EVALUATION OF THE PRESENT METHODS OF REPORTING
THE PROGRESS OF PRIMARY PUPILS IN CITY
SCHOOLS OF TEXAS AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF A MORE DESIRABLE SYSTEM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study is to evaluate the methods of reporting pupil progress in the primary grades of Texas schools comparable in size to that of Wichita Falls, Texas, and to set up criteria from which could be developed a more desirable reporting system for the primary grades. The main purpose is to establish a more adequate program for parent-teacher-pupil relationship and understanding through a philosophy based on the development of the whole child.

Sources of Data

The data were collected from various sources. Some of these have come from periodicals, research bulletins, magazines, and any number of books written on the method of reporting pupil progress by writers who are considered authorities in this field. The samplings of various current techniques of reporting were obtained by means of correspondence and conference with representative personnel.

Limitations

This study has been limited to the methods of reporting pupil progress in the primary grades of schools of cities with
population between 50,000 and 100,000. The study is of the research type, investigating past and present trends and methods of reporting, and does not contain experimental data. From authoritative evidence it implies that a revision in the reporting system of the primary grades is necessary.

Method of Treating Data

From a study of trends and representative methods of reporting pupil progress evaluative criteria were established. An analysis was made of the present reporting systems in the primary grades of several schools of Texas, and an attempt was made to establish a more desirable method of reporting in the primary grades from a comparative study of the various techniques.

Related Studies

An examination of educational literature reveals that the subject of the need for a more adequate, more comprehensive reporting technique is a vital one. Although current professional periodicals and bulletins seem to be the best source of information, it is found that numerous school systems are delving into research material to find a "better way." A few of the studies which are similar to this study in interest and content are reported here.

In August, 1938, an analysis was made by Phillips of ways of reporting child progress to parents. From this survey it was indicated that reporting was in a period of transition and
that there was much variation in the types of reporting. Phillips recommended that reporting should be a technique bringing about close cooperation between the school and the home, since the child's life at school and at home make up his whole life. From the opinion of progressive educators it was observed that three of the newer ways of reporting child progress were parent-teacher conferences, informal letters, and professional sheets.¹

Davis conducted a comparative study of trends in reporting pupils' school progress. He sought to discover trends in methods of reporting as revealed in educational literature and in school practice and to make a comparison of the two. After a summary of data and a comparison of present practices and the recommendations of educators on reporting, Davis says, "It may be said, that the samplings of present practices regarding the problem of effectively reporting child progress to parents do not harmonize completely with the recommendations of educators."²

In August, 1948, McManus made an intensive study of parent, teacher, and pupil attitudes to the conference method of reporting pupil progress. It was a survey type of study which


gathered and tabulated data regarding current attitudes and opinions of parents, teachers, and pupils to the conference method of reporting in the Jefferson Elementary School, Sherman, Texas. An assimilation of attitudes and ideas represented in the data led to the conclusions that parents, teachers, and pupils were in agreement that the conference method of reporting in all areas of growth was satisfactory and that there is a growing appreciation of values in education other than academic.\(^3\)

Closely related to the present study is one made by Aikin in which there was developed a desirable method of reporting pupil progress from an examination of the various systems of reporting. In consideration of the fact that a revision was needed and was being increasingly studied, it was concluded that it is not a question of whether a method for reporting pupil progress is necessary or desirable but whether such a report may be used to serve a purposeful end for which it was instigated, that is, the development of persons who can find satisfaction in experiencing and in realizing values that depend on individual and group effort to attain increased improvement.\(^4\)


Elementary and secondary teachers joined in a study of reporting to parents in Portland, Oregon. There were enumerated some general principles concerning an adequate report, and a tentative card was set up and used for nine months. From data obtained from a questionnaire sent to parents, teachers, and pupils, the following conclusions were made:

1. Parents want an analyzed picture of what students actually do in different school situations.
2. Parents approve of marking on a basis of the progress which the child makes in relation to what he is able to do.
3. Parents approved of the new report card.  

Stiles reports of the development of a system of reporting pupil progress to parents in the secondary schools of Boulder, Colorado. The most significant outcome of this experiment was that the new forms have given parents reports in terms of well-defined symbols which can be understood, and they have included more information about the progress of pupils than can be indicated by a single grade. In so doing, they have helped to eliminate much of the confusion which formerly existed in the minds of pupils and parents . . . and have helped to develop better cooperation between the home and the secondary school.  

In an article by Himsl, superintendent of schools, Broadus, Montana, it is interesting to note the direct contrast to the popular notion that reporting systems need revision. His idea

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of what parents want of education is "more exact evaluation in 'reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic,'"\(^\text{7}\) and an opportunity for the child to experience self-control, courtesy and sportsmanship through academic studies.

In the light of these previous studies as well as information obtained from professional literature, this study is made in an attempt to evaluate and develop a more adequate system of reporting primary pupils' progress in the schools of Wichita Falls, Texas.

\(^{7}\text{Matheas Himel, "Wanted: Report Cards Parents Can Understand," National's Schools, XXXIII (February, 1944), 23.}\)
CHAPTER II

TRENDS AND CHANGES IN METHODS OF
REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS

Function of Formal Reporting

Elsbree makes the statement that "there is nothing in
the laws of the forty-eight states which requires teachers
to send reports of pupil progress home to parents."\(^1\) However,
for many years, the report card has been the chief agent or
means by which a child's parents are notified of his progress
in school over a designated period of time.

The major concern in reporting is to provide a sound
working relationship between the school and the home in the
guidance of the individual children common to both institu-
tions.\(^2\)

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 re-
ports 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.\(^3\)

\(^1\) Willard S. Elsbree, *Pupil Progress in the Elementary
School*, p. 72.

\(^2\) J. H. Dougherty, F. H. Gorman, and C. A. Phillips, *Ele-
mentary School Organization and Management*, Chapter IX.

\(^3\) The National Elementary Principal, *Appraising the Ele-
mentary School Program*, Sixteenth Yearbook, p. 316.
Through the years traditional school reports have been issued for the purpose of transmitting to parents two separate and distinct types of school program. One type consists of data on scholastic achievement, generally measured in mathematical terms. Such items as daily attendance, number of times tardy, grades on various subjects, and the status of the child’s conduct are usually included. The second type of formal grading which has been used in the more recent years consists of reporting the progress of the pupil in the social virtues, including such personality traits as cooperation, obedience, initiative, courtesy, and citizenship.

