



# The Notorious SBG: Administrators' Perceptions of Standards-Based Grading Practices

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## **The Notorious SBG: Administrators' Perceptions of Standards-Based Grading Practices**

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**Abstract**

This mixed-methods study synthesizes Standards-Based Grading (SBG) literature, analyzes 249 Arkansas administrators' survey responses using OLS regressions, and identifies themes through in-vivo coding of qualitative feedback. Results show more SBG support among liberal, elementary-level administrators in larger, economically diverse districts. Qualitative insights highlight structural barriers and mindsets against SBG, emphasizing its importance for mastery-focused assessment and grading alignment. These findings underscore the influence of principals' beliefs on SBG support and suggest researching the contextual and ideological factors influencing SBG's implementation.

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## Introduction

In the evolving landscape of educational assessment, Standards-Based Grading (SBG) emerges as a pivotal reform, shifting focus from traditional grading practices towards a mastery-oriented evaluation. Historically, schools have used a "hodgepodge" grading approach, combining academic achievement with non-academic factors, often leading to ambiguity and inconsistency (Bredeson, 2013; McMillan, 2001). Critics argue this approach exacerbates historical educational inequities, especially for underserved students (Feldman, 2019; Ogut et al., 2023). SBG aims for a more uniform assessment, focusing on mastery of specific objectives and minimizing nonacademic influences (O'Connor, 2017; Guskey, 2020).

Despite growing enthusiasm for SBG, research on its effectiveness remains limited, leaving questions about its superiority over traditional systems (Morris & Barton, 2022; Fergus & Smith, 2022; Welsh et al., 2013; Guskey & Link, 2022; Wilcox & Townsley, 2022; Townsley & Varga, 2018; Guskey et al., 2020). SBG's success is contingent on the acceptance and preparedness of educators, which demands significant professional development and alignment with teachers' views on grading practices (Williams, 2023; Stan, 2012; Link & Guskey, 2022; Feldman, 2019).

This paper explores administrators' perspectives on SBG, which is crucial for advocating and implementing grading reforms. Understanding their views is vital, as administrators are critical in shaping school policies and practices (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012; Hess, 2013; Guskey, 2011; Sutherland, 2016; Townsley et al., 2019). We also examine how personal responsibility values and political ideologies might influence their stance towards SBG (Haskins, 2009; Feldman, 2019; Stonecash & Brewer, 2015; Arlan & Wong, 2022; Hess et al., 2000; Hess & Noguera, 2021; Pew Research Center, 1994; 2014; Dunn et al., 2019; Woo et al., 2022).

Our mixed-methods study addresses critical research questions on the intersection of administrators' ideologies, personal responsibility levels, and characteristics with their perspectives on grading equity and SBG. This study adds to understanding educational equity and leadership roles in grading practice reform by synthesizing literature, analyzing survey responses, and extracting qualitative insights. This comprehensive approach provides insights into the nuances of SBG perception and implementation across educational contexts.

## **Literature Review**

### **Standards-Based Grading**

For over a century, grading practices have sparked debate among educators and scholars (Brookhart et al., 2016). Commonly, schools use a "hodgepodge" approach to grades, blending academic achievement with effort, participation, and other non-academic factors, leading to potential ambiguity and inconsistency (Bredeson, 2013; McMillan, 2001). Critics argue that such practices can reinforce historic educational inequities, particularly for underserved students (Feldman, 2019; Ogut & Circi, 2023). Additionally, despite their seemingly objective facade, electronic grade books may discourage students if grades are based on average scores (Brookhart et al., 2016).

To address the perceived unfairness in traditional grading, educators created SBG, which seeks a more uniform way to assess and report learning, focusing on mastery of specific objectives without the influence of nonacademic elements (O'Connor, 2017; Guskey, 2020). SBG essentially introduces three fundamental changes: it decouples academic proficiency from behavior and employability skills, permits various opportunities to show learning without detriment, and shifts the role of homework from earning points to skill practice (O'Connor, 2017). Although psychologists support monitoring student behaviors and traits (Hessen & Kuncel, 2022), SBG separates these from academic skills on report cards (Guskey, 2020),

centering on the acquisition of crucial classroom knowledge and abilities instead of point gathering (Zimmerman, 2017).

Despite recent enthusiasm for SBG, research on its effectiveness is scarce, leaving its superiority over traditional grading systems in question. Advocates for SBG, such as Morris and Barton (2022), suggest it boosts student success, engagement, and confidence, possibly shifting the focus from scoring to learning. Studies show benefits for students with math anxiety via retakes allowed by SBG (Fergus & Smith, 2022) and a closer correlation between SBG grades and test scores, indicating a more accurate measure of proficiency (Welsh et al., 2013). Guskey and Link (2022) also contend that SBG's feedback can refine teaching strategies. However, Wilcox and Townsley (2022) caution that effective SBG requires alignment with real-world expectations and college preparedness, particularly in science education. Conversely, Townsley and Varga (2018) report ambiguous connections between SBG and academic indicators like GPAs and ACT scores, noting the need to consider previous academic performance in such analyses. Guskey et al. (2020) reflect that despite the shift to SBG, students still face challenges adapting to college, independent of grading systems.

SBG targets potential enhancements in grading, yet Feldman (2019) suggests that truly fair grading transcends just standards. He scrutinizes traditional grading's enduring inequities, such as economically disadvantaged students penalized for non-cognitive traits rather than lack of ability (Griffin & Townsley, 2022). He also points out that students possessing cultural capital often gain unfair advantages in the current system. Feldman insists that rectifying these biases is crucial, not just as a matter of teaching practice but as a fundamental step towards genuine equity in education.

While SBG promises to redefine student assessment, its success hinges on teacher acceptance and preparedness—a challenge that calls for significant professional development (Williams, 2023). Teachers' views on grading, including some who favor traditional methods for student motivation (Stan, 2012), must be acknowledged and addressed. Moreover, equitable grading demands more than just adherence to standards; it involves navigating complex scholarly debates on fairness and requires systemic pedagogical changes and continuous reevaluation of grading systems to truly benefit students (Link & Guskey, 2022; Feldman, 2019). Despite previous research indicating certain teachers with more liberal leanings, higher degrees of education, elementary-level content, and core-subject content are more likely to support equitable grading (Morris & McKenzie, 2023; Morris et al., 2023), there's a gap in understanding administrators' perspectives on adopting SBG and committing to equitable grading reforms.

