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AN ANALYSIS OF WAYS OF REPORTING
CHILD PROGRESS TO PARENTS

THESIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	vi
Chapter	
I. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM.	1
Root of Problem	
Problem Selected	
Definition of Terms	
II. BASIS FOR APPRAISAL	14
Restatement of Problem	
Traditional Philosophical Principles	
Modern Philosophical Principles	
III. SURVEY OF TRENDS	39
Current Practices	
Trends in Texas	
IV. COMPARISON OF TRENDS TO GUIDING PRINCIPLES.	68
Reporting Prospectus	
Outline of Guiding Principles	
Outline of Trends of Reporting in Texas	
Relative Approach of Trends to Guiding Principles	
V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	81
Significant Points Brought Out In Analysis	
Techniques Needed in Reporting Child Progress to Parents in Texas	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	91

PREFACE

Our present national situation is a picture of a "civilization rocked to its foundations."¹

Whether or not America will be able to withstand and overcome the disintegrating force of an over emphasis on materialism is a question that keeps recurring to the mind.

One of the first steps necessary in meeting our situation is an appraisal of the mainspring institutions of Democracy in terms of social ideals that will promote the general welfare of all the people. This means that education, government, and industry in America must undergo a thorough evaluation before the social welfare that is needed may be promoted.

Taking stock of the various phases of our educational program is a tremendous job that will require years of study and work on the part of teachers. This thesis is primarily concerned with evaluating one phase of our educational program. It is an analysis of some of the newer ways of reporting child progress to parents in the light of certain guiding principles discerned from modern concepts of philosophy and psychology upon which the structure of our education exists.

¹Boyd Bode, Education At The Crossroads, as quoted in John L. Childs, "Bode At The Crossroads," Social Frontier, IV (1938), 267.

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Reporting Emphasis of Demonstration Schools . . .	57
2. Marking Symbols of Demonstration Schools	57
3. Reporting Emphasis of City Schools	58
4. Marking Symbols of City Schools	58
5. Reporting Emphasis of Curriculum Schools	59
6. Marking Symbols of Curriculum Schools	60
7. Reporting Emphasis of County Schools	61
8. Marking Symbols of County Schools	62
9. Basis for Reporting	79
10. Symbol Phase	79

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. Report Card Used by the Demonstration School, Sul Ross State Teachers College, Alpine, Texas	64
2. Report Card Used by the Elementary Schools of San Antonio, Texas	65
3. Informal Report Used by the Second Grade of the Demonstration School, North Texas State Teachers College, Denton, Texas	66
4. Initial Informal Letter.	86
5. Follow-up Informal Letter.	87
6. Informal Progress Report Letter.	88
7. Progress Report Sheet	89

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Root of Problem

A Social Background.--Democracy champions the cause of the common man. As Boyd Bode points out in his recent book, Progressive Education At The Crossroads,

In this country democracy has been associated with the rise of the common man. Our clue to democracy stands for the common man and for the application of 'operational' procedures in the construction of ideals and purposes, as well as in the determination of means for achieving predetermined goals.¹

On the basis of this meaning of democracy, everything we call democratic today misses the point, and the alarming fact is that we look around, searching diligently for the operation of the fundamental principles of democracy, and find absolutism holding sway.

With this picture staring the people of America in the face, is it not high time to take stock of the course which we are following? Our inventory should be concerned with the ideals, purposes, and aims of our main institutions in the light of our current, critical social conditions. Too long have we been concerned in America with statistics, greatness of power, and wealth in our appraisals. The

¹Boyd Bode, Education At The Crossroads, as quoted in John L. Childs, "Bode At The Crossroads," Social Frontier, IV (1938), 267.

problem facing America is for the people to decide which of the values of life are of most importance. The rush of building a new empire and opening a frontier has placed an over-emphasis in our country on individualism. For the past century we have centered our objectives mainly on a philosophy of rugged individualism which has resulted in the exploitation of the common man. Generally speaking, our present values are the outgrowth of an emphasized materialistic theory of living. Social values have been pushed into the background, and aggressive materialism rules. The picture is not bright for the common man.

Democratic foundations.--The Declaration of Independence furnishes a broad working base for a general evaluation of our present course. From the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

That whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute New Government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such forms, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

These paragraphs yield the generalizations:

1. That Democracy is based upon "respect for personality"; each individual is sovereign in his right to think and choose for himself. The function of

personality is to evaluate distinctively. His sovereignty, however, must in no way obscure his social obligations.

2. The purpose of life is the "pursuit of happiness."

3. That each individual has a right to choose his own method of pursuing happiness.

4. That in a democracy, government is merely a tool for achieving life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

5. That in a democracy, all power resides in, and comes from, the people.

6. That a particular form of government which once was effective, may become destructive of the purposes for which it was established.

7. That the pursuit of happiness involves the continuous search for better ways of achieving happiness.

8. That the continuous modification of the form of government is the means by which improvement is made effective.²

This represents the ideals for which our country was conceived. The great desire of our forefathers was to establish a way of living that would be associated with the rise of the common man. The spirit of the Declaration of Independence breathes of liberty, equality, and fraternity. It stands definitely against the rule of the absolutes.

Let us go further into the social implications of our constitution. Read from the bulletin, "Teachers and Cooperation", issued by the Committee In Charge of The Yearbook on Cooperation:

Lest there should be any misunderstanding of the essentials of democracy, the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States closes with a

²Teachers and Cooperation, N. E. A. Bulletin, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. (Issued by the Committee In Charge of The Yearbook on Cooperation), November, 1937, p. 45.

clear statement that the reason for forming a government is to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity. To secure, not to preserve them, because even yet we have not achieved them all. These same ends are the supreme goals of teaching effort; to release in children their creative talents, to set them free by developing in them those qualities of self-direction, self-appraisal, and self-control, without which true freedom is impossible.

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were framed by master minds. They describe a vision of human relationships so far beyond the achievements of both man and government that for many years to come the principles of democracy will serve as inspiring ideals. Much progress has been made since these ideals were formulated, but that progress has been chiefly individualistic. The need of our times is social. Further progress depends upon the development of adequate methods of achieving the great social goals of democracy--unity, defense, and general welfare--as effectively as the individualistic ends of justice, security, and liberty are achieved. The question now is not so much "what?" but "how?". The answer is "by cooperation."³

The social goals portrayed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution constitute the social ideals which should serve as the criteria in our needed evaluation of the educational, governmental, and industrial institutions of our country. These ideals represent the need of our times, as indicated in our present national situation, and as a result should be set up as a set of values upon which our present general course in America could be appraised.

The challenge for education.--After all is said and done, the underlying purpose of education in a Democracy is to help people secure a better way of living. In this light education is the life blood of Democracy. The public

³Ibid., pp. 46-47.

schools--the backbone of education--are the greatest potential tools of Democracy. What is of more importance to our nation than education's perceiving the vision of its importance? Education might be the preventative of future ills if teachers could clearly grasp a view of our whole present situation. It is an education that is static--dead--that helps to accelerate traditional social ills to recurrence.

Education, if it is education, must motivate social understandings. It must inspire one personally, and its primary function should be to help the mass of people acquire a better plane of living. Hermann Keyserling writes:

Everything one is wont to call "education" today misses the capital point: it imparts knowledge but it does not inspire personal understanding; it develops efficiency, but it does not create a higher plane of being. In this respect it is not progressive; it does not differ in principle from the medieval school where youth was taught simply to explain what was already believed. That this is really so seems to me to be finally proved by the increasing inferiority of the level of the so-called educated masses all over the world; the more they know, the less they understand, the more efficient they are as specialists, the less superior and complete they appear as personalities.⁴

Are our schools, nationally speaking, meeting the demands of the people for a better way of living? Contrast the rote memory exercises of our traditional schools to the live questions of the following story:

Greeting his pupils, the master asked:
"What would you learn of me?"

⁴Will Durant, Great Men of Literature, p. 167.

And the reply came:

"How shall we care for our bodies?"

"How shall we rear our children?"

"How shall we work together?"

"How shall we live with our fellowmen?"

"How shall we play?"

"For what ends shall we live?"

And the teacher pondered these words, and sorrow was in his heart, for his own learning touched not these things.⁵

Current social changes demand that our education be turned to the vital issues of life, and our job in the field of education is to attack the very core of the traditional program in order to ascertain whether or not we are touching on the vital issues of living. We must find the value of all that is good within our educational set-up, and hold fast to that; but our analysis, also, should depict the weaknesses, the fallacies, the rotten spots, the dead, static part of our educational structure.

We have the responsibility of discarding this diseased part as quickly as we would hold fast to that which is good. If our national situation is an indication that old practices have failed, then it is imperative that the findings of a comprehensive evaluation of our education be used.

The above pictured background presents a challenge to workers in the field of education to do their part in formulating plans of action for the improvement of our present

⁵Geo. S. Counts and J. Crosby Chapman, "Principles of Education," as quoted in "Youth Education Today," Sixteenth Yearbook, American Association of School Administrators, Feb., 1938, p. 8.

order or system of things. No force could be stronger than a united drive by the people of America, directed by a vision of the social aims of democracy in reconstructing our present society. The emphasis of our rehabilitation program should mainly be concerned with human welfare, and rehabilitation will result only through an education designed to personally inspire people for a higher plane of living. America is just as strong as the will of the people. Education's job is to release the dormant energy that lies within the people of America.

Problem Selected

Analysis of problem.--Workers in the field of education have the responsibility of appraising the institution of education. A survey of the professional literature of the day indicates clearly that the subject of evaluation is alive. Workers within our schools are becoming alert to the need of a deep-seated, comprehensive evaluation of the principles and techniques of our schools.

This thesis deals specifically with one phase of our educational program. It is an analysis of newer ways of reporting child progress to parents. In this study of reporting child progress to parents the problem in concern is how near our newer ways of reporting approach the present trends in education which are influenced by our modern philosophical and psychological concepts.

Scope of the problem.--The problem of this thesis deals with two aspects of appraisal in the elementary school. First, it is concerned with discerning from modern philosophy and psychology the guiding principles of progressive education. Naturally, this study forms the basis for the appraisal and the crux of the problem. The primary contribution endeavored will lie in whatever contrast that may result from the portrayal of the traditional principles of educational philosophy and psychology and the modern principles of philosophy and psychology. The next aspect is concerned with determining the extent to which the new trends of reporting child progress compares with the guiding principles of progressive education.

Education in general is in a period of transition in which the whole base is being moved. There is need for development of techniques in nearly all fields of educational endeavor to fit the philosophy and psychology of the newer education, even, as has been intimated, to the evaluation of the course it is taking. While our teaching objectives are being changed our administrative techniques must also change. Reporting child progress has been an administrative device, and quite naturally is a direct descendent of a school's philosophy.

The writer has limited the depth of the second chapter, which deals with the basis for appraisal, considerably, due

to the unlimited amount of reading available. An understanding of philosophy develops with a person's experience. While Dewey's ideas seem meaningful, there are no doubt shades of meaning that escape the interpreter's attention. Also, the survey of the trends of reporting child progress to parents has been limited to certain selected groups of schools in Texas, namely: Demonstration schools, curriculum schools, city schools, and county systems employing an elementary supervisor. Such a group seems to represent as progressive an element as is obtainable in Texas, since each particular group has some type of professional leadership in the elementary field.

Definitions of Terms

Important in any discussion is an understanding of the terms involved. In order to ameliorate an understanding of the principal terms used in this analogy the writer will give his conception of the meanings of some of the terms which will be frequently referred to in the discussion of this particular problem.

People.--In the light of our views people are men, women, boys and girls that make up our society. We are concerned with including boys and girls in our thinking of the term people. The following thoughts from J. R. McGaughy expresses a clearer understanding of this view:

The good school accepts the fact of the personality of the pupil. It believes that he

is a real personality, a real human being even before he reaches the magic age of twenty-one, and that he has problems just as real and just as important as are the problems of any adult.

