

Swimming Upstream: Outcomes Based Assessment as a Life Raft



Get Warm!

- Turn and talk:
 - What does a grade measure?
 - How do grades impact your students in the alternative setting?
 - What is the best part of the conference so far?
- Now, share what you learned from your partner

Our Outcomes for You:

- Write a learning outcome
- Explain how learning outcomes impact student learning
- Decide whether these might be useful in your setting

How will we pull this off?

- We'll share a little about us and our school turnaround project
- We'll summarize our best practices
- We'll let you hear from some of our students and staff
- Then you can try it, or leave

About Community High School

- Community High School is located just outside of Asheville, NC
Students mostly live outside of Asheville proper
- Student demographics: Student population is more male, and has significantly more special needs students than do district high schools as a whole.
- History of underachievement: 4 years ago, finished last in the state based on EOCs

Race/ Ethnicity	% of Pop.
Asian	1%
African-American	11%
Latino	8%
Native American	1%
Multi-racial	5%
White	74%

Female	41%
Male	59%

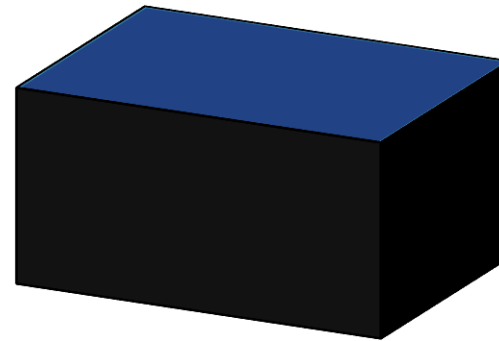
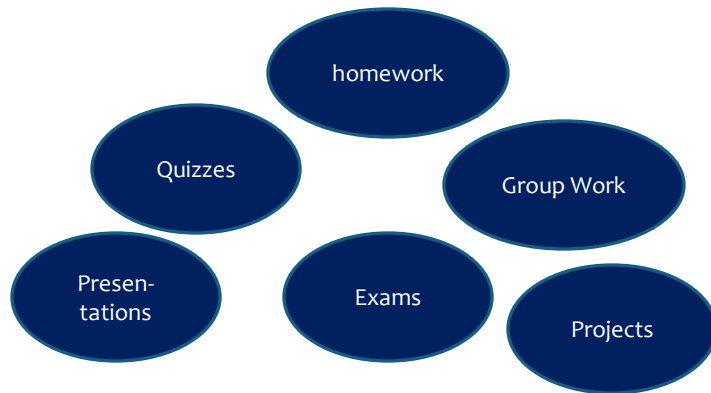
EC students	26%
ESL students	4%

Ongoing Challenges as a Turnaround School

- Structural:
 - Three principals in 3 years
 - Staff turnover in mathematics (most difficult area to improve academic success)
 - Central Office turnover
- Firefighter mentality: putting out fires
- Getting students to school:
 - transportation issues (double busing)
 - other mandated out-of-school requirements (court, medical, child-care)
- Negative perception of the school within the district (tendency for other schools to think their problem students should become our problem students)



How do most students look at grades??



Outcomes: Shift the Paradigm from Grading to Learning

- Evidence-driven
- Focus attention on **learning**, not **grades**;
- Give immediate feedback when assessment occurs;
- Encourage students to persist with difficult concepts and skills until mastery;
- Enhance communication between educators, students, and families;
- Facilitate the use of classroom- and teacher-generated data in decision-making school-wide.



How to write an outcome

- Think of your class or other learning environment.
- What is the first concept you expect students to master?
- How will you phrase this for students to understand what you want?
- How will you know if they know it?
- Take 5 minutes to work on this with a partner

That was easy, right?

Outcomes as a process: one teacher's experience



What is the teacher's job?

