

# MCS's Equitable Grading Practices

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EVERY STUDENT MATTERS, EVERY MOMENT COUNTS



# Purpose of Presentation

- The **purpose** of this presentation is to inform the board of the years' long work of the district around **equitable grading**.
- The **purpose** of the presentation is also to outline **next steps** as we continue to **scale equitable grading practices**.



# Our Collective Why The MCS Vision

*Every student graduates with the skills, knowledge, and character traits essential to thrive and contribute to society*



# Our Collective Why The MCS Vision

Every student graduates  
with the **skills, knowledge,**  
and **character traits**  
essential to **thrive** and  
**contribute** to society

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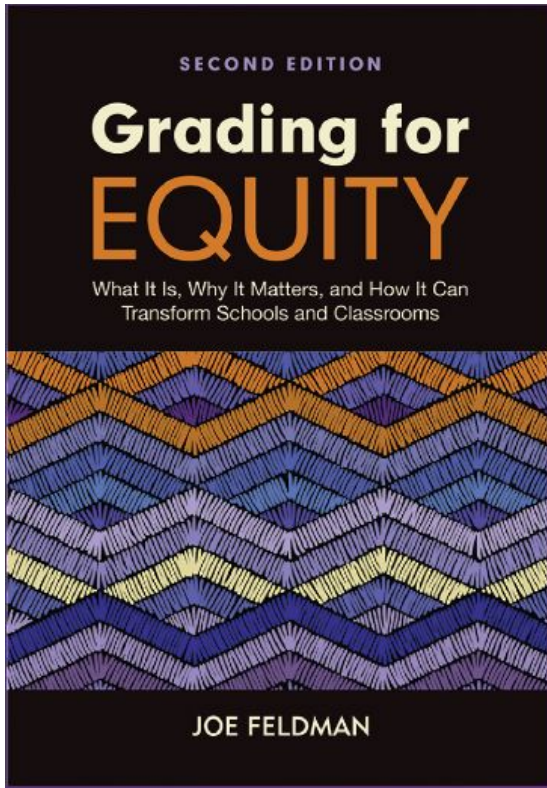
# District Goal Alignment

**Goal One:** Increase and maintain academic achievement and equitable access to enable all students to attain college and/or career readiness.

**Goal Two:** Ensure all employees have access to high quality professional development to support the MCS Vision.



# Equitable Grading Practices



Equitable Grading Practices are defined using a variety of definitions; however, **at the core of the practice**, Joe Feldman - author of the book *Grading for Equity* - describes it best:

Equitable Grading Practices are best defined as **“grading that reflects a student’s academic level of performance.”**

# Grading: A Brief History

- Grades were established as a **mechanism for providing feedback** to students and parents
- Grades were established for **institutions to communicate** between one another
- Grades are the **primary factor** for a high school diploma, trade school entrance, and college admissions



# Why Equitable Grading? And Why Now?

- **Equity** has been a District Strategic Goal for five years
- **Grading Equity** supports a system of communication that is **fair and accurate**
- As we continue to **strive for excellence**, it is our **responsibility** to engage in **best practices**



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading

## ☐ Elementary Report Cards

- ☐ Standards-Based
- ☐ 1-4 Rubric Grading
- ☐ In practice since 2014



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading

- **Instructional Core Roadmap includes**
  - Teacher PLC teams working to identify **essential standards**
  - Gaining a deep understanding of how instruction **supports the rigor** of the standard
  - PLC teams identify **success criteria** for each standard
  - **Mastery-based grading** based on student success for the identified standard



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2019/2020

- **Solution Tree with Dr. Dufour**
  - Site Administrators and Site Leadership Teams
  - Teams attended Solution Tree Conference, changed grading practices as a result.



