



UNIFORM PUPIL TRANSCRIPT

August 1992

CURRENT BUDGET PROVISION

By July 1, 1993, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) must develop a uniform pupil transcript that may be used by school districts beginning in the 1993-94 school year.

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BACKGROUND

A University of Wisconsin System/Department of Public Instruction Admissions Communications Task Force identified the high school transcript as contributing to communications problems between public high schools and UW System institutions. The task force reported that many public high school transcripts in Wisconsin (1) fail to distinguish college preparatory courses, (2) fail to clarify the sequence of course work by name or title or by academic discipline, and (3) fail to communicate equivalencies approved for high school graduation which are assigned to discipline areas not enumerated in the Board of Regents' basic course work admissions requirements.

Public high school graduates make up nearly 80 percent of the new freshmen in UW System institutions and a significant number of new freshmen in Wisconsin's independent colleges and universities. The high school transcript is a critical credential in the college admissions process. It is the official source of information describing an applicant's qualifications for admission and attesting to graduation from high school.

The UW System/DPI Admissions Communications Task Force recommended the following improvements for high school transcripts and course titles:

- Encourage high schools to review their transcripts and current transcript processing procedures to ensure optimal quality control.
- Develop a set of model transcripts that high schools are encouraged to use. A small, short-term work group, comprised of appropriate school and university representatives and facilitated by the Department of Public Instruction, should be charged with the task of developing a set of transcript formats that best suit the needs of both the high schools and universities. These model transcripts should be reviewed and approved by officials from the DPI, the UW System, and various appropriate professional associations. *They should be distributed to all Wisconsin high schools with the request that each high school adopt one of these models to the degree possible given technical limitations.*
- "Trendy" high school course titles, acronyms and abbreviations that make it difficult for admissions personnel to identify the discipline area and nature of the course should be avoided.

In accepting the report of the Admissions Communications Task Force, Superintendent Grover agreed to seek a solution to the communications difficulties caused by the inadequate quality, imprecise format, and vagueness of course titles of public high school transcripts. He appointed a Transcript Working Group, consisting of interested persons in both the secondary school system and the UW System, as well as participant observers from the Wisconsin Association of Nonpublic Schools and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. The working group met on February 12, 1990 and received their charge.

The Transcript Working Group was asked to provide the state superintendent with the following:

1. Format for either a single model transcript or a set of models which can be recommended for adoption by all public high schools in the state.
2. Guidelines for "titling" or describing high school courses which identify the discipline area, the nature of the course content, and the relationship to state high school graduation standards and the admissions requirements for UW System institutions.
3. Guidelines for displaying grade-point values, rank in class, or other specialized information about course and/or grade values.

4. Guidelines for displaying additional information, such as school-supervised work experience, co-curricular activities, academic and other honors, and community service.
5. Guidelines for student demographic and personal information which serve the needs of the admissions process and other transcript users, including employers and the military.
6. Guidelines to assure visual quality, security, and timely transmittal of transcripts to campuses and other users.
7. Review of legal considerations surrounding the transmittal of transcripts to educational institutions and/or employers or the military.

The Transcript Working Group studied copies of transcripts currently being produced in many public high schools and submitted to UW System institutions. It sought input from private colleges and employers, as well as from legal counsel with special expertise in educational policy and law. Furthermore, the working group reviewed the work of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) as well as other states who have studied the issue of quality transcripts and have devised recommendations for the appropriate data elements.

One problem with the high school transcript is that a single document is expected to serve a variety of consumers. High school officials, post-secondary admissions officers, military recruiters, employers, scholarship committees, students, parents and counselors are among the consumers who have to read and interpret high school transcripts. Each transcript consumer makes special use of the transcript, but high schools produce the same transcript in both form and content for all graduates. Each consumer of the transcript information is subject to various state and federal laws regarding access to the information. A single document, dependent on a single release, will not meet the needs of all graduates whether they go directly into post-secondary education or on to the world of work.

Since the transcript is generally the only record of a student's high school educational attainment retained after graduation, it is an important credential. Its data elements should have both clear educational merit and purpose. To the greatest extent possible, it should meet the needs of all consumers. Furthermore, the release of this final student record has to be handled in a careful and legal manner in order to protect the integrity of the record, the rights of the student, and the legal responsibilities of the school district.

