



# Evaluation Brief

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Department of Shared Accountability

## Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings from the 2007 Secondary Teacher Survey on Consistency of Implementation

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### Background

In 2006–2007, the Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) continued the evaluation of the second year of implementation of the new Grading and Reporting Policy (Policy IKA). At the secondary level, evaluation activities included interviews with school-based staff, a teacher survey, a student survey, a parent survey, and document reviews. The interviews were used to develop the survey questions and response choices.

This brief describes the findings of the survey of secondary teachers. The purpose of the survey was to determine the extent to which the grading and reporting components were implemented consistently as intended across schools; the challenges that teachers faced in implementing each component; and the level of communication among schools, parents, and students about the implementation of new grading and reporting procedures. Two additional surveys of students and parents will gather information on teachers' implementation of the components to determine the consistency of implementation from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders across schools.

### Methodology

Analysis focused on 30 middle and 22 high schools that are implementing Pinnacle and Edline during the 2006–2007 school year (Table A1).

The survey was developed with advice from the Grading and Reporting Evaluation Advisory Committee. The survey was administered online in early February 2007, and the last responses were received in early March 2007. Completed surveys were received from 2,008 secondary teachers, representing an overall response rate of 50%, with a range from 9% to 92%. The response rates from teachers in middle and high schools were similar.

Respondents were relatively evenly distributed across mathematics, science, English, social studies, and arts/physical education, with approximately 11% to 15% of the respondents in each of those subject areas. Foreign language teachers comprised approximately 7% of respondents. Approximately 8% of the respondents were special educators, and 4% were English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers (Table A2). More than one third of respondents (38%) have been with the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) for more than 10 years. Approximately one fourth have been teaching in MCPS for two to five years (27%) or 6 to 10 years (26%). Nine percent of respondents are in their first year in MCPS (Table A3).

### Summary of Findings

According to the survey findings, the following areas show promise toward consistent implementation:

- Teachers using multiple assessment strategies, including tests, projects, reports, exhibits, and discussions, to determine students' grades
- Consistency and clarity of information about grading and reporting received from MCPS central office
- Automatic updating of grades from Pinnacle to Edline
- Improvement of students' awareness of their grades

The following areas continue to present challenges to consistent implementation:

- Determining students' eligibility for reassessment
- Time involved in providing reteaching and reassessment opportunities for students
- Teachers' philosophical discomfort with the 50% rule
- Assigning grades for late work

- Students' lack of completion of homework assigned for practice
- Difficulty choosing and reproducing reports on Pinnacle
- Unreliability of Pinnacle when many teachers enter grades at the same time

## Discussion of Findings

### *Consistency of Implementation*

Survey respondents reported their perceptions of the consistency of implementation of each of the grading and reporting components within their own departments and throughout their schools. For each component, nearly half of respondents indicated they did not know the consistency of implementation in their school (44% for reteach/reassess, 42% for grading, and 45% for homework) (Table A4). Less than one fifth reported inconsistency within their own department or course team (18% for reteach/reassess, 12% for grading, and 13% for homework). Within their own course or department but not throughout their school, 28% reported that reteach/reassessment procedures were consistently implemented, 25% reported consistent implementation of grading procedures, and 24% indicated consistency in homework procedures.

### *Reteaching and Reassessment*

The procedures for reteaching and reassessment continue to pose logistical and philosophical challenges and inconsistencies for teachers. The responses indicated that a majority of teachers implement key procedures as intended by the policy. However, a considerable number still do not. (Table A5). More than three fourths (77%) indicated that they offered at least one assignment or assessment to be reassessed in each of their classes. Nearly as many (72%) indicated that they provide all teaching and testing accommodations for students with disabilities and limited English proficiency for reteaching and reassessing activities. Nearly two thirds (64% each) always replace the original grade with the reassessed grade, and allow students absent on the day of a reassessment to reschedule it. Sixty percent allow all students the opportunity for reassessment, regardless of their original grade.

