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A Study of Public Relations in the Minnehaha Elementary School Vancouver, Washington

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A Study of Public Relations
in the Minnehaha Elementary School
Vancouver, Washington

by
Harold V. Henry

Presented to the Department of Education
and the Graduate School of the
Central Washington College of Education
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

There is an ever growing trend today by school people in general to recognize the importance of interpreting the school program so that the public may develop an understanding which will bring about a closer working relationship.

No longer is it possible for the school to stand alone. If education, through the school, is to endeavor to keep pace with society, maintain its rights and fulfill one of its objectives, that of teaching the democratic way of living, then the school leader must certainly assume the responsibility for studying his community to bring about this desired goal.

Support of the school program comes from the people. How can this best be accomplished? Most assuredly a strong public relations program would be the number one method for achieving this support.

The editors of the School Executive in their study of the "Principal and Community" state that:

Undoubtedly principals have come a long way in the last few years in their conception of public relations. No longer do they conceive of their job solely in terms of what goes on 'inside' of the school. They recognize their responsibility to the patrons and to the public. An increasing

number discern that the school is an agency which affects the entire community.¹

First, it is the responsibility of the school staff to become acquainted with and to understand their school and community, for effectively planning a school public relations program.

Olsen and Others, point out:

Education is inherently a social process, and if it is to be realistic, vital, and therefore defensible in the modern democratic world, its curricular program must be formed in terms of continuous, first hand acquaintance with significant aspects of the physical, biological, and social environment. Thus the test of the teacher today is emphatically this: Does he know the community?²

The same analogy can thus be drawn in respect to the parent. Does he know the school and its purposes? It is doubtful that he does, for until recent years the school program has been left to those trained in the art of passing on knowledge to the youth of the community.

It was a rarity when parents participated in constructive contribution to school activities. If they had any participation at all, it was in the realm of expressing dissatisfaction with the teacher or the administrator which

¹ The Editors, "The Principal and the Community", The School Executive, September, 1950, p. 12

² Edward G. Olsen, and Others, School and Community, N. Y. Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1945, p. 12

usually was the result of some misunderstanding.

Now school people more and more are taking their cue from private business. It is recognized that businesses measure their profits in terms of public good will; they have learned through experience that it pays to advertise.

Reeder believes:

The need for a public relations program is as urgent in the administration of the school as it is in the administration of private business. The schools were established by the people, they are financed³ by the people, and they belong to the people.

In the second place, it becomes the responsibility of the school staff to inform, or to acquaint the community with the school. In other words, the school staff must let patrons know what the school is doing, take them into their confidence and seek suggestions from them in planning.

Reeder further states that:

In public relations familiarity with the school is not likely to 'breed contempt'; on the contrary, lack of it is likely to 'breed contempt'. If the people are taken into the confidence of the school officials and are given information concerning the purposes, conditions, and needs of the schools, they are more likely to support the schools through foul as well as fair weather.⁴

³ Ward G. Reeder, An Introduction to Public School Relations, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1937) p. 4

⁴ Reeder, Op. Cit. p. 4

The community's power rests in its cooperative efforts. United, with a common goal, there is no end to the benefits that any school may receive.

Abraham Lincoln once said:

Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail, without it nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions.

Leonard and Eurick ⁵ in "Evaluation of Education" state that "competent participation in affairs of the state is necessary for free men." Similarly competent participation in the affairs of the school is necessary for the education of these same free men.

The School Executive further states:

That the most important phase of the job of an elementary principal is that of human relations. He is the key person because of his relations with children, teachers, parents, and patrons. Through his work with the teachers he influences the program of the school. Through the children he interprets the school to the community... Many good educators have failed because they have neglected human relations. ⁶

Thus it would appear that a strong public relations program is recognized as an important part of any school

⁵ J. Paul Leonard, Alvin C. Eurick, An Evaluation of Modern Education. (New York: Appelton-Century Crofts Inc., 1942) p. 4

⁶ The School Executive, Op. Cit. p. 64

system. The writer, in order to lay the foundation for the improvement of the public relation program for his community, conducted this questionnaire study with a threefold purpose in mind. (1) To evaluate the overall public relations of the school with its community, (2) to bring to light the weaknesses and neglected parts as well as the strengths of the school and community relations and, (3) thereby to provide a point of departure in improving the school public relation program.

Chapter II

PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

During the past decade school systems have become more concerned about their public relations with the community; therefore, some research has been done in this area. This chapter presents a review of some of these studies.

A committee on certification of Superintendents of schools,⁸ authorized by the American Association of School Administration in 1937 headed by Otto W. Haisley, Superintendent of Ann Arbor, Michigan Schools, related that:

None of the twenty-six superintendents studied had an organized, continuing public relation program. Twenty-four were convinced of the importance of a systematically organized program. Sixteen emphasized the need of better preparation in public relations work for all employees in the school system. Professional layman interviewed in the twenty-six cities emphasized the following weakness in the public relations programs:

1. School people assume that parents and other members of the community read more than they do. The interviews showed that very little of

⁸ Committee on Certification of Superintendents of Schools, "The Superintendent of Schools and His Work," American Association of School Administrators, Washington D.C. 1940

the written material sent to the homes was read.

2. Teachers are confused in their thinking about changes in education and are confusing the public to such an extent that the laymen suspect the teaching group of guessing at a lot of things.
3. Too many school employees are interested in participating only in those community affairs which concern the school, particularly financial support.
4. Too few of the staff and line officers of the schools take an active part in community affairs.
5. School employees, as a rule, do not know how to mingle with lay and business people as other professional men do. Too many of them treat adults as children.
6. Too many educators are only concerned about "talking shop" and do not show enough interest in other things in the community.
7. Teachers lack tact in meeting social and community problems.

The survey went on to show that the materials most widely read were materials of an illustrated nature and surveys of school activities. The laymen interviewed pointed out the local paper as their chief source of school information. The sport page and sections of the paper that contained graphs and pictures of school activities were most frequently mentioned.

The devices selected by laymen and believed to have the greatest appeal as being representative of what schools were doing are listed as: Students and faculty organizations and programs, athletic teams, bands, orchestras, glee clubs,

dramatics, radio programs, and speaking contests.

According to the laymen interviewed certain personal qualifications are necessary to enable a superintendent to carry on good public relations; these are: (1) Social Sensitivity. (2) Ability to speak effectively in plain, simple terms. (3) The ability to mingle with lay groups in their sports and social affairs. (4) The ability of the superintendent to present a financial picture of the public schools in concise and representative form. (5) The ability to organize the staff-and-line officers to such an extent that a layman can get any information he wants at any time by making contacts with the person in charge of the activity. (6) The ability of the superintendent to recognize and call by name a large number of business and professional people. Perhaps, one of the most valuable discoveries in this particular study was that a direct carry over resulted in the community when harmonious relations were lacking between the superintendent and staff of a school system. The public does not understand this discord and as a result false inferences and gossip exist on the part of the layman. Therefore, the best public relations exist where school employees follow the axiom, "One for all and all for one."