This implication is the one which has been so well popularized by Kilpatrick. It is that respect for personality. If this pupil is a real person, society and the school will be just as much concerned about him and his problems, even though he be only five or twelve years old, as they would be if he were already adult.⁶

America.--As described here America is thought of as the United States. The world generally thinks of American ideals in terms of the ideals of the people of the United States. N. F. S. Grundtvig, the Danish genius, once said of his beloved country, "The People--That is Denmark".⁷ In our use of the word we borrow our meaning from a Dane--The People--That is America.

Democracy.--A way of living which is constituted by the rise of the common man is our treatment of the term democracy. It is characterized by the belief that all people are socially equal. Democracy stands for the people, and against absolutism.

Education.--The experiences people have in changing their way of behavior may be termed education. In the United States we speak of our educational institutions as our school set-up. Education is referred to in this manner throughout our analysis with an added emphasis that it becomes Lamar's "Guardian genius of democracy" as long as it

⁶J. R. McGaughy, An Evaluation of the Elementary School, p. 24.

⁷Olive D. Campbell, The Danish Folk School, p. 66.

inspires people to a higher plane of living.

Evaluation.--This paper deals with the term evaluation in a broad sense of the word. Primarily it is thought of as an appraisal of certain values of the school's program. Appraisal and evaluation suggest an effort to judge something, as, in this case, the objectives and techniques of reporting. The Sixteenth Yearbook of the National Elementary Principals Association outlines its ideas of evaluation in the following language:

School appraisal is not only desirable; it is unavoidable. Administrators, teachers, parents and children all form judgments of some kind with respect to the success of the school and the adequacy of its various elements. These judgments may vary from hasty inferences based on hearsay or cursory observation, to conclusions reached through the careful collection and thoughtful interpretation of objective evidence. The purpose of this yearbook is to encourage appraisal of the latter type.⁸

Philosophy.--In the case of this paper, philosophy is used as a structure upon which a system of education exists. It denotes reasoning in order to understand the principles of education. Philosophy searches for causes and meanings.

Psychology.--Skinner and associates have a new slant on psychology which is quite applicable to our problem. They suggest a new field for educational psychology:

Defined as the science of human behavior, psychology enters into the scientific study of man wherever he is and whatever he is doing. The

⁸ Appraising the Elementary School Program, The National Elementary Principal, Sixteenth Yearbook, Vol. XVI, No. 6, p. 233.

processes of sensation, perception, attention, physiological correlates, are operating whether one is engaged in selling life insurance, driving an automobile, or attending a concert, just as truly as when one is memorizing a poem or teaching arithmetic.

Owing to the force of tradition more than to any other factors, no doubt, the form and emphasis of psychology as it is usually taught is much less valuable to education than it should be. It has, for instance, emphasized the individual rather than the social aspects of development, in spite of the obvious fact that the stimulus of the social factors--other people or the products of their thought in the form of written words--is by far the most important aspect psychologically which the environment affords. Secondly, psychology has concerned itself chiefly with the adult instead of the child and the progress of growth. Thirdly, it has taught a structural, static doctrine rather than a functional and dynamic one. Fourthly, it has been restricted largely to the normal, and has dealt sparingly, at least in academic circles, with the deviates and the abnormal. These narrow emphases need to be corrected if the values inherent in the science are to be recognized in their bearing upon educational problems.⁹

Traditional.--Associated with the word traditional are our notions and ideas of the customs of the "old school." It has been customary to hand down from year to year certain educational practices which have never been touched by a comprehensive evaluation. The same principles year in and year out constitute a traditional principle.

Modern.--Opposite to an aged tradition is a word which symbolizes present day time. For example, a modern philosophy of reporting child progress is the result of a

⁹Charles E. Skinner and Associates, Readings in Educational Psychology, p. 7.

present way of thinking. The emphasis is replaced from the old to the new. Modern is thus associated with our "new education."

Principles.--The word is used to indicate strength, as, the guiding principles of education are the fundamental beliefs of education. We think of principles in this paper as certain concepts upon which exist the foundation for a particular type of education.

Progress.--Child progress is synonymous with child growth. Both indicate development.

CHAPTER II

BASIS FOR APPRAISAL

Restatement of Problem

We have alleged that our society's great need of a larger allegiance to the social ideals of Democracy has revealed a new horizon in the field of education. Our next position emphasized the close relationship of our social goals to the necessity for an education that personally inspires people to a higher plane of living. A third major point in the opening discussion suggests that in order for education to become a positive force in helping the people achieve the desired aim of general welfare, the entire structure of the institution must undergo a thorough evaluation.

The first part of our analogy very briefly touched on the part of education with which we are concerned in this investigation. It seems extremely important in the beginning for the writer to establish a method of attack on the problem of analyzing the newer ways of reporting child progress in Texas.

To begin with, it is well to bear in mind the fact that any system or way of reporting child progress is a part of the philosophy of the institution that employs it. Reduced to a fine point, a reporting system really is a

direct descendant of the guiding principles to which the school in concern adheres. Viewed in this relationship, the crux of an appraisal of reporting child progress lies in an interpretation of the school's philosophy.

American educators need to view the conflicting ideals of the traditionalists and the progressives as a conflict between two values. The major tenets of the two philosophies differ very little to our present political clash of conservatives and liberals. One group holds fast, or would turn back, to tradition while the other follows Roosevelt in what some think is the finest of all human quests--that of searching for new and better values in living.

The next area of our analysis will deal with a survey of the fundamental principles of traditional education as well as a review of the dominant philosophy behind modern education. As outlined in the opening chapter, the social ideals of Democracy will serve as a set of values around which the fundamental beliefs of the two conflicting philosophies may be synthesized. Our objective in this realm of the investigation will be to look for guiding principles, in the light of social values, which will serve as a basis, or criteria, for the appraisal of the current way of reporting child progress to parents in Texas.

Therefore, our guiding principles must express values in terms of our current social needs. This seems the

logical process for education to participate in social living. Only through such a selected process of our aims may our social goal--general welfare--be achieved, and through general welfare only may all the people secure the blessings of liberty, of equality, and of fraternity. On this ground the educational institutions of a democracy may well afford to seek an education that is "For liberty, and against tyranny; for equality, and against special privilege; for fraternity, and against war".¹

Dean Russell, reflecting upon the present unhappy state of our nation, challenged education in the following manner:

Liberty, equality and fraternity have not been achieved. Possibly man cannot perfect himself. Possibly the world resists his control. Certainly we at Teachers College should explore the possibility that the failure has come from the use of too much force and too little of education.²

Traditional philosophical principles.--Traditional education represents a way of thinking that has its roots in an American dream of one hundred years. A very large majority of farm workers could hope to own a farm, and

¹Excerpt from address by W. F. Russell, Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University, to the Texas State Teachers Association, Houston, Texas, Nov. 26, 1937.

²F. Ernest Johnson, "Dean Russell's Challenge," Social Frontier, Volume IV, February, 1938, p. 147.

each man hoped to become economically independent. Due to the frontier opportunities of that day the need of our forefathers' time was the development of their country. The fundamental factors of the resulting philosophy were two-fold, namely, Laissez Faire and rugged individualism.

The freedom of individual endeavor to a people that had been oppressed for centuries by the rule of absolute monarchies in Europe motivated an economic system that reached unparalleled greatness in America. The greatest advances of mankind in the realm of sciences produced added emphasis to this newly loosed initiative of individuals. A hundred years of progress shifted agrarianism to industrialism and mammoth cities sprang up over all the country.

This was fine in so far as material growth was concerned. We made much individualistic progress. In fact, some think we made too much. The physical sciences advanced so rapidly with the speed of individual initiative that our social sciences were pushed into the background. A dazzling system of rivalry and chicanery resulted in a few rugged individuals, with no sense of human value and general welfare, using every known high pressure practice to write the laws of our land for their own exploitative profit and parasitic gain. This stifled social operations. We acquired in America, the "land of the free and the home of the brave", an absolutism as monstrous as any of the divine rulers of the old world. The reason for this was

that we failed to develop our social sciences as rapidly as we did our physical sciences. Machines played havoc with a civilization that produced individuals with the initiative and efficiency to build them, but thoroughly incapable of understanding how to use them for the greatest benefit of society. It took a depression of far-reaching magnitude for America to learn that liberty can't be bought. As pointed out by J. R. Swenson, the prerequisite of democracy is education with broad, social ends:

It is admitted that the hope of permanent democracy is dependent upon a high and increasing degree of intelligence and conscience widely distributed in the citizenship. If democracy fails us, that is, if citizens become indolent in their citizen rights; if they seek narrow selfish advantages or privileges instead of broad, social ends; if they refuse to use vision and reason in political action, because thinking requires effort; if they follow blindly any loud-mouthed demagog shouting hate and contempt because recipient of a few material benefits and tawdry compliments, so selling their liberty like the free-corn fed and circus entertained Romans of twenty centuries ago--then we may be liable to a violent change, with a fascist dictator or a communist oligarchy supreme in the former "land of the free and the home of the brave". Eternal vigilance is ever the price of liberty.³

Relationships.--The institution of education, during America's century of rapid material progress, became saturated with the Laissez Faire philosophy. From year to year we have handed down, from one generation to the next, practices in our schools that can be traced back to a

³John Robert Swenson, Why On Earth Did It Happen?, p. 224.

culture in Europe that taught people a certain way because they did not want them to think another way. When Thomas Jefferson and his group of thinkers visioned a new way of living for the people of America, and did something about it politically, teachers in the republic added a few more tablets of memorization based on the new ideals. This early attempt of education in a democracy gradually became engrossed in the crass formalism of the time. Is there little wonder that our country can boast so few public-spirited people with a type of education that places its emphasis on a doctrine of Laissez Faire?

Contrast the need for methods of high level cooperation in educating people for successful living in a democracy to the traditional practices of our schools. The following excerpts were selected from the N. E. A. Bulletin, "Teachers and Cooperation":

It is the unique function of education in a Democracy to prepare the oncoming generation to live successfully in a Democracy. From the earliest days of the republic, Democratic principles have been taught in our schools, and teachers, as a class, believe in the principles they teach. But under the stress of the current, critical period the profession is awakening--suddenly, as it were--to the fact that it has given lip-service only to its ideals.

The practices of the traditional American school were inherited from a class culture which had been taught to worship God as the supreme ruler of the world, which believed in the divine right of earthly kings, and which demanded "blind obedience" to authority. That culture was almost as autocratic in its point of view and practices as some of the more recent manifestations of autocracy in the fascist countries of Europe.

The American revolution was against the exploitation of the common man by those in authority. However, the revolution never reached the classroom. Many superintendents, supervisors, principals, and teachers, are to this day little czars in their own domains. In spite of the great advances made in recent years in adjusting materials of instruction and methods of teaching to children--advances which tend to give force to democratic principles in the classroom--teaching, supervision, and administration are in the main still individualistic and autocratic in form.⁴

Origins.--The curriculum of our traditional schools was, as we have seen, organized around specified subjects with the idea that these subjects possessed certain values. Charles W. Knudsen outlines the theory of subjects in relation to educational value in these words:

Earlier programs of curriculum development proceeded on the assumption that different subjects possessed inherent values, and that by a happy selection of subjects a curriculum could be formulated that would insure the acquisition of a desired set of separate values. The suggestion has been made repeatedly, and apparently on sufficient grounds, that the arguments for selected subjects often were made as a justification for the inclusion of materials already in the program of studies. Strangely enough, the method of arguing for the retention of old subjects also became the method of argument used by those who desired to introduce new subjects. What was sauce for the traditional goose became sauce for the innovation gander. There was something almost mythical about the values ascribed to subjects. It was assumed, for example, that the classical languages possessed a cultural value, and that mathematics and manual training possessed a disciplinary value. Clearly, then, if it was desired that a learner acquire culture, the classics were prescribed, and if it were desired that

⁴N. E. A. Bulletin, "Teachers and Cooperation," Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, Issued by The Committee In Charge of the Yearbook on Cooperation, November, 1937, p. 2.

the learner acquire a disciplinary value in addition, it was necessary to prescribe mathematics or some other subject that possessed a similar value.