### **Principal Perceptions**

Principal perceptions are key in educational reform, particularly in grading practices. Their role in influencing school dynamics through strategic staffing decisions and policy advocacy can make or break the implementation of new systems like SBG (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012; Hess, 2013). While SBG is gaining favor, especially in elementary education, resistance persists, often due to the perceived temporary nature of such reforms and a lack of inclusive development processes (Guskey, 2011; Sutherland, 2016; Townsley et al., 2019). Principals' support is critical, given their authority over essential school functions and resources that can drive the adoption of SBG (Stronge et al., 2008; Waters & Cameron, 2007). Buckmiller et al. (2020) reported positive attitudes and knowledge about SBG among rural high school principals, suggesting potential widespread rural adoption soon. However, there's a gap in research regarding the variation in administrator support for SBG and the factors influencing this stance.

### ***Personal Responsibility***

Administrators' support for SBG often mirrors their values, particularly around personal responsibility. Administrators aligned with conservative and neoliberal views might hesitate to embrace equity-focused grading, fearing it undermines individual accountability and the reward for effort, conflicting with societal and parental expectations (Haskins, 2009). Conversely, progressives argue that societal structures largely influence student outcomes (Feldman, 2019; Stonecash & Brewer, 2015). The Responsibility Questionnaire (R.Q.) developed by Arlan and Wong (2022), validated for assessing personal responsibility in adults, offers insight into how these values may influence educational leadership and support for SBG.

### ***Political Ideology***

The connection between administrators' political ideologies and grading preferences is an area ripe for research. Political leanings influence educational outlooks, with debates often rooted in values and politics (Hess et al., 2000; Hess & Noguera, 2021). Conservatives and liberals are typically divided over the role of personal responsibility in education, as highlighted by Stonecash and Brewer (2015), and this divide extends to grading practices. Tools like the Pew Research Center's scale provide a structured approach to quantify these ideologies, though not without debate (Pew Research Center, 1994; 2014). Dunn et al. (2019) and Woo et al. (2022) emphasize the significance of personal ideologies in shaping educational leadership and decisions, pointing to the profound effects these beliefs can have on the implementation of policies like SBG.

### ***Administrators Characteristics***

The existing literature shows a complex relationship between administrator experience and the propensity to support innovative practices like SBG. Established theories suggest that



seasoned officials may exhibit skepticism towards innovation, having witnessed previous initiatives' shortcomings or adverse consequences (Downs, 1967; Teodoro, 2011). Hess (1998) provides evidence supporting the notion that this skepticism extends to educational administrators, particularly in the context of pedagogical innovations. Moreover, the scale of an organization is posited to influence its capacity for innovation. Teodoro (2011) argues that larger entities may benefit from economies of scale that afford the necessary resources and expertise to adopt and sustain innovative practices, leading to an assumption that administrators from larger schools and districts might be more amenable to SBG.

School culture may also play a significant role in accepting SBG, particularly at the elementary level. Elementary school administrators operate within a unique educational environment where they are more likely to form close-knit relationships with students due to smaller school sizes and longer durations of student attendance. This familiarity could cultivate a more favorable attitude towards SBG, emphasizing individual mastery over traditional grading practices (Maranto et al., 2018; Rinkema, 2018).

### **Difficulties in SBG Implementation**

SBG represents a shift toward assessing student learning against defined benchmarks, yet its implementation is hampered by varying and sometimes unclear guidance from its advocates (Link & Guskey, 2022; Peters & Buckmiller, 2014). While its theoretical benefits are recognized, SBG faces practical obstacles in different educational settings. Concerns arise especially among high school students, who question how SBG aligns with traditional higher education grading and workplace evaluations, potentially impacting their future academic and career endeavors (Oswald et al., 2019; Peters et al., 2017). Students also face confusion over the value of homework in SBG, leading to concerns over pointless tasks (Peters et al., 2017). These

issues underscore the necessity for consistent implementation of SBG and clear communication about its processes and expectations.

Teachers' receptiveness to SBG varies with experience; veterans often regard it with skepticism, while newcomers tend to support it, reflecting a broader trend where less seasoned public servants favor change (Downs, 1967; Hany et al., 2016). Despite some consensus on SBG's alignment with educational standards (Schiffman, 2016), the shift to SBG can lead to an "implementation dip" where students submit homework less frequently when adjusting to new evaluation methods. Teachers also report the burden of creating additional assignments for retakes (Schiffman, 2016) and confusion over grading versus practice tasks (Wheeler, 2017). Moreover, SBG's top-down implementation often leaves teachers feeling excluded from decision-making (Townesley & Knight, 2020).

Implementing SBG in secondary education requires strong leadership to guide the shift from traditional norms, particularly given secondary teachers' autonomy. Rinkema (2018) and Bredeson (2013) stress the need for leaders to understand the change process and be sensitive to the school's context. Guskey (2020) suggests starting with strategic discussions on grading purposes before tackling the specifics of change and preparing for resistance due to entrenched beliefs or clarity concerns about the new system. Such resistance may come from comfort with familiar practices rather than a conviction of their effectiveness (Guskey, 2021). With limited evidence for SBG's effectiveness, some may view a cautious approach as more logical, considering the possibility of SBG being an educational trend. Clear communication outlining current practice limitations and the need for change is crucial for increasing buy-in (Guskey, 2021). Townesley and Buckmiller (2020) further advocate for transparency and teacher engagement to ensure successful SBG adoption.

Parents often show resistance to SBG, preferring traditional grading systems they perceive as a benchmark of a "real school" (Tyack & Cuban, 1995), and due to concerns over college admissions and job prospects (Frankin et al., 2016; Oswald et al., 2019). Trust influences this reluctance in conventional grading, lack of clarity about SBG benefits, and uncertainty on how SBG may affect university entry (Frankin et al., 2016). However, admissions officials have indicated that SBG will not put students at a disadvantage in university applications (Buckmiller & Peters, 2018).

For effective SBG implementation, researchers underscore the necessity of strategic steps including:

- Initiating grading purpose discussions by school leaders (Guskey, 2011; Guskey, 2020; Shepherd et al., 2018; Townsley et al., 2019).
- Providing ongoing, quality training for teachers (Guskey, 2021; Townsley et al., 2019).
- Engaging parents through transparent, regular communication to bridge understanding gaps (Townsley et al., 2019).
- Implementing SBG gradually with feedback loops and trial phases, maintaining perseverance through early challenges (Townsley & Buckmiller, 2020; Townsley & Knight, 2020).
- Anticipating and proactively addressing resistance from teachers and parents (Guskey, 2021).
- Promoting collaboration across all stakeholders to align the school's approach to SBG (Townsley et al., 2019).

