Evaluation Brief

Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings from the January 2006 Elementary School Teacher Survey

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Background

The grading and reporting policy was piloted in Grades 1 and 2 during the 2005–2006 school year. The policy intent is to ensure uniform and consistent grading. The three major components of the policy include academic meaning of a grade, homework, and learning skills.

During the 2005–2006 school year, 17 elementary schools volunteered to pilot the electronic report card. The remaining elementary schools implemented the components of the policy, but not the electronic report card aspect. As part of the evaluation process, the Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) conducted interviews, core team surveys, parent focus groups, and a teacher Web survey to examine the level and quality of implementation and to inform later practices. The intent of this brief is to provide a summary of the teacher Web surveys that were administered to gather teachers' experiences regarding the implementation of policy procedures.

Methodology

A teacher Web survey was created using the Test Pilot system. The survey consisted of five sections for those schools not implementing the electronic report card and six sections for schools implementing the electronic report card. The elementary teacher Web survey was sent via e-mail to staff development teachers at 34 elementary schools in mid-December 2005. Staff development teachers were asked to forward the survey link, which included the school name at the end, to Grade 1 and 2 teachers in their school. A deadline for responses was included in the e-mail. Due to a low response rate, the deadline was extended. Staff development teachers were asked to distribute the survey to

teachers again to give them a chance to respond by the end of January 2006.

The overall response rate for the survey was 68.7%. For schools implementing the policy only, the response rate was 62.7%, while the rate for schools also implementing the electronic report card was 73.7% (Appendix Table 1). The majority of respondents (80.7%) were classroom teachers (91.7% at schools not implementing the electronic report card and 72.7% at schools implementing the electronic report card). Thirty-nine percent of survey respondents indicated that they have worked in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) more than ten years, 30.3% indicated two to five years, 19.3% indicated six to ten years, and the remaining 11.4% indicated this was their first year (Appendix Table 2).

Summary of Major Findings

Overall, findings suggest that respondents learned about the grading and reporting policy primarily through written documentation. Most also indicated that they attended meetings, trainings, or workshops on the policy. In fact, very few respondents reported not participating in any grading and reporting activities.

The majority of respondents had a grasp of the intent of the policy and the tasks associated with it. Practices least reported to be in place were those related to special services (e.g., special education and English for Speakers of Other Languages), as the expected collaboration between special education and classroom teachers was reported to be somewhat limited.

Survey respondents generally reported being supportive of the grading and reporting policy, however, most believe that MCPS has done just

a fair or poor job in its management of the implementation of the policy.

While respondents generally supported the policy and the increased detail on the report cards, many indicated the number of assessments required as the least valuable to student achievement and most problematic, due to interrupted instructional time.

Respondents reported that "constant" policy changes posed a challenge to implementing the components of the grading and reporting policy. Other challenges included: a) not having the actual report card, b) for respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card, not being able to enter student data at home, c) not knowing grade-level expectations ahead of time, and d) grading students in special populations. Moreover, more than two thirds of respondents at schools also implementing the electronic report card reported time to enter student data as a challenge.

There were marked differences between the perceptions of respondents at schools implementing the policy only compared with those implementing the electronic report card. More specifically, more respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card attended professional development meetings or trainings about grading and reporting than those at schools implementing the policy only. Additionally, more respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card relied on notices or memorandums from their principals to learn about grading and reporting information. More respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card than those at schools implementing only the policy believed that revisions to essential learnings, central office staff meetings, feedback meetings, and collaboration among school staff were helpful in implementing the components of the grading and reporting policy.

Discussion of Findings

Thirty-eight percent of respondents rated overall management of implementation as "fair." Another 30.3% rated implementation as "poor," and 19.3% rated it "good." Only 1.1% of respondents rated implementation as "excellent." The remaining respondents (11.4%) indicated they did not know or were not sure as to the management of implementation by MCPS.

Overall, respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card rated implementation higher than schools implementing the policy only (Appendix Table 3).

A little more than half of all respondents (55.1%) indicated they were "somewhat supportive" of the grading and reporting policy, and 11.7% indicated they were "very supportive" of the policy. Twenty-two percent reported being "not too supportive" and 6.4% reported being "not at all supportive" of the grading and reporting policy. Respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card were more supportive of the grading and reporting policy than those at schools implementing the policy only (Appendix Table 4).

