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# An Analysis of the Pupil Progress Reports for the Charleston Community Unit School District #1 (Grades 1 through 8)

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This research is a product of the graduate program in [Educational Administration](#) at Eastern Illinois University. [Find out more](#) about the program.

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTS FOR THE CHARLESTON

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 (Grades 1 through 8)  
(TITLE)

BY

Gary Patterson

Field Experience

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Specialist in Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
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1976

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING  
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

December 16, 1976  
DATE

ADVISER

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DATE

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## I. INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD STUDY

Evaluation and grade reporting has come under considerable attack ever since the turn of the century. Educators in many areas have criticized all attempts that have been made to evaluate the students in the public schools. Teachers have complained that student evaluation is the most difficult task in teaching. This is not unique to education, however. In the field of business and industry, evaluation of a person's performance is a most difficult, necessary and demanding task. Usually the person in the role of an evaluator, such as the foreman, the boss, the president, or chairman of the board, receives a greater income. Responsibility and evaluation are closely connected.

When it is your responsibility to have a quality product and your employee is not working up to his capacity or just not doing his job, it is your responsibility to see that the employee improves. The employee needs to know what he is doing wrong so he can improve his performance. He does not need his deficiencies hidden from him until it is too late for him to correct those deficiencies. A major difference between industry and education in the area of evaluation is the fact that in industry, if the employee continues not to perform, he is fired where you cannot discharge a student for lack of performance in the public school.

There is little question that evaluation of a student's performance

is needed, even though there are those who would disagree. The question is, "How should the evaluation be reported to the student and/or the student's parents or guardians?" Should it be straight forward like a brick between the eyes or should it be candy-coated so it will not offend anyone? Another question is, "What should be evaluated?" Should you evaluate achievement, ability, attitude, social competency, or what? These are just two questions that have plagued American educators for decades.

To Answer these questions and others there are numerous articles, editorials, and essays concerning evaluation and grade reporting, but there is very little quality research on the topic. There seems to be a great deal of talking and very little researching. Many educators seem to have criticism and some even have recommendations, but hardly any back up their beliefs with any empirical research. However, one might conclude that when there are many with the same suggestions, maybe there might be some validity to those suggestions.

This field study will review some of the "opinions" and "research" in the field of evaluation and grade reporting and will examine how Charleston Community Unit School District #1 has developed its grade reporting systems for the grades K-8. At the conclusion of this study, recommendations will be made to the administration and the curriculum councils concerning the findings. in this study.

#### Current Practices of Reporting Pupil Progress

Most classroom teachers view the assigning of grades, or the preparation of pupil progress reports, as the most frustrating if not the

most difficult part of their teaching. "Much of the frustration connected with marking and reporting results from the fact that the process involves so many subjective judgements and there are so few specific guidelines to aid teachers in making these judgements."<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, school marks have been challenged in the courtroom. The subjective judgements of some teachers have been questioned. "Courts do not pass judgements on the validity of a mark or on the merit of a petitioner's scholastic performance. What the courts will decide is whether a mark being questioned was based on caprice, unfairness, malice, or prejudice."<sup>2</sup>

Some people have even questioned whether or not schools have the right to evaluate their students; however, every state in the United States has some provision in their statutes that give the schools the authority to evaluate their students. Hawaii has a policy for their schools that specifically states the method in which the schools are to report to the parents the progress of their children. This policy does provide some flexibility for the individual school, but it is the most specific of any "state" policies covering pupil progress reporting. The Hawaiian policy has two sections, one for the elementary schools and one for the secondary schools. Some sections of this policy are reproduced below:

1. Reporting Pupil Progress in Elementary Schools.
  - a. The end of the year report should be in written form--report card, checklist or letter.
  - b. All schools should work toward planned parent-teacher conferences with additional reports such as notes, telephone calls and letters.
  - c. Indication of the child's personal and social development should be made.
  - d. Specific indication of the child's academic progress should be made in relation to his own ability. His standing in relation to grade level should be indicated.

- e. Schools are encouraged to work out their own forms cooperatively with parents subject to the approval of the District Superintendent.
  - f. The progress report should be diagnostic and constructive, indicating what might be done to help the child make better progress.
2. Reporting Pupil Progress in the Secondary Schools.
- a. The report card should indicate the student's personal and social development, as well as academic.
  - b. The system used in making reports should be uniform throughout the state and should be based on the A-B-C-D-F scale.  
Achievement:  
A...Excellent  
B...Good  
C...Average  
D...Passing  
F...Failure or Unsatisfactory
  - c. Grades in academic subjects should be given on the basis of the student's ability to achieve as determined by a national percentile rating on standardized mental maturity tests and other available data.
  - d. The format of the report card need not be the same for all schools. Schools are encouraged to work out their own forms cooperatively with parents subject to approval of the District Superintendent.<sup>3</sup>

Now that it has been proven that pupil evaluation has a legal base, we should examine some of the methods that are used in reporting pupil progress.

Letter grades are still used in most schools despite the fact that the system of giving letter grades has been under constant attack for more than fifty years. The continued use of grades would seem to suggest that they are serving some useful function or that they are so deeply embedded in our educational system that their modification or replacement is strongly resisted.

METHOD OF REPORTING	Elementary	Secondary <sup>4</sup>
Letter grades (e.g. A,B,C,D,F).	72%	83%
Parent-teacher conferences	60%	20%



(Method of Reporting)	(Elementary)	(Secondary)
Written descriptions of performance	24%	10%
Number grades (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	10%	9%
Percentage grades	2%	10%
Pass-fail reports	8%	3%

As one can see, a larger percentage of elementary teachers use parent-teacher conferences and written descriptions of performances than secondary teachers. The small number of students that the elementary teachers have to report on, make these reporting methods somewhat more feasible at the elementary level. More detailed reports on the learning and development of children are also probably more necessary during the earlier stages of schooling.

"The report card is still the primary method of reporting student progress."<sup>5</sup> The following table is based on a survey of 100 school districts in all fifty states found in Phi Delta Kappa in 1972.

METHOD OF REPORTING	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6 <sup>6</sup>
Letter grades (e.g. A,B,C,D,F)	62%	86%
Three letters (e.g. O,S,N)	14%	4%
Two letters (e.g. Pass-fail)	10%	4%
Number grades (e.g. 1,2,3,4,5)	1%	4%
Checklist of objectives	13%	2%

Even though the traditional letter grade reporting system is the most prevalent, there has been research that shows a shift to modifying the traditional letter grade system or combining it with other ways of marking and reporting.

1. The use of committees of students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel to improve marking and reporting

- practices.
2. The use of both report cards and parent-teacher conferences for reporting student progress (especially in elementary schools).
  3. The use of report forms that are specifically adapted to particular grade levels.
  4. The use of more detailed reports, such as behaviorally stated objectives for subject fields, social adjustments, personal development, and work habits.
  5. The use of marking systems that compare a student's learning progress with his own potential (especially in elementary schools) as well as with the achievement of others.
  6. The use of report cards that provide space for both teachers and parent comments.
  7. The use of less frequent reporting (e.g., twice a year.)
  8. The use of student evaluation as an adjunct to teacher evaluation of learning progress.<sup>7</sup>

There is no way to avoid judgements in grading. All we can do is to provide guidelines that will make the task less frustrating and burdensome to the teachers and make the reports more valid and useful to students, parents, and school personnel.

"School programs change students. How effectively have we obtained the changes we intended? School testing programs help us deal with this question, and grading and reporting devices are ways of announcing and recording selected changes associated with instruction. Without these operations, schools have great difficulty defending their activities and assessing their effectiveness."<sup>8</sup>

#### The Functions of Grades

The original and most obvious reasons for giving grades is to provide the student and his parents with information regarding the student's progress; however, as the schools and school systems grew, grades began to be used for other functions. Most of these functions of grades can be listed under four main headings; administration, guidance, information, and motivation.<sup>9</sup>

The administrative functions of grades are used to indicate whether a student should be promoted, retained, graduated with honors, admitted to college, given a job, or is eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. In most instances, these functions are more important to the institution than to the specific student.

The guidance functions of grades are used to indicate areas of special ability or weakness, help the student decide in which courses to enroll, and help the student decide how many courses he should take. In this function, grades are used to focus on the future and to help make decisions about that future.

Grades are also used as a means of informing the student and their parents about their progress in school. It gives the student and parent an indication as to whether the student is performing as the instructor wishes them to perform. Sometimes it is used as a comparison of one student's work to the work of the rest of the class. This informational function of grades was the original function of grades.

The motivational function of grades is when grades are used to stimulate students to make greater efforts in their school work. Some "educators" use grades as a reward for their hard work or a punishment for their laziness. Also, grades are sometimes used to enforce discipline in the classroom, for example, a student's grade is lowered because the student has a bad attitude or causes a disruption. Grades are also used to promote competition among the students. It may be pointed out that grades do motivate students, but not always toward goals valued by the school or society.

It is important to realize that these categories are not independent

of each other. In fact, one grade can fulfill all four functions and often does to some extent.

