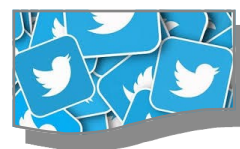


# Curriculum and Instruction Newsletter

See what's happening on Twitter at:

RamPride  
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## Are Grades Reliable?

There has been extensive research surrounding this question over the past century. Studies dating back to the 1800's indicating the possible lack of reliability in teacher grading practices have been examined by leading educators in the field to help find the answer to this age old question. Brookhart and Guskey (2018), dug into sixteen individual studies from the past century to cull together some important takeaways to consider when establishing grading procedures.

- ◇ **Clarify Criteria:** Define the criteria used in composing the grade, specify the weight or relative emphasis each criterion should contribute to the grade for the student's work product, and apply these criteria and weight consistently.
- ◇ **Be Consistent:** Use scoring guides (ex: rubrics), checklists, or point schemes to focus decisions on criteria and performance level requirements (i.e. standards), and share model answers to communicate teacher expectation of student answers. When grading constructed-response questions, grade all student responses to one question before moving onto the next question and grade student work anonymously so as to focus on the quality of work in an objective manner.
- ◇ **Use Simple Scales with Few Distinct Categories:** Using fewer categories in rating scales results in clearer definitions which means that educators deal with a minimal amount of border line cases and misclassifications. Fewer categories allow for better explanations as to the "why" a particular grade reflects a student's work product.

**Getting Rubric Criteria Right** (comprised of 2 components-criteria and performance descriptors)

Characteristics	Descriptors
Appropriate	Each criterion represents an aspect of a standard curricular, instructional goal or objective that students intend to learn
Definable	Each criterion has a clear agreed upon meaning that both students and teachers understand
Observable	Each criterion describes a quality in the performance that can be perceived by an observer
Distinct from one another	Each criterion identifies a separate aspect of the learning outcome the performance is intended to assess
Complete	All criteria together describe the whole of the learning outcomes and performance is intended to assess
Arranged along a continuum of quality	Each criterion can be described over a range of performance levels

## Science Committee Exploring New Curricula

The district's science committee will be exploring new science curricula for grades K-8 to determine a new program. The committee will review various curricula to determine which align with the district's educational philosophy of inquiry-based learning. This process will begin in October of 2019. We encourage and welcome our teachers to participate in this important process.



**“Read. Write. Think. Every day.”**

## Shout Out !!

To the WHHS graduating class of 2019!! Our district realized a 97% graduation rate this past June. Congratulations to the students, teachers, and administrators on their hard work and dedication to excellence in education. Our recent alumni are prepared to face the exciting challenges that lie ahead in post secondary education or in the work place.

## Instructional Toolbox:

<b>Feedback System</b>	Reduces discrepancies between students' <u>current</u> knowledge, understanding, or performance and <u>project</u> learning goals.		
<b>Feedback Process</b>	<p><b>Teachers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and clarify appropriately challenging and specific goals</li> <li>• Assess student progress toward these goals</li> <li>• Assist students to reach goals through timely, understandable, practical, and caring suggestions, scaffolding or examples</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek and contribute to goal clarification</li> <li>• Try out feedback; determine value; request additional feedback if needed</li> <li>• Increase effort and/or use suggested learning strategies and resources</li> </ul>	
<b>Student Feedback Questions</b>	<p><b>Goals</b> Where am I going?</p>	<p><b>Learning Strategies</b> How <u>am</u> I doing? What needs to change?</p>	<p><b>Future</b> Where am I going next?</p>

Visible Learning suggests that one of the greatest Effect size indicators is feedback. Here is a simple guide to assist teachers in the classroom with student checks for understanding in any content area and/or grade level. Feedback fosters assessment capable learners.