



## ACTIVITY 3.6

### *When Grades Don't Match the State Assessment Results*

#### PURPOSE

Often we see students with low report card grades but high standardized test scores and vice versa. This activity has participants explore reasons why there might be a disconnect between report card grades and state test scores.

#### TIME

10–20 minutes

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

If available, information showing the relationship/disparity between report card grades and state test results

#### SUGGESTED ROOM SETUP

Tables and chairs for ease of discussion/participation

#### DIRECTIONS

Together with your teachers read the scenario and then discuss the following questions.

**Scenario:** Students consistently get high grades but fail to meet competency on a state test. Or the reverse, students get low grades but demonstrate a high level of competency on the state test.

- Why might the situation be occurring? Consider the extent to which conditions for sound communication are violated.
- Are other standards of quality assessment being violated?

**Possible reasons:** (1) The state assessment only includes achievement, while grades might include factors other than achievement, such as absences. (2) Class instruction and assessment may include more or different content than the standards measured in the state assessment, meaning classroom assessments might measure different targets than the state assessment. (3) The classroom assessments underpinning the grades aren't accurate. (4) It is unclear how the state performance standard cutoff relates to teachers' grading cutoffs. (5) They were given at different times and might not match with respect to the content students have encountered in the school/instructional calendar.

## CLOSURE

Discuss what you can do in your school or district to deal with this situation.

**Possible solutions:** (1) Clarify state assessment and classroom learning targets. Do they match? If not, should they? Is instruction aligned? (2) Check classroom assessments for accuracy—do they meet the five keys to quality classroom assessment? (3) Calibrate classroom assessments to the state assessment so that teachers and students know the level needed to perform on classroom assessments to meet state standards.