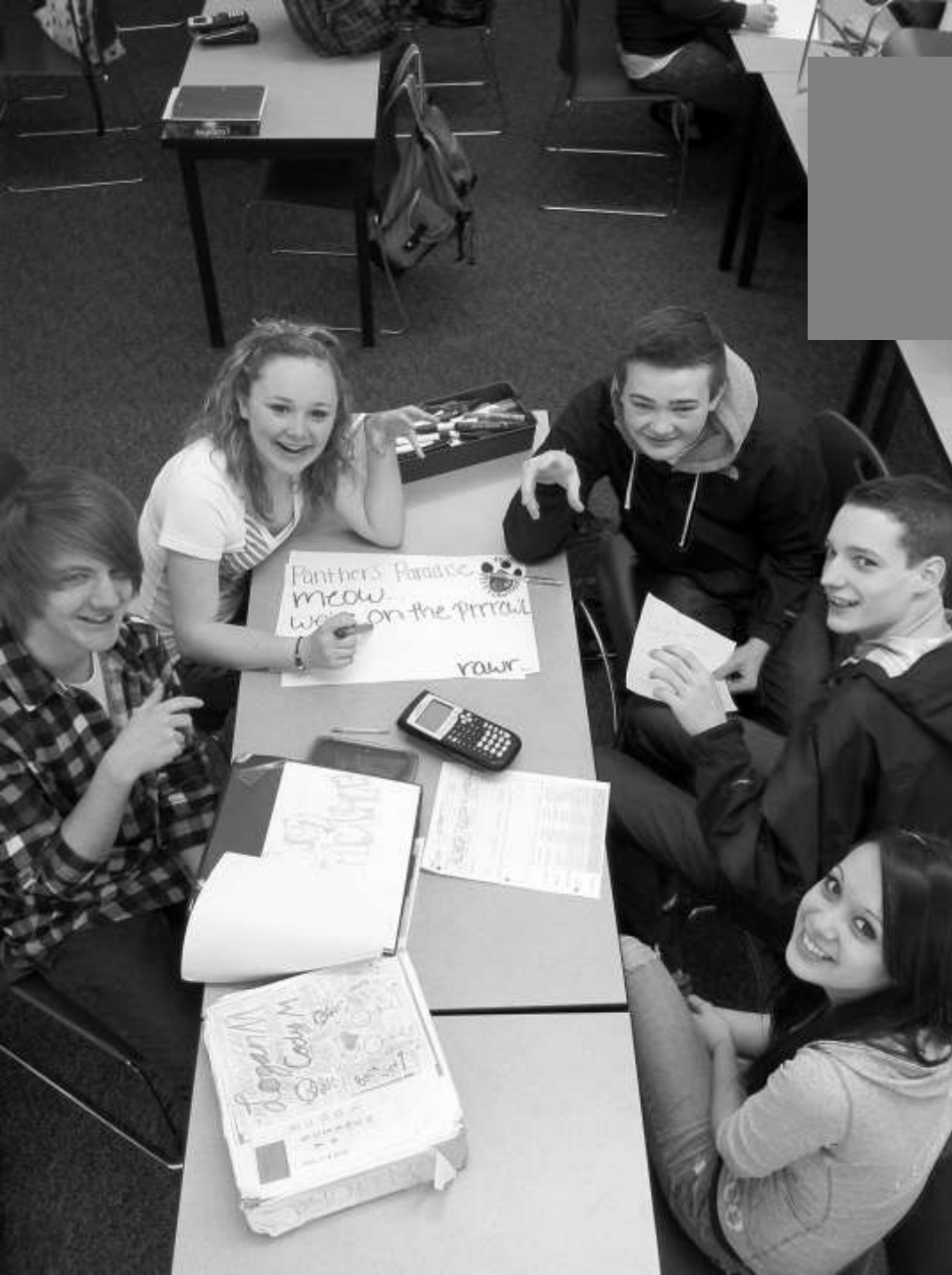


# WELCOME



*"The unexamined life is beginning to look better all the time."*



*December Eighth  
Two Thousand Eleven*

**STANDARDS-  
BASED  
GRADING  
AT THE  
SECONDARY  
LEVEL:  
FEAR NOT**

# Goals for the Session

- Understand the basics and the recursive nature of the action research cycle
- Learn how one might move from fear to hope in reforming assessment and grading practices

