



# Evaluation Brief

February 2008

Department of Shared Accountability

## Second-year Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings From the Elementary-level Interviews and Teacher Web Survey (Conducted November 2006–March 2007)

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### Background

The Grading and Reporting Policy (Policy IKA) is designed to ensure uniform and consistent grading and reporting practices with and among schools. At the elementary level, this includes academic meaning of a grade, homework, and learning skills. Implementation of these aspects of the policy will continue this school year in Grades 1 and 2.

During the 2006–2007 school year, administrators in 19 elementary schools (field-test schools) agreed to implement a standards-based electronic report card for students in Grades 1 and 2. All elementary schools are implementing the components of the policy. As part of the evaluation process, the Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) conducted interviews and a teacher Web survey. The evaluation will be used to examine the level and quality of implementation and the consistency with which the policy is being implemented in schools. This brief provides a summary of the elementary interviews and teacher Web survey.

### Methodology

*In-depth interviews:* Four field-test schools were selected for in-depth analyses and four schools that did not use the electronic report card (non-field-test schools) were matched using student demographics. The majority of the interviews were conducted in November 2006, with some conducted in early January 2007. Interviewees included the principal, staff development teacher (SDT), team leaders for Grades 1 and 2, and the grading and reporting contact. This contact was the SDT at some schools and a grade-level team leader at others. A total of 28 people were interviewed.

*Teacher Web survey:* A teacher Web survey was created using the Test Pilot system. An elementary teacher Web survey link was sent via electronic mail to the grading and reporting contact person at the 19

field-test schools as well as to the 19 non-field-test schools for comparison purposes. The e-mails were sent at the end of January 2007, with a deadline two and a half weeks later. Reminder e-mails were sent three times that included an extension of the deadline. The final surveys were received in early March 2007.

The overall response rate for the survey was 64.0% (62.3% for non-field-test schools and 65.7% for field-test schools) (Table A1). The majority of respondents (66.1%) were classroom teachers (59.6% at field-test schools and 69.1% at non-field-test schools). Other respondents included teachers of art, music, or physical education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and special education. Thirty-five percent of survey respondents indicated that they have worked in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) more than 10 years, 27.7% between 2 to 5 years, 26.5% between 6 to 10 years, 9.3% less than one year, and the remaining 1.7% did not respond to the item (Table A2). More than half of the respondents (58.3%) indicated they teach students in Grade 1 and 61.8% indicated they teach students in Grade 2. Respondents were allowed to check both options.

### Summary of Major Findings

Findings from the staff survey reveal the following:

- Collaboration with colleagues is beneficial in understanding the components of the policy.
- Procedures are easiest to implement in mathematics.
- Respondents are confident with implementing most procedures of the policy.
- Field-test schools are ready to proceed with full implementation.

The following areas are challenges to implementation:

- Lack of confidence in grading students receiving special education services
- Lack of confidence in grading ESOL students
- Difficulty in implementing the procedures in reading and writing
- Lack of a Web-based system for teachers to enter grades from home
- Lack of a summary report to print after report card grades have been entered
- Feeling overwhelmed regarding the number of assessments to be administered

### Discussion of Findings

*Interview Findings:* Almost half of the interview respondents (46.4%) believe that MCPS is doing a “fair” job in managing implementation of the Grading and Reporting Policy. Twelve out of the 28 interview respondents indicated that their school was “ready” to proceed with full implementation, although one respondent was uncertain that the school’s technology capability was ready to handle full implementation.

*Survey Findings:* Approximately one quarter of survey respondents believe that MCPS is doing an “excellent” or “good” job in managing implementation. Disaggregated survey results reveal that 37.1% of field-test respondents believe MCPS is doing “a good job” in its management compared with only 13.3% of respondents at non-field-test schools (Table A3).

Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents reported that their school was “very ready” or “somewhat ready” to proceed with full implementation. Overall, respondents at field-test schools were more optimistic about their school’s readiness for full implementation than those at non-field-test schools. Disaggregated survey results reveal that 81.5% of field-test schools compared with 56.4% of non-field-test schools are “very ready” or “somewhat ready” (Table A4).

### Grading and Reporting Activities

*Survey Findings:* Survey respondents answered questions about activities that took place at their school since July 1, 2006, to learn about grading and reporting. Eighty-seven percent reported documents or written information were given to teachers. A

majority (85.1%) reported that meetings, trainings, or workshops were held. Similarly, most respondents (81.9%) indicated that the topic of grading and reporting was discussed during grade-level team meetings. A little more than one third (35.0%) reported that public information sessions on the topic of grading and reporting were held for parents of students who attend their school. Less than 4% reported being unaware of school-sponsored activities related to grading and reporting (Table A5). Disaggregated results reveal slightly higher percentages for non-field-test schools (Table A5). Fewer respondents at field-test schools (77.0%) reported that grading and reporting meetings, trainings, or workshops were held at their schools compared with respondents at non-field-test schools (93.9%).

