

# Welcome



## Who's in the Room?



# Poll Everywhere

[https://www.polleverywhere.com/multiple\\_choice\\_poll/s/Ua0eZyHQySf0pB](https://www.polleverywhere.com/multiple_choice_poll/s/Ua0eZyHQySf0pB)

# Rethinking Grading Practices to Provide Meaningful Feedback

**Peter Russo**

Coordinator of Special Education  
Long Beach High School

**Serena Whitfield**

Teacher, Long Beach High School



- Examine current grading practices
- Model how technology can be used to engage stakeholders while giving and receiving feedback
- Identify alternatives to current grading practices and feedback practices



# Peter Russo

Coordinator of Special Education  
Long Beach High School



- New York City Department of Education  
Master Assistant Principal, Middle School 88
- Leadership in Education Apprentice Program  
Fellow
- **iZone** Ambassador School for Innovation
- **Teach to One** - Model Middle School for  
Blended Learning
- Winner of **Staples Design Thinking** Challenge
- **Jetblue** Grant Recipient of \$25,000 for STEM  
Education
- 2017 Presenter - Long Island Tech. Ed. Summit





# Serena Whitfield

Special Education Teacher

- 10 years teaching experience  
NYCDOE/Long Beach Public Schools
- Certified 1-12
- Self-contained & Integrated Co-Teaching
- Educational Leadership - SBL/SDL
- Supervisor for Long Beach United
- Technology Committee
- Discipline Committee/Restorative Practice
- “Beautiful Me” Advisor



# Long Beach High School Profile

## Academic Data

- 3,700 students in district
- 1,347 students in the High School
- 61% went to a four year college
- 27% went to a two year college
- 152 Advanced Regents Diploma earned
- 70% of our juniors and seniors participate in SUPA, AP or IB classes

## Demographic Data

- 60% White
- 25% Hispanic or Latino
- 11% Black or African American
- 4% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 15% Students with Disabilities
- 5% English New Language
- 40% Economically Disadvantaged



# Leaders in Education - Grading

Ken O'Connor

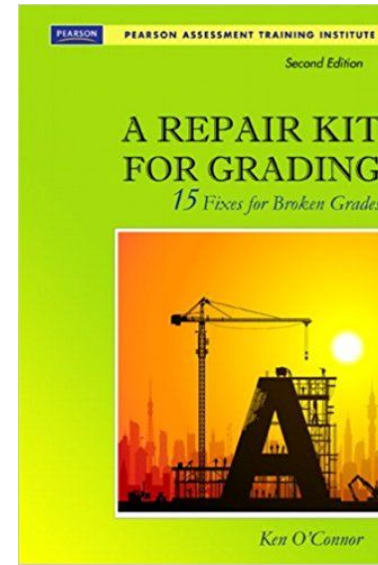
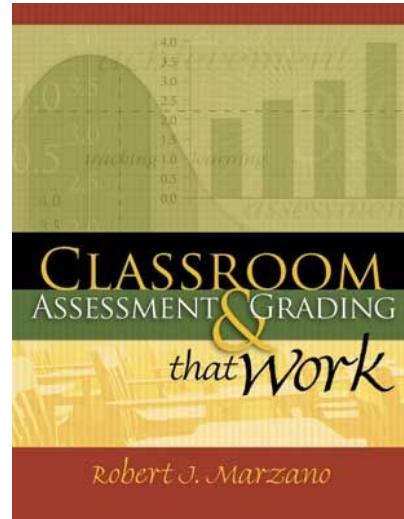
Thomas Guskey

Robert Marzano

Rick Wormeli

Douglas Reeves

John Hattie

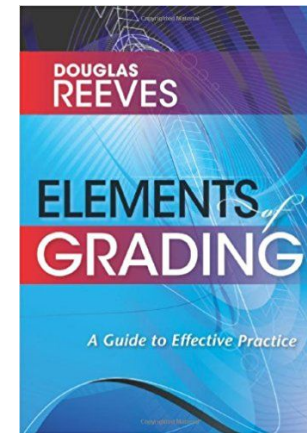
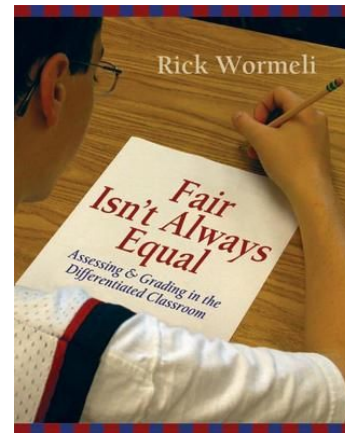
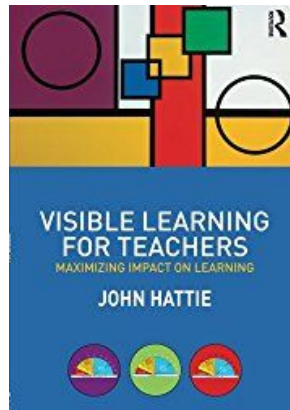
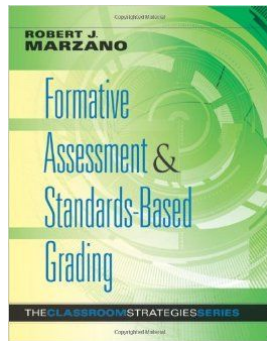