OVERVIEW OF TRANSCRIPT WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Local school districts produce a two-part record. Each part of this record will provide different data elements and be subject to a clear, well-publicized release policy. A two-part record contains many of the same elements currently appearing on high school transcripts. But, by being viewed as two records, each can be handled in a legal manner. Members of the working group, seeking to avoid an additional burden on the local districts, pointed out that the two types of records could be re-produced on a single document as long as there is a separate release for each.

Part I, the **FORMAL TRANSCRIPT**, should strictly reflect the course work record of the student and include such elements as grades, GPA, class rank, and graduation date. It should provide demographic elements that are concise, purposeful, and legal. Part I should not provide information which is a behavioral record or which identifies the student on the basis of race, gender, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, religion, or national origin. Furthermore, it should not contain photographs, attendance records, or other information about special conditions involving a student's health or physical characteristics.

Part II, the **STUDENT PROFILE**, is an optional document developed by the student and which may contain additional information which expands on the student's educational efforts and characteristics beyond the strictly educational information on Part I. It can contain special information which the student chooses to release, including special learning needs, test scores (including the ACT or SAT), attendance record, extracurricular activities, awards and special honors, employment and volunteer activities.

2. Districts should have a published policy which describes the process to be followed by district employees, students (and/or parent/guardians if student is under age 18) for the release of transcripts for any purpose.

Schools should take seriously the transmittal requirements of the law and protect themselves by having a legally signed consent form from the student (and/or parent/guardian) which assures that all parties know what information is being released on the **FORMAL TRANSCRIPT** document and what special information is being provided on the **STUDENT PROFILE**.

3. School districts should develop an orderly, well-organized record format which can be legibly re-produced. Care should be taken to retain the visual quality of the transcript and to present information in an orderly manner. Casual placement of labels, poor photocopying, or poor quality computer printing contribute to sloppy, difficult-to-read documents. Transcripts should be produced in an 8-1/2" by 11" size with either horizontal or vertical display of information. These format recommendations allow local districts to use a computer-generated document, a label format, or manually entered format.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Part I, FORMAL TRANSCRIPT DATA ELEMENTS

The Transcript Working Group encourages development of the FORMAL TRANSCRIPT with the following data elements:

1. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ELEMENTS FOR A FORMAL TRANSCRIPT

Student's full legal name. The "full legal name" is the one that should be used on the transcript with note of previous legal names used on other educational records. It is not unusual for students to be known by names other than those formally given to them, and these "common names" many times work their way into formal records.

Birthdate. While the date of birth is essential, the place of birth is not considered so and may even be considered discriminatory in some instances. Thus, it is recommended that place of birth not be included on the transcript.

Name(s) and address(es) of parent(s) and/or legal guardian, if other than parent.

Student's Social Security number. The social security number helps to minimize errors in the assembling of application materials and verifying information obtained from other than school sources. It should be noted that giving social security numbers is voluntary and cannot be required.

Full school name, address (street, city, state, zip code), and telephone number (including area code). The phone number of the guidance office may also be included.

Graduation date. It is recommended that only the date the student has actually graduated be entered on the transcript.

Date and grade at which student entered and/or withdrew from this school.

Names and addresses of other secondary schools the student has attended, with grades earned and dates attended at those schools. In preparing a transcript, a school should include the record of any work the student may have done at other high schools and the names and addresses (at least city and state) of those other schools.

Signature and title of certifying school official with school seal. The signature of an authorized school official, as well as the school seal, attests to the accuracy of the record.

2. ACADEMIC DATA ELEMENTS FOR A FORMAL TRANSCRIPT

Course Names and Abbreviations. A mnemonic system using three letter **prefixes** should be used in front of the course number and course title. The prefix should be chosen according to the department in which credit will be received. For example, speech, if taken for English credit, would use the prefix ENG; if given credit as an elective or as a speech credit, then SPE would be used.