The second study reviewed by the writer, was prepared by the Editorial Committee of the twenty-seventh year book, The National Elementary Principal.⁹ In 1948 a poll was made of the elementary principals throughout the United States to determine how much time they spent on community work. The results indicated that these principals devoted about nine percent of their time to "community duties", which would represent approximately four hours weekly. Two percent of the principles gave less than one hour weekly, and twelve percent gave seven or more hours weekly. The size of the community showed no significant differences except that in communities of less than 2500 population more hours were demanded from the principal.

Principals were asked to list new areas and activities in which they should be interested. The following list comprises the areas on the basis of frequency mentioned:

- (1) Parent Teacher Association.
- (2) Youth groups,
- (3) Community recreation,
- (4) Service clubs,
- (5) Community improvement programs,
- and (6) Adult education.

When comparing the 1948 study with the 1928 study, the committee concluded that principals today have increased interest in the community. The following recommendations

⁹ The Editorial Committee, The National Elementary Principal, Twenty-Seventh Year book, Vol. XXVIII, No. I, September, 1948, pp. 125-132

were made by this committee:

1. That about half of the principals should reconsider their present community relationships and increase both the quantity and the quality of their participation in community affairs.
2. That in their review of community relationships all principals should raise questions as to the purposes of these contacts. It is possible that community pressures dictate many activities which are relatively unimportant.
3. That there is a need for community contacts in the sense of attempts to discover curriculum resources, and to explore the influences affecting the lives of children. These explorations should indicate improvements in the curriculum and pupil personnel phases of the principal's work.
4. That extensive local study of the community phases of both supervising and teaching principals is needed. Where there are central office restrictions these should be examined and, if possible, removed. Through the principal's community activities two processes take place--new ideas enter education, and the schools are interpreted to the people.
5. That the professional preparation programs of teacher education in situations and inservice education should recognize the importance of community contacts and should help principals to emphasize the quality, rather than quantity, of such relationships.
6. That superintendents of schools should guide the community activities of principals so as to promote the growth of individual administration and to utilize the special talents of all. Team spirit can bring much to the school system as a whole.

The editors ¹⁰ of The School Executive devoted their planning section to an investigation of the school principal and his job.

¹⁰ The Editors, "The Job of the Principal", The School Executive, September, 1950, pp.64-66

Their findings revealed that principals divided their job into six responsibility areas, the second being in the area of community relationship. Analysis of the replies from a great many principals indicated there were a variety of ways in which public relations were carried on:

1. Interpreting the goals.
 - "The principal as a leader in his school community feels the responsibility for interpreting the goals of education by means of
 - a. Conferences of representative people to discuss the needs of the community.
 - b. Meeting of parents to discuss the common problems.
 - c. Sending letters, circulars, and pamphlets announcing coming events...
 - d. Open house and other school gatherings
 - e. Home visitation by teachers.
2. Utilizing community resources.
 - a. Seek to serve as a representative to help children, teachers, administrators, parents to live and work together in a democratic society.
 - b. Seek to serve our community as a whole by recognizing and utilizing effectively the resources found in the community.
3. Cooperative Planning
 - a. Harness the vast reservoir of human talent in our immediate community.
 - b. Public participation in exploring, planning, and evaluating educational issues....
4. Program defense
 - a. Informal meeting at school to answer questions
 - b. Send out invitations to citizens to come to school and see what is going on.
 - c. Lay consultants.
 - d. Conference with critics.
 - e. Arm yourself with facts about school so that you will have answer available immediately.
 - f. Work with P.T.A. programs for the next year's programs.

Story ¹¹ contributes an interesting study on "What Part Should Parents Play in School Administration?" The survey was nationwide; 1,817 educators were questioned. The participants were asked to list the "strongly democratic" practices in their school systems. Almost every response rated high on active citizen's groups.

The study pointed out that educators feel a serious need for greater parent participation in the management of school affairs. About one half of the responses indicated they believed their school system was "satisfactorily" democratic. A large number did not think their system was "sufficiently" democratic. The question, "how much citizen participation?" brought out that over half of the educators believe that direct participation of citizens is desirable in certain areas of school planning. There was, however, a wide variation between the participants opinions and the ideas prevailing in their schools.

This study indicated that educators are anxious to have regular lay participation within the circles of school administration.

Chisholm, in a study made in the State of Illinois

¹¹ M.L. Story, "What Part Should Parents Play in School Administration?", The School Executive, May, 1951 pp. 52-53

in 1949 discusses the problem of pupil transportation. This study brings out these factors in connection with public relations:

First, the findings of this study give the Superintendent and his board of education the most defensible method for the need and cost of pupil transportation in his district ... In the second place, a significant part of the possibility for educational progress in most states awaits a practical and workable solution to the pupil transportation problem.¹²

There is evidence that the type and cost of pupil transportation plays an important part in influencing the kind of community relations a school could expect to receive. This study particularly develops the idea that pupil transportation hinders reorganization of school districts, and outlines a program and schedule of transportation to overcome this problem.

No doubt the most copiously compiled work in research questionnaires in the field of school public relations is that by Hand¹³ who developed four different types of question forms. (1) The Illinois Inventory of Parent Opinion, (2 and 3) Illinois Inventory of Pupil Opinion,

¹² Leslie Chisholm, "Pupil Transportation", The Nations Schools, Vol. 47, No. 5, May 1951, pp. 63-64

¹³ Harold C. Hand, What People Think About Their Schools, (New York: World Book Company 1948.) pp. 153-217

(two forms, upper-elementary school form, and secondary school form), and (4) Illinois Inventory of Teacher Opinion. These questionnaires are probably the most all-inclusive forms thus far developed for sampling the opinion of the people in the three areas just defined. The author also offers illustrative materials, introductory letter, tables, and suggested procedure for analyzing the results of the questionnaire survey.

Hedlund ¹⁴ worked out a method of evaluating school public relations by applying the scientific principle used in polling public opinion. His technique stresses careful, controlled sampling of small groups and predicts within 5 percent an accurate opinion of the total population. His survey was conducted in conjunction with high school pupils.

The National School Service Institute ¹⁵ has developed a carefully planned 12 page brochure type of opinionnaire to be used by schools. The arrangement and format of this questionnaire have been especially planned to the language and interest of the layman in the school community.

¹⁴ Paul A Hedlund, "Measuring Public Opinion On School Issues", American School Board Journal 116: pp. 29-31

¹⁵ Otis A. Crosby, "The Nation Reaches a Verdict in the Case of the People Vs. Today's Schools", The Nations Schools, Vol. 47, January 1951 pp.34-37

By far the most interesting study was that of the Staff of Wooldridge School, ¹⁶ Austin, Texas. The study related to parent and teacher opinion on pupil progress reporting practices to the parents. An extensive questionnaire was submitted to parents and teachers in May, 1949, the last two weeks of school. The questionnaires were sent to 320 families and 220, or 69 percent were returned. The questionnaire comprised the following major areas, with specific questions related to each of the areas:

- (1) General appraisal items;
- (2) Parents visit and observation in child's room;
- (3) Group meetings by homeroom groups in September;
- (4) Individual conferences with parents;
- (5) Mimeographed report card forms; and,
- (6) General appraisal of the New System of evaluating pupil progress.

