

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A COMPARISON OF STUDENT GRADES
TO ALASKA STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT SCORES,
COUPLED WITH TEACHER GRADING PRACTICES

By

Sam Stewart

THE BOYER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, 2007

ROGER J. DUTHOY, Ed.D. CHAIRPERSON

This study focused on the grading practices of Kenai Peninsula Borough School District language arts and mathematics teachers in Grades 7 and 9 and examined whether their practices accurately reflect student achievement as measured by the Alaska Standards-Based Assessments. The researcher compared individual student grades in language arts and mathematics with the student's scores on the Alaska Standards-Based Assessment. Additionally, the teachers participating in the study were surveyed concerning their grading practices to determine the weight given to product, process, and progress factors. Teacher grading practices were found to vary widely, with no teacher indicating a total product orientation in his or her grading practices. Overall, teachers tended to divide assessment by product and process, with only 1% of the grading policies

related to progress. This study revealed a disconnect between grades and student standardized test performance. Of students scoring not proficient on the Alaska Standards-Based Assessment, 48–65% of students in both grades and subject areas had received a grade of C or better in the subject area. Similarly, 9–20% of the students who received below a C scored as proficient on the standardized test. The researcher concluded that grades do not consistently and accurately reflect student achievement. It is recommended that the student reporting system be modified; student performance could be indicated by 1 indicator, and student progress or growth, including process criteria such as effort, could be indicated by a 2nd indicator.