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Mullen: Now the percentages is definitely a hot spot for conversation today and I've love to get into just that practice - and removing that practice, essentially - but I want to go back to something you mentioned in that response which I absolutely love which is your talking about activities and assignments that are essentially wasting time and are just being completed because students are being told to complete them. That's a common concern from parents and teachers that I speak with - that what this is doing is preparing them for doing things they don't like to do just because they're told to do it, which is a "life skill" they call, and my concern, my question, is what in standards-based grading in your work and your experience working with teachers across the country, how does standards-based grading connect to concepts such as conflict, self-efficacy, in ways that build that "grit" a lot of people call, to get through the work even when they don't want to or they don't see the value in that moment.

Townsley: Sure, ya, so I'd say the big paradigm shift is - and I'll use your words, Greg - to provide more ownership for students and their learning. Again, if I'm a student and I just get my first assessment back and it tells me that in "standard 1" I have no idea that I don't really understand it, and in "standard 2" I'm rocking it already, well now I know hopefully as a learner taking some ownership of my schooling experience that I need to spend more time on "standard 1". If my test just says 76%, I'm not going to have that same Ah-Ha moment. Now having that information alone is not enough to take ownership, right? There has to be that next step. So I think about what we really want for students to go on to college, what do we really want for students to be quality citizens and workers - we want them to take ownership of their job, we want them to take ownership of their learning. We want them to say, "you know what, I turned this product in to my supervisor and I want to go do some kind of quality check of my own. Through the process I've learned in standards-based grading in school, I'm learning what quality

looks like and what it doesn't look like and so I'm hoping to replicate that later on in life. As a student in college and university, again not all colleges and universities are necessarily doing the standards-based grading thing yet, I want to be able to figure out what I know and what I don't know and go and talk to the graduate assistant, the teacher assistant, or the professor ahead of time to take again an internal locus of control or mentality as a person. I believe standards-based grading really tries to influence that type of thinking. It's more about chasing down my learning where I'm doing well and not doing well, as opposed to chasing down assignments, activities, and points.

Mullen: Professor Townsley, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. Are there any upcoming events or publications in the works that people should know about?

Townsley: That's a really good question, Greg, I do have a book coming out through another publisher called "Making Grades Matter" and for those educators who have gone to a big workshop or conference and got really jacked up about changing their grading practices and perhaps even write a book about how to fix their broken gradebook from a K-12 perspective; the book that's going to be coming out is very much fitting that next step or iteration of "where do I get started" - so if you're a secondary educator trying to figure out how to get started with standards-based grading practices, hopefully you'll check out "Making Grades Matter". Also, an article coming out here along the lines of losing As and Fs, what works for schools, and implementing standards-based grading. It's a deep-dive into literature from a teacher perspective, from an administrator perspective, and from a community or parent perspective as well. It's what the literature says so far about what works and doesn't work for school implementing standards-based grading. A couple publications coming out soon that will hopefully help the school community take the next steps towards standards-based grading.

Mullen: That's fantastic. Thank you again for being on the program.

Townsley: You bet, Greg, thanks so much. Have a great day.

### **[End Interview]**

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