CHALLENGING THE CONVENTIONS OF GRADING AND REPORTING

ON YOUR MARK

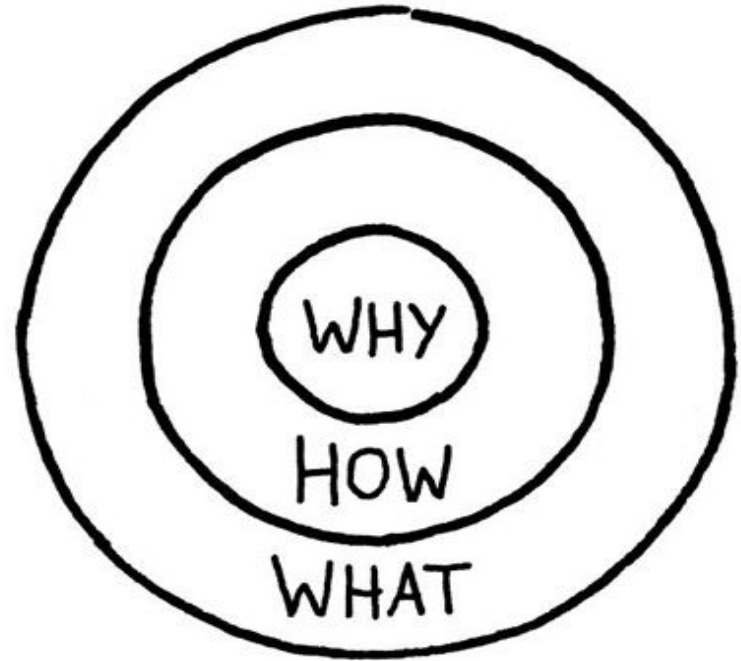


THOMAS R. GUSKEY



# Know your why!

“People Don’t Buy What You Do They Buy Why  
You Do It.”



<https://youtu.be/LZe5y2D60YU>

**Why do we grade?**

**What is the purpose for  
grading?**



# What are grades for?

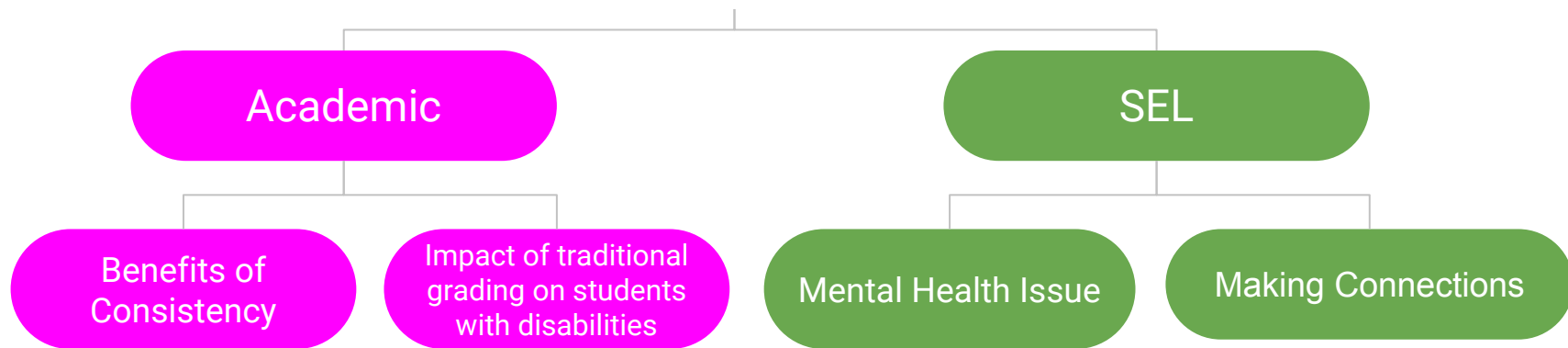
- Administrative purposes
- To give students feedback about their progress and achievement
- Provide guidance to students about future coursework
- Provide guidance for teachers for instructional planning
- To motivate students

Of all of these points, the most important purpose for grading is to provide **feedback to students and parents**

Grades should be **consistent, accurate, meaningful**

We believe that learning occurs continually throughout the year and is interconnected between all subjects, teachers, and experiences. Students should be given multiple opportunities over time to show growth and progress before receiving a grade.

## WHY



**Long Beach High School**  
**Current Grading Practices**

# Create a test

## 16 questions 100 point scale

Part 1	Items 1-10	Ten items that require recall of important but simpler content that was explicitly taught. ( <i>Recall</i> )
Part 2	Items 11-14	Four items that ask for application of complex content that was explicitly taught in class <b>AND</b> situation similar to what was taught. ( <i>Application</i> )
Part 3	Items 15-16	Two items that ask for application in novel situations that go beyond what was explicitly taught. ( <i>Making connections</i> )

# Long Beach High School Current Grading Practices

Grading Category	Percentage Range
Classwork/Class Participation/"Cooperation"	10%-30%
Homework	10%-20%
Quizzes/Tests/Projects/Assessments	30%-80%
Final exam	10%-25%
Regents exam	5%

The committee reviewed current grading practices used at Long Beach High School by Math, Science, English, World Language/ENL and Social Studies Departments. *There is variation of these percentages within and between departments.*

Long Beach School District uses a **100 point scale** for grading. Most report card grades represent **averages** across the marking period.

Under **Physical Education** Requirements, there is a separate grading policy.

# Long Beach Middle and High School Current Grading Practices

The following grading practices that impact a students grade **vary** from class to class and building to building include:

- awarding points or taking away points for missing or late homework
- allowing “re-do’s” or “test corrections” after a test to award additional points
- taking away points for turning assignments late
- averaging in zero’s for missing assignments
- Points for “Participation”, “Conduct”, “Classwork”

# **LBHS Grading Committee**

## Station # 1

How might **Classwork**,  
**Participation**, + **Cooperation**  
be incorporated into a  
students grade?