One hundred twenty nine of the 2,008 survey respondents included open-ended comments about their experiences implementing the reteach/reassess component (Table A6). Of those, 16% (21 individuals) commented that they allow students to reassess based on their original grade. One example of determining reassessment based on an original

grade was summarized as, "I allow students that have not mastered the material to retake assessments. Mastery is a grade of A or B. Grades of C, D, or E can retake." Another teacher indicated that eligibility for reassessment was based on performance on other quizzes, saying, "I allow reassessment for a failing grade if the student gets an A or a B on two subsequent reassessments." Another 25% of the open-ended comments (32 individuals) indicated that students must complete specific activities to be eligible for reassessment. These activities included getting parents' signature on the original assessment; participating in study sessions with the teacher; correcting items missed on the original assessment; and scheduling reassessment within a given time period.

Nine percent of the comments (12 individuals) indicated they average the reassessed grade with the original grade or keep the higher grade. The following comment summarizes the words of those teachers: "The reassessment grade only replaces the original if it is higher."

Respondents reported their challenges to implementing the reteach/reassess procedures consistently in their classrooms (see Table A7). Some of these challenges were philosophical, while others were logistical. For example, more than half (60%) agreed with a statement that students take advantage of the opportunity to reassess by not preparing adequately for the original task or assessment. More than one third (35%) agreed that allowing reassessment sends the wrong message to students. Logistically, respondents expressed challenges related to the time needed for reteaching and reassessing students. More than half reported inadequate time to provide reteaching opportunities to students (57%) and inadequate time to develop reassessment instruments (52%). Nearly half (46%) indicated a lack of time to administer reassessments to students. Additionally, 43% responded that time spent on reteaching and reassessment detracted from time to help struggling students.

One hundred thirty four of the 2,008 survey respondents included open-ended comments about their challenges in implementing the reteach/reassess component. (See Table A8 in the appendix for a summary of teachers' comments.) Of those, more than one third (40%, 52 individuals) indicated that students are not coming in for reassessment when they are eligible. The following quote is reflective of this challenge: "Some students do not study for the reassessment and score lower or do not take advantage of reassessment at all." Nearly as many (34%, 46 of 134 teachers) reported that they are using

their lunch time, before, and after school time for reteaching and reassessment activities. The following quote reflects the frustration of those teachers: “Teachers are making the time by using duty-free lunch or after school to ensure that reteaching and reassessing takes place.” Approximately 10% (13 individuals) each commented that students are not attending reteaching activities, not studying for the reassessment and thus receiving lower grades, or misusing the original assessment as a preview of the reassessment.

### *Grading*

When grading students, the majority of teachers (82%) indicated that they assess student learning in a variety of ways, such as tests, projects, reports, exhibits, discussions. However, issues relating to the 50% rule and assigning grades to late work continue to present difficulties resulting in inconsistent implementation. Nearly three fourths (72%) of teachers reported that they assign a grade of no less than 50% to a task or assignment that meets basic requirements. Slightly more than half (53%) indicated that they subtract one letter grade for an assignment submitted after the due date but before the deadline, while just less than half (46%) assign a zero for assignments turned in after the deadline (Table A9).

One hundred sixteen of the 2,008 survey respondents included comments on their experiences with implementing the grading procedures (Table A10). Of those, nearly half (43%, 50 individuals) indicated that they offer open or adjusted deadlines for assignments.

The 50% rule presented teachers with special philosophical challenges (Table A11). More than half the survey respondents (60%) indicated that their philosophical disagreement with awarding 50% for an assignment that was less than 50% completed or correct presented a challenge to consistently implement the grading procedures. Nearly as many (57%) indicated their belief that the 50% rule does not accurately reflect students’ learning, and presented a challenge to consistent implementation.

Ninety two of the 2,008 survey respondents included open-ended comments about their challenges implementing the grading component, which may contribute to inconsistent implementation (Table A12). Of those, more than one third (36%, 33 individuals) commented that the 50% rule inflates students’ grades, or leaves them unprepared for classes at the next level. A quotation from a biology teacher illustrates this challenge: “Because of the re-

assessments and 50% rule, kids have inflated grades. If they fail the High School Assessment, but pass my class due to the re-assessment and 50% rule, it looks as though I am not teaching what I need to teach.” Nearly as many (31%, 30 individuals) indicated their opinion that students misuse the 50% rule. An illustrative quotation is: “Students don’t see the value in accurately completing assignments when they get 50%.”