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2020/2021

- **Grading for Equity by Joe Feldman**
  - Book Study with Site Administrators
    - Book Study served to lay the foundation for future approaches to grading practices
- **Grading Task Force with Dr. Reeves**
  - 50 teachers participated
  - Goal of the Task Force was to examine current practices and explore change ideas



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2021/2022

- **Creative Leadership Solutions with Dr. Reeves**
  - Site Administrators and 36 Volunteer Teachers
    - Site Administrators and teachers participated in change ideas and presented results in a Science Fair Format



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2022/2023

- **Creative Leadership Solutions with Dr. Reeves**
  - Site Administrators and Site Leadership Teams
    - Site Administrators and teachers participated in change ideas and presented results in a Science Fair Format
- **California Education Partners**
  - District personnel and staff from Downey and Hanshaw
    - On-Track work examines grading, graduation, and change ideas



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2023/2024

- **Mastery-Based Grading Pilot**
  - Instructional Core Committee input
  - Initial group of pilot teachers begins the work
  - IETS development of pilot PowerSchool grading option



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2023/2024

- **Creative Leadership Solutions - Dr. Reeves**
  - CLS Coaches with ELA, Math, and Site Administrators
- **California Education Partners**
  - District Personnel and Staff from **Downey, Hanshaw, Modesto High, Mark Twain**
  - On-Track work examines grading, graduation, and change ideas, adding the two sites scales the work



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2023/2024

## □ Pilot Teachers and Beyond Traditional Grading Website

- 7 Teachers Mastery-Based Grading Pilot Implementation
- Teachers represent content areas from **Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Language Arts 7, CP English 6, and AP English Language:**
  - Dee Campbell, Math Coach, CIPD
  - Kristi Warren, 7-8 ELA, Roosevelt
  - Brittany Hughes, 9-12 ELA, Gregori
  - Nicole Evans, 9-12 ELA, Johansen
  - Mark Gonzales, 9-12 Math, Beyer
  - Jonathan Olsen, 9-12 Math, Beyer
  - Mary Vardeh, 9-12 Math, Beyer
  - Lori Gaines, 9-12 Math, Gregori



# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2023/2024

## Status of 7-12 Standards-Based Grading Pilot

### About:

The SBG pilot program assesses grading by standard versus traditional letter grades in ELA and Math for educators in grades 7-12. It aims to evaluate impacts on student engagement and teacher uniformity, in collaboration with CIPD and IETS.

### Teachers

The participating teachers are:

- Dee Campbell, Math Coach
- Kristi Warren, 7-8 ELA
- Brittany Hughes, 9-12 ELA
- Nicole Evans, 9-12 ELA
- Jonathan Olsen, 9-12 Math
- Mary Vardeh, 9-12 Math
- Lori Gaines, 9-12 Math

### Feedback

We are collecting feedback through a monthly survey and during office hours

- [Survey](#)
- [Responses](#)

Of note:

- Less Ds and Fs
- Students are more aware of where they need help

### Trainings

CIPD and IETS offered two initial trainings:

- Dec 14th, 2023
- Jan 11th, 2024

[Agenda](#)

[Training Presentation](#)

### Office Hours

To help with obstacle and celebrate success, we have monthly office hours:

- Feb 8th, 3:45 [Agenda](#)
- Mar 7th, 3:45 [Agenda](#)
- Apr 11th, 3:45
- May 9th 3:45

### Obstacles

- Guidance on evaluating standards from 1 to 4 in each subject area using a grading rubric.
- How are "A" students affected?
- Which standards should be evaluated and how often?
- How are soft skills evaluated?
- What is the standard hierarchy?

### Resources

To support the pilot, we made the following:

- Schoology Group
- Handouts:
  - [Parent Handout](#)
  - [Student Handout](#)
  - [Final Grades Handout](#)
- Videos:
  - [Setting Up SBG Gradebook](#)
  - [Creating SBG Assignments](#)
  - [Parents - Understanding SBG](#)
    - [and Spanish](#)
- [Teacher-Created Deck](#)