Formal grading, as it is now used and as it has been used for many years, attempts to record in symbols the teacher’s estimation of an exact measurement of a pupil’s knowledge and of his progress in his school activities. However, concerning the accuracy of teachers’ estimation, Bolmeier says:

That single marks frequently represent the teachers’ variable interpretations of the meaning of school marks rather than the pupil’s actual comparative accomplishments was revealed in a recent experiment. Twenty-four persons were requested to issue marks in terms of the traditional symbols (A, B, C, D, and F) to several hypothetical pupils for whom descriptive data were supplied. There was much discrepancy in the marks issued to these hypothetical pupils, one pupil being assigned all five of the possible marks.1

Traditional reporting carries information which indicates the progress of each school child in comparison with some

accepted pattern or some standard of measurement. This stan-
dard varies with different schools and with different teachers.
It may compare the child with the average child in his group;
it may compare his knowledge of certain subject matter with
subject matter goals which have been set up by the state for
his particular grade level; it may compare his scholastic
achievement with the average for his chronological age group;
or it may compare his present achievements with his former
achievements.

Many educators have recently concluded that grades and
marks, as they have been used in most schools, are in direct
opposition to the theory that learning should take place
through the child's desire and as a fulfillment of his needs.
They have also concluded that there are no accurate ways of
measuring a child's initiative, courtesy, cooperation, and
other social and personal characteristics.

Practical accuracy in marking should be possible in
a subject like spelling, but in socialized materials a
term mark may be a mere guess . . . . It is incongruous
to grade children on such attributes as honesty and
initiative. We accept such statements as "Blessed are
the pure in heart," but who would have the temerity to
indicate 75 per cent pure? 5

Wrinkle classifies the functions of marking and reporting
under four headings, namely, (1) administration, (2) guidance,

5 C. M. Reineohl and F. C. Ayer, Classroom Administration
and Pupil Adjustment, p. 290.
(3) information, and (4) motivation and discipline. For administrative functions, marks indicate whether a student has passed or failed, whether he should be promoted or required to repeat the grade, and whether he should be graduated. Marks are used in guidance and counseling in identifying areas of special ability and inability. For informational functions, marks are used to give information to students and parents regarding the student's achievement, progress, and success or failure in his school work. For motivating and disciplinary functions, marks are used to stimulate students to make greater effort in their learning activities. 6

From these misleading functions it can be assumed that marks and reports are "wonderful things," 7 but today most educators agree that the traditional type of school marks, including the letter-grade and percentage-grade system of marking and reporting, does not perform its assumed functions. 8

Since the practice of passing and failing pupils is generally conceded to be an inadequate basis for grade placement, school marks have failed to perform their assumed administrative


7 Ibid., p. 32.

function. The same limitations on the value of reports for administrative purposes would apply to the guidance function since the significance of teachers' marks may not be known by the counselor. Time and experience have proved the inadequacy of traditional types of marking for conveying information of school progress to the parents; therefore, it is to be concluded that this system has failed to perform intelligently to the informational function of marks. Since it is generally conceded that the pupil should realize value in what he is doing and should not be prompted to action through fear of penalty or the desire for extraneous reward, school marks have failed to perform their assumed motivating and disciplinary function.

Wrinkle declared that:

... the chief aim in reporting is to avoid invidious comparisons, harmful misunderstandings, and useless work on the part of both teachers and parents, and to report only items of information which will serve a constructive educational and social purpose. 9

The problem of finding the most helpful way of describing the child's activities and accomplishments is involved in reporting. It is not enough to describe the behavior of a child; teachers and parents must know what factors produced that behavior. It is not enough for the teacher to report that a child is failing in some subject. If the report shows

9Ibid., p. 500.
that the child is not achieving what he should, what can the parent do? His recourse usually is to scold or force the child to spend more time on the subject at home. What benefits are derived, if the main factor responsible for the low achievement was that the child saw no value in what he was studying? An analysis of these questions and their answers leads to the conclusion that a good report card is not one which is clearly written or promptly sent out, but one which does something to help the child.\textsuperscript{10}

Trends of Reporting

Report cards of one type or another are used almost universally, and have long furnished the most direct line of contact between the home and the school. Many variations have been developed, some of them related to stated points of view, aims, and procedures of the school from which they are issued, others not. In the main, however, the report card is more indicative of the real aims of the school than are the stated or publicized aims. What is "marked" is usually what is "taught."\textsuperscript{11}

Yeager says that:

The origin of the pupil's report card as an accounting instrument can be traced to the English common law principle that parents had almost unlimited control over the education of their children. While statutory provisions establishing the American common school have limited this right, parental responsibility has remained to see that children partake of the opportunities provided. Since the state requires attendance, some form

\textsuperscript{10} Norman Fenton and Dean A. Worcester, \textit{An Introduction to Educational Measurements}, p. 142.

of accounting of that attendance and usefulness of the time expended becomes obvious. This has taken on the official nature of the traditional report card.\textsuperscript{12}

Following the traditional reporting system, other trends in accounting will be discussed.

The traditional report card.--The traditional method of grading is one of the oldest in use. The first form was that in which ratings were based on a scale of zero to one hundred. Many parents seemed to desire this type of grading because they felt that they could understand the significance of a grade in figures. Since this method has been almost universally used for evaluation of a child's progress, it has served as a basis from which have been derived other reporting systems. One of the first attempts to improve the method was to eliminate some of the points on the scale. This was done to avoid the slight differentiation of one point and created a five to ten point scale.

Next, many schools adopted the symbolic or letter method of reporting pupil achievement to parents in an attempt to reduce the inaccuracy of the percentage method. In this system the letters A, B, C, D, E, or F, or numbers were used to characterize the achievement of the pupils. The most evident objections to these two systems were (1) that each child is assumed to be capable of making one hundred per cent or perfect

\textsuperscript{12}William A. Yeager, \textit{Administration and the Pupil}, p. 343.
score and (2) that it compares the child with a group rather than with his previous work.

The conventional method of grading has been abandoned in many schools, because in the marking and evaluating of grades, teachers often allowed factors outside of pupil effort and achievement and ability to influence their marks. The like or dislike of the child, the parents' status in the community, and various other conditions exerted too much influence on the child's grade.

There may be some values in the traditional report card, as it has withstood the test of time. It does indicate success of the pupil or the lack of it; it furnishes a means of pupil and teacher motivation; it is used in guidance and promotion; it conveys to the parents information regarding attendance, tardiness, conduct, and effort.

