



# As we wait for the webinar to begin...

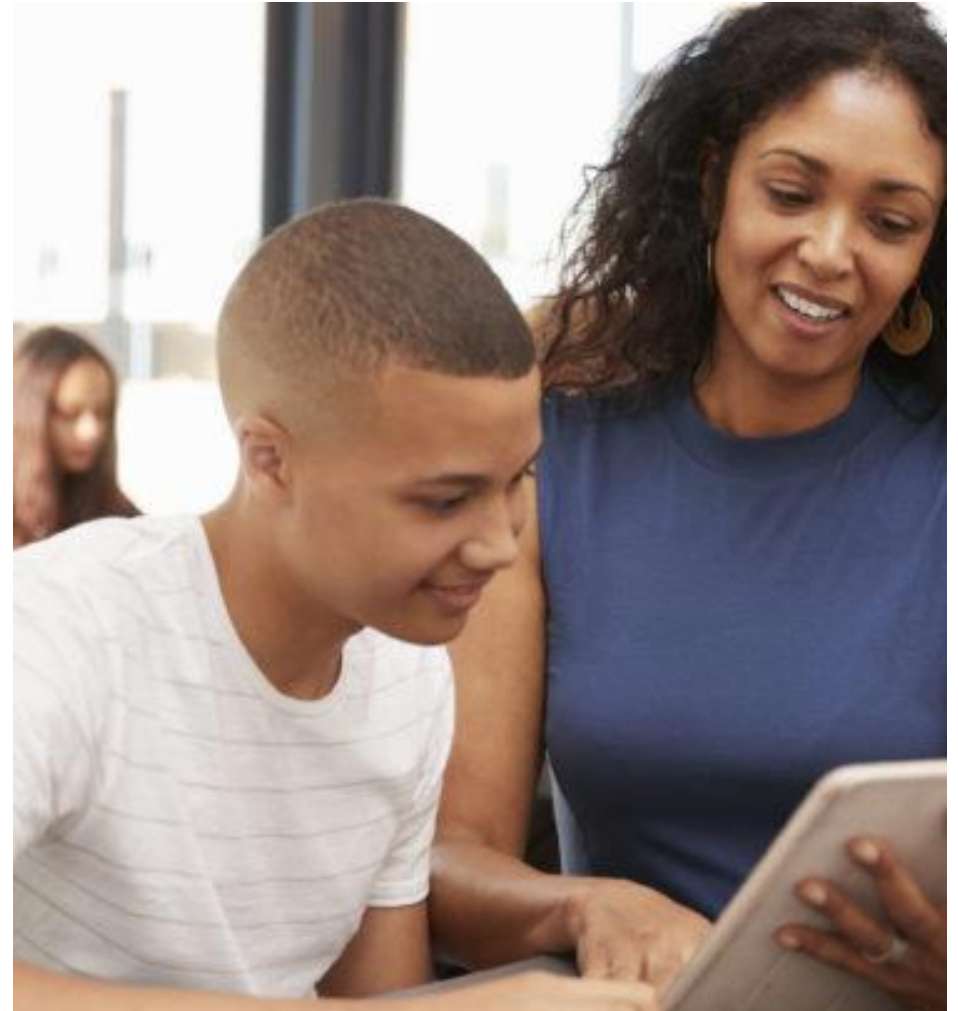
Take a moment to introduce yourself. In the chat box, please share the following:

- Your name
- Your current role
- What school/district/organization you represent
- Where you are joining us from

# Grading and Reporting: What are we learning from COVID-19?

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June 15, 2020





# Webinar Etiquette

- Please mute your audio and keep your camera OFF.
- Use the chat feature to:
  - Share your thoughts when questions are posed to the group
  - Ask questions
- Be an active participant.
- Be respectful.
- Provide feedback.



# Welcome and Introductions

- Good Afternoon...Welcome!
- Thank you for being here with us today...
- Webinar host: Ellen Vorenkamp
- Moderator: Terri Portice



# What is the MAC?

An education assessment-focused, non-profit organization.

A statewide consortium, governed by a volunteer board, serving our LEA's, ESEA's, education associations, SEA, and the community.

**Mission of the MAC...** is to improve student learning and achievement through a system of coherent curriculum, balanced assessment and effective instruction. We do this by *collaboratively...*

- Promoting **assessment knowledge & practice**
- Providing **professional learning**
- Producing and sharing assessment **tools and resources.**



# Previous webinar purpose

To support local districts and public-school academies in serving students in accordance with their Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan.