### Next Steps

To continue the good work, we have identified key steps to move forward

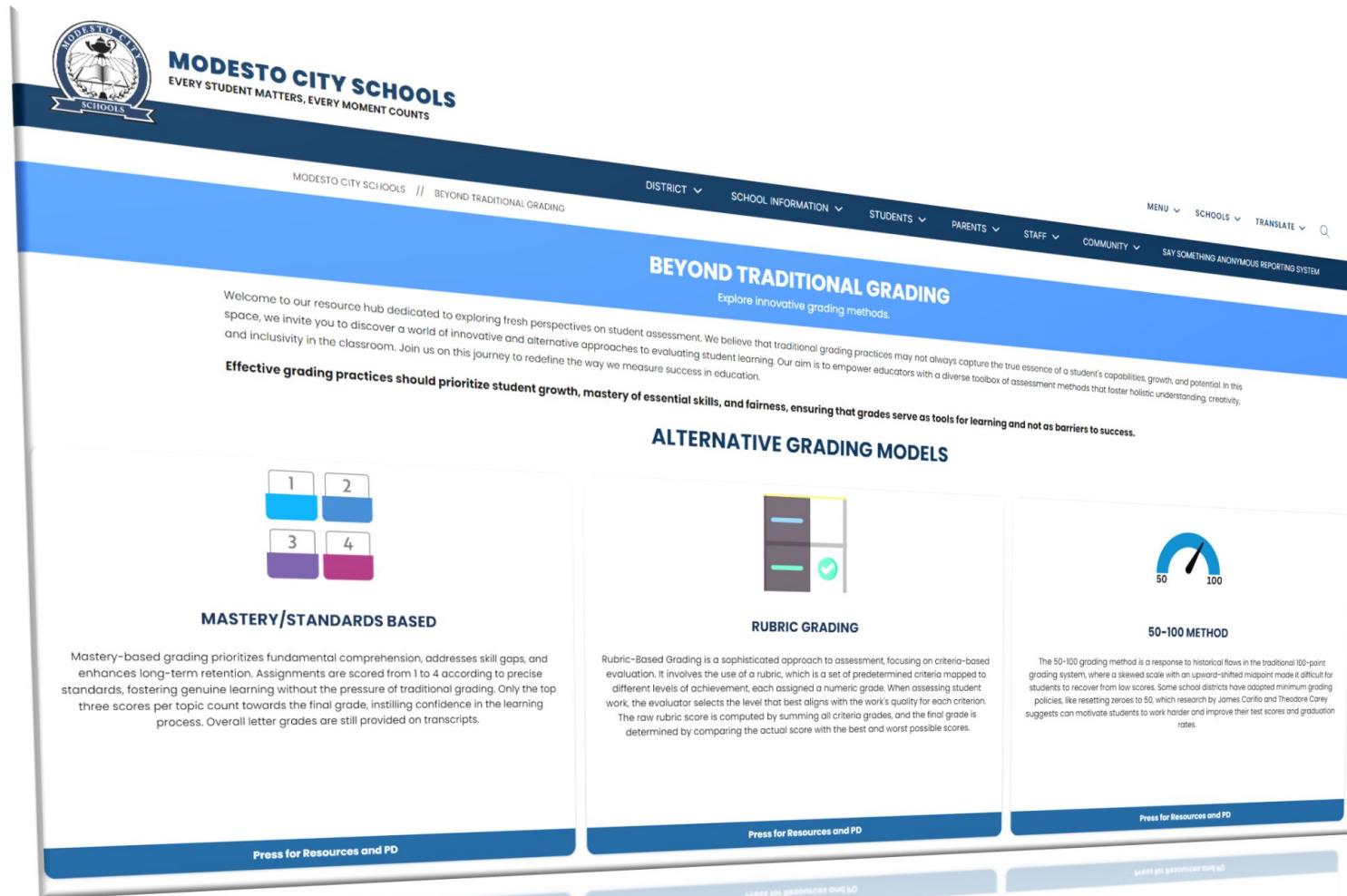
- Setup SBG sync in Schoology and train pilot teachers 4/11
- Develop more parent resources
- Partner with Mastery-Based Grading Teams
- Provide on-going support to sites
- Run more pilots in 2024-25 school year

All standards are approved by CIPD for each course and entered into PowerSchool District Mastery. Standards entered for: Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Language Arts 7, CP English 6, and AP English Language



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# The Modesto City Schools Journey in Equitable Grading: 2023/2024



# Next Steps 2024/2025

- **Creative Leadership Solutions (CLS)**
  - Site Administrators, Site Leadership Teams, and scale beyond ELA and Math
- **California Education Partners**
  - District Personnel and Staff from Downey and Hanshaw, Modesto High and Mark Twain, and Davis and Roosevelt
- **Equitable Grading Committee**
  - Teacher Leadership from each junior high and high school to inform next steps for Modesto City Schools looking toward developing recommended changes to board policy and administrative regulations



# Public Comments



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# Board Q&A



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