

PRESENTER: Dr. Debra Pickering is a private consultant working with schools and districts nationally and internationally. During more than 30 years in education, she's gained practical experience as a classroom teacher, a building leader, and a district administrator. Dr. Pickering has used this experience to provide training and support to K-12 teachers and administrators as they seek to continually improve student learning. In addition to her work with schools, Dr. Pickering has coauthored, with Robert Marzano, educational books and manuals, including *Dimensions of Learning*, and more recently *Classroom Instruction That Works*, *Classroom Management That Works*, and *Building Academic Vocabulary*, all published through ASCD. With a culmination of theoretical grounding and over three decades of practical experience in the real world, Dr. Pickering has worked with educators to translate theory into practice. Her work continues to focus on the study of learning and on the development of resources for curriculum, instruction, and assessment that can help all educators continue to meet the needs of students K-12. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Debra Pickering.

DEBRA PICKERING: Sorry, I took the mic off, forgot to put it back on again. I didn't want to wear it into the restroom. I did that one time, that's not pretty. So I'm very, very careful now. I'm happy to be here and have a chance -- one of my favorite topics, talking about assessment and grading practices. Because these are things we've been doing for decades and we're -- all over the country, people are starting to say, do we need to talk about assessment and grading in a different way? And the answer is probably somewhat -- I mean, you have to have the side -- because it's frustrating when you're not getting all the results that you want and you have to look at every aspect of your system.

I'm working with quite a number of schools and some of them have been low-performing for a long time, and they're working very hard. And we don't even know what to do anymore in order to keep getting better. People are working hard, they're good people, they're good teachers. But they said, you know, we have some brand new teachers and, you know, brand new teachers may not be up to what they're going to be those first or second years of teaching.

Anyone in here who's taught for a long time, have you ever wanted to call up the kids you taught your first or second year and say, I'm really sorry? Not about everything, but there was some days I don't know what I was thinking. You give it your best shot, and you know, you get better, but you know, when they're saying we have new teachers, we have some teachers

that are getting better, but we still don't seem to be performing the way we want to. What should we do? Do we have to change everything? Wouldn't it be great if we had, you know, all these students coming in with folded arms, just looking at us, wanting to learn every second of the day?

The thing is, we can't change all of that. The game is what it is. How many of you have seen the movie Moneyball? Anyone seen Moneyball? See, ladies, Brad Pitt is in Moneyball and he's looking real cute in that movie. There's a great line in there. It's a baseball movie, but there's a great line because Brad Pitt is the manager of the baseball team, goes to the owners and say, we can't win with this team. We've got to have new players, we've got to have -- you know, and the owners said, you don't get any more money. You don't get any more resources. And so what he had to do is sort of re-think the game.

And there's a wonderful line near the end of the movie where Brad Pitt says, if we win with this team, we will have changed the game forever. And when I heard that I said, that's what it's about. We have to say, what are we trying to do here? And what is the best way to do it? So everything is on the table. There's no assumption that this is how we assess, this is how we grade. Everything's on the table. And it doesn't mean everything has to be changed, it just means we have to sort of go, let's think about this a little bit differently.

Do this for me just to start. Here's a question. I want you to discuss it at the table. You know what would be helpful? Some of you probably remember I usually do this, but everyone please raise your right hand. Would you point your index finger? And when I count to three, would you point to your table leader? One, two, three. Okay! Here's the game. You have to win with your team.

Table leaders, your job is to keep your table on task for the next, you know, 55 minutes here. Here's what I mean. During this time, I am going to give you some chances to kind of process out loud, but because there are a number of points I want to make to kind of tell a story here, table leaders, you help me bring every back. So when I give the sign, come back together, help me bring everyone back. Encourage everyone to participate when you're talking. And yeah, keep everyone -- you know, you have a lot of responsibility, just no power. But you're used to that. You should be fine. Okay?

