



english for **NEW
BOSTONIANS**

ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum: A Companion Guide for Parents of Students in Grades 7-12

Unit 4: Report Card

Activities:

- #1: Parent Experience with Report Cards (b)
- #2: Report Card Schedule (b)
- #3: Report Card Vocabulary and Overview (b)
- #4: What is a Progress Report? (b)
- #5: Problem Solving: Two Home/School Stories
- #6: Homework: Reviewing Your Child's Report Card (b)

Developed by Susan Klaw

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About English for New Bostonians

English for New Bostonians (ENB) invests in the future of our region by fostering a high-quality ESOL system that prepares immigrants to pursue their educational, economic and civic aspirations. Through grant making, training teachers, and building public awareness, ENB expands the number of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) seats, improves program quality across agencies, customizes curricula to diverse subpopulations, and leverages private and public resources. Founded in 2001 by the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA), immigrant leaders, and local foundations, ENB now involves several city departments, approximately 20 public and private funders, and numerous community organizations.

About the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Initiative

Through ESOL for Parents and Caregivers, ENB guides ESOL providers and immigrant-rich schools in building partnerships to facilitate parent engagement in schools, enabling parents/caregivers to improve their English and digital literacy skills, navigate school systems, and understand expectations and opportunities for school involvement and ways to optimize children's learning. At the same time, ESOL for Parents helps adults prepare to pursue their own educational and employment goals, while supporting children's learning – aiming to eliminate multigenerational poverty.

About Susan Klaw

Susan Klaw has directed, taught in, and developed original curriculum materials for Boston-based parent ESOL programs since 1991. She has delivered extensive training locally and nationally on various aspects of Family Literacy and been named a "Literacy Champion" by the Massachusetts Literacy Foundation, Parent Educator of the Year by the Children's Trust Fund, and Adult Educator of the Year by the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education.

About the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum

The Curriculum (on ENB website and available free of charge) gives ESOL teachers background materials, lessons and activities designed to help immigrant parents learn English and become more effectively involved in their children's education. Selecting curriculum units and lessons relevant to their classes, ESOL teachers can orient immigrant parents to the U.S. school system and provide practical skills such as interpreting report cards, participating in teacher conferences, advocating for children, and supporting children's learning at home. While some information is Boston specific, much can be used in any locale. ENB can assist in adapting materials for school districts. Additionally, ENB offers a Companion Middle/High School Guide, as well as a Digital Learning Guide to support online instruction.

Using the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum

All materials are intended to be downloaded and widely used. Please cite English for New Bostonians and credit English for New Bostonians on all reproductions. We welcome feedback and stories on how you and your students are using the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum!

Thanks to the many public and private funders that have supported this project, especially the Highland Street Foundation, Shipley Foundation, Hamilton Foundation, Moses Kimball Foundation, Plymouth Rock Foundation, Blum Shapiro Foundation and the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement's We Are Boston Gala.

*Contact us at info@englishfornewbostonians.org
or visit us online at www.englishfornewbostonians.org*

ACTIVITY #1: PARENT EXPERIENCE WITH REPORT CARDS

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Note to Teachers: *This unit has six activities and will take several classes to complete. The BPS report card, like those from most school districts, is so full of information and vocabulary that one could build an entire month of Parent ESOL around it. This unit is best done prior to the distribution of the first report card, but it could be done before the close of any of the marking periods. For teachers whose students attend schools in other school districts, use the report card of that district and adapt the concepts of this unit.*

The unit in this Companion Guide was designed for parents of middle and high school students. It uses the BPS 7th-12th grade report card as a sample. If your students have younger children, you can find a Report Card unit to use designed around the elementary level BPS report card in the primary curriculum, [ESOL for Parents and Caregivers](#). See Topic 2: School Involvement, Unit 3.

More generic and in some cases simpler report card activities appear in various textbook series. Check the ones you have access to. For example, for a generic high school report card activity, see: [Futures 3](#), Lesson 8, Read a Report Card.

