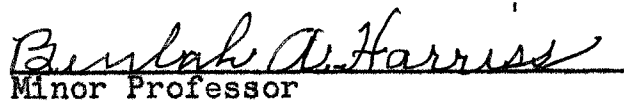
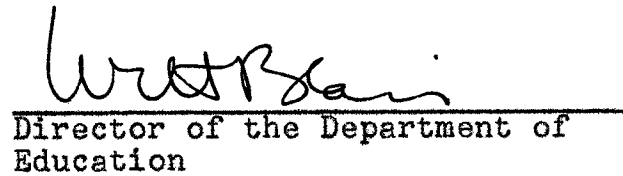


A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF METHODS FOR IMPROVING THE
REPORTING OF PUPIL PROGRESS

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF METHODS FOR IMPROVING THE
REPORTING OF PUPIL PROGRESS

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

191382

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Cleburne, Texas

June, 1951

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem involved in this study is to determine a satisfactory way in which public schools can adequately revise their scientific evaluation system in order to develop a more effective method of marking and reporting of pupil progress to parents.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out how pupils should be placed in an educational environment that will provide the best opportunity for achievement of optimum growth. Every individual child has a democratic right to a normal and steady educational rate of progress and growth.

The method of reporting pupil progress is an indicator of educational trends, and an administrative device which reflects a school's philosophy; however, the examination of methods used in reporting pupil progress is not to be considered a single basis for evaluating an educational program.

In this study an examination will be made of the pupil progress reporting practices of several schools with

an objective for determining these schools' progress toward an actual realization of sound educational concepts.

Sources of Data

The data for this study were secured from numerous periodicals, bulletins, magazines and books written on methods and theories of reporting pupil progress by educators who have made studies in this field. These materials were obtained from the library of North Texas State College, the Elementary School Journal, and copies of reports, along with three questionnaires which were compiled and sent to teachers, parents and pupils of the Cleburne Public Schools. Copies of the three questionnaires used in this study are included in the Appendix.

Limitations

This study is limited to the methods of reporting pupil progress in secondary public schools. There is also a recognized limit depending on the acceptance of such reporting systems by the teacher, parent, administrator and pupils. This limitation is dependent on their understanding and attitude regarding the recognized reporting system.

Related Studies

Many comprehensive studies have been devoted to problems of marking pupil progress and many of these studies are very closely related to the investigation made in this study.

Fred C. Ayer made a rather detailed study on Child Accounting and Progress of Pupils in Texas, and W. L. Wrinkle made a similar study in his Improving and Reporting Practices. Several surveys and experiments made by these authors along with those made by Ruth Strang and Henry J. Otto, have been of value in this study.

Procedure

In order to evaluate a desirable method of reporting pupil progress the investigator studied materials of other writers on their experiments and methods in this same field. Three questionnaires were compiled and sent to three groups, including teachers, pupils and parents, for the purpose of obtaining data on the three different attitudes and viewpoints of marking and reporting of pupil progress.

In Chapter II a survey of the various methods of reporting pupil progress was made in comparison with the data obtained from the questionnaires on the reporting of pupil progress. Chapter III was a review of some of the modern trends in reporting pupil progress with reports and systems from Ayer, Wrinkle, Strang and Otto.

Definitions

Progress.--Progress has been defined by many as meaning a change. In any democratic situation it is concluded that the definition must be extended to include that change for

the betterment of all concerned. This definition of the term is the one used in this particular study.

California Test of Mental Maturity.--A Standardized Mental Maturity battery of tests given.

Parents.--The term parents includes all those persons or service institutions legally or otherwise, charged with the responsibility of the guardianship of children.

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 comprehensive evaluation. The same principles applied year after year constitutes tradition. Traditional practices are based on traditional psychology and philosophy.

Modern.--In opposition to an aged tradition, modern is a term which symbolizes the present day. As opposed to the traditional, modern concepts have their basis in current philosophy and psychology.

Education.--The ambiguity that surrounds this term through use fosters a hasty definition. Hastily, then for purposes of this study it is defined as those experiences people have in changing their way of behavior.

Philosophy.--Philosophy is an overall concept or set of beliefs serving as a structure upon which a system of education is built. It develops out of reasoning and fosters understanding. Philosophy searches out for causes and meanings.

— Methods.--Method is the term used to designate ways and means of approaching an objective.

— Growth.--Growth is used to describe that difference between a condition at a point of departure and another more desirable condition at a point of arrival.

— Psychology.--This broad term is here defined as the science of human behavior; it seeks understanding and analysis of the processes and inter-actions producing that behavior.

— Accomplishment Ratio.--The result of a pupil's scholastic growth: his educational quotient divided by his mental maturity.¹

¹ Editorial Committee, Child Growth In An Era of Conflict, Department of Elementary School Principles, p. 1.

CHAPTER II

A STUDY OF THE REPORTING OF PUPIL PROGRESS TO PARENTS IN THE CLEBURNE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As has been stated by many educators in as many different ways the traditional method of school marking and reporting of pupil progress to parents is not in keeping with the modern philosophy of education. The traditional method is definitely not the scientific evaluation method and does not conform with today's sound educational concepts. The single standard of traditional marking and reporting is based on the assumption of the equality of pupils and this has appeared to be a false assumption. Many intelligent, far-sighted teachers and administrators believe that a new method is needed and many of them have made an attempt to develop and put into use a new method in their own schools. Certainly some have succeeded in introducing changes, while other have tried with little or no success. In many instances neither was the community ready nor was the faculty and administrative force prepared for any change. The primary factor emphasized by all educators

in this field is the strengthening of the bond or tie between the home and the school. This connecting tie between the home and the school is the report each pupil takes home to the parent whether it be the old traditional report card or a new and more scientific evaluation of the child's efforts and accomplishments.

In accordance with this new trend in the educational field the Cleburne, Texas public schools have inaugurated a method for strengthening this parent-teacher-pupil relationship. The plan is now in the second year of operation. Information concerning the successes and shortcomings of the plan will be given in the following pages using the questionnaires as a guide and a source of data for conclusions and evaluations.

The Cleburne system consists of five elementary schools and one high school, and employs a teaching personnel of ninety-four. The school also employs a guidance teacher or counselor who is in charge of the guidance program throughout the system.

In order to place the child and report his progress it was necessary to arrive at some method of evaluation that would give the pupil the best opportunity for recognition of growth. Since the placing of the pupil for proper scientific evaluation is by scientific placement tests the Cleburne system chose the Standardization Test, the California Test of Mental Maturity, and the Accomplishment Ratio Test. Every student is given one of these tests at the beginning of the

school year and again at the close of the school year. With these tests as a basis for measuring pupil growth the teacher should be fairly accurate in placing the individual pupil in his or her proper educational environment.

A questionnaire was sent to each of the ninety-four teachers in the Cleburne school system and to one hundred parents, and one hundred students. The data from these questionnaires were used as a guide for the changes that were introduced into the system. In preparing the information received from the student questionnaire much benefit was derived and much was gained toward strengthening the relationship of teacher and student.

In answer to the question, "do you believe a personal report by the teacher to your parents would be a more effective method of stimulating your efforts than our present method of reporting?", eighty-nine per cent of the students answered in the affirmative. They gave many reasons for their answers but stressed particularly the fact that parents were able to get a truer picture of the aims of the school and the accomplishments of the student towards gaining those aims. The parent was able to gain a better idea of the child's individual efforts in the work plan set up by the school. The parents also gained some conception of the child's ability to get along with other people.

The students also gave a list of pupil benefits from the new plan of reporting and grading. The primary benefit

mentioned was the noticeable increase in interest on the part of the parents in pupil progress. As a result of this interest the parents were inclined to encourage and assist the student in overcoming many weaknesses. The students also concluded that as a result of this reporting system the parents were gaining a new understanding of the pupil problem and were inclined to develop a more sympathetic and helpful attitude when student difficulties arose.

Seventy-seven per cent of the students stated that a teacher's threat to deduct grade points did not accomplish the aim of stimulating greater effort. Sixty-nine per cent of the pupils answering the questionnaire were in favor of making self-evaluation of their progress once each six weeks a part of the basis for the report to the parents. Seventy-seven per cent of the pupils stated that if teachers really had some knowledge of the true home life situation they would be in a better position to report on progress in school.

Forty per cent of the pupils admitted that fear of criticism and condemnation from other students and parents caused dishonesty in class preparations and tests on the part of individuals who were inclined to make low grades. Seventy-five per cent of the pupils stated that they believed that the emphasis placed on high marks caused students to cheat or use other questionable means to obtain the desired grades. In both the parents report and the teachers report seventy per cent answered in the affirmative to this same question.

Ninety-seven per cent of the parents who were questioned stated that they believed that the program of education sponsored by the school should be closely and effectively coordinated with the education that is continually going on in the home. Only seventy-seven per cent of the teachers answered this question in the affirmative. Seventy per cent of the parents believed that a revision in the reporting system was necessary to develop a program to meet the needs of each pupil according to his ability and his progress. Eighty-two per cent of the teachers gave an affirmative answer to this question. Seventy-one per cent of the parents did not feel that the present day report card gave as much information as they would like to have concerning the overall progress of the children. Along the same trend, sixty-three per cent of the teachers declared they did not believe that the present method of measuring the degree of learning which takes place can be estimated by both parents and teachers. Sixty-two per cent of the parents also answered this question in the negative. The parents and teachers were apparently in agreement on this phase of present methods of measurement.

Ninety-four per cent of the parents believed that the report cards should designate specific items in which a pupil has strength or special ability and gave reasons for this concept. Ninety-two per cent of the teachers were in agreement with this method of reporting and measuring pupil progress.

TABLE 1
SIGNIFICANT TRENDS IN REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS
IN CLEBURNE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS GIVEN IN
PARENT-TEACHER-PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions	Parents		Teachers		Pupils	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Do you believe that the program of education sponsored by the school should be closely and effectively coordinated with that education which is continually going on in the home?	97	3	77	23	32	68
2. Do you believe that students with different mental capacities can be graded to within one point of each other?	10	90	10	90	10	90
3. Do you believe that a revision in our reporting system is necessary to develop a program to meet the needs of each pupil according to his ability to progress?	70	30	82	18	83	17
4. Do you believe it best to grade a student's progress upon his ability to progress regardless of his mental level?	78	22	77	23	15	85
5. Do you believe that the great premium placed on high marks causes students to cheat or use other questionable means to obtain desired grades?	71	29	80	20	40	60

Table 1 shows some of the significant trends in reporting pupil progress in the Cleburne public schools. The parent-teacher-pupil questionnaire provided the data for this tabulation.