Successful SBG adoption involves a multi-faceted strategy that acknowledges the unique context of each district and focuses on clear communication, strategic planning, understanding

the rationale for change, and managing resistance, thereby improving the chances of successful reform (Guskey, 2021).

### **Case of Arkansas**

This study aims to bridge a literature gap by examining how administrators' characteristics, including experience, educational level, prior teaching subjects, personal responsibility, and political ideologies, affect their support for equitable grading and SBG practices. Understanding administrators' perspectives is crucial as they advocate for and implement grading reforms in their districts. Proponents like Feldman (2019) and Guskey (2022) have highlighted the importance of such practices, but research on the influence of administrators' traits on these educational policies is lacking. Given that the success of a shift to SBG largely hinges on administrators' backing and their ability to sway other stakeholders, this study becomes essential in identifying the factors that shape administrators' views on grading reforms and their potential to endorse and promote changes toward equity and standardization in grading systems.

To achieve this goal, this study will address the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** To what extent do administrators' political ideologies intersect with their perspective on grading equity, SBG, and effective grading practices?
- **RQ2:** To what extent do administrators' levels of personal responsibility influence their support of equitable grading practices, SBG, and effective grading practices?
- **RQ3:** How do administrator characteristics (years of experience in schools, grade level served, previous subject taught as a teacher, and education degree level) influence their support for grading equity practices, SBG, and effective grading practices?

- **RQ4:** What do administrators believe are the factors that may impede the implementation of an SBG assessment system?
- **RQ5:** How do these beliefs about impediment factors intersect with administrators' political ideology, levels of personal responsibility, and other characteristics?

Methodology, findings, and implications will be discussed to enhance understanding in this field and contribute to the dialogue on grading reform.

## **Methods**

### **Procedure**

In April 2023, the Administrator's Grading Perceptions survey was developed and later ethically cleared by the IRB (approval number 2303462350) for dissemination among Arkansas administrators. The survey, consisting of 27 questions, aimed to capture administrators' perspectives on SBG, grading efficacy, equity, personal responsibility, political ideologies, and demographics. Administrators could withdraw at any point without obligation to complete all questions. The survey was distributed via Qualtrics from June 5 to July 31, 2023, and reached 1,502 Arkansas administrators through email addresses acquired from the ADE My School Info website. Managed by the Office for Education Policy at the University of Arkansas and promoted by a noted policy researcher, participation was encouraged via a lottery for a \$100 gift card (1 in 5 odds). Anonymity was strictly upheld, keeping the drawing entry separate from survey responses to ensure privacy.

### **Participants**

Our survey reached 1,502 Arkansas administrators, with 249 completing it, yielding a response rate of 16.6%. While demographic comparisons to the overall administrator population

are unavailable due to a lack of ADE demographic reporting, our sample's demographics are detailed in the Appendix as Table 1a. The majority of respondents are White (84.7%), followed by Black administrators (13.3%). Administrators with only a bachelor's degree (n=2) were grouped with those holding a master's degree for analysis due to the small sample size.

### **Instruments and Questions**

Before the primary survey, a pretest was conducted in May 2023 to pinpoint issues and comprehend participant interpretation and responses, ensuring face and content validity (Simon & Francis, 1998; Crocker & Algina, 1986; Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). Faculty (n=10) and graduate students (n=14) completed the pretest in 7-8 minutes on average. Based on the feedback, we maintained the original vision questions from prior research (Townesley et al., 2019) and revised another to define standards-based grading (SBG) per Guskey's research (2022):

“Standards-based grading (SBG) is an assessment approach that measures students' proficiency on specific learning targets or standards, rather than simply averaging their scores on a set of assignments or assessments. It involves using clear and specific criteria to evaluate student learning, providing feedback to help students improve, and separating academic grades from other factors such as behavior or effort.”

Besides these two suggestions, we found no other necessary changes to be made to the survey. We have included Table 2a in the Appendix, which lists the items and corresponding questions for the instruments utilized below.

### ***Grading Equity Scale***

We adopted Morris & McKenzie's (2023) grading equity scale with an alpha of 0.84, encompassing 16 items based on Feldman's (2019) Grading for Equity. Our administration yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84, explaining 25% of the response variance.

### ***Vision Scale***

Despite the original study's lack of reported validity or reliability, we selected five questions from Townsley et al. (2019) to assess administrators' SBG vision. We confirmed content validity and construct adequacy, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 indicating reliable measurement.

### ***Personal Responsibility Scale***

We adopted Arslan and Wong's (2022) Personal Responsibility scale, with the original study yielding a 0.92 reliability coefficient. In our context, the scale accounted for 46% of the variance but with a reduced Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78. The deviation may be attributed to Arkansas-specific factors or the potential for higher responsibility among administrators, possibly leading to a concentration of Agree or Strongly Agree responses. This could also mirror the conservative nature of the state. Despite the lower reliability, we retained the scale to investigate our second research question (RQ2).

### ***Political Ideology***

We opted not to use the Pew Research Center's 10-question ideological consistency scale due to concerns about its potential offensiveness and extremity for our administrator audience. Similarly, we dismissed a Left-Right scale for its unreliability and length (Bauer et al., 2017). With no short, validated alternative available, we crafted a two-question approach to assess administrators' social-political and fiscal-political liberalism, developed with an educational statistics expert. These questions, previously used to measure educators' political ideologies

(Morris & McKenzie, 2023; Morris et al. 2023), aimed to be more participant-friendly. This two-item scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 for our sample.

### ***The Survey Document***

Our survey commenced with an introductory page outlining the study's objectives and informed consent. It then presented questions on SBG implementation and grading practices adapted from Townsley et al. (2019), followed by queries on grading equity and personal responsibility. Subsequent sections gathered data on administrator demographics and professional roles, including position, gender, race/ethnicity, grade levels served, previous teaching subjects, coaching experience, educational attainment, and school community context. The survey concluded with political ideology questions, strategically placed to reduce early termination rates by ensuring that potentially sensitive items were addressed after primary data collection (Crocker & Algina, 1986).

### **Quantitative Methods**

In the quantitative methods section, we outline our analytical approach, starting with the hierarchical linear regression model to identify key variables, followed by an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model for our analysis. We conclude with a description of our qualitative methods for examining administrators' perceived barriers to SBG implementation.