Rationale:

BPS report cards contain critical information that helps parents understand how their children are progressing in school. However, the vocabulary, educational concepts and layout are complicated for many parents, including, but by no means limited to ELL parents. In the following set of report card activities, that information is broken down into discrete, more comprehensible parts. The unit begins by having parents draw on their own experiences.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will share personal experiences with report cards and grades with their classmates.*
- *Students will name at least one thing in their children's report cards that confuses them.*
- *Students will be able to complete a simple chart with personal information.*

Materials:

- *Handout: [Report Card Chart](#)*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Brief opening discussion questions: What is a report card? Did you get report cards in the schools you went to? What is a grade? Did you have letter grades? Number grades? What kinds of grades do children in BPS get?*
3. *Hand out chart for each student to fill out. Circulate to help students with lower English reading or general literacy skills.*
4. *Have students share the results with a partner from a different country. Encourage intermediate level students to ask each other questions using the chart.*
5. *Write on the board and define the keyword **confusing**. Have students give examples of things that confuse them.*
6. *Write the following question on the board and then go around in a circle with students asking and answering the question. Encourage students to use each other's names when asking the question. When you see your child's report card, is there anything that is confusing?*
7. *Note on an easel pad what students say is confusing about the report cards. Tell the class that you will be studying the BPS report cards so that it becomes clearer.*

Handout: Report Card Chart

Directions: Fill out the chart below then share the information with a partner from a different country.

Name: _____ I went to school in _____
Name of country

	Elementary School	High School	University
Report Cards (Yes or No)			
Report Cards (How many times a year?)			
Letter or number grades?			

ACTIVITY #2: REPORT CARD SCHEDULE

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

It is good for students to understand when and how often their children will receive report cards, especially as the BPS schedule differs between elementary and middle/high school.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will be able to define what a marking period or term is.*
- *Students will be able to identify when their children at different grade levels will get their next report cards.*
- *Student will be able to point out two differences between the grade K-5 and grade 6-12 report card schedules.*
- *Students will practice reading a simple chart.*

Materials:

- *Boston Public Schools Report Card Schedule. Copy from inside back page of the current Guide to the Boston Public Schools for Families and Students. Or download: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/familyguide>*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Distribute the Report Card Schedule. Write key vocabulary on board and explain: term, marking period, distribute. Point out that this schedule is the same for all students in BPS schools, but that students in charter schools will have their own report card schedule.*
3. *Then help students read the charts, asking such questions as:*
 - *When does a student in a BPS high school get his or her first report card? The last one?*
 - *How many report cards does a high school student get each year?*
 - *How many times a year do children in grades K-5 get report cards?*
4. *Write the following sentence stems on the board and have parents copy and complete one for each of their children in a BPS school.*

My child is in ____ grade. He/she will get the next report card _____.
5. *Closing discussion questions: Does your child bring home their report card? When your child brings home the report card, what do you do?*

ACTIVITY #3: REPORT CARD VOCABULARY AND OVERVIEW

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

In order to understand the report card and to aid comprehension in parent-teacher conferences and school meetings, parents need to learn key report card vocabulary.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will learn the meanings of at least six (6) key words used in the Report Card.*

Materials:

- *Handout A: Sample Actual BPS High School Report Card*
- *Handout B: Key Vocabulary to Understand the Report Card*
- *Handout C: Understanding Report Cards*
- *Handout D: Homework Using the Key Vocabulary*
- *Highlighters*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Distribute Handout A: Sample Actual BPS High School Report Card. Explain that you have retyped it so that it is bigger and easier to read and it is now on two pages. But it is the exactly the same as the report cards they receive.*
3. *Distribute the Handout B: Key Vocabulary to Understand the Report Card.*
 - *Review the words and definitions in whatever ways you have found works best with your particular class. Make sure to practice pronouncing the words aloud so that when students hear the words they recognize them. Reference sections on the actual report card as you discuss definitions.*
 - *Give students a copy of the sample report card and ask them to highlight the vocabulary words from the list wherever they see them on the report card. Have them compare with a partner to see if they missed any.*
4. *Review the Grade key. Practice saying the grades and review what they mean.*
5. *Ask for questions. Is there anything you don't understand? Make sure to point out how you know who is teaching each course listed. Explain that this only shows the student grades for the first term (T1). Each report card that comes after this one will show grades from T1 and T2 and T3, etc. Dual Enrollment in this case means the student is taking an English class offered through Salem State University so she gets credits both from Salem State and her high school.*

6. *Distribute Handout C: Understanding Report Cards. Have students work on this in pairs. When they are finished, have them compare answers with another pair and make any corrections necessary.*
7. *Homework: Handout D: Homework: Practice Using Report Card Vocabulary. This is a good assignment for homework because students need to work on it individually. It asks them about their child. Explain that they will need to refer to both the sample report card and their vocabulary word/definition list as they do the homework.*

Handout A: Sample BPS High School Report Card



Boston International
Tony King, Headmaster
100 Maxwell St. Dorchester, MA 02124
(617)635-9373

Report Card
February 6, 2019

Students Name
BPS ID: 011230
Grade: 12 YOG 2020
Homeroom: 1990_001
Counselor:

Term	Start Date	End Date
T1	9/6/2018	1/28/2019
T2	11/13/2019	2/3/2019
T3	2/4/2019	4/21/2019
T4	4/22/2019	6/18/2019

