

MS Faculty Grading Discussion Notes

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What do Grades mean in your Class?

Andre: For Algebra 1, quick checks happen every 1-2 weeks; grades are a reflection of skill and/or preparation. The grade is a way of motivating them to meet objective measures; kids will immediately open Canvas to see how a grade impacts their overall assignment

Burton notices hyper focus on grades on everything from our students; need an A on everything; Canvas amps up this focus; US conversation is different because of the transcript impact; Burton also hammered kids on their first write-up and then gave kids an opportunity to resubmit and the quality of work improved

Eric: kids are way more open about grades on everything. Is this because of their generational approach to privacy/social media/etc? There's a lot of comparing grades and specific points between students, which makes it harder to push kids in the best way for them, particularly in things like humanities/writing style; less latitude in terms of how you distribute points; used to spend a lot of time grading their writing but now focuses on historical content

Allison: is a grade a reflection of how well you understand something? How well you follow directions?

Randy: The concept of "not yet"--you don't get it now but you still have time to get it. Is there a timeline for when they should do certain things?

David: there are kids who will never get to the exceeds expectations level because it's beyond them developmentally. There should be different rubrics for different kids; David's best experience was hammering the 8th graders on a first draft of a paper, where most kids got Cs and Ds. Their response was to step it up dramatically--is this a safe way for kids to "fail"?

Some teachers have a responsible action grade but others don't

Where do You Experience Trouble/Challenge/Uncertainty in Grading in Your Class(es)?

Eric: Canvas has changed things in terms of having things out there instantly. It has influenced him to give better grades and go through them quickly. Increase in class sizes has an impact. LT1 class is only one section, so he puts more time into it. For HT2 there are so many more to grade, which means that a bunch of things are graded more for completion, which results in overall higher grades; fewer big assignments meaning that they are weighted really heavily; more and more push back from parents which can be hard to fight. Doesn't think that this is necessarily a good trend, but it's what's happened. Gives out a lot more As than he used to. The worst parent interactions he's had have been "Why does my kid have an A-minus and not an A?"

Andre: grading system has to be something that you set up and let it go; you have to be predictive about how you think kids will do to get the distribution you want of grades. We are doing a disservice to the kids who are doing just enough to get an A and game the system to skate by and then move forward with an expectation of getting an A.

Burton: elementary school report cards split things out into different arenas--our reporting of grades doesn't really do that; his old school conversation was "why are there so many Ds and Fs?" so this is a really different situation

Allison: tried last year to break down grading into specific skills, but it was very hard to have the right number of assignments in each category because that can skew grades; worries about kids who really do struggle in school--getting a B can really feel like you're not up to par, and that really shouldn't be the case

Katie: trying to strike a balance between encouraging kids in that content area but also holding them accountable to expectations and teaching them how to "do school"; A is also the broadest category of grading we have, and a student with 94% is doing very differently than a student with a 98%

Manderson: do you think we need to be hiding comments from parents? This leads to a lot of communication from parents asking WHY that grade was received instead of asking their kids; can we let parents see grades but only comments?