Strang commented that the report should give as complete a picture as possible as to the kind of person the child is becoming.¹ In order to give a complete picture it is necessary for the teacher to designate specific items in which the pupil has special ability and designate specific items in which the pupil is weak and needs to improve, along with suggestions as to how this improvement could be made. From this type of report the parent would get a more complete picture of the child's development or failure, and would have a better understanding of the true situation.

Eighty-two per cent of the teachers, sixty-two per cent of the parents, and thirty-one per cent of the pupils believed that the emphasis given marks on report cards caused pupils to think that marks rather than true learning was the chief purpose of the school.

More than fifty per cent, but less than sixty-six per cent of the teachers, parents, and pupils expressed the belief that by the present method of measurement the degree of learning which is taking place cannot be estimated by parents, teachers, and pupils.

Ninety-four per cent of the teachers in comparison with

¹
Ruth Strang, Reporting to Parents, p. 4.

sixty per cent of the parents and only thirty-three per cent of the pupils believed that a personal report would be a more effective way of reporting pupil progress to parents.

Experiments have been made in an attempt to prove that learners make the best progress when they are aware of their rate of improvement. In the light of this method it was found that seventy-five per cent of the teachers, and fifty per cent of the parents believed it sound thinking to change the type of work so that the pupils would secure satisfactory marks. While on the other hand, ninety per cent of the teachers agreed that the aim of education is to place each child in an environment that will provide him with the best opportunity for achievement of optimum growth and development of his powers.

Seventy-six per cent of the teachers answering the questionnaire believed that progress of pupils cannot go uncharted and unmeasured without great loss to pupil growth. This is in accordance with Russell's value of school reports.

In spite of the fact that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the present systems and standards for the grading of school pupils, there is nevertheless just as widespread appreciation of the need for some system and for some standard. . . . The teachers have a double responsibility, on the one hand to the parents of the pupils, who desire some statement from the school as to the development of their children, and on the other hand to the school administration, which requires some tangible evidence of the progress of its pupils.

The report card has certain values in the home. It purports to give a statement of the quality of the work of the child, and the statement is accepted as such by the parents. . . . In this way the home is

brought into close contact with the school, and a relationship has been traditionally established that is of tremendous potential value.²

Only thirty-two per cent of the pupils questioned believed that a substitution for the present method of using report cards would stimulate their efforts. Yet, only forty-two per cent of the pupils believed that their present method of reporting progress to parents really reflected the true type of effort put forth on a course.

Eighty-two per cent of the teachers believed that a revision of the reporting system was necessary in order to evolve a flexible program to meet the needs of each pupil according to his ability to progress. Ninety-four per cent of the teachers felt that they would strive to develop a reporting system that would enable every pupil to learn his own needs and to sense his own driving interests and his own worth as a member of society.

Eighty-five per cent of the teachers believed that the present marking system of A B C D, is a better system of evaluating a student's progress than the percentage system of 75, 80, 81, 83, 85, on which it is based. Yet, seventy-eight per cent of the teachers believed that the A B C D E, five point distribution, can be correctly interpreted only if achievement levels of classes in which they are enrolled is known.

An accomplishment ratio is the relationship between a

²

Charles Russell, Rating School Pupils, p. 2.

child's actual achievement and his ability to achieve and is found by dividing the education quotient (his achievement) by the intelligence quotient (his ability to achieve). Seventy-six per cent of the teachers felt that the accomplishment ratio would be a better method of reporting a child's progress than the present system.

The opinion of the teachers, pupils and parents varied concerning the belief that a personal report would be a more effective way of reporting pupil progress. Ninety-four per cent of the teachers were of the opinion that it was a more effective method, in comparison with sixty per cent of the parents and only thirty-three per cent of the pupils.

Ninety-seven per cent of the teachers felt that definite steps should be taken toward finding a method of dealing with the "whole child" as a continuous personality rather than with two or more personalities separate and apart. The child should be judged as an entity rather than as first a scholar and next a school citizen. It was surprising to note that only fifty-one per cent of the teachers believed that a student of low mental ability should be marked "A" if he did a worthwhile piece of work even though his work was below that set up as a class standard.

Information from the three questionnaires showed that a different system of marking pupil progress was needed in order to strengthen the bond between the home and the school, and the pupil-parent-teacher relationship.

The Cleburne school system followed this questionnaire with an improved method of marking and reporting pupil progress. As was previously mentioned, a series of tests were given each year at the beginning and at the close of the school term. These tests were also given to every new student who entered the Cleburne school, and the tests were made a part of the cumulative record that was maintained on every pupil in the system. Report cards were sent to the parents at the end of each six week period and the A B C D system was used from the third grade through the high school. However, the first three grades used the letters S U N and I, (satisfactory, unsatisfactory, needs to improve, and improving). Each card carried a list of characteristics with a space for teacher comments. Every teacher was required to visit the home of each pupil in their respective homerooms at least once a year.

In the event some particular problem arose concerning a pupil's work, the guidance counselor was called in and the teacher and the guidance counselor studied the child's current record and the cumulative record. If the problem was not of a serious nature the homeroom teacher called at the home of the pupil, otherwise the guidance counselor made the home call. At a later date the parent was asked to come for a conference with the teacher and the counselor. In most instances the problem was of a more or less serious nature before the guidance counselor visited the home of the pupil.

There are many factors contributing to the inaccuracy of marks on pupil progress. One of these contributing factors is the recognized fact that teachers' personal reactions are not always free of prejudices. The inept student has been noticeably over estimated, and the average or above average student has been under estimated by teachers who have judged progress with a prejudiced attitude. For this reason educators in this field insist that teachers' evaluations alone are not an accurate means of reporting pupil progress.

Two teachers in the Cleburne public school system made an experiment concerning the accuracy of marks in comparison with the Standardized Tests that had been given. The tests were made in the same class with the grades of two teachers in two different subjects, English and Arithmetic. The variations in these classes are given in Table 2.

In some instances the teachers' grades were from one to two points higher than those averages gained from the regular Standardized Tests, while in other cases the teachers marks were from one to two points lower than the averages obtained from the tests given in the same subject. From a group of one hundred pupils in an arithmetic class it was found that the teachers' mark or grade was the same as the Standardized Test grade in only nine cases. It was found that only six teacher grades in an English class corresponded with those obtained from the test.

TABLE 2

A COMPARISON OF TEACHER GRADES WITH MENTAL
MATURITY AVERAGES FROM TWO CLASSES
OF CLEBURNE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mental Maturity	English		Arithmetic	
	How marked by teacher	Should Have been marked	How marked by teacher	Should have been marked
138	A	D	A	D
137	A	D	A	D
127	A	D	A	D
122	B	D	B	D
121	A	C	A	C
121	B	D	B	D
119	B	C	A	C
119	A	C	A	C
118	B	C	A	C
118	B	D	C	F
118	C	D	F	F
117	A	C	A	C
117	A	C	A	C
117	A	C	B	C
117	C	D	C	F
116	C	D	A	C
116	B	D	B	D
116	C	D	B	D
115	B	C	A	C
115	B	C	A	C
114	B	D	B	C
113	B	C	B	D
113	B	D	B	D
111	B	C	A	C
111	B	C	B	C
111	C	D	C	D
110	C	D	C	F
109	A	B	A	C
109	B	C	B	C
108	C	D	A	C
108	B	C	A	C
108	B	C	C	D
108	C	C	C	D
108	B	C	C	D
107	B	C	B	C
107	B	C	B	C
107	C	D	B	C
107	B	C	C	D
107	C	D	F	F
107	F	F	F	F
106	B	C	B	C

TABLE 2---Continued

Mental Maturity	English		Arithmetic	
	How marked by teacher	Should have been marked	How marked by teacher	Should have been marked
105	C	D	B	C
105	C	D	C	D
105	B	C	C	D
105	C	D	C	F
105	C	D	F	F
104	B	C	A	C
104	C	D	C	F
103	C	D	B	D
103	C	C	C	C
103	C	C	C	C
102	C	C	C	D
102	F	D	F	D
101	C	D	A	B
101	B	B	B	D
100	C	C	B	C
100	C	C	C	D
99	A	B	A	B
98	A	B	B	B
98	C	C	C	C
97	B	B	B	B
96	B	B	A	B
96	C	C	B	B
96	C	D	C	C
95	B	B	B	C
95	B	A	B	C
95	C	C	C	D
95	C	C	C	C
94	C	C	F	F
93	F	D	F	F
93	C	D	F	F
93	C	C	C	D
93	C	D	C	C
93	C	C	C	C
92	B	B	A	B
92	B	B	F	F
91	C	C	B	B
91	C	C	F	D
90	C	B	B	B
90	F	D	F	D
90	B	A	F	F
89	A	A	A	A
89	C	B	B	B
89	C	B	C	C
88	C	B	C	C
88	C	B	F	D
87	F	F	F	C

TABLE 2---Continued

Mental Maturity	English		Arithmetic	
	How marked by teacher	Should have been marked	How marked by teacher	Should have been marked
87	F	F	F	C
86	C	B	C	C
85	C	A	B	B
85	C	B	B	B
85	C	B	C	B
85	C	C	F	D
84	C	B	B	A
83	C	B	C	C
82	C	A	C	B
81	F	C	F	F
81	B	A	E	A
80	B	A	A	A
79	C	C	C	A
76	F	C	C	B
73	F	B	C	A
61	C	A	C	A

From the three questionnaires it was noted that the majority of teachers, pupils and parents of the Cleburne public schools felt that their old system of marking and reporting was not adequate. The general opinion was that there was a definite need for a more adequate system of apt marking and reporting pupil progress, and a need for a closer contact between the home and school. The three groups favored the idea of letter reports to parents in combination with the practice of parent-teacher conferences. The present system of marking and reporting was worked out in co-operation with the three groups, and parents, teachers, and students felt that it was an improvement over the old system.

The Cleburne system used three types of school report cards;

one for the primary grades, another for the intermediate grades, and a third report card for the high school.

The primary card had two divisions, citizenship and scholarship. The academic subject grades were given in the scholarship division, while the citizenship division gave a mark in social habits, work habits, health and physical education, and the usual attendance record. An explanation of the marks was given at the bottom of each card.

The intermediate card carried both academic and citizenship divisions, which included social relations and work and study habits. In addition to this a grade or mark was given on occupational guidance.

The card for the high school grades or marks included the regular listing of subjects, and was estimated by using the figures 70 to 90 inclusive. The reverse side of the card carried a report on conduct, effort and interest. The last three were simply checked if found unsatisfactory.

The grades or marks were computed by averaging the mental test, class participation, and the regular test or examination. According to information derived from the questionnaires the parents, students and teachers felt that the present method of reporting needed to be improved. There was a general desire for more frequent parent-teacher conferences and teacher-parent letters. The students felt that their system of self-evaluation had been a stimulation for increased effort and accelerated interest.

