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# An Inquiry into the Current Practices in Reporting Pupil Progress in Elementary Schools

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AN INQUIRY INTO THE CURRENT PRACTICES IN REPORTING  
PUPIL PROGRESS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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A Substantial Paper  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of Education  
Eastern Illinois State College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

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by  
Jean Farris Ikemire  
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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

There is a wide variety of methods used today in reporting pupil progress. Many school systems are still using the old standard-type report cards. Many of the more progressive systems, especially the larger city schools, are adopting newer methods of reporting pupil progress which do the job much more effeciently and thoroughly.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. This study was made because of a felt need for an improved method of reporting pupil progress to parents in the elementary schools. The study is two-fold in its nature. The first part includes a survey of the current literature in the field of pupil-progress reporting. The second part presents the methods and procedures to be used in developing an improved method of reporting pupil progress in the elementary schools.

Importance of the study. Both parents and teachers are beginning to recognize the fact that the standard type of report card does not tell the story of the progress of children in a way that is meaningful and satisfactory. It is important that we find out what these weaknesses are in the standard reporting

which has been so predominant in the past and still practiced in too many elementary school systems today. In spite of the fact that there are still some teachers, administrators, and parents who adhere to the standard report card, many teachers, administrators, and even parents recognize the fact that the standard type of report card is unsatisfactory.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Standard report card. This term refers to the form which has been sent home to parents with the following information: letter or number grade for each subject, grade for department, and number of days attended.

Letter to parents. This is a newer method of reporting pupil progress to the parents in which the information regarding the pupil is sent to the parent in the form of a letter. In this method the academic successes and failures of the pupil is not the main issue. Of course, this phase of the pupil progress reporting is not neglected altogether; but it is considered to be of less importance and significance than it has been in the past.

Parent-teacher conference. This is a newer method of reporting pupil progress in which the parent and the teacher have a talk. The teacher as guide tries to start on a positive note by emphasizing the child's contributions and successes. Specific instances of behavior can be shared by both while discussing the

social, emotional or physical development of the child involved. In many instances the parents themselves began talking about physical problems before discussing academic progress and needs.

Classification of children. This term or phrase refers to the grade placement of the individual child. In some schools the terms fail, retain, and promote are used in the classification of children. Other schools do not use these terms. Instead, the children move along with their chronological and social age groups. In this case, instruction continues on the ability and achievement levels of the children.

Two-way report card. This is a report card which has provision for the teacher's report to the parent and also for a report from the parent to the teacher of things which might be helpful to the teacher in working with the child. Many times the parent has the solution to the child's behaviors or problems.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF REMAINDER OF THE PAPER

Chapter two. This deals with the history of reporting pupil progress, methods of reporting, kinds of marks, by-products of issuing report cards, and trends in reporting to parents.

Chapter three. This chapter deals with a survey of the current literature in the field of reporting pupil progress. In this is given the practices of some large school systems which have improved their methods of reporting to the parents.

Chapter four. Methods and procedures to be used in developing an improved method of reporting pupil progress in the elementary schools. In it are the following topics:

1. Basic principles of administrative leadership in the improvement of school reporting.
2. Characteristics of a good report.
3. Suggestions for improvement of the report card.
4. Developing a report card.

Chapter five. Summary and conclusions

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY AND IMPLICATIONS OF REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS

History of report cards. In colonial times there were no formal written reports to the parents. The closely knit communities were small. The parents and teacher were brought together on numerous occasions. The schoolmaster was looked upon as one of the more important leaders in the town or community. He knew each adult in the area. He reported orally to the parent on the child's progress. Johnnie is reading in the fourth reader is a satisfactory report to a father or mother concerning their son. This idea was prevalent. As time passed, the communities developed into larger communities and cities. We find the situation quite changed. The teacher and the parent no longer find themselves in close contact. Informal contacts between parents and teachers were unlikely, so the formal reports became necessary.

