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Rural High School Principals and the Challenge of Standards-Based Grading

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Rural High School Principals and the Challenge of Standards-Based Grading

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The purpose of this study was to better understand how principals in rural schools are thinking about assessment and grading practices and if they anticipate implementing policy changes in the near future that may require increased support. Principals of schools in rural areas often face challenges that are significantly different from those of their urban and suburban counterparts. The researchers used a mixed-method survey to better understand if progressive grading policies were a part of the vision for principals of rural high schools, if they possessed conceptual underpinnings of such practices, and if they believed they had the capacity within their districts to lead teachers toward more effective grading policies. A high frequency of high school principals in rural schools said standards-based grading (SBG) was a part of their 5-year vision. These principals also showed relatively high mean scores of standards-based assessment literacy, and moderately high percentages believed they have the resources and capacity to support SBG. The researchers thus conclude that there is a high likelihood that many rural high schools will be implementing some form of SBG within the next 5 years.

Keywords: standards-based grading, assessment, secondary schools, school leadership

Principals of schools in rural areas face challenges that are significantly different from those of their urban and suburban counterparts (Parson, Hunter, & Kallio, 2016). As more schools move away from traditional grading practices in favor of a standards-based grading (SBG) approach, the voice of rural school leaders, particularly with regard to the barriers they face in their attempts to update grading and assessment practices, ought to be heard. Thus, the purpose of this study was to better understand how principals in rural schools are thinking about assessment and grading practices and if they anticipate implementing policy changes in the near future that may require increased support.

Despite findings from the literature suggesting traditional grading practices are not equitable for students (Feldman, 2019), distort the accuracy of

what students have actually learned (Guskey, 2013), and undermine assessment integrity (Reeves, Jung, & O'Connor, 2017), grading in twenty-first-century schools remains largely the same as it was over 100 years ago. A small but growing number of schools are challenging the status quo by moving to SBG practices (Iamarino, 2014). In a previous study, we found that a second wave of implementation of SBG is most likely coming to one midwestern state (Townsley, Buckmiller, & Cooper, 2019). This state appears to be a regional leader in grading reform. Urban and suburban schools in this state have forged forward with updating grading practices as documented in the local media outlets.

Not as well documented are the efforts of rural schools, however. Renihan and Noonan (2012) reported that principals in rural areas were generally

reluctant to initiate assessment and grading changes in their schools. We wanted to better understand if progressive grading policies were a part of the vision for principals of rural high schools, if they possessed conceptual underpinnings of such practices, and if they believed they had the capacity within their districts to lead teachers toward more effective grading policies.

The results of this study could assist high school principals in rural areas in anticipating potential barriers and roadblocks if they are considering making changes to their grading and assessment practices and policies. Because rural principals specifically struggle to make effective grading changes in their schools (Renihan & Noonan, 2012), this study fills a problematic gap in the literature. In addition, school administrator preparation programs and school leader professional organizations might benefit from better understanding the instructional leadership challenges faced by high school principals in rural areas when moving toward more effective grading practices.

Literature Review

Rural Principal Instructional Leadership Challenges

Rather than exclusively managing a school's daily operations, today's principals are tasked with helping teachers improve their pedagogical practice to improve educational outcomes for students. The principal's role as an instructional leader includes developing a vision for quality curriculum, aligning the curriculum to state standards, and monitoring the implementation of curriculum across the building (Glatthorn, Jailall, & Jailall, 2017). Parson et al. (2016) reported that rural principals faced instructional leadership barriers that were significantly different from those of their suburban and urban counterparts. In our particular state, rural principals often simultaneously serve in district roles overseeing extracurricular activities, student services, and transportation, all while being responsible for the management and instructional leadership for their assigned building(s). In other words, rural principals have multiple responsibilities within their schools, some of which are typically taken on by assistant principals or district office

personnel in more urban settings. Therefore, balancing management with instructional leadership is a habitually cited challenge (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009; Preston, Jukubiec, & Kooymans, 2013; Wieczorek & Manard, 2018). As such, rural principals report spending more of their time on management rather than instructional leadership (Parson et al., 2016). Because of these increased and varied responsibilities, rural principals often spend less time working directly with classroom teachers compared to principals of larger schools (Stewart & Matthews, 2015).