See: Important Considerations for Student Assessment and Reporting/Grading Policies and Guidelines in District CLP's published by MAC April 2020



# What we learned

- We are in a crisis mode
  - ✓ Order of Operations is key—Basic needs
  - ✓ Relationships/Connection
  - ✓ Learning – what, technology/internet access, less is more
  - ✓ Engagement and Equity
  - ✓ Feedback/Communication
  - ✓ Grades (maybe)
- Primary purpose of grading must be to support student learning
- *You can learn without grades, but you can't learn without feedback*
- Assessment must be done **with** students, not **to** them
- We need to rethink our reporting options now and in the future



# What the audience told us

## Today's Webinar

Equity/Equity of Access

Focus on learning (mastery, proficiency) –

Power Standards conversation

Higher education - how do we do what is best for students to increase their learning skills without leaving them in jeopardy of access to higher education options.

## MAC Resources

Examples of what meaningful formative feedback looks/sounds like

## MAC Reads Book Study

Common purpose for grading among all staff

Common understanding and expectations for students about proficiency to ensure consistency

Utilizing common criteria for grading/reporting

Stopping - zeros, weighted grades, grading everything, etc.

Engaging parents





# Today's webinar purpose

We know that assessment plays an essential role in learning. Schools and families have experienced challenging circumstances during this Spring when they began operating in accordance with their Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plans. Those plans have compelled districts to assure they will “*manage and monitor student learning and plan what’s next for learning including the potential need for summer and supplemental learning.*”

***In this webinar*** we will discuss the impact these changes have had on our educational systems and how we continue to bring quality in grading and reporting practices into 2020-21 (and beyond)—*no matter where the learning happens.*



# Webinar outcomes

1

Current status of COVID-19 impact on educational systems

2

Identify trends in grading and reporting currently being implemented in CoLPs

3

Examine the consequences of these patterns and trends

4

Highlight opportunities as we move forward into next school year and beyond



# Ken O'Connor



- Ken O'Connor is an independent education consultant and author. He is regarded as an expert on grading and reporting. He has worked in 47 states in the USA, all provinces and two territories in Canada, as well as 35 countries around the world.
- Ken has been a teacher, a department head, a curriculum coordinator, and a professional learning consultant.
- Ken is the author of ***How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards***, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed, Corwin, 2019; *Standards-Based Grading Quick Reference Guide*, LSI, 2017; *The School Leaders Guide to Grading*, Solution Tree, 2013; *A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades*, 2nd Edition, Pearson, 2011; and *Fifteen Fixes for Broken Grades: A Repair Kit*, Pearson, Toronto, 2012.

# Current status of COVID-19 impact on school systems

**Respond in the chat box to the following question:**

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**In just a few words, when reflecting about your school/districts' response to COVID-19, what are your thoughts?**



# This is a CRISIS, Part 1

## Overall

- Health—Deaths in\*:

Michigan	5,770+
USA	116,000+
World	438,181+
- Economy
  - Unemployment at levels equaling the great depression
- Stay-at-home/Isolation/Social distancing
  - How long/uncertainty/unrest

\*As of 6/4/2020; New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/world/coronavirus-maps.html>



# This is a CRISIS, Part 2

## Education

- Sudden shutdown of schools  
(for summer school? next year?)
- Pressure on teachers – then, now, and in the future
- Pressures on students – then, now, and in the future
- Internet and device access; Equity



# Pernille Ripp – “Take Care” 5.16.2020

*“I am going to make a few promises to myself as we continue to face this unknown future. I will set a few goals because at some point I need to remember that I do not have unlimited power reserves.”*

*(#14 of 14) ‘To take it day by day, to continue the fight, and to take care of me so that I can take care of others. I hope you do as well.’*

Accessed from <https://pernillesripp.com/2020/05/16/take-care/#comments>



# Comment from Jenna

5.16.2020 10:15 am

*“You have perfectly put into words what I’ve been feeling all week. One foot is in the sinking quicksand of this year, the exhaustion of trying to be all things to everyone pulling me down. One foot is in the uncertain whirlpool of what the fall will bring and how I can stop myself from drowning. I’m bookmarking your words here as a reminder that I’m not alone and that I need to take care of myself. ♥ Thank you.”*

Accessed from <https://pernillesripp.com/2020/05/16/take-care/#comments>





# Global response to the crisis in education

- Online instruction, packets, recommended hours
- Internet access
- Order of Operations – Connection, Basic Needs, Relationships, Engagement and Equity,
- Learning (new?)
- Communication.... Feedback
- Grades (Pass/Incomplete)
- Asynchronous, Synchronous
- Explosion of Blogs, Webinars, Facebook, Twitter Chats, Online Publications, Personal Communications, Newspaper articles
- **Less is more, flexibility, empathy, equity**

# Identify trends in grading and reporting currently being implemented

**Respond in the chat box to the following question:**

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According to your CoLP, how are/were grades reported at the end of this school year in your school/district?