Near the middle of the nineteenth century, written reports were instituted. There was space for marks in deportment, effort, and regularity of attendance, as well as for each school subject. The first practice was to use the letters E, excellent; G, good; F, fair; and P, poor. This system was criticized by many as being too unprecise a rating. Then the schools changed to the percentage terms. Mary made 80 in spelling, 92 in arithmetic, and 95 in science. This practice came under vigorous attack in the 1910 to the 1930 period on the ground that it implied an accuracy

of grading which was not really possible. By the later 1920s the most common reporting practice was to use report cards which expressed marks either in terms of the earlier E, G, F, P or A, B, C, D, F.

However, these minor changes in the symbols used did not solve the problems of reporting to parents. The past twenty years have been characterized by exploration of reporting very different procedures. The most common innovations are: using individual descriptive letters to parents; reporting orally in parent-teacher interviews; employing checklists to provide a more comprehensive, quick description of the pupil's work, progress, and conduct; and using pupil self-appraisal procedures.

In spite of these above-mentioned innovations, the most popular marking system is probably one using the four or five-point scale using letter marks: E, S, P, F or A, B, C, D, F. The letters represent descending order of merit from "excellent" to "failure." The key fails to make clear whether "excellent" refers to excellent performance in relation to the group or excellent in terms of the child's ability. The former is the interpretation more widely used.

Undesirable by-products of issuing report cards. The main criticism is that report cards are used chiefly to judge the child and is held as evidence for or against him rather than as a device

to help him. Marks should be assessed on the basis of how they affect those concerned - teacher, parents, and child.

Effects on the teacher. Many teachers testify that they find making out report cards the most unpleasant of their teaching duties. When meeting the downcast faces of some children as they receive their cards, conscientious teachers feel twinges of unhappiness or even guilt. Teachers frankly admit that they do not know how to mark children, or what factors to include in a mark. The teacher knows her relations with the parents depend, in a measure, on the marks which the children bring home. Are many teachers able to resist giving an advantage to children of influential parents?

Effects on the parent. Parents, too, are confused when it comes to report cards. Rarely do they understand the philosophy of evaluation on which cards are based. If their child has low marks, the parents may develop a guilty feeling for having failed as parents. Oftimes scoldings for low marks, and rewards for good marks do little to improve matters.

Report cards do share in complicating sibling relationships. Marks are compared by parents on the false premise that any child in the family can, with equal effort, do as well as any other.

Many parents find report cards disturbing. Some are uncomfortably reminded that their dreams of Johnnie becoming a doctor seem remote; others squirm as the neighbor boasts that her child has received better grades. A few, knowing how seriously Willie

and Anna are attacking their school work, feel keenly concerned about the effect on them of another set of low marks.

Effects on the child. Perhaps the most deeply affected person is the child himself. He thinks of these marks as representing the teacher's evaluation, not so much of his achievement, as of himself. His feelings of selfworth are affected accordingly. Marks come to have a disproportionate value in the child's thinking. He is judged by the mark, not by the satisfaction and enjoyment he receives from the learning experience.

Many a child goes through untold tortures from the moment he receives his report card until he musters up courage to deliver it into the hands of father or mother. Just as miserable is the child who aspires to make all A's and finds a B on his report card. Most teachers have never had the experience of bringing home poor report cards, month after month, to disappointed parents.

Pupils who painfully anticipate low marks and the sorrowful reactions of parents dully remind themselves that school is for sissies. Those pupils whose behavior did not conform to school standards are fearful that a "poor conduct" report will result in further punishment at home.

Trends in reporting to parents. For several years there has been a growing dissatisfaction with the traditional system of school marking on an absolute scale. Uneasy questions have been asked: "Just what do marks measure?" "Is a teacher's subjective judgment a reliable measure of child achievement?"

In keeping with newer theories of education, the trend is toward rating a child in terms of his own ability, although some educators still feel that, since the world is fiercely competitive, students should have competitive experiences in school.

Today educators realize how important it is that the school and community cooperate in planning for improved reporting. There are two chief purposes in reporting to parents. One is to interpret the school to the parent, while the other is to provide them with information helpful in guiding their own children.