In addition to time constraints, several other key resources to lead curriculum and instruction change initiatives are often less available to rural principals. For example, rural principals often have insufficient financial resources to improve schools compared to their suburban and urban counterparts (Wieczorek & Manard, 2018). Financial constraints are often further compounded by the need to hire external consultants when making effective instructional leadership changes in rural schools (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Preston & Barnes, 2017), rather than leaning on capacity from within the school.

Despite this seemingly uphill battle, rural principals have expressed a strong desire to make positive changes in their schools. When asked to identify their needs for leadership professional development, rural principals suggest facilitating change as a top priority (Salazar, 2007). In addition to specific professional learning, many rural principals have expressed an interest in receiving formal mentoring in order to improve their leadership potential (Duncan & Stock, 2010). If principals are going to overcome their documented reluctance to initiate grading and assessment changes in schools (Renihan & Noonan, 2012), it is important to discern their knowledge of the change and determine their capacity to make it happen.

Standards-Based Grading

Schools desiring to communicate learning more effectively based on standards such as the Common Core state standards have increasingly relied on SBG, often called standards-referenced grading (SRG) (Spencer, 2012). A common next step for schools aligning their standards with assessments is to begin reporting student learning

based on standards. In particular, aligning curriculum and assessments with standards is a key indicator for student success in rural schools (Barley & Beesley, 2007). Rather than communicating an omnibus grade such as an A or B– for each assessment, SBG involves teachers reporting multiple indicators of student learning, such as “Jaimé is ‘proficient’ in finding the area of a triangle and ‘developing’ in his understanding of an area of a circle.” Although the specifics of SBG may differ across districts, experts agree this philosophy of grading includes the following tenets (Iamarino, 2014; O’Connor, 2018; Reeves et al., 2017; Townsley, 2018; Vatterott, 2015):

- separate grades for academic and behavior/citizenship,
- grades based on state or national standards,
- the importance of clear expectations of levels of achievement,
- not counting homework/practice toward the final grade, and
- multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.

While SBG/SRG enhances communication of student learning with parents, teachers also report benefits to their instructional practice. One such example noted by secondary teachers is that lesson planning and assessment become more purposeful in an SBG classroom (Knight & Cooper, 2019). Not surprisingly, some parents have reacted favorably to standards-based report cards compared to more traditional reporting (Swan, Guskey, & Jung, 2014).

SBG at the high school level presents several unique challenges. Teachers report that adolescents have been trained to chase points and percentages and therefore may be slow to adapt to a system more focused on learning (Schiffman, 2016). Similarly, high school students in the early years of implementation confirm the perceived lack of motivation fueled by SBG practices (Peters, Kruse, Buckmiller, & Townsley, 2017). Because homework is no longer attached to a point value, some high schoolers may choose to not complete it at all and take their chances on the unit assessment.

High school parents have expressed concerns related to this initiative’s potential negative effect on college admissions and scholarship opportunities (Peters & Buckmiller, 2014). While high schools can learn from the successes and struggles of elementary SBG implementation, secondary principals will experience these and other anomalous issues specific to the years leading up to postsecondary activities.

Principals Leading SBG Reform

Principals are tasked with leading and improving all aspects of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the school (Glatthorn et al., 2017). However, grading as an element of instructional leadership is often neglected due to a deficit in school leaders experiencing training in formal grading practices and grades being deeply rooted in tradition (Guskey & Link, 2019). Despite evidence suggesting our traditional grading practices are poorly designed to communicate student learning, teachers are typically left alone to make grading decisions based on their own professional judgment, without any explicit guidance from school leaders (Link, 2019). Rural principals in particular assume their teachers possess effective grading and assessment practices and thus are generally reluctant to provide support for teachers in this area of curriculum and instruction (Renihan & Noonan, 2012).

