Common Decision Points:
Changing to a Learning-Based Approach for Grading

How will we guarantee that grading practices will not be an issue helping to create the "educational lottery?"

Common Decision Points	What Does It Look Like in Our School?	What Are Others Doing?	What Do We Need to Do?
What type of school are we going to be?			
What are the purposes of grades?			
Will grades be based on achievement of a standard? Will we include other factors?			
Which grading format will we use to communicate on the grade card? • Traditional grades? (A, B, C, D, F) • Scaled scores (four- or five-point scale)? • Categories or descriptors to report achievement?			

Common Decision Points	What Does It Look Like in Our School?	What Are Others Doing?	What Do We Need to Do?
How will we **record** student learning in class? Will we use: • A 100-point scale? • A 100-point scale converted to a 4.0 scale? Which bands will we use? • Marzano's Proficiency Scale Bank with descriptors?			
How will we use **homework**? • Will homework be formative or summative? • What percent of a course grade, if any, will be given to homework?			
What guideline will we use to define **inactive grades** and **active grades** for grading and learning purposes?			
What is the process for using **zeroes**, should it deemed appropriate?			
Will **attendance** be a factor in the grading process?			

Common Decision Points	What Does It Look Like in Our School?	What Are Others Doing?	What Do We Need to Do?
How will we handle **late work** in our grading process?			
How will we handle **incomplete work** in our grading process?			
How will we handle **second-chance tests** in our grading process?			
When is it appropriate to **average** scores to determine student grades?			
When is it appropriate to use the **mode**, **median**, **most recent**, or **final scores** to determine grades?			
How do we use **valedictorian**, **honor roll, or on-a-roll recognitions**?			
Are there **other considerations** unique to the practices in your team or at your school?			

(Decision points, page 3 of 4)

Key Questions to Define the Purpose of Grading

Processing Question	Answer
What information will be communicated in the report?	
Who is the primary audience for information?	
What is the intended goal of communication? How should information be used?	

Example of a Defining Statement

Guskey & Bailey (2010, p. 36) provide an example of a defining statement:

> The purpose of this report card is to communicate with parents and students about the achievement of specific learning goals. It identifies students' levels of performance with regard to those goals, areas of strength, and areas where additional time and effort are needed.