Now facilitate the conversation, answering the questions, what are the major flaws in our present system of assessment and grading? And what practices or policies do you believe should be maintained? In other words, some people say, hey, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Well, there are some flaws that we need to fix, but in that process of fixing it, what is it that you hope does not go away? I'm only going to give you about, oh, a minute, a minute and a half here to just brainstorm some of the flaws. And see if you agree at your table. Table leaders, take over and watch for the sign for everyone to come back, okay? Go.

Okay, come on back, please. Thank you. Here's the sign. Thanks. Now let me add one more layer to that question. One of the things that we hear a lot are the flaws of the other kind of assessment, not classroom assessment, but standardized tests, that kind of assessment. And we hear really common complaints, which I think, you know, I totally understand and we have made the same complaints. Many of you know I work with Bob Marzano, Marzano Research Lab. And there's a team of us and we talk a lot about and study and do the research, and look at the research around assessment and say, what really has to happen to make it make a difference? Standardized tests, we hear from all over the country. Come on! These are just really, you know, kind of sometimes our enemy. But actually, that gives us some good information if we use it properly.

But the flaws that we hear, the flaws that we hear are things like this. They're just a snapshot, a point in time, and don't represent gain. So it's, you know, flat-out here's what the student -- yeah, but look how much they've gained. Things like they turn student learning into a number. And I've seen t-shirts, don't make me a number, which is the accusation against standardized tests. Students with different abilities have to take the same test. Results are used to help individual students, they label students, don't provide good feedback. They assess lots of memorization and other lower-level knowledge. They can do harm to students' self-esteem. I've heard people say, you know, the student was miserable during that, knowing I can't do this. And we hear those a lot. We hear those a lot. Now we could discuss these, but here's what I really want for you to do.

Just take a minute. When you look at the flaws in classroom assessments and grading, to what extent would some of those same things be also true of classroom assessment and grading? Which of things would you actually pull over and say, ah! We have some of the same problems when we do the classroom assessments, which we control a little bit more. Take a

minute and see the extent to which you think some of the ones on the left could actually be pulled over to the right-hand side as well with a different explanation. Go!

Okay! Thank you. Again, I know you're not finished with the conversation. By the way, some of you are looking at the handout and you don't see this in the handout. The handout has some key slides. What I recommend, however, because I do different orders -- I'm sorry, I'm a little random. I'll be sequential for you, but I change my mind about the order of things. So if I were you, I'd kind of put the handout aside. Know there are some key slides. All of these slides will be posted on the web, so you can go back to them. And the main thing I want you to concentrate on all your colleagues sitting at the table right now as I make some key points, okay? Thanks.

If you said some of these can be pulled over, well here's the good news. These assessment approaches on the right we actually have more control over. We can change those. Some of the ones on the left, I'm not sure we can. You know, we try, but I'm not sure we can change some of those things. But on the right, we can. So let's make sure that we do what we know we have control over. And individual teachers have, I think, some more autonomy than they think sometimes. Sometimes it doesn't feel like it. So kind of keep that in mind as we proceed.

The major topics I want to, you know, kind of build again a little story, a little process here. I hope you increase your understanding of the foundations that it takes to make the changes in the assessment and grading. Also, very briefly the research. Remember, you have the slides, so if you want to say -- people sometimes say, wait a minute! What's the data behind any of this? It's there. So I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it. I want you to know it's there. A vision for formative classrooms and the grading implications, which actually the grading implications mainly is going to be in the breakout section. But I'm going to address those as we proceed. But digging deeper into those in the breakout section, okay?

So let's look at foundations for success. There are three things. I don't care what you're doing in your classrooms, there are three things that we know are foundations that increase the chances that you're going to be successful. One is clear guidelines for collegiality and professionalism. Another one is having an evidence-based practice, the reflective practice. And the third is a shared commitment to clearly-articulated curriculum goals and instructional goals.

And I'm going to mainly talk about instructional goals. That's the last thing on that list, is really the focus.

