

# Student Grading is OK

By Bryce Hedstrom

Students at all grade levels may grade one another's papers. Student grading is allowable and it is not an invasion of privacy according to the Supreme Court of the United States. In a 2002 decision, ***Owasso vs. Falvo***, the Supreme Court ruled 9-0 that there is nothing illegal about swapping papers and grading them in class. In fact, the practice was even encouraged by the high court. Justice Anthony M. Kennedy wrote for himself and seven colleagues in the decision, saying:

*"Correcting a classmate's work can be as much a part of the assignment as taking the test itself."*

Kennedy, a former law professor who still teaches several classes a year (as do many justices) also wrote:

*"It is a way to teach material again in a new context, and it helps show students how to assist and respect fellow pupils."*

Peer grading offers students immediate feedback on their work. Students often enjoy the instant results and they can learn from each other when we discuss the answers.

This practice also saves teachers time, allowing them to concentrate on doing the tasks they are trained to do—like creating engaging lessons for their students that incorporate best teaching practices.

Public educators can no more ignore the ruling of [\*\*\*Owasso vs. Falvo\*\*\*](#) than they can that of [\*\*\*Brown vs. Board of Education\*\*\*](#). Cautious administrators cannot prohibit it, nor can irate parents, or reluctant students.

When was the last time the Supreme Court voted unanimously on *anything*? According to the highest court in the land, swapping assignments and quizzes for peer grading is not only allowable, it is endorsed as good practice—and completely legal.