### *Homework*

In prior research (Merchlinisky, 2006), teachers’ responses have indicated that the homework procedures are the least troublesome to implement. Still, the current survey indicates that there is inconsistency across teachers in the implementation of the homework procedures. While the majority implement key procedures as intended by the policy, a considerable number do not (Table A13). More than three quarters (76%) of respondents indicated that all the homework they assign is directly relevant to the curriculum. More than two thirds (67%) reported that homework for practice counts for up to 10% of the marking period grade. Only a little more than half (58%) reported providing feedback on homework for practice, and nearly as many (52%) indicated that they inform students in advance how homework assignments will be counted. Still fewer (38%) indicated that they communicate to students the extent to which the two categories of homework count toward the marking period grade (Table A13). See Table A14 for teachers’ comments about their experiences implementing the homework component.

The greatest challenge teachers reported in implementing the homework procedures was students’ lack of motivation in completing homework for practice accurately, indicated by more than half (53%) of respondents. Nearly one fourth (23% each) expressed difficulty in establishing minimum standards for homework for practice, and how to assign credit for late homework (Table A15).

Seventy three of the 2,008 respondents included open-ended comments about the challenges they face in implementing the homework component (Table A16). Of those, more than one fourth (27%, 17 individuals) indicated that students simply do not complete homework. One fifth (20%, 15 individuals) indicated that they do not assign homework for practice, or grade all homework to avoid assigning 10%.

### *Communication*

The survey investigated communication about grading and reporting at two levels: the flow of information from MCPS central office to schools, and from schools to students and families.

Survey respondents rated the quality of the information they received from MCPS central office this year about grading and reporting. More than half (52%) rated the quality as “Excellent” or “Good,” approximately one third (34%) rated it “Fair,” and 12% rated it “Poor” or “Very poor” (Table A17).

Respondents also indicated their experiences with information they have received about grading and reporting from MCPS central office. A strong majority (81%) indicated that the information was consistent with their understanding of the policy. Sixty percent reported that the information helped to clarify their understanding of how to implement the policy in their classrooms. Nearly as many (59%) indicated that the quality and usefulness of the information has improved, and that the format is easy to use. Slightly more than half rated the information as concise and user-friendly (56%), and reported that they can pass the information along to parents, students, and other teachers without modification (Table A18).

Respondents indicated the methods they use for communicating with parents and students about the implementation of grading and reporting procedures in their classroom (Table A19). By far, the most frequent method of communication reported was a presentation at Back-to-School Night (84%) and inclusion of procedures in the course syllabus (83%). Slightly more than one third (35%) of respondents indicated that they post their procedures on Edline.

Review of documents from a sample of schools also illustrated various ways in which schools communicate information about implementation of the grading and reporting procedures to students and families. Some examples include the following:

- Articles in school newspapers, including editorials by students about their opinions of and experiences with various components
- A schoolwide document that outlines procedures that are consistent across all departments and procedures that vary by department
- Rubrics for specific assignments that include the due date and deadline, number of possible points, and a detailed summary of the requirements for each grade

- A course-specific description of procedures for reteaching/reassessment, weighting of various categories of assignments, meeting basic requirements for tasks, and grading late work

Survey respondents reported on the type of feedback they have received this school year from parents on each of the grading and reporting components. For each component, a majority of respondents indicated that they received no feedback from parents. That is, 65% received no feedback about reteaching/reassessment, 67% received no feedback about grading, and 75% received no feedback about homework (Tables A20, A21, and A22).

### *Pinnacle and Edline*

Teachers reported the most useful aspect of Pinnacle as its automatic update of grades to Edline (80% of respondents) and the fact that they no longer need to “bubble-in” grades (77% of respondents). Nearly three fourths (71%) found it useful that Pinnacle automatically updates their class list when students change class periods. Approximately half of respondents appreciate that Pinnacle automatically weights assignments (54%), creates reports (51%), and easily shows which assignments are missing (51%). Nearly half find it helpful to access Pinnacle from home (42%) and to use charts and graphs to view results for an entire class (41%) (Table A23). See Table A24 for a summary of teachers’ open-ended comments.