Some educators also feel that grading is an intricate part of the American culture. As a result, grading may have a cultural function as well as an administrative, guidance, informational and motivational function. "From the time the American child receives his first gold star for brushing his teeth until he grasps his final sheepskin, he is graded--he is evaluated and compared, sorted and classified, passed and failed, promoted and held back: he is given percentages, A's, B's, C's, S's, and U's. Grading is not ubiquitous; its impact on the individual is profound.....Grades are the cultural 'currency' of the school 'economy'."<sup>10</sup>

#### What is Evaluated?

More important than the method of reporting evaluation of students is what is being evaluated. What do the "grades", letters, checklists, or percentages actually measure?

What do grades mean? (In using the word grades, I am using the broadest definition, meaning any symbol that is used to communicate a student's performance to the student and/or parent or guardian.) Some people are confused and frustrated with the use of grades. As a result, when questioned about grades, they might reply, "Grades don't mean a thing." Hog-wash! Grades are not meaningless. In fact, they may mean many different things. It may be better, however, to say that grades don't mean a thing, than to say you know what a specific grade means when in reality the grade does not mean what you perceive

it to mean.

A most important part of reporting pupil progress is that a "clear" understanding of the report is held by all parties involved.

How do teachers use grades? What do grades measure? By examining the various ways grades may be determined might give some idea of the complexities that are involved in evaluation and this examination might give some indications as to what grades might mean.

Some teachers see grades as a measure of effort. Some see grades as a measure of progress. While others see grades as a measure of interest and/or motivation. Still others base their grades on the students' ability. The most traditional basis for assigning grades is that of the quality of work produced by the student. This traditional basis for grading is the one that has come under the most attack in recent years.

In order to establish a reasonable basis of quality without letting standards decline, educators have turned at times to average group performance to set levels. This could be called grading by the "curve."

Occasionally, one hears an educator claim that, while grading should be done on the basis of quality, that quality should not be an average of the student's work during a period of time but rather an indication of the best he can do, by taking only the student's best works and evaluating them.

Another way of looking at grading is in terms of work done. That places the primary emphasis on quantity. As in the ever-more-popular contract system for the assignment of grades, reading a book, writing a paper, visiting a museum, becomes things to do; and doing enough of

them builds up a certain grade.

"The repeated failure to replace the grade by alternative systems of evaluation, however, tends to support the belief that grades are likely to be a permanent part of the educational system. It seems, therefore, worth the effort to produce a system of grades whose meaning is at least unambiguous."<sup>11</sup> How the grade was determined must be clear and communicated to all parties.

There are other elements that influence human beings in general, when they evaluate one another. Sometimes a teacher may be prejudiced by one or more factors in the student's background and the teacher may not even be aware that these factors are involved in the determination of the evaluation of the student. The following is a list of items that may prejudice teachers:

1. Boy or girl
2. Family status
3. Behavior
4. Race
5. Religion
6. Personal appearance
7. Character or values
8. Sycophancy (Students who try to be a teacher's pet)
9. Teacher's health
10. Intelligence
11. Extra-curricular activities
12. Personality conflicts
13. "Halo or demon effect"
14. Oral participation (Extrovert and introvert)<sup>12</sup>

It is important that teachers are aware of these factors and that they try their best to keep them from affecting their evaluation of the student.

Not only is the method of evaluation important and its meaning well understood, but it is equally important to take care in deciding what is evaluated. "No one doubts that evaluation serves an important

role in the curriculum, teaching, and learning. The way of evaluating what is learned dictates the way in which learning takes place. The scope of evaluation determines what types or levels of learning are emphasized, no matter what the curriculum indicates. Furthermore, no matter what the teacher stresses, the student will selectively address himself to that learning on which he is examined."

Dr. David Gilman in an article in "Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance" stated recently, "Somehow, everyone always knows the meaning of grades....Succinctly stated, the report card communicates to the parent that the child is or is not performing well."<sup>13</sup>

It should be pointed out that there have been a "few" teachers that have misjudged their students. Issac Newton did poorly in grade school; Louis Pasteur was mediocre in chemistry in college; Thomas Edison was too stupid to learn anything, according to his teacher; Winston Churchill failed the sixth grade.<sup>14</sup> Evaluation is still very subjective and as a result it is open for human error.

Evaluation of students is basically a report on how the teacher may perceive the student with the use of tests, observations, and other means. The more trained the teacher is in evaluation and evaluation technique and the problems associated with evaluation, the more accurate the teacher is apt to be in that evaluation.

## II. ELEMENTARY PUPIL PROGRESS REPORT

### The Development

The movement to establish a pupil progress report in the elementary schools in Charleston that would break from the traditional letter grade report card began in January of 1972. Carl Sandburg Elementary School began an experimental program utilizing a checklist for reporting pupil progress rather than the traditional letter grades.

This "new" project created a great deal of interest on the part of teachers, parents and students. As a result of this interest, the Elementary Curriculum Council began to study the possibility of a change in the method of reporting pupil progress in the elementary schools of Charleston. The Elementary Curriculum Council established a sub-committee to analyze the then current system of reporting pupil progress and make recommendations relative to future improvements of that system. This sub-committee was chairmaned by June Bouknight, the principal at Carl Sandburg Elementary School. In December of 1972 the sub-committee submitted its report and recommendations to the Elementary Curriculum Council.

In April of 1973, the Elementary Curriculum Council concluded its study and recommended that all elementary schools in Charleston depart from the traditional system of letter grading and to replace this system with a checklist process of reporting pupil progress. In submitting its recommendations, the primary concerns of the Elementary Curriculum Council were:

1. That there be adequate distinction made between ability and effort in assessing individual student growth.



2. That methods of reporting pupil progress emphasize individual growth rather than peer competition.
3. That the method of reporting pupil progress increase communication between teacher, parent and student.

At the April 1973 meeting of the Board of Education of Charleston Community Unit School District #1, the School Board adopted the report as submitted by the Elementary Curriculum Council, this establishing a new method of reporting pupil progress in grades K-6 for all the Charleston elementary schools.

#### The Form

The new pupil progress form adopted by the Board of Education consisted of two major sections. One section of the report consists of a checklist on various subject areas. The other major section was for teacher comments.

The checklist portion of the pupil progress report relays information on the following subjects:

Reading	Mathematics
Writing	Music
Language	Art
Spelling	Physical Education
Social Studies	Health Education
Science	

Each subject area receives one check relating to the student's progress and one check stating whether the student is working up to or below the student's ability. In each subject area a student would be determined to have made outstanding progress, satisfactory progress, or very slow progress. The following definitions were given for the various stages of progress:

Outstanding Progress - Indicates that your child is applying himself very well and working above his average expectancy.

Satisfactory Progress - Indicates that your child is making satisfactory progress in relation to his expected performance.  
Very Slow Progress - Indicates that your child is not working up to his average expectancies.

On the pupil progress report, it stresses that this report is not a comparison with other pupils. Parents are also recommended to review the Parent and Teacher Guide - Report Pupil Progress which is a pamphlet that explains the reporting system.

### Delivery

The progress of elementary students in Charleston Community Unit School District #1 is reported to the parents on four different occasions during the school year. These reports are relayed to the parents at the end of each nine weeks.

At the end of the first and third nine weeks of the school year, parent-teacher conferences are held for each student. At that time the student's progress is reported to the parents orally and the teacher is able to answer any question the parents may have. This is also a good time for the parents and the teacher to learn from each other.

At the end of the second and fourth nine weeks the pupil progress report forms are completed by the teacher and they are sent home to the student's parents. These reports are carried home by the students and the folder which contained the pupil progress report is returned with the parent's signature indicating they received the report. The folders do not have to be returned at the end of the fourth nine weeks.

### III. JUNIOR HIGH GRADE REPORTING SYSTEM

#### The Development

Many years ago the student's progress was transmitted to their parents in the form of a number which ranged, theoretically, from 1 to 100. However, this method of reporting was decided to be too exact and a more general rating system needed to be used. Thus, the development of the letter grading system that is now in use. There have been few changes since this system was started.

Up through the 1973-74 school year, the Charleston Jr. High used the McBee five-part grade card. Each teacher had a separate card for each student and at the end of each grading period, the homeroom teacher would collect the grade cards from each of their student's teachers and mail them to the student's parents. Each student would have from 5 to 7 grade cards for each nine-week grading period.

This method was quite time consuming for each homeroom teacher and there was extra work for the office personnel in sorting and arranging grade cards.

For the 1974-75 school year Charleston Community Unit School District #1 entered into a contract with Eastern Illinois University for the use of their computer services. This was a blanket contract including many services such as scheduling, budgeting, payroll, and grade reporting. With the signing of the contract the Charleston Jr. High switched from the McBee system to the Eastern Illinois computer system.

With the help of Rusty Nichols of Eastern Illinois University

Computer Service, the administrators of Charleston Jr. High and Charleston Senior High developed the present grade card format. This format had to fall within the limitations of the computer.

#### The Form

The "grade card", as the pupil progress report is called, is printed by the computer service center at Eastern Illinois University and is mailed to each student's parents at the end of each nine-week grading period.

The Charleston Jr. High follows the traditional format of reporting pupil progress by using letters to symbolize the students success or nonsuccess in school. The letters used are A, B, C, D, E, F and I. On the grade card itself, the letter grades are defined as follows:

A - Excellent	E - Passing
B - Good	F - Failing
C - Average	I - Incomplete
D - Below Average	

The letter grades, however, are defined more extensively in the teacher's handbook. The following is how the letter grades are described in the teacher's handbook:

"The following plan of rating students may be used as a basis for determining students' grades.