A few studies to date have described principal leadership actions needed to successfully implement SBG at the high school level. In a small sample of Illinois high school principals, Weaver (2018) found a collaborative leadership style, including teachers throughout the process, to be helpful, coupled with a commitment of multiple years of differentiated professional development for teachers. Similarly, a high level of trust between teachers and administrators is needed to successfully lead the complex change of basing grades on learning rather than points (Urich, 2012). In the early stages of conversing about grades with faculty members, school leaders are advised to start by first agreeing on the purpose of grades (Brookhart, 2011). Following the visionary phase, barriers described by school administrators include working with student information system vendors

and an inevitable implementation dip (Knight & Cooper, 2019; Peters & Buckmiller, 2014). Conversely, principals report benefits from involving teachers' voices throughout the conversion to SBG (Urich, 2012; Weaver, 2018). With these challenges and opportunities in mind, the purpose of this study was to better understand how principals in rural schools are thinking about assessment and grading practices and if they anticipate implementing policy changes in the near future, which may require increased support.

Methods

Design

Approximately 276 high schools are considered rural in this midwestern state. Using SPSS, we disaggregated the data by those who self-identified their school as rural based on their classification in state association athletics and the state's urban educational network membership roster. Among participants who identified their district as rural, 85 completed the survey, for a 31% response rate. In some cases, the responses of the rural participants were compared to responses from individuals in the data set who were from suburban/urban schools ($n = 15$). Our research questions for this study were as follows:

1. What is the likelihood that principals of rural high schools will implement SBG practices and policies in the near future?
2. To what extent do principals in rural areas assess themselves as having the content knowledge necessary to lead this reform in their high school?
3. To what extent do leaders of rural high schools who are considering adopting SBG policies believe that the school/district has capacity to support such an effort?

Survey

Survey questions were crafted using widely cited literature written by experts in school assessment and change leadership. For example, Fullan and Quinn (2016) assert school leaders ought to lead change with a strong vision, deep knowledge of the change, and a desire to build capacity within the organization. Building on teacher

perceptions of SBG noted in Hany, Proctor, Wollenweber, and Al-Bataineh (2016), our survey was created with three sections: vision (1 question), knowledge of SBG (5 questions), and capacity within the school organization to implement (5 questions). Five-point Likert response scales were used to prompt participants' assessment of the statements ranging from, for example, 1 (*not a part of my vision*) to 5 (*strong part of my vision*). For questions related to knowledge of SBG, such as, separate grades for academics and behaviors/citizenship, a 5-point Likert scale assessing importance was used and ranged from 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*very important*). Additionally, a 5-point Likert level-of-agreement scale was used to assess the extent to which participants agreed with the survey statements on capacity to implement. Finally, one open-ended question asked about potential challenges the principals anticipated as they thought about the implementation process of grading reform.

Prior to finalizing the survey questions, we sought feedback. We used a pilot study with similar questions and sent it to 10 school administrators we knew. The people who took the pilot test were not included in the participant pool. We modified a couple of the questions based on their feedback. For example, we clarified the issue of transforming the SBG mark into a letter grade as a result of the feedback. Thus, on the final survey, we asked each participant to assume that, with all the questions/scenarios, the high school will transform the marks to letter grades on the report card. This is a typical concession that high schools make in grading reform to appease parents and the university/college application process (Peters & Buckmiller, 2014; Riede, 2018).

Participants

In January 2018, we sent our Qualtrics survey to the email addresses of every high school principal in the state. A list of these emails was made available by the state Department of Education. With the various school sharing agreements, there were 316 (Iowa Department of Education, 2018) high school principals in the state. These principals were also sent the informed consent documentation regarding participation in the study. To be eligible to

participate in the study, participants had to be a high school/secondary principal and in a school that had not as of yet implemented an SBG system. This study was a part of a larger study of all high school principals in the state. However, since the response rate from principals in rural schools was strong, we decided to perform a study specific to those in the rural school context.

Data Analysis

We used SPSS to disaggregate the data and calculate the descriptive statistics. The data analysis included ideas from Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's (2003) multistep process for the analysis of mixed-method research: data reduction, data consolidation, and data integration. We engaged in data reduction as we compared and contrasted data from the Likert scale and open-ended question to begin prioritizing potential codes for qualitative analysis. For example, we noted comments in the qualitative data related to external factors such as parent support and internal factors such as teachers pushing back on SBG. Similarly, we noted challenges in the open-ended question delineating internal versus external factors. Any data not related to internal or external factors was set aside. In the data consolidation phase, the results from the quantitative question prompted areas of further analysis particularly with the open-ended question. We initially sorted the responses to the open-ended question, using open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), into broad categories to reduce the data and identify general patterns. Anchor codes included internal and external implementation challenges. Internal implementation challenges included teachers impeding the process, which was further described by such comments as "mind-set of teachers." Finally, we integrated the qualitative and quantitative data into a coherent whole to answer the research questions.