Respondents also indicated which activities they had participated in since June 1, 2006. Most (87.6% for field-test schools and 87.3% for non-field-test schools) acknowledged having received documents or written information explaining the grading and reporting policy. Seventy-eight percent reported that they attended meetings, workshops or trainings for people who work at their school. Sixty-eight percent of respondents at field-test schools and 89.1% of respondents at non-field-test schools reported they attended meetings, workshops, or trainings about grading and reporting (Table A6).

### Grading and Reporting Practices

*Survey Findings:* To provide insight into the current level of implementation of grading and reporting at the school level, respondents identified practices that take place in their classroom/school. Nearly all survey respondents reported that student learning is evaluated using varied tasks/assignments (95.0%), grades are based on multiple measures over time (91.8%), and grades reflect what students are expected to know and be able to do (91.0%). Similarly, high percentages of survey respondents reported that all of the required assessments are used to evaluate essential learnings (81.0%), teachers look at trends over time to determine final grades (77.0%), attendance is not part of the grade (75.8%), and learning skills include behavior and effort (74.6%) (Table A7).

In addition to identifying classroom practices, respondents identified methods in which they collect evidence of student learning. Almost all respondents indicated using observations (98.0%), paper-pencil assessments (96.5%), and classwork (93.9%). “Discussions with the child” was also a popular response (84.0%). A little less than one third of respondents (31.5%) indicated using homework as a method of collecting evidence of learning. However, using homework for this purpose is not an expected or recommended practice. Disaggregated results were

similar across all responses for field-test and non-field-test schools and are presented in Table A8.

### *Policy Components*

*Survey Findings:* More than one quarter of respondents (29.8%) indicated that the content of assessments was most valuable to supporting student achievement. Twenty-nine percent of respondents reported that the academic meaning of a grade was most valuable to supporting student achievement. Disaggregated results reveal that almost one third of respondents in field-test schools believe the increased detail on the report card is most valuable to supporting student achievement. However, at non-field-test schools more than one third of respondents reported the academic meaning of a grade (35.8%) and content of assessments (33.3%) as most valuable to supporting student achievement. At field-test schools, only 22.5% of respondents reported academic meaning of a grade as most valuable to supporting student achievement and 26.4% reported content of assessments as most valuable (Table A9).

Similar to last year's survey results (Addison-Scott, 2006), the number of assessments was considered the least valuable to supporting student achievement (by 36.7% of all survey respondents). Additionally, 34.1% reported the homework policy as least valuable to student achievement. A similar pattern is observed in the disaggregated survey results. The majority of respondents reported number of assessments as least valuable to supporting student achievement (36.7% for all respondents; 30.9% at field-test schools and 43.0% at non-field-test schools) (Table A10).

A little more than half of the survey respondents (52.2%) reported that the number of assessments was the most difficult aspect to implement. Other policy components reported as being most difficult to implement include academic meaning of a grade (15.2%), content of assessments (12.0%), and the increased detail on the report card (7.9%). Half of the respondents at field-test schools and a little more than half of the respondents at non-field-test schools indicated that the number of assessments was the most difficult policy component to implement (Table A11).

More than half of respondents (57.7%) indicated math as the easiest subject to implement the policy components. The second subject area reported was reading, with 11.4% of respondents indicating it as easiest. Disaggregated results reveal a similar trend, with 55.1% at field-test schools and 60.6% at non-field-test schools indicating math as the easiest subject area to implement the policy components (Table A12). Interestingly, 42.9% of respondents reported reading as the subject area that is most difficult to implement the grading and reporting

policy components. Thirty-nine percent of respondents at field-test schools and 47.3% at non-field-test schools reported reading as the most difficult subject to implement (Table A13). The majority of the reasons why reading was considered most difficult to implement centered on the time needed to administer assessments, the subjectivity that is associated with reading, and the difficulty finding materials that are on level and appropriate. For example, one respondent replied, "There are so many essential learnings for the Reading/Language Arts section for a particular quarter that it requires so much work to keep assessing the students just to keep up with all the data points required. Math is much easier because it is very specific for the specific quarters and the assessments are clear cut." Another typical statement was, "Most of the assessments must be given one on one. There just isn't enough time. Additionally, many of the criteria can be interpreted differently. We need for the criteria to be more user friendly. The message isn't getting across consistently."

### *Consistency of Implementation*

*Interview Findings:* Respondents indicated the level of consistency with which they felt the procedures were applied in their schools. Seventeen out of 28 (60.7%) of the interview respondents reported that the procedures are applied "consistently across all grade level teams in my school." The remaining interview respondents replied that application of the policy was "consistently in some grade level teams, but inconsistently in others."

*Survey Findings:* Thirty percent of survey respondents reported that the policy procedures are applied "consistently in some grade level teams, but inconsistently in others." When asked about the perceived level of consistency in all MCPS elementary schools, 27.7% of respondents believe that there is a "moderate level of consistency across elementary schools." Disaggregated results reveal that 37.6% of respondents at field-test schools believe implementation is consistent in all grade level teams compared with 18.2% at non-field-test schools (Tables A14 and A15).