The concept of the curriculum as a selected group of subjects with inherent values, as pointed out by Dewey years ago, parallels a concept of society as a conglomerate of business, art, religion, politics, recreation, and so on.⁵

The origin of subjects may be traced back to the time of Aristotle, the Greek philosopher. Aristotle, realizing the need of his time for systematized knowledge, spent years of research in organizing knowledge. It was he who petitioned Alexander the Great, one of his former pupils, to collect different species of plants in his conquests of the civilized world, so that they might be returned to Athens for classification. Aristotle's contribution to the world's knowledge stands as one of the greatest of all achievements, but let us view the case of subjects in the light of existing conditions.

It will pay us to trace this theory also in its historical setting. It has been very notable in the history of European thought that formalism has begun always as a means of economizing effort by systematizing thought, but continues as a drag upon effort long after its original purpose has been served. In the Protestant reformation, for instance, creeds and confessions were at first formulated to assist the common folk better to understand the Scriptures which they were encouraged to read so as "to give a reason for the faith that was in them"; but each sect soon came to use its creed and confession to indoctrinate its children, and to convict non-believers of heresy. Again, among the early Greeks and on through the centuries until the Renaissance the favorite studies were the more formal

⁵Charles W. Knudsen, "The Case for the Subjects," Peabody Journal of Education, Vol. 15, No. 4, p. 170.

ones of the trivium--grammar, rhetoric, and dialect or logic--with mathematical science as a close rival. Following the great genius Aristotle, the scholars of Europe have always favored systematized knowledge, categories of thought, forms, etc. But the unfortunate tendency has been to play with the forms long after they have become empty and meaningless.⁶

In 1938, after some water has run under the bridge, the essentialists challenge the belief that children do not live by subjects alone. Hollis Caswell points out a new basis in these words:

When we turn to the problems and needs of living as an organizing center for the curriculum, pertinent content from all subjects is employed together in meaningful and significant relationships. Content thus becomes a means of solving our problems, of adjusting to the complexities of the present, and the curriculum becomes concerned with the process of living.

This suggests that subject matter must first be used, that it must have significance for the learner. Then its internal relationships and logic of organization may be considered intelligently. In this case the learner's end or purpose to be realized is the primary point of orientation. Logical organization is secondary and is looked upon as a tool or means of achieving more effective use in the future. This does not mean, however, that the secondary orientation is unimportant or is to be slighted. It means simply that concepts of the organized fields of knowledge grow gradually in the mind of the student as he develops understanding of life and the world about him, and sees that logical organization of knowledge aids in understanding the factors with which he must deal. He generalizes before he states the generalization in formal terms. He knows before he defines. The case against the subjects rejects then, not the value of subjects themselves, but the value of subjects as the primary basis of curriculum organization.⁷

⁶Isaac Doughton, Modern Public Education, p. 109.

⁷Hollis L. Caswell, "The Case Against the Subjects," Peabody Journal of Education, XV (1938), 184-185.

Methods.--With subjects, bolstered by a Laissez Faire philosophy, as the core of the traditional curriculum, our schools have acquired certain forms of methods they have been unable to discard. Back into the roots of primitive education we find the justification of memory and imitation as a foundation for the learning process. Doughton describes the traditional methods of the knowledge-discipline-drill theory as being closely associated.

The lack of written records of race experience in primitive times made oral dictation by teachers the only method of imparting knowledge; and, as a result, memorizing through careful listening or imitation through trial-and-error practice became the only possible method of acquiring the transmitted knowledge and experience. And even after written records became available, the cost and difficulty of multiplying books restricted their use until recent times to the very few, who must then communicate their contents by oral dictation to those who were less favored. The test of the effectiveness of the teaching naturally lay in the exactness with which the learner could reproduce the knowledge or duplicate the activities that were set for him to learn.

This unreasoning memorizing and imitation by children produced results that teachers could easily measure; and their own blind faith in an illusory theory of education led them to believe that certain other much desired but immeasurable results in character development inevitably followed or accompanied those results which they could so easily measure. Hence the discipline-theory continued to dominate the schools, and methods of discipline and drill were the common practice.⁸

Doughton further reveals in his study of nineteenth century education that promising reforms in method degenerated into crass formalism and that narrow concepts of

⁸Doughton, op. cit., p. 310-11.

education continued to prevail. He mentions Rousseau's revolutionary theory of education through activity, as well as the words of Baselaw, Pestalozzi, Lancaster, Herbart, and Froebel as examples of work which became entangled with traditional educational practices that would reduce teaching to easy, simple procedures.

Psychology.--Supporting the subject trend of the traditional school was the faculty theory of psychology which protected and justified bodies of subject matter as the basis of the curriculum. From Aristotle to Thorndike, education, in the main, accepted the theory that learning was a process of developing certain associations and connections. The psychology of the old education confined learning almost entirely to habit formation. Thorndike's famous S - R bond theory, or the conditioned reflex, so closely tied up with traditional education, tended to separate learning from living. Human values received little recognition in so efficient a scheme of mechanical education.

The last decade has seen social leaders demand a new and broader basis for learning. This great demand has awakened educational psychologists, and in tune with our times, a conflict rages over the dynamics of education. One thing is sure, psychologists no longer have their minds made up about the aspects of human nature. Human

nature is not static, but it changes with our changing civilization.

Two excerpts selected from Readings in Educational Psychology, written by F. B. Knight and W. H. Kilpatrick, respectively, add light to this viewpoint.

How do children learn? The answer depends on whose opinion one chooses to accept. Some judge that a general connectionist view--enlightened connectionism, perhaps--is a vigorous and virtuous theory of learning upon which sound school practice can and should be built. Other students of learning could write the next sentences and have written many like them. "The connectionist view of learning is now utterly repudiated. Even Thorndike's more recent experiments force him to abandon bonds, connections, and their ilk. Education will flounder around until its daily practices in the classroom are built upon the dynamics of Gestalt psychology."

Until recently our psychology was mainly trying to be "scientific" in the Newtonian sense just discussed. It was atomistic, the small element being the S - R bond or the conditioned reflex. It was dualistic, preferring matter to mind; it built itself on physiology (body) and ultimately on chemistry or physics; it sought to limit and banish mind and thinking, preferring as the basis for education impersonal habits to personal thinking. It seized avidly upon "standardized tests" as permitting an education founded on atomistic objectives as interchangeable as Ford parts, and as allowing besides a non-thinking type of evaluation. It tried to make education mechanical, to have it more easily controlled from without and above.

In direct contrast with all this, psychology is now moving perceptibly away from physiology, which seems but body non-thinking and mechanistic, to biology which gives full sway to all the organism can do; away from atoms like S - R or conditioned reflex to the organism acting as a whole, with thinking, feeling (emotion), impulse, physical moving, glandular action, etc., as aspects (not separable parts) of one organic action. In particular, this better psychology rejects such an analytic procedure as grants the same behavior to small pieces in separation as when in living contents. Learning is increasingly seen as creative of its own subject

matter, not simply an acquisition of what was already there.⁹

Transition.--American education was still influenced by the Laissez Faire doctrine when our present cardinal principles of education were laid down in 1918. The transition which we now feel had not reached the front line. Leaders in the front trenches had not anticipated the deluge that was descending upon them. It took the bursting bombs of 1929, and a great deal of reflective thinking for frontier educators to see the light. The first rumblings of a new education suggested a new course which now calls for the restatement of the cardinal objectives of the general educational program in the light of modern social conditions.

In 1918 the seven cardinal principles were announced with almost universal approval. They have been, with slight modifications, the guiding principles of curricular construction for twenty years. The inadequacy of the seven cardinal principles, however, in meeting the paramount problem of the world today--the preservation of democracy--has been brought to our attention by certain members of the Educational Policies Commission. To which of the seven cardinal principles, they ask, would a Hitler or a Mussolini take exception today? Would he object to health? Would he oppose a "command of the fundamental processes"? Would he deplore a training for "worthy home membership"? Would he disapprove of vocational training? Would he take exception to training for leisure? No, these objectives constitute worthy personal attainments which could not in the least place in jeopardy a regime of dictatorship. Emphasis upon these

⁹Charles E. Skinner and Associates, Readings in Educational Psychology, pages 4 and 603.

objectives in the schools might even divert attention from dangerous social considerations. He would not even object to training for ethical character and citizenship if he were granted the privilege of defining the terms. In other words, the seven cardinal principles with slight adaptations, easily within the power of the dictator to set up, might be accepted as the educational foundation for a Fascist government. Manifestly the time has arrived to restate the objectives of education.¹⁰

The status quo of traditional education had no justification for its existence after 1929. The movement of education from one base to another challenges progressive educators to seek values consistent with the basic force behind the transition. The problem for present-day education thus emerges from this search for the principles of education for social living.

Laura Zirbes, in a report on curriculum trends, reveals education's recent thinking by analyzing educational magazines, professional books, and yearbooks for references to changes and transition. She says that "Every educational change involves something from which there is a departure and except in the cases where the program is merely curtailed, the change is from something to something else."

Using this from-to relationship, the following excerpts from Zirbes' study are presented. She has set the data into parallel columns in order that the direction

¹⁰John W. Harbeson, "Curricular Evaluation," Journal of Secondary Education, XIII (1938), 135-136.

of the change may be indicated.

From:	To:
Mental development of the child	Social education of the child
Curricula facing yesterday	Curricula facing tomorrow
Isolated subjects	Correlation of curriculum and child's growing stream of life experiences
School curriculum prepared the child for adult life	School curriculum prepares child for effective participation in his immediate life
Content of subject matter as an end in itself	Content of subject matter as a means of changing ways of behavior
Emphasis upon fixed habits of behavior as represented by fixed habits and skills	Emphasis upon insights, meanings, concepts and interpretations necessitated by needs and demands of a rapidly changing social life
Question-answer recitation	Children taking initiative, making and carrying out plans; group discussions, conferences, conversation on common interests
Formalized recitation	Socialized recitation
Training in habits, skills and factual knowledge	Building desirable social attitudes, appreciations and understandings
Mass teaching	Developing creative, dynamic, integrated personalities; development of individuality
Dictated, prescribed and controlled learning	Self-planning and self-direction; freedom to discover, explore, think, play
Memorization and drill	Activity curriculum
Unchallenging busy work	Developing capacities for intelligent social participation in progressive reconstruction of child's own experiences

From:

Educating a passive child

Restrictive repression to satisfy traditional standards
Passive mastery of finished products of thought

In the effort of the school to develop control of communication and number, it has too frequently fallen into a formalism which defeated in great measure the fundamental social processes of the school

Evaluation of the product of educational effort solely by means of subject-matter types of examinations, which over-emphasize the memory of facts and principles and tend to neglect the more dynamic outcomes of instruction

History that focused pupils' attention upon military greatness and study of the past

To:

Furthering initiative, self-reliance, cooperativeness, purposes in life, interest in the world and developing intellectual and moral honesty

Freedom with rich opportunity for varied social activities

Exercising true intelligence in making wise adaptations to changing environment

Emphasizes social nature of the individual--participate effectively in social life; minister to the development of the individual and quite as emphatically secure control of those forms of communication and types of behavior which are necessary for life in the social group.

Changes in goals and methods accompanied by the development and use of new tests and examinations corresponding in type to the advances made in the curriculum

Study of progress of nations and races; learn history in light of present day developments; study one's own community

From:

To:

Public school as a
great conserv-
ing agency, ori-
ented by the halo
of the past

Creation of a generation of
men and women, informed
about, and interested in,
American drama, who tend
to settle matters of con-
troversy on the basis of
reflection rather than
prejudice.¹¹

Modern Philosophical Principles

A new value.--The philosophy of progressive education is based on vital problems of living, rather than that of achieving mastery of subject matter. Laissez Faire and rugged individualism are passe in this new conception of educating children in a changing world which recognizes the interdependence of mankind. The "big idea" of the new education is the school's recognition of our present need in society--that of individuals establishing the right kind of relationship with other members of the community. Progressive educators are building their objectives around a social philosophy.