District Administrators

Secondary Educators

District Administrators

University Educators & Researchers

# WHO IS IN THE ROOM?

OSPI Representatives

Elementary Educators

Educational Consultants

Building Administrators

Other

# PREflect

how would you define

STANDARDS-

BASED

GRADING



**AGREE**

**DISAGREE**

Grades must be about achievement only; behaviors must be kept separate.

Standards-based grading is less subjective than traditional grading practices.

If daily work is not graded, students will no longer complete it.

The grades I currently assign are accurate reflections of what students know and are able to do.

# Standards-Based Grading

As we see it...

A form of grading in which effective formative assessment, responsive instruction, and valid summative assessment are interdependent. All are thoughtfully designed to support learner needs and attend to district-adopted standards.

# Standards-Based Grading

Simply put...

Measuring students' proficiency on well-defined course objectives

*Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006*

# Standards-Based Grading

“ Grades must be about achievement only with behaviors reported separately,

AND

... their determination must support the learning process so that students understand that school is about learning and not just accumulating points.

”

*O'Connor, 2009*

# Turn and Talk

If this is what Standards-Based Grading is about, discuss possible sources of the fear teachers often feel when they are asked to implement standards-based grading methods.

# Standard

*-noun*

1. A skill with a defined set of criteria that can be demonstrated independently by a student.
2. A coherent expectation of what a student should know and be able to do.

# Learning Target

*-noun*

1. A specific, measurable, student-friendly statement that provides students with a clear vision of what will be learned in class that day.
2. Should be tied to course standards.

# Curriculum

*-noun*

1. The district-adopted resources and district-approved educational experiences used in each subject area at each grade level

# Assessment Types

Diagnostic Assessment – occurs **before** instruction to guide teachers in their planning, based on what the assessment reveals about existing knowledge and skills

Formative Assessment – assessment **for** learning. The gather of information **during** the learning process. Should be used to provide constructive and specific feedback aimed at improving learning.

# Assessment Types

Summative Assessment – assessment *of* learning. Designed to allow students to demonstrate achievement of the standards ***following*** the learning. It forms the primary basis for reporting achievement.

# Other Terms

- Rubric – a **scoring guide** that identifies specific criteria for assessing student learning, separated into performance levels and describing degrees of proficiency.
- Score – a **mark** indicating student performance **on a given assessment** or performance
- Grade – a **mark** reported **at the end** of a period as a **summary statement** of student learning

# Purpose of Assessment

- To provide feedback students can use for self-evaluation, reflection, and growth
- To communicate student achievement
- To evaluate practices using data to inform and modify instruction
- To identify students needing interventions and other placement opportunities

# The Action Research Cycle

## STEP ONE: Notice.

Observe what's going on in your classroom.

## STEP TWO: Inquire.

Learn about your focus area.

## STEP THREE: Ask.

Narrow your area to a specific question.

## STEP FOUR: Plan.

Make a plan to implement the instruction and collect data.

# The Action Research Cycle

**STEP FIVE: Implement.**

Implement the plan and collect data.

**STEP SIX: Analyze.**

Analyze and make sense of the data.

**STEP SEVEN: Reflect.**

Think about your data and what it means for your instruction.

**STEP EIGHT: Plan.**

Follow up by creating an action plan.

# FEAR

## NOTICE

- Students coming with percentages close to 0.
- Failing students expressing hopelessness.
- Students' feelings about themselves and themselves as learners seem tied to their success in their classes.