CHAPTER III

MODERN TRENDS IN REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS

The modern educational trend is turning more definitely each year to a new system of marking and reporting of pupil progress. The old A, B, C, D, E, F, method is gradually being replaced by other methods of reporting that reflect the philosophy of the school system and its willingness to face individual problems. No one method seems to have replaced the traditional method, and no one method seems to have been entirely successful in every situation. A general state of confusion appears to be the prevailing result at the present time.

Ayer makes the following statement regarding the importance of teacher's marks:

They are important in the first place because marking and reporting practices are an essential part of effective child accounting. They are important in the second place because of the current confusion in the minds of teachers and educators over marking and reporting practices. Above all, a discussion of marking and reporting practices is important because any adequate improvement of marking and reporting carries with it a more objective understanding of teaching and learning. These statements should not be taken to imply that the author hopes to solve all current problems involved in connection with marks and reports. Far from it; this is a task that must be worked out by each school and its teaching staff. The experience of many schools during the past two decades indicates that the problem of marking and

reporting cannot be solved satisfactorily by doing away with measures, marks, and reports. This merely covers up the evils of faulty bookkeeping.¹

The importance of marks or grades still plays too great a part in the term estimate or report for the individual pupil, and until such time as this traditional method can be replaced there will continue to be confusion and irregularity in reporting pupil progress.

Ayer quotes the following statement from Ross regarding reports:

It is impossible to estimate the wastage of material and human resources which results from education's ignorance of the consequences of its efforts. Until schools and colleges develop adequate, comprehensive, appraising and recording programs, that waste will continue.²

Present practices in reporting pupil progress reflect, in most instances, the tendency to place great importance on marks and grades, and most systems maintain the old idea that the report is the primary factor in pupil progress. Of course, it is evident that in anything a reward is a stimulation for work and effort, and in educational fields most pupils will endeavor to receive the best mark and will work to this end. Consequently, the marking system of reporting pupil progress has its value and until some other method is devised that will bring about the same or a better result the traditional methods of marking will be maintained.

¹ Fred C. Ayer, Practical Child Accounting, p. 96.

² Ibid., p. 97.

Ayer makes the following comment regarding this problem in marking and reporting:

The case for marks grants the misuses which have been made of them, but presents evidence of their essential value to our educational program. Experiments prove that learners make the best progress when they are aware of the rate of their improvement. Quantative marks are essential for purposes of classification, educational guidance, and educational research. The elimination of debilitating of teacher's marks does not do away with failure; it merely covers up poor work. The thing to do is to change the type of work so that the pupil can secure satisfactory marks. In the meantime the marks themselves should be made more reliable, more specific, and more discriminating. They should be used as checks and guides, rather than as rewards and punishments.³

In an endeavor to improve the traditional system of marking and reporting pupil progress many errors have been made and many systems have gone from one extreme to another, some going so far as to completely do away with marking and reporting. However, this is always the case in any attempt to improve and change traditional ways and it will be necessary to experiment extensively until such time as a satisfactory method can be devised.

Ross makes the following suggestion in planning some form of solution of the problem:

Some teachers appear to hold that passing examinations and accumulating credits and grades is the acme of all academic achievement, and the pupil's chief aim and end in life. In the same building or department other teachers may hold that tests and marks of any kind, if not creations of Satan, are, at any rate, relics of barbarism whose existence is more

³
Ibid., p. 98.

appropriate in a museum than in a modern school and whose elimination would bring, immediately and automatically, the educational millennium.⁴

Since most of life itself is placed on a competitive basis it is a common belief among teachers that competitive marking and reporting prepares the student for adult life. That again brings about the discussion as to the extent of competitive learning. Many educators hold to the theory that cooperation is of much more importance and that this is a basic factor in training the child for adult life and living.

Regarding competition and cooperation Wrinkle states:

Whatever social philosophy you may have, whether it gives fundamental recognition to individual or social values, to competition or cooperation, it is obvious that the school by its marking practices is doing much to promote the development of anti-social attitudes and practices. A desire to win even at the expense of others cannot be countenanced as a desirable educational attitude. The competition of unequals does not provide a fair basis for determining penalties or the granting of honors. There is plenty of opportunity for utilization of competitive motives in a legitimate manner. The competition of the pupil with his previous record and attempts to achieve in terms of his ability provide opportunities for application of competitive openings and interests. The encouragement of competition by individuals of unequal ability, however, is in violation of the principle of individual differences, is unfair, does not conform to mental practices and is negative in many of its results.

Although it is true that competition is a basic force in adult living it would not be difficult, if we look at the results to justify greater emphasis on the importance of cooperation and the school would be a good place to begin. Cooperation is also a vital force in adult life. It might well be given greater emphasis in the school through the promotion of cooperative activities, cooperative planning, cooperative evaluation and in many other ways.

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C. C. Ross, Measurement in Today's Schools, pp. 397-398.

School marks can be used as a means to an end without their becoming thought of by students as ends in themselves. Marks used consistently by teachers as a means of stimulating learning activity sooner or later are sure to be thought of by many students as the ends or purpose of education. The emphasis given to marks by most teachers in most schools tends ultimately to convince the student that the mark rather than what it is supposed to represent is the most important outcome of learning. To achieve a higher mark than might be otherwise assigned, some students who are normally honest do not hesitate to resort to dishonest practices. The assigning of final marks and the holding of final examinations upon which the marks are largely based, have to be delayed to the close of the quarter, semester, or school year, otherwise many students would cease to put forth any effort.⁵

In the old method of reporting and using either the six-point A, B, C, D, E, F, system or the S and U system there is no opportunity for reporting on individual traits such as, character, behavior and attitudes. Consequently, these methods are not wholly complete and satisfactory. Some schools continue to use the curve method but in most experiments and surveys and new programs it has been given little or no recommendation. According to this method a certain per cent of the class receives the highest mark, a certain per cent receive B, and so on until each pupil has been placed in one group or another. In this method no particular way has been found to satisfactorily report to parents.

In reporting to parents many schools have tried the parent-teacher conference system, while other teachers try to inform the parents through writing a report to each

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Wm. L. Wrinkle, Improving and Reporting Practices, pp. 48-49.

parent. This again involves the time element and many teachers feel that they do not have the time for this particular way of reporting pupil progress to the parent.

Smith and Tyler in their chapter on teachers' reports and reports to the home have the following to say:

There was also a feeling that marks had become competitive to a degree that was harmful to both the less and the more able, and that they were increasingly directing the attention of pupils, parents, and even teachers, away from the real purposes of education toward the symbols that represented success but did not emphasize its elements or its meaning.

The commonest method of replacing marks proved to be that of writing paragraphs analyzing a pupil's growth as seen by each teacher. This method is an excellent one, since good descriptions by a number of teachers combine to give a reasonably complete picture of development in relation to the objectives discussed. On the other hand, a report in this form is very time-consuming for teachers and office, as well as difficult to summarize in form for use in transfer and guidance. The committee decided on a compromise that would make place for giving definite information about important objectives in an abbreviated form and would allow for supplementing this with written material needed to modify or complete the information.⁶

In some schools both the teachers and the parents prefer the conference method of reporting pupil progress. They feel that in this way a discussion of the individual child will assist both parent and teacher in gaining a clearer picture of the situation and that the pupil's problems are easier to solve through joint discussion. The parent gains a better understanding of the problems that face both pupil and teacher, and is better prepared

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Eugene R. Smith and Ralph W. Tyler, Appraising and Recording Student Progress, p. 489.

to cooperate in the home, and the teacher gains a better understanding of the home life and the attitude of the parent. Consequently, they are better able to cope with school situations.

The schools of today are crowded. Every grade is usually filled to capacity and teachers are having to learn to meet individual needs and at the same time deal entirely with large groups. Plan after plan for reporting pupil progress has been tried and eventually discarded for a newer order and plan or a return to the traditional plan.

With the modern conception of education as a means of teaching children to live it is very necessary to teach them to live in harmony with others. In order to successfully teach children to live it is important to have the whole-hearted cooperation of the parents. If a child's home life is not just as it should be it is difficult to teach and prepare a child to live in accordance with current morals and standards of living. To accomplish this objective successfully the teaching staff must have some method or system of reporting pupil progress to the parents so that they will be capable of cooperating with the teachers in the problems that concern their children.

The traditional method of reporting by marks and grades at regular intervals merely gives the parent an idea as to the child's progress. The parent knows, of course, that the child has a certain grade in each subject and if that grade

is passing, well and good. In the event the work is not indicative of progress the parent attempts to find the cause of the low marks and to help the teacher remove the cause. However, this system of reporting gives no information regarding the child's ability to adapt himself to the school situation, and the degree of effort put forth to make these marks.

This system of grading also classes the slow, backward child with the child of superior intelligence and the backward child is graded according to the standards of the brighter child. In many instances the superior child puts forth little or no effort to accomplish excellent marks, while the backward, slow child puts forth great effort to accomplish even a low mark or grade. This system of grading is not fair to either the child or to the teacher. The need today is for a system that will grade each individual pupil according to his efforts and his adaptability, and his willingness to accept the challenge offered by the school system.

Wheat has the following suggestions for a flexible progress reporting system:

The Flexible Progress Group System involves somewhat new methods of pupil classifications, promotions and reports of progress. It calls for minor adjustments in teaching methods and varies the curriculum somewhat for different children. The outstanding feature of the system is that it abolishes for all children the repeating and the skipping of grades and yet allows each child to work at all times at the grade level which fits his educational foundation and

mental maturity. This flexible progress group system is not a static system, however, nor one by which pupils are regrouped once or twice a year. It encourages changes in the personnel of groups whenever the need arises. It allows for the fact that individuals within a group differ from one another in rate of mental growth, speed of learning, amount of absence from school, rate of physical and social development, and other variables. Several devices are sometimes used to meet these individual needs and capacities.⁷

This exact flexible grouping might not work in all school systems, but it gives the teacher a means by which each pupil may be grouped and graded according to his or her own individual mental capacity, and according to his own individual effort. Many schools have abandoned the report card method. In certain situations this may be the answer to the reporting problem.

According to Beggs in his article from the Elementary School Journal:

A majority of parents, and too many teachers, conclude that the schools most important contribution to the child's education is recorded on the card. Yet the confusion of parents and the scarcely less obvious uncertainty of teachers have long suggested the inadequacy of school marks as a reliable interpreter of pupil progress or adjustment. The vicious by-product of lesson learning, the "get-by" attitude, the "passing" complex and unwholesome competitions are readily admitted. Many administrators have been experimenting with a new media for reporting pupil progress. They have taken the direction of reducing the range from six or seven symbols to three.⁸

However, this method has not been the solution in all situations. Too often the parent expects some kind of report from the school and in every instance it is not possible to

⁷ T. B. Wheat, "Flexible Program in Group System," Elementary School Journal, XXIII (May, 1945), 176.