Course	Marking Term				Exam Final Conduct Effort		Absent	Comments
	T1	T2	T3	T4				
Dual Enrollment English (Russo)	A	--						
AP Human Geography (Boldewskull)	B	--						
AP Calculus (Hogu)	A-	--					0	Improvement Noted
Biology 2 (Wong)	A+	--						
AP Computer Science (Tasa)	P	--			A	A+	2	Demonstrates strong understanding of content on classwork

Daily Attendance

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Total
Day Present	87					87
Excused Absents	0					0
Unexcused Absents	3					3
Unexcused Tardy	3					3

Promotion/ Graduation Requirements

BPS Graduates must take and Pass the following courses:

Pathways 1: 4 English, 3 History (including history 1&2)

Pathways 2: 4 Humanities (English, History 1&2)

Pathways 1&2: 4 Math (including Algebra, Geometry, Adv. Algebra), 3 Lab Science (incl. Biology, Chemistry, Physics) 2 World Languages, 2 Arts, 2 PE, 1 Health, 1 Computer, and pass MCAS ELA, Science/Tech and Math Exams

Benchmark Assessment: Passing score on the MCAS (Level 2-4), BPS Mathematics Assessment (D-) BPS Math tasks (P).

Students in 9th grade that do not pass at least one benchmark exam in reading or math will receive a fail mark of 1 or F. These students must pass a final exam in ELA or Math by the end of summer school to change the grade.

Grade key

Excellent A+(97-100) A(93- 96.9) A-(90- 92.9) Good B+(87-89.9) B(83-86.9) B-(80-82.9)	Fair C+ (77-79.9) C (73-76.9) C-(70- 72.9) Poor D+ (67-69.9) D (63- 69.9) D- (60- 62.9)	F+ (50- 59.0) Failure F (<50) Failure P Pass NC No Credit I Incomplete W Withdrawn UN Ungraded
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Parent/ Guardian Signature

Handout B: Key Vocabulary to Understand the Report Card

1. **Grade:** A school score. These may be numbers or letters. They are also called **marks.**
Example: My daughter always gets **good grades** in math.

Grade also means educational level.

Example: My son is in **third grade.**

2. **Marking Term:** the division of time the marks (grades) refer to. In Boston, high school students have four **marking terms** in the year. The abbreviation is T1, T2, T3, T4.
3. **Course:** the name of the class the student is taking.
4. **Grade Key:** explanation of what the grades mean. For example, a B+ or B means Good.
5. **Absent:** not in school or not in your course that day
6. **Present:** in school
7. **Tardy:** late for school
8. **Excused absence:** when student has a good reason for why she was not in school, for example if she was sick. An excused absence doesn't count against the student, but parents must send in a note to the school. See High School Supplement: BPS Policies Unit to help parents understand excused vs. unexcused absences. If you have already done this activity, review with parents.
9. **Unexcused absence:** when students do not have a good reason for being absent. For example, a student decided to go hang out with his friends. More than three unexcused absences in a term and students lose credit for the work they have done.
10. **Effort:** to try hard
Example: Your son made an **effort** to improve his grades after the first report card.
11. **Conduct:** behavior
- 12: **AP calculus :** AP stands for **Advanced Placement.** These are the hardest courses a high school offers. They are college level courses.

Handout C: Understanding Report Cards

Directions: Look at the sample report card. Answer the following questions.
Vocabulary words are in bold.

1. This is an example of the Boston Public School (BPS) report card for which **grade**? _____

2. Is this report card for just one **marking term**, or for the whole year? _____

How do you know?

3. How many days was this student **absent**? _____

Were these **excused** or **unexcused absences**? _____

4. Use the **grade key** to decide whether this student is an excellent student, a good student or a fair student?

How do you know? _____

5. In what **course** did the student get an A for Effort? _____

6. How many AP courses is this student taking? _____

7. When it says "Biology 2 (Wong)" who is Wong? _____

Handout D: Homework: Using the Report Card Vocabulary

Note: To answer these questions you will need to refer to the Vocabulary list and the sample report card we used in class today.

Refer to the sample report card

1. What **course** did the student get her best grade in? _____
2. How many **courses** is she taking in the first term? _____
3. What was the teacher comment about her work in **AP Calculus**?

4. How many times was the student late in the first term? _____
5. What is the opposite of present? _____
6. What is the opposite of unexcused absence? _____

Answer about your child

7. At your child's high school, what is his or her favorite course this year? _____
8. In what subject does your child get the best grades? _____

ACTIVITY #4: WHAT IS A PROGRESS REPORT?