An "A" rating represents the superior student and is not frequently earned except by the most earnest student. It should be only given to a student when:

The student constantly does more work than is required.

Has a wide vocabulary at his command.

Is always alert and takes an active part in all class discussion.

Is prompt; neat; and thorough in all work.

Knows how to use books advantageously.

Is a rapid reader.

Has initiative and originality in attacking new problems.

Has ability to associate and re-think the problems and can adapt.  
 Has enthusiasm for his work.  
 Has ability to apply ideas gained from study to everyday life.

A "B" rating indicates above average and is justifiable if the student frequently does more than is required.

Has a good vocabulary and ability to speak with conviction.  
 Usually alive to the situation at hand.  
 Uses care in complying with assignments.  
 Prompt, thorough, neat and usually accurate in his work.  
 Eager to attack new problems and profits by criticism.  
 Has ability to apply the general principles of the course.

A "C" rating shows an average piece of work and is most frequently given. Such a student is one who:

Does what is required.  
 Is willing to apply himself during the class period.  
 Does daily preparation with comparative freedom from carelessness; but preparation sometimes limited by personal interest.  
 Is attentive to assignments.  
 Has ability and willingness to comply with instructions and cheerful response to corrections.  
 Is reasonable, thorough and prompt in all work.  
 Is average in neatness and accuracy.  
 Has the ability to retain collectively the general principles of the course.

A "D" rating is below average and represents the danger line. It shows that a student:

Usually does what is required.  
 Is frequently irregular in attendance.  
 Often lacks tools and equipment for the work.  
 Frequently "misunderstands" the assignment.  
 Lacks thoroughness and sometimes tardy with work.

An "E" rating may be used when the student:

Is willing, but finds difficulty in following directions.  
 Seldom contributes anything "outside" the lesson.  
 Retains only fragments of the general principles of the course.  
 Lacks in the qualities of the first three groups to the extent that he cannot do the work.  
 In short, this rating is only justifiable when the student has done the best he can and has been cheerful and cooperative about it.

An "F" rating should be given when the student:

Seldom does what is required.  
 Is frequently irregular in attendance.

Often lacks tools and equipment for the work.  
 Is very careless in preparation of assignments.  
 In general, has the ability to do satisfactory work, but  
 does not.

The "E" grade is to be used in grades 7 and 8. It is a grade to differentiate between the capable student who chooses to do no more than just get by and thus receive a "D" grade when he should be making an A, B, or C grade and the student who works up to his ability; but his best performance is below any desirable standard of performance. The "E" student is the hard-working, cooperative, low-ability student who does his work daily and does benefit from the educational experiences he receives by attending school. The "E" grade is a respectable grade and counts full credit toward graduation.

The "D" grade is a grade given to students whose achievements, according to a pre-determined standard, is at the "D" level regardless of the student's ability so long as he can come up to the pre-determined standard.

The Basic Philosophy of passing a student in grades 7 and 8, if he is working up to his ability, cooperating, turning in his work, and contributing to the class according to his ability, MUST be understood and practiced by all teachers in grades 7 and 8 if the "E" grade and "ELIGIBILITY RULE" is to function properly. Every student should have the opportunity to experience success in school if his mental ability warrents his attendance in a public school. The highest standard of performance is the standard which would stimulate students to maximum achievement regardless of ability."

On the grade card there is space for teacher comments concerning the student's progress in each teacher's class. However, these comments are number coded for the computer and are general comments and it is impossible for a teacher to indicate any special need or problem on the present grade card without writing a special note that would be separate from the grade card. The comments are coded in the following way:

1. Cooperative and enthusiastic
2. Good attitude
3. Not working up to capacity (parental conference urged)
4. Wastes time and is often unprepared (parental conference urged)
5. Does not complete required work (parental conference urged)
6. Improper behavior, disrupts classroom activity (parental conference urged)

The letter "z" is used in the area for absences to mean more than 9 absences because the computer is unable to print any two-digit numbers in the space for absences.

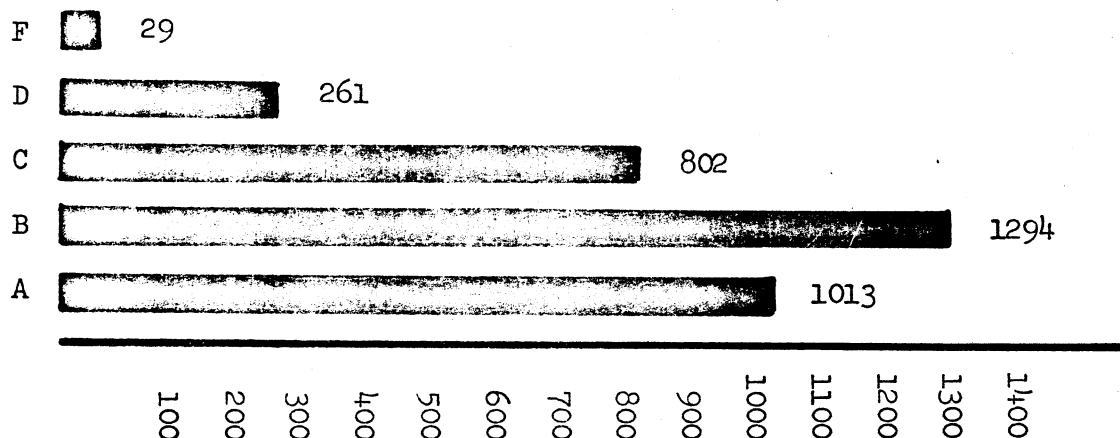
Also, about halfway through the nine-week grading period the teachers may or may not send home mid-term and commendation reports. Mid-term reports are used for students that are not making satisfactory progress in a specific area. It is generally assumed that a student cannot receive a failing grade unless a mid-term report was sent to the student's parents. The commendation reports are positive reports that are sent to the parents concerning their child's performance in a particular class or classes.

#### The Reason for Examination of the Grading System

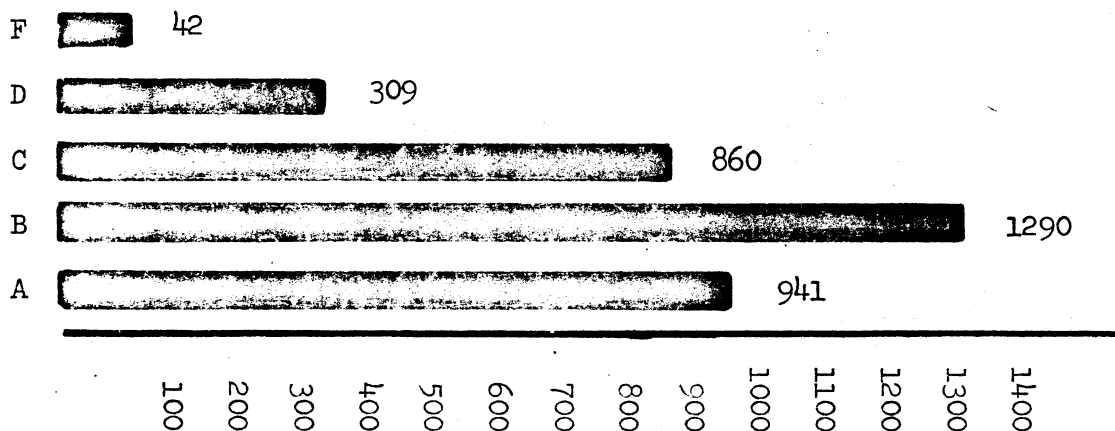
After a close examination of the grade distribution following the end of the first nine weeks of the 1975-76 school year, some surprising observations were made. The grade distribution was definitely skewed to the high end of the grading scale with more "A's" and "B's" than any other grade. There was also a relatively large percentage of students on the honor rolls. There are two honor rolls published at the junior high; the high honor roll and the regular honor roll. To be on the high honor roll a student needs to have a grade point average of 3.60 or better out of a possible 4.00. To be on the regular honor roll a student needs a 3.20 out of a possible 4.00.

At the end of the first nine-week grading period there were 32% of the junior high students on at least one of the honor rolls with 18.7% on the high honor roll.

The graph below shows the grade distribution for the first nine-week grading period for the 1975-76 school year.



At the end of the first nine-week grading period the grade distribution was shown to the faculty members at Charleston Jr. High School and there was some discussion and concern mentioned about the possibility of lower standards. At the end of the second nine-weeks grading period, however, the grade distribution showed the same pattern with more "A's" and "B's" than any other grade and a high percentage of students on the honor roll. The grade distribution for the second nine-weeks grading period is shown below.





After examination of the grade distribution some serious questions seemed to be raised. What do the letter grades really tell us about the student's progress in school? Is the letter grading system accomplishing what the teachers want in regard to reporting to the parents their child's performance? Is there anything wrong with grades being skewed towards the high side? Is there consistence among the teachers as to how grades are determined? Does the fact that grades are given to the students that are not accustomed to grades have any negative or positive effect on the students.

As a result of these questions that were raised, a study was made of the Jr. High grading system. Questionnaires were filled out by the teachers, 100 seventh graders and some parents.