### ***Hierarchical Linear Regression***

We applied hierarchical linear regression to determine if specific administrator demographic variables could contribute valuable exploratory value beyond the factors we had initially hypothesized (Rutter & Gastonis, 2001). Our base model (Model 1) considered hypothesized administrator characteristics and two scales, explaining 5.1-13.8% of the variance. Adding variables for gender, race, coaching experience, and school role (Model 2) slightly



increased the variance explained to 6.7-14.8%, without statistical significance. Incorporating district-level data on free/reduced-price lunch and enrollment (Model 3) significantly enhanced the model, explaining 13.4-17.4% of the variance, highlighting the value of district context in our analysis. We present the regression results in Table 3a, where the progressive inclusion of variables can be observed, concluding with the most robust model that integrates district characteristics.

### ***Multivariate OLS Regressions***

Following the hierarchical regression to identify the variables essential for our model, we inputted these variables into an OLS regression. This regression methodology aimed to find the parameter values within our regression model. The OLS regression minimizes the sum of the squared residuals (Cunningham, 2021). Our dependent variables are the vision and grading equity scales, while the independent variables are political ideology, personal responsibility, a vector of administrator characteristics, and a vector of district characteristics. To explore our first three research questions, our OLS multivariate regression is as follows:

$$y_{ic} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 liberal_i + \beta_2 responsibility_i + \beta_3 \chi_i + \beta_4 \Omega_i + \varepsilon_{ic}$$

Where:

- $y_i$  is the standardized dependent variable of interest, vision for SBG implementation and support for grading equity practices scale for administrator  $i$
- $\beta_1$  is the estimate of an administrator's self-reported political liberalism on a 0 to 1 scale,
- $\beta_2$  is the estimate of an administrator's level of personal responsibility on a 0 to 1 scale,
- $\chi_i$  is a vector of characteristics for administrator  $i$  (years of experience in education, grade level served by building, content taught as a teacher, and education degree level), each associated with corresponding  $\beta_3$  coefficients,

- $\Omega_i$  is a vector of district characteristics  $i$  (percentage of FRL students in each district and size of district enrollment), each associated with corresponding  $\beta_4$  coefficients,
- $\varepsilon_{ic}$  accounts for the random error associated with the teacher  $i$

### ***Open-Ended Responses***

In addition to instrument completion, we asked participants to consider current limitations or challenges to implementing SBG in their districts and schools. From the 249 participants, 212 answered the open-ended question in varying degrees of detail. We imported the database with the qualitative responses into Nvivo 14 to code the responses and further draw relationships between codes and participant data. This approach allowed us to analyze the relevance of a theme in connection with participant views and demographics and patterns of response related to participants' perceptions of grading.

We used in-vivo coding (Saldana, 2021) and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyze the responses. One researcher coded the responses in Nvivo 14 using participants' words and statements as the first round of open coding. Then, two researchers discussed groupings of codes and examples to form topic categories. Then, codes were clustered into interpretable themes after discussing and removing overlaps. Finally, we created variables with each theme as a new column in the quantitative dataset for comparisons. If a participant addressed the theme, the variable was assigned '1'; if the participant did not, the variable was assigned '0'. Non-responses were coded as NA.

## **Results**

### **Descriptive Findings**

Consistent with prior research (Townsend et al., 2019), most of our sample participants indicated implementing SBG as a part of their vision. Two hundred fifteen administrators

(86.3%) selected either “a vital part of my vision” or “a part of my vision” in response to SBG implementation. When prompted about the belief of resources needed to implement SBG in their school, 76.3% of administrators believe they have the resources necessary to implement a shift towards SBG. Of our sample administrators, 79.1% believe they understand the steps needed to implement a change toward SBG. Most participants, 75.9%, also think they can effectively inform their communities of an SBG implementation shift. Overall, 72.6% of administrators believe they have the leadership support to implement SBG in their schools.

When asked whether their school has had SBG or similar grading practices professional development (PD) within the last ten years, 49% of administrators claim their school has received PD, 33.7% claim their school has not, and 17.2% are unsure. When answering, “To what extent do you agree with the statement, ‘The reason why we have not shifted to standards-based grading yet is that it does not translate well on student report cards for student transcripts?’”, 59.3% agreed, while 40.7% disagreed.

Regarding pressure administrators feel from outside forces to adjust students’ grades, 68.3% report never feeling pressure from central office leadership or superintendents to change students’ grades. The next largest group, 24.9%, report rarely feeling pressure from their central office leadership or superintendents. Pressure from parents to adjust students’ grades increases, however, 44.2% report rarely feeling pressure from parents to change students’ grades, and 41.0% report sometimes or often feeling pressure from parents to adjust students’ grades.

Table 4a suggests some ideological differences, with support for grading equity-related practices growing from 61% to 70% as one moves from conservative to liberal, indicating modest support for Feldman’s (2019) equitable grading framework.

### **Multivariate Regressions**

The outcomes of our OLS multivariate regressions are presented in Table 5a. Our model accounts for 15-19% of the variance in our outcomes; however, only ten relationships of interest are statistically significant after controls.

### ***Political Ideology***

**RQ1.** To what extent do administrators' political ideologies intersect with their perspectives on grading equity, SBG, and effective grading practices?

Holding other variables constant, administrators identifying with more liberal-leaning political ideologies are 0.66 standard deviations more likely to support grading equity practices than their conservative-leaning counterparts ( $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, administrators identifying with more liberal-leaning political ideologies are 0.58 standard deviations more likely to have SBG implementation in their vision than conservative-leaning administrators ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### ***Personal Responsibility***

**RQ2.** To what extent do administrators' levels of personal responsibility influence their support of equitable grading practices, SBG, and effective grading practices?

Holding other variables constant, there is no statistically significant association between administrators' levels of personal responsibility and their support for grading equity practices or vision of SBG implementation.

### ***Administrator Characteristics***

**RQ3.** How do administrator characteristics (years of experience in schools, grade level served, previous subject taught as a teacher, and education degree level) influence their support for grading equity practices, SBG, and effective grading practices?

***Years of Experience.*** Holding other variables constant, no statistically significant associations exist between administrators' years of experience and their support for grading equity practices or their vision of SBG implementation.

***Grade Level Served.*** Holding other variables constant, no statistically significant associations exist between administrators' grade levels served in their school buildings and their support for grading equity practices. However, holding other variables constant, administrators in buildings serving middle grades (5-8) are 0.48 standard deviations less likely to envision SBG implementation than administrators serving elementary grades (PK-4) ( $p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, holding other variables constant, administrators in buildings serving secondary grades (9-12) are 0.65 standard deviations less likely to envision SBG implementation than administrators serving elementary grades ( $p < 0.01$ ).