But let me say a couple of things about collegiality and professionalism. If you're going to start messing with what happens in the classrooms in assessment, just classroom tests, classroom assessment, and grading practices, you've got to have a strong sense of collegiality. I was working, actually earlier this week, in a school where they're trying to make these changes, and what's breaking down is there isn't a collegial atmosphere. So it's hard to have hard conversations. Collegiality is a key. And collegiality is different than congeniality. Congeniality, love it. Love when everyone gets along and likes each other and we laugh a lot. But collegiality means we can have the hard conversations. In fact, the research says when congeniality gets too important, collegiality suffers. Because we're so caught up in making everybody happy, don't make any waves, okay, let's agree to disagree. We don't have the hard conversations.

So one question I always ask people is, how strong are your professional norms? And how strong is your collegiality? Here's some examples. This is not a magical seven, here's an example of professional norms. Sorry. Now again, this is not a magical seven, it's one -- it's seven I've collected over the years. And what we know when schools not only just have these, but use them, I don't mean someone nice calligraphy and put it in a frame and put it on the faculty lounge and the first-year teachers have to read them. I'm saying that these actually affect your behavior, you're much more likely to make changes in the name of students. Look at number two, foundational beliefs. Do you have foundational beliefs? These are not magical, these are some.

Now again, when I go to school I say, wait a minute. What do you believe about learning? Because that's going to affect your decisions here. That's going to -- don't have your decisions made by the person who speaks the loudest or the most frequently or with domination. It's based on your beliefs.

Now these, these can get pretty lively conversations. Look at students learn in different time frames. Does everyone believe that? Yeah. A lot of times we say, oh, kids need some help. Send them down the hall for intervention because -- they're fine. They learn in different time frames. And if we really honored that, we might have some different ways of talking about it and policies that are there. So we want to make sure that we honor that.

There's a school that's having a very lively conversation right now because here's the policy that is recommended from the formative assessment research. If I've worked at a school, at that school, and they had this in there, students learn in different time frames, I could not have this policy. I could not say to kids, kids, I will test you. If you don't do well, come see me. I will re-test you, then I'll average those two scores. That violates number three. See, if a student comes back and said, I want to be reassessed on that because I've learned it, and I reassess them and they show me, that's their score for what I was assessing.

Now do you think that starts some lively conversations? Yeah. Go back to your professional norms, you'd better have them in place. My message to the school is if I can have a policy that I average those two scores, or if I could have a policy at your school that says, kids, I told you when the test was going to be, that's your chance, and it's over, if I can do that, then erase number three from your list. Don't have it on your list and then violate it. That's the most important thing.

So actually, when you start with beliefs about learning, some of the things that we do, you go -- we'll keep doing. Other things that you do, you'd stop doing. I'm going to make some suggestions now that you go, really? And you say, yeah! If you believe that, because some of the things that we do -- I don't know about you, but some of the things we do around the country in terms of assessment and grading violate those. And so let's bring those back and make sure we have lively conversations. Just one minute at your table. To what extent do you think you live in a -- live do you -- well, kind of live. Do you work in a culture that has professional norms and clear beliefs about learning that drive your decisions? Four means you're really good at that, one means not so much, we kind of get along and have good donuts, but that's it. Okay? One minute at your table and then I'm going to interrupt you. Go.

Okay? Thank you. If you can hear me, raise your hand. Thanks. Again, I know these are longer conversations, I get that, but these are very long conversations. They should never end. You always have to come back and say, do we really live what we believe? And that's the key. Because the rest of the recommendations people are making, of course you would do them if you believed these things.

As you look at foundations for success, that first one there is collegiality and professionalism. The second one, evidence-based reflective practice, I'm not going to in this format talk about that one. Let's look at the third one, shared commitment to clearly articulated

curriculum goals and instructional goals. See, the curriculum goals one -- excuse me. The curriculum goals, I think people are getting stronger and stronger about those since we've had standards. You have state standards, the thing that people are talking about now. So what are the learning goals that are essential for student success? Certainly you go to your standards, and a lot of people are going right here. Common core is coming, it's being implemented, people are looking at it, you know, and say, what is the learning that is there? So I actually think there's a movement that's pretty strong in the country to make sure that we have essential learning goals and that we all commit to those. And I think that we continue to try to do that. So I'm not going to spend time on that. Just know that I think if we actually are going to implement those curriculum goals, we'd better get the instructional goals in place. Because if we do not, then things are going to implode. Those of you familiar with the curriculum -- with common core probably know some of those are pretty tough. So we'd better have a formative approach or we're setting ourselves up for frustration in doing that. So again, I'm not going to spend time going over common core. You know common core. You know it is there. You know what assessments are coming and that most of the country is doing that.