- In the arts <sup>+ reading</sup> and foreign language participation has a correlation to performance (lots of practice needed)

Helps students overall  
grades + rewards effort

- Rubrics based upon student need

**is it important?**

Participation  
classwork  
can be  
assessed  
together.

- Effort + hard work is rewarded ✓ ✓ ✓
- Participation enhances learning, thus impacting success
- Encourages student-centered learning.

## Station # 5

What should a student  
report card grade tell  
us about their learning?

• Comments + grades → effort,  
whether they are working  
to potential

• Numeric grades <sup>should</sup> predict future  
standardized test scores (in  
most cases)

• Do all classes need numeric  
grades? Should electives have them?

• Comments to indicate ~~success~~ successes  
or areas  
for improvement  
(class specific)

Were topics mastered?

- **number indicates mastery, but  
not necessarily improvement/  
learning!**  
But comments can  
indicate improvement



## Station #2

What are your thoughts about homework being part of a student's grade?

- Homework is important and its significance should be reflected with substantial grade (15-20%) ✓  
Meaningful assignments
- Homework is often given in lieu of taking additional time in class. ✓
- Homework is somewhat important (10%) ✓

Independent practice + formative assessment  
- necessary in content-rich courses that must move quickly.

Why is it important?

- It gives students the ability to do work on their own. Responsibility
- Homework rewards effort
- HW is good practice. Research supports: HJ (@HS level) leads to greater concept mastery.

## Station #2

What are your thoughts about homework being part of a student's grade? Don't like it

Essential as a motivator for work that needs to be done in class/outside of class.  
Hurts kids who don't understand concepts.  
Hurts kids who don't do well on tests.

It's part of class participation. → Grade based on skill level, effort and completion. Should be graded considering the individual child in mind.

Why is it important?

no extra help!  
seek assistance

STATION #2 4

What are your thoughts about Finals/Regents Exam as part of a student's grade? Grade does not necessarily indicate learning.

- 20% for Regents
- Helps final grade
- Common Core courses want 0-5%
- Most non-common core believes in 20%
- English wants higher (~10%)
- Some/most need motivation to work to potential

Highly subjective based on course/area of content.

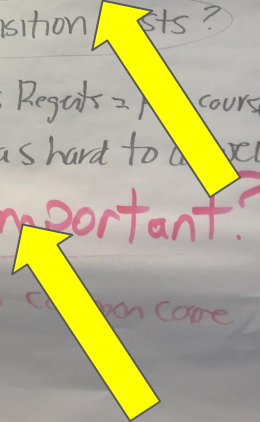
What do we do with transition students?

Student fails all quarters + Pass Regents = 1/2 course

Yes - Students will not try as hard to do well if it doesn't count

Why is it important?

- We don't want to punish common core course students



Station #4

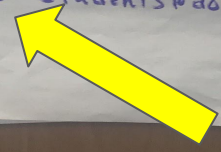
What are your thoughts about Finals/Regents Exam as part of a student's grade?

- FINAL should be a part of their grade (teacher contrived test)
- Regents should not
- IN SOME SUBJECTS COUNTING THE REGENTS HELPS THE STUDENT'S GRADE

Why is it important?

Show growth (final)

Motivates Students to do well



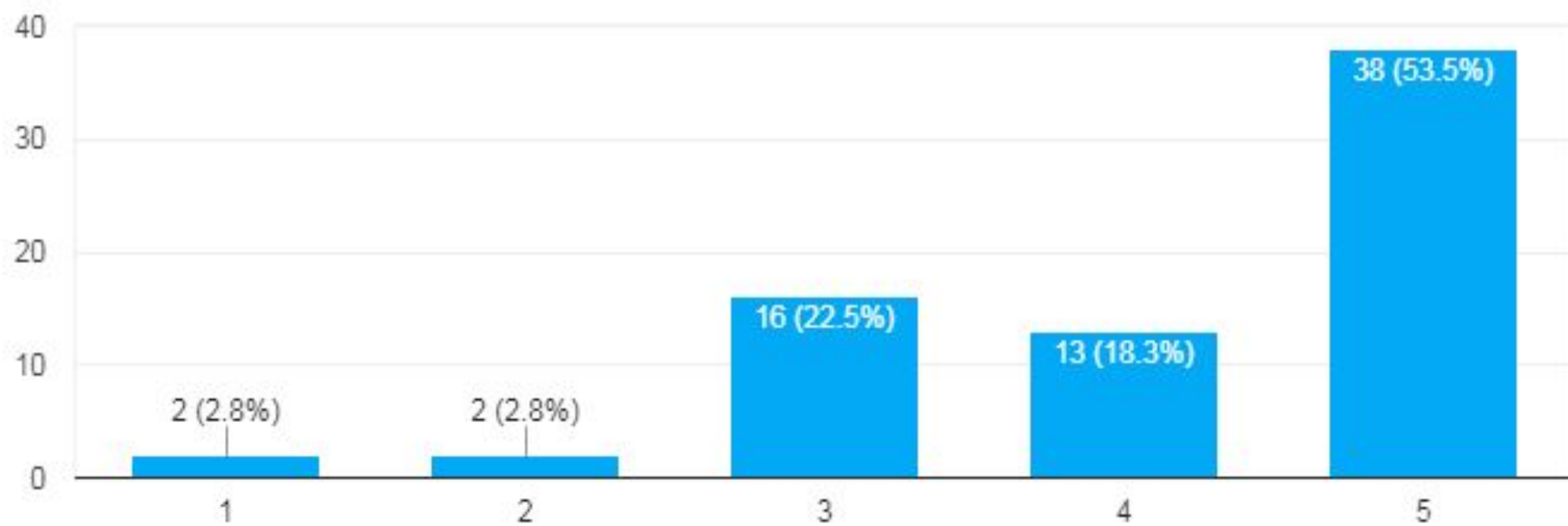
# **Alternatives to Current Grading Practices**