***Content Taught.*** Holding other variables constant, no statistically significant associations exist between administrators' content they used to teach and their support for grading equity practices or vision of SBG implementation.

***Education Degree.*** Holding other variables constant, no statistically significant associations exist between administrators' degree levels and their support for grading equity practices or vision for SBG implementation.

### ***District Characteristics***

While district characteristics were not a part of our original investigation and characteristics of interest, our controls of the percentage of FRL students in districts and district size were statistically significantly associated with our outcomes of interest. Holding all else equal, a ten percent increase in district enrollment size is associated with a 0.12 standard deviation increase in support for grading equity practices ( $p < 0.01$ ). As the school-size

administrators' work increases, the support for grading equity practices grows. Additionally, a ten percent increase in district FRL composition is associated with a 1.08 standard deviation decrease in support for grading equity practices ( $p < 0.01$ ). The support for grading equity practices decreases as the district FRL composition increases.

The vision of SBG implementation varies by district characteristics, as well. Holding all else equal, a ten percent increase in district enrollment size is associated with a 0.14 standard deviation increase in support for grading equity practices ( $p < 0.01$ ). As the school size administrators work at increases, the vision of SBG implementation increases. However, the relationship between district FRL composition and the vision of SBG implementation is not statistically significantly associated.

### **Open Ended Response**

We identified four major themes in participant responses. The central theme was formed by responses directly addressing the question of perceived SBG implementation challenges as observed by school administrators. The second theme included the broad support of administrators for SBG and positive experiences with ongoing implementation. The third theme discussed overall concern about the equivalence of grading systems. Finally, a fourth theme reflected participants' perceptions of an existing mindset that resists SBG. Table 6a shows a summary of themes and primary codes.

We conducted chi-square tests to investigate the relationship between themes discussed by participants and their demographic characteristics. Overall, there was no statistically significant association between the topics participants talked about and participant demographics, including race/ethnicity, gender, administrator role, education level, or community (rural, suburban, urban). Additionally, we conducted t-tests to compare mean

outcome variables such as ideology, overall support of SBG, responsibility, vision, and the proportion of FRL and White student populations between the group that discussed a theme versus the group that did not. These results are in Table 7a.

**Theme 1: Structural challenges, including state policy, resources, and communication, impede the implementation of SBG (131 participants)**

Participants who discussed structural limitations (vs. those who did not) showed significantly lower mean levels in the vision for SBG and came from school districts with a high proportion of FRL and a high proportion of racially diverse students. This theme encapsulated responses related to state policy-related barriers and logistics that hinder the smooth implementation of SBG. Administrators discussed challenges stemming from a lack of a state-level plan to implement SBG widely. Participant 120: “It is not possible to implement SBG in the state’s version of e-school.” Participant 181: “I believe that state education policies are impeding the switch to SBG report cards in the upper grades.” Participant 208: “The Arkansas Department of Education still requires traditional grading for students in grades 5-12.”

Other participants discussed the role of communication in SBG implementation. Effective communication was perceived as a tool to combat “lack of knowledge” and “lack of understanding.” Participants expressed the need for an articulated plan across different levels of school administration (e.g., state, district, school, building) to communicate changes in grading policies to ensure community buy-in and “consensus.” Implementing SBG requires stakeholders, administrators, teachers, and families to be on the “same page.” As described by participants, “the uniformity of communication must be ahead of the practices... proficiency scales and reporting must be visible to all stakeholders” (participant 115). Moreover, communities “struggle with losing the A, B, C, D system because they emote with it, especially at the secondary level.

They like that easy classification, and it honestly makes them feel good” (participant 106).

Participant 54: “While standards-based is a much better system, in my opinion, it will take lots of intentional effort on our part to make sure that the community understands why.” Participant 247: “The more clear and concise the standards, the learning targets, and assessment progress are communicated, I believe the parents will prefer it. It will allow them to see where deficits are, but the system must be well planned and executed.” Participants 207 and 226: “We need a clear communication plan for our stakeholders and community.”

Beyond achieving consensus and understanding, participants were also concerned with the “lack of resources” and “professional development” to make the implementation viable. Participants focused on time and financial resources: Participant 114: “Factors that impede implementation include teacher understanding with professional development and the cost in PD for teachers.” Participant 158: “We need time to train teachers and systems to collect data and track.” Participant 59: “Time to make changes in SBG with teacher training.” Participant 162’s response summarized the collective sentiment: “To successfully implement the concept, more professional development for all educators is extremely important.”

**Theme 2: SBG is a necessary change that places mastery learning at the center of assessment (87 participants)**

Participants who discussed the need for implementing SBG (vs. those who did not) showed significantly higher levels of vision for SBG and served schools with a lower proportion of FRL students and a higher proportion of white students. This theme embodies participants' positive views about SBG, particularly its emphasis on mastery learning as the cornerstone of educational assessment. Overall, participants focused on how SBG “is far a better measure of student knowledge... and allow for multiple opportunities for students to show mastery”



(participant 157)” and “gets down to the essential standards weeding out less critical criteria” (participant 49). Participant 23 elaborated on the imperative need to implement SBG:

Transitioning to standards-based grading is not only fundamental but that the idea of averaging grades is educational malpractice and doesn't actually provide meaningful feedback to the teacher on the impact of their instruction and to the student on how they are progressing.

Moreover, participants discussed how their schools have already implemented or have begun implementing SBG in elementary levels. These participants highlighted perceived benefits and positive experiences: “[SBG] help students and parents better understand the true meaning of learning” (participant 172), “We adopted SBG a few years ago, and it’s been wonderful” (participant 34). Despite positive outcomes, the transition has not occurred without hiccups. Some participants explained how the process has lost momentum due to challenges. Participant 199’s response illustrated the slow process:

We have shifted to an SBG system at my school. The biggest barrier was the paradigm shift about chasing points. "Points" have become so engrained in the culture of why we do school that it is very difficult to remove "points" from the conversation. Once we did that, and we focused on proficiency instead of points, it made all the difference.

While aware of the challenges, these administrators remain hopeful for future implementations of SBG. Participant 245: “We are progressing toward SBG but still overcoming barriers due to teacher mindset and traditional grading practices. I think we will be able to progress in the two years, not the next school year.”