With this change in course, our schools have acquired a new tool, and new tools are dangerous unless great intelligence is employed to direct their objectiveness. Many questions arise. Will consideration of the needs of society in terms of group welfare stifle the initiative of the individual? What of the individual? What are we going to do with the individual?

24. ¹¹Laura Zirbes, Curriculum Trends, (Report), pp. 12-

In consideration of these questions, may we contend that education is concerned with developing individuals to their maximum ability to participate in and contribute to society, and that the greatest growth that takes place in any individual's life results from a person's finding a mission or cause that is larger than any one individual. Only through such a medium can man release his greatest energy, and only through this inspiration can an individual expect to develop to his maximum ability. This idea rests solely on education's stimulating the people of America, through independent reading and direct observation, into channels which will awaken them to an allegiance to the great social goals of Democracy. All individuals may find a mission in this endeavor.

Instead of subjects, whose descent into a textbook form of wholesale education has sapped the vitality of the youth of America, modern education is centered around vital problems of living. This type of curriculum deals with life situations. Hollis Caswell, one of the social engineers in the field of curriculum construction, states the new emphasis of progressive education in the following manner:

The separation of school experiences from the vital problems of living defeats the primary function which public education should serve. The purpose of schooling is not to develop mastery of certain organized bodies of knowledge. Rather it is

to educate the citizen for effective participation in those common undertakings and cooperations which are necessary to sustain our democratic way of living.

The primary purpose of general education will best be served if content is widely employed in the relationship from which it gained initial meaning and significance, that is, in relationship to a problem of living rather than in the relationship which is of significance to the specialist in the subject whose concern for the practical problems of living tends to be incidental. On the one hand is a school guiding boys and girls in vital experiences which are an integral part of the ongoing stream of life; on the other, a school which believes the mastery of content is preparation for later living, a school which inevitably involves much memorizing and little understanding.¹²

The base of the new education is a social philosophy.

A new theory.--Values beget theories, and as early as 1900 John Dewey, America's foremost frontier thinker, visualized a new need for our schools. He writes:

Hence the need of a school. In this school the life of the child becomes the all controlling aim. All the media necessary to further the growth of the child center there. Learning?--Certainly, but living primarily, and learning through and in relation to this living. When we take the life of the child centered and organized in this way, we do not find that he is first of all a listening being; quite the contrary.

Life is the great thing after all; the life of the child at its time and in its measure, no less than the life of the adult. Strange would it be, indeed if intelligent and serious attention to what the child now needs and is capable of in the way of a rich, valuable, and expanded life should somehow conflict with the needs and possibilities of later, adult life. "Let us live with our children" certainly means, first of all, that our children shall live--not that they shall be hampered and stunted by being forced into all kinds of conditions, the most remote consideration of which is relevancy to the present life of the child. If we seek the kingdom of heaven, educationally, all other things shall

be added unto us--which, being interpreted, is that if we identify ourselves with the real instincts and needs of childhood, and ask only after its fullest assertion and growth, the discipline and information and culture of adult life shall all come in their due season.¹³

Let us follow this theory with another new-education point of view written years later after the specified subject matter curriculum became entangled with Dewey's approaching ideas of life problems as the real center and core of the new schools. Doughton interprets the meaning of the new theorists and quotes Kilpatrick.

Neither Kilpatrick nor Dewey nor any other sensible proponent of the new philosophy of education ever thought of denying to children the benefit of the accumulated race experience, and forcing them to drift casually and wholly unprepared to adulthood with its tremendous problems and responsibilities. But they have insisted, as Rousseau long ago insisted, that the best preparation for adult living is not in having children practice the experience of adulthood, but in having them live through the experiences that are normal to each age. Each experience of life thus gives to life an enrichment of meaning and adds to our power to direct subsequent experience. In this way we grow normally, steadily, and progressively into adulthood; and power comes through growth. Thus only can the school give to children an effective "running social start". Let Kilpatrick speak for himself:¹⁴

And this seems the final conclusion. We must have both individualized work and group work. But we must revise the common notion of what constitutes the school's task. Education is not acquiring specified subject matter fixed in advance; it is the continuous remaking of life by acquiring subject matter as it is needed for present behavior. When

¹³John Dewey, The School and Society, pp. 37 and 54.

¹⁴Doughton, op. cit., pp. 625-626.

we can see this and can understand the necessity for the unity of self-hood, when we shall see why drill, though necessary, must be subordinated to life--why the school, to be finally satisfactory, must be continuous with life.¹⁵

The real center or core of the new education is an experience curriculum based on vital problems of living.

A new school.--Theory begets action, and out of the dominant idea of an experience curriculum based on a social philosophy many schools in America are broadening children's understandings of the world in which they live. A theory in action is the term that describes the Horace Mann School, one of the many progressive schools in America. Here we see a skeleton outline of the principles of a progressive school.

(1) The Horace Mann School believes that the school is an important agency for educating children, but not the only one which should assume responsibility for the total education of the child. It realizes that as one of these agencies, it will function completely only in so far as it creates within the classroom an environment which will aid pupils and teachers to live and learn together. The school also recognizes that in order to make this cooperative effort worth while, the environment must be extended to include realistically the community which surrounds the school. It is on this belief that the school brings its pupils into closer contact with other educative agencies in the community, such as churches, libraries, museums, newspaper plants, local government, and social service agencies, and endeavors thereby to acquaint the child with his surroundings, and to build up within him critical understanding and appreciation of these

¹⁵William H. Kilpatrick, "An Effort at Appraisal," Twenty-Fourth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, p. 286, as quoted in Doughton, op. cit., p. 626.

agencies, some of which may aid and some of which may, in some instances, deter social progress.

(2) Although the Horace Mann School believes in cooperative living and endeavor, it does not lose sight of the very important fact that the child is an individual living in the present and that he should be allowed to learn to judge and act sensibly and constructively for himself as well as to think and act cooperatively with his group.

(3) The School, however, believes that there are at least four fundamental powers necessary to the complete education of a child.

- a. The power to know.
- b. The power to do.
- c. The power to think.
- d. The power to feel.

(4) This then is the philosophy of the Horace Mann School. Its purpose is to develop individuals whose bodies are strong and healthy; who grow in insight, develop mental and spiritual powers, and acquire the self-direction necessary for resourceful living; who believe in education as an enduring quest for meanings; whose feeling toward the world and its people are unbiased and fair, and who will therefore fulfill the obligations that come with membership in a society; who desire to investigate and explore new fields of thought; whose knowledge of the world is accurate and broad; who think with trained minds; and whose actions, while expressing individuality, contribute to the welfare of the group, the state, and the world in which they live.¹⁶

The basis for pupils and teachers living and learning together in the new schools is the use of the interests and needs of all the individuals engaged in cooperative living.

A new psychology.--Action begets methods, and how the new school meets this process of living is explained by Kilpatrick.

The educative process based on a problem of actual child living.

¹⁶Rollo G. Reynold and Mary Harden, "Fundamental Philosophy and Purposes of the Horace Mann School," Teachers College Record, 1935, pp. 649-652.

(1) Suppose a child faces a situation. First of all there is in him that which makes this a situation for him, and second there is in the environment something that so stirs him that he is moved to act. Only as these things happen together does a child face an actual situation.

(2) Facing thus an actual life situation, the second step is to analyze it, partly to set up or clarify ends, partly to get materials for the planning that comes next.

(3) The third step is to make one or more plans and choose from among them, for dealing with the situation. In the developing situation the plan will be in process of making from step to step as the situation develops. Planning is clearly an imaginative and creative step, but the imagination is checked and molded by the hard facts of the situation.

(4) Then comes the step of putting the plan into operation, watching while we see how it works, so that if need arises revision may be made.

(5) If the plan succeeds, a final stage is the backward look to see what has been done and how it might be done better another time.¹⁷

This new way of doing things in educating modern children for a modern world suggests a different basis of method.

The emphasis in traditional education was on:

1. The activities of the teacher
2. The plans of the teacher as the determiner of activity
3. The mastery of subject matter
4. The teacher's purpose

The emphasis in modern education is on:

1. The activities of the learner
2. The needed activity as the determiner of the teacher's plans
3. The learning activity based upon effective technique
4. The student's purpose¹⁸

¹⁷William H. Kilpatrick, "The Curriculum as a Process of Living," Journal of the National Education Association, XXIV (1936), 55.

¹⁸W. L. Wrinkle and W. D. Armentrout, Directed Observation and Teaching in Secondary Schools, pp. 213-214.

Education moves from training people's mind for storing of subject matter to a consideration of the personality of the whole individual. Can we not see a passing of Laissez Faire and rugged individualism in the dynamics of the Gestalt or organismic psychology?

In general, the major contentions of the new school may be summarized very crudely in what would seem for them a definition of the science. Psychology is a science of "wholes" which deals with the responses of organisms-as-wholes to situations-as-wholes. Anything short of these, on the one hand, is essentially physiology, and the other, physics.

Finally, organismic psychology forces educational philosophy to reconsider whether the hedonic conception, which has abounded since Socrates and no doubt even before, is after all, the true conception. Is "happiness" a goal of man's activity, as such? Does "practice with satisfaction" explain selection for continued usage? Do the very possibilities of attaining happiness fade immediately as that most abstract of all things is aimed toward? If education is to answer negatively with the Gestalt or organismic psychologists to these questions, the whole view of education will be more or less altered. It will be broadened. The organism to be educated will be seen as an emerged part of a larger whole which in turn, stage by stage, may be said to include the whole universe. The organismic psychologist's "human" is a larger being. He is not an isolated phenomenon depending for his growth upon some philosophically abstract principle. He moves for the same reason that a current of air moves. For him, experience is hearing, seeing, and feeling all at once. He does not see without hearing, nor does he hear without seeing. He matures in the same way that any physical body changes. He is a being "atuned to the world," and understandable only as such.¹⁹

The new school is concerned with the personality growth of individuals in terms of cooperative living. In

¹⁹Kenneth Seltsam, "Organismic Psychology and Educational Theory," Journal of Educational Psychology, XXII (1931), pp. 358-359.

this way the education of the whole child is taken into consideration.

A forecast.--The vision and energy of intelligent, progressive educators in America is needed to provide our country with a working laboratory in order to keep democracy up to date.

Most of us in America as well as in England prefer a democratic form of government. But when we are confronted with the weaknesses of democracy as currently practiced, we tend to burst into rhetoric about freedom, liberty, the Constitution, hallowed rights and imperishable traditions. Such talk does not get things done. On the contrary, it delays them. Intelligent citizens who value democracy should forget the rhetoric and bend their energies toward making studies, performing experiments, to the end of changing the machinery of democracy to articulate with changes in the environment. Such a course is impossible if people think of democracy as an entity, fixed, eternal, and inviolate. Sweden is now providing a laboratory where new machinery is being invented to keep the democratic method up to date. That, I submit, is the way to avoid dictators.²⁰

An education with a liberal philosophy is the white hope of America.

²⁰Stuart Chase, The Tyranny of Words, p. 337.

CHAPTER III

SURVEY OF TRENDS

Current Practices

A changing picture.--A new set of values, a new theory, a new school, and a new psychology are evidences of the changes in the educational field that are in tune with the transitional period of our present day society. The modern dynamics of the new school, as depicted in the second area of our analysis, have penetrated deeply into our educational structure, bringing about changes in elementary school curricula and teaching methods. Following changes in the teaching objectives of the new school to an emphasis on the education of the whole child, progressive educators began constructing new ways of reporting child progress to parents. The progress reports of today are the representatives of the newer philosophy of education. Reporting has changed, and is continuing to change. Ways of reporting that seem to meet our needs today may not necessarily do so tomorrow. With education in such a state of transition, the agency of reporting is somewhat like the tadpole with hind legs. The picture is changing.