Example: (for English credit) ENG 1206 Speech

The following prefixes are recommended lettering:

English	ENG
Social Studies	SOC
Mathematics	MTH
Science	SCI
Physical Education	PED
Health Education	HEA
Agriculture	AGR
Art	ART
Business Education	BUS
Computer Science	COM
Driver's Education	DRE
Family/Consumer Education	FCE
Foreign Language	FOR
Music	MUS
Reading	RDG
Religion	REL
Community Service	SER
Speech	SPE
Technology Education	TED
Theatre	THE

Different Levels of Difficulty. An asterisk (*) should be used to denote accelerated courses. In addition, courses taken for advanced placement credit should include the letters "AP" added at the end of the course title and those taken for International Baccalaureate credit should include "IB" at the end of the course title.

Example: *MTH 130 Calculus AP

Weighted Grades. All courses receiving a weighting factor in the calculation of the GPA should be designated with a pound sign (#) on the transcript to the left of the course title or an explanation provided on a separate school profile.

Example: #MTH 130 Calculus AP

Marking System. The standardized high school transcript should be based on a marking/grading system that reports the marks/grades earned by students in courses as follows:

<u>Grade</u>		<u>Grade Points</u>
(1) A	=	4.0
(2) B	=	3.0
(3) C	=	2.0
(4) D	=	1.0
(5) E or F	=	0.0

Pass/fail, credit/no credit, and satisfactory/unsatisfactory marks may also be used; however, the non-numerical marks/grades should be clearly identified and excluded from the calculation of the grade point average.

Class Rank. Class rank should be determined at the end of the most recent semester.

Credits Earned. Schools should use the Carnegie unit (0.5 credits per semester) or include a statement of equivalencies on the school profile.

Credits Attempted and Credits Earned. Both should be denoted on the transcript using Carnegie units.

Specialized Courses. The following codes are recommended to indicate specialized courses and should be added at the end of the course title:

Correspondence	C
Transfer credit	T
Summer School	SS

Example: ENG 101 SS

Brief description of school's system of symbols or other means for reporting student's academic progress. For a majority of schools, this means a description of their marking systems.

Rank in class and GPA with a brief description of how each is determined. For instance, what courses, if any, are excluded from the computation? What school years or semesters or other time units are covered? What is done about any courses marked on a pass/fail (P/F) basis if the system is basically an alphabetic or numeric one? What, if anything, is done about differential weighting in figuring GPA? And, in the case of rank in class, what student groups are included in or excluded from the ranking?

Part II, STUDENT PROFILE DATA ELEMENTS

The less formal and more personal **STUDENT PROFILE** optional data elements can be presented as a separate page or can appear on the reverse side of the **FORMAL TRANSCRIPT**. This **STUDENT PROFILE** provides flexibility to release optional elements such as attendance, extracurricular activities, volunteer activities, employment, and special needs. Data released on the **STUDENT PROFILE** would require a separate release. It is possible that the **STUDENT PROFILE** could be viewed as similar to a resumé with certain elements being validated by appropriate school officials, employers, or volunteer service coordinators.

The **STUDENT PROFILE** may be construed as a pupil record that is retained for only one year after graduation, or districts may adopt a policy to retain this additional information about a graduate for the same time duration as the **FORMAL TRANSCRIPT**.

The **STUDENT PROFILE** could include the following types of information:

Standardized college entrance test scores: American College Testing (ACT) and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

While the recommended separate signature would make the student's intent to release this information clearer, it should be noted that there are legal questions about the authority of school officials to provide the ACT/SAT scores which are the sole property of the student and the testing vendor. Because of this issue, the Transcript Working Group does not recommend placing these test labels or scores on the **FORMAL TRANSCRIPT**.

Student's common name or nickname.

Gender.

Name, title, and phone number of school staff member to contact for other information about this student. On a student-generated "profile," a short list of personal references could be included.

In-school and/or out-of-school activities and honors. This information could be useful to employers, admissions, and scholarship committees. Schools may want to include a method for validation of this information. Care should be taken, however, in developing the form so as not to put counselors or other school officials in a position to validate information of which they have no personal knowledge.

Special features of a student's program. This element provides an opportunity to describe fully any unusual features of a student's scholastic history that may illuminate other parts of the record or to detail parts of it for which there is no place in the remainder of the transcript (e.g., advanced placement, special programs).