Activities for Introducing the Grading and Reporting Policy

Respondents were asked about opportunities to learn about grading and reporting that took place at their schools since July 1, 2005. Multiple responses were captured. Ninety-four percent reported that documents or written information were given to teachers (Appendix Table 5). Correspondingly, almost all (91.7%) indicated meetings, trainings, or workshops were offered to learn about grading and reporting. Almost two thirds (64.2%) reported that public information sessions on the topic of grading and reporting were held for parents of students who attend their schools. A little more than a third (37.0%) indicated that the topic of grading and reporting was discussed during meetings of an existing school committee. Disaggregated results reveal that more respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card reported that public information sessions on the topic of grading and reporting were held in their schools than respondents at schools not implementing the electronic report card (79.2% compared with 43.2%).

In addition to identifying policy-related activities that occurred at their schools, respondents were asked to indicate which activities they had participated in since June 1, 2005. Almost all (92.1% for all survey respondents, 96.1% for schools implementing the electronic report card, and 86.5% for schools not implementing the electronic report card) acknowledged having received documents or written information about how to understand the grading and reporting policy (Appendix Table 6). Nearly 85% reported

attending professional development meetings or trainings for people who work throughout MCPS. Similarly, 72.1% reported attending meetings, trainings, or workshops for people who work at their schools. For respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card, 91.6% reported attending professional development meetings or trainings about grading and reporting for MCPS employees, compared with 74.8% of respondents from schools not implementing the electronic report card. More respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card also indicated that they helped organize or attended public information sessions for parents on the topic of grading and reporting than respondents at schools not implementing the electronic report card (29.9% compared with 4.5%).

Grading and Reporting Practices

In an effort to understand the implementation of grading and reporting at the school level, respondents were asked to identify practices that took place in their classrooms/schools. Findings are reported in Table 7 of the Appendix. Nearly all survey respondents reported that grades are based on multiple measures over time (95.5%), student learning is evaluated using varied tasks/assignments (94.7%), grades reflect what students are expected to know and be able to do (93.2%), and grades reflect achievement only (92.8%). Similarly, high percentages of survey respondents reported that learning skills include behavior and effort (84.9%), homework for practice is not part of the academic grade (82.6%), attendance is not part of the grade (78.9%), all of the required assessments are used to evaluate the essential learnings (78.9%), teachers provide feedback on homework that is assigned to practice new skills (68.7%), and teachers have communicated their grading practices in writing to parents (66.4%).

Disaggregated results for schools implementing the electronic report card versus schools not implementing the report card are similar except in two areas. More respondents from schools implementing only the policy indicated that learning skills include behavior and effort at their schools (91.0%, compared with 80.5% at schools implementing the electronic report card), while more respondents from schools implementing the report card indicated that all of the required assessments are used to evaluate essential

learnings at their school (89.0%, compared with 64.9% at schools implementing only the policy).

Practices related to special services for students were reportedly much less in place than other grading and reporting practices. Less than half of respondents (47.5%) indicated that special education teachers collaborate with classroom teachers in special education committee format to determine when adjustments to essential learnings are required for students. Similarly, only 41.5% of respondents indicated that teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) collaborate with classroom teachers in English Language Learner (ELL) committee format to determine when ESOL students require adjustments to essential learnings, and nearly the same percentage (41.1%) reported that they themselves collaborate with ELL teachers on adjustment indicators.

Policy Components. Survey respondents were asked to indicate which policy components were most and least valuable to supporting student achievement and those most difficult to implement. Close to half (47.5%) indicated that increased detail on the report card was most valuable to supporting student achievement. Disaggregated results reveal that more than half of respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card (55.3%) and a little more than a third (36.2%) at schools implementing the policy only indicated increased detail on the report card as most valuable to supporting student achievement. Thirty-one percent of all respondents reported academic meaning of the grade was most valuable to supporting student achievement. More respondents at schools implementing the policy only than at schools implementing the report card indicated academic meaning of the grade as most valuable to supporting student achievement (34.3% compared with 28.9%). (See Appendix Table 8.)