This study shows that, (a) from 54 to 96 percent of the parents scored "very worthwhile" to all questions in each area of the questionnaire, (b) from 1 to 70 percent of the parents scored "of some value", and (c) from 1 to 20 percent scored "of little value."

Some other information of interest are three following questions not tabulated in the above appraisal. (1) "Desired frequency in which parents should be invited to visit

¹⁶ Wooldridge School, Austin, Texas, "Group Marking and Reporting to Parents," The University of Texas Publications, (Austin, Texas, February, 1950) pp. 45-58

and to observe the child's room." One parent reported, "not at all," and 14 said, "once per year." The other responses were distributed as follows: Twice per year, 46 percent of parents; three times per year, 15 percent; four times per year, 22 percent; and miscellaneous replies or no responses, 11 percent. Thus 83 percent of the parents recommended from two to four visits per year.

To the question (2) "How many parent-teacher conferences should be scheduled per year?", 27 percent said, "one", 66 percent said, "two", and 7 percent gave miscellaneous answers or no response.

(3) Parents were asked to give whatever suggestions or comments they might have. Only 53 percent took advantage of this invitation. Thirty-one said they preferred the conventional six weeks report card (showing by grades or numbers my child's standing with the rest of the class) to the new type report card; 13 of these parents said they favored keeping all of the features of the new plan except the report card and non-comparative marking.

The teacher questionnaire was of the same nature, but adapted to reflect teacher reaction. The teacher phase of this study is not discussed in this paper, even though it is of consequential importance.

The study at the Wooldridge school greatly interested

the writer as it paralleled in some respects to the Minnehaha School study.

The results of this study give substantial evidence that with careful community planning and participation new techniques in the school program may be established.

A review of research literature reveals that there are few actual research reports available in the area of public relations programs in the public schools. There appears to be a need for more school people to appraise their public relations programs and to share their experiences with others in school work.

The intent in this study is not only to fulfill the public relations need in the Minnehaha School Community, but it is also hoped that there will be a contribution, of some value, to educational research. As a matter of fact, this study is a field problem of practical significance to the writer since it is a vital part of an on going program of public relations in his school community.

Chapter III

THE PROBLEM AND PROCEDURE

For several years the writer, as principal of the Minnehaha Elementary School in Vancouver, Washington, has had a keen interest in making a study of parent reactions to the school program.

Late in the Autumn of 1950, the plans for the study really began to take shape. The various ways of sampling the interests and feelings of parents towards the school program were analyzed and the Questionnaire Method was chosen as most adequate to serve the purpose.

Hand 17 develops the point that a poll conducted by questionnaire without signature is the most systematic and valid method of measuring what the people of a school community really think. He lists three limitations inherent in personal observations and other unsystematic methods of appraisal. These are (1) the influence of unrepresentative observations, (2) the reluctance of people to be frankly critical, and (3) the influence of observer's opinions and interest.

A seven page mimeographed form was necessary to

completely encompass the Minnehaha School's relationship with the family and the community. The questions centered around four major areas (1) The Parent Teacher Association; (2) the general school program; (3) school bus transportation; (4) personal information. A personal letter on school stationery explaining the purpose of the study and soliciting the cooperation of the parents was attached to each questionnaire.

The school roster contained 313 families at the time the study was made. The first week of April, 1951, each family was sent a copy of the letter and the questionnaire in a sealed envelope delivered by the child. The parents were urged to complete the questionnaire and return it to the school office within the same week it was sent out. However, the final count was not made until school closed in June. No follow-up of the letter was ever attempted. In other words no further pressure was applied to insist upon the questionnaire being filled out and returned to the school. The number of completed questionnaires totaled two hundred and two. While the sixty three and nine percent return was not as high as hoped for, it was reasoned that response without pressure tended to give more accurately the sincere expression of the participant.

The Wooldridge School in Austin, Texas,¹⁸ conducted a study which was somewhat comparable to the Minnehaha School study in number of parents surveyed. Three hundred and twenty questionnaires were sent out and two hundred and twenty, or 69 percent were returned. This is comparable to the 63.9 percent of return in the Minnehaha School study. However, there must be consideration given to the fact that the Wooldridge Study had been in progress for some three years, and that the community was, by and large, acquainted with the purpose of the study. This was not the case in the Minnehaha study, where the questionnaire was presented without previous notification. There was no community orientation to receiving the questionnaire, other than the introductory letter attached to it.

The writer had every reason to believe that had there been a period of orientation for the Minnehaha School community considerably in advance of sending out the questionnaire, a substantially higher percentage of returns would have been recorded.

Nevertheless, the majority of parents participating in the study (as well as the school staff, who assisted in

¹⁸ Wooldridge, Op. Cit. p. 64

in administering the study) were enthusiastic and desired to contribute constructively. One parent called and said:

I am most interested in what you are doing in this study. It took me less than thirty minutes to answer your questionnaire and I offered some constructive remarks, too. I was happy to take time. I certainly hope it will be successful. Our community needs to be informed.

Another parent called and asked, "How may I secure one of those school questionnaires? Evidently my child failed to bring one home."

As the completed questionnaires were returning to the office, the teacher interest became increasingly more noticeable. There was great curiosity and a good deal of speculation as to what type of comments would be found on the questionnaires.

The Minnehaha community at the time of this study was a growing suburban area bordering the Vancouver city limits. The area was not under the jurisdiction of the city government but was definitely a part of and under the direction of the Vancouver Public School District Number Thirty-seven. The community boasted a new eighteen room modern brick-veneer building which was located on a fifteen acre view site. The building was fairly adequately planned to accommodate the increasing population trend in this area.

In the main, the parents and patrons of this area were stable folks of average means. Many of them were employed or had their businesses within the Vancouver-Portland metropolitan center. A goodly share were employed by such industries as Aluminum Company of America, Bonneville Power, Carborundum Company, Jantzen Knitting Mills, Vancouver Plywood Corporation and local retail stores. Others were business men and executive officers with their interests either in Vancouver or Portland.

As previously mentioned this area was rapidly expanding. The factors influencing this growth were (1) a new school building, (2) excellent view home sites, (3) good soil for family gardens, (4) city water, (5) low property taxes, (6) close-in advantages of city conveniences and commuting, (7) and a growing shopping center.

Table I, on page 23, has been prepared to present pertinent information relating to the background of the people in the Minnehaha School community. It will be noted that one hundred and forty-five fathers indicated that they were steadily employed, nine indicated that they were employed part time, and five said they were unemployed. In other words 97.9 percent of the fathers who reported were employed at least part time. The table

Table I
PERSONAL INFORMATION

	<u>Father</u>	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Other</u>
1. Filled out questionnaire.	37	187	1
2. Steadily employed.	145	21	0
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No comment</u>
3. Own home.	164	21	17
4. Plan to stay in community.	121	16	65

5. Education of parents.

Highest Grade Completed

elementary			secondary				college				
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	17	9	6	18	111	9	11	4	7	4

(Vocational School 41)

6. Children in school.

<u>Grade Enrolled</u>									<u>total</u>
k	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
42	50	39	42	40	29	36	29		307
Average per family						1.5			

indicates that the vast majority of mothers were not steadily employed outside of the home; only twenty-one mothers out of one hundred and eighty-seven worked some place other than in the home.