⁸ V. L. Beggs, "Marking and Reporting," Elementary School Journal, XXX (July, 1948), 107-114.

get each parent in for conference at any definite time. This method has been tried and discarded as time consuming and fruitless in many school systems.

Since most secondary schools are made up entirely of heterogeneous groups it is very difficult to maintain a parent-teacher conference program.

Hockett and Jacobsen make the following comment in regard to this situation:

In public schools every child belongs. It is the school's obligation to accept each child as he is and to do all it can to further his development in every desirable way. It is the school for all the children of all of the people, the gifted and the handicapped, the strong and the weak, the docile and the recalcitrant. Its work covers all situations and all needs.⁹

It is often very difficult for the teacher to cover all situations and all needs in the crowded schools of today. More often than not, the teacher finds her group almost too large to manage and according to Ayer¹⁹⁴⁹ there appears to be no immediate remedy in sight.

Undoubtedly the greatest practical drawback in carrying out the constructive features of the newer types of reporting is the fact that teachers do not have the ability and the time to carry them out. Teachers in the vast majority of school rooms in the United States today have far too many pupils and too much required work to permit the amount of time necessary to carry out the more elaborate reporting practices. Until the time comes when their teaching load is reduced and their reporting load facilitated by clerical help, teachers will be practically limited to reporting the essential features of pupil progress as fully and as accurately as they can without running

⁹ John A. Hockett and E. W. Jacobsen, Modern Practices in the Elementary School, pp. 245-246.

into the law of diminishing returns due to the resultant neglect of essential teaching duties.¹⁰

One of the earliest attempts at improving reporting practices was started some twenty-three years ago in Colorado. In 1929, the Colorado State College of Education at Greeley, abandoned the A, B, C, D, E, F, method of marking pupil progress. William R. Wrinkle of the Colorado State College has written a report on these years of experimenting to find a completely satisfactory method of reporting pupil progress. Almost every mistake possible was made and at the end of a ten year period he concluded that it was impossible to "report intelligently unless you first evaluated intelligently, and that you could not evaluate intelligently unless you knew what you were trying to do."¹¹

The conclusion is made in his introductory remarks that even with years of experimenting, a perfect report form has not been found, and Wrinkle does not believe that one will be found since a method that is satisfactory in one school system does not prove satisfactory in another school. The actual purpose of marking and reporting is motivation and in most instances, this primary purpose is either modified or missed altogether.

Wrinkle in further discussion makes the following statement:

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Ayer, Practical Child Accounting, pp. 146-147.

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Wm. L. Wrinkle, Improving Marking and Reporting Practices, p. 3.

School marking and reporting practices do not serve adequately the functions they are assumed to serve. The practice of passing or failing students has not provided an adequate device for their grade placement. The assumption, whether or not you recognize it, is that a student is not passed--given passing fair grades--from one grade unless he is ready to do the work of the next grade. If such standards were actually observed, each grade would enroll a relatively homogeneous group of students whose achievement would fall within a relatively narrow range, with none below the grade standard; actually a typical school grade group at the late elementary or high-school level enrolls students whose abilities and achievements extend over a range of five or more grades with reference to almost any ability or achievement.¹²

In working out a plan entirely detached from the traditional A, B, C, D, E, F, marking and reporting system the following methods were suggested as a possible solution to the problem. The first method was to manipulate the symbols. This was satisfactory in some school systems but did not fill the need in others. The change to the S and U marking system minimized the importance of marks, did not discourage poor scholars, and simplified the reporting program. At the same time it lessened the stimulative power of grades and detracted from the motivation aspect. With this plan many students put forth just enough effort to remain in the "S" category, consequently, it became necessary to add an "H" (honors), an "S" plus and "S" minus, finally returning to the six-point marking system.

The second method was the supplementing of symbols by listing traits of character and personality. This method

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Ibid., p. 33.

involved more than was bargained for since traits were overlapping and too many meanings were attached to the different listing of traits of character and personality. This method had many advantages but certainly failed to solve the problem and make any marked improvement over the old system of traditional symbols.

The third method for a workable departure from traditional reporting was to make a fundamental change involving several different approaches. This included parent-teacher conferences, informal letters to parents, and check forms. The parent-teacher conference plan was desirable from many angles and stimulated cooperation between the home and the school. However, it consumed too much of the teaching time and added to the teacher's capacity load. It failed to provide any record for school use, and again the teacher-load was increased. The teachers were compelled to keep the records in addition to the many extra hours spent in conference with parents. The plan of reporting by informal letters to the parents met the same obstacle, too much extra time, and it was not practical for those teachers with large groups of students. Many teachers were not able to write clear, concise letters to the parents and the information was often misinterpreted. Some schools met this difficulty by substituting a printed form to be used as a letter to the parent. "The informal-letter type report has real possibilities if the reporting is done by competent, conscientious

teachers who are willing to devote a lot of time to reporting."¹³ Again separate reports must be made for the administrative record, and again the time element detracts from the successful use of this plan.

The check-form was the simplest system and involved less time and less effort and provided the school with a record. Many schools made the mistake of getting the check-forms too long, and too detailed, but it seemed to be a more satisfactory method of reporting pupil progress in many schools. In the discussion of reporting practices the last plan was the staggering of reports. This plan had many favorable points and was very valuable in the crowded school systems of the present day.

Wrinkle listed the following important factors learned during a ten-year period of the Colorado experiment:

1. The statement of any outcome or objective to be evaluated should be analyzed into its specific meanings so that its meaning is clearly stated.
2. The number of different forms should be kept at a minimum. If two or more short forms are to be used at the same time, they should be incorporated into a single form.
3. During a period of experimentation, unless there is plenty of money to spend on printing, forms should be produced by some inexpensive process such as mimeographing.
4. The basis for an evaluation of the student's achievement should be decided upon.
5. In the interpretation of a report the likelihood of misunderstanding by parents tends to increase

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Ibid., p. 56.

in proportion to the number of details included in the report.

6. Students should have a real part in the development of new forms and practices.
7. The development by students of an understanding of, and a favorable attitude toward a new practice is a most effective approach to parent education.
8. The summarization of reports on a student in a departmentalized program by a guidance counselor, a home-room teacher, a core teacher, or the principal involves too big a task and is not a workable plan.
9. The scale type evaluation forms are unsatisfactory unless each scale item involves only a single outcome, the achievement of which can be expressed in degrees by clearly distinguishable descriptions.
10. The check form is simpler than the scale for use in reporting evaluations and is more economical of space on a printed form.
11. The development of highly detailed, elaborate cumulative record forms is uneconomical; if too detailed and lengthy, they will not be used by most teachers.
12. Although it has many real advantages, the conference plan is not a practical solution to the reporting problem, especially at the secondary school level.
13. Whatever forms for use in reporting are developed, a separate report involving the use of a five-point scale should be maintained for administrative record purposes.
14. Check forms, unless they are carefully controlled, tend to become increasingly detailed, and, therefore, increasingly impractical.
15. The best way to state objectives is in terms of desired behavior outcomes--what the learner should do.
16. Many teachers have difficulty in writing effective comments. A deliberate program for the improvement of the writing of informal comments is essential.

17. The most intelligible way to write supplementary comments in explaining evaluations is to tell what the student did.
18. It is unnecessary to provide separate blanks for students' and teachers' evaluations.
19. Reporting to parents on the students' achievement of detailed, specific course objectives is an unnecessary and inadvisable practice.
20. The number of different forms should be kept at a minimum. If two or more forms are to be used at the same time, they should be incorporated into a single form.¹⁴

In the final form the Colorado system of reporting pupil progress to parents was a combination of methods that had been selected and checked by groups of students in the school. For marking and grading they use the symbols O, S, N, U, and IE, which represent the following achievements; outstanding, satisfactory, needs to make improvement, unsatisfactory, and insufficient evidence on which to base an evaluation. The Colorado schools use a single form which lists the twelve general and semi-general objectives; provides a general evaluation of the student's achievement of specific objectives; and combines the student and the administrative report in one form.

Henry J. Otto, Professor at Texas State University and Director of Education, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, gives a rather detailed account of a survey made in Illinois during the year 1934. The data in this specific survey were secured from thirty-five school district superintendents, principals,

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Ibid., pp. 66-92.

and teachers, and deal with problems of reporting and promoting practices in this particular area.

In discussing the reporting practices Otto makes the following statement:

The closely associated activities of marking (giving grades), reporting to parents, and determining promotion or non-promotion are probably the most disagreeable, disheartening, frustrating, and confusing duties of a teacher.

Most of the headaches associated with these activities grow out of the fact that many of the present practices, and the theoretical conceptions underlying them, were created at a time when little research of any kind had been done in the field of education. Certainly, they were created before there had been any respectable body of research focused specifically upon these practices or upon the fundamental character of children's growth and development.¹⁵

Otto states that an attempt was made through the survey to get a working idea of some of the theories of the schools in regard to promotion and reporting. In some instances the answers were not clearly stated and in other cases the questionnaire was not completed. "It was thought that the scheme of marking used by a school system would throw some light upon the general policy regarding promotions which prevails in the district."¹⁶

insert In the thirty-one school systems tabulated concerning the system of marking and grading sixteen different schemes were found in use. Fourteen systems used the class average as a basis for giving grades and marks. Two of the systems

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Henry J. Otto, "Findings in Child Psychology Should Affect Grading and Promotion Policies," NEA Journal, XXXX (February, 1951), 128.

¹⁶

Otto, Promotion Policies and Practicies, p. 25.

graded on a competitive basis, the given basis being the capacity of each individual pupil. Thus, approximately two-thirds of the group used some type of achievement standard for pupil promotion and the remaining one-third had no general rules for pupil promotion.

From the information received in the teacher's survey it was found that they used several methods in arriving at a basis for grading and marking of pupil progress. From twenty-one factors given by the teachers, achievement, attitude toward work, application and effort ranked highest.

Otto made the following comment on marking methods:

The methods whereby teachers secure an index to decide upon, or arrive at a decision regarding the assigning of marks are almost entirely subjective. Oral work (recitations), written work, informal tests, and daily observation constitute the devices most frequently used by teachers. Only in so far as objective measures are used in rating oral and written work and daily observation can it be said that monthly or term-end marks are assigned on other than a personal judgement basis. There are, of course, many aspects of child growth and education for which no objective measuring devices are available, but if the teachers are using academic achievement goals in courses of study and text-books as bases for promotion as they say they do, then it seems clear that marks and pupil promotion in their schools are based largely upon personal experience and judgements of teachers. Perhaps this is as it should be, but the facts in the case should not be misunderstood. Doubtless teachers would be glad to use objective means of measurement of child growth more extensively than they do if the school could afford to supply them and if schools could realize more fully the value of objective indices of pupil progress.¹⁷

The following theoretical conceptions have grown out of the many years of research and work by Otto on grading

¹⁷

Ibid., p. 40.

and promotional policies.