The number of assessments administered to students was considered least valuable to supporting student achievement by 42.3% of all survey respondents. Furthermore, 22.2% reported the technical aspect of the assessments and 17.3% indicated the new homework policy as least valuable to student achievement. A similar pattern is observed in the disaggregated survey results. The majority of respondents identified the number of assessments as least valuable to supporting student achievement

(44.5% at schools implementing the electronic report card and 39.2% at schools not implementing the electronic report card). The technical aspect of assessments was the second highest rated policy component that was considered least valuable by respondents (19.9% at schools implementing the electronic report card and 25.5% at schools implementing the policy only). More respondents at schools implementing the policy only than at schools also implementing the electronic report card identified the new homework policy as least valuable to supporting student achievement, at 19.6% and 15.8%, respectively (Appendix Table 9).

The majority of respondents (62.4%) reported that the number of assessments was the most difficult policy component to implement. Other policy components reported as being most difficult to implement include increased detail on the report card (13.3%), content of assessments (8.6%), and technical aspect of assessments (8.2%). Two thirds of respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card and a little more than half of the respondents at schools not implementing the electronic report card indicated that the number of assessments was the most difficult policy component to implement (Appendix Table 10).

Communication and Feedback

The majority of respondents (73.2%) indicated their schools had an appointed grading and reporting contact person. More than three fourths of respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card and two thirds of respondents at schools implementing only the policy indicated their schools had an appointed grading and reporting staff contact person.

More than half (54.8%) of all respondents reported that grading and reporting information was communicated to them by notices or memos from their principal or other school administrators. Information also was reported as being communicated from the team leader (18.0%) and update meetings (18.0%). More respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card indicated that notices from their principal or other school administrators are ways that grading and reporting information is communicated to them (60.8% compared with 46.3% at schools implementing the policy only). (See Appendix Table 11.)

Respondents reported using a variety of methods to communicate with parents about students' performance as well. Most (83.8%) indicated that informal notes sent home were used to communicate with parents. Eighty percent indicated phone calls, 73.2% indicated interim or quarterly reports, and 55.5% indicated e-mails as methods to communicate with parents. More respondents at schools implementing the policy only than respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card reported phone calls as their communication method (86.5% compared with 75.3%). Interim and quarterly reports also were reported as the method of communication by more respondents at schools implementing the policy only than those at schools implementing the electronic report card (84.7% compared with 64.9%). (See Appendix Table 12.)

When asked about the degree to which parents provided feedback on the grading and reporting policy for this school year, 42.6% indicated receiving "a little feedback." More than a third (39.9%) indicated receiving "no feedback" from parents, while less than one fifth (15.6%) indicated receiving "some feedback." Only about 2% reported receiving "a lot of feedback." More than half (52.0%) of the respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card indicated receiving "a little feedback," whereas 29.7% of the respondents at schools not implementing the electronic report card reported receiving "a little feedback" from parents regarding the grading and reporting policy for this school year (Appendix Table 13). Respondents also were asked to describe the feedback that they received from parents. The majority of respondents (54.6%) indicated that "feedback has been generally neutral" (65.7% at schools implementing the policy only and 48.4% at schools also implementing the electronic report card). Twenty-two percent of all respondents reported that feedback received from parents "has been generally positive," 13.9% reported that "feedback has been mixed" (both positive and negative), and 9.8% reported "it has been generally negative" (Appendix Table 14). More respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card than respondents at schools implementing the policy only indicated that feedback from parents has been generally positive (26.6% compared with 12.9%).

Implementation Challenges and Supporting Factors

Respondents were asked to identify challenges they experienced in implementing the components of the grading and reporting policy. Respondents were allowed to record multiple responses. Seventy-nine percent of respondents reported that "constant changes in the policy" were a challenge for them. Seventy-two percent stated that "not having the actual report card" posed a challenge for implementation. For respondents at schools also implementing the electronic report card, the majority (84.4%) reported that "not being able to enter student data at home" was a challenge to implementing the components. For respondents at schools not implementing the electronic report card, "constant changes in the policy" was the highest rated area of challenge, at 86.5% (Appendix Table 15).

