

Re-Imagining K-12 Schools Student Assessment

CJ Greer, Joey Levin, and Steffenie Williams

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Introduction

-Topic:

- Re-Imagining K-12 Schools Student Assessment

-Brief History

-Rationale:

- Current standardized assessment practices perpetuate inequality and marginalization
- Creates system that rewards socioeconomic status, opportunity, and financial privilege
- Provide recommendations that establish beneficial academic outcomes for students and their overall development





Literature Review





COVID-19 Impact on K-12 Education

Young People

- Resiliency
- Instability
- Responsibilities

Parents

- Newfound Responsibilities
- Anxiety around their child
- Stability

Educators

- Perception of educators
- Shift in profession
- Pandemic Response



Problems with Standardized Grading

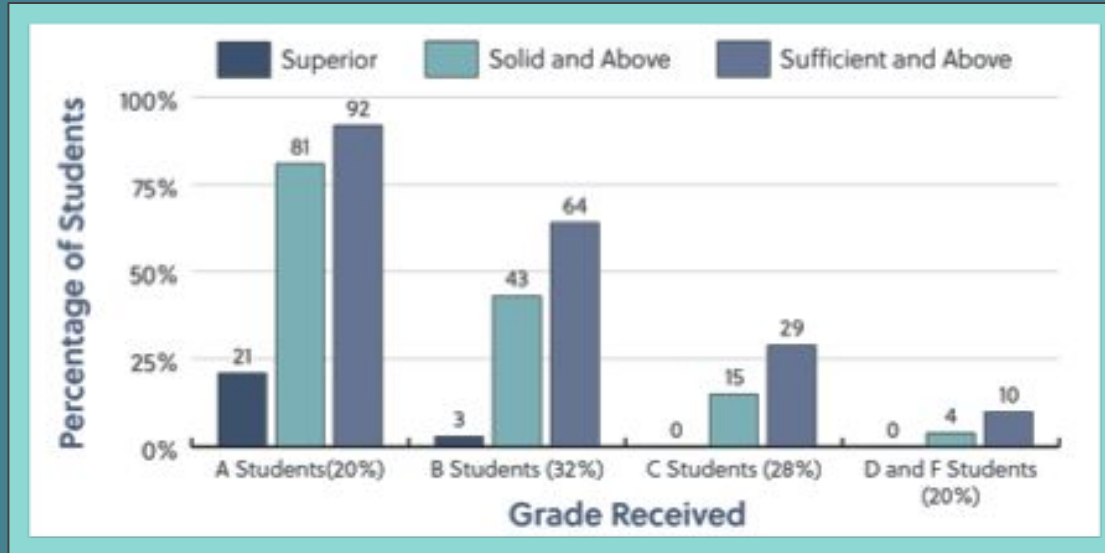
- Standardized grading does not provide an entirely accurate assessment of student performance
 - Student GPAs provide subjective assessments that vary based on subject and instructor
 - This is an unstable system that heavily advantages privileged families
- Standardized grading creates adverse effects on student development
 - Grades diminish students' interest in whatever they're learning
 - Grades create a preference for the easiest possible task
 - Grades tend to reduce the quality of students' thinking



