

## Board Workshop

### OPS Common Grading Practices Committee

**Date:** June 6, 2016

**Agenda Item:** Board Workshop about the OPS Common Grading Practices Committee

**Building:** District committee consisting of representation from the following:

- **OEA** – Chris Proulx, Bridget Donovan
- **Secondary Teachers** – Justin Potts, Cameron Pentland, Alan Dappen, Marcella Mahoney, Jody Boyer
- **Elementary Teachers** – Karolyn Roby, Melitta Wilson, Teresa Weatherly
- **Building Administrators** – Chris Humphries, Aly Wilkinson, Monica Green, David Lavender, Tom Wagner
- **Central Office** – Anthony Clark-Kaczmarek, Kanyon Chism, Kristine Denton, Donna Dobson, Susan Christopherson, Scott SchmidtBonne

**Proposed Action:** The Common Grading Practices committee's mission is to establish, communicate, and support the implementation of common research-based assessing and grading practices that promote and accurately report student learning. The committee meets monthly. No action is needed by the Board of Education. This report is to provide an update for board members on the committee's current work.

**Identified Need:**

The Common Grading Practices Committee works to:

- Identify and utilize research-based best practices for grading
- Update district grading practices using best practices including brochures, posters, presentations, and Infinite Campus grade book set up
- Identify and recommend a district grading scale appropriate for all students
- Communicate and support the implementation of all recommendations

**Authority of Action:**

To align with the Strategic Plan, specifically:

**Mission of the OPS Strategic Plan:**

Omaha Public Schools prepares all students to excel in college, career, and life.

**Guiding Principle 2:** High Expectations, Rigorous Curriculum, and Effective Instruction

**Objective 2.2:** Provide a rigorous, guaranteed, differentiated, and viable curriculum to all students

**Strategy 2.2.4:** Provide the necessary tools and training for continuous implementation of standards-based grading with fidelity

**Stakeholder Groups involved in the development of the proposal:**

- Curriculum Instruction and Assessment
- All buildings and programs
- All general and special education students and teachers
- Families are included in discussions regarding grading and student progress

**Fiscal Impact:**

- The Common Grading Practices Committee spend approximately \$500 on research and materials for meetings.
- Mrs. Ericka Volker facilitated the first three meetings and Dr. Peter Smith facilitated the last five. Facilitator costs were \$2,300.
- When Mrs. Volker accepted a new position in August, 2016 twelve other possible facilitators were contacted during the first semester with Dr. Smith accepting the task for second semester.

**Next Steps:**

- Committee unanimously agreed that the current grading scale must change, and has proposed a new scale to begin usage in August 2017.

Current OPS Grading Scale	Proposed Scale Approved August 2017
3.01 – 4.00	3.26 – 4.00
2.01 – 3.00	2.51 – 3.25
1.51 – 2.00	1.76 – 2.50
0.76 – 1.5	1.01 – 1.75
0 – 0.75	0 – 1.00

- Committee voted 10 to 4 (3 regular members were not in attendance) at the June 2, 2016 Meeting to use the proposed grading scale, pilot the scale in the fall of 2016, provide PD and communication throughout 2016-2017, and make the change in Campus in August 2017.
- Committee members will convene for a meeting on June 9, 2016 to determine logistics of the grading scale piloting, and to finalize discussions on Grading Practices brochure language.
- Meetings will continue in the fall of 2016 to determine final proposals as well as a plan to communicate and support the implementation of common research-based assessing and grading practices as well as field testing for the new grading scale.
- All documents and practices will be reviewed in the fall by a national consultant for grading.

**Monitoring and Reporting Timeline:**

- Committee members attended eight (8) meetings from May 2015 through May 2016.
- Committee members were responsible for reading two best practices texts on grading:
  - On Your Mark by Thomas Guskey
  - Fair Isn't Always Equal by Rick Wormeli
- Committee members were responsible for reading best practices literature on grading:
  - "Opinions About Homework: A Collection of Article Summaries from the Marshall Memo" by Kim Marshall
  - "The Case For and Against Homework" by Robert Marzano and Debra Pickering
  - "The Minimum Grading Controversy: Results of a Quantitative Study of Seven Years of Grading from an Urban High School" by Theodore Carey and James Cariflo

- “The Case Against the Zero” by Douglas Reeves
- “The Case Against Percentage Grades” by Thomas Guskey
- “Reporting Student Learning” by Ken O’Connor and Rick Wormeli
- “Teachers’ Professional Judgement in Assessment: A Cognitive Act and a Socially Situated Practice” by Linda Allal
- “Using Standards and Assessments to Improve Student Learning” by Thomas Guskey
- Committee facilitator completes minutes for each meeting and presents them at the next meeting.
- Committee members will work to develop a communication plan for teachers, students, parents, and staff.
- Committee members will complete the updating of the Common Grading Practices brochures, flyers, and all related materials.

**Additional Considerations:**

- Adequate testing for accuracy must be considered as well as communication and training plans for thousands of teachers, students, parents, and staff.