

# **Proposed Policy Revisions: BP/AR 5121 Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement**

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Quote from “Do Minimum Grading Practices Lower Academic Standards and Produce Social Promotions?” James Carifio and Theodore Carey, *Educational HORIZONS*, Summer 2010.

“At the same time it should be remembered that the stated goals of minimum grading are not to pass students who would otherwise fail, but to mediate the effects of unfair skewing caused by low outlying grades and to keep hope alive in ways that keep students engaged and motivated (226-227).”

# Agenda

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1. Goals and Key Actions
2. An Equitable Grading Practice
3. Progress to Date
4. Successes & Challenges
5. Next Steps

# Goals→Grades are...

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| PILLAR                | DRIVING PRINCIPLE  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Accurate</b>       | Our grading must use calculations that are mathematically sound, easy to understand, and correctly describe a student's level of academic performance.                             |
| <b>Bias-Resistant</b> | Grades should be based on valid evidence of a student's content knowledge, and not based on evidence that might be influenced by implicit bias or reflect a student's environment. |
| <b>Motivational</b>   | The way we grade should motivate students to achieve academic success, support a growth mindset, and give students opportunities for redemption.                                   |

# Key Actions

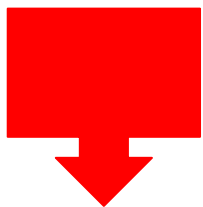
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- Encouraged early adopters across secondary sites since Fall 2022 to engage in one specific equitable grading practice—Minimum Grading
- Initiated a 3-year partnership with Crescendo Education Group to work with a new cohort of teachers each year on implementing equitable grading practices
- Provided 2 days of professional development on Equitable Grading Practices
- Proposed revisions to AUSD’s grading policy—BP/AR 5121—to adopt Minimum Grading and require use of the District-managed gradebook