Collaboration among school staff was reported most by respondents as the supporting factor that has helped in implementing the components of the grading and reporting policy (78.5% for all survey respondents, 83.1% for respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card, and 72.1% for respondents at schools implementing the policy only). Following collaboration, "revisions to essential learnings" was the second highest rated factor (41.9%) reported to help in implementation of the components (56.5% for respondents at schools implementing the electronic report card, and 21.6% for respondents at schools implementing the policy only). "Feedback meetings" (29.4%), "answers to frequently asked questions posted on the Web" (25.3%) and "central office staff meetings with school staff" (23.0%) also were reported as helpful (Appendix Table 16). Nearly a third of the respondents (33.8%) at schools implementing the electronic report card indicated central office staff meetings with school staff as being beneficial, compared with only 8.1% of respondents at schools implementing the policy only.

Electronic Standards-Based Report Card

Questions regarding the electronic standards-based report card were asked only of respondents in schools known to be implementing the electronic report card. This section details the responses to questions specifically related to the electronic standards-based report card.

Close to half of the respondents (47.4%) reported that MCPS has done "a fair job" in managing the implementation of the electronic standards-based report card. Another 29.6% felt MCPS has done "a good job," 15.8% reported "a poor job," 4.6% reported they didn't know, and 2.6% reported "an excellent job" (Appendix Table 17).

In addition to rating the management of the implementation, respondents also were asked the degree to which they agreed that the electronic report card was aligned with the written, taught, and learned curriculum. Three fourths of the respondents (75.3%) were in agreement or strong agreement[1] that the electronic report card was aligned (Appendix Table 18).

Electronic Data Collection Tool. About half of the respondents (49.7%) reported that the training they received in the use of the electronic data collection tool was "adequate." Another 28.5% reported "somewhat adequate," 13.2% reported "inadequate," and 5.3% reported "very adequate." Two percent reported not receiving any training in the use of the electronic data collection tool (Appendix Table 19).

In addition to adequacy of training, respondents also reported the degree of adequacy of support they received in the use of the electronic data collection tool. More than half of the respondents (58.3%) reported that support received was "adequate" or "very adequate." Twenty-five percent reported it as "somewhat adequate," while 13.2% reported support received as "inadequate." About 3.0 percent reported that they did not need support (Appendix Table 20).

The amount of time needed for entering student data varied for respondents. Thirty-two percent of respondents reported it takes less than one hour to enter student data into the computer. Another 26.2% reported it takes one to two hours, 24.8% reported it takes more than three hours, and the remaining 16.8% reported it takes two and a half to three hours.

A little more than two thirds of respondents reported that "time to enter student data" was a challenge when it came to using the electronic data collection tool. Approximately 60%

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[1] 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.

reported "not seeing the final product after entering data" as a challenge. Other challenges reported were "gaining access" (34.4%), "entering student data" (ease of use) (31.8%), and "using all of the steps necessary in applying the electronic report card" (24.0%). (See Appendix Table 21.)

Feedback Received from Parents. Similar to the questions regarding the overall grading and reporting policy, respondents were asked the degree of feedback they received from parents regarding the new report card. The majority of respondents (50.3%) reported receiving "a little feedback." Close to 30% reported receiving "no feedback," 15.9% reported "some feedback," and 5.3% reported "a lot of feedback" (Appendix Table 22).

According to 49.2% of respondents, feedback received from parents "has been generally neutral" (e.g., asking for information or clarification). Another 23.8% of respondents reported the feedback as "generally positive," while 18.0% reported it as mixed (both positive and negative). Nine percent reported receiving generally negative feedback from parents regarding the new report card.

Recommendations for the Grade 3 Report Card. Respondents currently implementing the electronic report card were asked to provide their input about the Grade 3 report card for the upcoming year. Since the new Grades 1 and 2 report card is very detailed, respondents were asked whether this level of detail should be continued for the Grade 3 report card. Almost two thirds (65.8%) reported that the level of detail currently used for the Grades 1 and 2 report card should be used for the Grade 3 report card.