Purpose of reporting.--Reporting has a definite scheme in the field of education. Various agencies in our society are constantly demanding information about pupils. For

example:

- a. The parent wants to know, "What is he doing? Is he getting into any trouble?"
- b. The future employer asks, "Is he honest and industrious? Is he a good team worker?"
- c. The university requires lists of periods, subjects, marks earned, and credits granted.
- d. Certain colleges inquire concerning leadership traits and promises of growth.
- e. And the school? Well, the school is interested in the pupil himself, first of all as a person. Has he the indispensable ingredients of integrity and personal honor? Is he responsible? Resourceful? Conscientious? Is he generally dependable or only selectively so? Parents, possible employers, educational and social agencies also wish that information.¹

As this analysis is primarily concerned with the reporting to parents of the growth of pupils in terms of the philosophy of the new school, let us add here that any progressive way of reporting should have as its objective a better understanding of the child on the part of the parents and teachers in order that cooperation between the home and the school may be established.

Whatever its relative importance in the general scheme of things educational, we are certain as we look back and then ahead, that the prime purpose of home reports is served if they bring about more frequent and more intelligent conferences of parents and teachers on the all-important question of the all-round development and growth of the individual child. Only in this way can the best opportunity for education that human mind can devise be given to children.²

¹Ethel Percy Andrus, "A Practical and Economical Report Card," California Journal, XIII (1938), 209-211.

²Appraising the Elementary School Program, The National Elementary Principal, Sixteenth Yearbook, Vol. XVI, No. 6, p. 316.

From within the ranks of progressive education, frontier thinkers have voiced the opinion that the best kind of reporting is no report card at all, but an intelligent conference of parents and teachers on the all-round development and growth of the child. Who would question this way of promoting progress of the child in comparison with our old traditional report cards that by their very nature tended to destroy the prime purpose of reporting? An intelligent conference affords an opportunity for teachers and patrons to discuss the interests, needs, and everyday living problems of the child.

Principles and symbols.--In our survey of the newer ways of reporting child progress to parents in Texas we are concerned with two phases of the present practice of reporting; namely, the basic principles underlying the practice of reporting, and an interpretation of the symbols employed in the practice of reporting. In a study of the report card in present practice, George Hill, of Morning-side College, selected a list of principles underlying the practice of reporting which were suggested by leading educators in the field of education. The study indicates that the report card should:

1. Represent the true spirit, purposes, and functions of the school. "The school therefore cannot afford to have its purposes and its methods regularly and consistently misrepresented through the medium of a

- report which ignores the major educational considerations."³
2. Reflect educational objectives arrived at only after careful consideration and mature judgment.
 3. Change in accord with changes in educational standards and educational philosophy. It must not be static; but careful planning should precede every change.
 4. Present a report of achievement that is broad enough to cover all the important educational outcomes-- subject achievement, character outcomes and social adjustment, health, and use of leisure.
 5. Give an adequate picture of causes as well as of outcomes. Not only should achievement be rated, but also the factors which account for different degrees of achievement should be described.
 6. Reflect a complete and sympathetic understanding of the child.
 7. Afford a means of reporting flexible enough to account for the peculiar individual abilities of each child.
 8. Give an account of pupil progress understandable and interesting to both pupil and parent.
 9. Bring about closer cooperation and greater mutual understanding of home and school.
 10. Provide for reciprocal reporting. The parent should be allotted a portion of the report on which to write his or her suggestions, information, and queries.
 11. Rate achievement in relation to the basic abilities and capacities of the child.
 12. Rate achievement by means of valid and reliable marking systems. It should "Describe that which it purports to describe" and report only that which can be described reliably.
 13. Conform to reasonable standards of form and appearance. The report should be attractive.⁴

Another significant study was made this year by a committee of the National Association for Childhood Education on record keeping and reports to parents. Dessalee Ryon Dudley, chairman of the committee, recently released

³John Lund, "More Truth About Marks," Journal of Education, CIX (1929), 609-610, as quoted in George E. Hill, "The Report Card in Present Practice," Educational Method, XV (1935), 115-131.

⁴Hill, op. cit.

the following findings which are pertinent to current practices of reporting in our schools.

The Committee made and circulated a questionnaire relating to current practices in the early elementary grades. The purpose was to determine trends in record keeping and reports to parents, and their possible relationship with certain other practices. Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were sent out to teachers, principals, and supervisors in various sections of the country.

Eighty questionnaires were returned to the chairman. Examination of the returns indicate a number of interesting trends as follows: toward one hundred per cent promotions in kindergarten, first and second grades; toward chronological age and social maturity as bases of pupil placement; toward age groups and ability groupings as the predominating means of classroom organization. The running record is given as the most commonly used type of teacher-kept record with frequent use of children's folders.

While the standard report form is still the most commonly used type of report to parents, the replies indicate a keen awareness of the need of less formal and more effective means of contacting parents. Many who are still using the standardized form tell of studies in progress which are pointed toward the making of informal means of reporting. The conference with parents ranks second in frequency of means of reporting.

Other trends are in the direction of teacher participation in the making of courses of study, the use of courses of study as guides to the teacher, teacher participation in the planning and carrying on of their own meetings with the discussion type of meeting most frequently used. There is also an indicated trend toward a school program of activities planned by teacher and children together, and small enrollments.

The school situations reported were suggested by the committee members with a probable leaning toward the more informal situations. This study, to be of value, needs reports from many more schools.

Returns show that the majority of schools which keep records of child growth and which use conferences and other informal means of reporting to parents tend toward other practices which indicate concern for the growth of the whole child. This phase of the report needs further study over a larger area as indicated above. The Committee has attempted to make a

collection of the means which teachers use in keeping records but the effort has met with slight success. Very few were sent with the questionnaire replies, though they were requested by the committee. This is the phase of the study which most needs to be stressed now. Teachers are searching for some simple, but effective, and not too time-consuming, means of recording child growth.⁵

The findings of this survey indicate that schools all over the country are grasping for methods of reporting that will adequately and appropriately meet the needs of an education that considers the personality growth of the individual as the primary issue in concern. However, while the trend over the nation is for one hundred per cent promotions in the primary grades, Texas has a greater per cent of failures in the first grade than in any other grade. This clearly indicates that we are still adhering to old ways of thinking. As long as this condition exists, Texas schools are not considering personality growth as the major concern.

Old ways vs. new ways.---The old traditional type of report card was mainly concerned with reporting subject achievement. It became a standardized product. The modern reports of the new school carry with them a philosophy of differentiation of activities to meet individual needs. Progress is the key word, and a large variety of

⁵Dessalee Ryan Dudley, First Report from Committee on Records and Record Keeping, Association for Childhood Education, April 7, 1938.

information is necessary for a cumulative record that will assist in helping the undertaking of the all-round development of the pupil. In this way we find the school attempting to meet the needs of the whole child.

Modern education has to do with the development of the whole child, including his physical, mental, emotional, and social growth. The philosophy which demands the informal report recognizes that children differ physically, mentally, socially, and temperamentally, and that they should not be run through a grading machine as oranges, nuts, and beans are sorted.

In the program of the school, emphasis should be placed both upon the individual needs of the child and upon social development. The well-prepared informal report recognizes and encourages the growth of the child in his relationship to his group and in his individual abilities.⁶

A second phase with which we are concerned in this particular area of our analysis is an interpretation of the symbols employed in the newer ways of reporting. Reporting systems must employ some form of marking or checking of responses. Currently there is considerable dissatisfaction with the type of marking employed in the traditional reports. Many progressive educators contend that the old number and letter marks miss the mark of the new education. It is contended that they are inadequate to show progress, or connote that an understanding has been acquired. Do our traditional marks show pupil progress?

School marks ideally should show progress. They

⁶Appraising the Elementary School Program, The National Elementary Principal, Sixteenth Yearbook, Vol. XVI, No. 6, p. 316.

should give in understandable terms a measure of the stage which a pupil has reached in his own learning. Reference to a child's classification in terms of school grade does not accomplish this purpose. When comparable tests are given, for example, pupils classified in the fifth grade are found with reading abilities all the way from that of average third grade children to that of average seventh grade children. Similarly, the marks A, B, C, and so on, are inadequate to show progress. They are simply marks of relative standing in a given group, and as a matter of practice are often determined in large part by factors other than achievement. The substitution of two marks--satisfactory and unsatisfactory--for a series of marks leaves untouched this most serious aspect of ordinary school marks. It may do untold damage to children to teach them that they are failures, especially when the underlying causes of failure are beyond their control.⁷

It is true that the new school recognizes the need for success in the life of every child. Does the traditional marking system promote or inhibit the important value of every child's succeeding? Do traditional school marks promote or inhibit cooperation among the pupils of a school group?

School marks are patterned after the capitalistic society in which we live. A child earns a good mark much as a laborer earns his wage. Possessive marks stimulate competitive attitudes and egotistic tendencies. They are divisive. Many schools consider that conventional marks tend to inhibit cooperative, creative activities and they are attempting to replace "possessive" rewards with "creative, functional" rewards. No very satisfactory solution has yet been achieved, however. Probably the children themselves are best fitted to deal with this problem, once they are developed skill in cooperation.⁸

⁷ Hershel T. Manuel, "If Not School Marks What?," The Texas Parent-Teacher, I (1938), 8-9.

⁸ Teachers and Cooperation, N. E. A. Bulletin, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, issued by the Committee in Charge of the Yearbook on Cooperation, November, 1937, pp. 70-71.

The new trend in reporting emphasizes personality growth and character traits. The marking system usually employed is based on the progress made by a pupil over a certain period of time. Behavior and citizenship traits are rated above achievement in subject matter. It is the object of the new school for the pupil to improve his own record, and not, as of old, to just try to get the best grade, regardless of growth. Progress checks are usually employed to show the relationship of a pupil's present record to his own past achievements.

The report card used in the laboratory schools devote four times as much space to personality and physical traits as to educational achievement. The marks in educational achievement are based on progress made during the marking period, and not on the level of achievement attained.⁹

It is the general opinion of progressive educators that nothing succeeds like success, and that anything that goes on a reporting form should stimulate. Therefore, nothing that does not stimulate should go on a report form. If we desire public spirited citizens in America then we must personally inspire them to attain a higher plane of living.

Reporting Trends in Texas

Procedure of survey.--With this thumb nail sketch of

⁹Appraising the Elementary School Program, The National Elementary Principal, Sixteenth Yearbook, Vol. XVI, No. 6, p. 471.

the general trends in the current practice of reporting as a background, we now turn to a survey of the trends of reporting child progress to parents in Texas.

New ways of reporting child progress to parents in Texas have followed and will continue to follow changes in the teaching objectives of the schools. Our survey was made with the purpose of procuring samples of the reporting systems of schools in Texas that, in the light of subjective judgment, appeared most likely of having changed their teaching objectives from the old traditional school to the modern concepts.

Our survey, as we have pointed out earlier in this particular discussion, is concerned with two aspects of the reporting system in Texas. The first is the basis upon which the schools report pupil progress to parents, and the second is an interpretation of the symbols employed in the different ways of reporting. Therefore, the data collected will be presented in a way to cover these two particular aspects.

In respect to the tables which will indicate the reporting emphasis of the schools surveyed we will repeat that the emphasis of the old school was on subjects; therefore, the reporting phase was concerned with reporting subject achievement. The new school deals with the growth

of the individual. Emphasis is placed on the personality growth of pupils.

One of the first questions to be raised in appraising the records and reports of a school organization is whether they deal with pupil status or with pupil progress. If they deal with status only, they are consistent with the old traditional aim of a standardized product. If they deal with progress, they carry out a philosophy of differentiation to meet individual needs. If progress is the essential element of records and reports, they must be cumulative and should contain a large variety of information about the pupil, so stated that it is objective and comparable from period to period.¹⁰

Due to the present state of transition in which we find many of our schools, it seemed necessary to add a third objective division in the reporting emphasis tables. These schools are changing their school policies gradually. For instance, while a great number of schools are moving away from a subject matter emphasis to the personality growth of the child, they are still using subject achievement as a partial basis in reporting programs. Our second, or in-between objective division, then, provides for a combination of subject achievement and character traits.

Schools surveyed were selected from four different types or classifications, namely: (1) demonstration schools, (2) city schools, (3) curriculum schools, and (4) county systems employing an elementary supervisor. The justification for the selection of these schools rests solely on

¹⁰Ibid., p. 261.

subjective judgment.