### **Collaboration and Communication**

*Survey Findings:* Structured conversations were implemented this year to facilitate communication between field-test and non-field-test schools. These structured conversations were facilitated by field-test schools to provide non-field-test schools with insight and problem-solving strategies related to implementation. A little more than one quarter of respondents (26.8%) reported that they were not aware of structured conversations. Forty-four percent of respondents reported that they attended a structured conversation this year. Of those

respondents who attended the structured conversations, 88.7% found them helpful and 77.5% indicated that the sessions provided clarity regarding implementation. Disaggregated results displayed in Table A16 reveal that 38.2% of respondents at field-test schools attended structured conversations versus 50.3% at non-field-test schools. Of those respondents who attended the structured conversations, 91.2% at field-test schools and 86.7% at non-field-test schools found them helpful. Moreover, 77.9% at field-test schools and 77.1% at non-field-test schools reported that the structured conversations cleared up any uncertainties they had regarding policy implementation (Tables A17 and A18).

The majority of respondents (62.1%) indicated they learn most information regarding implementation from the SDT or reading specialist (RS). The team leader was reported as the next highest source of information (13.4%). Disaggregated results shown in Table A19 indicate that 51.1% of respondents at field-test schools reported getting most of their information from the SDT or RS versus 73.9% of respondents at non-field-test schools. More respondents at field-test schools reported the team leader as the source of most information versus non-field-test schools (18.0% and 8.5%, respectively).

The majority of respondents (81.0%) reported that their grade-level team collaborates to determine how students will be assessed. Additionally, more than two thirds of respondents (68.2%) reported that their grade-level team collaborates to analyze student work. Disaggregated results reveal similar responses from field-test and non-field-test respondents (Tables A20 and A21).

Respondents were given a series of statements and asked to indicate how confident they feel with implementing standards-based grading and reporting. More than 80% of respondents reported that they feel very confident or somewhat confident in understanding essential learnings and assessments. Moreover, 81.7% of respondents reported they feel very confident or somewhat confident using the grading and reporting documents to collect and analyze data. In addition, 83.0% of respondents reported they feel very confident or somewhat confident in understanding how to use required assessments and 76.0% reported that they feel very confident or somewhat confident in identifying/creating assessments (Table A22).

Respondents were given a series of statements and asked to indicate how often they a) meet with their grade-level team to discuss the items and b) meet with their SDT or RS to discuss the items. Nearly 60% of respondents reported that their team meets at least once a month or more to discuss understanding assessments. Moreover, 58.3% of respondents reported their team meets at least once a month or

more to discuss using the grading and reporting documents to collect and analyze data. Likewise, 51.5% of respondents reported their team meets at least once a month or more to understand how to use required assessments and 58.9% reported their team meets to identify/create assessments. A little more than one third of respondents (35.3%) reported meeting with their SDT or RS at least once a month or more to discuss understanding the essential learnings. Thirty-two percent or more of respondents reported meeting with their SDT or RS at least once a month to discuss using the grading and reporting documents to collect and analyze data (Tables A23 and A24).

## Challenges and Supports to Implementation

*Survey Findings:* Respondents were asked to identify challenges they experienced in implementing the components of the grading and reporting policy during this school year. Fifty-two percent of respondents reported that constant changes in the policy were a challenge for them. Although the statement indicates changes in the policy, the policy has not changed since it was initially implemented in 2003. Teachers view procedural changes as policy changes. Forty-six percent stated that “not having the actual report card” posed a challenge for implementation. Although teachers do have a report card, they do not see the final summary report in advance. More than one third of respondents indicated grading students in special populations as a challenge. For respondents at field-test schools, most (79.8%) reported that “not being able to enter student data at home” was a challenge to implementing the components. For respondents at non-field-test schools, “constant changes in the policy” was the highest rated (66.1%) area of challenge followed closely by “not having the actual report card” (64.2%) (Table A25).

Collaboration among school staff was reported most by respondents as the factor that has helped in implementation (65.2% for respondents at field-test schools, and 72.1% for respondents at non-field-test schools). Following collaboration, revisions to essential learnings was the second highest rated (29.7%) factor reported to help in implementation (40.4% for respondents at field-test schools and 18.2% for respondents at non-field-test schools). Feedback meetings (17.5%) and documents to support parent communication (15.2%) were also reported as helpful (Table A26).

## Electronic Standards-based Report Card

*Survey Findings:* Questions regarding the electronic standards-based report card were only asked of respondents in field-test schools. This section details the responses to these questions.

Respondents were asked the degree to which they agree that the electronic report card is aligned with the written, taught, and learned curriculum. More than two thirds (69.2%) are in agreement or strong agreement<sup>1</sup> that the electronic report card is aligned (Table A27).

#### *Electronic Data Collection Document*

*Survey Findings:* When asked what changes they would like made to the electronic data collection document, the majority of respondents (93.2%) reported that they want the ability to enter data from a home computer. Almost two thirds responded that they want the ability to print a draft report after they have entered the data. More than half (52.5%) indicated that they would like to be able to enter all essential learnings for one child at a time, rather than the current practice of entering one essential learning for an entire class before moving on to the next (Table A28).

