

## R-A-R #1

The problem of practice for our group is “*how do we grade with an equity mindset for our diverse group of students, meeting students where they are at and encouraging academic risk?*” 'As a research team, we are interested in strategies to provide constructive feedback in order to develop proficient and expressive writers who have a growth mindset. To support our research, we selected the article "Time to pull the plug on traditional grading?" (Alex, 2022). Additionally, we formulated a set of inquiries that connect with our problem of practice to ask an experienced teacher for mentorship.

The reading made a significant connection to our group's issue at hand as it explored various schools that have adopted Feldman's equity model. This model promotes fairness in education by advocating for increased assignment time, elimination of deadlines, exclusion of extra credit opportunities based on irrelevant metrics, and implementation of intervention classes. There was valuable information supporting the implementation of a new grading system aimed at promoting equitable grading practices.

As a third-grade teacher, my grading responsibilities are minimal; however, when assessing students' writing, my goal is to determine if they have grasped the fundamentals of structuring a paragraph or essay. This serves as a foundation for their ongoing academic development. Therefore, I agree with the article that allocating more time to each topic is crucial for all students regardless of their grade level (Alex, 2022). Some third grade students have adopted the idea that completing all assigned tasks for a writing assessment automatically guarantees them completion. However, I hope to discourage this approach as it fails to encourage genuine reflection on their work and opportunities for improvement. My goal is to enhance the feedback I offer to my students by using a rubric that we develop together. The purpose of this approach is to help them better grasp the requirements of the tasks and also encourage them to refine their writing skills in areas such as sentence composition, incorporating details, utilizing complex sentence structures, and organizing their work effectively.

The idea of developing a meaningful rubric came after a discussion with my mentor, Claire Morrow, who is a 4th grade teacher whom I had the privilege of interviewing. We explored the concept of rubrics and their potential to support students at the elementary level. This is a critical stage in which students are honing their writing style and developing comprehension of what constitutes strong writing. Therefore, rubrics can serve as a structured

and guiding tool. They offer students the opportunity to evaluate their own work, engage in peer reviews, and receive feedback from their teacher. The intent is to enhance their work without attaching a grade to it. I am looking forward to incorporating rubrics more frequently in my classroom. My goal is for them to serve as a supportive tool, rather than a source of stress. I hope it will encourage my students to take academic risks and express themselves through writing in their unique ways.

#### Reference

*Alex, P. (2022). Time to Pull the Plug on Traditional Grading? Supporters of mastery-based grading say it could promote equity. Education Next, 22(4), 38-43.*

*Morrow C., personal communication, January, 20, 2024.*