Table I also reveals that one hundred and sixty-four, or 87.2 percent of the parents responding own their home. One hundred and twenty-one, or 59.9 percent, said they definitely planned to remain in the community.

Practically all of the parents who filled out the questionnaire did not hesitate to report on their educational achievements; one hundred and ninety-eight parents, or 98 percent, responded to this question. One hundred and forty-six parents, or all most 3 out of 4 responding indicated that they had reached or exceeded the twelfth year in school. Thirty-five, or 17.6 percent of the parents said they had attended one or more years of college. Forty -one parents said they had gone to Vocational school.

Table I gives some indications of the increasing pupil enrollment in the primary grades. The two hundred and two parents that responded to the questionnaire list a total of three hundred and seven children enrolled in the Minnehaha School, or an average of 1.5 children per family. Of this number 173 children were enrolled in the

primary grades while 134 were enrolled in intermediate and upper elementary grades. This would point to the assumption that there are a large number of young parents in the Minnehaha School community, and that a continued increase in the enrollment could be expected.

Chapter IV

PARENT REACTION TO THE PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Parent Teachers Association today is recognized as a definite part of every school program and community. A loyal well organized Parent Teachers Association can contribute outstanding service to the school and children. Kyte in his book The Principal at Work states that:

Every Parent Teachers Association has been created primarily for one set of purposes: (1) to promote child welfare, (2) to raise standards of living, (3) to secure legislation serving these aims, and (4) to develop intelligent cooperation between parents and teachers in meeting the children's needs.

Table II, page 27, presents some of the reactions to the Minnehaha School Parent Teachers Association. Almost three-fourths of the parents responding (one hundred and forty-eight out of two hundred and two) indicated that they were members of the local Parent Teachers Association. One hundred and thirty-two said they were acquainted with the objectives of this organization. Thirty-two of the parents responding, however, stated that they were not familiar with the Parent Teachers Association objectives. Another twenty-six indicated that they were only

George C. Kyte, The Principal at Work (New York: Ginn and Company, 1943) p. 426

Table II

REACTION OF PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

	<u>yes</u>	<u>qualified</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>opinion</u>
1. Are you a member?	148		54	
2. Do you hold an office?	25		164	13
3. Acquainted with Parent Teacher Association objectives?	132	26	32	12
4. Homeroom Mothers' organization worthwhile?	143	7	3	36
5. Should Parent Teachers Association run the school?	111		61	30
6. Approve last year's Parent Teacher Association functions?	92		8	102
7. Liked programs Parent Teachers Association presented?	64	21	4	113

partially acquainted with the objectives of the Parent Teachers Association, while twelve gave no opinions. In other words, more than one out of three parents in the community are not fully acquainted with the objectives of the Parent Teachers Organization.

Practically all (ninety-three percent) of the mothers responding to the question said that they thought the Home Room Mothers group was worthwhile. However, thirty-six mothers indicated no opinion regarding the Home Room Mothers organization.

Table II also indicates that ninety-two of the parents responding approved of the way the last year's Parent Teachers Association functioned, while only eight said they did not approve. A greater number, one hundred and three, gave no opinion. From the data received on this question, the supposition might be made that the majority of parents were nonchalant about or unconcerned with the last year's Parent Teachers Association. This may have been because the school was new and the community itself was rapidly growing, thus making it difficult for many parents to take part.

Parents were also asked to evaluate the type and nature of programs for the regular Parent Teacher Meetings. Sixty-four stated that they liked the programs,

twenty-one gave a qualifying response and four said that they did not like them, while one hundred and thirteen or about one fourth, gave no opinion. It is rather significant that only about one out of three parents liked the programs presented by the Parent Teachers Association. The one hundred and thirteen that gave no opinion may not have attended frequently enough to feel qualified to give an opinion. However, there is evidence in this data that indicates a need for more adequate program planning by the officers of the Parent Teachers Association.

To the question, "Should the Parent Teachers Association run the school?", more than half of the parents, (one hundred and eleven out of two hundred and two) thought that the Parent Teachers Association should run the school. Sixty-one parents said, "Definitely not!", while thirty parents gave no opinion. It would appear that the majority of parents answering the question held the idea that Parent Teachers Association should have a leading part in administration of the school. It is very doubtful that this assumption is entirely correct. Table III, page 30, may add some light to this channel of reasoning.

In Table III thirty parents stated that the

Table III

PARENT COMMENT ON PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

1. Would not join Parent Teachers Association	18
a. Don't believe in program.	5
b. Reason not given.	13
2. Interested but handicapped	48
a. Not enough time.	10
b. Work prevents attendance.	9
c. New to community.	9
d. Would join if contacted.	9
e. Care for small children.	6
f. No transportation.	5
3. Reaction of those who belong	71
a. Interested and like P. T. A.	30
b. Meetings too long.	7
c. Like entertainment and social part.	5
d. Need more active members.	5
e. Not satisfied with P. T. A.	5
f. More children's programs.	3
g. Praise workers instead of criticize.	3
h. Needs leadership.	2
i. Few people doing all the work.	2
j. Adhere more to National P.T.A. Program.	2
k. Entertainment not necessary.	2
l. Have afternoon meetings.	2
m. Did not receive notice of meetings.	2
n. Too much card playing; lack of business.	1
4. Reaction to personal participation	90
a. Do not care for office.	80
b. Never had opportunity to hold office.	10
5. Reaction to Homeroom Mothers' Organization	32
a. Very good organization; give more help.	16
b. Limited knowledge of organization.	11
c. Change oftener so more mothers can help and get acquainted with it.	4
d. Do not know good of organization.	1
6. P. T. A. running school	36
a. Should cooperate but not run school.	30
b. Trained personnel for that responsibility.	6

Parent Teachers Association should cooperate with the administration but not run the school. This statement no doubt would be accepted by the majority of the one hundred and eleven parents. There is suggested in these data, however, that parents in general tend to desire a part in community activities, whether it be of school nature or otherwise.

The fact that eighteen parents stated that they would not join the Parent Teachers Association is a point of concern. Five parents said that they did not believe in the program of the Parent Teachers Association. That type of reasoning does not appear logical on the surface. If the objectives of the Parent Teachers Association are reviewed, it will be found that "child welfare" heads the list. In the main, most parents are deeply interested in the welfare of their children, so here again there is evidence that the parents do not understand the Parent Teachers Association objectives, or that the Parent Teachers Association has failed to develop favorable support from all parents.

Another group of parents (forty-eight) indicated their interest in the Parent Teachers Association but they did not belong. They gave reasons ranging from care of small children, lack of transportation, work

complications, to not being contacted to join. All of these carry the connotation of lack of interest in the Parent Teachers Association.

Seventy-one parents among the members of the Parent Teachers Association indicated their reactions by remarks. About one half of this group said they liked Parent Teachers Association. However, one out of ten of the members remarked that the meetings were too long, and two parents said the entertainment was not necessary for the regular meetings. There was evidence of unco-operative attitudes or poor working relationship in the remarks from this group. Comments relating to the need for more active members, better leadership, more people participating in the work, and more praise given to the workers instead of criticism are all significant, for they seem to suggest internal disturbances within the group.

