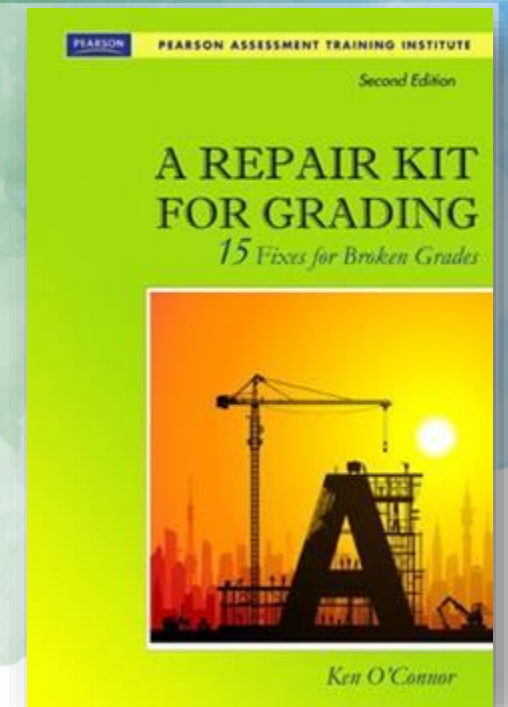


Harsh Reality #7

Just because a course has the same name or even the same assignments doesn't guarantee the teachers grade the assignments the same way.



A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades by Ken O'Connor



“Why [w]ould anyone want to change current grading practices? The answer is quite simple: grades are so imprecise that they are almost meaningless.”

~ Marzano, *Transforming Classroom Grading*, 2000, p. 1



Fixes for Practices that Distort Achievement

DON'T

1. Don't include student behaviors (effort, participation, adherence to class rules, etc.) in grades.
2. Don't reduce marks on "work" submitted late.
3. Don't give points for extra credit or use bonus points.
4. Don't punish academic dishonesty with reduced grades.

DO

1. Include only achievement.
2. Provide support for the learner.
3. Seek only evidence that more work has resulted in a higher level of achievement.
4. Apply other consequences and reassess to determine actual level of achievement.



Fixes for Practices that Distort Achievement (cont.)

DON'T

5. Don't consider attendance in grade determination.
6. Don't include group score in grades.

DO

5. Report absences separately.
6. Use only individual achievement evidence.



Fixes for Low-Quality or Poor Organized Evidence

DON'T

7. Don't organize information in grading records by assessment methods or simply summarize into a single grade.
8. Don't assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards.
9. Don't assign grades based on student's achievement compared to other students.
10. Don't rely on evidence gathered using assessments that fail to meet standards of quality.

DO

7. Organize and report evidence by standards/learning goals.
8. Provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations.
9. Compare each student's performance to preset standards.
10. Rely only on quality assessments.



Fixes for Inappropriate Grade Calculation

DON'T

11. Don't rely on the mean.
12. Don't include zeros in grade determination when evidence is missing or as a punishment.

DO

11. Consider other measures of central tendency and use professional judgment.
12. Use alternatives, such as reassessing to determine real achievement or use "I" for Incomplete or Insufficient Evidence.



Fixes for Supporting Learning

DON'T

13. Don't use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades.
14. Don't summarize evidence accumulated over time when learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities.
15. Don't leave students out of the grading process.

DO

13. Use only summative evidence.
14. In those instances, emphasize more recent achievement.
15. Involve students; they can—and should—play key roles in assessment and grading that promote achievement.



Harsh Reality #8

Most school districts are likely to need most (if not all) of these “fixes.”



Next Steps for Board Members

Actions You Can Take

- Books:

- [*A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades*](#) by Ken O'Connor
- [*Grading Smarter, Not Harder: Assessment Strategies That Motivate Kids and Help Them Learn*](#) by Myron Dueck
- [*Making Assessment Work For Educators Who Hate Data but LOVE Kids*](#) by David Schmittou

- Articles/Blog Posts

- ["The Case Against Zero"](#) by Douglas Reeves
- ["Making Up the Grade"](#) by Heather Lyon

- Assemble a committee to review your district's current grading policies and procedures



Key Points

1. Learning=Change...it's okay if you've never thought through this before.
2. Most teachers have not had any explicit training in best practices for grading.
3. Grades should be valid and reliable measures of the students' knowledge of the content.
4. Though they shouldn't, grades often take into account students' behaviors related to learning rather than their knowledge of the content.
5. Educational lotteries occur when a student's learning and/or assessment of learning are dependent upon the TEACHER the student has.



Key Points (cont.)

6. Just like sports practices are not scored, formative assessments in schools should not be graded.
7. Without district-wide grading policies, each teacher will decide how students should be graded.
8. When teachers decide, the same work from a student can lead to drastically different outcomes for students.
9. There are at least 15 “Fixes” for common grading malpractices.
10. As a Board, actions can be taken including doing some homework and working with stakeholders to collaboratively create policies.



Questions & Feedback

Survey

DON'T FORGET to fill out the **SURVEY**
and **RATE THIS SESSION** by using the
CONVENTION APP.

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