Method of survey.--An informal questionnaire was mailed to fifty schools, and thirty-nine replies were received. This high percentage of replies seems to indicate a desire on the part of school directors in Texas to cooperate in the solution of a problem with which they are so vitally concerned. Below is a sample form of the letter that was mailed to the directors, or superintendents, of instruction in the fifty schools:

I wonder if you'll have time today to do a favor for me?

In connection with graduate study at the North Texas State Teachers College, I am making a survey of the trends of reporting child development to parents. Right now I need samples of report cards or reporting systems used in the progressive schools of Texas.

Naturally, I must have some help, and I am therefore taking the liberty of asking you and forty nine other superintendents and supervisors over the state to assist me.

I would like to have a sample copy of the form of report used in your school. To make it quite easy for you, I have enclosed a stamped envelope. And I'll certainly regard it as a personal favor if you will slip into the enclosed envelope all forms of reports that you use. If you wish, add any comments you would like to make on the back of this letter and mail it along with your report forms.

I shall appreciate your cooperation very much. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,

Back came thirty-nine replies with many personal letters evincing the interest of educators in Texas in an evaluation of the reporting systems now in current practice.

A few excerpts from the letters reveal these generalizations:

I am enclosing two forms we use in our school; however, we also use the regular report card which all Houston schools use. These others are kept up--one to parents and the other--a personality one--kept in school office as a part of child's folio.

I do wish I had time to go more into detail, as report cards are nearest my heart right now.

Mrs. E. O. Stewart, Principal
Woodrow Wilson School
Houston, Texas

We are not satisfied with the report card that we are now using and have some committees working on a new card. We are enclosing the cards that we are now using in the Fort Worth schools and a card that has been proposed by a committee of primary teachers.

I trust that this information will be of some value to you.

Sincerely yours,
B. C. Shulkey, Assistant
Superintendent in charge
of Elementary Schools
Fort Worth, Texas

We are working now on an integrated activity program, and we might say these cards are approach cards. We have made an effort to improve problem solving by separating problem solving and skills. Social studies and science items explain themselves. Production under language arts is intended to encourage creative work.

I should like to hear of anything interesting that you learn.

Yours for cooperation,
H. B. Howard, Director
Elementary Education
Highland Park Elementary
Schools
Dallas, Texas

I am enclosing samples of the report card used in the kindergarten as well as the one used in the elementary grades.

We are now in the process of developing a report for all grades in line with that of the kindergarten.

Please do not consider the elementary card as a true philosophy of the school people in Port Arthur. We have felt a need for a new type of card for several years, but were handicapped because of the sentiment of some of the parents, but particularly by some members of our own group.

Sincerely,
 Frank D. Austin, Principal
 Franklin School
 Port Arthur, Texas

I am sending you the cards we are using at the present time. The folder was printed this fall to take care of the rooms in which we are changing our teaching objectives. The other forms are still being used in rooms where we are moving more slowly. Denison is an old town with respect for old things and the right way to teach in Denison takes cognizance of this fact.

Have you written to the Office of Education, Department of Interior, Washington, D. C., for their information about report forms? Circular No. 169, published about two years ago, is available. In addition they will send you several large scrapbooks and some lantern slides upon request.

Sincerely yours,
 George Meham
 Director Elementary
 Education
 Denison, Texas

I am enclosing forms used for reporting in our high school and elementary school.

This is the second year that we have used this method of reporting, and I believe that it is becoming increasingly useful and accepted by both parents and children.

Also, the teachers are improving in the reports that they make: as to usefulness, clearness, tactfulness, correctness, etc.

I shall appreciate it very much if you will send me the results of your study when it is completed, as I am very interested in the piece of work that you are doing.

Sincerely yours,
 John S. White, Sup't.
 Grandfalls, Texas

I am sending you a sample of the reports that we send to our parents. You will note that we contemplate no failures. These reports are not cumulative--that is, once a report is sent out that is final insofar as that report is concerned.

If a child, in the opinion of the teacher, parents, and child, can not do a certain piece of work, we direct his educational work in another field. I should like to have time to discuss our reports with you.

I hope that these reports will do you some good. Any information that you want will be furnished upon request.

Very truly yours,
Thomas E. Pierce, Director
Elementary Education
Big Springs, Texas

I am sending a copy of the Johnson County report card. It was adapted from an El Paso form that I found in the Office of Education bulletin, REPORT CARDS FOR KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY GRADES, by Hansen. I sent out a mimeographed form to the teachers of the county schools and used their suggestions in compiling the form we adopted.

You will find in this letter a copy of a radio script WHAT DOES A CHILD'S REPORT CARD MEAN? written to help teachers interpret the newer type of reports to parents.

Yours very truly
Mary Shipp Sanders
Director of Elementary
Education
Cleburne, Texas

I am very happy to send you a copy of our new report card and the form for the permanent record, which is to be kept in the office. We have found this report card very satisfactory.

Any time I can be of further service to you please let me know.

Very sincerely,
Mrs. Fred L. Sloop
County Supervisor of
Education
Brazos County

In reply to your recent request regarding your survey I regret to say that we have no county-wide system of reporting child development to parents. One school system does use a ditto folder which is very good. However, I have no copy in the office. The rest of the school systems are using the old type report cards.

We have felt the need of change for some time and the teachers have been very unhappy with the

present system. You, perhaps, will be interested to know that we are making a change for 1938-39. In 1937-38 we have worked on this subject in our teachers' meetings and with our Parent-Teachers Association. We may have been too slow in making a change but were eager not to get ahead of the parents. We now think that the majority of them feel the need as we do, since this study has been made.

We are having one more meeting in April. If it is not too late, I shall be glad to send you a sample when our new form is adopted.

If I can be of service to you, please write me again.

Very truly yours,
Mrs. Claud D. Cotten
Co. School Supervisor
Tom Green County

We think our schools can be classed very easily among the progressive group, but are sorry to say our reports have been about the same for several years. We hope to have a more satisfactory report adopted in our schools at an early date. We are working on that phase of the program now and would appreciate a copy of your results.

Yours very truly,
Bertha Smith
County Supervisor
Houston County

Schools surveyed.--The schools responding to the questionnaire, and the classification of each school is shown below in outline form.

Demonstration Schools

Abilene Christian College Demonstration School

Sam Houston State Teachers College Demonstration
School

Southwest Texas State Teachers College Demonstra-
tion School

Sul Ross State Teachers College Demonstration
School

West Texas State Teachers College Demonstration
School

North Texas State Teachers College Demonstration
School

City Schools (All city schools represented have one
or more persons on their staff designated as an
elementary specialist.)

Dallas

Denison

Fort Worth

Highland Park

Houston

Port Arthur

San Antonio

Curriculum Schools (Schools designated by the State
Department of Education to use the new curriculum
experimentally.)

Beaumont

Big Spring

Corpus Christi

El Paso

Grandfalls

Kilgore

Laredo

Lufkin

Port Neches

Stamford

Trinidad

County Schools (County school systems employing a
supervisor or director of elementary education)

Anderson

Bell

Brazos

Cass

Ellis

Hopkins

Houston

Johnson

Limestone

McLennan

Nacogdoches

Smith

Taylor

Tom Green

Williamson

TABLE 1
REPORTING EMPHASIS OF DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS

School	Subjects (only)	Subjects and Traits (combination)	Traits (Personality Growth)
A. C. C.	x	....
Sam Houston	x	....
Southwest Texas	x
Sul Ross	x	....	....
West Texas	x	....
North Texas	x

TABLE 2
MARKING SYMBOLS OF DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS

School	Numbers	Letters	Progress checks
A. C. C.*	x	x
Sam Houston	x	....	....
Southwest Texas	(Letter)
Sul Ross	x	....
West Texas	x	x
North Texas	x

*Two checks indicate that a combination of symbols is employed. In the majority of cases checks are used for character traits.

TABLE 3
REPORTING EMPHASIS OF CITY SCHOOLS

School	Subjects (only)	Subjects and Traits (combination)	Traits (personality growth)
Dallas	....	x	....
Denison	x	....	....
Ft. Worth	....	x	....
Highland Park	x	....	....
Houston	x	....	....
Port Arthur	x	....	....
San Antonio	....	x	....

TABLE 4
MARKING SYMBOLS OF CITY SCHOOLS

School	Numbers	Letters	Progress checks
Dallas	....	x	....
Denison	....	x	....
Ft. Worth	....	x	....
Highland Park	x	....	....
Houston*	x	x	....
Port Arthur	....	x	....
San Antonio	....	x	....

*Two checks indicate that a school employs a combination of symbols for marking.

TABLE 5
REPORTING EMPHASIS OF CURRICULUM SCHOOLS

School	Subjects (only)	Subjects and Traits (combination)	Traits (personality growth)
Beaumont	.....	X	.....
Big Spring	.....	.....	X
Corpus Christi	.....	X	.....
El Paso	.....	.....	X
Grandfalls	.....	.....	X
Kilgore	.....	X	.....
Laredo	X	.....	.....
Lufkin	X	.....	.....
Port Neches	.....	X	.....
Stamford	X	.....	.....
Trinidad	.....	X	.....

TABLE 6
MARKING SYMBOLS OF CURRICULUM SCHOOLS

School	Numbers	Letters	Progress checks
Beaumont	X	....
Big Spring	X
Corpus Christi	X	....
El Paso	X
Grandfalls	(Letter)
Kilgore	X	....
Laredo	X	....
Lufkin	X	....
Port Neches	X	....
Stamford	X	....
Trinidad	X	....

TABLE 7
REPORTING EMPHASIS OF COUNTY SCHOOLS

School	Subjects (only)	Subjects and Traits (combination)	Traits (personality growth)
Anderson	....	....	x
Bell	x	....	....
Brazos	....	....	x
Cass	....	x	....
Ellis	x	....	....
Hopkins	x	....	....
Houston	x	....	....
Johnson	....	x	....
Limestone	x	....	....
McLennan	....	....	x
Nacogdoches	....	x	....
Smith	....	x	....
Taylor	x	....	....
Tom Green	x	....	....
Williamson	x	....	....

TABLE 8
MARKING SYMBOLS OF COUNTY SCHOOLS

School	Numbers	Letters	Progress checks
Anderson	X	....
Bell	X	....
Brazos	X	....
Cass	X	....
Ellis	X	....
Hopkins	X	....
Houston	X	....
Johnson	X	....	....
Limestone	X	....
McLennan	X	....
Nacogdoches*	X	X
Smith	X	X
Taylor	X	....
Tom Green	X	....	....
Williamson	X	....

*Two checks indicate that a school employs combination symbols.

Three examples of our three objective heads--Figure 1, subjects, Figure 2, combination of subjects and traits, and Figure 3, personality growth--show the progress that is

taking place in the evaluation of ways of reporting. The illustrations that follow were selected as being representative of the philosophy behind the three objective divisions used in the tables.

REPORT OF _____										
A--Excellent, 90-100					B--Good, 80-90					
C--Fair, 70-80					D--Failure, Below 70					
SUBJECTS	1st.	2nd.	3rd.	Ex.	Av.	4th.	5th.	6th.	Ex.	Av.
	6 wks.	6 wks.	6 wks.			6 wks.	6 wks.	6 wks.		
Agriculture										
Algebra										
Arithmetic										
Civics										
Comp.-Rhet.										
Domestic Sci.										
Drawing										
Geography										
Geometry										
Grammar										
History										
Hist., U. S.										
Latin										
Nature St.										
Physics										
Physiology										
Reading										
Spanish										
Spelling										
Writing										
Times Tardy										
Days Absent										
Department										

(Front)

Figure 1.--Report card used by the Demonstration School, Sul Ross State Teachers College, Alpine, Texas.