Results

Vision

The vision question asked to what extent SBG is a part of the principal's vision in the next 5 years. We wanted to understand if there would, in fact, be a second generation of schools moving toward an SBG approach. The data show that principals in

rural areas of this state are interested in implementing SBG practices within the next 5 years. Specifically, the mean score for rural principals when answering this question was 4.01 ($SD = 0.94$) on a 5-point scale. No participant responded with a 1 (*not a part of my vision at all*) on the 5-point scale.

Knowledge of SBG/SRG

It is imperative that school leaders have an understanding of SBG/SRG prior to implementing new grading practices (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014). The researchers created this bank of questions from the literature on SBG to better understand the extent to which these principals know, understand, and support the components of an SBG system. The prompts for this bank of questions included separate grades for academic and behaviors/citizenship, grades based on state or national standards, the importance of clear expectations of levels of achievement, not counting homework/practice toward the final grade, and multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. As detailed above, the response scale ranged from 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*very important*). Experts in the field consider these topics critical components of an SBG system and to having strong literacy around these topics and understanding their importance to the grading system (Iamarino, 2014; O'Connor, 2018; Reeves, et al., 2017; Townsley, 2018; Vatterott, 2015).

The rural principals rated the issue of providing clear expectations regarding levels of achievement highest, with a mean score of 4.85 ($SD = 0.59$), indicating that rural school leaders understood that this was an important part of an SBG program. The lowest mean in this block of questions was in response to the question, When you think of effective grading practices, to what extent is the component not counting homework/practice toward the final grade important to SBG practice ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.12$). Although the standard deviation reveals a bit more variability in participant responses, not counting homework as a part of the final grade tends to be a difficult idea, because traditionally it has been a component of a student's grade. Teachers often think that if the homework doesn't have teeth, or count toward a final grade, students will not

complete the homework or practice (Vatterott, 2011).

When asked to what extent grades should be based on the statewide Common Core standards, the mean score was 4.52 ($SD = 0.77$). This falls between 5 (*very important*) and 4 (*somewhat important*), which is interesting because state code stipulates that the Common Core be fully implemented in all public and nonpublic accredited schools. Eighty out of the 85 respondents ranked this component as a 4 (*somewhat important*) or 5 (*very important*).

On the topic of separate grades for academic and behavior/citizenship, the principals gave a mean score of 4.41 ($SD = 0.98$). When comparing this mean score from the rural principals with the mean score from suburban/urban principals ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 0.27$) in our data set, an independent-samples t -test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between those two groups, $t(76.3) = 4.04$, $p < .001$. Levene's test for equality of variances was significant; thus, results for equal variances not assumed are reported for the independent-samples t -test.

Finally, the rural principals indicated a high level of importance that SBG provided multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency, with a mean score of 4.64 ($SD = 0.75$). Furthermore, a total of 91% ($n = 78$) of the respondents ranked this statement as either 5 (*very important*; $n = 64$) or 4 (*somewhat important*; $n = 14$).

Overall, the data seem to indicate, for the most part, that principals in rural areas have a good sense of the big ideas generally related to assessment and grading that are standard based but do not see the ideas as important as do their colleagues in suburban and urban high schools. These ideas, however, form the foundation of an SBG system.

Capacity Within the School Organization to Implement

The final bank of questions was designed to understand the extent to which principals believed they had the capacity to implement these grading practices in their school/district. The implementation phase has proven to be difficult, as several variables

are critical to the success of an SBG initiative (Peters & Buckmiller, 2014).

Nearly 73% ($n = 62$) of the rural principal respondents agreed either *strongly* ($n = 21$) or *somewhat* ($n = 41$) that they have the resources in their school to implement a shift in grading practices toward an SBG approach ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.15$). This mean is quite a bit lower and includes more variability in responses compared to results for suburban and urban school principals who participated in this survey ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.64$). Generally, resources needed to implement SBG practices would include funding to support staff learning and scheduling time for teacher collaboration or professional development.