**Theme 3: Equivalence of grading systems is necessary for SBG Success (75 participants)**

There were no differences between participants who discussed and those who did not discuss concerns about the equivalence of grading systems. Participants expressed that SBG's success hinges on developing equitable grading systems that can transition seamlessly across educational levels. Some participants indicated that while they had implemented SBG in elementary school, there were concerns about how SBG would be implemented in middle and high school, for example, “how to equitably convert an SBG report to obtain a GPA” (participant 49), “HS lack of a grading system that doesn't support SBG” (participant 210), or the “mixture of courses that are credited and others that are not, it's difficult [to do] SBG due to transcript reporting issues (participant 259), or “aligning standards to the report card, when there are so many standards” (participant 85).

Most participants were concerned with SBG hindering student post-secondary aspirations, especially to calculate GPAs and class ranks needed for college admissions and scholarship eligibility. Participant 61's response summarizes this shared worry: “SBG seems like the best thing for teaching and learning but not for state reporting, the last thing we want to do is create issues in getting students to college and or money for college.” To overcome this hurdle, participants discussed how SBG needs to be understood across educational levels. Participant 112: “I would like to see it expand through 12th grade, but colleges and universities (across the board) need to be willing to accept standards-based grades for acceptance.”

#### **Theme 4: Individuals' traditional mindsets and misconceptions prevent discussions about SBG to focus on actual learning (74 participants)**

Participants who discussed the role of traditional mindsets had significantly lower levels of vision for SBG than those who did not discuss this theme. This theme captured participants' perceptions of opposing views and resistance to SBG arising from traditional beliefs about

grading and assessment. Specifically, participants focused on senior staff as the source of the mindsets preventing the discussion and implementation of SBG. For example, participants mentioned how “change is challenging and scary, especially to seasoned teachers that are comfortable with certain aspects of grading” (participant 6), “old mindset of district staff” (participant 26), “we have a lot of older teachers who cannot differentiate teacher skills and teaching responsibility” (participant 3), “adult mindset, adults are creatures of habit” (participant 121).

Participants described potential misconceptions teachers and parents hold about SBG. For instance, participant 98 said, “[SBG] is a grading system that simultaneously lowers grades and confuses parents; traditions die hard in a small town.” Other misconceptions included not preparing students for the real world, not supporting student accountability, inflating grades, and behavioral problems. Participants commented, “SBG causes classroom management problems because the students do not focus because they can retake it later” (participant 160), “not holding students accountable to deadlines or effort on assignments and then allowing them to show mastery for full credit will not prepare them for life after high school” (participant 31).

Participant 23 also explained the misconception that SBG may increase workload:

Nostalgia is the greatest enemy of implementation and the core belief in most teachers' mindsets that providing students multiple opportunities doesn't translate into the "real world." -What I believe is at the core of this mindset is the belief that it will cause the adults more work at the expense of what they believe is a student not trying.

Contrasting with the view of SBG inflating grades, participant 113 showed concern about SBG exposing poor performance, perhaps hidden by traditional average grading: “Teachers are afraid of having hard conversations with parents about their student's grade falling. Instituting

standards-based grading may have a negative impact on [the] classroom grade because it is now a TRUE reflection of student knowledge and performance.”

### **Discussion**

This study used mixed methods to understand what factors might explain school principals' support for SBG. Our findings offer significant insights into how administrators' perceptions, shaped by the context of their schools and their own ideologies, play a crucial role in the implementation of SBG. This underscores the complexity of educational reform, where both the environmental setting of schools and the personal beliefs of principals critically dictate the trajectory and success of such initiatives.

#### **Administrators' Grading Perceptions**

Overall, the main finding of this study is that principals' context and personal beliefs play a fundamental role in how they understand and support standards-based grading. First, our hierarchical regression analyses indicated the significant effect of principals' ideology and vision and the school context of principals' support for SBG. Participants endorsing SBG often held liberal views and a high vision for SBG. Not only do they believe they understand the advantages and disadvantages of implementing SBG, but they also seem to have certainty in their potential implementation. Overall, participants showed confidence in their leadership skills to ensure buy-in from the community and secure stakeholder support. They also perceived a greater likelihood of the implementation due to resource availability. Supportive participants came from schools with a high proportion of white students and low proportions of FRL students compared with participants with lower levels of vision. This was further evidenced in the thematic analysis (themes 1, 2, and 4).

By contrast, participants who discussed barriers to implementing SBG and the role of negative mindsets displayed lower levels of vision. Not surprisingly, these participants also came from schools serving a high proportion of diverse and low-income learners. Participants serving already under-resourced schools/districts may anticipate more challenges to implementing SBG due to existing limitations and not necessarily because they do not support SBG. Further research is necessary to fully disentangle the relationship between school resources and principals' support of SBG.

Second, participant responses to the open-ended question highlighted administrators' perceived challenges in implementing SBG and participants' positive and negative perceptions of SBG. These findings concurred with recent qualitative publications and dissertations addressing principals' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes (see Campbell, 2023; Nash, 2023). Participants are concerned with challenges to implementing SBG at various levels (state, district, school, building) and building communication and consensus with the community and stakeholders (Bauer, 2016; Campbell, 2023; Townsley et al., 2019). This concern is reasonable because SBG proposes a cultural, institutional, and assessment reform. Additionally, the theme of concerns with the equivalence across different educational levels and grading systems resonates with Nash's (2023) dissertation focused on middle school principals' and Campbell's (2023) phenomenological study on high school principals' leadership on grading practices reform. Sentiments of frustration were common among middle school principals due to the lack of a district-wide reporting system due to different grading policies, grading systems, and report cards (Nash, 2023). Campbell (2023) found that transitioning from K-12 to college was one of the major concerns when considering SBG implementation due to the existence of a "performative culture" preoccupied with students' rank and GPA rather than actual learning.

Quantitative analysis indicated a significant role of ideology in support and vision for SBG. Participants with more conservative political views are likely resistant to abandoning the status quo of traditional grading practices in their schools. Specifically, conservative-leaning participants may hold misconceptions about SBG, such as proneness to grade inflation, leniency, and lack of student accountability. If participants consider that the SBG mastery approach goes against ideals of achievement as the product of effort, merit, or personal responsibility, they will be less supportive of this grading reform. Similarly, more liberal participants may be more open-minded to implementing SBG while observing potential benefits in ideologically-driven interests such as fairness and equitable grading. For example, these participants hold beliefs related to SBG's primary focus on student learning compared to less critical criteria such as attendance, timeliness, and orderliness.