Approximately half (51%) indicated through multiple-response survey items that Pinnacle is not reliable when a large number of teachers are entering grades at the same time. Nearly as many responded that Pinnacle offers too many reports to choose from (48%) and that they have difficulty reproducing the reports they like (45%) (Table A25). The following quotes represent these frustrations: “I wish we had a concise document that outlines all of our different options for reports.” “Pinnacle offers many types of reports that most teachers never use. It would help if we could somehow get rid of the extra choices.” Additionally, more than one third (35%) found it challenging that they cannot indicate a reassessed grade or a grade that was actually less than 50%.

A large number of survey respondents (685 individuals) provided open-ended comments about the challenges related to Pinnacle (Table A26). More than one fourth of those (28%, 191 individuals) commented on problems related to uploads, updates, and grade corrections. Nearly one fourth (24%, 164 individuals) expressed that Pinnacle was not user-friendly and provided less flexibility than other

electronic grading tools they had used previously. The following quote is indicative of this frustration: “It is not user friendly, and the menu choices do not make sense.”

Edline was implemented to provide students and parents greater access to students’ grades, and to improve communication between home and school about grading and reporting issues. Nearly three fourths of respondents (71%) indicated that the implementation of Edline has resulted in students having greater awareness of their grades. More than half (57%) expressed increased communication with parents about students’ grades. Almost half (45%) reported fewer complaints from parents surprised by their children’s grades. Nearly as many (40%) reported that teachers have greater accountability for reporting grades in a timely manner (Table A27).

Nearly all respondents participated in some type of training in preparation for implementing Pinnacle, and many received multiple forms of training. More than three fourths (77%) participated in the MCPS online training, and nearly as many (71%) reported school-based training from their super user or grade book advisor. Approximately one fifth (21%) attended MCPS summer training. Half the respondents reported that they did not need additional training on Pinnacle after their initial training, while approximately one fourth (27%) indicated that they could use additional Pinnacle training from their school’s super user or grade book advisor (Tables A28 and A29).

Nearly half the respondents (42%) expressed interest in training from their school’s grade book advisor on using the additional functions of Edline (e.g., e-mail, posting assignments). However, more than one third (36%) expressed no interest in additional EdLine training (Table A30.)

### Recommendations

- Compare the responses from parent and student surveys with the teacher survey responses reported here, and provide recommendations for consistent implementation.
- Continue to examine and report on areas in which challenges to implementation or inconsistent implementation were found.
- Between data collection and publication of this brief, many of the findings related to Pinnacle and Edline have been addressed by staff in the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO). OCTO staff should continue to monitor the implementation of Pinnacle and Edline as they are expanded to all secondary schools.

### Reference

Merchlinsky, S. (2006). *Evaluation of the Montgomery County Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings from the January 2006 secondary teacher survey*. Rockville, MD: Montgomery County Public Schools.

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**Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County Board of  
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**Appendix**

Table A1  
Secondary Schools Participating in the Survey

Middle Schools (N=30)	Response Rate	High Schools (N=22)	Response Rate
Argyle <sup>a</sup>	61%	Bethesda-Chevy Chase	52%
Benjamin Banneker	60	James Hubert Blake	63
Briggs Chaney <sup>a</sup>	52	Clarksburg	64
Cabin John <sup>a</sup>	66	Damascus	68
Col. E. Brooke Lee	60	Albert Einstein	37
William H. Farquhar <sup>a</sup>	36	Gaithersburg <sup>a</sup>	92
Forest Oak	71	Walter Johnson <sup>a</sup>	62
Francis Scott Key	58	John F. Kennedy	40
Gaithersburg	42	Col. Zadok Magruder	35
Herbert Hoover	65	Richard Montgomery	33
Julius West	37	Northwest	71
Kingsview	88	Northwood	65
A. Mario Loiederman	10	Paint Branch	30
Martin Luther King, Jr. <sup>a</sup>	47	Poolesville	63
Montgomery Village <sup>a</sup>	64	Quince Orchard <sup>a</sup>	41
Neelsville	70	Rockville	41
North Bethesda	36	Seneca Valley	59
Parkland	71	Sherwood	34
Ridgeview	17	Watkins Mill	11
Robert Frost	55	Wheaton	59
Roberto Clemente	28	Winston Churchill <sup>a</sup>	9
Rocky Hill	39	Thomas S. Wootton	37
Rosa Parks	55		
Shady Grove	60		
Silver Spring International	56		
Sligo	42		
Takoma Park	26		
Thomas W. Pyle	48		
White Oak	28		
Earle B. Wood	38		