# FEAR

## INQUIRE

- What is this pattern of students who are failing classes feeling their teachers do not like them?
- What instructional and assessment practices are causing students to feel this way?

# FEAR

## INQUIRE

- How are we potentially setting kids up for failure?
- How do I keep students on a “losing streak” from leaving school altogether?

# FEAR

ASK

What is my part in helping **break this**  
**“losing streak”** for kids?

And what are the **implications** for my work  
in my own classroom?

# COMFORT

## PLAN & IMPLEMENT

- Involve the students in identifying what works and doesn't work.
- Involve teaching team in the research
  - Use affective assessments and assessment outcomes to data conference
  - Agree on methods to try and meet to reflect on their effectiveness.

# FEAR

In a survey of 95 ninth grade students,

- 64% reported they felt their **teachers**, especially in math and science, **failed to notice when they did not understand**.
- Students wanted more **positive interactions with teachers who were willing to clarify, explain, and support them as they navigated their learning**.

# FEAR

## ANALYZE

- **Analysis** of student data is useful in raising teachers' awareness of student needs.
- When given an ***affective assessment***, students are skilled in articulating their needs, and the data supports their claims.
- None of the students' learning needs and desires is in conflict with best practice.

# FEAR

## REFLECT

- **Avoid assuming** and talk to students about their learning needs.
- **Use** diagnostic, formative, and summative **assessments** to learn what students know.
- **Use reflection** to eliminate ineffective pedagogy.

“ ***ENGAGE ME,***

***OR***

***ENRAGE ME!*** ”

Marc Prensky

## FEAR

Realizing traditional grading practices may create negative constructs



Unknowns



Letting go

## COURAGE

To admit current practices need revision



To enter into a ongoing learning process



To err & learn



Invite input



To provide a rational for change

## COMFORT

Brings honesty and equity to grading & reporting



Clear expectations



Kids meeting expectations



Ability to accurately communicate progress

## HOPE

Finding joy & efficacy in the grading & reporting process



Pausing to reflect and know my kids



Students will continue to advocate for what works in helping them learn

英

Courage

# COURAGE

## INQUIRE

- What do the grades I assign measure?
- What *should* they measure?
- How do I arrive at a grade?

# COURAGE

## INQUIRE

- Does my process make sense?
- Are there hidden “punishments” in my calculations?
- Do students feel like their grades accurately reflect what they know?

# COURAGE

ASK

Do my standards  
align with the  
Common Core Standards?

COMMON CORE  
STATE STANDARDS FOR

English Language Arts  
&  
Literacy in History/Social Studies,  
Science, and Technical Subjects



# COURAGE

PLAN *Develop Power Standards*

*Power Standards: Identifying the Standards  
that Matter the Most*

by Larry Ainsworth

“The ‘Safety Net’ Curriculum”

by Douglas B. Reeves, PhD

# COURAGE

Analyze a variety of texts to determine main idea, supporting details, and author's purpose.

- LT1: Analyze grade level texts: short stories, novels, dramas, poems, non-fiction, articles, informational texts, and artistic and print mediums
- LT2: Demonstrate an understanding of text features in informational texts and their effects on the text as a whole.

# COURAGE

## PLAN

### Create Assessments and Rubrics

- Identify Standards to be assessed on the Summative Assessment
- Create a Rubric that describes the four levels of performance
- Create learning experiences, practice activities, and formative assessments to support the learning

# Sports Analogy

## IMPLEMENT

- Play Book
- Practice
- Scrimmage
- Game Day



# COURAGE

REFLECT

What does a grade measure?

THEN → NOW

# COMFORT

## ANALYZE

- Implementation immediately leads to more questions
  - How do I identify the dimensions of the standards I am to teach?
  - How do I regularly report progress without entering formative assessments (practice)?
  - How do I convert outcomes to grades in a traditional online gradebook?