- **Clear Outcomes:** Make sure students know what they need to know
- **One size doesn't fit all:** Give students multiple chances to develop multiple types of evidence
- **Students need feedback** on evidence: what does it take to be proficient
- **Help students excel:** get to high performance wherever possible through peer tutoring, projects

Building an Evidence-based, Growth-Oriented Culture

We aim to

- Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning: “How can I show what I know” vs. “What assignments am I missing”
- Support teacher accountability: clear learning goals, assessment for learning, alignment
- Encourage student growth: Minimize time as a controlling factor. Proficiency to High Performance
- Replace failure with “Not Yet Proficient” to emphasize continuing to strive for successful learning

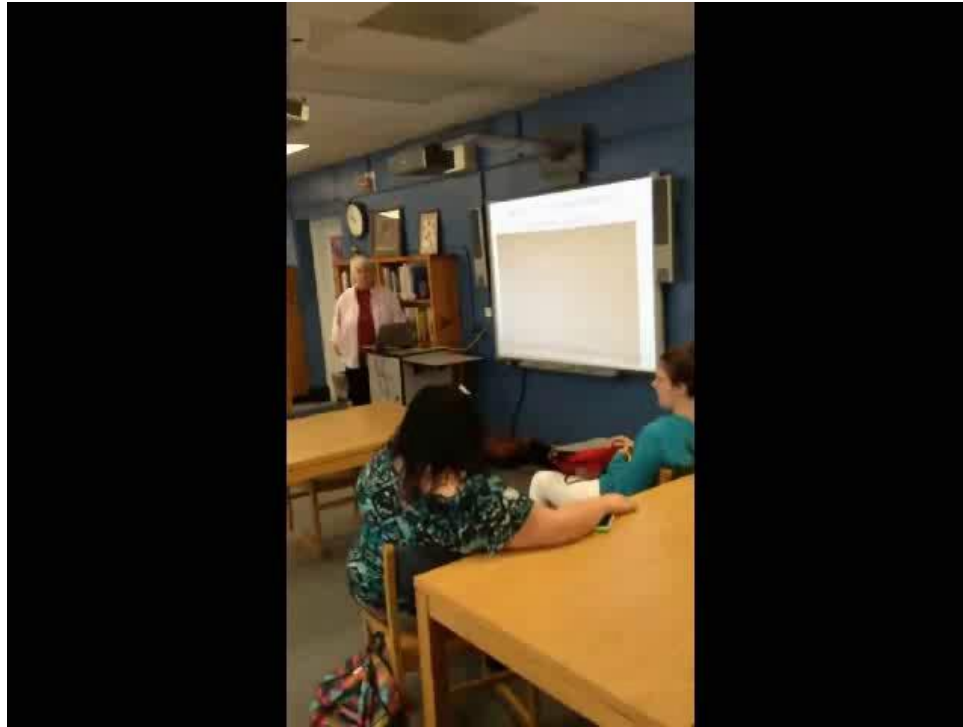
From a teacher's perspective:

- Shift from what work do you owe me to what evidence can you give me?
- Makes expectations very clear to students
- Allows maximum flexibility for instruction
- Promote growth mindset vs. failure/doom, especially for struggling students
- Allows top students more ways to succeed
- Supports differentiation, targeted interventions

What can outcomes do for students?