# Alternatives to current grading practices

Current Practices	Alternatives
Grading for behavioral issues	<b>Keep them separate</b> from measuring student performance
Incorporating judgements into grades	<b>Eliminate</b> these practices as they bring biases
Using zero's as punishment	Assign student grade of incomplete and allow the student to make up the assignment. <b>Do not average zero's</b> into student average.
Using a point system and averaging	<b>Using the median</b> of a students score to calculate grades can help eliminate a situation where a few bad skew a grade
Grading homework and other formative assignments	Replacing grades for homework with <b>specific feedback</b> leads to more accurate grades and does not cause completion rates to go down
Grading on a curve	Evaluate students in reference to <b>specific learning criteria</b> instead of their peers
Allowing extra credit	<b>Avoid</b> if possible because it skews the meaning of a students grade

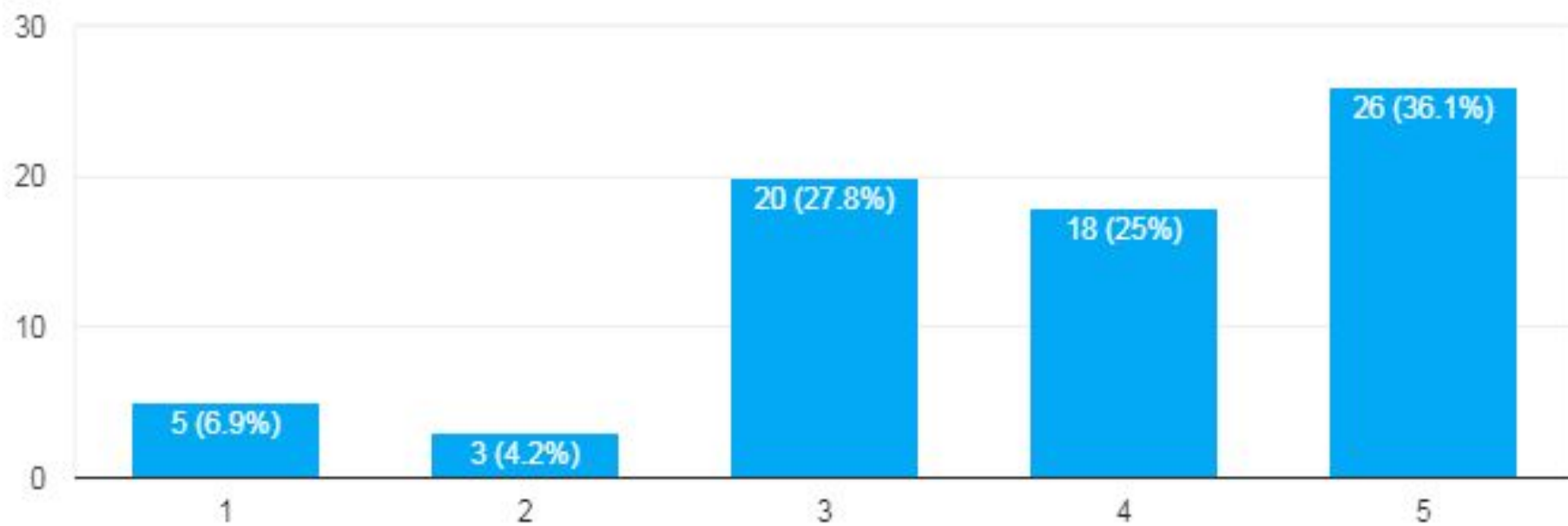
# Students should be able to re-take an exam if they received a poor grade.

71 responses



## Students should be able to hand in assignments after the deadline

72 responses



# The Long Beach Journey Toward Rethinking Grades



Long Beach school superintendent eliminates homework for elementary school students

<https://pix11.com/2018/06/07/long-beach-school-district-eliminates-homework-for-elementary-students/>

# The Long Beach Journey Toward Rethinking Grades

- All Elementary Schools in district use Standards Based Grading Report Card
- Long Beach Middle School is transitioning to standards based grading practices
- Long Beach High School is in the process of reviewing their grading practices





**“We can learn without grades, we  
can’t learn without descriptive  
feedback.”**

- Rick Wormelli

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uAj4wBIU-8>



Where do we observe examples of feedback in our everyday lives?