So let's look at the one that people don't talk about as much. How about your commitment to clearly articulated instructional goals? In other words, if I came to work for you, what are the areas of instruction that you would say to me, Debra, you have a lot of autonomy here, but you need to work in these areas of instruction and keep getting better. What are those areas that are so important that we all need to work on? We don't all have to do it the same way, we all need to work on. I mean, when I make my list, I go to -- when I ask the question, what are the essential areas of teacher expertise that are essential for student success, I go to the research. And the research, you don't have to go here, but I go to *The Art and Science of Teaching*, which captures the areas of teacher expertise written by Bob Marzano, my colleague, who says these research tells us these are worth your time.

So if you're in a culture that already commits to certain instructional areas of expertise, you're in good shape. If you don't, I'd start there. Because when we start to talk about assessment and feedback and grading practices, that's an area of instructional goals that's critical. So let me just take one out of this whole list here, just one, the whole area of learning goals and feedback.

I know I was looking at Grant Wiggins' handout, and I know Grant's work, he's been talking about feedback to you a lot. So I know that's not new, but I tell you what, it's such the critical variable here to make sure that we're successful. So if we look at the research for that, for formative feedback, it's very profound, the research around formative assessment.

John Hattie reviewed in 1990s about 8,000 studies on learning and instruction. He's one of the most influential educators in the world. And when he looked at research and instruction and said, here's some instructional goal areas, here's what he said. He looked at thousands of studies and said, feedback, feedback, feedback. Now that was in the 1990s. Let's see what he said in 2009. That was the powerful statement for me. When we assess, it's to get feedback that teachers and students share in order to then know what to do next. He said, make sure assessment and grading does not mean you're keeping score. Instead, make sure that what you're doing is assessing in order to know what to do next. That was powerful.

Now again, there are a lot of research that says if you improve your assessment, look, student achievement goes up. Again, I told you, I'm flipping through these quickly because I want you to know they're there in the slides that you have. You increase your ability to use assessment for feedback, student achievement goes up. Get better, achievement goes up more. The research is absolutely there as we start to proceed. The research tells us feedback has to make sure that the feedback from assessments -- that students have a clear picture of their progress on learning goals and how they might improve. We know that to be true.

Feedback from classroom assessment should encourage students to improve, not think we're done, you had the test, now we're moving on. No, the assessment comes back and encourages students to improve. Also that it should be frequent and formative, it'll be frequent and formative. So I know that Grant talked a lot about more frequent assessment because kids don't stop learning when they're being assessed, so that's very strong.

If you look at those three kind of principles, to what extent -- going to give you one minute again at your table. Do you think feedback at your school tells kids what progress they're making on specific learning goals and how they might improve? Second, it encourages students to improve? Third, it's frequent and formative, which means it guides subsequent learning opportunities? To what extent to you think you're there already now? A four means high, a one means low. One minute at your table.

So, there are the slides. There are 100 books, thousands of articles. If you do the search, there's plenty of research that says if we use feedback in order to encourage students to keep learning, then students win. We know that, we've known it for a long time, so what do we do? The research is there. So what's the vision? What should a formative classroom actually look like? Let me share with you a vision of what we're trying to do in terms of formative classrooms. First of all, when you think about a formative system, not just a formative classroom, there's a couple of terms I want to introduce. One is standards-referenced, and the other one's going to be standards-based.