# Purpose 1: The purposes of schools

## Albemarle County Schools Mission

The core purpose of Albemarle County Public Schools is to establish a community of learners and learning, through relationships, relevance and rigor, one student at a time.

## Vision

All learners believe in their power to embrace learning, to excel, and to own their future.



## Purpose 2: Classroom assessment & grades

*“... the primary purpose of **classroom assessment** is to inform teaching and improve learning, not to sort and select students or to justify a grade.”*

McTighe, J. and Ferrara, S. *Performance-Based Assessment in the Classroom*, Pennsylvania  
ASCD

*“the primary purpose of ... **grades** ... (is) to communicate student achievement to students, parents, school administrators, post-secondary institutions and employers.”*

Bailey, J. and McTighe, J., “Reporting Achievement at the Secondary School Level: What and How?”, in T. R. Guskey, (Ed.) *Communicating Student Learning: ASCD Yearbook 1996*, ASCD, Alexandria, VA, 1996, 120



# CoLPs at a glance

We looked at 17  
Continuity of  
Learning Plans from  
districts across the  
state.





# Trends in Michigan CoLPs p.1

We looked at seven of the 15 questions from the Continuity of Learning Plans from various districts across the state.

**We then dove deeper into numbers 4 and 12. The two that aligned most directly with grading and reporting.**

- Question 4: Describe the district's plans to manage and monitor learning by pupils.
- Question 12: Describe how the district will evaluate the participation of pupils in the Plan.



# Question 4: Describe the district's plans to manage & monitor learning by pupils

## Feedback

- Feedback to improve learning is expected.
- Feedback that affirms growth.
- Ask students what format and type of feedback is helpful to them
- Teachers provide feedback on all work that students turn in, but students will not be given grades.
- Use a variety of strategies to monitor, assess, and provide feedback to students about their learning.
- Teachers will ensure that comprehensive, actionable feedback is provided to students in a timely manner.

## Assessment/Formative Assessment

- Use formative assessment results to guide educators' reflection on effectiveness of instruction and to determine next steps for student learning.
- Student self-assessment is encouraged.
- Provide feedback to students to move learning forward.

## Instruction

- Instruction for the sake of learning is our focus.
- Every effort will be made to accommodate all students in their learning.
- The emphasis for schoolwork is on continuous learning, supported by monitoring and feedback, not grades.
- Offer a variety of ways to engage students in continuous learning.
- Provide options and multiple ways for students to represent demonstrate knowledge..

## Grading/Reporting

- No formal grades will be taken or reported.
- Decisions regarding the issuance of grades, and the use of pass or fail designations will be made at the district level .
- Determine alternative options for the student to earn credit. In addition teachers may assign an incomplete grade and work with their administrative team to determine alternative options for the student.
- Assessment, feedback and grading are based upon the principle of no educational harm to any child through a humane approach that is in the best interest of each student.



# Question 12: Describe how the district will evaluate the participation of pupils in the Plan.

## District Level

- Develop a set of benchmarks, measures or data points that will be used by the district to assess the effectiveness of the district's "Continuity of Learning Plan.
- Monitor how many students participate in remote learning options as well as how many students remain throughout the entire duration of remote learning.

## Monitoring Student Participation

- Students who aren't showing participation will be individually contacted and encouraged to participate.
- Report students not participating weekly to administrators.
- Monitor student wellness, engagement, and completion of assignments.
- Report victories and challenges to their building principals weekly.
- Monitoring student learning and provide feedback to students about progress.
- Teachers will contact students and/or families not participating to attempt to understand the barrier or reason for the lack of participation.
- Teachers will keep a log of communication with students and families.
- A variety of communication methods will be used between staff and students

## Checking Understanding

- Monitor student learning and provide feedback to students about their progress is an essential support for student growth.
- Review the student's work and provide feedback on their child's work.