<sup>a</sup> Also participated in developmental interviews to design survey questions.

Table A2  
Teaching Positions of Survey Respondents,  
by School Level

Position	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
Math Classroom Teacher	15.3
English Classroom Teacher	15.0
Resource Teacher/ Department Leader	14.1
Social Studies Classroom Teacher	11.6
Science Classroom Teacher	11.4
Arts, Music or Physical Education Teacher	10.9
Special Education Teacher: General curriculum	7.7
Foreign Language Classroom Teacher	7.3
ESOL Teacher	4.0
Technology Education Teacher	3.9
Family and Consumer Sciences Classroom teacher	1.1
Special Education Teacher: Fundamental Life Skills	0.7
Other Classroom Teacher	6.6
Guidance Counselor	1.5
Staff Development Teacher	1.4
Other School-based Personnel	3.1

Table A3  
Respondents' Years of Teaching in MCPS,  
by School Level

Years in MCPS	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
First year	9
2 to 5 years	27
6 to 10 years	26
More than 10 years	38
No response	1

Table A4  
Respondents' Perceptions of Consistency of Implementation  
of the Grading and Reporting Components (N=2,008)

How would you rate the consistency of implementing the procedures for each component in your school?	Reteach/Reassess Component	Grading Component	Homework Component
Consistent across all departments or course teams in my school	9%	18%	15%
Consistent in my department or course team, but not throughout the school	28	25	24
Not consistent within my department or course team	18	12	13
I don't know	44	42	45
No response	2	3	3

Table A5  
Teachers' Experiences Implementing the  
Reteach/Reassess Procedures

Which of the following represent your experiences with the procedures for reteaching and reassessment during the 2006–2007 school year? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I offer at least one assignment or assessment to be reassessed in each of my classes. <sup>a</sup>	77
I apply all teaching and testing accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency to reteaching and reassessment activities. <sup>a</sup>	72
The reassessment grade always replaces the original grade. <sup>a</sup>	64
I allow students who were absent on the day of a reassessment to reschedule the reassessment. <sup>a</sup>	64
I allow all students the opportunity for reassessment, regardless of the original grade. <sup>a</sup>	60
I offer 3 or more assignments or assessments to be reassessed in each of my classes.	53
I determine which assignments or assessments can be reassessed based on student performance on the original assignment or assessment. <sup>b</sup>	44
My department or course team determines which assignments will be eligible for reassessment, prior to the assignment or assessment being given.	22

<sup>a</sup> Required by the Grading and Reporting Policy.

<sup>b</sup> Inconsistent with the policy.

Table A6  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About Their Experiences  
Implementing the Reteach/Reassess Procedures

Comment	Percent of Teachers (N=129)
Students can reassesses after doing extra work, homework, or effort.	25
I offer reassessment for writing/classwork/quizzes, but not tests.	17
I offer reassessment based on the original grade, or within a specified time limit.	16
I offer reassessment for everything except unit tests.	12
Students can reassess if they attend reteaching.	11
I average the original and reassessed grades or take the higher grade.	9
The whole class is reassessed after the original assessment is graded.	9
I offer reassessment if the student requests it.	8
Students can reassess with parents' signature.	4
I do not reassess quizzes or tests.	3
Other experiences	9

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A7  
Challenges Teachers Face in Implementing the  
Reteach/Reassess Procedures