# COMFORT

## REFLECT

- The conversation changes
  - From points to learning
  - Students able to articulate learning and improvement
  - Feedback becomes more personal and relevant

# HOPE

## REFLECT

- Reassessment provides hope for students
- Hope is contagious
- Hippocratic Oath for teachers
  - Education is a moral endeavor
  - Do *not* take away hope from a child; even adults need hope

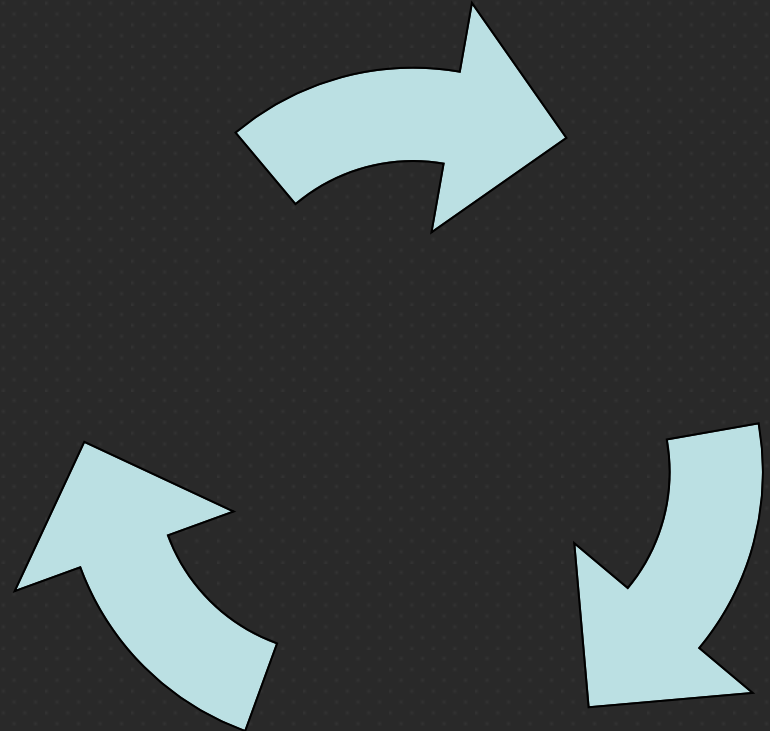
# WHAT NEXT?

## PLAN

- A commitment to publish the work
- Led to our work with District Assessment Committee
- New Policy and Regulation
- Professional learning and capacity building

# RECURSIVE

NOTICE  
INQUIRE  
ASK  
PLAN  
IMPLEMENT  
ANALYZE  
REFLECT  
PLAN



**AGREE**

**DISAGREE**

Grades must be about achievement only; behaviors must be kept separate.

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If daily work is not graded, students will no longer complete it.

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# Final Thoughts

One of the hardest things  
teachers have to learn is  
that the sincerity  
of their intentions  
does not guarantee  
the purity of their practice

*Stephen Brookfield, 1995*

# Final Thoughts

Good teachers deemphasize grading  
as much as possible  
and encourage students to develop  
their intrinsic motives.

Teachers who wish to increase  
their students' motivation  
should be concerned about  
their evaluation methods.

*Lowman, 1990, p. 138*

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# RELATED TEXTS

Ainsworth, L. (2003). *Power standards: Identifying the standards that matter the most*. Englewood, CO: Advanced Learning P.

O'Connor, K. (2009). Reforming Grading Practices in Secondary Schools. *Principal's Research Review*, 4(1), 1-7.

Prensky, M. To educate, We must listen. Retrieved online on February 7, 2009 [http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky-To\\_Educate,We\\_Must\\_Listen.pdf](http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky-To_Educate,We_Must_Listen.pdf)

Tomlinson, C., & McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating differentiated instruction and understanding by design*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

For further reference, see "Bibliography of Literature on Assessment, Grading, and Reporting"