Each child seems to grow and develop in accordance with his own individual pattern.

The rate at which children grow and develop ranges all the way from "very slow growers" to "very fast growers," with the majority of them clustering around the midpoint between these two extremes.

Growth and achievement in school is closely associated with growth of the organism as a whole.

If absurd extremes are avoided, exact grade placement has little or no bearing on the educational development a child will make during a given year.

Repetition of grades has no special educational value for children.

Standards are highest in school systems with high promotion rates.

Threat of failure has no appreciable effect on educational growth.

Marks are not needed to insure proper motivation.

The child's social and emotional adjustment has much to do with his educational progress.

Individual differences must be met under any kind of grouping and promotion plan.

One way to meet this problem in an educationally sound way is to group pupils on the basis of age and all-round maturity, eliminate the use of comparative and competitive marking system, and report to parents by means of individual conferences. In these conferences, the emphasis is upon the progress the individual child is making as compared to his educational status last year and two years ago. Adequate cumulative records and samples of children's work gathered over a two or three-year period are essential for making such a plan work.¹⁸

This report by Otto seems to bring out the same condition as reported by Wrinkle, a mass of unsolved problems and an assorted array of systems and plans for reporting pupil progress that have not been developed and perfected. The same condition apparently exists over the entire country and the perfect, workable plan has not evolved from the various systems in use at the present time.

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Henry J. Otto, "Grading and Promotion Policies," NEA Journal, XXXX (February, 1951), 129.

In the light of the findings from the reports given in the survey Otto suggests a plan that might at least stimulate thinking and study, and from which a successful plan might, in time, come forth.

The plan that is suggested involves the abolition of the term "school grade" and the abolition of acceleration and non-promotion. The plan centers around continuous pupil progress bases on the social maturity and developmental needs of individual pupils. Research in educational psychology and child development has demonstrated adequately that the growth of children is continuous and cannot be fitted into periodic, discontinuous, and sharply defined calendar intervals such as are implied in annual, semi-annual, or quarterly promotion plans.¹⁹

The third plan used for comparative analysis in this study is that of Fred C. Ayer, Professor of Educational Administration, University of Texas. His survey was started sixteen years ago with the preparation of some child accounting forms. Of the four basic child accounting forms this study is primarily concerned with the pupil's report card. These forms have been used rather extensively in Texas, as well as in other states. His method of reporting pupil progress will be studied.

The usual confusion and the vast number of systems of reporting pupil progress was brought out and discussed. Ayer also outlined the two factions of marking practices, and gave the current ideas on the value of marks and the abuse of marks. In discussing the value of marks he

¹⁹

Otto, Promotion Policies and Practices, p. 167.

contended that marks must be used, although the new trend is to supplement them with other forms. In reference to the parent-teacher conference plan he pointed out the fact that a necessity had arisen for a form of marking and reporting that would give the parents some idea of a child's progress before any conference is held with the teacher.

Ayer gave the following six points in defense of the value of marks:

1. Teachers' marks reflect a normal distribution of talent.
2. Teachers' marks are adaptable to various types of scores.
3. Teachers' marks are more widely used and more easily applied than other types of scoring.
4. The A B C D E five-point system is more readily interpreted by pupils, teachers, and parents than other types of marking.
5. Teachers' marks have stimulative value.
6. Teachers' marks are valuable for a number of important administrative practices.

On the other side of the question Ayer listed six points on the misapplication and abuses of marks:

1. Many teachers adhere too strictly to, or vary too widely from, the theoretical normal curve basis.
2. Marks do not provide a sound single basis for prediction.
3. Marks give no indication of the spread or variability of the subordinate items which make up a single composite grade.
4. Teachers' marks are too vividly associated with personal failure and superiority.
5. S, U, and similar types of two-point marking are not satisfactory.
6. Teachers' marks have centered too largely on subject matter achievement.²⁰

The two factions seemed to work at cross-purposes and each faction held to their own contention as to the reporting

of everything to the parents or abolishing the reports altogether. Ayer states his theory as follows:

The thesis of this text is simple and definite. It holds that all measurable goals which have been set up and are understood by the teaching staff should be measured, marked, and definitely reported upon at intervals and by methods deemed to be the most expedient and effective. Intangible goals, although specified and strived for, should be reported upon with great caution. Low marks and notices of failure should be accompanied by constructive suggestions, and derogatory emphasis on low marks or failure should be eliminated entirely. Judged by current trends, reporting practices will grow in both scope and accuracy, but whether chiefly by report cards, letters, parent-teacher conferences, or a combination of all three--it is hazardous to predict. Current practices, even in the more progressive schools, is strikingly variable as may be seen by comparison. For example, the Wooldridge Elementary School report sheet even limits its report on subject achievement to checking a statement that the "progress is consistent (or not) with what the school knows about the child," while a Philadelphia report card goes so far as to include scores on standardized achievement tests. Similar contrasts may be found in the number and type of items reported, in the presence or absence of space for "comments," in the use of letters, in the utilization of conferences with parents and pupils for discussing reports.²¹

Ayer stresses the need for some standardization of symbols in reporting pupil progress to the parents. The current method of marks and descriptive terms carry different meanings to teachers, parents and pupils, and some form of reporting should be developed that would be intelligible to all concerned. Letters to parents often bring about a better understanding between the teacher and parent, yet the time element is again in evidence.

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Ibid., p. 116.

In those schools where a set of standardized comments have been prepared the letter method of reporting pupil progress has been fairly successful, but when the teacher writes each individual letter the plan has been less successful. The conference method has been a little more successful, according to Ayer's report, and especially in those systems that continued to use the regular report to the parents, holding the conference after the parent had seen the progress report. In addition to these methods the following experiments have been carried out and discussed: (1) parent reports to teachers, (2) pupil participation in the assignment of marks, (3) general bulletins explaining curriculum goals, (4) testing programs, (5) plans for more effective cooperation between parents and teachers, (6) issuing of reports on staggered dates, (7) home visitation work of school nurses and visiting teachers, and (8) general bulletins explaining school policies. In those schools using the combined methods a rather effective marking and reporting system has been developed.²²

In concluding his report on pupil progress Ayer sets forth the following facts regarding a usable plan:

The foregoing facts lead to the conclusion that the best plan for most schools is to use a fairly simple report card as the primary method of reporting and to use the more detailed and time-consuming methods of reporting, such as conferences, letters, and home visiting, only to the extent that clerical assistance

and other aids to the teacher make practical. The culminating plan should not be to supplant one form with another, but to fuse all methods of reporting into a maximum integrated outcome. Thus, administered, reports may well become one of the leading means for stimulating and guiding pupils to their best development.²³

The last plan used for comparative purposes in this study was that of Ruth Strang, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University. Her monograph was presented in 1946, and was compiled from the experiences and reports of students in her classes over a period of several years.

In this study many methods of reporting pupil progress to parents were read and reviewed; however, the major factor stressed by all educators in this field was the importance of maintaining solid cooperation between the school and the home.

According to Strang the following is a typical situation:

We frequently speak longingly of the old-fashioned school-master who knew all his pupils personally. To be sure, gifted teachers, in all ages, have viewed every pupil as a person with potentialities, and have been interested in them long after they have left school. Our problem today is to maintain this desirable relationship under present conditions. One important instrument of individualization of instruction and guidance is the report to parents. It is with this, the home and the school that we are particularly concerned.

Reporting a pupil's progress to his parents is not the simple thing it at first seems to be. As we delve into the problem, we find ourselves involved in the whole philosophy of education, policies of marking and promotion, curriculum, and instruction.

Like any other instrument, reports to parents express a philosophy or an idea. As the philosophy and

practices of education change, we would expect corresponding changes in the form of these reports. The growing emphasis on pupil initiative, responsibility, and self-direction is manifested in pupil participation in making the reports of their own progress. However, teacher-centered education still prevails and is reflected in the persistence of teachers' marks and ratings on formal report cards. But, with a sense of direction, schools will move forward toward reports that are increasingly effective in guiding pupil growth.²⁴

These reports to parents are one of the most important phases of pupil guidance and serve as a medium by which the home and the school are united in dealing with the problems of education. The school alone cannot meet these problems. They need the cooperation of the parents, and before a successful plan of reporting pupil progress can be perfected the home and the school will be compelled to combine forces. The report card is the oldest and the most widely used contact between the home and the school. It represents the policies of the teacher and of the administration, as well as the attitude of the parents toward the school.

This slant on reporting pupil progress is explained very concisely by Strang in the following statement:

Reports to parents can be one of the most useful instruments for the personalizing of education and the guidance of pupils. Even in their present form, teachers' marks and other means of evaluating pupil progress are important because they have important effects. They influence a pupil's idea of himself--they often determine whether he regards himself as a failure or as a success. Moreover, they influence the parents' attitude toward the child and the school. Whether the school intends it or not, the items on the report card serve as goals for the

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Ruth Strang, Reporting to Parents, p. viii.

pupils and influence the parents' idea of the relative importance of different kinds of school achievement. Accurate and diagnostic reports of progress are exceedingly useful for guidance.

Accurate and diagnostic reports invite parents to participate in the education of their children. They suggest to teachers and administrators the need for changes in the curriculum. Reports that show the progress of the class and the individuals in it give the teacher new insights into his methods of teaching, and thus lead to improved instruction.²⁵

As a result of many surveys, experiments and studies, Strang contended that the reporting and marking of pupil progress could be covered by three methods. The three methods were report cards, letters to parents, and parent-teacher conferences. Strang referred to the report card as a "storm center," simply because every individual teacher places a different value on marks.²⁶ Where one teacher would grade a pupil according to his ability and capacity to learn plus the effort expended, another teacher would mark every pupil according to what was actually made in grade points.

Strang presented a plan similar to the one given by Ayer and enumerated seven points against traditional marks, and enumerated five points in defense of marks as follows:

Criticism of Marks

1. Teachers' marks are inaccurate, indefinite, subjective and liable to bias or prejudice.
2. Teachers' marks intensify undesirable and unfair competition.

²⁵

Ibid., p. 1.

²⁶

Ibid., p. 36.

3. Teachers' marks focus attention on the less important phases of pupil development.
4. Teachers' marks give rise to feelings of undue inferiority or superiority; sometimes present an unrealistic view of the pupil's true ability.
5. Teachers' marks encourage a superficial kind of scholarship.
6. Teachers' marks create an unhealthy mental hygiene atmosphere.
7. Teachers' marks by employing an extrinsic motivation, help to perpetuate an unsuitable curriculum, dull routine, and uninspired teaching.