Implementation of a grading initiative requires a thoughtful plan (Brookhart, 2011). Of those rural principals who responded to our survey, 73% ($n = 62$) also indicated they have an understanding of the steps required to undergo a shift of grading practices ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.15$). Once again, results for rural principals was lower and had less variability than those for the suburban/urban principals ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.77$).

When asked if their teaching faculty have the disposition to use SBG strategies as opposed to traditional grading practices, 69% ($n = 59$) of the rural principals indicated some level of agreement (*strongly* or *somewhat agree*), with 13% ($n = 11$) disagreeing (*strongly* or *somewhat*) and 18% responding *neither agree nor disagree*. Descriptively, rural principals reported a lower mean score ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.07$) to this statement compared to the suburban/urban principals ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.62$). This is consistent with the open-ended data in this study, where school leaders indicated that teachers may be a barrier to implementation.

Lastly, we asked principals to share their perceptions regarding to what extent they believe the leadership structure is in place to support a shift in grading practices, namely, at the superintendent, central office, and school board levels. Approximately 67% ($n = 57$) of rural principals indicated they believe that the upper administration and school board would support an SBG approach. Nearly 15% ($n = 13$) of the rural principals did not

agree that the leadership structure would support this type of grading shift. When comparing means, rural principals once again had a lower mean score and more variability in their responses ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.07$) than their suburban/urban counterparts ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.86$).

Open-ended Question

In addition to the Likert scale questions, the survey concluded with an open-ended prompt: What are the factors in your district that may impede the implementation of an SBG system? Beyond vision, knowledge, and capacity, the researchers desired to capture barriers rural principals anticipated in their local context. The most common response was coded as parent and community support. Parents and/or community were mentioned 28 separate times. Some of the representative comments were “selling it to parents” “parental push-back,” “parents lack of understanding,” “community support,” and “community understanding” of the reason for the shift. Rural principals appear to be aware of their communities’ unique needs yet may not be confident in their ability to communicate changes in grading practices to their constituency. When considering the grading game parents and community members grew up playing in American schools (Kirschenbaum, Simon, & Napier, 1971), rural school leaders may anticipate a need to proactively educate their communities.

The next most frequent comment revealed that principals seem to think some of the teachers may impede the implementation of new grading practices. Sixteen separate comments were coded in this theme. Representative comments include “some teachers do not understand the value of rest retakes or separating behaviors and grades,” “resistance in the paradigm shift with veteran teachers, mindset of the teachers,” and “finding teachers to willingly pioneer the change in their classrooms.” Because rural principals report spending a disproportionate amount of time on management tasks rather than working directly with their teachers (Stewart & Matthews, 2015), it will be important for school leaders to anticipate and address the unique questions their stakeholders may have throughout the change process.

Discussion

Research Question 1

High school principals in rural schools responded with high frequency that SBG was a part of their 5-year vision. They also had relatively high mean scores for standards-based assessment literacy, and moderately high percentages of those school leaders believe they have the resources and capacity to support SBG. Thus, we believe there is a high likelihood that many rural high schools will implement some form of SBG within the next 5 years.

Research Question 2

Participants in this study claim to have a good understanding for the importance of the big ideas related to SBG, even though they generally scored lower than their nonrural high school counterparts on questions regarding the basic components of an SBG system. It is imperative that educational leaders have a strong literacy of assessment and grading methods if they are to advocate for such practices (Heflebower et al., 2014). A deep understanding of these new practices will be especially helpful in supporting high school teachers who report their personal high school student experience using traditional grading as a point of philosophical dissonance (Olsen & Buchanan, 2019). In short, our data suggest that these high school principals have a good understanding of the knowledge regarding the big ideas in an SBG system.

Research Question 3

Owing to the relatively high percentages detailed in the data section, we think principals are likely to take on the challenge of implementing this grading shift because they have enough capacity within their school and district to move forward. Because, generally speaking, assessment and grading have not changed significantly in schools across the country, expertise in this change management is needed. These data show that principals in rural schools may face some greater challenges compared to their counterparts in nonrural settings. For example, in all of the implementation questions (resources, strategic planning, faculty, leadership structures), rural

principals' mean scores were lower than those for principals in suburban and urban settings. This difference seems to indicate that these high school principals may need some support, as they may not be confident in the capacity within their organization to implement these changes, which may alter strategic planning processes.

