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What a Fail!

Imagine little Jimmy running home to his parents, grinning from ear to ear. He waves his report card back and forth, shouting with excitement. Jimmy's parents hug him and shower him with praise. Little Jimmy got straight A's for the first time. If schools were to replace grades with pass or fail students would lose motivation, it would be harder to determine a student's appropriate placement, and education would seem more optional than ever.

First of all, grades provide a unique form of motivation for all students. Our class rank is extremely valuable when applying to colleges. An article from NBC indicates that the recession has high school students more determined than ever to enter college. (<http://www.nbcnews.com>). The lack of available jobs is creating desperation to make money anyway possible. Without grades, students would have less to put on their college applications. Also, many more incentives would disappear. Right now, SWCTA offers luncheons and breakfasts for people who get straight A's. Everyone would be heartbroken if these rewards were to vanish. Ninety-eight percent of students look forwards to these reward days. Rewards would also disappear from households around the valley. A recent survey revealed that seventy-three percent of students at Southwest Career and Technical Academy receive payment for every positive letter grade they receive.

In addition, without grades a student's true ranking would be much harder to determine. GPA provides a way unique way to profile students. Our class rank is extremely valuable when applying to colleges. College admission boards rely on several methods for accepting students (<http://money.howstuffworks.com>). One of these methods is GPA. Without grades, college committees would spend countless more hours debating over whom to accept. Do you really want to take these employees from their families? Even before a student reaches college, difficulties would arise. For example, schools require minimum GPA's for students who play sports. Without grades, the playing restrictions would be much looser. These grade checks also allow athletes to know how much harder they need to work. However, not only athletes benefit from seeing their grades. All students like to compare how they are doing with their peers. When transcripts are handed out, the first thing everyone does is check their class ranks. Humans love competition because it drives us to excellence.

One final reason we should keep grades is because education would come across as optional. If we get rid of grades, next we'll be getting rid of school completely. Many places of employment require a minimum working GPA. Without this requirement, school will come second to money. Also, places for volunteers require minimum GPA's. This is to prevent ignorant people from causing financial losses. We can't force these businesses to test kids; the point of volunteer work is to save money. St. Rose Dominican Hospitals requires a 3.0 GPA from volunteers (<http://www.strosehospitals.org>). Either we keep grades or we shut down America's hospitals. Not only would we do away with hospitals, but we would also get rid of valedictorians. It's wrong to destroy such a traditional position.

In conclusion, grades need to be much more complicated than a simple pass or fail. The reasons are abundant and not limited to the aforementioned. If our school were to transition to

pass or fail, our students would suffer greatly. How could you live with yourself knowing that you destroyed the future of your students? We've always used grades, why stop now?