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

Progress Reports are sent out mid way through each marking term, grades 6-12. They can be confusing to both students and parents because it may appear at first glance that these are the students' grades for the term as opposed to being a snap shot of where they are mid way through.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will be able to articulate a reason for Progress Reports*
- *Students will understand that grades on the progress report are not the final grade for the term.*
- *Students will learn whether their children's schools send out progress reports to all students or just to those who are having difficulty.*

Materials:

- *Boston Public Schools Report Card Schedule. Copy from inside back page of the current Guide to the Boston Public Schools for Families and Students. Or download: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/familyguide>.*
- *Handout A: Sample Actual BPS Progress Report*
- *Handout B: Understanding Report Cards*

Activity Outline:

1. *Opening discussion questions: Do your children in grades 7-12 get progress reports? What are they?*
2. *Look together at the report card schedule. If students already did Activity #2, they will be somewhat familiar with this chart. Have students find "Progress Reports." Choose whatever is the current marking period you are in and ask, When will the Progress Reports be distributed? If the date has passed, ask whether any students saw a Progress Report.*
3. *Distribute Handout: Sample Actual BPS Progress Report. Write Mid-Term on board and explain "mid" means middle or half way through something. Explain the difference between mid term grades and final grades. Stress that these are **not** the same grades the student will get at the end of the term. For fun, try listing some other phrases that begin with "mid": mid afternoon, mid semester, mid-way through something, mid 90's, midnight. Add in a little college vocabulary: in college the exams the students take half way through the semester are called midterms. The exams they take at the end of the semester are called finals.*

4. *Ask the group: What do we know about this student and write all responses on the board.*
5. *Practice reading aloud the names of the courses the student is taking and remind them what AP and P stand for.*
6. *Group brainstorm: Why is a mid-term progress report useful? List responses on the board. Again, stress these are not final grades.*
7. *Explain that some schools send progress reports to all students grades 6-12. Some schools just send progress reports if students are not doing well. What do they do at the high school your child goes to? The middle school? How can you find out?*
8. *Ask for a volunteer who will contact the school(s) and ask which children get progress reports and report back to the class. If necessary, model the questions for the students.*
9. *Distribute Handout: Understanding Progress Reports. Reference a similar activity students did when looking at the actual report cards. This could be done in class or as homework.*

Tony A King,
Headmaster

Mid-Term Progress Report

March 06, 2019

Term 2

Student X,

ID: 12345

Homeroom: 1990_001

Grade: 12

Counselor:

Excellent	A+ (97-100)	Fair	C+ (77-79.9)	F+ (50-59.9) - Failure
	A (93-96.9)		C (73-76.9)	
	A- (90-92.9)		C- (70-72.9)	
Good	B+ (87-89.9)	Poor	D+ (67-69.9)	NC No Credit
	B (83-86.9)		D (63-66.9)	
	B- (80-82.9)		D- (60-62.9)	
				I Incomplete
				W Withdrawn
				UN Ungraded

Mid-Term

Course (Teacher)	Grade	Comment
DualEnr English (Russo)	P	
AP Human Geog (Boldewskul)	C-	
Precalculus (Gjoni)	B	
Biology 2 (Wong)	D	
AP Comp Sci A (Tase)	C-	Poor class work

Total Absences: 4

Total Tardies: 4

According to the Boston Public Schools Promotion Policy, all students will be evaluated for promotion with respect to report card grades, performance on student products and standardized tests, and attendance. Besides academic standing, a key factor in the Promotion Policy is student attendance.

To indicate that you have read and understood the above, please sign this notice and return to the homeroom teacher within 2 days of issue. If you wish to schedule a parent/teacher conference, please call the number listed above.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Handout: Understanding Progress Reports

Directions: Look at the Progress Report. Answer the following questions.

1. What grade is this student in? _____
2. What course is he getting the best grade in? _____
3. What course is he getting the worst grade in? _____
4. What does Mr. Tase say about the student's work: _____
5. How would you feel if you saw this progress report? _____

Why? _____

6. What are two things you would do if you saw this progress report:

ACTIVITY #5: PROBLEM SOLVING: TWO HOME/SCHOOL STORIES

Note to Teachers: *If you do a report card unit before the first marking period, this activity could be used later as a way to review report cards before another set of marks come out. It can also be used as part of the original unit.*

Rationale:

Usually children's grades improve or remain constant over the course of the school year. When a child's grades go down, parents should take note and try to figure out with the child and the teacher what might have caused this.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will practice problem solving about report card related issues.*
- *Students will show they can read and interpret stories about the report card.*

Materials:

- *Handout: Report Cards: A Home/School Stories*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Opening discussion: Does your child always show you their report card? Have you ever felt worried about something on your child's report card? What did you do?*
3. *Distribute Handout: Report Cards: Two Home/School Stories. Use the same process with each story. Possibly unfamiliar vocabulary is in bold. Go over this first. Read it aloud together. Divide students into small groups to read it again and discuss the questions. Appoint a group leader. This is an oral exercise; they do not need to write anything down. Stress that there are no right or wrong answers.*
4. *As each group reports back, record responses on chart you have drawn on the board. Read over as a group the different ideas about what the mothers should do.*
5. *Encourage students to speculate what is going on with the two daughters. Again, stress that there are no right or wrong guesses.*

Handout: Report Cards: A Home/School Story #1

Margarita knows her 11th grade daughter Lisa got her report card Friday, because she got an email from the school. However, now it is Sunday night. Lisa has not said anything about her report card. She has not shown it to her mother. Margarita knew she needed to sign the report card. Finally after dinner, she asks Lisa to show it to her. Lisa says she can't find it. "I must have left it in my locker," she tells her mother.

*Margarita is worried that Lisa doesn't want her to see the report card because of her grades. Maybe Lisa is planning **to forge** her signature on the card and **hand it in**. She tries to talk to Lisa about this, but Lisa **storms away**, slamming the door to her room behind her. A month ago Margarita told Lisa that if her **grades went down**, she would have to quit her part time job at Old Navy. Maybe this is why Lisa will not show her the report card?*

WHAT SHOULD MARGARITA DO?

WHAT CAN SHE SAY TO HER DAUGHTER?

Handout: Report Cards: A Home/School Story #2

*Melissa brought home her Term 3 report card from high school on April 25 and showed it to her mother, Carmen. Carmen and Melissa **sat down together** and went over the report card carefully.*

*One of the first things Carmen noticed was that Melissa had been **marked absent** from two of her math classes and three of her chemistry classes. However, she had no absences on the Daily Attendance chart.*

*Another thing Carmen noticed was that Melissa did not seem to be doing as well as she had in both the first and second terms. In math, her grades had gone down from an A to a B to a C+. In chemistry, her grades had gone down from an A- to a B- to a C-. Her chemistry teacher wrote in the comment section that she wasn't **making an effort**.*

Carmen didn't understand. Melissa had never gotten a C in her whole life. At home, Melissa was a little quieter than usual, but every night she went to her room and said she was doing her homework and she went to school every day. So Carmen was confused about what had changed.

WHAT SHOULD CARMEN DO?

WHO SHOULD SHE TALK TO?

WHAT SHOULD SHE ASK?

ACTIVITY #6: HOMEWORK: REVIEWING YOUR CHILD’S REPORT CARD

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Note: *This homework assignment should be given out after you have used the previous exercises to help familiarize parents with the BPS Report card. It is designed to be given out during a week that report cards come home.*

Rationale:

It is helpful if parents are encouraged to talk with their children about their report card.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will talk to their children about their report card.*
- *Students will demonstrate their ability to read and understand the report card.*

Materials:

- *Boston Public Schools Report Card Schedule. Copy from inside back page of the current Guide to the Boston Public Schools for Families and Students. Or download: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/familyguide>*
- *Handout: **Homework: Reviewing Your Child’s Report Card***

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Opening discussion: What do you do when your child brings the report card home? List student responses on the board and circle any which involve talking with their children about their grades and stress their value.*
3. *Use the BPS report card schedule to review with students when their children should be getting a given report card, if they haven’t already.*
4. *Give out the homework. Review key vocabulary as a group before students take it home: praise, successes, review, improve.*
5. *Collect the homework and review it individually. This will be a good way to assess what students have learned from the Report Card Unit.*

Homework: Reviewing Your Child's Report Card

Directions: Report cards will come home this week. Ask to see the report card, look at it, and talk about it with your child.

- 1) Praise your child for all successes (A's and B's, good attendance, teacher comments).
- 2) Look at the attendance carefully. Is the Daily Attendance correct do you think? Look at whether your child has missed any individual classes. Ask them why they were absent from those classes if you don't know the reason.
- 3) If your child has C's and D's, talk to your child about why those courses are hard for them.

Why does your child think they don't get better grades?
What does your child think they could do to improve the grades during the next term?

Tell your child you want to have a conference with their teacher and their advisor to talk to about getting extra help.

Directions: Later, review the report card yourself and answer the following questions:

Your Name: _____ Child's Name: _____

1. What course did your child do best in this term? _____

2. Did your child get a C or D in any courses this term? _____

3. If the answer to question two is yes, list three things you can do to help your child improve their grades.