**Home**

**Sports**

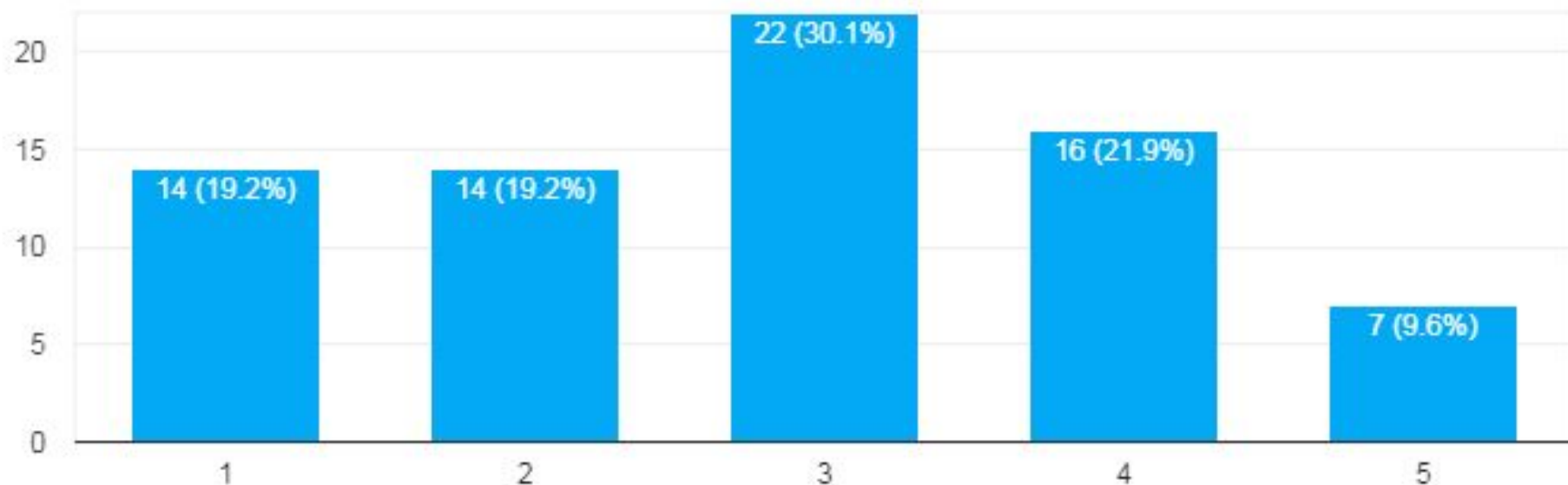
**Driving**

**Spouse**

**Hospitals**

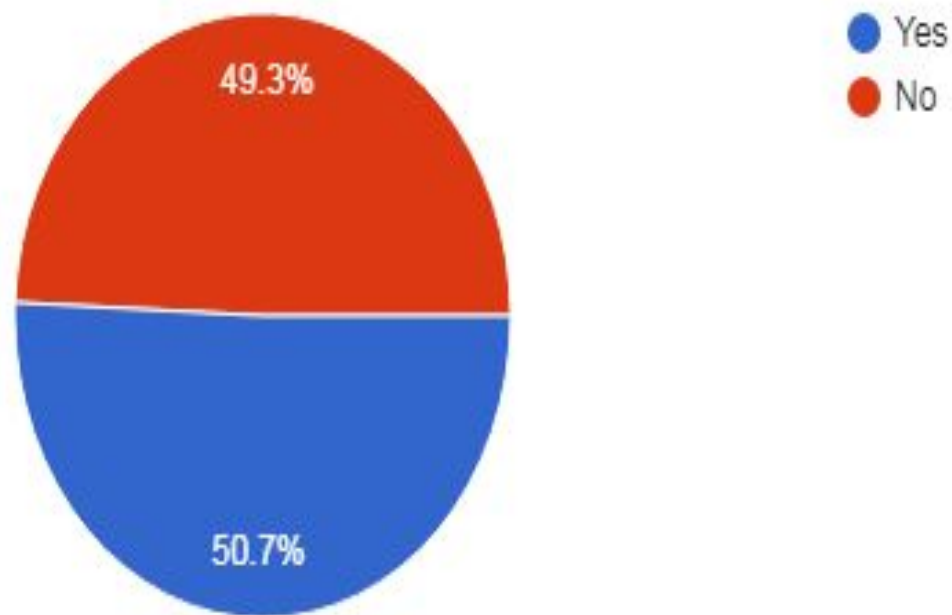
My teachers write comments on my assignments/tests/homework to help me do better next time.

73 responses



# I receive specific feedback on my homework assignments?

71 responses



# THE MODERN SCHOOLTEACHER

DISHEVELED HAIR  
FROM GETTING UP  
AT 5:00 AFTER  
GETTING TO BED  
AT 1:16

PRANK FROM  
STUDENT  
(FUTURE CARTOONIST)

MONEY FOR CLASSROOM  
SUPPLIES (OUT OF HER  
OWN POCKET)

