



RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
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**Holding students accountable in a  
Standards-Based Classroom**



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**Objectives**

- I will understand what it means to hold students accountable in a standard-based grading system.
- I will understand the impact of an academic consequence for a behavioral misstep.
- I will understand how to redefine responsibility through clear criteria and teach students in a more purposeful and supportive manner.

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**Myths of Standards-based Grading (Chapter 3)**

- Students are no longer held accountable.
- The students won't do the work if it's not for a grade.
- The students will be unprepared for the real world.

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### Traditional Definition of Accountability

- Punishment administered when students do not comply with expected directions or behaviors.

### Redefining Accountability....

- Real accountability means moving to an alternate view that all essential evidence is mandatory for ALL students.
- Make no mistake! We have to deal with behaviors through code of conduct, but grades cannot be the weapon.

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**The idea that punishing the absence of a skill will produce the skill is absurd!** (pg. 104)

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### Penalties vs. Incentives

The majority of teachers implement some form of penalty as an incentive for students to meet required deadlines. Teachers admit that not all students submit work on time despite the penalty, even though the penalty was clearly stated.

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### The Perils of Punitive Grading

#### **1. Destroys Relationships between student and teacher**

- Thomas Guskey (On Your Mark) stated, “The greatest punishment a teacher can bestow is a failing grade. Such practices have no educational value and, in the long run, adversely affect students, teachers, and the relationship they share.”
- Match the consequence with the action

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#### **2. Punitive Grading is Inaccurate**

- Behavior is behavior and learning is learning.
- Susan Brookhart writes, “Validity is in question when grades mean different things in different schools or subjects, in different teachers’ classes, and for different types of students.”

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#### **2. Punitive Grading is Misplaced**

- If we applied a behavioral intervention such as detention or suspension for an academic misstep (can’t add fractions), it makes little sense and would not be common practice.

So why do we apply academic consequences for behavioral missteps?

Behavior is behavior, proficiency is proficiency!

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### Cheating in the Classroom

**Talk with an elbow partner:** What is it about cheating that makes it so difficult to eliminate an academic penalty?

- “Kids do well if they can and behind every challenging behavior is an unsolved problem or a lagging skill.” ~ Ross W. Greene
- Even if kids are dishonest, they need adults who'll help them learn to be more appropriate, more open to risk, and more confident about their abilities to succeed.

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### Think about this!

- Is it that students don't care or have they learned not to care as a way of coping with their history of falling short?
- Why do teachers continue to utilize punitive grading practices when they don't produce the desired results?
- What kind of behavior do we teach when we use academic consequence for behavior noncompliance?

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On a scale of 1-10,  
(1 being not at all and 10 being already there)  
where are you in terms of removing punitive  
consequences in your gradebook? Explain.

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**Timeout for True Stories....Vignette on pg. 101-102**

- All students are required to complete all summative assessments at quality level (C or better).
- Improve communication with parents, staff and students.
- Allow struggling students the necessary support and time to master the standards.
- Provide extra help to students before, during and after school.

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**A New Kind of Accountability -**

First figure out what type of student we are dealing with...

	Infrequent ISSUE	Chronic ISSUE
Can't Do students (Skill)	These students occasionally need additional instruction and support from teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional instruction</li> <li>• Skill deficiency (extra tutorial at lunch or after school, extra support during class time with peer student or teacher)</li> </ul>	These students need regular, predictable, and more targeted instruction and support from the teacher and support team. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support team with IEP or non-IEP</li> <li>• Scheduled weekly appt with student to review organization, skills, upcoming learning challenges</li> </ul>
Didn't Do students (Will)	For these students, we must make learning mandatory instead of invitational from a schoolwide system, the zero is not choice! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mandatory lunch/after-school tutoring to complete work</li> <li>• Saturday school make-ups</li> <li>• Communication with parent</li> </ul>	These students require more targeted behavioral interventions from the teacher and administration to prevent the problem from persisting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavior team intervention focused on helping with building accountability skills with resources from counselors and admin</li> </ul>

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### Bringing Parents, Teachers, and Students on Board

- Parents will appreciate teachers and administration who set clear expectations and parameters on students. Allowing students time and structured support to turn in missing assignments and be successful in their grades will make parents happy.
- Parental support:
  - In order to be successful in the behavioral and academic interventions, we need the support of parents to ensure that students show up to the interventions.
  - All stakeholders must be on the same page when we set our expectations for it to be effective.
  - Parents and students must see our use of non-instructional time as a system of support and not as a consequence.

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### CALL TO ACTION

- Write **1** biggest takeaway from this session.
- Refer back to the scale of where you are in terms of removing punitive consequences from your grading practice. What would it take or what would you need in order to move **2** numbers higher from your answer?  
Or if you are already at **10**, what types of routines could you implement to teach accountability more clearly?
- Refer back to the **4** types of students in the can't do/didn't do approach. Which one is your school already strong at addressing? Which one is your school the least effective at addressing?  
What is your next step?

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