## Student/Parent Communication

- Teachers will contact students and/or families not participating to attempt to understand the barrier or reason for the lack of participation.
- Teachers will keep a log of communication with students and families.
- Secondary level to make sure that they are contacting families in an equitable manner.
- Maintain a log of all communication with students and parents. -If a student has access to technology, teachers will use the instructional platform to monitor student engagement, and completion of assignments.





# What we found

- Common language and ideas throughout these plans.
- Plan components are based on research and are considered best practices.
- Focus was on learning not grading.
- Feedback to students was a critical component and was outlined in plans across the state.
- Use of ongoing formative assessment/feedback was a common area of focus.
- Intentional focus on finding ways to ensure active student engagement.
- Monitoring student wellness, engagement, and completion of assignments.
- Educators have done things differently to meet the needs of the students.
- Equity is an issue.



# Ken's thoughts

- Feedback – “ask,” actionable
- Instruction/Checking for Understanding - school “*work*,” the student’s “*work*”
- Grading – no harm, best interest of each student BUT ...
- Monitoring – barriers and/or reasons, communication log

# Examine the consequences of these patterns and trends

**Respond in the chat box to the following question:**

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What are your biggest concerns with grading and reporting during the COVID-19 crisis?



# Continue — education

- Recognition of the critical role of relationships for connection, engagement and learning (SEL)
- Equity, Empathy and Flexibility
- Grace before grades
- Collaboration/ **STRONGER TOGETHER**
- Focus on what is important
- Giving and asking for feedback
- Providing opportunities for self-assessment, reflection and goal setting



# Stop — education

- % grades and zeros
- Averaging
- Penalties for behaviors—late submission, academic dishonesty



# Start and/or expand – education

- Pandemic priority standards (Matt Townsley – Endurance, Readiness, Leverage)
- Grades based on standards and 2 to 7 levels of proficiency, not methods of assessment and points and %; lowest level – Not Yet/Incomplete
- Student voice and choice (agency) – passion projects, PBL, digital portfolios



# Start and/or expand— education

**Grades determined by:**

mode + more recent evidence + professional judgment



# Start and/or expand- education

- Emphasis on words, not symbols
- **Narrative Reports** are written descriptions of current learner performance that provide useful information to support the educational growth of each learner, since they document achievement on agreed upon essential standards.
  - “NARRATIVE REPORTING” by Ellen Vorenkamp, April 2020



Attachment A: Example for a Single Content Area Teacher



Student Name: Jane Brock Subject Area: Reading

Grade Level Expectation	Benchmark	Focus Area within Benchmark
Narrative Literature Text	Summarize narrative text	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, by retelling the stories and making connections to characteristic of narrative text.
<b>Description of Instructional Activities</b>		<b>Observations of Student Learning &amp; Performance</b>
<b>Comprehension Activities:</b> Read and Respond Stop and Ask Monitor and Mend Question Cards Plenty of Predictions Inquisitive Inquiry Strategic Strategies		<b>Strengths</b> Provides an objective summary of the text. Predicts a logical outcome based on information in a reading selection. Identifies and summarizes the major events in a narrative. Determines the main idea of a text. Determines how details support the main idea. Recognizes elements of a plot. <b>Areas for Improvement</b> Identify causal relationships in a text. Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil). Summarize information from multiple sources to address a specific topic.
<b>Teacher Comments concerning process and self-regulation attributes:</b>	Jane is able to identify strategies she utilizes, such as context clues and decoding, as she reads. She sets realistic goals for herself based on feedback and puts in the effort to achieve those goals. She is attentive during instruction and asks questions when she needs clarification.	
<b>Suggestions and Resources for Parents:</b>	Continue to read with Jane, asking her probing questions to ensure comprehension. Encourage her to ask clarifying questions and problem solve when she comes up against any unknown words. Read various stories and think together how their themes or topics may have been related or different.	

# Narrative report example



# Start and/or expand - education

- A more holistic evaluative view of student achievement – summative primarily but consider the whole body of evidence
- Maximizing intrinsic motivation, minimize extrinsic motivation
- Recognizing the double meaning of grades



# Start and/or expand - education

- More use of conversation as assessment evidence, less or better product evidence.
  - How does this look in an online environment
  - Use of Questions to engage in dialogue
  - Giving feedback orally and in writing

# Highlight opportunities as we move forward into next school year and beyond

**Respond in the chat box to the following question:**

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What is one positive you have observed in grading and reporting practices that you would like to see continued?