Continuous evaluation is needed. Report cards, if used, should be only the start of a continuous and comprehensive plan of evaluation. If the unfortunate effects outweigh the good, the present type of card should be abandoned until a satisfactory one can be devised.

According to Elsbree and McNally,<sup>1</sup> there are undeniable trends which suggest what tomorrow's reporting procedures may resemble. These are:

1. A trend away from formal report cards to diagnostic letters and informal notes.
2. A shift from a rather limited report of scholastic progress to a more comprehensive report of the total development and growth of the child.

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<sup>1</sup> Willard S. Elsbree and Arnold J. McNally, Elementary School Administration and Supervision (American Book Company, New York, 1951), pp. 178-190

3. A trend (where printed report forms are used) toward stating the specific objectives to be attained in the various areas of the school program.

4. A trend in the direction of oral reporting through parent-teacher conferences.

5. Greater flexibility both with respect to time and manner of reporting. (Considerably more freedom in reporting is allowed individual school units and teachers than was formerly granted.)

6. A trend in the direction of soliciting the reactions of parents to the pupil's progress and to the teacher's report of pupil progress.

7. The preparation of special bulletins and handbooks for parents and other lay citizens to inform them about school policies and practices.

8. Some disposition as illustrated by the Montclair experiment to develop self-appraisal forms for pupil use in the upper grades of the elementary school. <sup>2</sup>

More schools are beginning to use the letters to parents and the parent-teacher conferences as means of reporting pupil progress to parents. The trend is definitely away from the old standard form of report card which was mainly an evaluation of the academic successes and failures of the individual. Several school systems are using a combination of the two forms: the letter to parents and the parent-teacher conference with great success. All persons concerned - teachers, parents, and pupils - approve of this type of reporting pupil progress.

Reports regarding individual child should not be expected to take the place of a thoroughgoing program of school interpretation. If reports about children are to be helpful, parents need to know what the school's purposes are, including the chief objectives of the various fields of study, how the curriculum is organ-

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 179-181

ized to obtain those purposes, and the kind of learning experiences used in the school.

## CHAPTER III

### SOME EXAMPLES OF IMPROVED METHODS OF REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS

A survey of current literature in the field of reporting pupil progress gives us a number of examples of how various school systems have improved upon their older, inefficient methods of reporting to parents. We look through these articles on this subject and we find that parents as well as teachers are well pleased with the improvements. This chapter will be made up of short summaries of procedures used by a few large city school systems in adopting improved methods of reporting pupil progress.

The teacher reports to the parents. Raymond <sup>3</sup> informs us that the teachers of Montgomery County, Maryland, make reports to parents regarding their children's progress in school four times a year. The forms used are  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " X  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " - a four page fold. Three colors are used to differentiate the forms for reporting to parents of (1) kindergarten and first grade, (2) second and third grades, and (3) fourth through sixth.

About the end of the first month the parents are invited to the school. They are given a survey of the work outlined for the grade and other interesting experiences planned. The parents are told how they can help. A room mother is chosen to assist the teacher in various activities.

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<sup>3</sup>Anna Raymond, "The Teacher Reports to the Parents," The National Elementary Principal, (XXXI, No. 6, June, 1952, pp. 22-26)

A progress folder is kept for each child's work. As reporting time draws near, the teacher and pupil have a conference to discuss the merits of the work which has been kept. The teacher does this with each pupil and then the report is sent home.

After this report a conference with each parent is arranged. This is a little difficult the first time. In these conferences with parents the major emphasis is upon the phases of the child's development in which improvement is most possible. Such practices as giving of rewards and the comparing of children's grades are discouraged.

The second report is prepared by using the child's folder, notebooks, and the teacher's observation.

The third is made out in a conference with the child, and, if necessary, a parent conference.

The fourth and final report is a short conference with the child, evaluating his growth through the year. He takes the card and folder home.