However, Yeager summarizes the objections by saying:

Shortcomings of the traditional report card then are associated largely with: (1) the limitations of marks as a measuring stick, (2) subjective considerations in using it, (3) narrowness of its scope in relation to total pupil progress, (4) its unscientific nature, (5) personal and emotional considerations on the part of both teachers and parents, (6) lack of resulting personal conference situations, (7) urge on the part of many pupils to acquire acceptable marks as a reputed measure of their success, and (8) its primary use as a copy of archival records rather than a report to the home.13

13 Ibid., p. 345.
Rogers condemned traditional reports as unscientific, misleading, and undesirable.\textsuperscript{14}

With the advent of modern educational philosophy and the accompanying scientific movement, it soon became evident that radical changes in grading and reporting pupil progress were imperative. Educators, school administrators, and classroom teachers united their efforts.

**Descriptive-word method.**—In an effort to overcome the inaccuracy of both the percentage and the letter methods, such descriptive terms as "excellent," "good," "average," "poor," and "failure" are used in reporting to parents. In some instances the initials E, G, A, P, and F have been used, and occasionally they are given plus and minus signs. There is little improvement in this type of reporting, as it still compares the child with a class average, and most of the criticism of the traditional percentage method can be applied to this and other forms of descriptive terms to denote pupil progress.

**Rank method.**—As an experiment, some schools have used the rank method of reporting. This method shows how the pupil stands in relation to the other children in his group. For instance, the child who receives a mark of "1" is informed that he made the highest grade in the group, while the child

\textsuperscript{14}Frederick Rand Rogers, "The Case for the Elimination of the Traditional Card," *Education*, LIV (December, 1933), 234-239.
who makes "25" knows his grade is the lowest. Attention has been called to the injustice of teachers' ranks in groups which are not properly classified and not homogenized with respect to capacity and level of achievement. Other criticisms of the rank method are that it does not show individual effort and that it again compares the child with other pupils in the same group.

The percentile method.—The percentile method of grading is similar to the rank method in that it is also based upon the comparison of the child to other children in the group. By means of percentile scores the class is divided into three groups: (1) fifty per cent of the children are considered to be average, (2) twenty-five per cent, below average, and (3) the remaining twenty-five per cent, above average. The percentile score defines one hundred per cent as the highest mark and one per cent as the lowest mark. Although this method is thought by many as the most desirable one now in use, there is the objection that it is very discouraging to a child of low intelligence to receive always a mark in the low bracket. He receives no reward for making an effort and nothing but discouragement when he compares his grade with that of a superior child.

The double-marking method.—In an attempt to devise a measurement of achievement in relation to ability, some educators have suggested a double-marking system. Each mark consists of two symbols, one of which indicates absolute achievement
and the other, achievement relative to capacity. For instance, the letters E, G, A, P, and F indicate that the pupil’s subject-matter achievement was excellent, good, average, poor, or failing. The figures 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in combination with the letters indicate the teacher’s estimate of the amount of effort which the child put forth in each subject. As an example, a grade of F-5 would mean that the child was failing, in comparison with the work of the other children, and that he seemed to be putting forth little or no effort.

Three-division method.—Another division system which attempts to show the amount of pupil progress has been devised. This method uses the words "satisfactory," "shows improvement," and "needs improvement" to mark pupils in subjects, habits, and attitudes. By this system, the parent assumes that his child is trying if he has previously been marked "needs improvement" and is then marked "shows improvement." However, if a child is continuously marked "satisfactory," the parent has no way of knowing the amount of effort that his child is making.

The profile method.—Finstenbach described a profile-type report card which was used for reporting vocational trends in the elementary schools of Buffalo, New York. The card listed only arts and crafts and was designed to help students and parents visualize the attitudes of the pupils for specific
trades. One point was given for low, two points for medium, and three points for high in estimating the final mark.\textsuperscript{15}

The method was an effort toward elimination of figures and letters in grading, yet it embodied the same type of subjectivity.

Using Elsbree's summary, it may be seen that

The majority of the schemes fall under one of the following headings:

1. Percentage ratings
2. Letter symbols or descriptive terms
   a. A, B, C, D, F
   b. Excellent, Good, Fair, etc.
3. Class rank
   a. Pupil with highest achievement rated No. 1;
      second highest, No. 2; etc.
4. Pass-Fail
   a. Pupils with satisfactory achievement pass;
      those whose work is unsatisfactory fail
5. Check list
   a. Checking a number of items, sometimes limited
      to achievement of subject matter and sometimes
      including personal growth factors.\textsuperscript{16}

Evidences of a Change

Within recent years there has been a growing discontent with methods of grading pupils and reporting those grades to parents. The universal movement to place emphasis upon individual differences in child development rather than upon the accumulation of knowledge in various subject-matter fields has resulted in a change from the traditional report card to informal grading systems.

\textsuperscript{15}F. C. Finstenbach, "Profile-Type Rating Card," Industrial Arts and Industrial Education, XXV (1936), 214.

\textsuperscript{16}Elsbree, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 58.
The cause for the change in the method of reporting has been attributed to two main factors. First, scientific ways of measuring achievements have been introduced as being superior to the teacher’s judgment. Advanced knowledge of child development has brought dissatisfaction and has resulted in the change in method of reporting child growth. Second, the emphasis on individual needs and differences has offered the teacher more opportunities to note different aspects of behavior, learning, and social relationships.  

17 "Improvements in home reporting have taken the following forms: (1) changes in the traditional report card, (2) messages to the home, and (3) personal conferences."  

A better understanding by the parent of the purpose, program, accomplishment, and needs of the school and of his child and other children who are attending the school is a professional opportunity and obligation, if the curriculum is to be considered as a "process of living."  

18 The purpose of reporting pupil progress is to effect a maximum cooperation between the community's two most important institutions, the home and the school. However, Huggett and Millard say that  


18 Yeager, op. cit., p. 345.  

19 William H. Kilpatrick, Remaking the Curriculum, p. 46.
Probably no other administrative practice affects the kind of teaching carried on in a school quite so much as the kind of appraisal records that are used. How can a teacher do anything but teach formal reading or strive merely for acquisition of skills in arithmetic, spelling, and other subjects, when the only evaluation of her work and of the scope and breadth of the child's learning is the conventional type of record and report card?

As previously stated by Yeager, the problem has been devoted to the change or abolition of the traditional report card and to the establishment of a new type of report. The movement has gathered momentum within the past few years. It accompanied the changing trend of thought along philosophical and psychological lines and has become a vital part of the progressive education movement.