#### Examination of the CJHS Teacher Questionnaire

As one examines the questionnaire given to the Charleston Junior High School teachers concerning their method of reporting student progress, there seems to be one consistent theme throughout. The teachers would like to be able to write comments on the grade card. More personalized comments that fit each particular student to their specific problem or strength are more what the teachers want. However, they don't want the complete narrative as in the elementary pupil progress report.

There was also mentioned some concern about the consistency of the grading system. Does one grade from one teacher or one class mean the same as the same grade from another teacher or class? Is there any way to indicate any grouping according to ability that is done, on the grade card?

### Examination of the CJHS Student Questionnaire

The students polled, 100 seventh graders, were almost unanimous in preferring the junior high grade card over the elementary pupil progress report. Over ninety percent of these students preferred the letter grade method of reporting student progress. There may be many reasons for this, but it does show that the students have a definite preference for some reason. Some comments the students made should cause some questions to be raised concerning the elementary pupil progress reports. These comments to the statement on the questionnaire, "I like the junior high grade card better than the elementary school pupil progress report." are:

- "You get more of an idea of how good you are doing. (or bad)"
- "I don't understand the progress report."
- "With the elementary grade cards you really don't know how you're doing in school."
- "You know better how you're doing with 5 grades rather than 3."
- "The others made me feel like a child when I was in the sixth grade."
- "In elementary school I never really knew how well I was doing."

If these comments are a fair assessment of how the students view the elementary pupil progress report, then this is a sad indictment against that report.

Other observations from the student questionnaire indicated that most students are rewarded for good grades but few are punished for poor grades.

It was also pointed out that the students tend to study harder when grades are given than when they are not, according to the poll. Almost all the students feel that their parents have an accurate idea of how well they are performing in school.

### Examination of the CJHS Parent Survey

An examination of the parent questionnaires found that the parents were almost unanimously satisfied with the present method of reporting student progress. It should probably be pointed out that there have been studies conducted that show that most parents are satisfied with the present method of reporting pupil progress no matter what the method might be.<sup>15</sup>

The parents also felt that the computer grade card was not too impersonal and the comment section on the grade card was adequate. All the parents that responded said they felt free to call the junior high to set up a conference with one or all their child's teachers.

There were only 25% or 25 parent responses to the 100 questionnaires that were sent to parents with self-addressed return envelopes.

#### IV. RECOMMENDED CHANGES

In the Fall of 1975 the Elementary Curriculum Council recommended that the new pupil progress reporting system be evaluated and recommendations for its improvement (if any) be made. A sub-committee was established with Miss Denise Cox, principal of Carl Sandburg Elementary School and Lerna Elementary School, acting as the sub-committee's chairman. Questionnaires were prepared for the teachers and parents of the students. In April of 1976, teachers and the parents of students in the first, third and fifth grades were given these questionnaires. The parents were asked to complete their questionnaire during their parent-teacher conference on either April 2 or April 5, 1976.

After the results of these questionnaires were tabulated and reported to the Elementary Curriculum Council, the Elementary Curriculum Council recommended that the sub-committee continue its work and make necessary recommendations for improving the present system of reporting pupil progress.

The comments from the parents during the conferences and the results from the questionnaire sent to the teachers revealed that most people were satisfied with the present method of reporting as compared to the previously-used method of assigning letter grades.

It was felt by some of the teachers that the "Explanation of Marks" on the pupil progress form were not explicit enough. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the ways some teachers mark.

It was also felt by some of the teachers that these reports were quite time consuming to fill out and they felt they did not have adequate time to prepare the reports.

Also, a majority of the teachers felt that they would like a place on the report to indicate what levels the students were working at in mathematics and reading. Others felt that this should be done in the narrative or comment section of the pupil progress report.

The sub-committee consisting of Denise Cox, chairperson, Catherine Griffin, George Kolopanis, and Gary Patterson, after several meetings and discussions made the following recommendations:

1. That the definitions for outstanding progress, satisfactory progress and very slow progress be changed to read as follows:  
Outstanding Progress - performance of your child indicates that he/she is working up to their maximum level of ability.  
Satisfactory Progress - performance of your child indicates that he/she is making adequate academic growth in relation to his level of ability.  
Very Slow Progress - performance of your child indicates that he/she is making very little academic growth in relation to to their level of ability.
2. These definitions of Outstanding Progress, Satisfactory Progress and Very Slow Progress should be placed at the top of the report instead of at the bottom of the report as they are now.
3. Add to the report to show promotion or retention, example:  
 Placement for the 19\_\_-19\_\_ School Year. Grade \_\_\_\_.
4. Under the teacher's name, put K 1 2 3 4 5 6 for the teachers to circle the one that applies.
5. Eliminate the check mark for ability.

Changes were also recommended in the Parent and Teacher Guide--  
Reporting Pupil Progress as follows:

1. Change Individual Growth to Academic Growth on page and define Academic Growth as measured gains of a child within a given period of time which is not based upon comparisons with other students.
2. Omit entirely the term expectancy since it was removed from the Pupil Progress Report.
3. Change the wording for the method of reporting to the parents to the system now in use. (2 reports and 2 conferences)

4. Add to the Guide a copy of the green conference sheet used in parent-teacher conferences.
5. Recommend that an envelope be used to send the report home to take the place of the pocket folder now in use. The report can be folded and inserted. A place on the back for a parent signature for one period can be included.

These changes were to be recommended to the Elementary Curriculum Council at the first fall meeting of the Elementary Curriculum Council. On the date of the first Elementary Curriculum Council meeting, a special meeting of all the Charleston School District's Curriculum Councils, elementary, junior high, and high school was called by the Board of Education to discuss plans for the upcoming referendum. The Elementary Curriculum Council meeting was rescheduled and Gary Patterson was not notified of the change and missed the meeting. The other members of the sub-committee concerning the changes in the Elementary Pupil Progress Report did not attend the meeting. Denise Cox, chairperson of the sub-committee, was hired by another school district and was no longer part of Charleston Community Unit School District #1. George Kolopanis and Catherine Griffin's term on the Elementary Curriculum Council had expired and they did not attend the September meeting of the Elementary Curriculum Council.

At the September meeting of the Elementary Curriculum Council grade reporting was discussed without reference to the sub-committee formed in the spring. It was decided to defer any changes in the present form at this time because there were enough forms already printed to last the rest of the year and because of the financial condition the Elementary Curriculum Council did not want to recommend any added expense.

As for Charleston Jr. High, the report card seems to be acceptable to most of the faculty and the parents or guardians of the students.

The possible exception may be that some teachers would like to write a comment on the grade card that would identify or explain a student's problem better than the coded comments on the computer card. As a result, I would like to recommend the development of a short comment form for the teachers to use, if they desire. The comment form would be separate from the grade card itself, and would not be part of the student's permanent record. These comments would be for communicating to the parents a clearer picture of their child's performance in school. These comment forms would not be required, but they would only be used if the teacher desired. The comment form would accompany the grade card home to the parents of the student.

Probably the biggest concern that I have is the need for a general philosophy towards grading in the Charleston Junior High School. The teachers' handbook with its definitions of each grade does not, in my opinion, do an accurate job of describing the way the teachers use the grades. These definitions should be updated and the teachers should be as consistent as possible in the use of the letter grades.

I feel a committee of junior high teachers should study what the letter grade should mean and work with the school administration in developing a grading philosophy for the Charleston Junior High School. Possibly an inservice meeting could be held to study grading procedures and what constitutes a student earning a specific grade. This inservice meeting would hope to bring more consistency to the grading practices used by the teachers at Charleston Junior High School.

There is no doubt that there is a difference in general philosophy of grading between the Charleston Elementary Schools and the

Junior High. Probably there should be more of a consistency between the two grading systems. This could be done by developing a unit-wide grading philosophy.

After developing a general philosophy of grading, each teacher should evaluate their own philosophy of education. The real beneficiary of this examination should be the students of Charleston Community Unit School District #1.

No matter how hard we try to have consistency in grading from one teacher to the next, it is an almost certainty that consistency cannot be achieved. There are too many subjective influences on the teacher in deciding how to evaluate a student. No matter how objective a teacher tries to be, there is always a subjective element involved somewhere.

The best hope of any consistency in grading is for a good general philosophy towards grading and the hope that each teacher will follow that philosophy.



## Footnotes

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7. Ibid., p. 7.
8. Chase, Clinton, Measurement for Educational Evaluation, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1974.
9. Olmask, Kurt, Student Life-Styles and Reactions to Grading, Case Western Reserve University, 1970, p. 17.
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13. Gilman, David, "The Economics and Psychology of the Report Card", Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, Oct. 1974, p. 159.
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## APPENDIX

Student \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 quarter report  
197 -7

Since no two children develop at the same rate, the progress report is based on the child's current instructional level. It is Not a comparison with other pupils. It is recommended that parents review the PARENT AND TEACHER GUIDE - REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS.

SUBJECTS	Comments:					
	Outstanding Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Very Slow Progress	Working Up To Ability	Working Below Ability	
Reading						
Writing						
Language						
Spelling						
Social Studies						
Science						
Mathematics						
Music						
Art						
Physical Ed.						
Health Ed.						

**Explanation of Marks:**

**Outstanding Progress** - Indicates that your child is applying himself very well and is working above his average expectancy.

**Satisfactory Progress** - Indicates that your child is making satisfactory progress in relation to his expected performance.