Citizenship Record			
These habits and attitudes are desirable for good citizenship.			
	Grading		
	1	2	3
I. Cooperation.....			
Work with groups for good of school and community			
II. Courtesy.....			
Politeness and respect for others; self-control			
III. Work Habits.....			
Initiative, effort, neatness, completion of work			
IV. Health Habits.....			
Cleanliness, posture, activity			
Attendance Record			
V. Days Present.....			
VI. Days Absent.....			
VII. Times Tardy.....			

(Page 1)

Scholarship Record			
The grades on this card indicate progress of the child as compared with the normal standard of work required for the class.			
	Grading		
	1	2	3
VIII. Reading.....			
IX. Language.....			
X. Spelling.....			
XI. Writing.....			
XII. Social Studies.....			
XIII. Arithmetic.....			
XIV. Music.....			
XV. Art.....			

S means that progress is satisfactory
 U means that progress is unsatisfactory
 A pupil will not be promoted to the next grade if he receives a rating of U in reading, social studies, or arithmetic for the third grading of the term.

(Page 2)

Figure 2.--Report card used by the Elementary Schools of San Antonio, Texas.

Second Grade
Demonstration School

The items included in the following lists are representative of some of the responses we expect from children in the second grade.

A check mark in the column to the right of the lists indicates our estimate of _____ development thus far. If each item is not checked in one of the three columns, it only means that during the period covered by this report we have noted no particular evidence of growth, or lack of growth, in your child.

-----Conferences with you are welcomed.-----

Column 1--Satisfactory growth

Column 2--Is improving

Column 3--Needs to improve

ATTITUDES AND HABITS	1	2	3	KNOWLEDGES AND SKILLS	1	2	3
1. Comes to school neat and clean.....				1. Reads for thought			
2. Sits, stands, and walks correctly....				2. Attacks new words independently....			
3. Keeps hands away from face.....				3. Does much free reading.....			
4. Uses Kleenex or handkerchief.....				4. Is able to tell the story well...			
5. Plays vigorously...				5. Speaks clearly and distinctly...			
6. Is courteous and considerate.....				6. Contributes to class discussions			
7. Has confidence in self.....				7. Asks questions...			
8. Is usually happy and alert.....				8. Searches for information.....			
9. Responds promptly to directions.....				9. Writes legibly			
10. Plans and works with others.....				10. Spells 8 to _____ words a week.			
11. Works independently				11. Understands and uses number experiences.....			
12. Makes good use of time.....				12. Takes advantage of opportunities for creativeness in art			
13. Is neat and orderly				13. Appreciates and works for tone quality in music..			

Figure 3.--Informal report used by the Second Grade of the Demonstration School, North Texas State Teachers College, Denton, Texas.

How can the story of pupil progress best be told?
How can reporting motivate the greatest amount of endeavor?
Which of the three examples listed portrays the best picture of a child's growth? Which example comes nearest being a simple, direct, and descriptive report? And last, but of great importance--which reporting emphasis offers an opportunity for a pupil to develop the creative spirit within his personality?

The last section of the third area of our analogy simply presents the data obtained from a survey of the schools listed in Texas. Our next area will be concerned with comparing the trends obtained from the survey to the guiding principles of the new school. A summary of the analysis in area five will contain conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF TRENDS

Reporting Prospectus

A critical examination of the elements of our problem suggests that reporting in present practice is in a period of transition. There is such a variation in types of reporting that our analysis will not pretend to expect arrival at any finality. With reporting's undergoing so great a change, a possible contribution will be in the direction of recommending desirable trends of reporting in the light of the philosophy of the new school.

In viewing the two phases of reporting with which we are concerned, the philosophy behind the newer ways of reporting, and an interpretation of the symbols employed in reporting pupil progress, we stated that school marks have become an inadequate basis of evaluation. Such marking systems, as pointed out, descended upon us from the subject matter achievement days of the old schools. Emphasis of school marks fitted in nicely with the idea that competition is the life of the school. "Closely related to this philosophy are the percentage basis marking, the scientific measurement program, and letter system of marking," states William Bruce in an article on school marks. Bruce points out that marks for competitive motivation are

associated with the money-chasing materialists in the business world.

In relation to the school marks issue, he adds that teaching is not primarily a task of distributing marks over a scale.

As the teacher sees more clearly the purpose of marking, he will take a positive attitude toward making whatever marks his school administration uses serve this purpose. He will throw his influence, no doubt, toward a gradual modification of the inherited marking scheme in accordance with the needs of the pupils. When teachers are freed from the vacillation and retreat caused by the school marks bugaboo, they will have energy and courage for the construction of a forward-looking school program even though this involves the exposure of deep-cutting contradictions in our culture. Indeed, fundamental problems can scarcely emerge until our conception of the school rises above the level of a competitive game.¹

Then, changing from marks as a basis for evaluation to the newer types of reporting, we find the emphasis placed on the growth of the child. On this basis reporting should motivate endeavor. It should be a simple, direct description. It should offer an opportunity to develop the creative spirit within the child, and as William H. Bristow points out in "Reporting Pupil Progress", an article published in *The Nation's Schools*, a reporting system should give a child the feeling of security that comes from the realization that he is actually making progress.

Bristow outlines the following principles as worthy

¹William Bruce, "School Marks and Confusion in Education," Educational Administration and Supervision, XXII (1936), 275-281.

guides for a system of reporting:

The reporting process should bring to light both individual and group difficulties and should establish that mutual respect and determination so essential for satisfactory learning. Likewise a helpful relationship between home and school should be fostered. The responsibility of the school cannot be discharged by merely reporting that the child is doing unsatisfactory work.

A reporting system based on the foregoing principles will (1) avoid situations in which the pupil can most easily solve his problem by any form of dishonesty; (2) create a situation in which the home and the school will spontaneously cooperate to further the social, emotional and intellectual well-being of the child; (3) be so drafted that the child will exercise to the fullest extent his several abilities through the removal, as completely as possible, of harmful competition with other children in his environment, and (4) constantly encourage the pupil to excel in his own previous record.²

He also outlines eight characteristics of a satisfactory reporting system.

1. Delineations of traits should be stated positively.
2. Individual differences should be recognized.
3. The system should foster cooperation between home and school.
4. It is important that school and parents learn to recognize evidences of growth.
5. Items reported on should be pertinent and meaningful.
6. Accuracy demands that school data be objective.
7. Much educational data are essentially confidential and should be used only in a personal interview.
8. Report should consider the whole life of the pupil rather than academic achievement only.³

Our traditional philosophy of education and the traditional symbols employed in reporting have failed to meet

²William Bristow, "Reporting Pupil Progress," The Nation's Schools, XVII (1936), 23-24.

³Ibid., p. 578.

the pragmatic test. Although many schools still prefer to cling to the cloisters of a way of thinking which developed before a new age was forced upon us by the physical sciences and technology, scenes since 1929 are evidences that the old philosophy has fallen. Schools are deciding that the needs of the child must be met. Traditionalism fails to work. Here we find our clue to the new education based on a set of social values. The quest of searching for the truth continues on a new front.

Guiding Principles of the New School

Education in a democracy exists for the human welfare of the group. Every individual is a part of society. In a democracy the well being of the whole constitutes the democratic ideal. Our fundamental processes of living must continually be reconstructive in order to achieve a genuine expression democracy--the moral equality of men.

The good life is social; individuals do not exist apart from society. The welfare of the group is of the greatest significance. The emphasis upon individual development must be transferred to the common life of which the individual is a part. The central problem of education, therefore, is the achievement of the good society.⁴

Today there is widespread acceptance by many educators that the school must help build the good society. Traditional schools kept aloof from social realities.

⁴Henry Harap, The Changing Curriculum, p. 331.

The modern school becomes a part of "the area of social living."⁵

An outline of the generalizations which were evolved in the second chapter from the modern philosophical principles of the new school follows:

1. A New Set of Values.--The base of the new education is a social philosophy. In order to make secure the lives of all, the emerging society of America tends toward a collectivism devoted to the interests of all the people of America. Common welfare is the goal. "A society with social values emphasizes knowledge instead of ignorance, cooperation instead of competition, careful planning instead of trust in providence, and socialized economy instead of private capital."⁶

2. A New Theory.--The real center or core of the new education is an experience curriculum based on vital problems of living. Such a theory follows directly the acceptance of a social philosophy of education. The paramount interest of the school becomes social living. At the turn of the twentieth century, Dewey advocated the theory that children learn by experiencing life situations. In

⁵Ibid., p. 339.

⁶George S. Counts, Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order? (A John Day Pamphlet), p. 48.

1936 the California Curriculum Commission outlined statements representative of Dewey's philosophy in the following manner:

Education is life.
 Education is growth.
 Education is a social process.
 Education is a continuous reconstruction of experience.⁷

3. A New School.--The basis for pupils and teachers living and learning together in the new school is the use of the interests and needs of all the individuals engaged in cooperative or group living. In other words, the modern school has an interest-need-use basis. It encourages a deep and warm understanding of children's needs. The teacher is a guide--not a dictator. Pupils are regarded as active agents who can be educated only through self-activity. The school life experiences of pupils are as broad as life itself. School is not confined to textbooks and four walls. The community becomes the school and textbooks are replaced by excursions, critical discussions, visual aids, experimentation, and investigations. The school becomes involved in social living.

The purposes of the elementary school are stated

⁷Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades, California State Curriculum Commission, 1936, p. 1.

as follows:

Helping the child

(1) Establish normal mental attitudes and controlled emotional reactions, and to develop a sound body.

(2) Develop an understanding of social relationships and a willingness to participate in social activities in ways conducive to the progress of society.

(3) Develop individual talents and abilities as completely as possible.

(4) Cultivate habits of analytical thinking.

(5) Acquire command of the common knowledges and skills essential to effective living.

(6) Develop appreciation for and desire to seek beauty in its many manifestations.⁸

4. A New Psychology.--The new school is concerned with the personality growth of the child in terms of cooperative living. In this way the education of the whole child is taken into consideration. The real aim of the school is the all-round development of the child. Schools today are concerned with the physical, emotional, and social growth of children. Aims of the new school become general patterns of conduct which function as guides throughout the development of the child. A list of general aims for the school's whole program appears in contrast to the numerous list for each grade level in the old mechanistic point of view. The whole pattern of conduct is the main consideration of the new school.

⁸Ibid., p. 3.

Brown and Feder explain the chief tenet of Gestalt Psychology in this way:

There are events in nature where there is organization and this organization is primary, so that the properties of wholes can not be understood as a resultant of the activities or properties of the individual parts.⁹

Outline of Trends

The data collected from the survey of the four groups of schools in Texas cover two definite phases of the reporting program; namely, the basis or philosophy of reporting and an interpretation of the symbols employed in the different ways of reporting.

The first aspect, the basis upon which schools report pupil progress, was shown in Chapter Three as including three objective divisions. These divisions represent a type of philosophy or way of thinking which becomes the emphasis of a particular school. Subjects, a combination of subjects and traits, and personality traits are listed as the representatives of the underlying philosophies in present use.

The second aspect, an interpretation of the symbols employed in reporting, is also divided into three objective divisions which represent the marking symbols employed in

⁹J. F. Brown and D. D. Feder, "Thorndike's Theory of Learning as Gestalt Psychology," Psychological Bulletin, XXXI (1934), pp. 427-432, as quoted in Hollis Caswell and Doak Campbell, Readings in Curriculum Development, p. 347.

present day practice. These objective divisions are percentage numbers, letters and progress checks.

In pursuance of these principles the following outline indicates the trends of reporting pupil progress in Texas:

1. Demonstration Schools

- a. Basis aspect.--One school, Sul Ross, emphasizes subjects; three schools, West Texas, Abilene Christian College, and Sam Houston, emphasize a combination of subjects and traits; and two schools, Southwest Texas and North Texas, emphasize traits or personality growth.
- b. Symbol aspect.--One school, Sam Houston, uses percentage numbers; three schools, Abilene Christian College, West Texas, and Sul Ross, use letters; one school, North Texas, uses progress checks, and one school, Southwest Texas, uses an informal letter.

2. City Schools

- a. Basis aspect.--Four schools, Houston, Dallas, Port Arthur, and Denison, emphasize subjects; three schools, San Antonio, Ft. Worth, and Highland Park, emphasize a combination of subjects and traits.