In addition to level of detail, respondents 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 25.9% reported "it should remain the same" (A, B, C, and D). The remaining respondents reported it should be something else. Respondents also were asked to provide any additional recommendations for the Grade 3 report card. Many respondents mentioned making the changes to the current Grades 1 and 2 report card first, then moving on to Grade 3. Others mentioned reducing the number of essential learnings that were to be collected. One respondent recommended, "It needs to follow the same path as the 1 and 2 report cards. Having parents learn new codes from K to 1, 2 and then to 3 is a lot!" Another respondent suggested, "The layout for Grades 1, 2, and 3 report cards should be a tri-fold instead of one long sheet. The font should be larger instead of microscopic." "Get lots of input from 3rd grade teachers before implementation" was recommended by one respondent.

Recommendations

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

- Provide timely updates to schools regarding policy implementation and changes so that teachers are able to make changes in the classroom without the changes being seen as a burden.

- Provide more training for teachers on using the assessment tools and methods to assess students.

- Provide teachers with examples of how to grade students using the 4, 3, 2, and 1 scale, including examples of what a response for each would look like.

- Determine a way to minimize the number of assessments that teachers have to administer.

Evaluation of the Implementation of the Montgomery County Board of Education Grading and Reporting Policy: Findings from the January 2006 Elementary School Teacher Survey

Appendix

Table 1
Response Rate by School

Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Response Rate	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Response Rate
Ashburton	85.7%	Bannockburn	57.1%
Beall	76.9	Bel Pre	44.4
Bells Mill	85.7	Brooke Grove	37.5
Brookhaven	87.5	Burtonsville	100.0
Cloverly	100.0	Cashell	71.4
Darnestown	84.6	Diamond	33.3
East Silver Spring	50.0	Fairland	54.5
Flower Valley	33.3	Farmland	100.0
Forest Knolls	100.0	Lakewood	63.6
Fox Chapel	100.0	Maryvale	70.0
Galway	68.2	Mill Creek Towne	62.5
Kemp Mill	63.6	Poolesville	75.0
Matsunaga	42.9	Rock Creek Forest	80.0
Monocacy	80.0	Rosemont	28.6
Rock Creek Valley	66.7	S. Christa McAuliffe	100.0
Summit Hall	60.0	Strawberry Knoll	92.3
Whetstone	81.8	Viers Mill	23.1
Total*	73.7	Total	62.7

* 4 respondents' surveys did not have the school name and were therefore unable to be linked to a school.

Overall Response Rate: 68.7%

Table 2
Respondents' Years of Teaching in MCPS

	First Year	Two to Five Years	Six to Ten Years	More than Ten Years	Total
Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	18 (11.7%)	45 (29.2%)	31 (20.1%)	60 (39.0%)	154 (100%)
Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card	12 (10.9%)	35 (31.8%)	20 (18.2%)	43 (39.1%)	110 (100%)
Total	30 (11.4%)	80 (30.3%)	51 (19.3%)	103 (39.0%)	264 (100%)

Table 3
Respondents' Rating of the Management of Implementation of the
Grading and Reporting Policy by MCPS

	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
An excellent job	1.1%	0.7%	1.8%
A good job	19.3	27.5	8.1
A fair job	37.9	43.8	29.7
A poor job	30.3	24.2	38.7
I don't know/Not sure	11.4	3.9	21.6

Table 4
Overall Support for the Grading and Reporting Policy

	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Very supportive	11.7%	14.9%	7.2%
Somewhat supportive	55.1	61.0	46.8
Not too supportive	21.9	17.5	27.9
Not at all supportive	6.4	4.5	9.0
No opinion	4.9	1.9	9.0

Table 5
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Activities Have Taken Place at
Their Schools for Staff, Parents, and Students Since July 1, 2005

Activities (multiple responses)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
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	94.0%	96.1%	91.0%
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	91.7	94.2	88.3
Public information sessions on the topic of grading and reporting, for parents of students who attend the school where I work	64.2	79.2	43.2
Trainings about standards-based report cards for 17 pilot schools in Grades 1 and 2	50.2	79.9	9.0
Meetings of an existing school committee, at which Grading and Reporting is one of the topics discussed	37.0	43.5	27.9
Information sessions or meetings on the topic of grading and reporting, for students who attend the school where I work	21.1	26.6	13.5
Formation of a new school committee, whose charge is to discuss grading and reporting policy issues	7.9	9.7	5.4
I'm not aware of school sponsored activities related to the grading and reporting policy	7.5	5.2	10.8
Other	4.5	3.9	5.4