Conclusions

Changing traditional grading practices and policies in a high school is no easy task, and maybe even more so in a rural setting. Traditional grading has been a part of American school vernacular for the past 100 years. Unfortunately, there is little research to support traditional methods as an effective conduit for communicating student learning (Brookhart et al., 2016), which should pave the way for updated, research-based assessment and grading methods. Still, the fact remains that implementing an SBG system is a difficult task, as the struggles of early adopters of SBG have documented (Peters & Buckmiller, 2014). A thoughtful strategic implementation design is essential to success, and even then, implementation will face significant roadblocks.

Comments from the open-ended responses reveal that school leaders seem to think parents and community members may impede the process. Anecdotally, this is what we hear from practitioners in the field and have experienced when working with school districts. Parents and community members are products of traditional grading practices—it is what they know and understand. But by such responses as “lack of understanding,” “getting information to the community,” “misinformation,” and “more opportunities for learning about SBG is needed,” we think leaders are moving beyond simply blaming the parents with a roadblock label. Instead, leaders seem to understand that there may be work to do in educating parents/community members and helping parents better understand the rationale, advantages, rules, and research behind these grading practices. Since this parent/community education is an important step in the implementation process—and one that takes a lot of time—rural school leaders are advised to take the time to build rapport with their staff and community (Ashton & Duncan, 2012). As a part of

this process, high school principals should consider proactively engaging area college and university officials to assist in generating narratives for parents to hear and read, in order to quell commonly cited concerns related to SBG and postsecondary preparation (Peters & Buckmiller, 2014). Moreover, school leaders are also advised to keep their boards of education informed throughout all phases of SBG development (Townsley, 2017).

Given that principals in rural areas are generally reluctant to initiate assessment and grading changes in their schools (Renihan & Noonan, 2012), we believe that entities such as state departments of education, educational service agencies, and university/college partners should be prepared to offer further support in these implementation endeavors. Battistone, Buckmiller, and Peters (2019) found that teacher education training on progressive assessment practices was inconsistent at best. Further, as Anderson (2018) asserts, typical classroom assessment courses in teacher preparation programs typically devote only a single chapter at most to grading practices. Therefore, high school leaders will need to provide ongoing support for new teachers through in-service workshops and professional development to further refine their knowledge and skill level regarding methods and rationales for SBG. Organizations such as the Great School Partnership (n.d.) have curated a number of resources for schools eager to produce grades that more accurately reflect what students know and are able to do.

Yet another way rural principals may cope with a feeling of isolation or lack of resources is to find a mentor (Ashton & Duncan, 2012) who has successfully led a significant instructional leadership change. Other school leaders may take it a step further by choosing to engage more directly with other school district leaders in their geographic proximity. In areas where more than one school is working toward more effective grading practices, establishing regional partnerships is another potential solution for rural principals to create long-term implementation plans and sustainability in their instructional leadership efforts (Harmon, Gordainier, Henry, & George, 2007).

SBG seems to be a part of the 5-year vision in the rural schools in this state. During the past decade, many prominent SBG experts—including Ken O'Connor, Thomas Guskey, Rick Wormeli, and Tom Schimmer—has visited the state at least twice. This is in addition to nearly a dozen SBG-specific conferences facilitated by institutions of higher education, educational service agencies, and state professional organizations. As a result, school leaders are intimately aware of the need to change grading practices, as evidenced by their self-reported level of vision and knowledge of SBG. In the next 5 years, rural school leaders should be prepared to lead this implementation by closing the knowing-doing gap.

Further research is needed to explore rural high school teachers' willingness to adopt SBG, as well as the effectiveness of professional learning specifically designed for this context. In the same way, scholars should consider assessing the effectiveness of regional partnerships and other supports generated in rural settings aiding high schools in their grading reform efforts. Parents in rural settings may have different concerns compared to their more cosmopolitan-minded suburban and urban counterparts; therefore, surveys and focus groups may be helpful to better understand their level of support or concern for SBG in their children's high schools.

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