# Wonderings? - education

- Up to Grade 8, preferably 10, no subject grades; instead, grades for standards plus narrative communication
- GPA for two years at most and not including everything
- Reconsider the high school transcript, see e.g., [mastery.org](https://mastery.org)
- Eliminate ranking; class rank
- Rethink honor roll, academic prizes/recognition
- Eliminate quarters/terms/trimesters for grade determination, use only for administrative and communication purposes
- In HS reduce the # of teacher/student contacts; means 3 or 4 60 –75 minute classes each day for teachers and students.



# Think about...

*“To put it simply, we have built a national education system at the high school level around seat time and grades, even as the experts have challenged us to think more critically about deeper learning, critical thinking, and problem solving. It is why Washington state has been moving away from tasks, worksheets, and voluminous assignments and instead toward more focus on powerful learning standards. What students should know and be able to do is a far more important question than how many assignments they turn in on time. Now is a moment for learning standards!”*

Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Student Learning and Grading Guidance*.  
Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. 2020. ii-iii



# Recent articles for further reading

- “Covid-19 Is Showing Us the Cracks and Flaws.” **Middle Web** blog May 4, 2020
- “Why Are Some Kids Thriving During Remote Learning?” **Edutopia**, April 24, 2020
- “A dissent on pass/fail grading in remote learning. Douglas Reeves, **Educational Leadership Online**,” April 22, 2020
- “Elementary teachers union ‘fundamentally’ opposes mandatory live video conferencing.” **Toronto Star**, May 13, 2020
- “A school year is a terrible thing to waste. Why are teachers’ unions losing time opposing live-video learning?” **Toronto Star**, May 16, 2020
- “Transitions to Online Learning: Assessment.” Webinar by **International Schools Services**. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSdS1b7RF5k&feature=youtu.be>



# Resources for networking

Facebook groups, especially Standards-Based Learning and Grading

Twitter chats

- #sblchat 9 EDT first and third Wednesdays
- #ATAssessment 9 EDT alternate Tuesday
- #TG2chat 9 EDT Sundays
- #Colchat 9 EDT first and third Mondays

An *Educational Leadership* Special Report | Volume 77.

“A New Reality: Getting Remote Learning Right ”

Retrieved on 4/19/20 from [http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/summer20/vol77/num10/toc.aspx?utm\\_source=marketing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=Distance&utm\\_content=Coronavirus&utm\\_campaign=EL-SpecialIssueApril2020-041520](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/summer20/vol77/num10/toc.aspx?utm_source=marketing&utm_medium=email&utm_term=Distance&utm_content=Coronavirus&utm_campaign=EL-SpecialIssueApril2020-041520)

The Marshall Memo: A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education <https://marshallmemo.com/>





# Questions





# Where to find additional materials



Visit the [MAC Website](#) for more resources to help you along your journey to support your colleagues in becoming more assessment literate.



## Grading and Reporting in the Era of COVID-19

Tuesday, April 28, 2020



## Formative Feedback: Navigating the complexity of engaging student thinking

Wednesday, May 6, 2020



## ALN: Learning Points to use with your colleagues



### Grading for learning: Guidelines for supporting student success

What if students could see grades as a means to understand how well they are learning their learning goals rather than a demand about scores and percentages as an end goal? What would it take to do exactly the whole grading process and involve students in a focused attempt to learning?

These questions form the core of the movement toward standards-based grading, also known as evidence-based grading. The movement is rooted in the understanding that meeting high academic standards should no longer be limited to select groups of students. Rather, educators should make it their goal to help all students become successful, self-directed learners.

The grading practices to support that goal, educators must shift from traditional grading practices to those that:

- align with standards and a student's learning.

Based on a premise that the primary purpose of grades should be communication, not competition, author Ron O'Connell offers eight guidelines for grading practices that support learning and encourage student success.

**Guideline 1: Retain grading practices to learning goals (i.e. standards).**  
Grading practices should align with learning goals (which are used to define standards, learning goals, competencies, or outcomes). This alignment is most clear, ideally, if a grade is determined and reported for each learning goal with its overall grade. Where teachers are required to determine single subject grades, the contribution of each learning goal to the final grade should be clear and direct. Teachers should learning standards, which are based on learning goals, and not measurement methods.

**Guideline 2: Use clearly described criterion-referenced performance standards.**  
The grading supports learning and encourages student success by ensuring that grades represent clear, public performance standards.

**Guideline 3: Limit the values attributed included in grades to individual achievement.**  
For grades to clearly and accurately communicate the achievement status of students, grades must be based only on achievement on learning goals. Grades should not be used to reward or punish students for behaviors that, while important, behavioral such as effort, participation, attitude, or others should be reported separately in a different format. In addition, a student's grade should be based on their evidence of achievement—not personal with that of other students.

