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.