Special circumstances. From time to time, a student will have special problems to which the user should be alerted in order to make a fair assessment of the student's record or to assist the student in adjusting to school and/or work. The means for sharing the information should be worked out with the assistance and participation of the student and with the student's best interest in mind.

Brief school accreditation information. In most cases, this involves naming the regional accrediting agency by which the school has been approved.

Following are three examples of pupil transcripts which can be used by local school districts. Each includes the data elements described earlier in this document. The differing styles allow for individual district grading approaches. A sample Student Profile is included as well as a sample Student Release form.

SCHOOL OF RECORD

SCHOOL NAME
SCHOOL ADDRESS
CITY, ZIP CODE
SCHOOL TELEPHONE
DISTRICT NAME

Wisconsin State High School

TRANSCRIPT
(Grades 9-12)

ENTRY MO. YR.	WITHDRL. MO. YR.
GRADUATION DATE MO. YR.	

STUDENT INFORMATION

NAME (Last, First, Middle)		
ADDRESS		
CITY, ZIP CODE		
IDENTIFICATION NO.	BIRTHDATE	REPORT DATE
PARENT/GUARDIAN		

ACADEMIC RECORD

GRD. LEV.	MO.	YR.	COURSE TITLE	GRD. LEV.	CRED* EARN.	CRED. ATTP.	GRD. LEV.	MO.	YR.	COURSE TITLE	GRD. LEV.	CRED* EARN.	CRED. ATTP.
<h1>Sample</h1>													

SUMMARY BY TERM				GRADE TABLE		PREVIOUS SCHOOLS ATTENDED (Grades 9-12)				ENTRY		WITHDRL		
Term Mo. Yr.	GPA GPA	CRED* EARN.	CRED. ATTP.	Grade Points		School Name			City	State	MO.	YR.	MO.	YR.
				A - 4.0	A- - 3.7									
				B+ - 3.3	B - 3.0									
				C+ - 2.3	C - 2.0									
				C - 1.7	D - 1.0									
				D - 1.0	E or F 0.0									
				Not used in GPA		CUMMULATIVE SUMMARY				Authorization Signature				
				P/F		Total Credits	GPA Credits	GPA Points	Cum. GPA				Date	
				CR/NC										
				S/U										

*1 CREDIT = A MINIMUM OF 150 HOURS OF PLANNED IN-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

SECONDARY SCHOOL RECORD _____, WISCONSIN _____
 _____ HIGH SCHOOL, _____

Sample

Name: _____ (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Middle) _____ Student I.D. _____
 Birthdate: _____ Yes - Date: _____
 Address: _____ (Street) _____ (City/State) _____ ZIPcode _____
 Name of Parent/Guardian: _____
 Dated Earned: _____ Credits Required for Graduation: _____

GRADING SYSTEM	GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
A = Excellent	English _____
B = Very Good	Social Studies _____
C = Average	Mathematics _____
D = Poor	Science _____
F = Failure - No Credit	Physical Education _____
I = Incomplete	Computer Literacy _____
W = Withdrawn	_____
P = Pass	_____

	FRESHMAN	SOPHOMORE	JUNIOR	SENIOR
Eng-Comp B				

Sample

HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOLASTIC RECORD

Doe, John
Main Street
City, State ZIPcode

Student Number 0000000
Entry Date 02/20/83
Grad. Year 1987
Counselor Barnett
Date Printed 11/16/86

	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87	Credits Earned
English I	A S1				0.500
English I	A S2				0.500
English II		A S1			0.500
English II		A S2			0.500
Poetry A			A S1		0.500
Adv. Comm. A			A S2		0.500
Spanish I	A S1				0.500
Spanish I	A S2				0.500
Spanish II		A S1			0.500
Spanish II		A S2			0.500
Spanish II			A S1		0.500
Spanish III			A S2		0.500
Algebra I	B S1				0.500
Algebra I	B S2				0.500
Algebra II		B S1			0.500
Geometry		B S1			0.500
Algebra II		A S2			0.500
Geometry		A S2			0.500
Trig/Pre-Cal			A S1		0.500
Trig/Pre-Cal			A S2		0.500
Biology		A S1			0.500
Biology		A S2			0.500
Chemistry AP			A S1		0.500
Chemistry AP			A S2		0.500
Geography	B S1				0.500
Geography	B S2				0.500
Amer History			A S1		0.500
Psychology			A S2		0.500
Phys Ed-9	C S1				0.500
Phys Ed-9	B S2				0.500
Music	A S1				0.500
Health			A S2		0.500
Soc Invol		A S1			0.500
Soc Invol		A S2			0.500