In response to the question dealing with personal participation, eighty parents indicated that they did not desire to hold an office in the Parent Teachers Association. Ten parents, however, stated that they were never given an opportunity to hold office. This last statement would seem to indicate that a few parents desire to accept some responsibility in the Parent

Teachers Association but are by-passed. It is apparent that there is some inherent relationship here to the previous parent comment that a "few people are doing all the work."

Table III also presents some facts concerning reaction to home room mothers' organizations. One half of the mothers' remarks (sixteen) relating to this organization indicated that it was a very good organization but that it could give more help to the teachers. One mother said that she did not see any good in the home room mothers' organization. Eleven mothers stated that they had only a limited knowledge of this organization and four mothers reported that the home room mothers' group should change its membership oftener so that parents might become better acquainted with it. These data would seem to suggest that more understanding of the purposes of home room mothers' groups is needed and that more mothers should be asked to participate in the home room mothers' organizations.

Chapter V

PARENT EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

It is apparent from the questionnaire data that parents gave the most enthusiastic responses to the questions dealing with the school program. Table IV page 35 highlights parent reactions regarding the school program. One hundred and sixty-five (81.6%) of the parent responses indicated that parents believed in the school philosophy. Twenty-four parents in addition gave qualifying approval, on the other hand two parents said they did not believe in the school philosophy and eleven others did not respond to the item.

Further evidence of parent endorsement is indicated by the 70% of parents who state that they entirely approved the program. An additional 14% gave qualified approval. It appears, therefore, that more than eight out of ten parents approve of the school program. On the other hand, six parents indicated that they did not approve and twenty-three gave no opinion one way or another. It can be said, then, that the Minnehaha School program is highly endorsed and has only relatively low unfavorable reaction.

Considerably more than one half of the parents' answers (125 out of 202) were satisfied with the health

Table IV

PARENT EVALUATION OF SCHOOL PROGRAM

	<u>yes</u>	<u>qual</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>no opin</u>
1. School Program.				
a. Believe in school philosophy.	165	24	2	11
b. Approve overall program.	144	29	6	23
c. Like health and athletic program.	125	17	4	56
d. Pleased with progress child is making.	138	27	16	21
e. Approve school movies.	78	112	1	11
f. Is child taught all he should be.	89	38	0	75
g. School offers too many programs.	4	129	15	54
h. Does school have all equipment it needs.	34	40	44	83
2. Teacher pupil relationship.				
a. Do you like the way your child is treated by the teacher.	184	6	5	7
b. Child receives all help needed from teacher.	107	58	0	37
c. Child feels he is member of group.	180	18	2	2
d. Agree with school discipline.	119	0	41	42
e. Like progress reporting plan.	131	32	21	18
f. Should child bring school work home.	66	125	59	12
3. Parent school relationship.				
a. Acquainted with child's teacher.	189	0	13	0
b. Acquainted with child's principal.	149	0	53	0
c. Child is allowed playtime after school.	191	0	10	11
d. Teacher welcomes your visits.	170	13	1	18
e. Content with youth groups.	103	21	25	53
f. Approve the lunch program.	144	10	6	42
g. Ways of being informed.				
1. Visiting school.	146	-	-	-
2. Attending P.T.A.	69	-	-	-
3. As homeroom mother.	18	-	-	-
4. Talking with children.	106	-	-	-
5. Talking with neighbors.	32	-	-	-

and athletic program, which is an indication that the school has failed to inform the parents of its health and athletic programs.

Sixteen parents said they were not pleased with the progress their children were making in school. In other words, about one out of thirteen parents feel their children should do better work in school. It would seem to appear that there is some connection with the responses relating to child progress and the negative reactions given in answer to the school philosophy. However, it should be pointed out that almost two-thirds of the parents are well satisfied with the progress their children are making in school work.

This does not mean, however, that the parents think their children are taught all they should be. Eighty-nine parents indicated that they thought the children were taught all they should be, while thirty-eight gave qualifying approval. There were no negative responses given to this item, but seventy-parents gave no opinion. No doubt the absence of negative responses and the high frequency of no responses were due to parents not knowing or being sure that they knew what should be taught to children. Here again might be evidence of parent thinking that teachers are better qualified to know what and how children

should be taught. If the foregoing statement is the case, then it would seem that it is the responsibility of the school to inform the parents of what is taught in the school program as a basis for securing parent support. This, as a matter of fact, is only a feature of a good public relations program.

One hundred and twenty-nine parents indicated, with some reservations as to type and nature, that the school did not give too many entertainment programs. Fifteen parents indicated that the school did give too many entertainment programs. Fifty-four parents did not comment on way or the other on this item. It would be safe to assume that the school does not give too many programs, but should give consideration to the type and nature of programs which will be given.

In answering the questions pertaining to the amount of equipment needed by the school, parents in general, indicated by their responses that they were not familiar with this situation. The somewhat even distribution of parent responses under "yes", "qualifying", "no" columns seeming to prove this point. It is also indicated by the fact that eighty-three parents gave no opinion. The most frequent parent comment on this item was, "We need

more playground equipment." There is much evidence here that the school has not informed the parents of playground equipment needs nor concerning the nature of other equipment that is lacking at the school.

The responses to the questions dealing with teacher-pupil relationship in the most part indicate parent satisfaction and approval. An overwhelming number of parents (184 out of 202) said that they were pleased with the way their children were treated by the teachers, while only five disapproved. One hundred and seven responded that they thought their children received all the help needed from the teachers, fifty-eight gave qualifying responses, while thirty-seven expressed no opinion. Although there were no negative responses to this question it appears that there is some doubt in some parent's minds because only slightly more than one half (107 out of 202) were completely satisfied with the help given to their children. These data suggests that the school staff needs to scrutinize and improve techniques for helping children.

Practically every one of the parents believes his child feels he belongs to the group. Only two parents said "no" and two gave no opinion. These responses are

an interesting reflection of the success the school is achieving in carrying out its philosophy of "learning to live together".

The school discipline practices received the complete approval of the majority of parents (117 out of 202). However, forty-one said they did not agree with discipline practices and forty-two gave no opinion.

Again at this point there is a wide difference of opinion between some parents interpretation of the proper child discipline and the school philosophy and practices.

Some of the dissenting responses were accompanied by such remarks, "School needs to get back to the hickory stick", "Cut out the play and get down to work". This indicates that some parents desire more strict disciplining practices by the school. The evident misunderstanding by parents regarding school practices and techniques in administering discipline will require that parent and the school work together for better understanding.

Minnehaha school has gradually discouraged teachers from sending school work home for pupils to do during the evening. Fifty-nine parents responding to the questionnaire heartily approved this plan. One hundred and twenty

parents gave qualified agreement but sixty-six said they thought children should bring school work home. Twelve parents did not indicate their thinking one way or the other. The greater number of parents responding to this question (125 out of 202) thought some school work should, if necessary, be done at home. In most cases parents feel it would be left to the teacher to determine when and how much work should be sent home. However, the parent responses indicated above do not entirely coincide with the school philosophy. This points out again that there is a need for parents to develop a better understanding of the school philosophy and its goals.