Planning through parent-teacher conferences. According to Tatum, <sup>4</sup> parent-teacher conferences were started about the end of World War II in Warren County, New Jersey. The idea has grown.

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<sup>4</sup> Anna R. Tatum, "Planning for Child Growth Thru Parent-Teacher Conferences," The National Elementary Principal, XXXI: 34-38, June, 1952.

They are using the three-way method of reporting which involves children, parents and teachers.

In order to carry out any proposed change it is very essential that the community understand the situation. This was done by teachers talking to the public, by committees of parents, classroom parent meetings, and published articles in newspaper.

For the conference there prevails an air of friendliness and welcome. This creates an impressive atmosphere for the parent. The children plan ways of showing their work and leave materials on the desk for their parents to see and discuss.

There is no set pattern for the conference but the teacher acts as guide in starting the conference off on a positive note by emphasizing the child's contributions and successes. They later discuss the child's social, emotional or physical development.

"A conference card is prepared for each child. These materials are confidential and are destroyed at the end of each year. The card has four columns: (1) Personality and Health; (2) School Achievement and Needs; (3) Parent Contributions; (4) Follow-Up." <sup>5</sup>

There are three annual conferences which are scheduled early in the school year for mid-October, late January, and early May, with the understanding that an in-between conference will be arranged whenever a pressing problem arises.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 35

It is believed that:

This method of reporting is helpful to us because it (1) evaluates each child's progress in terms of his potentialities instead of rating him in comparison with others; (2) looks ahead to a child's future progress instead of just estimating his present status; (3) makes it possible to give parents all significant information instead of that limited to a letter or number or check mark or a short note; (4) makes it possible for parents and teachers to communicate freely in pooling information and so to work together on problems affecting each child. <sup>6</sup>

The parent-teacher conference - a cooperative plan. Reszke <sup>7</sup> informs us that a combination of the report card and the parent-teacher conference plan of reporting pupil progress is used in the Cincinnati public school system. At the elementary school level the report card is sent home four times each year; the conference is held at the request of parents, teachers, or principal.

This was a new school which was opened for use September 6, 1949, and was to be used as a demonstration school. It was named the North Avondale School.

The purpose of the parent-teacher conference was to establish a cooperative working relationship between the school and home. It is felt that a conference with all parents individually is important regardless of whether or not there is indication of a problem.

Appointments for conferences are arranged by telephone, in

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 38

<sup>7</sup> Luise Reszke, "The Parent-Teacher Conference - A Cooperative Plan," The National Elementary Principal, XXXI:39-46, June, 1952.

person at the school, through messages carried by children, at Parent-Teacher Association meetings, and through personal notes written by teachers, parents, or principal.

There are no set times for conferences other than at the beginning and middle of the school year. Additional conferences are arranged only when there are felt needs.

In the evaluation which takes place during the conference emphasis is placed on the ability that the child has in the organization of his work, standards that the child has for his work, cooperation with classmates and teachers, and other personal characteristics conducive of individual growth and cooperative living. The teacher presents constructive criticism and shows ways in which the child can improve.

The values of the parent-teacher conference are many. This method for reporting pupil progress:

1. Enables the teacher to know the child and his developmental tasks.
2. Provides insight into problems that center in the home but affect the child's school life.
3. Prevents wasted teacher effort of focusing attention on the problem rather than on the symptom.
4. Provides the teacher with insight into the manner in which parents deal with their children.
5. Establishes the parent's confidence in the teacher.
6. Gives the parent an opportunity to know the teacher as a person.
7. Helps the parent understand the goals of teaching, etc.
8. Helps parents understand the school environment and its demands upon the child.
9. Provides assurance to the parent that the teacher values the child as a person and is anxious for his success.
10. Encourages parent participation in the program of evaluation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 46

Something needs to be done. One of the perennial problems in American schools is what to do about reporting the educational progress of children to their parents. Report cards have been eliminated in some northern New Jersey schools.<sup>9</sup> The teachers say that report cards are growth-stoppers, and many feel that failures block the child's development. Another teacher says that there is no fair way of marking the very young children. You can not keep children from comparing report cards. In many cases, the slow learners, the ones who can't ever come out on top, tend to develop dangerous defeatist attitudes.