Which of the following present the greatest challenges to implementing the reteaching and reassessment procedures consistently? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
Students take advantage of reassessment opportunities by not studying for the original assessment.	60
I don't have adequate time to provide reteaching opportunities to students.	57
I don't have adequate time to develop reassessment instruments.	52
I don't have adequate time to administer reassessments to students.	46
Time spent on reteaching and reassessment detracts from time to help struggling students.	43
I believe that allowing reassessment sends the wrong message to students.	35
I have difficulty reporting a reassessed grade (e.g., indicating to parents that a task or assessment has been reassessed).	11
I have difficulty understanding the criteria for reassessment.	6
No challenges	8

Table A8  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About Challenges They Face in  
Implementing the Reteach/Reassess Procedures

Comment	Percent of Teachers (N=134)
Students are not taking reassessments.	40
Teachers are using lunch, before and after school time for reteaching/reassessing.	34
Students are late to or not attending reteaching.	10
Students do not study for reassessments, and get a lower grade.	10
Students use original assessment as a preparation for reassessment.	9
Other challenges	16

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A9  
Teachers' Experiences Implementing the  
Grading Procedures

Which of the following represent your experiences with the procedures for grading during the 2006–2007 school year? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I assess student learning in a variety of ways (tests, projects, reports, exhibits, discussions, etc.). <sup>a</sup>	82
When using percentages, I assign a grade no lower than 50% to a task or assessment that meets the basic requirements. <sup>a</sup>	72
Under some circumstances, I make the due date and deadline on the same day.	56
I subtract one letter grade for an assignment submitted after the due date but before the deadline. <sup>a</sup>	53
I assign a 0 for assignments turned in after the deadline. <sup>a</sup>	46

<sup>a</sup> Required by the Grading and Reporting Policy.

Table A10  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About Their Experiences  
Implementing the Grading Procedures

Comment	Percent of Teachers (N=116)
I have open deadline or adjusted deadlines.	43%
I give a zero if the assignment is never turned in.	12
The due date and deadline are always the same day.	11
I give 50% even if only the student's name is on the paper.	9
I'm unsure how to determine "basic requirement" for 50%.	9
I make adjustments to points deducted after the due date.	4
I set/announce minimum standards for each assignment.	3
Other experiences	11

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A11  
Challenges Teachers Face in Implementing the  
Grading Procedures

Which of the following present the greatest challenges to implementing the grading procedures consistently? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I disagree philosophically with awarding a student 50% for an assignment that was less than 50% completed or correct.	60
I believe the 50% rule does not accurately reflect students learning.	57
I am unclear about the definition of “basic requirements” of an assignment or task.	18
The grading procedures are inconsistent with my course content.	11
I am unsure whether classwork for practice can be counted as part of students’ grades.	7
I have difficulty developing a variety of ways to assess student learning.	6
No challenges	18

Table A12  
Teachers’ Open-ended Comments about Challenges They Face in  
Implementing the Grading Procedures

Comment	Percent of Teachers (N=92)
The policy inflates grades, leaves students unprepared for next class level or real world.	36
Students misuse the 50% rule.	31
It is unclear who determines “basic requirements” (principal or teachers).	19
Teachers need more time to institute this policy.	13
Teachers want a way to differentiate “earning” versus “given” 50%.	6

*Note.* Respondents’ verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A13  
Teachers' Experiences Implementing the  
Homework Procedures

Which of the following represent your experiences with the homework procedures during the 2006–2007 school year? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
All homework I assign is directly related to the curriculum. <sup>a</sup>	76
Homework for practice counts for up to 10 percent of the marking period grade. <sup>a</sup>	67
I provide feedback (written or oral) on homework assigned for practice. <sup>a</sup>	58
I inform students in advance how a specific homework assignment will be counted (i.e., checked for practice or graded for learning). <sup>a</sup>	52
Some students do not complete homework for practice because it counts for no more than 10% of their grade.	47
My department or course team determines the percentage that homework for practice will count toward students' grades.	42
I communicate to students the extent to which the two categories of homework count toward the marking period grade. <sup>a</sup>	38

<sup>a</sup> Required by the Grading and Reporting Policy.