In Defense of Marks

1. Teachers' marks are a kind of appraisal of school achievement that both parents and pupils want and understand.
2. Teachers' marks are a means of motivation; pupils work harder because marks give them definite knowledge of the results that they are achieving.
3. Teachers' marks are the kind of appraisal required by institutions of higher learning and by prospective employers as evidence of pupil's success in secondary school.
4. Teachers' marks are a preparation for the competition pupils will meet later in life.
5. Teachers' marks are a reward for outstanding scholarship.²⁷

In content the defense and criticism appear to be very similar throughout the field and there is much truth on both sides of the question. There are many things that must be taken into consideration in the planning of a new system of marking and reporting. Strang offers a suggested solution to the problem by using the best ideas from both groups. The descriptive type of reporting is used to best advantage in the primary school, the conference method along with marks is suggested as a plan for the elementary school,

²⁷

Ibid., p. 37.

and in junior high school individual achievement should be rated according to grade standards in each subject.²⁸

The main point stressed by Strang was the basic understanding between the teacher, parent, and pupil, regardless of the system being used. Unless the teacher makes a point of understanding the individual pupil no marking plan will be successful; unless the parents understand the marking system no plan will be successful; and finally, unless the pupils understand the principles upon which education is based the marks are useless and any plan is defeated before it is started.

In clarifying the relationship of the three divergent groups the Standardized Tests have been very useful. The teacher particularly gains by this method since the test can be used as a check on the daily observations of the individual pupil, thus giving another basic foothold for a more complete understanding between the teacher and the pupil.

Strang states that the following facts regarding the Standardized Tests should be studied in order that their full importance will not be missed.

1. A test gives information on the particular kind of behavior it calls for. No single test tells all about a child's mental ability, reading proficiency, or knowledge of a content field.
2. Any single test result may not represent the individuals' real ability. There are many sources of error in testing. For example IQ's of the same child have been known to vary as much as thirty or forty points. From the IQ alone, the teacher has no way of knowing whether the result recorded of one test truly represents the child's ability along that line, or whether the score is very much in error.

²⁸Ibid., p. 39.

3. Many individuals deviate from the central tendency, i.e., they are out of line with what might be expected. In individual cases, the teacher cannot generalize from the scores on one test unless the correlation between the test and achievement or the other factors is almost perfect--0.96 or higher.
4. Since the individual is growing and changing, test scores obtained several years earlier may not represent his present status. In interpreting test results, the teacher should take into account the date at which each test is given.
5. Different tests of the same ability are not alike, and their value varies when they are administered under different conditions. For example, an individual Binet test administered by a skilled psychologist may give a very different picture of a child's mental ability from that given by a group intelligence test administered by a teacher. Accordingly, the teacher should know the name of the test, and the circumstances under which it was administered.²⁹

However, when these tests are used with the full knowledge of all their limitations they are of unlimited value in giving the teacher a better understanding of the pupils. They are more adequately prepared to grade the pupils in such a way as to enable the parent to understand the progress according to the ability, effort and comprehension of his or her child.

The second method for gaining a more complete understanding between pupil, teacher and parent is through visits to the home. Here the teacher obtains an idea of the home life, the attitude of the parents, and their understanding or lack of understanding of the school situation. Through these visits the parent is given a picture of the

²⁹

Ibid., pp. 63-64.

teacher attitudes and a clearer conception of the child in his school life and living.

Parent conferences enable the teacher and parent to discuss the situation and exchange viewpoints. These viewpoints are of unlimited value to both parent and teacher. Often, the parent has not been aware of the actual progress of the child and through these conferences a complete understanding is reached. It might be well to mention the fact that these parent-teacher conferences held at the school take less of the teachers time than some of the other methods of contact.

Since grades and marks are simply a summary or an analysis of pupil progress, Strang suggests a useful and understandable combination of methods that have been fairly successful and accurate in some schools.

The most accurate reports to parents are based on a combination of (1) data from cumulative personnel records, (2) teachers impressions and notes made during the year, and (3) the pupil's own folder containing evidence of his development and self-evaluation. The most comprehensive reports show the pupils progresss in all the important phases of school achievement in relation to his own ability and to that of a large number of pupils of his own age. The report shows grade scale. The reports that are most valuable from the standpoint of guidance summarize the pupil's progress and include suggestions with respect to his development: physical, social, emotional and intellectual.³⁰

In most instances those educators studied in this field agreed that a combination of different plans are more advantageous to all concerned, and that the plan has to be selected to fit the needs of a particular school and community. The type of community has much to do with the attitude of the parents toward the school, and the type of teacher has much to do with the success of any plan of reporting pupil progress.

Strang summarizes her study of the reporting of pupil progress to parents by stating:

Reports to parents involve the whole educational process--curriculum, instruction, and guidance. If the curriculum and instruction are formal and narrow, the kinds of reports to parents recommended cannot be used effectively. If teachers do not have the guidance point of view and a command of guidance techniques, they will fail to report the information most useful and significant from the standpoint of child development.

Teachers can grow in ability to interpret the report to parents and to use it for guidance purposes. This takes time and skillful leadership, but it is well worth the efforts. Reports to parents are one of the most important means of guiding children and adolescents toward their best development.³¹

From the preceding studies it appears that the schools are beginning to awaken to the fact that the day for an entirely new system of marking and reporting pupil progress has arrived. A few school systems have pioneered the field and it is from the experiences of these few that many plans and ideas were brought forth. The major factors in a

31

Ibid.

successful marking and reporting plan are many and varied, but the one outstanding problem is that of cooperation between the school and the home. Since the report is the only means of bridging this gap it is most important that the reporting methods be improved and revised to the extent that this end will be accomplished.

Ayer, Wrinkle, Otto and Strang all conclude that parent conferences, letters to parents and self-evaluation by the student are the three most important phases of any system of reporting pupil progress. When the three methods are used to the best advantage the school then has the beginning of a more or less satisfactory reporting and marking system. Out of the current state of confusion some plan may come forth that will be of help in solving the problem for another decade.

The following criteria, selected from the four experiments studied, were used as a standard for an evaluation of the present marking and reporting system of the Cleburne Public Schools.

1. Was the present method of reporting pupil progress developed cooperatively?
2. Does the report to parents show trends in each pupils development?
3. Does the report to parents recognize individual differences in ability?

4. Is the report accurate, diagnostic, and constructive?
5. Does the report give ample space for comment?
6. Is the report easily understood by the different parents in the community?
7. Can the report to parents be prepared without putting too great a burden on the teacher?
8. Do the pupils share in the writing of their own reports of progress?
9. Are the parents and teachers given help in using the report for guidance purposes?

The Cleburne school took the information that was obtained from the questionnaires and used it as a basis or background for preparing their present system of reporting pupil progress. The questionnaire was a compilation of facts and ideas taken from the schools that had experimented with new methods. The Cleburne school system tried to set up a method of grading and reporting that would accommodate their needs in that particular locality. It has not always been successful to take any one plan, in its entirety, from another school and attempt to use it without change. One plan might work out successfully in one locality and be a complete failure in another community.

Experiments show, in most instances, that it is not

advisable to change the method of grading and reporting of pupil progress in any school without first discussing the plan with both the parents and the students. A few schools have tried to change their traditional method of marking and reporting without the cooperation of the parents and students and they have found that it failed in every aspect. With this knowledge in mind the Cleburne schools made a careful study of their situation before changing the traditional method of reporting pupil progress to parents.

The following data represents the application of the criteria to the Cleburne school system.

1. Was the present method of reporting pupil progress developed cooperatively? .

At the time the Cleburne school system decided to improve their marking and reporting methods a meeting was held and the plan was presented to the parents. From time to time approximately one hundred parents were visited and their ideas were considered along with those of the teachers and students. The group later prepared the three questionnaires. From the information obtained through these questionnaires the present plan was put into operation in the Cleburne schools. Consequently, the readjustment was worked out cooperatively with the school and the home.

2. Does the report to parents show trends in each pupils development?

The Cleburne system does not meet this standard in its entirety, although their report card shows items that give the parent an average idea as to the pupils individual development. However, the plan is not complete and shows a need for improvement and advancement in order to meet this standard in a more satisfactory manner.

3. Does the report to parents recognize individual ability?

The Cleburne school reporting system gives comparative information on each individual child in comparison with the group achievement. It also shows the individual progress in relation to each child's individual capacity and his ability to progress. The use of the Standardized Tests have been of great benefit to the teachers in making a more accurate report of individual differences in ability.

4. Is the report accurate, diagnostic and constructive?

In the past the report cards have given only the teachers' grade as gained from daily lessons, reports and written work. However, the Cleburne school system is working toward a more accurate, diagnostic and constructive method of reporting through the use of the Standardized Tests that are given each year, and through the letters and conferences with the parents and pupils.

A very definite improvement has been made in accuracy and constructiveness in reporting progress through these conferences and the cooperative work with the regular guidance program. It is hoped that within a short time a more diagnostic method will evolve from the present method.

5. Does the report provide ample space for comment?

The teacher receives much valuable information from the comments and ideas of the parents, consequently, it is very important that some provision be made to encourage the parents to pass this information on to the teacher. The extra space also encourages a more flexible method of reporting pupil progress. The present report card used in the Cleburne school system does not provide space for sufficient comment.

6. Is the report easily understood by the different parents in the community?

The Cleburne school report cards carry explanatory information regarding both the grades in regular academic studies and character trait development. The explanatory remarks are presented in a form that is easily understood by the different parents in the community.

7. Can the report to parents be prepared without putting too great a burden on the teacher?

The Cleburne school system falls far short in meeting this standard. The reports at the time can not be

prepared with little or no burden to the teacher. The tests must be given and graded, then averaged and computed before any report can be made. The letters to parents, visits to the home, and parent conferences all go to make up the report. The time consumed by these duties is entirely too great. Definite changes and improvements are needed to lessen the burden of the teacher.

8. Do pupils share in the writing of their own reports?

Each pupil in the Cleburne school system grades and marks his own individual work with the assistance of the teacher. This method of self-evaluation has been very satisfactory, not only in stimulating the student to work, but in creating a desire within the child for more enthusiastic cooperation. The child is also made to feel that he is an important part of the whole school organization.

9. Are the parents and teachers given help in using the report for guidance purposes.

This plan or method is in a stage of development and the Cleburne school system is working whole-heartedly toward this objective. At the present time the guidance counselor is using the combined reports in coordination with the cumulative records in the guidance program.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

From the preceding study, which included various methods of reporting pupil progress to parents, it was found that the trends in reporting reflected the school and community conception of the aim of education in so far as their own locality was concerned. Educators in the field agreed that the reports to parents are a form of analysis showing progress that has been made physically, socially, mentally and emotionally. This report should be written in such a way that every parent would have a clear picture of the development and progress of the "whole child."