More than half of respondents reported that “time to enter student data” was a challenge to using the electronic data collection document. About 50% reported “not seeing the final product after entering data” as a challenge. Other challenges reported were “gaining access” (36.7%), “entering student data (ease of use)” (32.2%), and the “inability to save in the middle of task” (19.2%) (Table A29).

#### *Suggestions for the Grade 3 Report Card and Data Collection Document*

*Survey Findings:* Respondents at field-test schools were asked what coding system should be used for the Grade 3 report card. Seventy percent reported that “it should be the same as for Grades 1 and 2 (4, 3, 2, and 1), whereas 19.7% reported “it should remain the same (A, B, C, and D).” Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions for developing a Grade 3 data collection document. Some respondents mentioned consistency across grades so as not to confuse teachers. Respondents also mentioned keeping it similar so that it eases the burden on parents. As one respondent noted, “It should be similar to those of Grades 1 and 2 in order to maintain consistency for staff collaboration and parent understanding.” Keeping the Grade 3 teachers informed and providing ample support to them was another recommendation.

<sup>1</sup>The response format was: *strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, and not sure*. A combination of the *agree* and *strongly agree* response is reported here.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the findings from the interviews and surveys:

- Provide additional training and support to teachers in implementing the policy in the areas of reading and writing.
- Provide additional training and support to teachers in implementing the policy for students receiving special services.
- Provide teachers with samples of what responses result in a 4, 3, 2, or 1. Many teachers mentioned how helpful white papers would be, especially in reading, where teachers are concerned about subjectivity.
- Provide teachers with the means to see or print the final report card once all data have been entered. With the electronic tool used at the time of this survey administration (i.e., OASIS), this option was not available.
- Determine a way to clarify how teachers can collect evidence of learning during instruction.
- Help teachers better understand the value and use of assessments to plan for groupings and instruction.
- For teachers in field-test schools, develop a system that allows them to enter student data from their home computer. With the electronic tool used at the time of this survey administration (i.e., OASIS), this option was not available. A Web-based system may ameliorate the problem.
- Replicate best practices, such as expanding structured conversations, team planning and other methods that allow for teachers to collaborate within and across schools.

## **Reference**

Addison-Scott, S. K. (2006). *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings from the January 2006 Elementary School Teacher Survey*. Rockville, MD: Montgomery County Public Schools.

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**Second-year Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County  
Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings From the  
Elementary-level Interviews and Teacher Web Survey  
(Conducted November 2006–March 2007)**

**Appendix**

Table A1  
Response Rate by School

Field Test	Response Rate %	Non-field Test	Response Rate %
Ashburton <sup>a</sup>	--	Bannockburn	83.3
Beall	38.9	Bel Pre <sup>a</sup>	41.7
Bells Mill	90.9	Brooke Grove	50.0
Brookhaven	92.3	Burtonsville	71.4
Cloverly	84.6	Cashell	75.0
Darkestown	100	Diamond	100
East Silver Spring	--	Fairland	100
Flower Valley	66.7	Farmland <sup>a</sup>	76.9
Forest Knolls <sup>a</sup>	63.6	Lakewood	47.1
Fox Chapel <sup>a</sup>	56.3	Little Bennett <sup>a</sup>	33.3
Galway	36.0	Maryvale	20.0
Great Seneca Creek <sup>a</sup>	94.1	Mill Creek Towne	50.0
Kemp Mill	50.0	Poolesville	35.7
Spark M. Matsunaga	84.2	Rock Creek Forest	100
Monocacy	80.0	Rosemont	42.9
Rock Creek Valley	63.6	S. Christa McAuliffe	83.3
Roscoe R. Nix	32.0	Sargent Shriver	38.9
Summit Hall	40.0	Strawberry Knoll	84.2
Whetstone	46.7	Viers Mill <sup>a</sup>	76.5
Total <sup>b</sup>	65.7	Total	62.3

-- School staff did not state how many teachers the survey was sent too, thus a response rate could not be calculated.

<sup>a</sup> Indicates had in-depth interviews.

<sup>b</sup> Response rate does include those surveys completed at schools without response rate calculated.

Overall Response Rate: 64.0%

Table A2  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Years of Teaching in MCPS

	First Year	2 to 5 Years	6 to 10 Years	More than 10 Years	No Response	Total
Field-test schools	7.9	30.9	25.3	34.8	1.1	100% (178)
Non-field-test schools	10.9	24.2	27.9	34.5	2.4	100% (165)
Total	9.3 (32)	27.7 (95)	26.5 (91)	34.7 (119)	1.7 (6)	100% (343)



Table A3  
Percentage of Respondents Rating the Management of Implementation of the  
Grading and Reporting Policy by MCPS

How do you think MCPS has been doing so far in managing the implementation of the new grading and reporting procedures?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
An excellent job	1.5	2.8	0
A good job	25.7	37.1	13.3
A fair job	37.3	37.6	37.0
A poor job	17.5	9.0	26.7
I don't know/Not sure	14.6	9.6	20.0
No response	3.5	3.9	3.0

Table A4  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating School's Readiness to Proceed with Full Implementation