Total credits

HIGH SCHOOL

Hometown _____
City, State 00000

Career Totals

Career GPA - _____

Credits Earned - _____

Credits Attem - _____

Honor Points - _____

Rank Within Class

Previous School

Authorized By: _____

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Legend: S1 = Semester 1; S2 = Semester 2

ADDITIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION _____ STUDENT'S NAME, LAST NAME FIRST _____

Additional information about this student, as checked below, is provided either in this space or on attached pages.

- A. Interests, activities, and achievements
- B. Special features of student's program
- C. Special problems or needs
- D. Personal inventory or checklist
- E. Written comments
- F. Community Service

Sample Student Profile

TEST SCORES _____

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL INFORMATION _____

Additional information about our school, as checked below, is provided on the attached pages or school profile.

- A. Accreditation information
- B. Method of computing GPA
- C. Method of computing class rank
- D. Key to symbols and titles
- E. Explanation of curriculum
- F. Description of marking system
- G. Frequency distribution
- H. Other

PREVIOUS SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Name of School	FROM			TO			
	City	State	ZIP	Mo.	Yr.	Mo.	Yr.

SCHOOL OFFICIALS

Name: _____ School Principal	Person to Contact for Additional Information Name: _____ Title: _____
Signature of Official Certifying this Transcript (School Seal If Available) Name: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____	

Sample

_____ PUBLIC SCHOOLS
_____, Wisconsin
Obtain or Release of Records Form

Dear Parent:

In order for us to obtain or release (*circle one*) information regarding your child,
_____, please sign below. If you have any questions, you may
(*Student's name*)
contact me at _____, ext. _____.

Sincerely,

Counselor's Name

PARENT PERMISSION TO OBTAIN OR RELEASE INFORMATION

I, the undersigned, hereby request and authorize:

(*Name of school, agency, person, etc.*)

(*Street address*)

(*City*)

(*State*)

(*Zip*)

to release to:

(*Name of school, agency, person, etc.*)

(*Street address*)

(*City*)

(*State*)

(*Zip*)

the information which I have indicated below:

(*Name of child*)

(*Date of birth*)

- Official student academic/administrative records (identifying information, grade level completed, grades, class rank, attendance records, and group aptitude and achievement test results)
- Medical and/or related health records
- Psychological evaluations or social work reports
- Multidisciplinary team evaluations and related reports
- Appropriate agency reports
- Individualized education program
- Others (specify)

(*Signature of parent or legal guardian*)

(*Date*)

CONCLUSION

All of the above recommendations and sample transcripts, student profile, and school profile are intended to give meaning and usefulness to the high school diploma. Students need to understand the value of their high school education as reflected on the transcript record. While post-secondary education institutions routinely request transcripts, it is hoped that a more intelligible transcript, accompanied by a student profile, may be useful to employers. If noncollege-bound high school students recognize that employers might ask for transcript and student profile records, they might take their high school course work more seriously.

The data elements recommended for inclusion on the high school transcript aim to be consistent, commonly understood, and limited to educational performance in the high school. Good grades and the mastery of basic skills in math, science, social studies, and language arts should be reflected in the student's transcript. Additional information about an individual student, such as attendance record, test scores, honors, co-curricular activities, volunteer activities, and out-of-school employment, are recommended for inclusion in a student profile. The student profile should be generated by the graduating senior to show interested colleges and employers added dimensions of an individual who has first and foremost pursued a high school education.

If Wisconsin's public high schools can adopt the report's recommendations and formats, employers, post-secondary institutions, and most importantly students themselves would clearly know that effort in the high school classroom is their most important responsibility.

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Positions held by the Transcript Working Group are provided for the time they served on the committee in 1990.