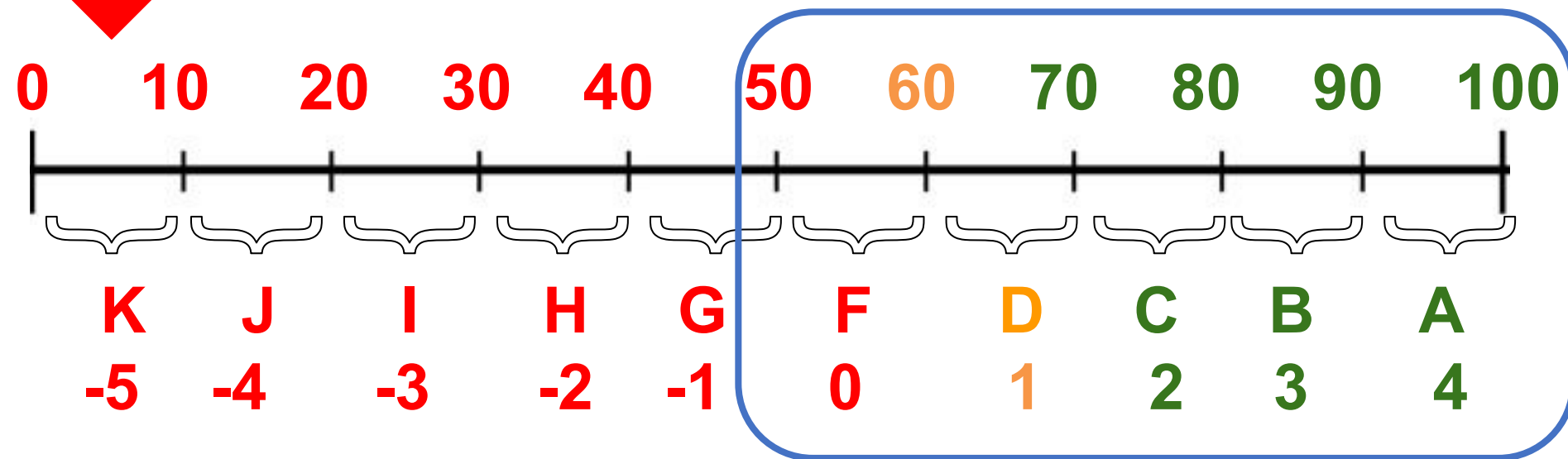
# An Equitable Grading Practice

## Engaged Secondary Sites in a Pilot Practice

- Proportionate Grading, known as **Minimum Grading**, raises the floor of the lowest grade to 50% with these outcomes:
  - The elimination of 0-49 degrees of failure
  - The ability of students to recover from low scores with fewer mathematical barriers
  - The movement away from a flawed 100 pt. scale to a grade range (50-100) matching a simplified 0-4 GPA scale



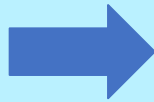
# Flawed 100 pt. Scale



We are not eliminating zeroes or Fs, but we are eliminating “G-K” grades and -1 through -5 scores that create inaccurate deficits.

# 50%, the Proposed New Floor in a Proportionate Scale

Current AUSD  
Grading Scale



Proposed Minimum  
Grade Scale

|        |   |   |      |   |   |
|--------|---|---|------|---|---|
| 90-100 | A | ↔ | 90's | A | 4 |
| 80-89  | B | ↔ | 80's | B | 3 |
| 70-79  | C | ↔ | 70's | C | 2 |
| 60-69  | D | ↔ | 60's | D | 1 |
| 0-59   | F |   | 50's | F | 0 |

50 is the minimum F.

**Skewed  
Math**

**Anything in the 50s will be a zero and an F.**

“Our grades now require from the student the same degree of improvement from an F to a D as we would require from a B to an A.”

*Grading for Equity, pp.84-85*



# **An Equitable Grading Practice, cont...**

**Do minimum grading practices lower academic standards and produce social promotions?**

*“...although some have suggested that minimum-grade policies promote grade inflation and social promotion in schools, well-designed, longitudinal studies show this is not the case.” (Carey & Carifio, 2012; Carifio & Carey, 2010).*