Whereas the ideology variable did not significantly influence the themes discussed by participants, 28% of principals discussed resistance to implementing SBG due to a lack of disposition for change, traditional views about grading, and student accountability. Drawing from the role of context, principals who serve schools with predominantly conservative views may be less confident in their vision to adopt SBG. In our study, participants with high levels of vision for SBG show high support for SBG. Because this vision reflects long-term intent, these principals may be better equipped to educate parents and community members about the rationale, advantages, challenges, and steps to implement SBG. As principals develop a vision to implement SBG, they grapple with creating a strategic plan to convince other agents (parents, learners, teachers) of the benefits of SBG, secure resources, and allocate time for professional development (Bauer, 2016).

### **Future Directions**

Our research elucidates the influence of school context and principals' political ideologies on their perceptions and commitment to implementing SBG. We discovered that principals with liberal leanings, particularly those in more homogenous and resource-rich schools (with fewer Free and Reduced Lunch students), tend to hold more favorable views towards SBG than their conservative counterparts or those in schools facing more challenges. These administrators show greater confidence in garnering community buy-in and securing stakeholder support.

The implications of our study emphasize the importance of a holistic understanding of both the educational context and the administrators' political ideologies in the successful implementation of grading reforms. As the educational landscape evolves, the need for comprehensive research on innovative grading practices like SBG and equitable grading becomes increasingly urgent. Despite growing scholarly attention, a significant gap remains in peer-reviewed studies, pointing to the need for more in-depth exploration in this area.

Building on the foundations laid by Bauer (2016) and our current study, it becomes evident that future research might fruitfully pivot toward a broader understanding of the contextual variables at play. This encompasses exploring leaders' perceptions toward SBG and meticulously examining readiness at various educational echelons – school, district, and state. A multifaceted approach is required to assess resource availability, which is integral for successful implementation. This includes, but is not limited to, professional development opportunities, time allocation, and the adaptation of report card systems to align with SBG practices.

Our findings underscore the intriguing interplay between political ideology and support for SBG, warranting further investigation to delineate the nuances of this relationship. Future studies might aim to unpack the extent to which political ideology not only shapes perceptions but also tangibly influences the implementation of SBG. Is ideology a significant predictor of

successful implementation, and does it serve as a potential barrier? Addressing these questions could yield valuable insights, providing a nuanced understanding of the ideological dimensions of educational reform.

Furthermore, there is a pressing need for comprehensive program evaluation at all educational levels. While our study and others have highlighted the perceived success of SBG, particularly at the elementary level, there remains a paucity of empirical evidence to substantiate these claims. Future research endeavors should strive to evaluate the impact of SBG on student and school outcomes, employing rigorous methodologies to derive robust conclusions.

In summation, the journey towards unraveling the complexities of SBG is far from complete. As we navigate this terrain, it is imperative to adopt a multifaceted approach, intertwining the exploration of ideological, contextual, and practical dimensions. Only through such a comprehensive lens can we truly understand the intricacies of SBG, paving the way for informed practice and policy that genuinely supports all students' learning journeys.



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## Appendix

**Table 1a***Administrator Demographics of Administrators' Grading Perceptions Survey*

<i>Teacher Survey Demographics</i>		
<i>Race</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.4
Black or African American	33	13.3
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.4
Other	1	0.4
Prefer not to say	2	0.8
White	211	84.7
<i>Role</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Principal	178	71.5
Assistant Principal	71	28.5
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	140	56.2
Male	109	43.8
<i>Grades Served</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Lower (PK-4)	42	16.9
Middle (5-8)	116	46.6
High (9-12)	91	36.5
<i>Content Taught</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Core	215	86.3
Programmatic	50	20.0
Coach	95	38.2
<i>Years of Experience</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Middle (6-15)	49	20.0
End (16-28)	151	60.0
Extension (29-35+)	49	20.0
<i>Education</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Master's (including 2 Bachelor's)	177	71.1
Professional	41	16.5
Doctorate (EdD or PhD)	31	12.2
<i>School Community</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Rural	150	60.2
Suburban	64	25.7



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Urban	35	14.1
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**Table 2a***Survey Instrument Questions*

Question	Alpha
<b><i>Grading Equity (Morris &amp; McKenzie, 2023)</i></b>	
The grades that I assign students reflect... - level of work effort.	0.84
The grades that I assign students reflect... - attention to following directions.	0.84
The grades that I assign students reflect... - participation in class.	0.83
Please indicate your level of agreement - Points should not be deducted from work submitted late	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - Retakes should be available to students after receiving additional support and reteaching	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - Retakes should be available to any student on any assignment	0.83
Please indicate your level of agreement - Retake scores should replace previous scores	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - All assignments and grades should be explicitly linked to a standard	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - Non-academic performance (behavior, participation, etc.) should not be included in final grades	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - If homework is assigned, it should not be recorded as a grade	0.83
Please indicate your level of agreement - Grades should only reflect a student's level of academic performance	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - The final grade should reflect a student's content mastery	0.84
Please indicate your level of agreement - A 0-4 scale for grades is more mathematically sound than the 0-100-point scale	0.84
How often do you as a teacher - Offer retakes on assignments?	0.83
How often do you as a teacher - Allow retakes on exams?	0.83
How many points out of 100 would you typically deduct for student work that is: turned in a day late, turned in a week late, turned in a month late?	0.84
<b><i>Final scale</i></b>	0.84
<b><i>SBG Vision (Townsend et al., 2019)</i></b>	
To what extent are standards-based grading practices a part of your vision for your school in the next 5 years?	0.86
I believe we have the resources in our school to implement a shift towards standards-based grading/reporting practices	0.79
I understand the steps needed to implement a shift towards standards-based grading practices in my building	0.81
I believe we can effectively inform our community of a standards-based grading shift	0.81
I believe we have the leadership support (superintendent/central office and/or board of education) for a standards-based grading shift (or we have already implemented SBG)	0.84
<b><i>Final scale</i></b>	0.85

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***Personal Responsibility (Arslan & Wong, 2022)***

I discipline myself to make the best use of my time doing meaningful things 0.76

When I am responsible for something, I always find ways to get it done even without the necessary resources and help 0.74

I am conscientious in whatever I do, big or small 0.69

Even in difficult circumstances, I still choose to do what is right rather than what is expedient 0.74

***Final scale*** 0.78

***Political Ideology***

In general, how do you regard your: social political views

In general, how do you regard your: fiscal political views

***Final scale*** 0.86

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**Table 3a***Hierarchical Linear Regression Model Results*

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Vision	$R^2 = 13.8$	$R^2 = 14.8$	$R^2 = 17.4^{***}$
Grading Equity	$R^2 = 5.1$	$R^2 = 6.7$	$R^2 = 13.4^{***}$