Just preceding this study the Minnehaha school put into practice a new method of reporting pupil progress to parents which may be described as the parent-teacher conference method. The majority of parent responses (131 out of 202) to the question on the reporting procedures by the school were completely favorable. Thirty-two parents indicated partial approval, while on the other hand, twenty-one parents stated they did not approve and eighteen gave no opinion. Some parent remarks on qualifying responses indicated that they liked the plan but also wanted at least part of the traditional report card.

Remarks of those parents who disapprove of the plan clearly indicate they desire the traditional report card marked with symbols for comparative purposes. In this manner they would be able to interpret the value of symbols and thereby evaluate their children's progress. This information clearly points out that the school must redouble its efforts to inform the parents of the advantages inherent in the new procedure for reporting pupil progress.

The parents in the main clearly indicated their feelings regarding their personal relationships with the school. One hundred and eighty-nine said that they were acquainted with their children's teachers and only thirteen stated that they were not acquainted. This is a commendable achievement but even so, every effort should be made to include the relative small members who are not acquainted with their children's teacher.

One hundred and forty-nine parents indicated that they were acquainted with the principal of the school but fifty three said that they did not know him. Here, too, is an opportunity for the principal to make himself more readily available to parents and so provide an opportunity for them to inquire about the school program and also increase his acquaintances.

In general most parents feel that the teachers welcome

their visits to school; this is the opinion of one hundred and seventy parents. However, one parent indicated that he thought he was not welcome, while thirteen parents gave qualified responses and eighteen gave no opinion. It appears in this case that the school personnel is not making every effort to make parents feel welcome when they visit school. It is apparent that some definite plans are needed to develop a friendlier attitude toward school visitors, to make them feel welcome while at school, and to encourage more visitation.

The questionnaire data also shows that parents are interested in youth groups and worthwhile clubs for children. Only about half of the parents responding to the questionnaire were satisfied with the school and parent teacher association sponsored youth organizations, such as Boy Scouts, Cubs, Campfire Girls etc. Other parents mentioned that there was a lack of leaders, financial support, and parent participation for the youth groups. It is apparent that the Minnehaha School and sponsoring body (P.T.A.) should do some cooperative planning in improving existing youth groups and in providing more organizations for the children in the community.

In the main parent reactions to the school lunch program were favorable. Only six parents said that they

did not approve of the school lunches and ten indicated qualifying approval; however, one hundred and forty-four gave complete approval. There were forty-two parents who did not indicate their feelings, probably because they have children who do not participate in the school hot lunch program. From the varied and suggestive remarks that parents made regarding the hot lunches it would seem that some improvements can be made in the lunch program.

It is interesting to note how parents secure information about the school. One hundred and forty-six parents said "by visiting school," sixty-nine stated "by attending parent teachers meetings," eighteen indicated "by talking with children," and thirty-two said "by talking with neighbors." This is indeed very revealing and brings to light one of the most prominent weaknesses of the Minnehaha School public relations program. It is apparent that there is an organized way of giving information about the schools to the parents. When parents must rely upon gossip with neighbors or other school patrons or on information supplied by their children it is obvious that much misinformation is secured.

Practically all research in the field of school public relations stresses that the school itself must supply

authentic information to the patrons in the school community.

The parent responses to the questions dealing with pupil transportation are significant in that they definitely show that the majority of pupils ride the school bus. One hundred and fifty-three parents, or 75% of the entire group said they have children riding the school bus. One hundred and thirty-five parents approved of the transportation system as set up, while seventeen indicated qualifying responses, and nine parents said they did not approve of the service received. Forty-one parents did not express an opinion. Some of the parent remarks are as follows: "Not enough children accomodated," "Small children should all ride," "Walk too far to catch bus," and "Children picked up to close to school."

There is no doubt that pupil transportation creates many problems. The Minnehaha school area is not unlike any other, except that as previously mentioned, it is a rapidly growing suburban area. Therefore, within a relatively short time school transportation service will be greatly curtailed. A program of informing parents must be planned to facilitate this change.

Table V
TRANSPORTATION

	<u>yes</u>	<u>qual.</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>no</u> <u>opin.</u>
1. Have children riding bus.	153	-	33	-
2. Understand state regulations.	117	40	30	40
3. Approve transportation systems.	135	17	9	41
A. Comments				
1. Good driver, considerate of children.				
2. Not enough children accomodated.				
3. Small children should all ride.				
4. Walk too far to catch bus.				
5. Highway not safe to walk along.				
6. Children picked up to close to school.				
7. All children should ride when inclement weather.				
8. Rather walk, better for health.				

Table VI

PARENT'S REMARKS

- A. Suggestions for improving child progress.
1. Teach more arithmetic and neatness in doing it.
 2. Teach more reading and phonetics.
 3. Teach more spelling, penmanship and art.
 4. Too much social studies not enough history and geography.
 5. They should have more study on grammar and english.
 6. Writing is badly neglected and so is the knowledge of how words are made. They seem to be only memorized.
 7. You cannot divide until you learn the time tables yet they do. They don't learn reading and spelling as readily as when they had A.B.C.'s.
 8. What happened to A.B.C.'s?
 9. Regretable the music program isn't too good. Lack of full time teacher obviously the fault.
 10. I think they should be taught penmanship regularly. My child is in the third grade and doesn't hold a pencil correctly.
 11. There is too much play. The teacher should have more interest in all students.
 12. Too much stress on social activities which while they have their place are not the basic reason that children are in school.
 13. Responsibility and respect for other peoples property.

14. Teach month of year and tables of measure. U.S. History as to location of States and names.
15. Oral expression even in kindergarten could be given in current events, story telling etc.
16. Teach 6th and 7th grades manual training and sewing.
17. If I had another child starting to school I would not approve of the way they teach reading and sounds.
18. I think he should learn the alphabet and sound of each letter.
19. Give them some of the stories in reading as the "Great Stone Face," "Evangeline," memorization of poems by Longfellow, Holmes, etc.
20. He should be advanced in group reading as soon as he feels ready to do more advanced work.

B. Reaction to child treatment by teacher.

1. Why does the teacher punish all the children for what one child does. My child can be punished but don't all to be. It makes the pupils dislike the teacher.
2. I would rather have each child punished for wrong doing than to have the whole room punished.
3. The teachers are very fair but not strict enough.
4. We feel there is lack of supervision during lunch period and recesses.
5. The teachers are very fair, but not strict enough. The children have too much play instead of studies, in other words they should bring back the hickory stick.
6. Child is very dissatisfied, feels he is never selected by teacher to do any of the extra jobs which she has for them to do.
7. Silly question, how do I know how she is treated she never complains.

8. I have heard of several cases where children have been sent to the health room for illness and parents have not been informed.
9. My notes asking that my child be kept in because of colds have sometimes been disregarded.

C. Feeling of belonging by pupil.

1. Believe all children feel very much a part of the group and are very school conscious.
2. The school belongs to her.
3. I have heard a child is treated better if parents go to P.T.A. Is this true?
4. She feels left out and lonely. She can't seem to fit in with the other youngsters only sometimes.