**Very Slow Progress** - Indicates that your child is not working up to his average expectancies.

The ability evaluation reflects the teacher's judgement of your child's performance in relation to his measured scholastic abilities.

Attendance Record				
	1	2	3	4
Days Present				
Days Absent				
Times Tardy				

CHARLESTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
REPORT OF PUPIL PROGRESS

Student \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 quarter report

Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

197 - 7

Since no two children develop at the same rate, the progress report is based on the child's current instructional level. It is NOT a comparison with other pupils. It is recommended that parents review the PARENT AND TEACHER GUIDE - REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS.

Definition of Terms

Outstanding Progress - Performance of your child indicates that he is working up to his maximum level of ability.

Satisfactory Progress - Performance of your child indicates that he is making adequate academic growth in relation to his level of ability.

Very Slow Progress - Performance of your child indicates that he is making very little academic growth in relation to his level of ability.

SUBJECTS	Outstanding Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Very Slow Progress	Comments:
Reading				
Writing				
Language				
Spelling				
Social Studies				
Science				
Mathematics				
Music				
Art				
Physical Ed.				
Health Ed.				

Placement for 197\_ - 197\_ School Year  
Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance Record

	1	2	3	4
Days Present				
Days Absent				

STUDENT NAME
PARENT NAME AND ADDRESS

HOMEROOM
----------

MO	DAY	YR
DATE		

STUDENT NUMBER
----------------

## CHARLESTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADE REPORT

SUBJECT	TEACHER	EXAM				EXAM				ABSENT				COMMENTS			
		1st 9 WKS	2nd 9 WKS	E X A M	F I N A L	3rd 9 WKS	4th 9 WKS	E X A M	F I N A L	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

**GRADE CODES**

- A-EXCELLENT
- B-VERY GOOD
- C-AVERAGE
- D-LOW AVERAGE
- E-PASSING
- F-FAILING
- I-INCOMPLETE
- Z-MORE THAN 9 ABSENCES

**COMMENT CODES**

- 1-Cooperative and enthusiastic
- 2-Good attitude
- 3-Not working up to capacity (parental conference urged)
- 4-Wastes time and is often unprepared (parental conference urged)
- 5-Does not complete required work (parental conference urged)
- 6-Improper behavior, disrupts classroom activity (parental conference urged)

CHARLESTON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOLS  
MID-TERM REPORT

MIDDLE OF \_\_\_\_\_ GRADING PERIOD

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

AT THE PRESENT TIME \_\_\_\_\_ IS MAKING UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS

IN \_\_\_\_\_ AND HAS EARNED A GRADE OF \_\_\_\_\_

REASONS ARE CHECKED BELOW:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DID NOT COMPLETE REQUIRED HOMEWORK              | <input type="checkbox"/> POOR DAILY PREPARATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CARELESS IN (PENMANSHIP). (GRAMMAR). (SPELLING) | <input type="checkbox"/> IMPROPER BEHAVIOR           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> POOR ATTENDANCE/EXCESSIVE TARDINESS             | <input type="checkbox"/> HAS A READING PROBLEM       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAILED TO MAKE UP WORK AFTER ABSENCE            | <input type="checkbox"/> INATTENTIVE IN CLASS        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMES TO CLASS WITHOUT NECESSARY MATERIALS      | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK SEEMS TOO DIFFICULT    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> POOR STUDY HABITS                               | <input type="checkbox"/> POOR ATTITUDE               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LOW TEST GRADES                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> LACK OF CONSISTENT EFFORT   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOT WORKING UP TO ABILITY                       | <input type="checkbox"/> LACK OF CLASS PARTICIPATION |

OTHER COMMENTS:

PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL TO ARRANGE FOR A TEACHER CONFERENCE.

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_ BROWN OIL

J37669X



CHARLESTON JR. HIGH SCHOOL

Commendation Report

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Dear Parent,

It is a policy of the junior high school to recognize students who deserve commendation. I am pleased to report to you that

in \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) class, \_\_\_\_\_  
class no. name of student

- \_\_\_\_\_ displays an excellent attitude
- \_\_\_\_\_ is attentive and participates actively in class
- \_\_\_\_\_ is unusually creative
- \_\_\_\_\_ shows consistently good effort
- \_\_\_\_\_ completes assignments regularly
- \_\_\_\_\_ displays positive leadership

Other comments:

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's signature

## CHARLESTON COMMUNITY UNIT #1

## TEACHER SURVEY OF PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING

The Elementary Curriculum Council is conducting a survey of pupil progress to assist in the evaluation of our current method. Please circle your response to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements and feel free to make comments as needed. Return this form to your building principal by April 2, 1976.

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

1. I am satisfied with the present method of reporting my students' progress. (two conference sessions at the close of first and third quarters and two written progress reports at the close of second and fourth quarters)  
 Yes 27      No 25      Comments:  
      52%      48%
2. I am pleased with the practice of not comparing a student with his classmates.  
 Yes 41      No 5      Comments:  
      89%      11%
3. I have found the Parent and Teacher Guide for Reporting Student Progress helpful.  
 Yes 33      No 11      Comments:  
      75%      25%
4. I think that narrative comments are an important part of the progress report.  
 Yes 45      No 2      Comments:  
      96%      4%
5. I have found parent/teacher conferences of value in acquainting me with the parents of each of my students and the school related expectations placed on them.  
 Yes 44      No 2      Comments:  
      96%      4%
6. I feel that my students understand the meaning of their progress reports.  
 Yes 15      No 23      Comments:  
      40%      60%
7. I think that I have an adequate amount of time to prepare reports.  
 Yes 14      No 29      Comments:  
      33%      67%
8. I am in favor of including a space on the pupil progress report form where I can indicate the levels in which a child is working in reading and math.  
 Yes 30      No 9      Comments:  
      77%      23%
9. Other Concerns:

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this survey.

1. I am satisfied with the present method of reporting my students' progress. (two conference sessions at the close of first and third quarters and two written progress reports at the close of second and fourth quarters)
  - I would rather have a conference the second quarter.
  - Parents do not understand our present method. The checkmarks are misleading.
  - Would like to have first conference mandatory but second one only optional.
  - I think the 2nd conference should be optional, with the clear understanding that if the parents choose not to come, they will not receive written report.
  - Too complicated with less release time--next year will be worse. Is the 2nd conference necessary?
  - The conferences are good. The written reports consume too much time. Time could be spent on preparation--which is more beneficial to students.
  - The conferences are most helpful for me. However, I wonder if they are effective for the children and parents.
  - That is sufficient for indicating progress or problems.
  - I believe in many cases the second conference is not really necessary.
  - But question teacher opinion of "ability".
  - The "working up to ability" and "not working up to ability" columns are difficult to judge and they put too much emphasis on teacher opinion.
  - Too wide range in what is satisfactory and not satisfactory.
  - I can't think of a better way even though I'm not completely satisfied.
  - I would be in favor of only one conference except for parents of children with problems.
  - Most parents think the second conference isn't necessary.
  - Time consuming without giving a true picture of progress.
  - I like only two written reports a year--but not the way they are.
  - I like a conference 1st quarter and only if needed 3rd quarter.
  - I would like to adapt the ABC reporting system.
  - I think letter grades give an incentive.
  - I would like to talk with my parents at the end of the year.
  - I would prefer a general check list with a smaller area for comments.
  
2. I am pleased with the practice of not comparing a student with his classmates.
  - I try not to--but I find myself doing just that!
  - Its such a relief not to have to give grades to 1st graders.
  - So much more realistic.
  - Not altogether--it is sometimes helpful to know group performance (for placement).
  - Parents have not fully accepted this concept but seem satisfied.
  - In theory--yes. Realistically I wonder if it really benefits



- children this much to except for very slow.
  - I do think some indication should be made whether they are at grade level or below/above.
  - I still have a few parents who want this comparative information. I provide it to them when they ask for it.
  - However, I believe some parents and some pupils still do this.
  - Good for the slow learners. Comparison motivates average and above-average students.
  - I really try to measure the child against his own ability.
  - But students still do it.
  - Because of this students get more individual attention and their own strengths and weaknesses are worked with.
  - However, "ability" is a very subjective view.
3. I have found the Parent and Teacher Guide for Reporting Student Progress helpful.
- I have not used it very much.
  - Fairly helpful.
  - Parents seem not to have read it. Each teacher seems to interpret it differently.
  - I wonder if parents have read them, however, very few parents have questions about child progress.
  - If the parents would read it!
  - Though I must admit that I only read through it one time.
  - Checking many details is time consuming and almost all of my progress reporting has to be done at home.
  - We have to find the areas of proficiency exceptal so I try to keep that in mind as I grade.
  - But parents don't seem to understand it.
  - Some.
  - But parents don't seem to understand it.
  - Most parents didn't read it. Explanations were better when I handled them directly.
4. I think that narrative comments are an important part of the progress report.
- I dislike the checklist.
  - Very time-consuming.
  - Particularly at this grade level.
  - But it takes an inordinate amount of time to attempt to phrase the comments so the parents (hopefully) will not mis-interpret.
  - Only when pertinent; just verbiage is often used to fill space.
  - Perhaps a check list with room for extra comments would be enough.
  - By far--the most important--I feel too many teachers do not follow the explanation given on the report.
  - But...they take so much time to prepare. I average 20-30 minutes per report. With 30-32 that's a lot of time.
  - Very necessary.
  - This method of reporting wouldn't tell nearly enough about the student without the narrative comments.