Table A14  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About Their Experiences  
Implementing the Homework Procedures

Comment	Percent of Teachers (N=40)
I assign little or no homework.	52
The homework percentage is determined by the school or principal.	23
Teachers develop the point system for homework.	10
Homework needs to be clearly defined.	10
10% for homework makes it hard for students and parents to calculate the grade.	8

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A15  
Challenges Teachers Face in Implementing the  
Homework Procedures

Which of the following present the greatest challenges to implementing the homework procedures consistently? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
Students do not see the value of completing homework for practice accurately.	53
It is difficult to determine what constitutes a minimum standard for earning credit for homework for practice (e.g., how much of an assignment students must complete to get credit).	23
It is difficult to determine how to assign credit to late homework.	23
It is difficult to determine which homework assignments are for practice and which are graded for learning.	12
I have difficulty understanding the criteria for determining the percentage that homework counts toward a grade.	4
No challenges	24

Table A16  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About Challenges They Face in  
Implementing the Homework Procedures

Comment	Percent of Teachers (N=73)
Students do not do homework.	27
I don't give 10% for practice homework, or I grade all homework to avoid the 10%.	20
I do not accept late homework.	17
I do not assign homework.	14
Class time is being used when students do not do homework.	9
There is inconsistency in how the homework procedures are applied.	7
Homework for completion takes time to record and inflates the grade.	4
Other challenges	6

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A17  
Teachers' Ratings of the Quality of Information  
Received from MCPS Central Office

How would you rate the overall quality of the information you have received this year from MCPS central office regarding grading and reporting?	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
Excellent	7
Good	45
Fair	34
Poor	9
Very poor	3
No response	2

Table A18  
Teachers' Experiences With Information  
Received From MCPS Central Office

Which of the following represent your experiences with the information you have received from MCPS central office about grading and reporting? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
The information is consistent with my understanding of the policy.	81
The information has helped to clarify my understanding of how to implement the procedures in my classroom.	60
The quality and usefulness of the information has improved.	59
The format of the information is easy to use.	59
The information is concise/user-friendly.	56
I can pass the information on to other teachers, parents, or students without modification.	53

Table A19  
Teachers' Methods for Communicating with Parents and Students  
About Grading and Reporting Procedures

How do you communicate with parents and students about grading and reporting procedures in your classroom? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I present the procedures at Back-to-School Night.	84
Procedures are included in the course syllabus.	83
Procedures are posted on EdLine.	35
Procedures are included in interim or progress reports.	19
Procedures are discussed in the PTSA newsletter or school newspaper.	19
Procedures are presented in a schoolwide document that covers all departments.	18
Procedures are discussed on a schoolwide listserv or other electronic forum.	11
I do not communicate with parents and students about grading and reporting procedures.	3

Table A20  
Feedback Teachers Have Received From Parents  
About the Reteaching/Reassessment Procedures

What feedback have you received from parents regarding the reteaching and reassessment procedures this school year? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I have received no feedback from parents about reteaching and reassessment.	65
Parents indicate inconsistent reassessment procedures across teachers.	11
Parents say there should be more opportunities for reassessment.	10
Parents say that a lower reassessed grade should not replace the original grade.	7
Parents indicate that students have difficulty finding time for reteaching and reassessment.	7
Parents express that students should not be allowed opportunities for reassessment.	5
Parents indicate inconsistent reassessment procedures within my classroom.	1

Table A21  
Feedback Teachers Have Received From Parents  
About the Grading Procedures

What feedback have you received from parents regarding the grading procedures this school year? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I have received no feedback from parents about grading.	67
Parents question calculation of grades or weighting of assignments.	16
Parents indicate inconsistent grading procedures across teachers.	11
Parents express confusion about the definitions of due date and deadline.	9
Parents indicate inconsistent grading procedures within my classroom.	1

Table A22  
Feedback Teachers Have Received From Parents  
About the Homework Procedures