Standards-referenced is actually where most schools are headed. See if you think your school is here. Standards-referenced means this. You have kindergarten through senior year in high school. Some people think we should get rid of grade levels, we don't recommend that. Maybe someday, but not now. You have curriculum, instruction assessment. Report cards reflect the assessment. Most people have that in place. In a standards-referenced system, the center of that whole picture are your standards. And again, common core is going to dramatically influence those. Kid shows up in kindergarten, they deal with kindergarten standards. You go into first grade, they're working with first grade standards. Second grade, second grade standards, and that continues until finally they get up to course standards. Somewhere around eighth grade usually that starts.

So right in, smack-dab in the middle of this picture, are standards. In a true standards-reference system, here's what it means. Your curriculum, your report cards, your grade books, your tests are all organized around the standards. All of it. So you don't have a grade book that says, here's the kids' names, here's all my assignments and my assessments and how they did on everything, and here's how they did on each one. Instead it's here's the kids' names, here's how they're doing on each standard based on your assessments in the classroom. So if you had a test that had two standards that were assessed, two grades. You never have a test grade, you have a standard grade based on your assessment. Now that's a departure for some people. So the grade book, report card, the test design, curriculum, all of it would be focused on standards.

And here's what it doesn't mean. That you do everything you've always done, but cut and paste standards language into the top. Or put a cover sheet on it and say, oh, I've been doing that for years. I'll just put the new standards language on there, ah. Standards-reference

means everything does reference back to standards and you'll be meticulous about that. So that's standards-reference.

Now, some people say, well, we're not even there yet. We have what we call a standards-based report card. All it means is you have a bunch of categories. It's a lot more than that. Most standards-based report cards we would not call standards-based. When you get to standards-based, here's what we mean. Let me add that is on your journey. This is where you head next.

You may or may not have kindergarten through senior year in high school. That's fine to have grade levels. In this system, you also have curriculum levels, however. That every major topic which comes from your standards, I'll tell you in a minute why I use the word topic, has levels. What do you need to learn first in order to then be able to do this, and then be able to do this, and be able to do this? It's called learning progressions. I have 10 there because that's the most common number people who are doing this work are trying to get at. 10 required levels for your major topics.

Here's the point. You certainly have instruction assessment report cards. A kid shows up, however, let's say the kid is in sixth grade. When they come to school and it's time for reading class, they may actually be at a particular topic in reading, like reading comprehension fiction, be at level eight. For a particular math topic, they might be at level five. Now this does not mean they're in -- you know, we do the old-fashioned tracking where you have the eagles and the buzzards. This is not -- this is not what we're talking about. It means kids are progressing through the learning in order to maximize their learning as they go through. But the whole curriculum is set up so they move at their own pace.

And they're not labeled. It isn't like, oh, well you must be gifted, look at you! No, you're moving quickly through certain progressions. And much, much less of the identification of, well, you must be special ed, you must be this, you must be that, and let's put a label. As opposed to, you know, you're struggling with these progressions right here. Now of course you look at some of the reasons for that, of course you do. But it's a matter of moving through the progressions, and the entire system is geared for that to happen.

In this system, you don't have makeup work. It's about coming back in to be reassessed. You don't have, well, you have to take the same test as everybody else. No, you don't. You have

to be assessed in the same areas. And it has to be assessed in the best way we know how in order to get an accurate measure so you move on. So if kids are moving through the system, that's truly standards-based.

If you had standards-based systems, a lot of things would change. Some of you are probably saying, whoa, that would change schedules, yes. How you use rooms and desks and tables and chairs and human beings, yes. So that's why a lot of people aren't there. I will tell you I'm surprised at how many districts and even a couple of states who've had conversations about they want to get there within a certain number of years. That's standards-based. So just reporting by standards, good. That's progress. Instead of reporting by, you know, assignments and assessments. But instead of reporting by standards, that's huge.

If you had a system like that, that would be wonderful. But even if you don't, the classroom can change. One of the most encouraging -- we've skipped some of this. One of the most encouraging things that I've seen in the country are the numbers of teachers who are changing their classrooms before the school district ever even have the conversations about becoming standards-based. And let me symbolize what that means.