- Again, it takes a great deal of time to do this correctly.
  - In some instances.
  - I don't add to those narrative except in a few isolated cases.
  - But with no preparation periods for elementary teachers, I'm afraid the quality will degenerate.
  - I feel that to maintain understanding from most parents point of view, comments have to be stated in such a generalized manner that one feels - what have I really said that pinpoints specific problems. In other words--if I say that the child is having difficulty with inflections, how many parents would know what I mean?
  - Helps to explain areas where a check in a box does not clarify a student's ability.
  - The best part of the whole progress report!
  - Definitely.
5. I have found parent/teacher conferences of value in acquainting me with the parents of each of my students and the school related expectations placed on them.
- Usually this is true.
  - Need only one parent/teacher conference possibly at the end of the first semester.
  - Extremely valuable at the first of the year.
  - I think the 2nd conference should be optional, with the clear understanding that if the parents choose not to come, they will not receive a written report.
  - I like the two conference times as I feel I know the students so much better the 2nd time. Changes are made very often.
  - These conferences are beneficial--without exception. They should be encouraged by not sending a written report to non-attending parents.
  - Conferences will be less effective if we continue to send written reports to the "ALL" "no show" parents.
  - Very few parents feel there is an importance of discussing musical progress.
  - Absolutely!
  - I think this is one of the biggest advantages of conferences.
  - I find this to be interesting and important.
  - In the fall
  - Very valuable; hope they are continued.
  - Especially the fall conference.
6. I feel that my students understand the meaning of their progress reports.
- Not at this level.
  - I try to go over it with them individually in their language, but it's hard to tell how much soaks in. Besides, it takes a lot of time with 32 kiddies.
  - Not really - need time to discuss report with pupil on individual basis.

- Some feel that unless they get "outstanding" they're not making good progress.
  - They feel that "Satisfactory Progress" is close to failing--even though we spend a great deal of time discussing this. Each teacher interprets the reports differently so students are confused.
  - I feel too many parents still see outstanding-A, Satisfactory-C Slow Progress-failing and this is communicated to students.
  - I go over reports individually and even encourage children to help write a part of them. This takes a lot of school time, but I think it's very worth while.
  - Probably most of the students understand the meaning.
  - I prepare them so they will have a good idea early in the year and review them at later times.
  - Not fully. They would rather have letter grades.
  - I am not sure that they realize the basis of the evaluations.
  - They convert the checks to grades.
  - Parents have said that their children think they haven'd done well when they see check in SP.
  - They have an idea generally where they fall.
  - As well as a 2nd grader can understand...
  - I have them fill out a p. report on themselves so that any questions they have can be cleared up.
  - As a new form of report is used continuously, understanding increases.
  - They still ask if they received an "A" or "B".
  - If proper explanation given.
7. I think that I have an adequate amount of time to prepare reports.
- When?? It takes a long time to write out reports and to prepare for conferences, and I feel for the teacher who has 30 students.
  - The narrative portion involves a great deal of preparation outside the classroom.
  - Almost all is prepared on my "own" time.
  - We need 3 days of conferences, especially if class size remains so high.
  - My husband hates report-writing because I'm holed-up and edgy. It takes me about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour for each report.
  - Hours and hours of time are spent on these at home!!
  - I always find the time - pressure of time helps me get reports ready.
  - At home, of course. There is no work period during my school day!
  - With so few planning periods, this is quite a problem. Next year will be impossible unless the referendum passes.
  - Not with schools expectations, now. Reports require much more detailed record keeping, preparation, etc. I feel we need a revision.
  - This is definitely not time for the other teachers.
  - At school - NO WAY!! It takes me one full week (15+) hours in the evenings. My family hates reporting time.
  - Much of this has to be done at home.
  - Could always use more time!
  - But would I ever?? Ha!
  - But only when I work many hours at home.
  - This year. Next year will require more time than will be available.

- It is a very demanding task.
  - The way they're being done right now I do.
  - Not counting grading and recording, I figure that I spend 25-30 hours on written reports. I have 30 homeroom students to grade for.
  - Preparation time is needed not only for the written reports but also for parent conferences.
  - Not for narrative.
  - It takes me many hours to prepare these reports. I could use several early dismissals to work on them.
  - Parent conferences must be prepared entirely on teacher time.
8. I am in favor of including a space on the pupil progress report form where I can indicate the levels in which a child is working in reading and math.
- This can be done in comments if needed.
  - I don't feel this is necessary since we have conferences. Hopefully teachers give this information to parents.
  - Perhaps; however, I think there is a danger of parents misinterpreting and/or comparing with neighbors.
  - A good idea.
  - I usually do this, anyway, as parents like to know if they're above, at, or below grade level.
  - This level awareness is being used just as A, B, C, - as a status symbol.
  - If parents know this each year then they don't know what the levels mean. They want to know if this is below, at, or above grade level, and if their child is working up to his or her ability.
  - I would prefer doing this at conference as I am doing now. Most parents wouldn't understand what the levels meant anyway.
  - Very important.
  - With change.
  - It might be best to continue to do this during the conference sessions.
  - What to you mean by level? Grade level? Level in Holt or other series?
  - This will answer questions that parents may have and prevent any misunderstandings in future.
  - This comes out in the narratives.
  - Since I favor reviving the ABC system, one could qualify the grade and the grade would reflect the progress according to the pupil's ability.
  - I do not feel it is necessary to indicate any level (what does it mean? - how is it explained to parents?) but I would like to see some math and reading skills listed and check marks used to indicate a student's strengths and weaknesses.
  - I have stressed relating reading and math to ability only; mentioning them on the report would contradict this goal.

## 9. Other Concerns:

I have a feeling many students do not work up to their ability since they don't get a letter grade. I feel parents are much more lax in helping children. Perhaps parents would put forth more effort if Johnny brought home a C, D, or whatever.

Would like to see a new report form developed for kindergarten--perhaps a sort of a checklist with space for comments.

The last conference should not be mandatory. It is not necessary to meet all parents. Written report should not be required for those parents not coming to conferences.

Primary and upper elementary reports should differ.

Parents of very good students are more anxious to have conferences. Teachers differ on how they mark these reports (I have seen s+ - S-)

I feel achievement testing, especially at 1st grade, is not at all worth the time or money spent.

I am concerned that many parents tend to feel that to evidence they are interested (?) parents they choose a conference with each teacher--e.g. art, speech, music, etc. There is a trend that parents worry whether the check mark is in center of space--or on the line, before or after the space. It is my opinion that this amounts to Satisfactory plus or Satisfactory minus! Is this the purpose?

I would encourage the elimination of group standardized tests until an appraisal can be made. They are costly and do not necessarily measure what should be measured. Parents view them as completely accurate.

Are we committed to this means of reporting indefinitely? Surely there is a better way that consumes much less of teacher time. Time used this way benefits children very little. This time is needed for planning effective teaching procedures, since no planning time appears available next year. We teachers often "spend ourselves so thin" that our work with students is less effective than it could be. Realistically, there must be limitations that are recognized. I like the present reports but not under present conditions. Adjustments, which may not be desirable. Nevertheless, we cannot be all things to all students.

There must be some way to indicate achievement other than satisfactory or excellent. Parents look specifically for these check marks and feel there is no in between.

I feel that when a parent repeatedly refuses to take the time and make an effort to come in for parent/teacher conferences that it should be necessary to make an extensive written report to send to the parents. Perhaps a simple checklist type form would be sufficient.

I really prefer grades and conferences. I feel a conference must be part of our grading system--whatever form we use.

Having conferences is a great method of reporting. There are some instances, however, when a child is progressing in a satisfactory manner and the Spring conference might be considered a waste of time by parent and/or teacher. In such isolated cases, I feel the teacher should be able to consult the parent and decide if a conference is necessary at that time.

I'd prefer the 1st conference but I do feel the 2nd not too effective.

Regardless of what is said about not comparing students, I feel they are compared or how else would one know what level of work one is doing.

Some parents seem to feel the reporting system is too vague--fine for younger children, they say, but before junior high, they want to know how their child compares to others.

Those of us who are involved in team-teaching or departmentalized work find the narrative report on 85+ students is a burden. It comes down to "What are we evaluating?" the student's progress or his personality and social adjustment? In many ways a percentage grade is more fair than a narrative report that cannot help but reflect a personal bias.

I'd like to be able to really communicate how each child is doing--how much of his ability and interest he is tapping. I have thought of several alternate ways of doing this, but the best way for covering the 700+ would be to stagger the written evaluations which go home through the mail.

When I asked students to indicate the type of reporting system they preferred, the results were as follows:

Votes

- |    |                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 1  | Progress Reports as they are now.    |
| 23 | Would like to have A,B,C,D,F grades. |
| 3  | Didn't care                          |

I think numbers 4 and 5 are very helpful.

I have trouble with the words working below abilities and outstanding Progress. Because a child can be working up to the expectancy of his grade but still be below his ability.

The words scholastic abilities seem to mean we use test scores to make our judgement of the students grades, but I do not. I think this wording should be changed on the report progress sheet and in the handbook. At first grade level I don't feel we have a test score to use when progress sheets are used.