Standardized Grading led to Grade Inflation

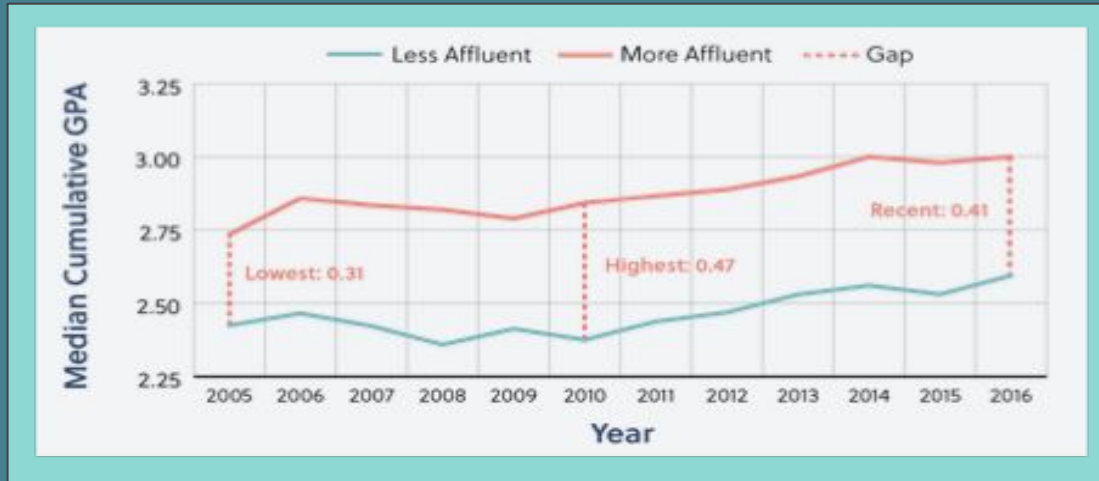
- Grade inflation is the awarding of higher grades than students deserve either to maintain a school's academic reputation or as a result of diminished teacher expectations
 - It occurs when the course grades subjectively assigned by teachers do not comport with objective measures of student performance
- Grade inflation clouds measures of students' true knowledge and skills
- Grade inflation exacerbates socioeconomic inequalities in educational outcomes when it varies systematically by student or school background

Distribution of Grades and End of Year Exam Scores



- While students may find success in achieving a specific letter grade throughout the term, they struggle to show the levels of mastery on their end of year exams that are supposed to be affiliated with an “A” grade

Cumulative GPA Trends and Type of Schools



- Grade inflation occurs faster in schools attended by more affluent students comparatively to schools attended by less affluent students.



Standardized Assessment

- The Wisconsin Forward Exam in grades 3-8 in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, at grades 4 and 8 in Science, and 4, 8, and 10 in Social Studies (17 Assessments)
- Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM or Maps) at grades 3-11 in ELA and Mathematics, at grades 4 and 8 - 11 in Science, and at grades 4, 8, and 10 in Social Studies (26 Assessments)
- ACT Aspire at grades 9 & 10 (2 Assessments)
- The ACT Aspire with Writing at grade 11 for Reading, English, Mathematics, Science, and Writing. (5 Assessments)

50 Standardized Assessments



Overview of how this Affects Wisconsin

- Students of color are disproportionately affected negatively by standardized assessments.
- Students are placed into lower classes, tracks and special education at alarming rates.
- Money (\$669 Billion Nationwide) from assessments could instead be used to better educational tools/PD/curriculum (or ~1% raise).



Best Practices and Recommendations

- **Recommendation I: Reexamining the necessity of standardized testing for WI Primary students**
 - Higher education is eliminating and/or devaluing testing for admissions
 - Primary sector should begin shifting towards this philosophy (same argument)
 - Failing young people (uplifting testing scores vs uplifting youth's talents)
 - Creating a conversation
- **Recommendation II: Removing Letter-Based/Standard-Based Assessment and Implementing Skills-based Assessment for WI Primary students**
 - Holistic evaluation of youth
 - Wisconsin surplus of spending on standard testing
 - Promotes creativity for students instead of “grade hunting”
 - Students’ writing ability, retention, and learning attitude increase positively

Examples: Game-based assessments, surveys, and portfolios

Example in practice: [New York Performance Standards Consortium](#) (NYPSC)



Additional Resources

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721715579043> - Grading

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2011.537009> - GPA

<https://www.istor.org/stable/42772833> - Inequalities of Standardized Assessments

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/dispro-stakeholder-input-session-Sept-2019.pdf> - DPI Report

[The Racist Beginnings of Standardized Testing | NEA](#)



Questions?