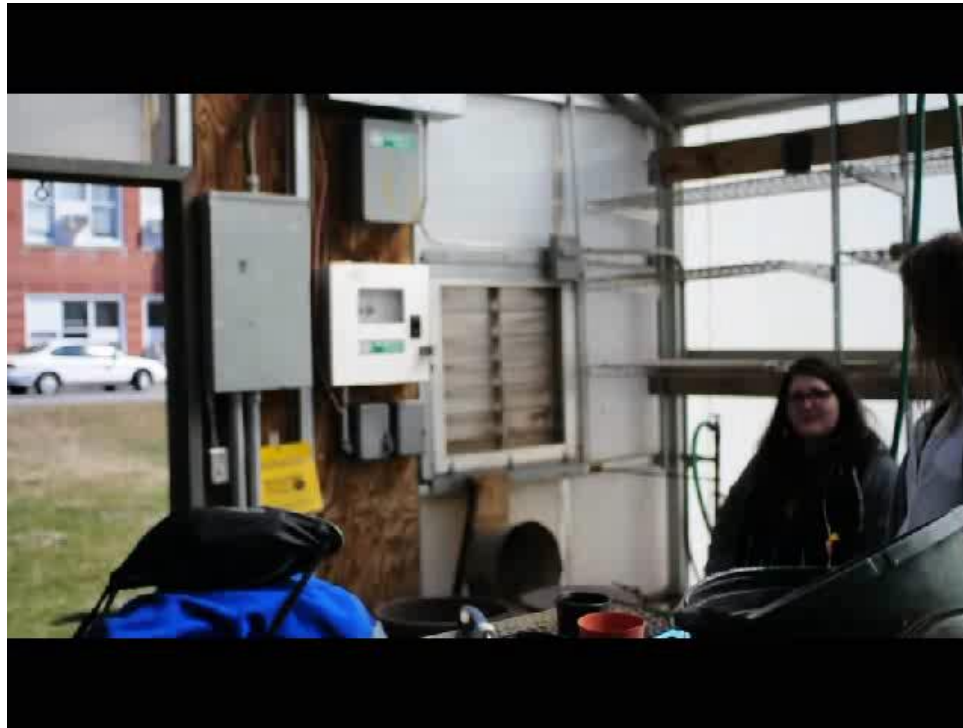
Show what you know



What do we ask of students?

- Know what you need to know
- Show what you know
- Know where you stand
- Find out what you still need to show
- Help your fellow students get proficient