LESSON PLANS,  
PAPERS TO GRADE  
AND GRADE BOOKS  
TO UPDATE BY  
TOMORROW

SHOES FOR TRAFFIC  
DUTY, PLAYGROUND DUTY,  
CAFETERIA DUTY AND  
THAT REALLY FAST BRAT

NOTE FROM  
PARENT SAYING  
TEACHERS GET  
PAID TOO MUCH



© 11/6/2011  
THE CHATTANOOGA TIMES **PANTIE**



**NEVER  
ENOUGH  
TIME**

# 8 HOURS

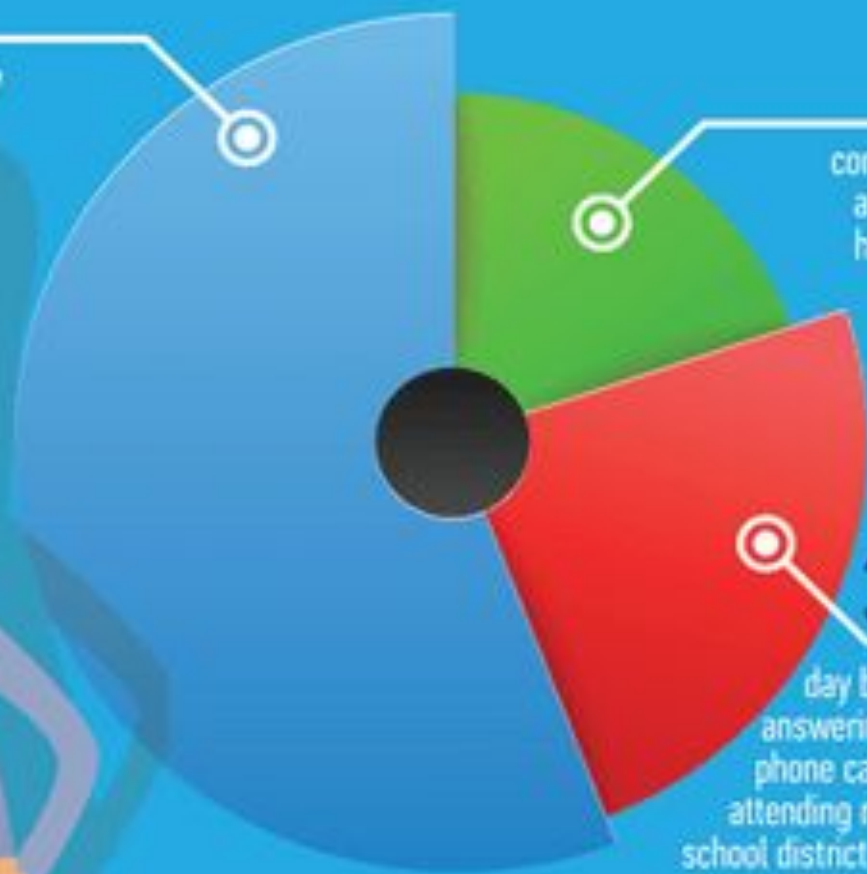
standard teaching day  
(full time)

# 1 HOUR

come before school or stay  
after school to offer extra  
help to those who need it

# 3-5 HOURS

day by day planning, grading,  
answering emails, making home  
phone calls, making home visits,  
attending meetings required by the  
school district, holding teacher-parent  
conferences, etc.



# Student Feedback

Students often view feedback as something that occurs after the learning is over. However, authentic feedback is an integrated part of the learning process.