How ready do you believe your school is to proceed with full implementation (for Grades 1, 2, and 3), including a standards-based report card?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Very ready	23.0	35.4	9.7
Somewhat ready	46.4	46.1	46.7
Not very ready	10.8	3.4	18.8
Not at all ready	5.8	2.2	9.7
I don't know/Not sure	9.9	10.1	9.7
No response	4.1	2.8	5.5

Table A5  
Percentage of Respondents Stating That the Following Activities Have Taken Place at  
Their School for Staff, Parents, and Students Since July 1, 2006

Based on what you know or have read about, which of the following activities have taken place at your school, or for people who work at your school, since July 1, 2006? Please check all that apply.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Distribution of documents or written information to teachers and others who work at my school, about how to understand or use the Grading and Reporting Policy.	87.5	86.0	89.1
Meetings, trainings or workshops, to learn about grading and reporting, or how to work with new grading and reporting procedures, for people who work at my school.	85.1	77.0	93.9
Public information sessions on the topic of grading and reporting, for parents of students who attend the school where I work.	35.0	46.6	22.4
Meetings of grade level team at which grading and reporting is one of the topics discussed.	81.9	80.3	83.6
I'm not aware of school sponsored activities related to the Grading and Reporting Policy.	3.5	3.3	3.6

Table A6  
Percentage of Respondents Stating They Have Participated in Activities Related to the  
Grading and Reporting Policy Since June 1, 2006

Which of the following activities have you taken part since June 1, 2006? Please check all that apply.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
I have received documents or written information about how to understand or use the Grading and Reporting Policy.	87.5	87.6	87.3
I have attended meetings, trainings or workshops, to learn about grading and reporting, or how to work with new grading and reporting procedures, for people who work at my school.	78.1	68.0	89.1
I have attended meetings of an existing school committee, at which grading and reporting issues were discussed.	27.7	28.7	26.7
I have helped organize, or have attended, public information sessions on the topic of grading and reporting, for parents and/or students.	10.2	13.5	6.7
I have been appointed to a new school committee, whose charge is to discuss Grading and Reporting Policy issues.	0.6	0.6	0.6
I have not participated in or been affected by activities related to the Grading and Reporting Policy.	4.7	6.7	2.4
Other Activities.	16.3	28.1	3.6

Table A7  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Following Grading and Reporting Practices  
are Taking Place in Their Classroom/School

Which of the following are being reflected in grading and reporting practices in your classroom during 2006–2007? Please check all that apply.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Student learning is evaluated using varied tasks/assignments such as tests, projects, teacher observations, reports, and discussions.	95.0	96.1	93.9
Attendance is not part of the grade.	75.8	79.8	71.5
Teachers provide feedback on homework that is assigned to practice new skills.	55.1	53.4	57.0
Grades are based on multiple measures over time.	91.8	91.0	92.7
Learning skills include behavior and effort.	74.6	70.2	79.4
Homework for practice is reported as a learning skill.	64.7	63.5	66.1
All of the required assessments (e.g., T3) are used to evaluate the essential learnings.	81.0	88.8	72.7
Grades reflect what students are expected to know and be able to do, as defined by MCPS curriculum.	91.0	92.7	89.7
Teachers communicate their grading practices in writing to parents.	56.0	55.6	56.4
Teachers look at trends over time to determine final grades.	77.0	78.1	75.8
I collaborate with ESOL teachers to implement adjustments.	48.4	52.2	44.2
ESOL teachers collaborate with classroom teachers in English Language Learners committee format to determine when ESOL students require adjustments to essential learnings.	38.5	43.3	33.3
Special education teachers collaborate with classroom teachers in special education committee format to determine when special education students require adjustments to essential learnings.	37.0	34.8	39.4

Table A8  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Methods of Collecting Evidence of Student Learning

What are some ways that you collect evidence of student learning? Check all that apply.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Observations	98.0	97.2	98.8
Paper-pencil assessments	96.5	94.4	98.8
Classwork	93.9	91.6	96.4
Homework	31.5	24.2	39.4
Discussions with the child	84.0	84.3	83.6
Other	6.7	9.6	3.6

Table A9  
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Policy Component is  
**Most Valuable** to Supporting Student Achievement

Which component of the policy being implemented in elementary schools this year do you believe to be the <b>most valuable</b> to supporting student achievement? Check only one.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Academic meaning of a grade	28.9	22.5	35.8
Number of assessments	2.9	2.2	3.6
Content of assessments	29.8	26.4	33.3
Learning skills	9.6	7.3	12.1
Homework policy	0.3	0.6	0
Increased detail on report card (essential learnings) (Field-test schools only)	19.5	30.9	7.3 <sup>a</sup>
Other	6.1	7.3	4.8
No response	2.9	2.8	3.0

<sup>a</sup> Although the item was only relevant for field-test schools, some respondents from non-field-test schools responded.