In most instances the classroom teacher of today has come to realize that there are two different types of educational outcomes. There are the objective outcomes which include skills and items of information. Then there are the subjective outcomes such as attitudes, appreciations, and interests. Both the subjective and the objective outcomes should be considered to accept the philosophy that the school is to help the child grow physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and morally.

In 1936 Brooks reported that in the last eight years "there has been widespread interest in this problem and more

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20 Huggett and Millard, op. cit., p. 346.
than one hundred magazine articles have been written concerning marks and report cards."  

Munson made a study of report cards in fifteen city school systems of Illinois to determine the traits of character and citizenship given consideration on these cards. He found that eighteen distinctive traits and their explanatory descriptions were used in the twenty-seven types of report cards analyzed.  

A committee of the Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association made a survey to assist thirty schools in developing adequate programs of evaluation and reporting. Under the leadership of Smith and Tyler a general description of a new-type report was made with a word of warning to explain the meaning of the information given so that there might not be confusion and antagonism.  

In 1946 Ojemann and McCandless made a report on a study of methods of reporting on pupils' characteristics to parents.  

One group of parents received traditional report cards, while another group received rating on certain characteristics of the child, suggesting some possible factors which produced his behavior, in addition to the traditional report card. At the end of the experiment, it was found that the majority of parents said that they had derived suggestions for guidance from the new-type reports.

Beggs reported on an experiment in the schools of Elmhurst, Illinois, in which was tested the letter form of reporting. From the encouraging answers of a questionnaire sent to parents, it was concluded that "the diagnostic letter has definitely replaced the symbolism of the report card and check list in this community." 25

An experiment on the parent-teacher conference as a reporting technique was reported by Mecham. The method proved to be successful in the fact that parents became more able to appreciate the value of the information received from their visits to the school and the fact that teachers were challenged in this "opportunity for growth." 26


26George Mecham, "Parent Teacher Conferences as a Report Technique," Texas Outlook, XXVI (May, 1942), 18-20.
Robert A. Skaife suggested that if education is concerned with the growth and development of the whole child, reports to parents should contain information on the whole child and not merely on his scholastic achievements. He added that each pupil's progress should be determined by comparison with his own previous record and not with his classmates' records. Skaife also recommended that the community should be educated to the newer type of reporting to insure its acceptance. 27

To summarize, Otto says:

The changes are mainly in the direction of (1) recognition of the broader objectives of elementary education, (2) recognition of the importance of all areas of child growth and development, (3) desire for a cooperative effort by home and school, (4) recognition of the mental hygiene aspects of marking and reporting to parents, (5) earnest efforts to evaluate progress as objectively as possible, (6) maintaining an informal, helpful relationship with pupils and parents, and (7) the elimination of the comparative marking system. 28

Then Wrinkle says:

The possible departures from conventional marking and reporting practice would be (1) to manipulate the symbols, (2) to supplement the symbols, and (3) to make a fundamental change involving a different approach. 29

However, regardless of the different opinions of the changes that are evident in reporting, it remains that the

27 Robert A. Skaife, "For Recording the Progress of the Whole Child," Nation's Schools, XXXII (June, 1944), 44.


problem will continue to be experimental so long as there are changes which characterize our dynamic democracy.
CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING

A MORE DESIRABLE REPORTING SYSTEM

Purpose of Education and of Home Reports

Among the many interrelated factors that determine the effectiveness of learning, perhaps the most important single determiner is having a purpose. Wrinkle says that

Almost anyone can tell you that the purpose of education is to change the behavior of the learner. If going to school is to result in certain desirable changes in the learner's ways of behaving, then the objective problem is: How should the learner learn to behave? When this has been decided, the evaluation problem is: How well does he do what he should do? And the reporting problem is: What kind of reports should we make to tell how well he has done the things that he should do?¹

As previously stated, the purpose of reporting the progress of pupils to parents is

... to provide a sound working relationship between the school and the home in the guidance of the individual child .... It is important to keep the supporting public informed, to stimulate teachers to become better acquainted with their pupils, and to express the spirit of the school and the philosophy underlying its program.²

If the report to the home can establish an understanding and a cooperative relationship between the parent and the

¹William L. Wrinkle, Improving Marking and Reporting Practices, p. 4.

²J. H. Dougherty, F. H. Gorman, and C. A. Phillips, Elementary School Organization and Management, Chapter IX.
teacher, a situation favorable to child growth is created. The report also should serve to help the pupil to appraise himself and the teacher to study each pupil.

Philosophy Underlying Education and the Reporting System

What is philosophy? There is agreement with Hopkins when he states, "An examination of the literature on philosophy rewards the searcher with almost as many different definitions as there are philosophies." A simple statement, made by an uncouth, illiterate man and reported by Hopkins, seems to express adequately the conception of philosophy. The old man observed, "Philosophy is just the way you look at anything." A body of beliefs that are inherent in the personality of the individual, but yet causes all behavior, becomes the philosophy of that individual, even though he may express a different set of principles and convictions. Hopkins points out that since philosophy represents beliefs and values, there is no right or wrong philosophy. Educational philosophy, then, right or wrong, is the way in which education is viewed. In the words of John Dewey:

A philosophy of education, like any theory, has to be stated in words, in symbols. But so far as it is more than verbal it is a plan for conducting education. Like any plan, it must be framed with reference to what is to be done and how it is to be done. The more definitely and

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3 Thomas L. Hopkins, Interaction, the Democratic Process, p. 173.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p. 175.
sincerely it is held that education is a development within, by, and for experience, the more important it is that there shall be clear conceptions of what experience is. Unless experience is so conceived that the result is a plan for deciding upon subject-matter, upon methods of instruction and discipline, and upon material equipment and social organization of the school, it is wholly in the air. It is reduced to a form of words which may be emotionally stirring but for which any other set of words might equally well be substituted unless they indicate operations to be initiated and executed. 6

Since, in America, education and democracy have developed together, the democratic way of life establishes the purposes of American education. 7 Democracy is not an institution which can be inherited from our forefathers; rather, in the words of John Dewey:

It must be translated into the concrete details of what it means in every walk of life. The enforcement of understandings of what it is and means, throughout every mode of human association is the pre-eminent task of public education in our generation. We shall continue the work to which Horace Mann gave himself by engaging devotedly in the execution of this task. 8

As the democratic or American way of life is a dynamic, growing, expanding way of life so are the modern school and the related practices ever changing and growing institutions. A democratic school program seeks to meet the needs of boys and girls living in a rapidly changing situation.