Table 6
Percentage of Respondents Stating They Have Participated in Activities Related to the
Grading and Reporting Policy Since June 1, 2005

Activities (multiple responses)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
I have received documents or written information about how to understand or use the Grading and Reporting policy	92.1%	96.1%	86.5%
I have attended professional development meetings or trainings about Grading and Reporting for people who work throughout MCPS	84.5	91.6	74.8
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	72.1	77.3	64.9
I have attended meetings of an existing school committee, at which Grading and Reporting issues were discussed	26.4	31.8	18.9
I have helped organize, or have attended, public information sessions on the topic of Grading and Reporting, for parents and/or students	19.2	29.9	4.5
I have not participated in or been affected by activities related to the Grading and Reporting Policy	1.9	1.3	2.7
I have been appointed to a new school committee, whose charge is to discuss Grading and Reporting policy issues	1.1	1.9	0
Other Activities	3.0	5.2	0

Table 7
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Following Grading and Reporting Practices
Are Taking Place in Their Classrooms/Schools

Practices (multiple responses)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Grades are based on multiple measures over time	95.5%	96.1%	94.6%
Student learning is evaluated using varied tasks/assignments such as tests projects, reports, and discussions	94.7	94.2	95.5
Grades reflect what students are expected to know and be able to do, as defined by MCPS curriculum	93.2	94.2	91.9
Grades reflect achievement only; learning skills are reported separately from academic grades	92.8	96.1	88.3
Learning skills include behavior and effort	84.9	80.5	91.0
Homework for practice is not part of the academic grade	82.6	85.7	78.4
All of the required assessments (e.g., T1, T2, T3) are used to evaluate the essential learnings	78.9	89.0	64.9
Attendance is not part of the grade	78.9	82.5	73.9
Teachers provide feedback on homework that is assigned to practice new skills	68.7	68.8	68.5
Teachers have communicated their grading practices in writing to parents	66.4	70.1	61.3
Special education teachers collaborate with classroom teachers in special education committee format to effectively determine when special education students require adjustments to essential learnings	47.5	48.1	46.8
ESOL teachers collaborate with classroom teachers in ELL committee format to effectively determine when ESOL students require adjustments to essential learnings	41.5	42.9	39.6
I collaborate with ELL teachers on adjustment indicators	41.1	38.3	45.0

Table 8
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Policy Component Is Most Valuable to Supporting Student Achievement

Policy Component	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Academic meaning of the grade	31.1%	28.9%	34.3%
Increased detail on report card (essential learnings)	47.5	55.3	36.2
Number of assessments	3.1	2.0	4.8
Content of assessments	10.9	7.9	15.2
Technical aspect of assessments	3.1	3.3	2.9
New homework policy	1.2	0.7	1.9
Other	3.1	2.0	4.8

Table 9
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Policy Component Is Least Valuable to Supporting Student Achievement

Policy Component	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Academic meaning of the grade	3.6%	4.8%	2.0%
Increased detail on report card (essential learnings)	7.3	8.2	5.9
Number of assessments	42.3	44.5	39.2
Content of assessments	4.8	3.4	6.9
Technical aspect of assessments	22.2	19.9	25.5
New homework policy	17.3	15.8	19.6
Other	2.4	3.4	1.0

Table 10
Percentage of Respondents Stating that the Following Policy Component Is Most Difficult to Implement

Policy Component	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Academic meaning of the grade	4.3%	4.7%	3.8%
Increased detail on report card (essential learnings)	13.3	10.7	17.1
Number of assessments	62.4	66.7	56.2
Content of assessments	8.6	8.0	9.5
Technical aspect of assessments	8.2	7.3	9.5
New homework policy	1.6	1.3	1.9
Other	1.6	1.3	1.9

Table 11
Percentage of Respondents Stating the Following Methods Are Used to Communicate
Grading and Reporting Information to Them

Communication Method (multiple response)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Notices or memos from my principal or other school administrator	54.8%	60.8%	46.3%
Update meetings	18.0	9.8	29.6
From team leader	18.0	18.3	17.6
Other	9.2	11.1	6.5