"Writing" is a vague term; does it refer to handwriting, creative writing or...? A more detailed skills checklist might be considered for reading and math:

ex. Reading \_\_\_\_\_  
Oral \_\_\_\_\_  
Comprehension \_\_\_\_\_  
Skills Mastery \_\_\_\_\_

The explanation of the terms at the bottom of the form is confusing, especially "satisfactory progress."

I feel that many parents would prefer a grade rather than the present reports. Many of my parents oppose individualization.

## CHARLESTON COMMUNITY UNIT #1

## PARENT SURVEY OF PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING

The Elementary Curriculum Council is conducting a survey of parent opinion regarding the reporting of pupil progress to assist in the evaluation of our current method. Please circle your response to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements and feel free to make comments as needed. (Please complete only one survey for your family)

Indicate grade levels of students in your family: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

1. I am satisfied with the present method of reporting my child's progress (two conference sessions at the close of first and third quarters and two written progress reports at the close of second and fourth quarters)  
 Yes 300            No 66            Comments:  
          82%            18%
2. I am pleased with the practice of not comparing a student with his classmates.  
 Yes 331            No 29            Comments:  
          92%            8%
3. I have found the Parent and Teacher Guide for Reporting Student Progress helpful.  
 Yes 307            No 45            Comments:  
          87%            13%
4. I think that narrative comments are an important part of the progress report.  
 Yes 348            No 14            Comments:  
          96%            4%
5. After attending a parent/teacher conference, I feel that I know how my child is progressing within the district's curriculum.  
 Yes 344            No 21            Comments:  
          94%            6%
6. After reviewing my child's progress report, I feel that I know how my child is progressing within the district's curriculum.  
 Yes 280            No 69            Comments:  
          80%            20%
7. I have found parent/teacher conferences of value in acquainting me with my child's teacher, the instructional programs, and the educational environment.  
 Yes 314            No 37            Comments:  
          89%            11%
8. My child is aware of the meaning of his/her progress report.  
 Yes 307            No 45            Comments:  
          87%            13%
9. The information I receive from the pupil progress report is useful as a means to guide my child's educational achievement.  
 Yes 282            No 29            Comments:  
          90%            10%
10. Other Concerns:



## CHARLESTON COMMUNITY UNIT #1

## TEACHER SURVEY OF PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING

I am presently working on a field study for my specialist degree. The field study is to examine and evaluate the pupil progress reporting systems for the Charleston Community Unit School District in grades K-8. I would like your assistance in this field study by completing this form.

Please circle your response to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements and feel free to make comments as needed. Return this form to the office by June 3.

Gary Patterson

1. I am satisfied with the present CJHS grade reporting system.  
 Yes 9          No 11          Comments:  
     45%          55%
2. I feel the present grade reporting system at CJHS gives the teacher the opportunity to provide an accurate evaluation of the pupil's academic progress.  
 Yes 9          No 11          Comments:  
     45%          55%
3. I feel the comment section of the grade card is adequate.  
 Yes 6          No 14          Comments:  
     30%          70%
4. I feel confident in using the present grade card.  
 Yes 16          No 4          Comments:  
     80%          20%
5. I feel the computer grade card is too impersonal and does not allow flexibility.  
 Yes 8          No 12          Comments:  
     40%          60%
6. I feel that written comments are too time consuming for secondary grade cards.  
 Yes 10          No 10          Comments:  
     50%          50%
7. I would prefer to use a pupil progress report similar to that used by the elementary schools in Charleston.  
 Yes 1          No 19          Comments:  
     5%          95%
8. I feel that individual parent conferences for all students should be included in the junior high student evaluation procedures.  
 Yes 3          No 15          Comments:  
     17%          83%
9. I would like to have a place for written comments on the grade card.  
 Yes 16          No 2          Comments:  
     89%          11%
10. I grade each student as compared with how well the other students do in my class.  
 Yes 8          No 10          Comments:  
     44%          56%
11. Other Concerns:

## Teacher Survey of Pupil Progress Reporting, Grades 7 &amp; 8

## Comments

Statement #1: I am satisfied with the present CJHS grade reporting system.

I don't feel strongly about it one way or another. I grade somewhat on a child's ability as well as performance.

Better than previously used; present circumstances I wonder about costs of computer reporting.

Would like to have more variety of comment responses.

We need an understanding and agreement on grading fundamental groups.

Need to show a difference in a "C" in a fundamental groups.

It's convenient, but a way to correspond with parents and students with more accurate and/or appropriate comments would help.

Statement #2: I feel the present grade reporting system at CJHS gives the teacher the opportunity to provide an accurate evaluation of the pupil's academic progress.

Yes, as far as letter grades go; otherwise, I feel the comment section of the grade card is adequate.

Need more comments on grade cards to check or space to write individual comments.

Primarily the limitation of choices and restriction to one choice on card.

I doubt that any system does.

Yes, but, it would be nice to have a way to put more comments on their grade card.

Statement #3: I feel the comment section of the grade card is adequate.

Need to add: "Is working up to capacity."

No, often the comments don't apply; or others than the ones to choose from are would be preferable.

Need more comments.

There should be more definite standards, i.e, talks too much in class, is loud and disruptive.

Need to add: "poor attitude."

Need more variety of comment responses.

Sometimes teachers need to write in other forms that are not provided.

Statement #4: I feel confident in using the present grade card.

Yes, I suppose so, as much as any reporting system we have used.

This does not really show that student is working to his own ability or not.

Primarily the limitation of choices and restriction to one choice on card.

Statement #5: I feel the computer grade card is too impersonal and does not allow flexibility.

A longer checklist with more options to check.

It is adequate--not superior--perhaps it could be changed slightly.

To a certain degree no, on most cases. Best we have had anyway.

Need more flexibility.

Statement #6: I feel that written comments are too time consuming for secondary grade cards.

Short comments only.

Could be--depends on how it is done.

If they are to have value, they must be personal.

No, but all cards might not always need written comments.

Yes, if mandatory for each student.

If comments like K-6 were required for six classes, it would take a lot of time.

It would take a tremendous amount of time to see the parents of all students, but it would be useful.

Statement #7: I would prefer to use a pupil progress report similar to that used by the elementary schools in Charleston.

I think this develops into a meaningless check sheet too easily.

It would be difficult to get it to all teachers involved.

A happy medium of ours and theirs. (elementary)

No, it seems to be too detailed for our purpose; we have the students 45 minutes; in elementary they are often with one teacher all day.

Statement #8: I feel that individual parent conferences for all students should be included in the junior high student evaluation procedures.

Needed for some students.

It would be.

Not for all--but for any with problems.

Encouraged and time allowed, but not required.

Statement #9: I would like to have a place for written comments on the grade card.

Possibly at the end of the 1st quarter or semester; after that it is on the last half of the year, best to get started on problems as early as possible.

Statement #10: I grade each student as compared with how well the other students do in my class.

Grade each student individually on what he does in his own work, effort and etc.

Yes, however, they should be graded on an ability test.

Individualized as much as possible--student graded against self, not class.

I grade somewhat on whether or not students are working up to capacity.

Yes, and it depends on the activity or assignment I am grading, sometimes it is on individual thing and at others I might use a comparison.

Other Concerns:

Basic concern is whether we should be grading each student as to his/her ability and progress, or against the masses.

I believe it is a waste of money to mail grades out. Have students report to homeroom 9th period--give them grades--have them take them home and return to teacher.

I have been feeling very concerned over the situation we are facing regarding the validity of our grades. Due to grouping we are sending very low ability kids and kids who do little to the high school with A's and B's on their records. Are we giving these kids a realistic picture of themselves? Are we being fair to the good students? I see good and bad points on both sides, but the present situation bothers me a lot.

My students are graded according to their own progress. There is no way to indicate this.

## CHARLESTON COMMUNITY UNIT #1

## STUDENT SURVEY OF PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING

You are being asked to participate in a survey concerning the report cards you have at the junior high this year. This survey will be used as part of a field study being conducted by Gary Patterson for completion of a graduate degree at EIU. This survey will be used to evaluate the present grade reporting system at CJHS. From this study, recommendations will be made to the administration concerning any possible improvements.

Please circle your responses to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements and feel free to make comments as needed. It is important that this survey be completed to the best of your ability.

1. I like the junior high grade card better than the elementary school pupil progress report.  
 Yes 90      No 8                      Comments:  
       92%        8%
2. I feel I was graded accurately.  
 Yes 85      No 9                      Comments:  
       90%        10%
3. I wish to be graded based on how well other students do. (as the curve)  
 Yes 29      No 69                    Comments:  
       30%        70%
4. I wish to be graded only according to my own ability.  
 Yes 73      No 25                    Comments:  
       74%        26%
5. I think my parents have an accurate idea of how well I am doing in school.  
 Yes 92      No 6                      Comments:  
       94%        6%
6. I want more information concerning my behavior on my grade card.  
 Yes 43      No 52                    Comments:  
       44%        56%
7. I am pressured at home to make good grades.  
 Yes 24      No 51                    Comments:  
       45%        55%
8. I have been punished for poor grades in the past.  
 Yes 24      No 73                    Comments:  
       25%        75%
9. I am rewarded for good grades.  
 Yes 62      No 35                    Comments:  
       64%        36%
10. I feel I work or study harder when grades are given than when they are not.  
 Yes 73      No 23                    Comments:  
       76%        24%
11. Other Concerns:

Student Survey of Pupil Progress Reporting, Grades 7 & 8  
Comments

Statement #1: I like the junior high grade card better than the elementary school pupil progress report.