8 John Dewey, "Education and Social Organization," *Education Digest*, II (March, 1937), 32-34.
Faith in the potentialities of the individual is one of the corner stones on which democracy was founded, and our people have always had a profound faith in the worth of the individual as being possessed of the capacity to grow, develop, and learn. The individual child is the reason for the school, for he is the one for whom learning experiences are provided. Lee and Lee state:

It is to his development that the work of the school is directed. Our understanding of the child as a growing individual and as a learner, his personality and his purposes and interests, supplies the foundation for developing an effective educational program. Thinking about changes to be made in the child is thinking in terms of goals to be achieved.

Jersild declares:

The child development approach is many-sided. It sees the child not simply as a mind to be trained, or a body to be kept in good repair, or a bundle of emotions to be studied. Rather, it sees the child as embodying many characteristics which interlock and interact upon one another in countless ways.

An essential of a democratic school program is an educational philosophy that is based on experiences with living, growing children. All modern educators seem to agree that the task of the modern school is to help living children grow in the right direction. Hopkins expresses this philosophy by saying,

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9 Hopkins, op. cit., p. 103.


The school deals with living things, pupils, teachers, parents, citizens of the community and all other persons. It is an institution set up by living beings, organized into what is sometimes called a society to further growth of all those living things. More especially it is concerned of the young . . . the members of a new generation.  

Dewey takes for granted "the soundness of the principle that education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based upon experience—which is always the actual life experience of some individual."  

The new growth philosophy impresses the fact that children are not all alike. The existence of individual differences is a normal condition of nature and could not be eliminated, even though it were desirable to do so. Not only does an individual differ greatly from other individuals, but each person varies widely in his abilities and characteristics. To direct attention on only one phase of growth is to form a distorted conclusion concerning the strength or the weakness of the individual. Children grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially; and only when the total organism is taken into account, does the true measure of ability emerge.  

This "living philosophy," then, is concerned with developing individuals to their maximum ability to participate in and

12 Hopkins, op. cit., p. 93.
13 John Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 93.
contribute to society. It follows the organismic psychology which considers the development of the whole individual.

The philosophy of education and of the school is reflected in the reporting system that is employed. Casanova believes that

Consideration of the whole child, in the whole situation called attention to individual differences in the emotional, mental, social, and physical make up of children. . . . new methods of informing parents of child growth and development have necessarily followed.15

If the school and the home have a joint responsibility for a growing child's development, and if what happens to him in either place affects his total behavior, then both institutions should be aware of the underlying philosophy of society and of education. Counts gives a suggested list of questions which might be helpful in stating a philosophy. These are:

1. What is the nature of the learning and educative process?
2. What is the nature of the individual?
3. What view is held in regard to the growth of personality?
4. What are the special functions of the school?
5. What is the accepted theory of the structure and processes of society?
6. What is the meaning of life?16

It is seen, then, that education may be conceived as a process that facilitates the growth and development of all

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aspects of the personality of the learner toward socially desirable goals. The expanding school serving growing children in a dynamic society is full evidence of a living, growing philosophy of education. Progressive educators are building their objectives around a social philosophy.

Objectives of Education and of Reporting

In order for the school and its many ramifications to reflect the "living" philosophy of modern education, it seems peremptory to determine specific objectives. Assuming that the purpose of education is the modification of behavior, there arises the decision of what behaviors are to result from the teaching and learning activities. 17 The end product of all educative experiences should indicate a change in behavior and not merely knowing something.

Wrinkle recognizes the fact that it is difficult to accept the idea that all learning experiences should result in the modification of behavior, and he suggests that a too-limited conception of behavior may be the cause. "But (1) thinking effectively, (2) using the scientific method, (3) discriminating in choices of values, (4) setting up worthwhile achievable goals, and (5) expressing ideas effectively are also behaviors just as well as jaywalking ... 18 or any other overt, easily observed behavior.

17 Wrinkle, op. cit., p. 8. 18 Ibid, p. 94.
Furthermore, Wrinkle recognizes the fact that accepting the idea of setting up objectives in terms of behavior and actually setting them up are two very different things.\(^{19}\) It is easy to advise what to do in case of danger, but what is done is another matter. However, he gives six basic criteria which may be used in evaluating objectives for any phase of school activities. They are: "Is the objective (1) understandable, (2) stated as a behavior, (3) based upon the needs of the learner, (4) socially desirable, (5) achievable, and (6) measurable?"\(^{20}\)

It seems that the most acceptable list of objectives for the elementary school is that prepared by the Committee on Elementary Education of the New York State Council of Superintendents. They are called the Cardinal Objectives in Elementary Education and are reproduced here for convenience:

1. To understand and practice desirable social relationships.
2. To discover and develop his own desirable individual attitudes.
3. To cultivate the habit of critical thinking.
4. To appreciate and desire worthwhile activities.
5. To gain command of the common integrating knowledge and skills.
6. To develop a sound body and normal mental attitudes.\(^{21}\)

As Elsbree so aptly states, "the task of the modern school is more nearly revealed in these six objectives than

\(^{19}\)Ibid., p. 95.  \(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 97.  
\(^{21}\)Committee on Elementary Education of the New York State Council of Superintendents, *Cardinal Objectives in Elementary Education*, p. 13.
in the limited subject areas in which marks are ordinarily
given.\textsuperscript{22}

To aid the elementary teacher to gain further insight
into the objectives of a democratic educational program,
Saucier submits a list of objectives. The elementary school
should be directed toward assisting the child:

1. To develop an ever-increasing range of wholesome
interests.
2. To develop sound habits of thinking,
3. To evolve a social outlook or point of view.
4. To acquire facts and skills, meaningful to the
child and individually and socially useful to him.\textsuperscript{23}

At this point, it seems desirable to give Wrinkle's ob-
jectives which are set up in terms of behavior, the modifica-
tion of which is the purpose of education. His objectives,
which may be broken down into specific behaviors, are:

1. He directs his individual activities effectively.
2. He follows plans and directions.
3. He gets along well with others.
4. He takes an active part in group living.
5. He speaks correctly and effectively.
6. He takes good care of personal and school materials
and equipment.
7. He observes attendance regulations.\textsuperscript{24}

In addition to these contributing behaviors Wrinkle also
gives five semigeneral objectives:

\textsuperscript{22}William S. Elsbree, \textit{Pupil Progress in the Elementary
School}, p. 55.

\textsuperscript{23}W. A. Saucier, \textit{Theory and Practice in the Elementary

\textsuperscript{24}Wrinkle, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 100.
8. He reads with ease and understanding.
9. He expresses himself correctly and effectively in writing.
10. He utilizes available sources of learning materials.
11. He uses the problem-solving method.
12. He uses the basic skills in mathematics.  