Outcomes make learning more transparent



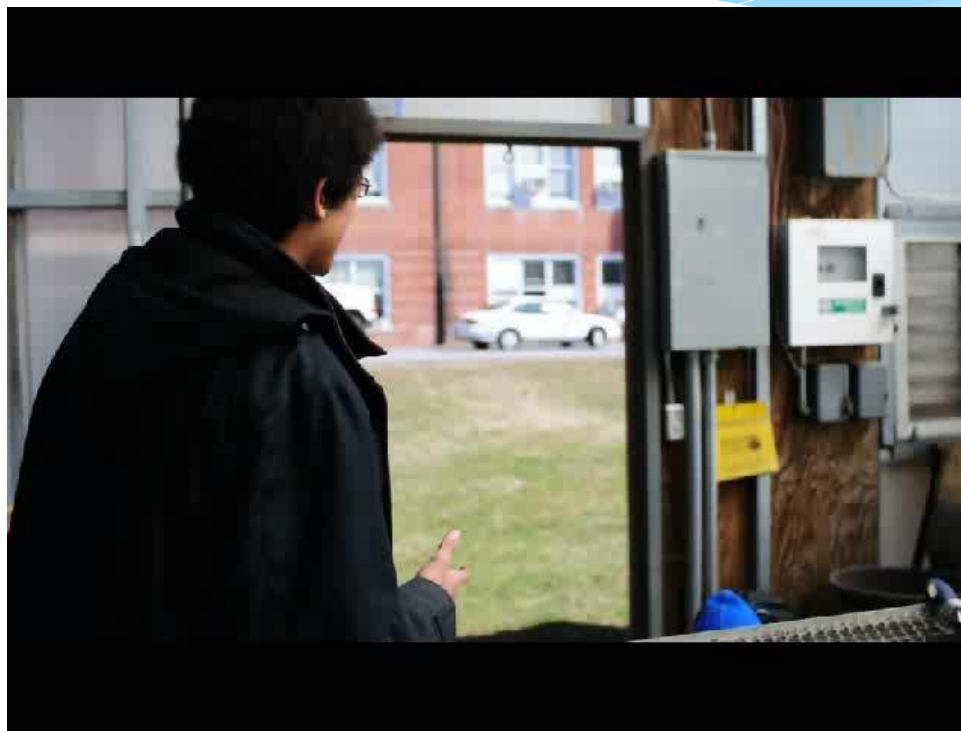
Student experience with Proficiency



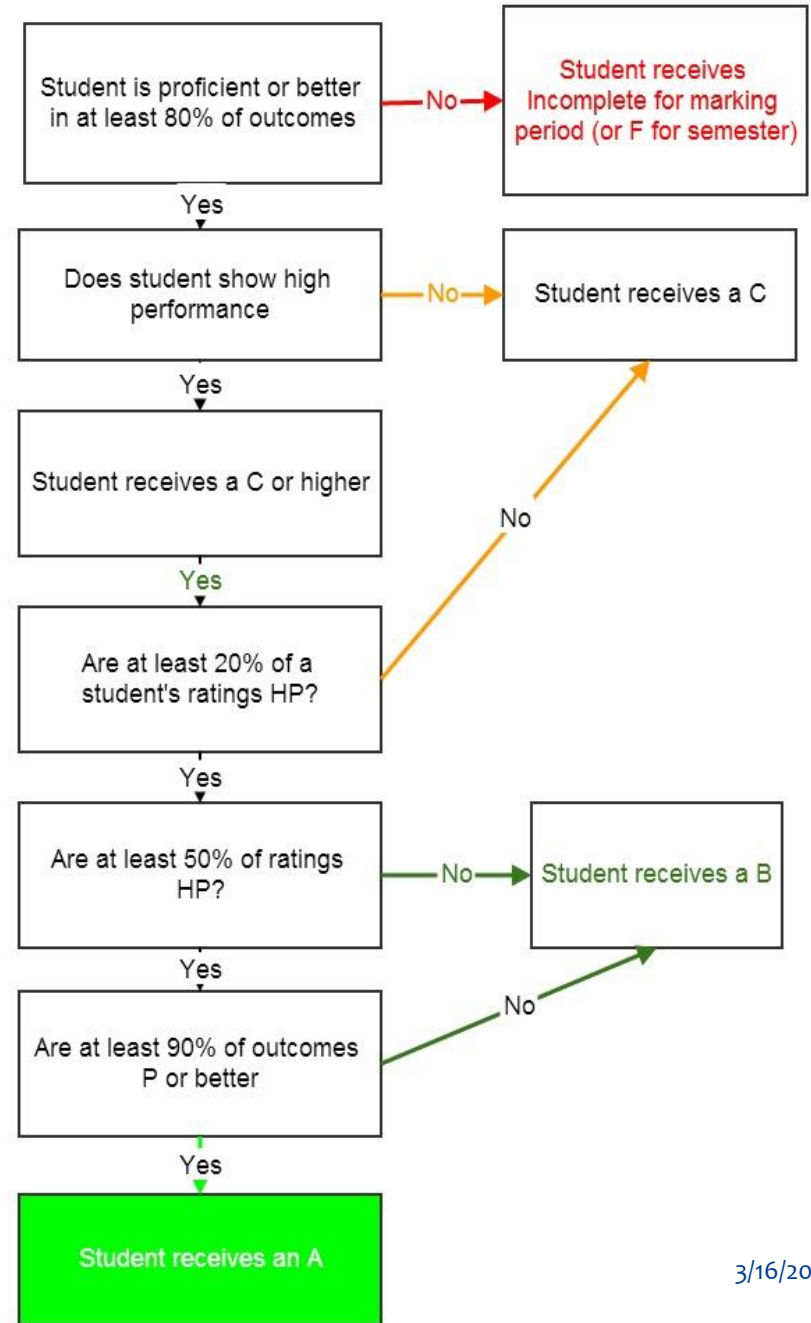
Faculty Leadership of Learning

- Whole faculty reviews every student on a weekly basis—EAGLE Time activities
- Proficiency: students attend targeted remediation during school hours, driven by outcomes
- High performance: students demonstrate deeper learning through tutoring, projects

Time for Proficiency: EAGLE Time



Outcomes to Grades for Report Cards at CHS



Best Practices at CHS

- Learning Outcomes/Outcomes-based Assessment
- Staff Collaboration
- Instructional Practices/Literacy:
 - Bell-to-bell instruction, with time planned in 15 minute increments
 - Stations, for differentiated instruction and to get students moving
 - Incorporate literacy work into every aspect of academic life
- EAGLE Time: In-school remediation time, allows students to get evidence of proficiency, Individual attention



Accomplishments



- Students: change perception of the quality of the school
- Student initiatives and advocacy to support their own learning
- Advisory has stabilized with focus on Eagle PRIDE

Item	Change from 2011 to 2012	Additional Changes 2013
Attendance	3% increase	
Dropout rate	47 vs 22 in 2012	Another 50% drop 2013
Graduation rate	6% increase	
Negative referrals	1552 vs 525 in 2012	
Academic Growth	Bottom of the heap	Showed more growth than 30% of district's comprehensive high school

For More Information

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