D. Teacher helping child.

1. I think the staff has every child's welfare at heart.
2. As much as possible with so many children to handle.
3. At least the ones I have talked to seemed to be concerned.
4. The teachers I am acquainted with are very nice.
5. The one in grade - seems to get help, but the one in grade- seems to get no help and when he asks the teacher and she says oh you were just looking around and playing.
6. One needs extra help in reading.
7. My child seems vague as to what is expected or required in certain of his studies.
8. He didn't seem to understand what they expected him to do with the papers they have him do.
9. Too much time spent on slow pupils.

10. My child complains he is not allowed to ask questions.
11. I think he needs more encouragement, perhaps a little praise for a job well done.
12. With the number of children in the room. I don't see how any teacher could give the children enough individual attention.

E. School work (homework) sent home.

1. Enough hours spent in confinement at school. Would love to answer this question at (another school).
2. I believe they need rest from school work at home unless behind.
3. I think if something is a little hard for him to learn some outside study would help.
4. Not especially, but a little would give a person an idea as to what they do.
5. Assignments should be given with a completion time established. These may be during school hours.
6. When in higher grades.
7. Just enough to let us know what the child is doing in school.
8. If slow and not keeping up with the rest of the class.
9. If necessary to accomplish what they should in a school year by all means have homework. Gives them good practice at home in settling down to an appointed task to be done.
10. Only if they have difficulty in completing assignments.
11. If a certain subject is hard for a pupil I think the teacher should inform the parents and tell them how to help their child with this subject.

12. How else can parent tell how his child is progressing?
13. I don't know with the screwy grading system you have no way of actually telling what they do in comparison with their school age group. I like this conference business to tell exactly how they stand with the teacher.

F. Comments on School Philosophy.

1. I believe it is a good philosophy.
2. Believe it is time for a change so much we need to learn to live in this world.
3. The above philosophy is perfect hope we are going to achieve it--doing your best am sure.
4. I think the program is wonderful. Wish it were international.
5. Emphatically.
6. Very, very much so. It is wonderful.
7. I feel Vancouver parents are very lucky that their children can share in this only intelligent manner of learning.
8. I believe in your objective. Yes, but still doubt it can be carried out. However I fell you are doing your best.
9. I believe it is necessary that children be taught to sit and pay attention during classes not be allowed to walk about and visit during such time.
10. Too much stress on social activities. They must learn to study.
11. Don't like your progressive system. If a child learns **okay to pass them**. But don't like this idea of passing them if they learn or not. Look like you want to get rid of them.
12. I believe the basic skills should be emphasized more.

8. I believe in your objective. Yes, but still doubt it can be carried out. However I feel you are doing your best.
9. I believe it is necessary that children be taught to sit and pay attention during classes not be allowed to walk about and visit during such time.
10. Too much stress on social activities. They must learn to study.
11. Don't like your progressive system. If a child learns okay to pass them. But don't like this idea of passing them if they learn or not. Looks like you want to get rid of them.
12. I believe the basic skills should be emphasized more.
13. I can't fully accept the idea that no child should experience failure expressed at a kindergarten meeting. It seems to me that we can't always be a winner. Perhaps, I have misinterpreted the idea behind this philosophy. I realize always failing does something to a person but it seems to me learning to accept failure is a valuable experience.

G. School Lunch Program.

1. We feel our child gets a very good lunch and that it is very reasonable in price.
2. I don't know much about it. We tried it for a while but the child was so hungry when he came home. But then he doesn't like what is good for him and I think they served quite a few vegetables.
3. According to my children's opinion there seems to be a lack of discipline during the lunch period which makes eating in the cafeteria unpleasant.
4. Could the milk be kept cooler? Be nice if children knew the soup the day before they order.
5. Why only $\frac{1}{2}$ bun with hamburger? More food and better menus.

6. Do not force child to eat food he or she does not like such as spinach. We furnish the money and why should he eat what he does not like.
7. Do a way with it children waste too much food.
8. All children do not like chili understand if order soup get chili now and then so they do not want to ask for soup.
9. Send home a menu a week in advance.
10. Not enough for a big eater.
11. Menu could be improved and a copy sent home.
12. From reports of my child she refuses the hot lunch. If they would give them a sandwich, soup and ice cream she would be satisfied.
14. Serve more potatoes to larger boys.

H. Suggestions for P.E. Program.

1. I have no special opinion, but would be glad to discuss the athletic program with a school staff member.
2. Every child who goes out for basketball practice should have a chance to play in the games. More individual supervision and training for those who try but don't quite know how to play the game.
3. Eliminate P.E. etc.-eliminate buses and let children get their exercise by walking.
4. All children do not care for tumbling.
5. I don't think tumbling should be just a privilege for the ones who are good at it. After all they got that way by practicing or doing.
6. Would like our child to be able to learn to swim.
7. I don't favor such strenuous exercises for little girls particularly when they don't feel well.

8. Better health examination and apparently all the girls are offered is tumbling.
9. Should have room health inspection daily.
10. Regular program for good posture. More folk dances.
11. My child has been hurt several times. Knocked down in the mud and clothing torn by rough boys. Maybe they need a lecture and closer watching at play period.
12. My boy tells me the bigger boys rule who is to play in games which he does not like and I do not think this is right either.
13. I believe it would be a help to parents if a schedule of sports practice was given them so they would not expect their children home at a regular time when there is an after school practice.
14. Need of a full time P.E. teacher.
15. If a child is weak he shouldn't be forced to be active in athletics.
16. More time for younger grades to play in gym and learn some tumbling.

I. School Discipline.

1. The lack of respect for the teacher and the lack of class room order is evidence of this.
2. Not all the schools fault here, parents are at fault too.
3. Most children say they can get by with anything and the teachers do not discipline them.
4. Not strict enough is the actual remark of the children themselves.
5. At another school I understand one teacher pasted tape over our child's mouth to keep her quiet--glad she didn't come to Minnehaha.

6. How about expelling a trouble maker and following up to the parents so they can see what they are raising. As stated before seems you are a bit easy on children who cut up all the time in a room, but perhaps the under the thumb idea with a licking or whatever it takes isn't the solution either.
 7. Too much child supervision over children with out adult to supervise them.
 8. What is the school's discipline?
 9. You believe too much in book raising and letting them do as they please-"self expression" I believe in self expression but not to the extent they are smart alacky. (Mine aren't, but lots of them sure are.)
 10. Absolutely not strict enough. It is very hard for child to be taught respect for elders when some get away with sassing the teacher.
 11. We hear complaints about noise in classrooms.
 12. One room I visited was a nightmare. I think the child gets too nervous in such an atmosphere.
 13. I don't like him to be kept after school.
 14. The classes have to much leisure time. I'm definitely against funny books and candy during classes.
- J. Equipment for School.
1. More playground equipment.
 2. Need more library books.
 3. Art equipment and playground equipment. How about sand and gravel on playground?
 4. Need more shop tools.
 5. How about more science equipment?
- K. Comments on Movies and Money at School.

a. Movies

1. Movies should be previewed before showing.
2. We do not feel that entertainment films as a money raising project during the school day, is good.

b. Money

1. We feel that activities for the child are kept very low as possible for cost.
2. You do not require too much for anything.
3. Seldom, I do think the children are sometimes asked to buy supplies which are never used or little needed. (Especially at beginning of term.)