However, these stated objectives will not complete the list of objectives for every school. Just as each individual has his own objectives in life so has each school a set of objectives suitable to its own needs in addition to the general objectives listed above. And neither will a given set of objectives remain stable; they should always be subject to revision as the needs, interests, and purposes of students, and the needs of society change.  

The objectives of the school should be reflected in the system of reporting pupil progress. In deciding what to tell parents about their children it is advisable to examine the objectives of the school; then, specific items on which to report can readily be derived.

Smith and Tyler, in trying to devise a method and blanks for recording facts about a pupil in abbreviated form, found it was necessary to agree upon working objectives for producing the kind of forms that would serve the purposes desired. The following objectives were used:

\[\text{Ibid.}, \ pp. \ 101-102. \]  
\[\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 98. \]
1. Any form devised should be based on the objectives of teachers and schools ....

2. The forms dealing with personal characteristics should be descriptive rather than of the nature of a scale.

3. Every effort should be made to reach agreement about the meaning of traits names used, and to make their significance in terms of the behavior of a pupil understood by those reading the record.

4. . . . a characterization of a person should be by description of typical behavior rather than by a word or phrase that could have widely different meanings to different people.

5. The forms should be flexible enough to allow choice of headings under which studies of pupils can be made . . . .

6. Characteristics studied should be such that teachers will be likely to have opportunities to observe behavior that gives evidence about them.

7. Forms should be so devised and related that any school will be likely to be able to use them without an overwhelming addition to the work of teachers.

8. Characteristics studied should be regarded not as independent entities but rather as facets of behavior shown by a living human being in his relations with his environment.27

Elsbree concludes that

While any single set of objectives will perhaps be quite unsatisfactory to use as the basis of deciding upon what items to report, it is highly probable that acquiring a command of the fundamental processes, cultivating the habit of critical thinking, practicing desirable social relationships, learning to appreciate and participate in worth-while activities, and the development of a sound body, will appear in some form or other in the list of objectives proposed by teachers in communities that lay claim to a modern program of education.28

Otto states that "it is essential that the card express the objectives of the school program and rate pupil progress in a manner which conforms to the policies of the school and

27 E. N. Smith and R. W. Tyler, Appraising and Recording Student Progress, p. 467.

28 Elsbree, op. cit., p. 74.
which conveys to the parent the relationship of the child to the desired goals."^29

Criteria for Evaluating Reporting Systems

With the objectives identified, the principles that are most significant in framing the technique of reporting pupil progress may be established to serve as evaluative criteria. A report to parents on a child's school work should tell the parents and the pupil something that will help the pupil to continue and improve his growth. The report should express the spirit of the school and be consistent with the educational philosophy back of the school program.

It seems expedient to quote the lists of criteria for determining the character of a reporting system as set forth by several educators who are concerned with this problem. In 1940, Reinoehl and Ayer said that adherence to clearly defined principles helps to make the home report serve its true function. His suggested list of criteria follows.

1. Simple in form
2. Objective
3. Definite
4. Meaningful
5. Broad in scope
6. Positive
7. Personal appeal
8. Distinctly individual
9. Cooperative^30

^29Henry J. Otto, Elementary School Organization and Administration, p. 244.
^30C. N. Reinoehl and F. C. Ayer, Classroom Administration and Pupil Adjustment, pp. 324-325.
In 1947, Wrinkle published the results of a study made in the Campus Research-Laboratory Schools of Colorado State College of Education at Greeley, Colorado, in which were developed criteria to be used in evaluating marking and reporting forms and practices. His fourteen criteria are:

1. Have the objectives of the educational program been identified?
2. Are the objectives clearly stated?
3. Are the objectives sufficiently analyzed so that they have specific meaning?
4. Are the objectives understood, accepted, and recognized as important by the students, teachers, and parents?
5. Are different objectives evaluated and reported separately?
6. Are different forms provided to serve different purposes?
7. Are different bases for evaluation utilized which are appropriate to the purposes involved?
8. Can the teachers evaluate with sufficient reliability the achievement and growth of the student with respect to the objectives which have been set up?
9. Can the reports be prepared with a reasonable expenditure of time and effort?
10. Do the evaluation procedures make provision for student self-evaluation?
11. Is provision made for the reporting of evidence and comments relative to the evaluations?
12. Are the forms so constructed as to facilitate recording?
13. Can the evaluations be easily translated into other symbols if the evaluations may have to be stated in terms of other systems of marking?
14. Do the forms and practices serve the various functions which they are designed to serve, that is, give information, stimulate interest in improvement, facilitate guidance, provide a basis for college entrance recommendations, etc.?  

Yeager, in 1949, restates criteria suggested by Tibbetts (1936) and recalls the study made by the Educational Research

31 Wrinkle, op. cit., pp. 107, 110.
Service of the National Education Association (1934), in which emphasis was placed on the growth of the child and the spirit and objectives of the school system.\textsuperscript{32} It is significant that Yeager considered these studies applicable to the present solution of the problem of reporting progress of pupils to parents.

Tibbetts' criteria suggest that "a good system (1) has a minimum amount of clerical work, (2) is one to which the community is educated, (3) promotes understanding and good will, (4) informs parents of the child in all phases, (5) states simply the school's philosophy and objectives, (6) adjusts school life and school subjects, (7) sets standards of value of work for its own sake rather than for marks or rewards, (8) is suitable for the appropriate age levels, (9) is understandable to the child himself, (10) is based on objective and subjective records, (11) facilitates progress in cases of transfer, (12) considers the child as an individual as well as a member of a social group, and (13) indicates scholastic achievement, individual adjustment, and social growth."\textsuperscript{33}

A general statement seems to be sufficient regarding the scope of reports. A short note of explanation should include


"information on time for reports, methods of marking, basis for judgment, noteworthy accomplishments, and request for co-operation and conference that may be desired."\textsuperscript{34} A report form should contain a record of attendance and tardiness in addition to the intellectual, physical, social and personal conditions. At the close of a term, facts about promotion are included in the report to parents.

Even when the scope of the report card has been enlarged to include all the important phases of child growth, there will remain the question of what marking system to use. "If marks must be used, the symbols must be accurately defined and clearly understood in terms of the learning product being appraised."\textsuperscript{35}

The procedure for setting up a system for home reporting is to apply such criteria as may seem to fit a given school-home situation in the light of the philosophy of the school and its objectives and in accordance with home levels of understanding.