See down the left-hand side of this slide it says topics? The only reason it doesn't say standards is because teachers who are doing this work say, you know, this standard is so big, there's so much packed into it, I need to split it into two. And what do you call those? We just call them topics. So some standards are topics, some standards have two or three topics. By the way, if you know the common core, they say, well, there are fewer standards. Oh, please. Some of them go on for a half a page. That's an interesting kind of -- there's a lot going on there, let me just say that. Which is fine, but they're topics.

So look at first quarter. The teacher says, I'm going to introduce the first six topics first quarter. All right? Let's say this is how the student does. Now I'm showing you on a 0-4 scale, you could do it with percents. In the breakout I'm going to try to talk you out of it, but try -- you will drink the Kool-Aid eventually. The whole notion is -- so I'll show you in zeros and fours here. So can you see if three is proficient and ready to move onto the next level? Can you see where the student has some strengths and weaknesses here? Okay?

Now go to the second quarter. Okay, you see what happens there? What happens is that certainly the seven through 11 topics were assessed, but did you notice that in some of the

first six, the scores change? The kid came back to be reassessed. Third quarter, fourth quarter, it happens all year long. What this symbolizes is a record that says this: we have a schedule here of when we're going to introduce topics, but we know you learn in different time frames. You come back to me and say, I'm ready to be reassessed, I'm going to ask one question, which is, show me that you did anything to prepare. Because one of the things that teachers have told us is sometimes kids come back and say, okay, retest me. They say, what did you do to prepare? Well, just retest me. They're thinking the assessment fairy's going to come down and sit on their shoulder and it's going to be better today than it was a week ago. No, you have to show me what you did to actually prepare to do that.

The message is, if you didn't learn it by October 30th, you're fine. But you need to learn it and I'm going to be on you to learn it. So that's very, very important. This is a vision of a formative classroom, and this vision is coming true in classrooms, to the extent they can, today.

You probably know teachers who run their classrooms this way. And other teachers who go, no way! Nuh-uh. An early retirement is starting to look real good if you're going to do this. No, they actually -- there are teachers who are doing this and I don't care if they're in elementary and they have lots of subject areas or if they're in secondary and have 150 kids a day. They're doing it. And they are doing it very well and they're getting results. One minute at your table, respond. Does this make sense to you? Have you seen this a lot? Yes, no? At your table.

Okay, come on back, please. Thank you. Come back. Again, in a setting like this, can't really take questions. I'm sure you have questions. I'll try and do that more in the breakout. But this gives you the big picture. Here's -- I could not have said this two years ago, but now I see -- this is happening so much faster than I thought it was going to. And if you'd asked me two years ago, I'd say we have a long uphill climb. I don't think that anymore. I think some people have what is a very, very steep climb, but I've been shocked at how many teachers K-12 are embracing this whole idea. And the only thing that stops them at all is some feasibility, manageability kinds of things. And they're working all of those out. There are answers for all of that. There are answers for all of that.

So now the question is, why wouldn't you do school this way? If you believe that kids learn in different ways and in different time frames and that assessment -- that errors are

inherent in the learning process and that assessment is a way of giving feedback, for goodness' sake, why wouldn't you do this?

The most common answer is, well, I just don't think I can manage it. Yes, you can. The next most common answer is, well from high school at least, they say, well, they don't let them do that in college. And I go, I know. But college is -- most of them, their mission statement isn't get the kids to learn as much as possible. I know that doesn't sound very nice to say about colleges, but I'm telling you a lot of times instruction is lower on the priority. In our business, K-12, instruction is high priority. Thank goodness colleges are changing and they're recommitting to instruction.

But sometimes people say, but professors won't let them do this. They go, I know. And they're going to get some weak teaching in college, I know that. But you don't become a weak teacher in order to get them ready for it. It's like some teachers last week said, oh, I'd love to be creative, Debra, but we have to get ready for the test. Do you get the problem there? No. Well, I've got to read those passages and they're boring on that test. So you're going to give them boring passages so they're used to it? Our logic just breaks down.