Instead of giving report cards to the pupils, these teachers in New Jersey which were mentioned in the above paragraph have fifteen-minute conferences four times a year. The teachers prepare folders with samples of each child's work and notes to guide them in discussing the child's mental and physical development with his parents. Instead of grades, comments like "This is good for you." or "You can do better." appear across the tops of corrected arithmetic and spelling papers in the folders.

It is unlikely that any system of reporting can be proof against criticism. An illuminating report on a child's work may constitute an important factor in parent education. For many children, the old formal report card resulted in unpleasant and sometimes disastrous relationships between parents and children on the dates when report cards were issued. Reporting pupil pro-

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<sup>9</sup> "Report Cards, "Elementary School Journal, 49:316-17, February, 1949.

gress to parents can be made an occasion for setting up good relations between the school and parents and between the parents and children.

## CHAPTER IV

### IDEAS AND PRINCIPLES RELATED TO IMPROVED REPORTING

There are many basic principles from which we can get an understanding of the different aspects of this problem of improving the reporting of pupil progress. These we must understand if we are to be successful in the job of changing the reporting method which has been in use for so long in our school systems.

Chief purposes in reporting to parents. It is inconsistent to compare children with one another or with a set standard. The standards set must be realistic for the individual. Rating scales defeat the purpose for which they are made. It is important that the parent know all the important gains a child is making, the problems he's up against, and how the school is trying to help him. The method of reporting should reflect and reinforce the basic purposes of the school.

Reporting should be a two-way process where the teachers and parents help one another to evaluate the children's progress.

Reporting should build a child's self-confidence and reinforce acceptable relationships between the parent and child. If the child is to learn and be happy, he must have faith and confidence in teachers, parents, and administrators.

Reporting to parents is at the heart of school-community relationships. The parent who has several contacts with the

school at least two or three times a year is usually on better terms with the school and more willing to cooperate in every way possible. The parent who never sees inside the school is the one who knows the least about what is going on and does the most negative criticizing of the activities which are carried out by them. If parents feel that the teacher knows their child, values him, and is doing the utmost to help him, they are likely to feel confident in the school. This is possible through improved methods of reporting pupil progress.

In giving leadership to teachers and parents in the improvement of school reporting, the administrators should keep in mind the following basic principles:

1. The chief purpose of reporting pupil progress to parents is to provide the information necessary for a sound working relationship between the school and the home in the guidance of the child.

2. Parents should be kept informed about the growth and progress of their children in all aspects of the school curriculum. This implies reporting evidences of changes in the emotional, the physical, the social, and the aesthetic phases of pupil growth as well as in the intellectual.

3. Nothing should be included in an oral or written report to parents which seems likely to operate against the welfare of the child.

4. Pupil progress reports should be so written and constructed that parents understand well their role in guiding the child's development. Vague or general teacher comments are not likely to provide parents with the background they need in order to be helpful.

5. Provision should be made for parent-teacher interviews, informal notes, telephone calls, and specially prepared bulletins and handbooks.

6. Reporting policies should be revised co-operatively by teachers, parents, and principal. Many schools have made the mistake of revising their report forms without parent co-operation and the results have in some instances been disastrous.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Willard S. Elsbree and Arnold J. McNally, Elementary School Administration and Supervision (American Book Company, New York, 1951) pp. 189-190

Characteristics of a report. Regardless of the method to be used in reporting pupil progress, a report should have the following characteristics:

1. The report should be so constructed that it will be meaningful to teachers, pupils, and parents.
2. It should contribute to desirable public relations by avoiding antagonism, resentment, or other negative attitudes.
3. The report should emphasize the child's strength rather than his points of weakness and his failures alone. When a pupil's difficulty or need is reported, suggestions should be made for overcoming the difficulty.
4. It should stimulate a desire on the part of parent and pupil to overcome weaknesses.
5. It should reflect the educational objective of the school.
6. It should tell the parent how his child is growing in terms of his ability to achieve as well as general achievement in comparison with general expectations of his whole age group. Obviously, the five-letter report card evaluates only a child's achievement as compared with the achievement of others in his own immediate class group.
7. It should report standard achievement test scores, thereby showing the child's achievement in relation to average achievement of a large widely distributed group of children of his approximate age.
8. It should report progress in terms of the development of the whole child rather than in terms of growth in subject matter fields only. Progress in the development of social qualities, of emotional maturity, of physical characteristics, and of desirable work habits should also be included.
9. It should provide for comments by both teachers and parents.
10. It should give attendance data.
11. It should make provisions for conferences desired by the teacher or the parent. 11

Suggestions for improvement. The child should come to recognize how his ambitions compare with those of others. It would be unfortunate if a boy with an intelligence quotient of 90 should aspire to attend medical school, where the average I. Q. is 50 or

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11 "The Elementary Course of Study," Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Public Instruction, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, pp 225-226.

more points higher. From the mental-hygiene standpoint, however, the report card should not be used as a means of bringing about this recognition. Children should be helped to realize that, despite certain deficiencies, there is still a chance for effective, happy living. They must be helped to keep their feeling of self-worth.

Some schools simplify the problem of giving marks by giving only S and U - "satisfactory or unsatisfactory." This plan makes no evaluation excepting sifting out the failures. There is nothing to distinguish the student who barely passes from the best student in the class.

The teacher should evaluate the child by various instruments so as to be able to build on the child's strong points and strengthen his weaknesses.

The pupil should be taught how to judge his own work so that evaluation will become an integral part of his work habits. Much of the teacher's evaluation may be of the informal type.

Individual reports, to be most helpful to parents, need to include two types of information, one regarding the child's educational achievements and the other regarding the factors which help to explain his achievement or lack of it.

For example, a report for a fifth-grade child in reading might include comments or judgments regarding his accuracy of reading, comprehension, his speed in reading, and his reading interests.

These would give parents information regarding the child's educational achievements. The report might also comment on his attitude toward reading, his habits of work, his regularity of attendance. Reports should comment on his achievement in relation to several major objectives of the subject rather than a single grade in reading.

In reporting achievement, teachers are becoming increasingly aware and concerned about the effects of the report on the child. They want to avoid a sense of despair or unfairness created by low marks for children of limited background or ability who strive to learn, but whose educational competence is still below that of his classmates. They want to avoid as well the sense of complacency produced by high marks for the child whose competence is superior but who has put forth little effort.

To overcome these undesirable effects, some schools are reporting achievement in terms of progress. Progress means gains in educational competence made by the pupil since the last report. A child whose competence in solving arithmetic is low may have made more gain in problem solving since the last report than another child whose competence was the highest in class - the first child would receive a high mark or verbal commendation on progress while the second child would receive a low mark or verbal reminder of his lack of progress even though his problem solving competence was superior.

This procedure avoids the bad effects of a report based

solely on the child's standing in relation to others, but it has a weakness. Neither parent nor the child is helped to appraise the child's level of achievement in relation to normal expectations for adequate performance in higher education or in employment. Consequently, a good report to parents should appraise both the child's progress and his level of accomplishment.

Some confusion exists regarding the role of pupil self-appraisal in reporting to parents. It can be a helpful teaching device, but it cannot provide all the appraisal information needed for reports.

In reporting pupil progress some tension is unavoidable. Periodic reviews of school experiences and educational accomplishments are needed to guide us. But though not all tension can be removed from reporting to parents, harmful pressures can be reduced. Current innovations in reporting aim to make reports a truly helpful part of a sound school program.

Rogers<sup>12</sup> recommends the diagnostic letter as the best plan yet devised for reporting to parents. This letter contains facts about the child and his work, knowledge of which is of interest and benefit to the parent. A faculty committee might work out a helpful guide for preparation of school letters, and sample letters might be discussed by the faculty as a whole in terms of their probable effect on parent and child.