For this study a set of criteria has been formulated to evaluate present reporting systems of schools in Texas cities comparable in size to that of Wichita Falls, Texas, and to develop a more desirable method of reporting the progress of

\textsuperscript{34} Reinoehl and Ayer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 325.

\textsuperscript{35} Dougherty, Gorman, and Phillips, \textit{op. cit.}, Chapter IX.
pupils to parents. The criteria, which have been gleaned from the various lists of criteria herein reported, follow.

1. Does the reporting system state and reflect the philosophy and objectives of the school program, that being the development of the whole child as an individual in a social group?

2. Is the method so planned as to promote cooperation and good will between the school and the home, containing a report from the parent to the school?

3. Is the report form simple in form, using language that is clear and definite and understandable to pupils and parents?

4. Is the scope of the reporting method broad enough to include all aspects of child growth and development, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially?

5. Are the "learnings" within the academic subjects specifically described rather than "lumped" under a single heading?

6. Is the report form based on objective and subjective records, using terms about which there can be no mistake in meaning?

7. Is the form devised to require a reasonable amount of time and effort to prepare?

8. Are all items on habits, attitudes, and achievements in learning stated in positive rather than negative terms, showing that effort produced gains in the child's learning?

9. Do the evaluation procedures make provision for student self-evaluation?
10. Is the method distinctly individual and flexible, calling attention to special abilities and interests of each individual child?

11. Does the reporting system set standards of value of work for its own sake rather than for marks or rewards?

12. Is the method so stated that the teacher can evaluate with sufficient reliability the achievement and growth of the pupil?

Evaluation of Present Systems of Reporting in the Primary Grades of Several City Schools of Texas

With these criteria as guiding principles, the methods of reporting the progress of primary pupils in city schools with conditions similar to those of Wichita Falls, Texas, were evaluated. An examination of the report cards revealed that, in most cases, there was a tendency toward modernizing the reporting system to keep pace with the philosophy and objectives of the changing school in this democratic society, although it was evident that there were some schools that cling to the conventional method of reporting.

Representative samplings of the various types of reporting pupil progress were examined and were checked against the proposed evaluative criteria. The systems under consideration were: (1) A-B-C method, (2) S and U method, (3) check-list type, (4) letter form, and (5) parent-teacher conference. The evaluation of report cards that employ the above systems is
shown in Table 1. A check (X) indicates that the report form is characterized by that criterion.

The A-B-C method is definitely being replaced and for obvious reasons. Table 1 shows that it does not meet the basis for evaluation on any point except in being simple in form and easily executed. It may be noted that this form of reporting is in excess in regard to simplicity of form and ease with which it is used. The report cards of Texarkana, Texas, and Wichita Falls, Texas, are representative of the A-B-C method, although the latter city schools have a different form for use in the first grade.

A step away from the formal A-B-C method is the report form that uses letters S and U, or some similar explanation for "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory." Table 1 shows that this method is supported by only five of the proposed criteria. The system is more inclusive of the many aspects of child development and gives more explicit explanation of that which is appraised than does the conventional A-B-C method. However, it should be noted that the method falls short of stating the objectives, in simplicity of form and language, in time element, in flexibility, value of work and in reliability of teachers' evaluation. The report cards used in this examination are those from Abilene, Amarillo, and Tyler, Texas.

Still nearer the more desirable method of reporting the progress of pupils is the check-list form which is employed in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Methods of Reporting</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A-B-C</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Stated in terms of objectives</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Cooperative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Simple in form and language</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Broad in scope</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Academic &quot;learnings&quot; described</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Objective and subjective</td>
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<td>7. Limited time element</td>
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<td>8. Positive</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Pupil self-evaluation</td>
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<td>10. Individual and flexible</td>
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<td>11. Value on work and not marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Reliability of teacher evaluation</td>
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</table>
the primary grades at San Angelo, Temple, Lubbock, and Fort Worth, Texas. At Waco, Texas, this type is supplemented by two parent conferences each year. Table 1 reveals that these report forms seem to check positively with the desirable principles except in the item of pupil self-evaluation. There is no provision made whereby the child might appraise his own efforts, and this would be a desirable characteristic of a report form in order to further the cause of democracy.

The pendulum has swung far from the conventional reporting system in the form of the letter. Since a sample form was not available, the criteria are checked in Table 1 from information received from literature on reports to homes. The success of this method appears doubtful because of the expenditure of time in writing the letters and the tendency for them to become stereotyped in form and language. The letter form is intended to be a desirable method for reporting and should be characterized by all the desirable criteria proposed in this study, but it is uncertain that every teacher would make every letter adaptable to every criterion. Instructions to give teachers definite guidance in writing letters should be provided. The report form for the primary grades of Dallas is of the letter type, although there is a definite form or blank to be filled in by the teacher. The schools of Odessa, Texas, advocate the success of the letter method.

As indicated in Table 1, the reporting method which seems to be supported more completely by the principles of all-around
development of the child is the parent-teacher conference. The time element may be questioned, but it should be noted that advocates of this plan suggest only two or three conferences in the school year, perhaps more in exceptional cases. Although the conference procedure does not particularly provide for pupil self-evaluation, it seems that it could include pupil-teacher conference. At Sherman, Texas, the conference along with a letter once a year has been a successful method of reporting to parents.

It will be noted that the reliability of teachers' evaluation has been checked as being prevalent in the check-list, letter, and conference methods. There may arise the question concerning the reliability of any person's estimation in any report form, but it seems that in these methods it would be more reliable than in a system that would give the evaluation a definite mark or symbol.

Elsbree rules out uniform schemes of reporting. He says, "To assume that a single reporting device will serve all these parents equally well is to fail to take account of individual differences." 36

Proposed Form of a Desirable Reporting System

Although the parent-teacher conference appears to be the most agreeable form of reporting the progress of primary pupils,

36 Elsbree, op. cit., pp. 76, 77.
it should be observed that a sudden change from a conventional system to a modern one is not always desired and accepted by the school and the community. The Handbook for Self-Appraisal and Improvement of Elementary Schools presents the levels of reporting from the minimum legal requirement in Texas of report cards containing numerical or alphabetical estimations of achievement to the parent-teacher conference and suggests the latter as being the "ideal" as reflected by modern literature on elementary education. Therefore, with the idea in mind of making the change to the "ideal" reporting technique a gradual one, one in which the teachers and the parents are educated and convinced of its worth, a desirable card is formulated and suggested to bridge the gap between conventional reporting and the conference method. It is understood that any fixed method can not be applied to any and all school situations, since each school has its own philosophy and set of objectives. Also, as is the case in certain areas of cities, the fact that both parents work makes it difficult and almost impossible to employ the conference as the means of reporting to parents. Believing that the check-list type of reporting practices the democratic principle of the worth of the child as an individual to a greater extent than other methods, it is chosen as the most desirable.