Table 12
Percentage of Respondents Using the Following Methods to Communicate with Parents
About Students' Performance

Communication Method (multiple response)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Informal notes sent home	83.8%	83.1%	84.7%
E-mails	55.5	54.5	56.8
Phone calls	80.0	75.3	86.5
Interim or quarterly reports	73.2	64.9	84.7
Other	18.1	20.8	15.3

Table 13
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Degree of Feedback Received from Parents Regarding the Grading and
Reporting Policy for the 2005–2006 School Year

	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
No feedback	39.9%	25.7%	59.5%
A little feedback	42.6	52.0	29.7
Some feedback	15.6	19.0	10.8
A lot of feedback	1.9	3.3	0

Table 14
Percentage of Respondents Describing the Feedback Received from Parents
Regarding the Grading and Reporting Policy for the 2005–2006 School Year

	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
It has been generally positive	21.6%	26.6%	12.9%
It has been generally negative	9.8	8.1	12.9
Feedback has been generally neutral (e.g., asking for information or clarification)	54.6	48.4	65.7
Feedback has been mixed (both positive and negative)	13.9	16.9	8.6

Table 15
Challenges to Implementing the Components of the Grading and Reporting Policy
During the 2005–2006 School Year

Challenges (multiple responses)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Constant changes in policy	78.5%	72.7%	86.5%
Not knowing ahead of time the grade-level expectations	57.4	57.8	56.8
Not having the actual report card	72.1	72.7	71.2
Lack of flexibility	35.5	37.7	32.4
Not being able to enter student data at home	64.9	84.4	37.8*
Grading students in special populations	42.3	42.2	42.3
Other	15.1	18.2	10.8

* Does not apply

Table 16
Factors that Have Helped in Implementing the Components of the Grading and Reporting Policy
During the 2005–2006 School Year

Benefits (multiple responses)	All Respondents	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card	Schools Not Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Central office staff meetings with school staff	23.0%	33.8%	8.1%
Central office staff meetings with parents	6.0	10.4	0
Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) posted on the Web	25.3	27.9	21.6
Revisions to essential learnings	41.9	56.5	21.6
Documents to support parent communication	14.0	14.3	13.5
Feedback meetings	29.4	35.7	20.7
Collaboration among school staff	78.5	83.1	72.1
Other	4.5	6.5	1.8

Table 17
Percentage of Respondents Rating the Management of
Implementation by MCPS of the New Electronic
Standards-Based Report Card

	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card
An excellent job	2.6%
A good job	29.6
A fair job	47.4
A poor job	15.8
I don't know/Not sure	4.6

Table 18
Degree to Which Respondents Agree with the
New Report Card and Its Alignment with
the Written, Taught, and Learned Curriculum

	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Strongly agree	9.1%
Agree	66.2
Neutral	13.0
Disagree	5.8
Strongly disagree	3.2
Not sure	2.6

Table 19
Percent of Respondents Indicating the Degree of
Adequacy of Training Received in the Use of the
Electronic Data Collection Tool

	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Inadequate	13.2%
Somewhat adequate	28.5
Adequate	49.7
Very adequate	5.3
I am not sure	1.3
I did not receive any training	2.0

Table 20
Percent of Respondents Indicating the Degree of
Adequacy of Support Received in the
Use of the Electronic Data Collection Tool

	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Inadequate	13.2%
Somewhat adequate	25.2
Adequate	49.0
Very adequate	9.3
I am not sure	0.7
I did not need support	2.6

Table 21
Percent of Respondents Indicating Challenges in
Using the Electronic Data Collection Tool

Challenges (multiple responses)	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card
Gaining access	34.4%
Entering student data (ease of use)	31.8
Using all of the steps necessary in applying the electronic report card	24.0
Time to enter student data	67.5
Accessing a computer to enter data	10.4
Not seeing the final product after entering data	59.7
Inability to save in the middle of task	23.4
Other	18.2
I did not have any challenges	9.1

Table 22
Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Degree of
Feedback Received from Parents
Regarding the New Report Card

	Schools Implementing the Electronic Report Card
No feedback	28.5%
A little feedback	50.3
Some feedback	15.9
A lot of feedback	5.3