*September 1, 2013.*

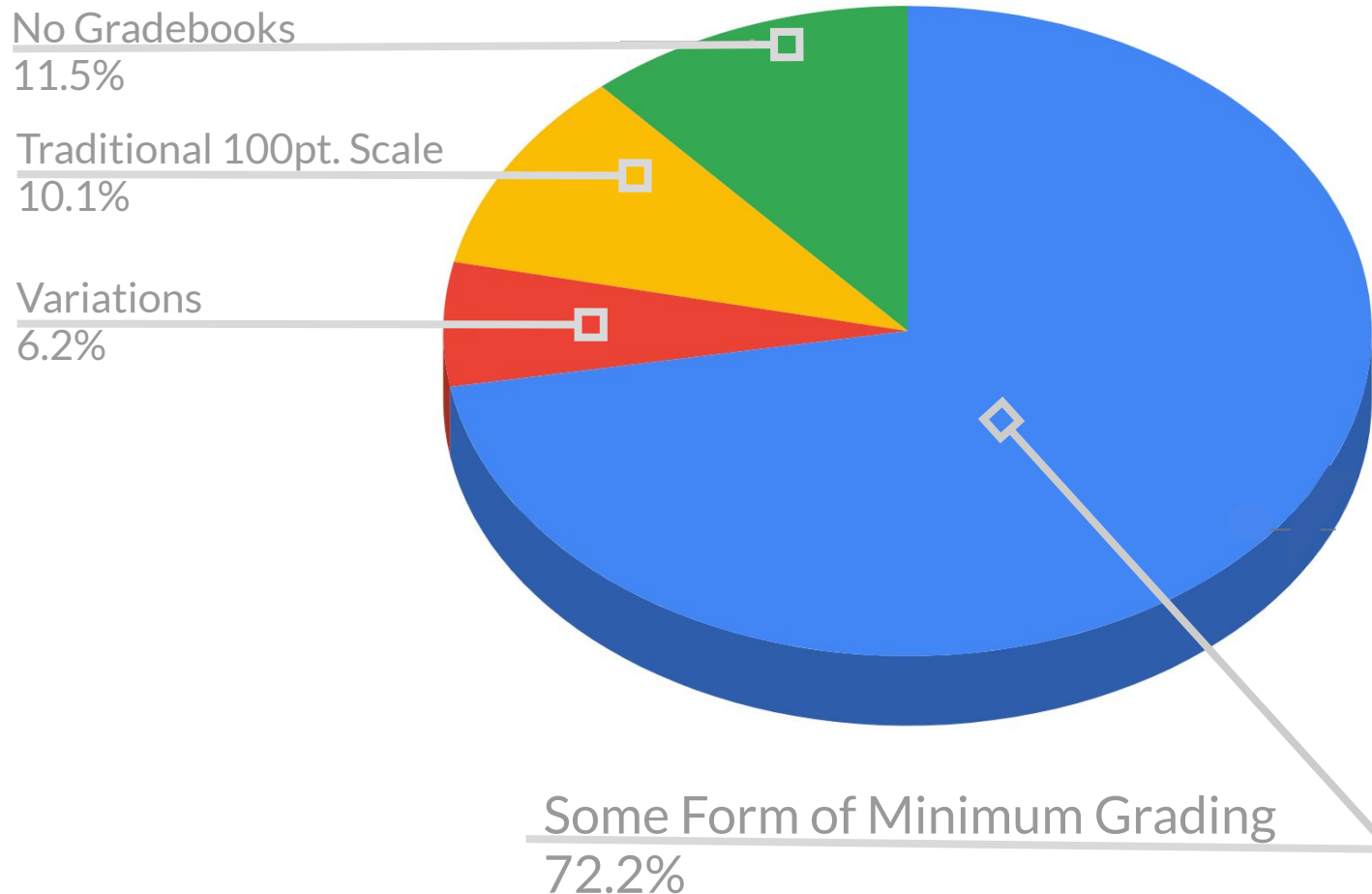
# Progress to Date

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- Since Fall 2022, engaged teachers at secondary sites as Early Adopters of Minimum Grading
- Provided two professional development days on Aug. 8th and Oct. 9th to discuss equitable grading practices and course standards
- Hosted an optional Listening Session on AUSD grading policy for secondary teachers on Oct. 9th
- Restarted an expanded Grading for Equity Workgroup and, currently, forming Course Standards Workgroups to begin identifying common priority standards

# Progress to Date, *cont...*

## Current Practices of Secondary Teachers (N=227)



# Successes & Challenges

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## Successes

- Participation of 72% of teachers as Early Adopters in piloting minimum/ proportionate grading
- Establishing Cohort 1 with Crescendo, including Leadership workshops with secondary principals
- Bringing proposed policy revisions to the Board

## Challenges

- Communicating that 50% is an F in Minimum Grading
- Addressing perceptions of moving too fast or too slowly
- Identifying training needs and technical steps to achieve consistency
- Communicating change to teachers, students and families—message & timing

# **Next Steps: 2023-2024 Phase 1**

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- Revisiting secondary sites to provide more information on Minimum Grading and to introduce Standards-Based Grading practices
- Meeting with Course Standards Workgroups to prepare courses for Standards-Based Grading practices
- Calendaring PTSA presentations on Equitable Grading Practices (EGP) pending Board approval of policy revisions and providing additional student discussion and engagement

# Next Steps: 2024-2025 Phase 2

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- Expanding studies on additional grading practices, specifically those presented at the Oct. 9th in-service:
  - Extra credit
  - Grading most recent performance
  - Grading individual and not group work
- Monitoring the results/response of implementing Minimum Grading among teachers, students and families

# Proposed Policy Revision: BP/AR 5121 Grading Policy

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## Board Discussion