What feedback have you received from parents regarding the homework procedures this school year? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
I have received no feedback from parents about homework.	75
Parents report inconsistent homework procedures across teachers.	9
Parents indicate that homework for practice should count for more than 10% of their child's grade.	6
Parents express that homework for practice should not count toward a grade.	2
Parents report inconsistent homework procedures within my classroom.	1

Table A23  
Teachers' Responses About the  
Most Useful Aspects of Pinnacle

Which of the following aspects of Pinnacle have you found to be the most useful? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
Pinnacle automatically updates grades to Edline.	80
I no longer have to "bubble-in" grades.	77
Pinnacle automatically updates class lists when students change class periods.	71
Pinnacle automatically weights assignments.	54
I can use Pinnacle to create reports.	51
It's easy to see which assignments are missing.	51
I can access Pinnacle from home.	42
I can view results for an entire class with charts and graphs.	41

Table A24  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About the  
Most Helpful Aspects of Pinnacle

Comments	Percent of Teachers (N=24)
Easy to use/timesaver	25
Good for recording attendance	25
Crystal report	19
Progress reports/interims are easy to use	19
Principal viewer	14
Baldrige tool	5
Easy to print student grade updates	5
Nice class list	5

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above.

Table A25  
Teachers' Responses About the  
Most Challenging Aspects of Pinnacle

Which of the following aspects of Pinnacle have you found to be the most challenging to implement? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
The system is not reliable when many teachers are entering grades at the same time.	51
Pinnacle offers too many reports to choose from.	48
I have difficulty reproducing the reports I like.	45
Pinnacle does not allow me to indicate when a grade was a reassessed assignment or less than 50%.	35
I have lost control in setting up my grade book.	29
Pinnacle rounds grades inaccurately.	29
Pinnacle does not give me the ability to add notes/comments on individual students.	22
Long-term subs do not have Pinnacle accounts.	15

Table A26  
Teachers' Open-ended Comments About the  
Most Challenging Aspects of Pinnacle

Comments	Percent of Teachers (N=685)
Problems with uploads, updates, grade corrections	28
Not user-friendly, lost flexibility of other programs	24
Problems with home access	16
Problems with class list/roster changes or updates	10
Problems where several teachers need access to a student's grades	7
Problems recording attendance, tardies	6
Need more training	5
Too time-consuming	5
Limited choices of comments, templates, notations, labels, categories	5
Problems with weighting grades	5
Need a report directory, description, or preview	5
Restricts teachers' view/use	4
Poor Pinnacle support	3
Unclear for parents/creates unreal expectations	3
People other than teachers can see/access grades	1
No problems, happy with Pinnacle	5

*Note.* Respondents' verbatim comments were grouped into the categories listed above. Some respondents made multiple comments. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.

Table A27  
Teachers' Responses About  
Edline's Impact on Their Work

Which of the following represent your experiences of how Edline impacts your work? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
Students have greater awareness of their grades.	71
I have increased communication with parents about students' grades.	57
I receive fewer complaints that parents are surprised by their students' grades.	45
I have greater accountability for posting grades in a timely manner.	40
I receive calls or e-mails from parents because Edline is not updated in a timely manner.	23
Parents ask for updates more frequently than the 3-week guideline.	22
There are more disputes from students about their grades.	17
There are more disputes from parents about their students' grades.	17
Parents are notified of changes when changes are not related to grades (e.g., changes to seating chart).	5
There has been no change in communication with parents since the implementation of Edline.	12

Table A28  
Training Teachers Received for Using Pinnacle

In what ways have you received training for using Pinnacle? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
MCPS online training	77
School-based training from super user or grade book advisor	71
MCPS summer training	21
No training	2

Table A29  
Additional Pinnacle Training Needed by Teachers

Do you feel that you need additional training to implement Pinnacle effectively? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
No additional training needed	50
School-based training by super user or grade book advisor	27
Systemwide training	11
Not sure	16

Table A30  
Teachers' Interest in Training on  
Additional Features of Edline

Are you interested in training to use the additional features of Edline (e.g., posting homework, e-mail, calendar)? (Check all that apply.)	Percent of Teachers (N=2,008)
School-based training by super user or grade book advisor	42
Not interested in Edline training	36
Systemwide training	18
Not sure	12