- b. Symbol aspect.--Two schools, Houston and Highland Park, use numbers; five schools, Dallas, Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Port Arthur, and Denison, use letters.

3. Curriculum Schools

- a. Basis aspect.--Three schools, Stamford, Laredo, and Lufkin, emphasize subjects; five schools, Beaumont, Trinidad, Port Neches, Corpus Christi, and Kilgore, emphasize a combination of subjects and traits, and three schools, Big Spring, El Paso, and Grandfalls, emphasize traits.
- b. Symbol aspect.--Eight schools, Beaumont, Stamford, Trinidad, Laredo, Port Neches, Lufkin, Corpus Christi, and Kilgore, use letters; two schools, Big Spring and El Paso, use progress checks; and one school, Grandfalls, uses an informal letters.

4. County Schools

- a. Basis aspect.--Eight county systems, Taylor, Hopkins, Tom Green, Ellis, Williamson, Anderson, Bell, and Limestone, emphasize subjects; four county systems, Smith, Johnson, Nacogdoches, and Hopkins, emphasize a combination of subjects and traits; and three schools, McLennan, Brazos, and Anderson, emphasize

personality growth.

- b. Symbol aspect.--Two schools, Johnson and Tom Green, use percentage numbers; eleven schools, McLennan, Taylor, Hopkins, Brazis, Anderson, Ellis, Williamson, Houston, Cass, Bell, and Limestone, use letters; Smith and Nacogdoches use progress checks.

Relative Approach of Trends to Guiding Principles

The major tenets of the new education, a social philosophy, a curriculum based on vital problems of living, and an interest-need-use school that is concerned with the growth of the whole child, have been represented as being the guiding principles of the new school.

We have indicated that these guiding principles serve as the underlying philosophy of the third objective division of the tables in Chapter Three. In this light, schools that emphasize traits or personality growth approach nearest the desired goals of the new education.

Progress checks, the third objective division of the marking emphasis tables, also, have been described as the most desirable form, in present practice, of marking symbols. This form of checking pupil progress is a part of the evaluation technique of the new school. The change in marking goes hand in hand with replacement of competitive marks to an emphasis on pupils' improving their own records.

Relative Approach

TABLE 9
BASIS FOR REPORTING

School Groups	Reporting Emphasis		
	Subjects (only)	Subjects and Traits (combination)	Traits (personality growth)
Demonstration 6	1 or 17%	3 or 50%	2 or 33%
City 7	4 or 57%	3 or 43%	.....
Curriculum 11.....	3 or 27.3%	5 or 45.4%	3 or 27%
County 15.....	8 or 53%	4 or 27%	3 or 20%
Total 39.....	16 or 41%	15 or 38%	8 or 21%

Table reads: Of six demonstration schools surveyed, one, or 17%, emphasizes subjects; three, or 50%, emphasize a combination of subjects and traits; two, or 33%, emphasize traits.

TABLE 10
SYMBOL PHASE

School Groups	Marking Symbols		
	Percentage numbers	Letters	Progress checks
Demonstration 6	1 or 17%	3 or 50%	2 or 33%
City 7	2 or 29%	5 or 71%	.....
Curriculum 11.....	.....	8 or 73%	3 or 27%
County 15.....	2 or 13.3%	11 or 73.3%	2 or 13.3%
Total 39.....	5 or 13%	27 or 69%	7 or 18%

The tables presented show the relative approach of the trends of reporting child progress in Texas to the guiding principles of the new school.

Readings from the tables indicate that the transition of education in Texas from traditionalism to the social goals of the new school is taking place. The whole base is being changed. In some places it is moving slowly, but as a whole, progress is being made. However, Texas has a long way to go. Are we not challenged to do something about the fact that 41% of a selected group of progressive schools still emphasize traditional subjects in preference to social living?

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Significant Points Brought Out In Analysis

General.--America's emerging education, whether termed progressive, a new education, or education for a new social order, springs from seeds sown by such courageous men as William James, John Dewey, and others, who championed the belief that our world is a world of change, and that practical men move in the stream of the world's changing conditions.

The emerging education takes cognizance of this philosophy with the belief that schools which remain aloof from existing conditions will, eventually, bring injustices to society, and slow the wheels of progress.

The education ascending from the conditions of our present epoch has as its major consideration the welfare of all the people of America. Essentials of the emerging education evolve around the needs of human beings. Needs of individuals in our present world of interdependence may be achieved only through group action, and intelligent activity of groups seeking their desired needs will necessitate the education of the people of America in Cooperation, the highest level of democratic processes. Society's urgent needs will continue to demand, in our modern schools, the

diminishing importance of subjects as the basis of school curricula, and the increasing importance of vital problems of living.

Guiding principles.--The following is a statement of the generalizations discerned from the philosophical background of the emerging education:

1. Education has realized that its underlying purpose is to help people secure a better way of living, and therefore schools must be fused with life and its problems.
2. The major consideration of the new schools is the growth of the whole child. Opportunities must be provided for children in our present day schools for their physical well being, and their mental and emotional growth. The development of group consciousness and cooperation in children are characteristic of the modern school's effort toward social progress.
3. The modern school has an experience curriculum based on vital problems of living which take into consideration the nature and needs of children. Interest is the motivating power of work in the modern school, and activities of the school go beyond the walls of classroom, and the school itself, into the community. The modern school gradually

widens the scope of the child's world.

4. Teaching in the modern school is an art, since the teacher must guide children into those problems of living which are vital to their respective levels. Personal inspiration is one of the teacher's greatest assets in guiding children of the modern school, since self-directed, purposeful activity is desired of pupils. Teachers in the modern school are representatives of a profession that has as its purpose the helpful ideal of bettering human welfare.

Reporting.--The extent to which the newer ways of reporting child progress in Texas approach the goals of the emerging education is submitted in two divisions:

1. The basic principles underlying the present practice of reporting in Texas are still traditions; however, schools are in a period of transition from an emphasis of subjects as a basis for reporting child progress, to an emphasis of traits, or personality growth.

2. The majority of the schools surveyed in Texas employ competitive marking symbols in their reporting of child progress, yet the trend is toward the use of progress checks as a means of evaluating children's growth.

Techniques Needed in Reporting Child Progress To Parents in Texas

Recommended.--For schools seeking higher levels, the writer recommends the purposeful goals of the emerging

education. A few breaths of the purified air often convince even the traditionalist of the great possibility for new life within our schools. The goals of the modern school have possibilities of becoming desirable springs of human action.

New techniques.--Reporting should be a technique of bringing about close cooperation between the school and home, since the child's life at school and at home make up his whole life.

The teacher in the modern school uses records and reports in a professional way. Much material in the form of anecdotal reports, case studies, data from intelligence and achievement tests, and all strictly technical matter must be treated just as the physician treats his records. They are kept, preferably, in a cumulative record folder of the child, used only by professional workers, and then for one purpose--to help the child.

Teaching, therefore, ceases to be a trade in the emerging education. The modern school must come through for the child just as the doctor does for his patient or the lawyer does for his client. Materials should be used in reporting that will help establish the desired cooperation of home and school. As pointed out in Chapter III, the best kind of report is no report card at all. Three of the newer ways of reporting child progress are:

(1) conferences, (2) informal letters, and (3) progress sheets.

Conferences.--An intelligent conference is one of the best techniques for establishing a close relationship between the home and school. Here parent and teacher may discuss the child's problems confronting both the home and the school. The teacher of the modern school will understand human relationships enough to begin the conference with the successes of the child, or the progress he has made. At all times the teacher will keep a wide, deep, and warm interest in the needs of the child, and through sincerity will enlist the parent in helping the child with his problems. The desire for approbation is very strong in all human beings, and used in a sincere manner certainly may be employed to a great advantage in a conference. After all, boys and girls are persons, and all have the desire to succeed. A teacher must be straightforward in conference discussion, but praise at the beginning and conclusion of the conference are strong forces for establishing the active support of parents.

Personal conferences sometimes are impossible to arrange, and when such is the case, the telephone may be used. However, the telephone can not effectively take the place of an intelligent personal conference.

Informal letters.--The second technique which many

modern schools are using is an informal letter from the school to parents. The letter may go out at regular intervals, or when needed.

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the informal letter technique.

Fifth Grade
City Schools
Denton, Texas

Mrs. John Doe
1111 West Oak
Denton, Texas

Dear Mrs. Doe:

Johnny is progressing satisfactorily in his school work. His study habits are good, and his attitude toward his classmates and his teachers is excellent. He is very interested in our problems at school, but is inclined to be careless in his written work. Johnny is a splendid boy and is always courteous to his teachers and fellow classmates.

I would like to have you look over his notebook and sign it, if you care to. Any suggestions you wish to make regarding his work will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,¹

Figure 4.--Initial Informal Letter

¹Appraising the Elementary School Program, The National Elementary Principal, Sixteenth Yearbook, Vol. XVI, No. 6, p. 314.

Fifth Grade
City Schools
Denton, Texas

Mrs. Tom Jones
999 West Oak
Denton, Texas

Dear Mrs. Jones:

Tom is showing marked improvement in his writing. He is improving his skill in multiplying numbers, too. I am also happy to report that his attitude toward his work and the school is much better. He needs to improve his writing, however, and I am giving him special attention in this particular.

We appreciate your cooperation very much, and sincerely hope you will be able to visit the school again soon.

Sincerely,²

Figure 5.--Follow-up Informal Letter

Progress sheets.--Many modern schools use the progress sheet technique in reporting pupil growth. This type of evaluation may be employed as an informal letter, or it may be sent out at regular intervals, just as the traditional report cards. Progress reports may serve as another rung up the ladder. They are a step forward. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate the form of two progress sheets.

²Ibid.

 (Group)

 (School)

 (Date)

Progress Report of _____
 _____ to _____ Days present _____

The school is concerned with the personality development or the growth of the whole child.
 Our school's program consists of five educational fields: (1) Language Arts; (2) Social Relations; (3) Home and Vocational Arts, (4) Creative and Recreative Arts, and (5) Nature, Mathematics, and Science.³
 Items listed below are representative of some of the responses we expect from children in the _____ (Group).
 A check mark () in the column to the right indicates our estimate of _____ development thus far.

Column 1--Satisfactory growth
 Column 2--Is improving
 Column 3--Needs to improve

HABITS AND ATTITUDES*	1	2	3	INTERESTS, KNOWLEDGES AND SKILLS	1	2	3
1.				1.			
2.				2.			
3.				3.			
4.				4.			
5.				5.			
6.				6.			

Conferences with you are welcome. Thank you for your cooperation with the school.
 Sincerely,

*Items in this report should contain the major considerations of the group concerned. See Figure 3.

Figure 6.--Informal Progress Report Letter

³Tentative Course of Study For Years One Through Six. Texas State Department of Education, p. 15. (From a chart prepared by Fred C. Ayer).

PROGRESS REPORT of								
(Pupil's name)			(Classification)					
(Group)			(School)					
(Days absent)			(Days present)			(Times tardy)		
<p style="text-align: center;">The teacher's aim is to help the pupil develop the qualities listed below.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The pupil's response to these aims is as follows:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p>Column 1--Satisfactory growth Column 2--Is improving Column 3--Needs to improve</p>								
PERSONAL GROWTH* 1. 2. 3. SOCIAL RELATIONS 1. 2. 3. LANGUAGE ARTS 1. 2. 3.	1	2	3	HOME AND VOCATIONAL ARTS 1. 2. 3. CREATIVE AND RECREATIVE ARTS 1. 2. 3. NATURE, MATH., AND SCIENCE 1. 2. 3.	1	2	3	
Conferences with you are welcome.								

*The items under the six objective headings of this report should contain the major considerations of the group concerned. See figure 3.

Figure 7.--Progress Report Sheet

In recommending the newer techniques of evaluation of the modern school, the writer has taken into consideration the fact that the teacher of the emerging school will have the initiative, insight, and creative spirit necessary to determine the needs of the group of children with which he is working.

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