**#1: Explain the purpose of the feedback**

**#2: Don't provide a grade with your feedback.**

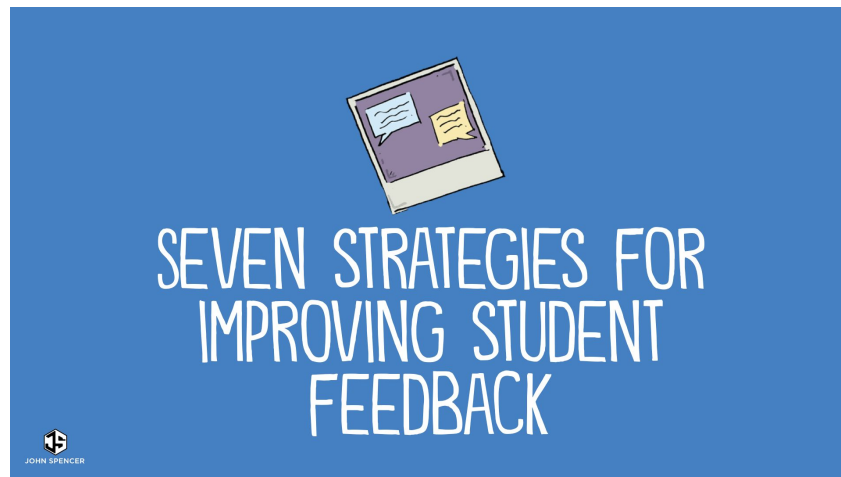
**#3: Provide revision time in class.**

**#4: Build bridges from feedback to revision.**

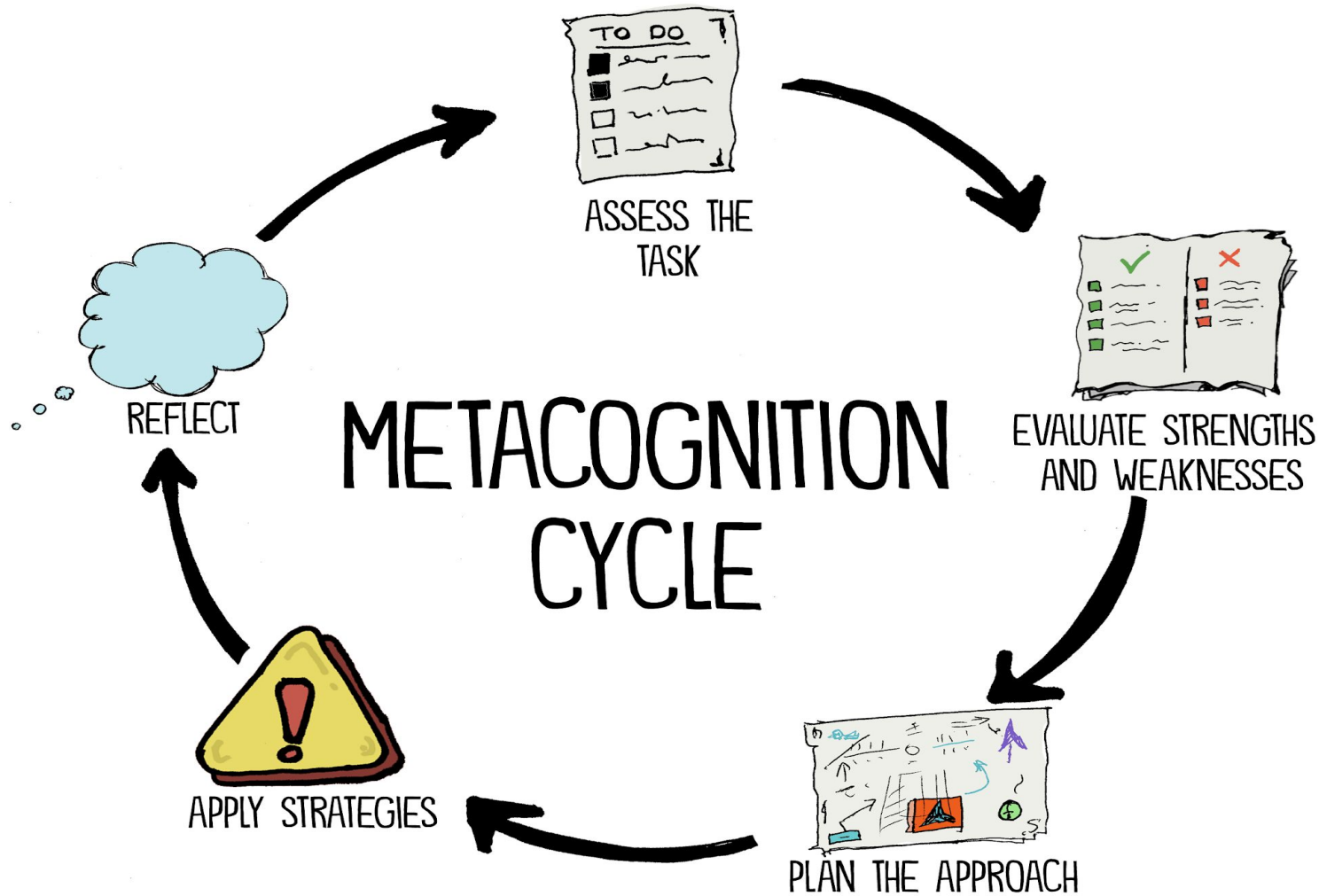
**#5: Use a mix of feedback tools.**

**#6: Vary the Grouping**

**#7: Make it visible!**



<http://www.spencerauthor.com/student-feedback/>



**What can it look like?**

#1 FEEDBACK TOOL FOR GOOGLE DOCS

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# Faster, Better Feedback on Student work

Review up to 75% faster than typing with Voice Comments. Embed explainer videos in three clicks. Track Skills and we'll auto-complete your rubric.

Welcome to the future of feedback.

The various colors indicate a different comment or type of feedback using the Kaizena add-on.

The screenshot shows a Google Docs document with a Kaizena comment overlay on the right. The document content includes a table for 'Volume', a section on 'Pure Substance' with a table of questions and answers, and a section for 'Pure Substance Video' with a table for comparing pure substances and mixtures. The Kaizena comment, from Eva Mastrantuono, is replying to a thread and contains the text 'yes/no' in a red box and a paragraph explaining pure substances.

Document content:

	measure of the amount of matter in a substance or an object
Volume	measure of the amount of space that a substance or an object takes up.

[Pure Substance](#)

Question	Answer
Define Substance:	matter that has a uniform and definite <a href="#">composition</a>
Can salt be a substance?	yes
Is aspirin a substance?	yes/no

[Pure Substance Video](#)

Compare and contrast a pure substance and a mixture:

Pure Substance	Mixture
----------------	---------

**Kaizena Comment:**

Replying to thread

Eva Mastrantuono  
5 days ago

yes/no

A pure substance has a uniform composition. For example salt is NaCl and it will only ever be made up of NaCl (1 sodium atom and 1 Chlorine atom). The text states: However, the aspirin that contains the acetylsalicylic acid is a mixture. If something is a mixture it cannot be a pure substance.

I had noticed that many students were confused on how to identify if something was a mixture or a substance. This was a lesson to help clarify the confusion by providing them with an explanation of both.

Mass	Is an measure of the amount of matter in an substance or an object
Volume	Is an measure of the amount of space that an substance or an object takes up

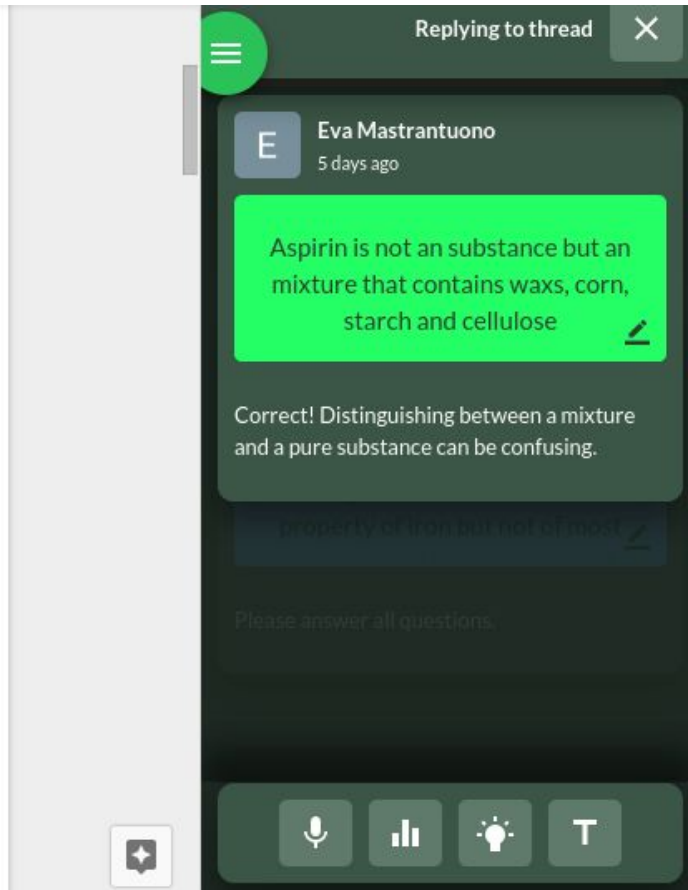
### Pure Substance

Question	Answer
Define Substance:	Is matter that has an uniform and definite composition all samples if substances, sometimes called pure substances
Can salt be a substance?	Its is an substance because its pure
Is aspirin a substance?	Aspirin is not an substance but an mixture that contains waxes, corn, starch and cellulose