You get more of an idea of how good you are doing. (or bad)

Because they will mail it!

We can get our own grades at home.

I don't understand the progress report.

With the elementary grade cards you really don't know how you're doing in school.

You know better how you're doing with 5 grades rather than three.

But it takes so long to get them.

The others made me feel like a little child when I was in the 6th grade.

Smaller and comes in the mail.

In the elementary school I never really knew how well I was doing.

Statement #2: I feel I was graded accurately.

Not in Mrs. Lynch's class on my 1st grade card.

In some classes---no.

I don't think all of my grades were accurate.

Some teachers can't figure percentages well.

In some classes yes, in others no.

Except for P.E., health and swimming.

Statement #3: I wish to be graded based on how well other students do.

The scale of grade should be set.

No, but maybe sometimes.

Sometimes.

I would like to be graded on how well I do.

That way you know where you stand in life.

Statement #4: I wish to be graded only according to my own ability.

You won't be able to get a college degree on your own ability grades.

The scale of grades should be set.

Not only.

Statement #5: I think my parents have an accurate idea of how well  
I am doing in school.

I believe that they know how well I am doing, but not what the junior  
high is like.

Terrible.

The parent exchange day let them know a lot about CJHS.

It doesn't tell you satisfactory or anything.

I tell them what I do but many kids don't.

They do if we get grades but not if we just get a progress report.

Sometimes.

Statement # 6: I want more information concerning my behavior on my  
grade card.

Just enough is given

I know what I'm doing wrong.

It doesn't matter.



Statement #7: I am pressured at home to make good grades.

Kind of pressured but not really.

They expect it but do not pressure me in any way.

To some extent.

To a certain extent.

It runs in the family.

I do it on my own.

I'm not pressured a lot. As long as I do my best my parents are happy.

Well, I am to a certain place like a "C".

I'm just told to do my best.

Statement #8: I have been punished for poor grades in the past.

I always make very good grades.

I never got poor grades.

I have not had any poor grades in the past.

Because I have not had them--no.

Never had any.

Certainly not!

I never had any poor grades.

I have never had bad grades.

Statement #9: I am rewarded for good grades.

Sometimes.

Well, kind of.

Just by saying you did well.

Sometimes.

Sometimes, not all of the time.

Just by saying good work.

Sometimes, maybe I get to go to the D.Q. or something like that.

To a certain extent.

My parents just say I did a good job.

A little bit.

Statement #10: I feel I work or study harder when grades are given  
than when they are not.

Sometimes.

I work harder but get lower grades.

I work hard all the time.

Statement #11: Other Concerns:

I feel that all of my grades are fair, but in Science she does not  
grade very fair. Mrs. Lynch.

I feel teachers should tell us if we need more points if we are get-  
ting a low grade, but most won't tell you and that isn't fair at all!

There is too much boarding.

## CHARLESTON COMMUNITY UNIT #1

## PARENT SURVEY OF PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING

You are being asked to participate in a survey concerning the pupil progress reports your child has received from the Charleston Jr. High this year. This survey will be used as part of a field study being conducted by Gary Patterson for completion of a graduate degree at EIU. This survey will be used to evaluate the present grade reporting system at CJHS. From this study, recommendations will be made to the administration concerning any possible improvements.

Please circle your response to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements and feel free to make comments as needed. It is important that this survey be completed to the best of your ability.

Please return this form as soon as possible via the enclosed, stamped envelope. Thank you.

1. I am satisfied with the CJHS method of reporting student progress.  
 Yes 21      No 2      Comments:  
     91.3%      8.7%
2. I feel I know how my child is progressing at CJHS in relationship to his ability.  
 Yes 21      No 1      Comments:  
     95.5%      4.5%
3. I want to know how my child is progressing at CJHS in relationship to his classmates.  
 Yes 13      No 9      Comments:  
     59.1%      40.9%
4. I feel the computer grade card is too impersonal.  
 Yes 3      No 21      Comments:  
     12.5%      87.5%
5. I feel free to call the junior high to set a conference with all or one of my child's teachers.  
 Yes 24      NO      Comments:  
     100%
6. I feel the comment section of the grade card is adequate.  
 Yes 16      No 4      Comments:  
     80%      20%
7. I would like more information concerning my child's behavior on the grade card.  
 Yes 5      No 18      Comments:  
     21.7%      78.3%
8. I reward my child for good grades.  
 Yes 9      No 16      Comments:  
     23.8%      76.2%
9. I feel I know how my child was progressing this year better than I knew last year.  
 Yes 9      No 10      Comments:  
     47.4%      52.6%
10. Other Concerns:

## Parent Survey of Pupil Progress Reporting, Grades 7 &amp; 8

## Comments

Statement #1: I am satisfied with the CJHS method of reporting student progress.

Yes and no--I think that any parent whose child deserves a "comment code 3, 4, 5 or 6" should be told when the situation presents itself not only at grade report time.

Statement #2: I feel I know how my child is progressing at CJHS in relationship to his ability.

Both 2 and 3 are important.

Statement #3: I want to know how my child is progressing at CJHS in relationship to his classmates.

Both 2 and 3 are important.

I want to know how he is doing and if he is working up to his ability.

Not necessarily!

Upper or lower half of class.

Would be interesting.

Statement #4: I feel the computer grade card is too impersonal.

I feel teachers can still make comments on report cards.

If there is a problem with a class I would like more than a slip. I would like written comments.

Possibly, more comments about why grades are given.

Statement #5: I feel free to call the junior high to set a conference with one or all my child's teachers.

Hard to set a conference since I work out of town until 5:30.

Statement #6: I feel the comment section of the grade card is adequate.

Yes and no--Parents of students receiving negative comments need more details than a code number. I feel that such such comments warrent a parent/teacher conference.

I think teachers can use it more.

Would like to see comments from all classes.

Explicit; not threatening to student, objective.

Most teachers don't use it.

I would hope that if my child's teachers feel their is a need for a conference for any reason they would contact me.

Seems very sparcelly used by the teachers.

Statement #7: I would like more information concerning my child's behavior on the grade card.

Such information needs to be reported as necessary--not on the report card 6 weeks late! I appreciate CJHS on-campus rule and the office's handling of any violation.

Should be included in conferences upon request either by parent or teacher.

Unless there is a problem.

If it needs my attention.

I would hope that if my child's teachers feel their is a need for a conference for any reason they would contact me.

It's adequate.

Statement #8: I reward my child for good grades.

We talk over all grades.

Verbally only--always express approval or comment on grades if not up to ability.

Social reinforcers - praise, hugs, smiles, etc.

Praise.

He is not awarded materially, but does get praised.

A so called 'good' grade does not necessarily indicate that 'good' learning has taken place. All I care is that my child learns and achieves according to her ability.

By reward if you mean money or gifts, no. I do let them know how proud I am of them.

Sometimes lunch out or a milk shake.

Not monetary, but praise and more freedom and privileges if grades are acceptable.

Statement #9: I feel I know how my child was progressing this year better than I knew last year.

Not really--we make it a point to be aware of our children's progress every year.

I was also pleased with progress report procedures at Jefferson last year.

I know this from enthusiasm shown at home toward subject matter.

About the same.

About the same.

Not much difference.

Statement #10: Other Concerns:

I feel that it is not necessary to mail the grades to parents. It is a waste of money.

I enjoyed the parent-student exchange.

I thought the parent-child exchange day at school was an excellent idea.

On the whole, we have been satisfied with this year's experience in junior high and with the pupil progress reporting.

Human behavior patterns are as important to me as the three R's.

Our major complaint is in the lumping together of Language Arts/Reading/Social Studies. It is confusing for parents to know which of the team of teachers the child is working under and then never learn what grade was earned. Example: our son had A's in speech, D's in grammar, etc. and it all ended in a "C" under the name of the base teacher. I think the card could be designed to show the breakdown to the seventh grader as well as the parent, even if it has to record only the average for the 9 weeks in the school office.

## LOG

March 29, 1976 Elementary teacher survey forms were distributed.

March 31, 1976 Parent Survey was filled out during elementary parent/teacher conferences.

April 8, 1976 Parent Survey was filled out during elementary parent/teacher conferences.

April 12, 1976 Met with the Elementary Curriculum Council and was placed on a committee to study the Elementary Pupil Progress Report with Denise Cox, Catherine Griffin, and George Kolopanis.

April 26, 1976 Met with the committee at Carl Sandburg Elementary School to examine responses from the Elementary Survey and make recommendations.

May 10, 1976 Met with the Elementary Curriculum Council with the report of the April 26 meeting. We were instructed to continue our work and report back our recommendations in the Fall.

May 18, 1976 The sub-committee of the Elementary Curriculum Council met to make recommendations for the improvement of the Elementary Pupil Progress Report.

May 31, 1976 Teacher Survey forms were distributed at the junior high school.

June 2, 1976 Student Survey forms were filled out by 100 seventh grade students.

June 9, 1976 Parent Survey forms were mailed to 100 parents of seventh grade students.

June-August Research on Grading Procedures and attitudes toward grade reporting.

July 1, 1976 Cut off date for the return of Parent Surveys.

September-October Writing of the paper.