Table A10  
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Policy Component is  
**Least Valuable** to Supporting Student Achievement

Which component of the policy being implemented in elementary schools this year do you believe to be the <b>least valuable</b> to supporting student achievement? Check only one.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Academic meaning of a grade	7.0	9.0	4.8
Number of assessments	36.7	30.9	43.0
Content of assessments	3.8	2.2	5.5
Learning skills	2.3	3.4	1.2
Homework policy	34.1	35.4	32.7
Increased detail on report card (essential learnings) (Field-test schools only)	6.7	8.4	4.8 <sup>a</sup>
Other	4.7	4.5	4.8
No response	4.4	6.2	3.0

<sup>a</sup> Although the item was only relevant for field-test schools, some respondents from non-field-test schools responded.

Table A11  
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Policy Component  
is **Most Difficult** to Implement

Which component of the policy being implemented in elementary schools this year do you believe to be the <b>most difficult</b> to supporting student achievement? Check only one.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Academic meaning of the grade	15.2	12.9	17.6
Increased detail on report card (essential learnings) (Field-test schools only)	7.9	10.7	4.8 <sup>a</sup>
Number of assessments	52.2	50.1	53.9
Content of assessments	12.0	12.9	10.9
Learning skills	2.0	2.2	1.8
Homework policy	2.3	2.8	1.8
Other	4.1	3.9	4.2
No response	4.4	3.9	4.8

<sup>a</sup> Although the item was only relevant for field-test schools, some respondents from non-field-test schools responded.

Table A12  
Percentage of Respondents Stating the Components of the Policy are **Easiest** to Implement in the  
Following Subject Areas

In which area do you believe the components of the policy to be <b>easiest</b> to implement? Check only one.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Art, Music, or PE	7.3	7.9	6.7
ESOL	3.2	3.9	2.4
Language Arts	3.5	5.6	1.2
Math	57.7	55.1	60.6
Reading	11.4	10.1	12.7
Science	4.1	6.2	1.8
Social Studies	3.2	2.8	3.6
Special Education	1.0	0	0.6
No response	9.3	8.4	10.3

Table A13  
Percentage of Respondents Stating the Components of the Policy are **Most Difficult** to Implement in the  
Following Subject Areas

In which area do you believe the components of the policy to be the <b>most difficult</b> to implement? Check only one.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Art, Music, or PE	4.7	4.5	4.8
ESOL	2.3	1.7	3.0
Language Arts	14.9	14.6	15.2
Math	5.5	6.2	4.8
Reading	42.9	38.8	47.3
Science	5.0	6.7	3.0
Social Studies	5.2	5.6	4.8
Special Education	9.3	10.1	8.5
No response	10.2	11.8	8.5

Table A14  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Degree of  
Consistency Implementing the Policy in Their School

How consistently do you think the procedures are being applied within your school?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Consistently in all grade-level teams	28.3	37.6	18.2
Consistently in some grade-level teams but inconsistently in others	30.0	27.5	32.7
Inconsistently in all grade-level teams	5.5	3.4	7.9
I don't know	33.2	29.2	37.6
No response	2.9	2.2	3.6

Table A15  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Degree of  
Consistency Implementing the Policy in MCPS

With what level of consistency do you think the procedures are being applied across MCPS elementary schools?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
High level of consistency across elementary schools	3.8	3.9	3.6
Moderate level of consistency across elementary schools	27.7	30.9	24.2
Low level of consistency across elementary schools	22.1	19.7	24.8
I don't know	43.4	42.7	44.2
No response	2.9	2.8	3.0

Table A16  
Percentage of Respondents Stating They Attended the Structured Conversations

Have you attended any <i>structured conversations</i> this school year?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
I am not aware of any structured conversations.	26.8	28.1	25.5
No	28.9	33.1	24.2
Yes	44.0	38.2	50.3
No response	0.3	0.6	0

Table A17  
Percentage of Respondents Stating the Structured Conversations Were Helpful

Were the <i>structured conversations</i> helpful to you?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
I am not aware of any structured conversations.	24.2	26.4	21.8
I did not attend a structured conversation.	5.0	32.6	26.1
No <sup>a</sup>	11.3	10.3	12.0
Yes <sup>a</sup>	88.7	91.2	86.7
No response	2.3	2.2	2.4

<sup>a</sup> Percentages are calculated for those who stated they attended the *structured conversations*.

Table A18  
Percentage of Respondents Stating the Structured Conversations Cleared up Uncertainties

Did the <i>structured conversations</i> clear up any uncertainties regarding policy implementation for you?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
I am not aware of any structured conversations.	24.2	25.8	22.4
I did not attend a structured conversation.	29.1	33.1	24.8
No <sup>a</sup>	19.2	17.6	20.5
Yes <sup>a</sup>	77.5	77.9	77.1
No response	4.1	4.5	3.6

<sup>a</sup> Percentages are calculated for those who stated they attended the *structured conversations*.