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<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Rogers, "Common-Sense Considerations Concerning Report Cards," Elementary School Journal, 52:518-522, May, 1952.

Personal contacts are a must. Written reports to the parents are helpful, but they can never be substituted for personal contacts. When a parent enrolls his child in school, he should pledge himself to visit the school at least twice during the year. At a friendly, informal conference, the teacher and parent can discuss ways in which they can work together for the best interests of the child. Occasionally the teacher may have group conferences with the parents of all his pupils. This plan provides a group-therapy situation, for each parent learns that other parents have similar problems.

Developing a report card. All schools wishing to report pupil progress by means of a report card will not find it desirable to adopt the same form of card. A report card should evolve as a result of co-operative effort on the part of all the people concerned. If the continuous-growth concept is the desired goal of a school, time should be taken to develop a report which reflects this philosophy. This may require a period of several years. By enlisting the interest of all groups - teachers, parents, the school board - much good can be accomplished in directing the basic thinking of all concerned toward the improvement of the whole school program.

One suggested procedure to develop a report card may be:

1. Select a committee of members from the professional staff to draw up a suggested report card.
2. Submit the suggested card in duplicated form to various groups for discussion.

3. Further revision of the card in the light of suggested ideas.
4. Place the card in use in the school for a trial period of a year. The card may appear in mimeographed or duplicated form for economy, since it may need further revision.
5. Invite further discussion of the card by various groups, such as the parent-teacher association, the school board, and the teachers. A talk on the revision of the report card may be of interest to service clubs and other community organizations.
6. Further revision by the committee, further trial periods, and further discussions, if necessary, should be continued until the report card is ready to be adopted as the official report for the school or for the school system.

This is not the procedure but merely a suggestion of how to go about the problem of improving the existing form of reporting pupil progress to parents.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

This study was made because of a need for an improved method of reporting pupil progress to parents in the elementary schools. For too long a time the schools have been sending home reports of low marks or high marks in the academic field regardless of how accurate these marks were and regardless of their effects - good or bad - upon the parents and especially upon the children. Many a child has been branded a failure by the school teacher without understanding or caring whether the "failing" marks were due to a lack of interest, a lack of favorable background, a lack of sympathy and love, a lack of physical stamina, or a lack of mental ability.

No one can deny the fact that the issuing of reports to parents may have a decided ill-effect upon the pupil, the parent, and even upon the teacher. This study has brought out the fact that there is a decided trend away from the standard report card which has been in vogue for a long period of time.

This study has brought out the fact that many of our more progressive schools are turning to the letters to the parents and to parent-teacher conferences as a better method of reporting pupil progress. A combination of these two methods is being

successfully used in some large city school systems. The conference type of reporting takes into account the social, emotional, and physical development of the child as well as the academic achievement. This is something that has been neglected for so long by the method of reporting pupil progress which has been used by so many schools in the past and still is being used in many schools today.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions drawn from this study were:

1. The reporting method used should represent the cooperative efforts of administrators, teachers, parents, and pupils in order that their purposes might be clearly understood.
2. The reports should be in harmony with the educational objectives or the philosophy of the school.
3. The reports should reflect the total growth of the child in all areas of his development.
4. Schools should recognize the individual child-developmental approach and evaluate a child in relation to his ability rather than to the ability of his class.
5. The information reported (1) should be significant and accurate enough for guidance purposes, (2) should strengthen parent-child relationships by increasing understanding and interest, (3) and should protect the self-respect of the child and help build self-confidence in him.
6. Since the parent-teacher conference method appears to approximate the child-developmental approach, the conference method of reporting should be encouraged.
7. All children should learn self-appraisal as early as possible so that they can share in the evaluation of their progress toward clearly understood objectives.
8. All conferences and reports should be the confidential concern of the school and should become a part of the child's cumulative record.

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