So when you start to say we can't do this, yes, we can. We can say to kids -- you know, it's just so funny when we do these things, like we say if you're--I read policies. If you're sick, then you have two days -- one day for every day you were sick in order to make up the work that you missed. It doesn't matter if you were on your death bed or had a little sniffle. You know, that's the policy. I go, what? It's not about that. It's about you missed some chunks and guess what? Everything we teach, there's some website online that will actually give them the support that they need.

So it's learning 24/7 is this. It means there are tons of ways to learn it. Will this motivate kids? Not every kid, but I'm telling you, the anecdotes and the data that we're getting from teachers say kids say, you mean if I come back and show you I learned it now, that's the score I get for that? Uh-huh. They go, well, okay then. And they're starting to motivate each other.

Now do there have to be some changes? Yeah. And by the way, here's another visual. You can do it the one I showed you, but you also could say this is the level of achievement for the particular student profile. You know, maybe this is where they are in September, this is

where they are in January, this is where they are in March. You see what happens? You're constantly revisiting those goals as you get better and better.

Because time-based have these characteristics. Performance-based has the ones on the right. You see the focus in a performance-based system, a formative system, as opposed to a time-based system? So we're shifting over here to the right-hand side, where it's about academic performance. It's about instruction and assessments. It's about curriculum level. It's about customization. And sometimes people say, well, what about social promotion? You should have social promotion, it's for social reasons. And it helps the kids' social, emotional development. But it's our fault that we say, and if we promote you to the next grade level so you can be with your peers, I'm sorry, you didn't learn what this was over here, but you still have to learn the next thing. That just doesn't make any sense that we do that. We don't have to if we just rethink what we're doing and make sure it's truly formative.

So as you look at the critical attribute of a formative system, it's this. So as you look at the definitions when people use summative and formative of what they're talking about, there's not a test that is summative and a test that is formative. Sometimes people say, this is our formative assessments. And they're really -- that's kind of a mislabeling because an actual test could be treated either way. It's how you treat the score that makes it summative or formative.

So in a summative, you say you're done. I'm turning that in, we're not going to reassess. Got it. Sometimes you have to do that. So if you have all these different kinds of assessment, there could be wonderful kinds of assessment, it gets recorded. And then it gets displayed on the web or in a grade book or something like that. Formative, you treat the score differently. It's this. That's all it really means. We're just treating it as the journey. And then the critical attribute is when you have the results, you start to say, now what's going to happen? The teacher does some things, et cetera, et cetera. And the student does some things, and so on.

So there have to be some changes in maybe what the classroom looks like. Here's a plan book in a formative system. Notice -- I hope you can see that. Let me explain. Monday through Friday, some of the times the teacher's written whole class, sometime learning lab or learning stations or learning centers, K-12. Sometimes secondary people say, you mean in high school classrooms you have stations? Of course you do. It's amazing what happens. And if you're confused about that, go to the primary. They'll tell you how to really do good learning centers. But everyone should because we don't all learn in the same time frame. So of course you do.

So that means that sometimes your class is going to look like this. Notice where the teacher is, the green little circle up there. Leading the class in a discussion, a simulation, you know, something they're seeing, a video, whatever. But it's whole class. Then there are learning station times where kids are working on different things. This is beautiful to behold K-12. When kids are working together in small groups, alone, teachers all over the place, you know what the kids are doing? Getting ready to be reassessed. And the teacher starts to manage who -- see this topic here? I'm going to be reassessing that, tell me when you're ready, or ready by this time, et cetera.

Again, are there barriers here? Of course. Teachers say, I had to start doing this after school. One teacher in California told me, she said the kids were coming in after school, but it was getting crowded, you know? They were coming in and she said, I had to give out tickets. And then sometimes kids say, oh, you're out of tickets for today? She says, yeah, but I'll give you a stand-by ticket. She does this stand-by thing, so if a kid showed up and -- you know, she said, I would say, first of all, what'd you do to prepare to be reassessed? If the kid's like, well, then she goes, no, no, come back tomorrow when you actually did something to be reassessed. Okay, stand-by, come in, you get a seat. And the kids are working together.