Table A19  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Main Source of Information Regarding Policy Implementation

Where do you get most of your information regarding policy implementation in your school?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Team leader	13.4	18.0	8.5
Staff development teacher or reading specialist	62.1	51.1	73.9
Principal	4.7	5.1	4.2
Central office staff	3.5	3.9	3.0
MCPS documents or handouts	9.0	11.8	6.1
MCPS Web site	0	0	0
Other	5.8	8.4	3.0
No response	1.5	1.7	1.2

Table A20  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Grade-level Team Collaborates to Determine how Students Will be Assessed

Does your grade-level team collaborate to determine how students will be assessed?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
No	15.2	14.6	15.8
Yes	81.0	82.0	80.0
No response	3.8	3.4	4.2

Table A21  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Grade-level Team Collaborates to Analyze Student Work

Does your grade-level team collaborate to analyze student work?	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
No	27.1	28.1	26.1
Yes	68.2	68.0	68.5
No response	4.7	3.9	5.5

Table A22  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Confidence in Standards-based Grading and Reporting

How confident do you feel with implementing standards-based grading and reporting in the following areas?	Very Confident			Somewhat Confident			Not Very Confident			Not at all Confident			No Response		
	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT
Philosophy of standards-based G&R	28.6	34.3	22.4	54.5	55.1	53.9	12.0	6.7	17.6	3.2	2.8	3.6	1.7	1.1	2.4
Understanding essential learnings	41.1	49.4	32.1	47.2	44.4	50.3	8.7	4.5	13.3	0.9	0.6	1.2	2.0	1.1	3.0
understanding T1s and T2s	38.8	48.3	28.5	45.2	41.0	49.7	11.1	6.2	16.4	3.2	2.8	3.6	1.7	1.7	1.8
Understanding T3s: where to find them	54.5	61.8	46.7	32.4	28.7	36.4	8.5	5.6	11.5	2.9	2.2	3.6	1.7	1.7	1.8
Understanding T3s: how to use them	46.3	52.8	39.4	36.7	33.1	40.6	11.1	9.6	12.7	2.9	2.2	3.6	2.9	2.2	3.6
Identifying/creating assessments for T1s and T2s	32.9	41.6	23.6	43.1	40.4	46.1	16.6	12.9	20.6	5.8	3.9	7.9	2.0	1.1	1.8
Using multiple and varied measures over time	38.5	40.4	36.4	45.8	47.2	44.2	10.8	8.4	13.3	2.0	1.1	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.0
Grading students receiving special education services	9.3	10.7	7.9	41.4	42.7	40.0	36.2	33.1	39.4	9.6	10.1	9.1	3.5	3.4	3.6
Grading ESOL students	13.4	14.6	12.1	46.9	53.4	40.0	30.0	24.7	35.8	6.7	5.1	8.5	2.9	2.2	3.6
Determining grades based on multiple data points	38.2	45.5	30.3	46.4	44.9	47.9	10.2	5.1	15.8	2.0	1.1	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.0
Using the G&R documents to collect and analyze data	31.8	43.3	19.4	49.9	47.8	52.1	12.8	6.2	20.0	3.2	1.7	4.8	2.3	1.1	3.6

All = All respondents; FT = Field-test schools; NFT = Non-field-test schools



Table A23  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Frequency of Meeting With Their Grade-level Team to Discuss Different Issues

How often does your grade-level team meet to discuss the following topics related to the Grading and Reporting Policy?	At least once a day			At least once a week			At least once a month			Less than monthly			No Response		
	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT
Philosophy of standards-based G&R	1.7	2.2	1.2	16.6	20.2	12.7	30.6	28.1	33.3	47.8	47.8	47.9	3.2	1.7	4.8
Understanding essential learnings	1.2	1.1	1.2	29.7	35.4	23.6	30.6	30.3	30.9	34.7	29.8	40.0	3.8	3.4	4.2
Understanding T1s and T2s	1.2	1.1	1.2	19.8	25.8	13.3	38.2	37.6	38.8	35.6	31.5	40.0	5.2	3.9	6.7
Understanding T3s: where to find them	1.2	1.1	1.2	14.9	18.5	10.9	35.7	36.0	33.3	44.6	41.6	47.9	4.7	2.8	6.7
Understanding T3s: how to use them	0.9	0.6	1.2	14.9	18.5	10.9	35.7	36.0	33.3	44.6	41.6	47.9	5.0	3.4	6.7
Identifying/creating assessments for T1s and T2s	0.9	0.6	1.2	25.1	30.3	19.4	32.9	34.3	31.5	36.4	30.9	42.4	4.7	3.9	5.5
Using multiple and varied measures over time	2.6	2.8	2.4	24.2	28.1	20.0	31.5	29.8	33.3	36.7	35.4	38.2	5.0	3.9	6.1
Grading students receiving special education services	0.9	0.6	1.2	11.4	14.6	7.9	22.4	21.3	23.6	59.8	59.0	60.6	5.5	4.5	6.7
Grading ESOL students	2.0	1.7	2.4	9.9	14.0	5.5	24.5	23.6	25.5	49.0	56.2	59.4	5.8	4.5	7.3
Determining grades based on multiple data points	0.6	0	1.2	16.6	21.9	10.9	34.4	33.7	35.2	42.3	39.3	45.5	6.1	5.1	7.3
Using the G&R documents to collect and analyze data	2.9	3.9	1.8	19.5	24.7	13.9	35.9	34.8	37.0	35.6	31.5	40.0	6.1	5.1	7.3

