

## Progress Reports – A New Look

At City Academy we are still using our more qualitative and informative system of reporting demonstrated competency levels as Initial, Reaching, Solid, and Expanded or I, R, S, and E.

What is new this year is that we have moved from using our own internal data base for managing student progress reports to the Utah Student Information System (SIS) for managing student reports. In the long term this state system will provide more accessible information for parents, students, and teachers/advisors. We are currently working closely with the state office to adjust the parameters of the state's SIS structure so that we can better report through their system all the information our parents and students want to receive.

One of the necessary evils for us in working with SIS is that we are required to enter numbers rather than letters to report demonstrated competency. We developed a system for coding our levels of demonstrated competency so that we could enter them into SIS. You may recall from last year that our progress reports also included a “thermometer” where a student's level of demonstrated competency was additionally marked within a range for each level of competency. The coding system we developed to correlate numbers with all that qualitative information is as follows (and is in the handbook on p. 20): Expanded is coded 20. Solid is coded with 18-19. Reaching is coded with 16-17. Initial is coded with 14-15. We use the code 13 to represent student work and effort, but demonstrated competency that does not yet reach the Initial level. A lack of work demonstrating competency is coded as 0.

Unfortunately once these numbers are in the state system, the system averages the numbers and spits out a percentage. This is another necessary evil of SIS that we have not been able to rectify. Mathematically, there is no meaning for averaged code numbers, and we really don't mean for them to have any meaning. At school we never talk about or refer to these percentages in any way. However, we also know that parents and students will see these numbers so in the handbook we have listed what this will look like. Again, please remember that the percentages are manufactured by SIS after we enter code numbers for our qualitative information. They come after the fact and are really completely irrelevant. Please be assured that there is no “new quantified grading system” this year at City Academy. It is our hope that eventually parents and students can learn to ignore these percentages as we do at school. Colleges will never see the percentages because they will not come out on a transcript, only the E, S, R, or I will.

Something else new this year is a student's Academic Citizenship report. As always, City Academy teachers are working very hard to ensure that opportunities for “big learning” are occurring in each class every day so that important concepts and skills are built consistently from current understandings over time. We place high value on class time for teachers to work with students, and for students to work with and learn from each other. We also know that students' classroom learning is enhanced by individual work students do outside of class time, i.e. homework. The best chances for academic

progress and excellence occur when students maintain regular class attendance, come to each class prepared with their homework, and fully participate in all learning opportunities being offered. Each one of those components of learning is very important and we wanted to develop a way to report to students and parents the degree to which they are happening. This Academic Citizenship report also allows us a more structured way of determining which students require support during the last period on Fridays.

If a student's academic citizenship for a class is assessed as "unsatisfactory" that would indicate that s/he is not keeping up with the work of the class and therefore are not able to earn credit in that class. We intend that teachers, advisors, parents and students will be proactive and work together to ensure that a student never reaches this situation. Also, as always, our assessment structures are flexible in terms of working with individual students. Teachers may always allow a student a bit of additional time to demonstrate enough competency to earn credit if the teacher feels this is warranted. More information about this is on pp. 22-23 of the handbook.

Any questions about these issues should be directed to Sonia at 596-8489.