Methods for proper scientific evaluation of pupil progress were studied to assist the teacher in placing the individual pupil in his or her proper educational environment. An attempt was made to find a method by which the home and school might be brought into a closer relationship.

Letters to parents and parent conferences were utilized to encourage the parents to adapt the child's report as a means of guidance for improvement in all phases of the school life.

From the four experiments used for comparative study it was found that many methods of reporting pupil progress have been tried and many changes have been made, but as yet no satisfactory method has been found that would be adaptable in all schools. Although there is a growing trend toward improvement in this field a vast majority of the schools in this country are using the traditional method of grading and reporting pupil progress. The majority of schools continue to grade according to the theory that all pupils are equal mentally and are capable of expending equal effort in achieving grades and marks.

There has been a growing tendency of dissatisfaction throughout the country; teachers, administrators, parents and students are aware of the need for a method of reporting pupil progress that will bear out the modern theory of education. However, in the majority of localities the situation is more or less a general state of confusion with no immediate solution in sight.

The Cleburne public school system was studied and it was found that they are making an attempt to work out some method of reporting pupil progress that will uphold the modern conception of education. The administration, faculty and parents are working together in an effort to find new methods of reporting pupil progress that might prove of benefit in the solution of their particular problem.

It was found through the application of the criteria to the practices of the Cleburne public schools that they were justified in the following specific conclusions:

1. The method of reporting pupil progress has been developed cooperatively.

2. The method used in this system does not entirely show trends in each pupils development.

3. The method of reporting to parents in this system recognizes individual ability only through comparison with group achievement.

4. The method of reporting pupil progress is not entirely accurate, diagnostic and constructive.

5. The method of reporting pupil progress to parents in this system does not provide sufficient space for parent comments.

6. The method of reporting in this system is easily understood by the different parents in the community.

7. The method of reporting pupil progress to parents in this system can not be prepared without putting a great burden on the teacher.

8. The method of reporting progress in this system requires that the pupils share in the writing of their own reports.

9. The method of reporting in this system provides some help for parents and teachers in using the report for guidance purposes.

Recommendations

In order to obtain a satisfactory method of reporting pupil progress to parents in the Cleburne public school system the following recommendations are offered as suggestions for improvement:

1. A more complete method of reporting the child's individual development to the parent is needed. This method should show whether the pupil is growing more cooperative, more competent in academic studies, more responsible, and whether he is growing physically. A parent should have some report of the child's improvement or lack of improvement with suggestions for helping the child to improve.

2. A more diagnostic and constructive method of reporting pupil progress is needed. The report should show in a specific manner any progress that has been made, and if further progress can be made and how. The report should carry space for suggestive comments of a constructive nature in order that each parent will have a complete understanding of the child's growth and development.

write 3. A more generous spacing of the card for parent comment is needed. It is through the written comments of the parents that the teachers get their impression of the parents reaction to the pupil's progress and development.

4. A minimum reduction of the clerical work on the teachers report to the parent is definitely needed. At the present time the teacher is forced to spend too much

time preparing reports, writing letters to parents and arranging and holding conferences. This detracts from successful teaching and often causes the teacher to sacrifice time that might be spent in having individual contacts with the students.

5. A more specific method of using the report in the guidance program is needed. This use of the pupils' grade and record should be encouraged and developed more fully in order that both the parent and the teacher will make use of the reports for constructive purposes in furthering the development of the individual child.

APPENDIX

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parent:

Modern educators teach that a sound philisophy of school policy will include the following principles:

1. The aim of education is to place each child in an environment that will provide him with the best opportunity to achieve the best growth and development of his powers.
2. The school should direct the growth of the child so that he might live wholesomely and effectively as an individual and as a member of a democratic group.
3. The function of the school should help every child to:
 - a. Understand and practice desirable social relationship
 - b. Discover and develop his own desirable individual aptitudes
 - c. Cultivate the habit of critical thinking
 - d. Develop sound body and normal mental attitudes
 - e. Appreciate and desire worth while activities
 - f. Gain integrating knowledge and skills
4. The primary purpose of reporting pupil progress to parents is to provide the information necessary for a sound working relationship between school and home in the proper guidance of the child.

With the above facts in mind the common problem presented is:

"To find out how we can adequately revise our evaluation system to a more effective method of marking and reporting pupil progress."

QUESTIONS	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓ 1. Do you believe that the program of education sponsored by the school should be closely and effectively coordinated with that education which is continually going on in the home?	97	97	03	03
✓ 2. For each pupil to make desirable progress, do you think it necessary to adjust his school experiences to his ability?	90	90	10	10
✓ 3. Do you believe that a revision in our reporting system is necessary to develop a program to meet the needs of each pupil according to his ability to progress?	70	70	30	30
✓ 4. Experiments prove that learners make best progress when they are aware of their rate of improvement; do you believe it <u>sound thinking</u> to change the type of work so that pupils can secure satisfactory marks?	51	51	49	49
✓ 5. Do you believe that by our present method of measurement the degree of learning which is taking place can be estimated by both parents and teachers?	38	38	62	62

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓6. Do you believe that the emphasis given marks on report cards causes pupils to think that marks rather than true learning is the chief purpose of our schools?	65	65	35	35
✓7. Do you believe that the great premium placed on high marks cause students to cheat or use other questionable means to obtain desired grades?	71	71	29	29
✓8. Do you feel that our present-day report card gives you as much information as you would like to have about the over-all progress your child is making in school?	29	29	71	71
✓9. If a student receives a low or failing grade, do you think that a statement explaining this grade should be included in the report to you?	87	87	13	13
✓10. Do you believe that a standard of work can be set up suitable to all members of a group with unequal mental abilities?	26	26	74	74
✓11. Do you believe that students should be graded against what other students do?	02	02	98	98

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
X 12. Do you believe that students with different mental capacities can be graded to within one point of each other?	10	10	90	90
✓ 13. Do you believe it best to grade a student's progress upon his ability to progress regardless of his mental level?	78	78	22	22
✓ 14. Do you believe that the ability to get along with people is more duly fundamental than to stand "high" in academic subject matter?	95	95	05	05
✓ 15. Do you believe a pupil should be made aware of failure unless he is told why and given a way to overcome it?	15	15	85	85
✓ 16. Do you think that our report cards should designate specific items in which a pupil has strength or special ability and why?	94	94	06	06
✓ 17. Do you think that our report cards should designate specific items in which a pupil needs to improve?	98	98	02	02
✓ 18. Do you think that				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
a pupil's progress should be reported in terms of his individual growth and not in terms of class standards?	83	83	17	17
19. Do you think that the report card should include a report upon such character traits as follows: Check each item desired.				
— Honesty	81	81	19	19
— Reliability	81	81	19	19
— Obedience	85	85	15	15
— Judgement	75	75	25	25
— Self-Control	78	78	22	22
— Initiative	80	80	20	20
— Thrift	63	63	37	37
— Tolerance	78	78	22	22
20. Do you think that the report card should include a report upon a student's personality, and social development as follows? Check each item desired.				
— Gets along well with others.	86	86	14	14
— Is courteous and kind toward others.	81	81	19	19
— Takes good care of books and supplies.	80	80	20	20
— Respects rights and properties of others.	85	85	15	15
— Willingly shares responsibilities.	80	80	20	20
— Is developing desirable independence.	79	79	21	21

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓ 21. Are you perfectly satisfied with our present marking system as it is?	20	20	80	80
✓ 22. Do you believe that a personal report to you about the progress of your child would be a more effective method of stimulating the child's efforts than our present method of using the report cards?	60	60	40	40

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

The Problem: To find out how we can adequately revise our evaluation system to a more effective child accounting system of marking and reporting pupil progress.

QUESTIONS	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓ 1. Do you believe the aim of education is to place each child in an environment that will provide him the best opportunity to achieve optimum growth and development of his powers?	65	97	02	03
2. Do you believe the				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓ 2. Do you believe the school should direct the growth of the child so that he might live wholesomely and effectively as an individual and as a member of a democratic group?	67	100	0	0
✓ 3. Do you believe that democracy is a way of living that demands the highest physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of each member?	64	96	03	04
✓ 4. Do you believe the function of the school should be to help every child:				
a. Understand and practice desirable social relationships?	67	100	0	0
b. Discover and develop his own desirable individual aptitudes?	67	100	0	0
c. Cultivate the habit of critical thinking?	65	97	02	03
d. Appreciate and desire worth while activities?	67	100	0	0
e. Gain command of common integrating knowledge and skills?	67	100	0	0
f. Develop sound body and mind?	66	99	01	01

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓ 5. Do you believe that the main purpose of reporting is to provide information necessary for a sound working relationship between school and home in guidance of the child?	66	99	01	01
✓ 6. Do you believe that appraisal is an essential factor in every school enterprise?	54	80	13	20
X 7. Do you believe that progress of pupils can go uncharted and unmeasured without great loss to pupil growth?	51	76	16	24
✓ 8. Do you believe that children differ in interests, abilities past experiences and the rate at which they grow?	64	96	03	04
X 9. Do you believe there have been significant changes underlying the concepts of educational achievement?	62	92	05	08
✓ 10. Do you believe that achievement should be rated in terms of his own abilities and potentialities by checking the present status against his former achievement in the light of				

	Yes		No	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
His mental ability his emotional qualities, his physical energy and strength, his home relationships, and any other force which might limit his progress?	61	90	06	10
✓ 11. For each pupil to be successful and make desirable progress, do you think it necessary to adjust his school experiences to his ability?	62	92	05	08
✓ 12. Do you believe that definite steps should be taken toward the idea of dealing with the "Whole Child" as a continuous personality rather than with two or more personalities separate and apart so that we might develop well adjusted happy individuals with integrated personalities?	65	97	02	03
✓ 13. Do you think we should strive to develop a reporting system that would enable every pupil to learn his own needs and to sense his own driving interests and his own worth as a				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
person and as a member of society?	65	94	02	06
✓ 14. Do you believe that a revision of our reporting system is necessary to evolve a flexible program to meet the needs of each pupil according to his ability to progress?	55	82	12	18
✓ 15. Do you believe that by our present method of measurement the degree of learning which is taking place can be estimated by both parents and teacher?	25	37	42	63
✓ 16. Do you believe that marks alone, which are general statements of achievement are limited in value because of unanalyzed variables?	53	79	14	21
X 17. Do you believe that specific statements are needed in reporting the progress of pupils?	49	73	18	27
✓ 18. Do you believe that marks reach their greatest value when they are supported by objective data that provides for facts concerning the specific strengths and				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
weaknesses of pupils?	61	90	06	10
✓ 19. Do you believe it necessary to collect specific facts about pupils achievement that will give the marks meaning, reveal sources of difficulty, and provide leads for intelligent remedial treatments?	62	92	05	08
20. Do you believe the descriptive type of reporting is superior to standardized marks in marking progress of the intangible aspects of development?	57	85	10	15
21. Do you believe a combination of descriptive and quantitative reporting might be a good plan?	63	94	04	06
22. Do you believe that quantitative marks are essential for purposes of classification, educational guidance, and research?	56	84	11	16
23. Do you believe that a mark is a means to an end and not and end in itself?	59	88	08	12