All = All respondents; FT = Field-test schools; NFT = Non-field-test schools

Table A24

Percentage of Respondents Indicating Their Frequency of Meeting With Their Staff Development Teacher or Reading Specialist to Discuss Different Issues

How frequently do you meet with your SDT or RS to discuss the following areas?	At least once a day			At least once a week			At least once a month			Less than monthly			No Response		
	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT	ALL	FT	NFT
Philosophy of standards-based G&R	0	0	0	2.0	1.7	2.4	27.7	23.0	32.7	66.8	71.9	61.2	3.5	3.4	3.6
Understanding essential learnings	0	0	0	2.9	3.9	1.8	32.4	29.8	35.2	60.3	61.8	58.8	4.4	4.5	4.2
Understanding T1s and T2s	0	0	0	2.3	2.8	1.8	25.4	21.9	29.1	68.2	71.3	64.8	4.1	3.9	4.2
Understanding T3s: where to find them	0	0	0	1.7	2.8	0.6	25.4	20.8	30.3	68.8	71.3	66.1	4.1	5.1	3.0
Understanding T3s: how to use them	0	0	0	2.6	3.9	1.2	26.8	21.9	32.1	68.2	71.3	64.2	2.6	2.8	2.4
Identifying/creating assessments for T1s and T2s	0	0	0	2.9	2.8	3.0	25.9	22.5	29.7	67.3	71.3	63.0	3.8	3.4	4.2
Using multiple and varied measures over time	0.3	0.6	0	3.8	2.8	4.8	26.2	23.0	29.7	67.3	70.8	63.6	2.3	2.8	1.8
Grading students receiving special education services	0	0	0	2.3	2.8	1.8	19.5	17.4	21.8	73.5	74.7	72.1	4.7	5.1	4.2
Grading ESOL students	0	0	0	2.9	3.9	1.8	19.2	18.0	20.6	73.5	73.6	73.3	4.4	4.5	4.2
Determining grades based on multiple data points	0.3	0.6	0	2.9	2.2	3.6	26.5	23.0	30.3	66.8	71.3	61.8	3.5	2.8	4.2
Using the G&R documents to collect and analyze data	0.3	0.6	0	2.6	2.2	3.0	28.9	27.0	30.9	64.7	66.9	62.4	3.5	3.4	3.6

All = All respondents; FT = Field-test schools; NFT = Non-field-test schools

Table A25  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Challenges to Implementing the Components of the Grading and Reporting Policy During the 2006–2007 School Year

Which of the following factors have presented challenges to implementing the components of the policy in your school during the 2006–2007 school year? Please check all that apply.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Constant changes in policy	51.9	38.8	66.1
Not knowing ahead of time the grade-level expectations	31.2	24.7	38.2
Not having the actual report card	45.5	28.1	64.2
Lack of flexibility	29.7	23.0	37.0
Not being able to enter student data at home	56.6	79.8	31.5*
Grading students in special populations	37.6	33.1	42.4
Other	10.8	8.4	13.3

\* Does not apply

Table A26  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Factors That Have Helped in Implementing the Components of the Grading and Reporting Policy During the 2006–2007 School Year

Which of the following factors have helped in implementing the components of the policy in your school during the 2006–2007 school year? Please check all that apply.	All Respondents	Field-test Schools	Non-field-test Schools
Central office staff meetings with school staff	11.4	14.0	8.5
Central office staff meetings with parents	3.2	5.1	1.2
Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) posted on the Web	9.3	13.5	4.8
Revisions to essential learnings	29.7	40.4	18.2
Documents to support parent communication	15.2	23.0	6.7
Feedback meetings	17.5	16.9	18.2
Collaboration among school staff	68.5	65.2	72.1
Other	9.0	10.1	7.9

Table A27  
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Degree to Which They Agree With the New Report Card and Its Alignment With the Written, Taught, and Learned Curriculum

Do you agree that the new report card is aligned with the written, taught, and learned curriculum?	Field-test Schools
Strongly agree	15.3
Agree	53.9
Neutral	14.0
Disagree	10.7
Strongly disagree	2.2
Not sure	2.8
No response	1.1

Table A28  
 Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Changes They  
 Would Like Made to the Electronic Data Collection Document

What changes would you like to see made for the electronic data collection document? Please check all that apply.	Field-test Schools
Ability to enter all essential learnings for one child	52.5
Ability to enter data from a home computer	93.2
Ability to print a draft report	65.5
Other	8.5

Table A29  
 Percentage of Respondents Indicating Challenges in  
 Using the Electronic Data Collection Tool

Please indicate any challenges you had in using the electronic data collection document. Please check all that apply.	Field-test Schools
Gaining access	36.7
Entering student data (ease of use)	32.2
Using all of the steps necessary in applying the electronic report card	10.2
Time to enter student data	52.0
Accessing a computer to enter data	12.4
Not seeing the final product after entering data	50.8
Inability to save in the middle of task	19.2
I did not have any challenges	13.0