The front of the report card should contain necessary information in the way of name, grade, year, etc. along with a friendly note to parents stating the purposes and objectives of the school program and requesting cooperation and conference that may be desired. Here, too, may be an explanation of the marking system of the check-list form, that being to place a check (✓) in the column that indicates the teacher's estimation of the child's progress. Suggested descriptive terms may be "highly satisfactory progress," "satisfactory progress," and "much improvement needed" or "unsatisfactory progress."

The inside of the report card may give a fairly complete picture of the whole child. A suggestion for indicating growth in academic skills and knowledge may be as follows:

**Reading experiences**

1. Enjoys reading
2. Understands what he reads
3. Reads well orally
4. Is learning to read independently
5. Is adept in working out pronunciation and meaning of new words

**Number experiences**

1. Understands number concepts
2. Knows number facts for grade level
3. Applies number facts learned
Examples of describing the social, physical, and emotional growth of the child may be described as follows:

1. Works and plays well with other children
2. Is courteous and waits his turn
3. Is thoughtful of the rights and feelings of others
4. Assumes and carries out responsibilities willingly
5. Contributes to group living
6. Observes good daily health habits
7. Obey safety rules
8. Enjoys wholesome recreation
9. Uses time and materials wisely
10. Gives attention
11. Follows directions promptly
12. Asks for help only when needed
13. Completes work which he has started

One of the major purposes of reports in the early schools was to record the attendance of the pupils, and it continues to be a part of report cards of today. The attendance report is especially helpful in the case of transfer students to give the teacher one facet of the child's whole record.

At this point, it seems appropriate to present an example of a desirable report card illustrating the check-list type. Figure 1 shows a sample form which may be formulated a report form to meet the needs of a given school.

On the back of the card it is suggested that space be provided for comments by the teacher and for helpful information
| **PROGRESS IN**  | **DEVELOPMENT OF**  | **GOOD CITIZENSHIP TRAITS** |  | **PROGRESS IN**  | **SCHOOL EXPERIENCES** |  |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|  |------------------|--------------------------|  |
| 1. Works and plays well with other children. | |  |  | LANGUAGE EXPRESSION | Expresses himself freely |  |
| 2. Makes good use of his time. | |  |  | Shows growth in reading | Show growth in vocabulary |  |
| 3. Follows directions. | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Respects proper authority | |  |  | LEARNING | Understands what he reads |  |
| 5. Is careful in the use of materials | |  |  |  | Enjoys reading |  |
| 6. Completes the work which he has started | |  |  |  | In learning to read independently |  |
| 7. Wears his face | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Observes safety rules | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Observes good health rules | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Cooperates in group living | |  |  | ARITHMETIC | Knows primary numbers |  |
|  | |  |  |  | Applies number facts learned |  |
| **ATTENDANCE REPORT** |  |  |  | SOCIAL STUDIES |  |  |
| Days Absent |  |  |  | WORD STUDY |  |  |
| Days Present |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total Days |  |  |  | RECREATIVE AND CREATIVE ARTS |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  | MUSIC |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  | HOMEWORK |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |

Fig. 1. Example illustrating the desirable check-list form of reporting the progress of pupils.
from the parents, including their signature. This is another occasion to exert cooperation between the home and the school and to give a more all-around aspect of the child. Last, a report form should include facts about promotion at the close of a term.

Based upon the suggested criteria, this proposed method of reporting pupil progress in the primary grades would seem to enable every child to realize his own needs and interests and to feel his own worth as a member of a democratic society.

**Frequency of Issuing Reports**

The frequency with which reports are sent to the home is a matter to consider. McCaughy relates:

The length of the period covered by the report to parents has become increasingly longer in recent years. Fifteen or twenty years ago nearly every elementary school sent monthly reports to the home. At the present time a great many of these reports are made only at the middle and the end of each semester, or four times during the year. Often the reports to parents of very young children are not made so frequently as this . . . .

Ideally, it should not be necessary for any school to make a formal report to the homes of its pupils. The school and the remainder of the community should be so completely interrelated and the parents should be so vital and continuous an influence in determining the school’s policy and practice and in cooperating in its activities that such formal reports should be recognized as entirely unnecessary. 38

Although this idea would meet with little opposition in the modern school, it must be recognized that the elimination

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of reports should be a gradual process the same as the change in the method of reporting.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study has presented criteria upon which to base an evaluation of present systems of reporting the progress of pupils in primary grades in order to develop a more desirable method of reporting.

The following conclusions were formulated as a result of this study:

1. There has been an extensive study made on the subject of reporting pupil progress as the school has developed from its early days.

2. The trends of reporting have been away from the traditional method that emphasized subject matter and assumed all pupils equal in ability.

3. Grades and marks are in direct opposition to the theory that learning should take place through the child's desire and as a fulfillment of his needs.

4. The function of formal grading has been altered by the new conception of the child-centered and life-centered school.

5. The tendency is to make the reporting system in terms of the child rather than of subject matter only.
6. There are many types of report cards employed in the city schools of Texas, from the conventional A-B-C method to the parent-teacher conference.

7. There cannot be developed a fixed method of reporting to be used in the schools that are progressively changing.

8. The trend of reporting seems to be along the line of the check-list type as illustrated on page 49 of Chapter III.

9. The problem of reporting is a long-term process which requires continual research and study.

Recommendations

As a result of the research and study made in the field of reporting pupil progress, the following recommendations are made:

1. Each school should possess and practice a democratic philosophy and objectives of life and education.

2. The reporting system should be so devised that it reflects the philosophy and objectives.

3. A more desirable method of reporting should be formulated for the majority of schools.

4. The progress report should be in a continual state of revision.

5. A method of reporting should be flexible to provide for individual differences or use different forms of reporting for individual pupils.
6. Provision in the report should be made for pupil self-evaluation.

7. A report form should be simple but definite.

8. There should be a transition from conventional reporting to modern methods, the recommended form being the checklist type as illustrated on page 49 of Chapter III.

9. There should be continued study and research of reporting to progress with a given society.

In this attempt to evaluate and develop a more desirable reporting technique it is the desire that whatever may be done will be more adequate than the practice which it replaces.
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