**Guideline 4: Sample student performance—do not include all scores in grades.**  
This guideline is meant to help to have a clear understanding of the nature of each assessment and the need for a variety of assessment strategies. A student's learning to understand the difference between formative assessment (which is used to inform instruction) and summative assessment and the appropriate use of evidence each.

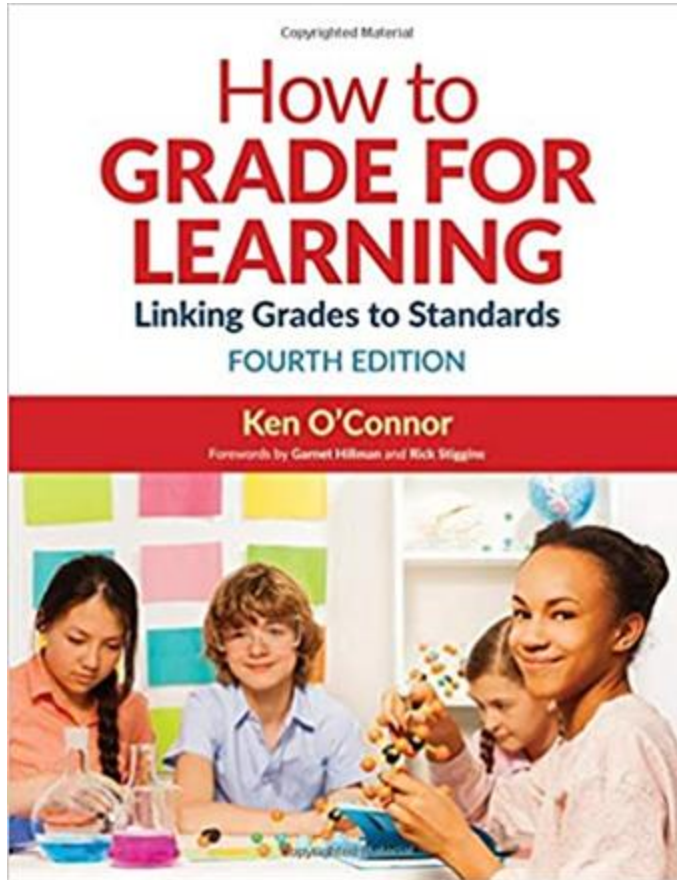
© 2019 ALN | This information is aligned with the Assessment Literacy Standards at [www.assessmentliteracy.org](http://www.assessmentliteracy.org)





# How to Grade for Learning:

## Linking Grades to Standards



“

HTGFL provides the principles and the practical examples that support effective assessment, grading and reporting in crisis learning, in normal times, and whatever the new normal becomes.

”

Ken O'Connor, author

Registration link:

[www.michiganassessmentconsortium.org/event/mac-reads-2020](http://www.michiganassessmentconsortium.org/event/mac-reads-2020)



# Assessment Learning Institute

August 4-6, 2020 (live in Lansing or virtual, as needed) Orientation June 8, 1-2 pm

## Outcomes:

- **Identify a personal problem of practice\***: Each attendee will identify, in advance, a personal problem of practice (PoP) related to assessment and reporting in their *current* remote learning situation.
- **Receive targeted feedback**: Receive feedback on your PoP from the ALI staff, both before the August session and on Day 1 of the event.
- **Plan for a balance of assessment tools and strategies**: ALI faculty will provide information on both assessment *for* and *of* learning during Days 2 and 3. You'll leave the Institute with an actionable plan to address your PoP as well as improved assessment literacy for yourself and colleagues.
- **Register on the MAC Events Page**:  
[www.MichiganAssessmentConsortium.org/events](http://www.MichiganAssessmentConsortium.org/events)



# Webinar recording

- Once the webinar is finished and rendered, it will be uploaded to the MAC website and information will be emailed to each participant.
- Until then, if you have any questions, please email us using the contact link in our website header.
- Don't forget to check out our other valuable resources!

[www.michiganassessmentconsortium.org](http://www.michiganassessmentconsortium.org)

# How else might MAC help support your work?

**Respond in the chat box to the following question:**

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What additional supports will you need to promote high quality grading and reporting practices in your continuous learning plans?

# See you next time!

[www.MichiganAssessmentConsortium.org](http://www.MichiganAssessmentConsortium.org)



## Thank you for joining us!