### Pure Substance Video

Compare and contrast a pure substance and a mixture:

Pure Substance	Mixture
Specific properties 100% pure	Components that form it Heterogeneous mixtures can be seen with the naked eye



Comments made on the students responses.

# Takeaways

- Instead of immediately assigning a letter grade to student work, **give the student suggestions for taking their work to the next level.**
- Allow students to **resubmit work** based on your feedback.
- Try to avoid focus on grades. **Feedback should move students toward learning;** not toward the highest grade.
- Provide feedback that allows for an explicit action that **leads to improvement.** Specific clarification of problematic issues provides students the opportunity to move forward from the right place.
- Use **rubric** to help provide feedback. **Effective rubrics** contain specific expectations and are a natural tie-in to providing authentic feedback.

# Takeaway - Tools for providing Authentic Feedback

- [Kaizena](#) is an audio tool for providing feedback on written documents. Highlight any section of the document, record, and provide your feedback. Kaizena works best with Google Drive.
- [Thinglink](#) allows users to add comments to images and video. Take a picture of any piece of student work, add comments, and share with your student. Thinglink is perfect for all subjects. For example, as math teachers provide feedback on problems – highlight specific areas where the student misunderstanding takes place and discuss the next steps.
- [NowComment](#) is another tool for use with documents. Turn your text into an online conversation (be sure to use privacy settings) between you and your student.
- [Recap](#) uses video to assign and assess work. Create your class to monitor assignments, have students reflect on work, and provide feedback
- [Seesaw](#) is a digital portfolio tool that provides students to upload and reflect upon work. Use the audio features to help students to reflect on their learning and share insight into their thought process. Seesaw also offers the option to engage in dialogue with students about their responses.
- [Poll everywhere](#) is a tool that allows you to engage your audience or class in real time. Ask the audience a question, then watch the chart update automatically with their responses



**When you rethink the purpose of grading and your grading mindset, you rethink how you can manage feedback to students so that it is manageable, relevant, timely and specific.**



# Poll Everywhere

[https://www.polleverywhere.com/free\\_text\\_polls/w7ewAJnAWM1Uf8D](https://www.polleverywhere.com/free_text_polls/w7ewAJnAWM1Uf8D)



# Research

1. Baltimore County Public Schools Grading Policy  
<https://www.bcps.org/academics/grading/Grading-and-Reporting-Procedures.pdf>
2. Do your grading practices undermine equity initiatives? - Joe Feldman  
[http://crescendoedgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Equitable-grading-Leadership-Mag\\_NovDec.pdf](http://crescendoedgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Equitable-grading-Leadership-Mag_NovDec.pdf)
3. Guskey, T.R. Zero Alternatives. *Principal Leadership*, 5(2), 49-53  
<http://www.schoolschedulingassociates.com/wp-content/uploads/canady/zero.pdf>
4. Guskey, T.R. The Case Against Percentage Grades. *Educational Leadership*, 71(1), 68-72  
<https://next-generation-leadership.wikispaces.com/file/view/GUSKEY+EL13+Percentage+Grades.pdf>
5. O'Conner, K. *Eight Guidelines for Grading*. 2018  
[http://lss.yukonschools.ca/uploads/4/5/5/0/45508033/eight\\_guidelines\\_grading\\_ken\\_oconnor.pdf](http://lss.yukonschools.ca/uploads/4/5/5/0/45508033/eight_guidelines_grading_ken_oconnor.pdf)
6. O'Conner, K. *15 Fixes for Broken Grades*. 2011  
<https://www.gfps.k12.mt.us/sites/default/files/Ken%20O'Connor%20GFPS%20Aug%202013,%202012.pdf>
7. Reeves, D. *Busting Myths About Grading*. All Things PLC. 2017  
<https://www.illuminateed.com/blog/2017/11/busting-myths-about-grading/>
8. Berrien Middle School. *Standards Based Grading Handbook*.  
[https://www.homeoftheshamrocks.org/uploaded/MS/SBG\\_Handbook-1.pdf](https://www.homeoftheshamrocks.org/uploaded/MS/SBG_Handbook-1.pdf)
9. *Effective Grading Practices in the Middle School and High School Environments*. Hanover Research. (2011)  
<https://njctl-media.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/Effective%20grading%20practices%20in%20the%20middle%20school%20and%20high%20school%20environments.pdf>
10. Wormelli, R. *Middle Ground*. 2012  
<https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/WhatsNew/WNDet/TabId/270/ArtMID/888/ArticleID/21/Its-Time-to-Stop-Averaging-Grades.aspx>



Please follow the instructions on how to connect to our “Poll Everywhere”

 Text **SERENAWHITFI682** to **22333** once to join

To Access from your Laptop: <https://pollev.com/serenawhitfi682>