She said the other day, a kid came in, you know, after school and there was one young man already there. and the kid was kind of complaining, what do you want me to do? And his peer, the kid that was sitting there, said to his friend, dude! Just study the stuff and show her that you know it and then you get that score. He's like, what, dude? She said they just went off and had the conversation, she doesn't have to intervene. The kid said, really? You mean I can just-- she goes, yeah, show her what you know. Okay, I can do that. She said it was just -- it was a totally different conversation because she was a resource for them to learn, she wasn't someone holding up hoops for them to jump through. She wasn't saying, here kids, first week of school, I have hoops for you to jump through and some of them are on fire. The ones that are on fire, if you jump through those, you'll get an A. Then there're some smoldering ones, and those are the B's. And then there're ones, you know, they're okay, it's a C. So if you duck under, it's a D and F. So as we start to change the conversations with students, now we have a formative system. We have a true formative system that's in place. So the teacher's all over the place.

As you look at that list, is there anything that you can kind of argue with there, that this is what should be happening after every assessment, kind of what's happened next? If so, to

what extent do you think your classrooms are a mixture right now of whole class and then learning stations and labs with kids being ready to be reassessed? A, do you do that now? And B, does that seem like a realistic or attractive vision to you? One minute at your table.

I have six. Okay, thank you. Let me make one last point. A question that frequently comes up is, yeah, but that means can you still give grades A, B, C, D? Yes. In fact, we recommend that because for right now our society is very kind of locked in to grades and class rank and honor roll and all those things, you don't have to change those things. Now there are grading implications, however. Here's sort of a visual of what a grade book has to represent. Notice at the top -- let's come back together.

Notice at the top is a record of students' academic performance on the topics that were covered during the grade period, that were included during that. See the square after each academic topic? That represents where the student has progressed to when the grade is turned in. It is not an average. It represents what the student has progressed to. So if the student started at a one and ended at a three, the topic score is 3. It's not an average. And that's really -- sometimes people say, really? Yeah. You really get-- guess what? There are lots of places in life where that's true. If you fail your driver's license test and then you go back and you pass it, they don't say, well, you can only drive on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, you know, because your average isn't that high, you know? If you don't pass the bar exam or CPA accountant's exam, you go back and they don't say, well you passed it, but you got to wait for a while before you actually have any clients. You know, that's not the way -- you say, no, that represents where you've progressed to.

Now notice the square at the far right under academic. That represents an average. Because when you turn in a grade at a certain point, you have to average. So the important part is that those first scores don't. Now look at the bottom part of the screen. Non-academic or life skills, those are tracked separately. Those do not affect the academic performance. If the student turned it in late, didn't put their name on it, didn't follow directions or all the other things, uh-uh. If they're an A writer, they're an A writer. If they turn things in late, then that will be -- that will show up. If they didn't complete their homework, that will show up in life skills. If they, you know, had missing work, that will show up in life skills. The only way we can do this is if we have accurate records of how students are doing. That's one of the backbone principles of formative assessment. And then those can be put together for an overall academic grade. At a

certain point, you have to kind of make the determination here, but remember that the summative topic score is not an average and represents the level of achievement. Whereas this score here can be an average, although there are other ways to do it. We won't get into that right now. So that's very important. So can you give regular grades? Yes. Do some grading practices need to be altered? Absolutely.

So let me pause here. Some of the things that I have shared with you, you go, well, we're already there on this journey. Some of them maybe you say that would be our next step. Here's what I know. If we do not do these things, then we can't expect very different results. This changes the game in some ways.

You know, let me go to the end with Brad Pitt. If we can win with this team, we will have changed the game forever. See, I think we can win. We can take the students we have, all the personnel, the human beings we have, and we can do a better job so that, in fact, students win. It's just that some of the rules have to change and change forever. Hopefully this validates a lot of what you're doing. Hopefully it nudges and brings up some questions as well. Thank you very much.