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#### A Place for Comments: Modifying Professional Writing in the School System

Within the framework of a study called “Definition of a New Didactic Form: General Instruction/Professional Instruction”, a group of seven teachers came together to develop mutual respect for both areas of instruction. They observed that the lay-out of the high school grade sheet contributes to the rift between the two kinds of instruction since there exists a very obvious separation between general instruction grades, which are located at the top of the page, and those of the technical subjects which are located at the bottom. Nearly all technical high schools have adopted this format. They have therefore decided to attack the problem of the reorganization of the grade sheet, “professional writing”, the representational and communicative function of which is highly significant within the educational institution. In questioning the reasons behind its original format, in proposing the adoption of new criteria for the order of presentation, by offering the absent participants (guidance counselors, students, etc.) a specific space in which to express themselves, the instructors have shown how the evaluative aspects are also components of the subjects taught.

The creation of a space for dialogue (the detachable section for comments), the opportunity for students to look over the grade sheet before the staff meeting, and the desire for a better readability of information, contribute to a greater “communicative” function for the grade sheet by facilitating exchanges between teachers, students, families and administration. Initially, the reorganization of the grade sheet produced a new model which was edited by the high school. Later, students, teachers and parents were also consulted.

This experimentation and evaluation have demonstrated the essential role played by professional writing in the desire for equality, the use of language and the lay-out of graphic conventions.