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
✓ 24. Do you believe that emphasis given marks cause pupils to think that marks rather than true learning are the chief purposes of learning?	55	82	12	18
✓ 25. Do you believe that the great premium placed on high marks cause students to cheat or use other questionable means to obtain desired grades?	54	80	13	20
✓ 26. Do you believe that examination marks should be made on a more objective and reliable basis and then serve much less dominantly in assignment of term end marks?	55	82	12	18
✓ 27. Do you believe that marks of appraisal should be more specific and simple and used as checks and guides, rather than as rewards and punishments?	63	94	04	06
X 28. Do you believe that high marks in academic subjects speak an index of personal superiority?	12	18	55	82
J 29. Do you believe that				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
low ability in academic subjects becomes a badge of personal failure?	23	34	44	66
30. Do you believe our present system of marks and reporting the measure of achievement is:				
✓ a. Reliable, valid and adequate?	12	18	55	82
✓ b. Sufficiently informative?	13	19	54	81
✓ c. Emphasizes right objectives?	15	22	52	78
✓ d. Tells more about individual progress than comparative progress?	20	30	47	70
✓ e. Puts emphasis on pupil development rather than on subject matter achievement?	11	16	56	84
✓ f. Contains extensive inclusion of personality, character, and social traits?	12	30	47	70
X g. Includes health and physical development?	20	30	47	70
✓ h. Prevents emotional disturbance and disintegration of child's personality?	14	21	53	79
✓ i. Improves parent-child relationships?	15	22	52	78
X j. Improves instructional services on the part of the teacher?	12	18	55	82

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
k. Stimulates pupils and parents to desirable effort and constructive activities?	20	30	47	70
l. Reflects needs and possibility of individual pupil?	17	25	50	75
m. Tends toward maximum development of the whole child?	17	25	50	75
n. Emphasizes success and minimizes failure?	16	24	51	76
o. Reflects the philosophy and instructional efficiency of the whole school in helpful contact with the whole child?	15	22	52	78
p. Prevents apprehensiveness, frustration, and insecurity?	9	13	58	77
q. Helps one to adjust his limitations?	14	21	53	79
31. Do you believe that facts or quantitative data need be recorded for administrative and instructional purposes and revealed to pupils and parents?	47	70	20	30
32. Do you think a pupil should be made aware of failure unless he				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
is given a way to overcome it?	13	19	54	81
✓ 33. Do you think the whole plan of education should be cooperative and not competitive?	49	73	18	27
✓ 34. Do you believe that the program of education sponsored by the schools should be closely and effectively coordinated with that education which is continually going on in the home?	58	77	09	23
35. Do you believe that you can set up a standard of work suitable to all members of a heterogeneous group?	22	33	45	67
36. Do you believe that homogeneous grouping with reference to ability is advisable?	45	67	22	33
37. Do you believe you can grade students of a heterogeneous group to within one point of each other?	07	10	60	90
✓ 38. Do you believe that a student of low mental ability should be marked "A" if he does a good piece of work even though his				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
work is below what you have set as a class standard?	34	51	33	49
✓39. Do you believe that a student should be graded against what other students do?	14	21	53	79
40. Do you think a student of low mental ability should be graded against a standard set up for the entire class?	11	16	56	84
✓41. Do you think a student of high mental ability should be graded against a standard set up for the entire class?	18	27	49	73
42. Do you believe progress in school subjects should be reported according to a child's own ability to progress?	58	77	9	23
X43. Do you believe our present marking system of A B C D, is a better system of evaluating a student's progress than the percentage system of 75, 80, 83, 81, 35c, upon which it is based?	57	85	10	15
44. Do you believe that the A, B, C, D, E, five point distribution				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
can be correctly interpreted only if achievement levels of classes in which they are enrolled are also known?	52	78	15	22
45. Do you believe it sound philosophy to change type of work so that pupils can secure satisfactory marks as experiments prove that learners make best progress when aware of the rate of their improvement?	51	76	16	24
X46. Do you believe that passing examinations and accumulating credits and grades is the acme of all academic achievement, the pupils chief aim in life?	06	08	61	92
X47. Do you believe there is anything attached to normal curve of distribution that justifies assignment of failure to the group receiving E and F marks?	10	15	57	85
48. An Accomplishment Ratio is the relationship between a child's actual achievement and his ability to achieve and is found by dividing the education				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
quotient(His achievement) by the intelligence quotient(His ability to achieve). Do you think the accomplishment ratio would be a better method of reporting a child's progress than our present system?	51	76	16	24
49. Do you think it would be better to promote a child from one grade to another on the basis of his accomplishment ratio than to fail him as is repeatedly done by our existing procedure?	57	85	10	15
50. Do you believe that the stimulus which remains with one in being permitted to progress with his class is greater than any gain in subject matter from repeating the grade?	42	63	25	37
51. Would you be in favor of adopting a method that is flexible and consistent with the "no failure" but "some growth" for every pupil?	50	75	17	25
52. Our Democratic				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Society is rapidly becoming more complex. Which do you think is more fundamental?				
a. Ability to get along with people?	62	92		
b. Efficiency in the four fundamental processes in arithmetic?	05	08		
✓ 53. Do you think teachers can do a more thorough job of reporting if they are not required to make the reports too often?	56	84	11	16
✓ 54. Do you think the report should carry the objectives and aims of the school?	60	90	07	10
55. Do you think the report should carry a definite philosophy regarding the relation of home with school?	57	85	10	15
56. Do you believe that teachers fail pupils instead of pupils failing themselves?	15	22	52	78
✓ 57. Do you believe that a teacher should pick a student up where he is in his educational development and take him as far as he can go				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
rather than pronounce him a failure?	62	92	05	08
✓ 58. Check each item below that you think might be successfully though gradually worked into an effective and flexible reporting practice so as to make the consequences of evaluation more wholesome, presuming that this system begins with the lower grades and is gradually extended through high school.				
a. Personal interviews and conferences between teachers and parents both scheduled and voluntary.	63	96	04	04
b. Conferences between teachers and pupils.	64	96	03	04
c. Visitation by the teacher with the parents both in the home.	57	85	10	15
d. Diagnostic letters and personal notes by teachers and pupils.	56	84	11	16
e. Periodic self-appraisal by pupils.	57	85	10	15
f. Reciprocal reporting on the part of the parents.	54	81	13	19

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
g. Subjects grouped under broad fields with only rate of progress marked as being rapid, normal, slow, or unsatisfactory.	52	78	15	22
h. Personal and some social development as work, social and health habits merely marked with the rate of progress.	51	76	16	24
i. Statements of improvement or reasons for poor progress.	63	96	04	04
j. Designate specific items in which pupil has strength or special ability and why.	61	92	06	09
k. Designate specific items in which pupil needs to improve and how this improvement can be made.	63	96	04	04

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONS	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
1. Everyone will agree that people differ in their physical abilities. Do you believe that people also differ in their mental abilities?	100	100	0	0

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
2. Do you believe that some kind of allowance should be made in the grades on report cards as a result of these mental differences?	87	87	13	13
3. Do you believe that teachers can honestly grade you as close as one point on your progress on a curve?	10	10	90	90
4. Does a teacher's threat to take grade points from you really stimulate you to greater efforts to achieve?	23	23	77	77
5. Do you believe that our present day method of reporting your progress in school really reflects the true type of effort you put on a course?	42	42	58	58
6. You have taken some courses that seemed to be more difficult than others. Do you think this factor of difficulty should be taken into consideration when a teacher makes a report of your progress on a report card?	83	83	17	17
7. If you find a course of work very difficult for you, do you think your progress in the course should be indicated by a				

		YES		NO	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
	failing grade if you have honestly put forth an effort to achieve in the course?	08	08	92	92
8.	You have put forth a real effort to make progress in a certain course but you still receive a low grade on your report card. Do you believe that you should be rewarded for that effort put forth?	97	97	03	03
9.	Do you believe that you should be recorded a failure in a course if you have not reached the standard as set up by the course of study provided you have made an honest effort to reach that standard?	15	15	85	85
10.	You have been told many times that a pleasing personality is a worthy trait. Do you think that teachers spend as much time as they should helping you to develop this trait?	16	16	84	84
11.	If teachers spent more time in helping you to develop a pleasing personality, would you be willing for				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
your personality progress to be indicated on your report card to your parents?	92	92	08	08
12. Do you believe that your ability to get along with other people should be reported to parents if teachers would be perfectly honest in their report?	80	80	20	20
13. If a report on your personality and ability to get along with others were reported on your card, do you think this would cause you to try harder to develop these traits?	72	72	28	28
14. Has your fear of what other pupils or your parents would think of you for making a low grade ever tempted you to be dishonest on your daily work or tests?	40	40	60	60
15. Do you believe that your progress on a course of work should be evaluated against the progress made by some one else on the same course regardless of your ability to achieve in that course?	03	03	97	97

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
16. How would you mark a student under a so-called standard of work under the following conditions? Read each condition before you mark them. <u> </u> A student of high mental ability does all the work required with but little effort. <u> </u> A student of average mental ability does all the work required but with considerable effort. <u> </u> A student of low mental ability does all the work required but puts out his supreme effort.				
17. In your opinion which of the three above cases do you think made the greatest percentage of progress?	Case 1 7	Case 2 13	Case 3 80	
18. Would you be in favor of making a self-evaluation of your progress once each six weeks as a part of the basis for a report to your parents?	69	69	31	31
19. Do you believe that if teachers really knew your true home life situation they would be in a better				

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
position to report on your progress in school?	77	77	23	23
20. Do you believe that passing examinations and accumulating credits in high school is the all-important factor in your school experience?	05	05	95	95
21. On our present report cards an A, B, C, D, or F is used to indicate your achievement in a certain subject. Do you believe that if an explanatory statement as to why a certain mark was assigned to you were included on the report card it would cause you to try to improve your mark on the next report?	75	75	26	25
22. Do you believe that the mark A, B, C, D, or F is a fairly true indication of the effort you have put forth on a course?	52	52	48	48
23. Do you believe that the emphasis placed on high marks causes you to think that marks are the true aim of education, rather than how much you learn?	31	31	69	69

	YES		NO	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
24. Do you believe that the great premium placed on high marks causes students to cheat or use other questionable means to obtain desired grades?	75	75	25	25
25. Do you believe that a personal report by the teacher to your parents would be a more effective method of stimulating your efforts than our present method of using the report card?	32	32	68	68

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