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$

**Table 4a***Political Ideologies and Perceptions of Grading Equity Practices*

	Conservative	Moderate	Liberal	Total
N	101	139	9	249
Grading Equity Mean	0.61	0.64	0.70	0.63

**Table 5a**

*OLS Regression Analyses of Administrators' Grading Perceptions and Administrator Characteristics on Grading Equity Practices*

	Support for Grading Equity	Vision of SBG
Liberal vs. Conservative	0.66*** (0.30)	0.58*** (0.28)
Log(District Enrollment)	0.12*** (0.05)	0.14*** (0.05)
District FRL	-1.08*** (0.36)	-0.19 (0.32)
Personal Responsibility	0.57 (0.40)	0.77* (0.42)
Log(Years of Experience)	-0.11 (0.10)	0.09 (0.08)
Professional vs. Master's	0.29 (0.18)	-0.23 (0.16)
Doctorate vs. Master's	-0.06 (0.18)	-0.05 (0.22)
Core vs. Non-core	-0.17 (0.17)	0.24 (0.15)
Programmatic vs. Non-programmatic	0.12 (0.16)	0.30 (0.15)
Serve Middle vs. Elementary	0.16 (0.17)	-0.48*** (0.18)
Serve Secondary vs. Elementary	-0.05 (0.18)	-0.65*** (0.18)
constant	-1.17	-0.53
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.15	0.19
<i>Observations</i>	249	249

Note: Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Support for grading equity practices and the vision of SBG implementation are in standard deviations. \*\*\* p < 0.01, \*\* p < 0.05

**Table 6a***Summary of Themes Across Participant Responses*

Initial coding	Clustered codes	Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents struggle to understand SBG</li> <li>• Stakeholders</li> <li>• Lack of staff training</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge</li> <li>• Teacher workload</li> <li>• Variation across schools</li> <li>• State policy</li> <li>• Software</li> <li>• Lack of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community buy-in</li> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Resources and policies</li> </ul>	Structural challenges, including state policy, resources, and communication, impede implementation of SBG (131 participants)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Already implemented</li> <li>• Work in progress</li> <li>• Positive experience</li> <li>• SBG evidence of learning</li> <li>• Evidence of mastery</li> <li>• Objective measures</li> <li>• A needed change</li> <li>• Need for action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful evidence of learning and mastery</li> <li>• Action is needed for change</li> <li>• Positive experiences after implementation</li> </ul>	SBG is a necessary change that places mastery learning at the center of assessment (87 participants)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report cards</li> <li>• GPA credits</li> <li>• Ranks</li> <li>• College admissions</li> <li>• School transitions</li> <li>• Works for elementary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about school transitions and equivalent reporting systems</li> <li>• College admissions</li> </ul>	Equivalence of grading systems is necessary for SBG Success (75 participants)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old teacher's mindset</li> <li>• Negative perceptions</li> <li>• Unpopular philosophy</li> <li>• Push back</li> <li>• Does not solve the problem</li> <li>• Tried and failed</li> <li>• Student accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional mindsets</li> <li>• Rejection of SBG due to misconceptions</li> <li>• SBG does not account for real-life skills (timeliness, responsibility, etc)</li> </ul>	Individuals' traditional mindsets and misconceptions prevent discussions about SBG to focus on actual learning (74 participants)

**Table 7a**

*Summary of Mean Comparisons of Variables of Interest Across Themes*

Discussed theme:	<u>Theme 1: Implementation Challenges (Yes = 131)</u>					<u>Theme 2: SBG Mastery (Yes = 87)</u>					<u>Theme 3: Equivalence (Yes =75)</u>					<u>Theme 4: Resistance (Yes = 74)</u>				
	Yes	No				Yes	No				Yes	No				Yes	No			
<b>Variable</b>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>M (Sd)</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Support Grading Equity	0.65(0.14)	0.63(0.14)	0.02	0.73	.468	0.66(0.15)	0.63(0.15)	0.04	1.68	.095	0.66(0.15)	0.63(0.15)	0.03	1.19	.234	0.65(0.15)	0.64(0.15)	0.01	0.34	.732
Vision of SBG	0.65(0.17)	0.75(0.17)	-0.10	-3.28	<b>.001</b>	0.76(0.18)	0.63(0.18)	0.13	4.82	<b>.000</b>	0.69(0.2)	0.68(0.2)	0.01	0.27	.784	0.65(0.17)	0.71(0.17)	-0.06	-2.26	<b>.025</b>
Political Ideology	0.36(0.21)	0.35(0.21)	0.01	0.46	.648	0.36(0.2)	0.35(0.2)	0.01	0.38	.707	0.37(0.22)	0.34(0.22)	0.03	0.89	.373	0.33(0.2)	0.36(0.2)	-0.03	-1.06	.290
Personal Responsibility	0.83(0.13)	0.83(0.13)	0.00	-0.07	.946	0.82(0.12)	0.83(0.12)	-0.01	-0.55	.584	0.82(0.13)	0.83(0.13)	-0.02	-0.86	.393	0.82(0.12)	0.83(0.12)	-0.01	-0.70	.487
Years of Experience	2.55(0.64)	2.42(0.64)	0.12	1.19	.235	2.53(0.63)	2.48(0.63)	0.06	0.60	.548	2.55(0.68)	2.47(0.68)	0.08	0.79	.433	2.47(0.7)	2.52(0.7)	-0.04	-0.41	.684
District FRL Proportion	0.6(0.18)	0.54(0.18)	0.06	2.24	<b>.027</b>	0.54(0.19)	0.6(0.19)	-0.06	-2.33	<b>.021</b>	0.54(0.19)	0.59(0.19)	-0.05	-1.79	.075	0.59(0.17)	0.57(0.17)	0.02	0.70	.486
District White Proportion	0.57(0.26)	0.68(0.26)	-0.12	-3.33	<b>.001</b>	0.63(0.24)	0.6(0.24)	0.04	1.06	.292	0.63(0.25)	0.60(0.25)	0.03	0.70	.482	0.63(0.26)	0.6(0.26)	0.02	0.62	.539
District Enrollment	7.77(1.21)	7.94(1.21)	-0.18	-0.99	.322	8.06(1.34)	7.68(1.34)	0.38	2.13	<b>.035</b>	8(1.31)	7.74(1.31)	0.26	1.41	.162	7.72(1.16)	7.9(1.16)	-0.18	-1.01	.316