L. School Programs.

1. I like the new idea of each room presenting a program. Why can't this be worked into once a month evening program? Each pupil having a speaking part?
2. It never gets tiresome to attend programs in which the children participate. Also open house displays of their work and hobbies are most interesting.
3. The spring programs should not be too many. A child is sent to school to learn and not be studying on a program all the time.
4. The spring program couldn't be better. Look forward to it. Just give a little more time for costumes.
5. Skits, plays, pantomines. Music is often over emphasized.
6. I think these programs are very good for the children but also realize how much extra work it makes.
7. Too many programs, plays, movies etc. Not enough real education. Too much play.
8. Leave out the dancing.

9. Festivals and singing, folk dancing, musicals, drama, and comedy plays.
10. Children should have opportunity to use mike.

M. Youth Groups Programs.

1. Lack of leaders to accommodate all who would like to be members.
2. I think there is a good deal of room for improvement of the parents interest in youth activities.
3. Not enough parents will take time out and study to become leaders.
4. There are not enough groups for children to belong.
5. The financial outlay for most of them is so emphasized that it is disgusting. The child who needs it most is left out.
6. Would like to see more 4-H work.
7. Cub program is falling down.
8. Last year my daughter attended campfire girls and no interest was shown only when selling candy and so she dropped out.
9. Bluebirds lacks organization.
10. I believe the P.T.A. should endeavor to be more of a financial aid to youth groups. Leaders are obligated to struggle with out funds and put up their own in some instances. If there were a larger sum, youth leaders would be more easily had. Then more groups could organize and opportunity would be available to a larger group of children. I would like to see a youth group open to each child interested.

N. Reporting Child Progress.

1. The idea is good and can get down to solving things this way. Start them early in the year and allow plenty of time.

2. I think it is fairer and better than former method.
3. I believe this far superior to old report card way.
4. The conferences are a very fine improvement. I'm all for it.
5. Very enthusiastic about this years good system of reporting.
6. I like the conferences but would also like a definite grade marked reports.
7. I may be old fashioned but I believe children should be given report cards with honest to goodness grades.
8. I believe in a report that shows exactly what the child is doing by direct grading.
9. The parents sees so few children he needs the comparison of group average. The conference is okay if accompanied by the other.
10. Sometime I am a little uncertain as to how he stands in comparison to the rest of his group, whether he is behind or just average.
11. I would like to see a monthly report card sent home and school hours until 3:00. Hours are entirely too short.
12. I like written report by the teachers. Don't care for this interview especially when teacher is new and can give no intelligent report.
13. I got no information what so ever at my conference. In fact I gave all the answers. I still don't know if my child is good or not.
14. Prefer report card so father can see progress on paper.
15. I would like to have a written report several times a year also.
16. I firmly believe in grade system not the "S" or "N.I." but the A, B, C, D, and F.

17. I prefer the report cards. It gives children an incentive to do better next time. A parent can always talk to the teacher if there is a major problem.
18. My youngsters object to not getting some kind of written report to bring home. I like to consult the teacher in person.
19. The parent-teacher conference is wonderful but I'd like to see a simple report every six weeks on the child's progress in reading, writing, spelling etc. (Yes, we're old-fashioned.)
20. There is too long a period between reports which I realize would create hardships on the teachers if it were otherwise with the personal conferences. Think report cards made more definite impressions of progress.

Chapter VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Public relation has a distinct and vital place in any school program. The degree of support received from a community depends a great deal upon how much emphasis the school places in its public relation program.

The purpose of this study has been to determine to some extent how well the present public relation program has been functioning, to evaluate the favorable and unfavorable points and to plan and develop a more effective public relation program in the Minnehaha School community.

The study was conducted in the Minnehaha Elementary School community in Vancouver, Washington during the school year 1950-1951. The writer, principal of the school, has long been interested in improving public relations in his school community. A seven page questionnaire was constructed and sent out to school parents early in April 1951. The questionnaire was sent to three hundred and thirteen families which comprised the school roster at that time. Two hundred and two completed questionnaires were returned to the school; this constituted 63.9 percent return. There was no pressure applied by the school to secure a more complete return of questionnaires.

The Minnehaha School community is a rapidly growing suburb of the city of Vancouver, Washington. Although it is not a new community the school is new, and has been in operation for less than two school years; the public relations features, therefore, have not been thoroughly worked out.

A large number of parents in the community are young people, energetic and anxious to participate in the school activities. As the community develops and families grow, there will unquestionably be an increase in school enrollment as well as an increase of new homes in the community.

The majority of fathers are steadily employed locally, or own their own business. However, there are very few mothers employed outside the home. Most of the parents own their homes and plan to live indefinitely in the community. All of this tends to make for a more stable school community.

A high percentage of the parents have completed twelve or more years of school. In addition, a considerable number have attained other achievements in the vocational school program.

The parents indicated high endorsement of certain phases of the parent teachers association and the Minnehaha School program. For example, a majority of these

parents are members of the local Parent Teachers Association, are well acquainted with its objectives and believe that the homeroom mother's organization is worthwhile. A very large number of parents highly endorsed the school philosophy, the overall school program, and the progress that their children were making in school. A still higher number were well pleased with teacher-pupil relationship, and were happy because their children had a feeling of belonging to the group. A majority of parents were pleased with the new method of reporting pupil progress, and liked the health and athletic program.

It was gratifying to note that practically all of the two hundred two families were acquainted with their children's teachers, and the majority of them felt they were welcome when they visited school. However, there were several phases of the Parent Teachers Association and school program that the parents did not highly endorse. They pointed out that they did not like long Parent Teachers Association meetings, that there was not enough business, and that there was a need for more active members. A good many were not satisfied with Parent Teachers Association for various personal reasons.

About one-half the parents responding to the questionnaire thought the Parent Teacher Association should run

the school. Several parents expressed disapproval of the school program; they criticized the lack of strict discipline, and some of them felt their children did not receive all the help they needed. Many parents thought that children should bring school work home. They stated that there was not enough playground equipment at the school. They also pointed out that more youth clubs and organizations should be encouraged.

These data suggested certain recommendations for improving the public relations in the Minnehaha School community.

1. It is recommended that the school personnel develop a plan for friendly school relations so that all parents will always feel welcome when visiting the school.
2. It is recommended that a systematic plan be established for regularly and authentically informing the community of the educational program and the policies of the school.
3. It is recommended that the school staff honestly endeavor to evaluate all criticisms and complaints relating to the school in the light of their justification. Measures should then be taken to counsel with all complaintants in order to clarify their questions.
4. It is further recommended that the school personnel and parents seek effective teamwork in analyzing and solving all school problems and needs. Every effort should be made by both groups to utilize the significant data revealed in this study.

5. It is also recommended that the principal of the school has a responsibility and opportunity for democratic leadership in this community, and that he demonstrate and practice it. Furthermore that he will encourage cooperative parent, teacher, and pupil planning in the educational purposes for which the schools have been established.

Through a more complete program of public relations and community participation it is hoped that confidence, support, and cooperation of the parents may be gained to achieve the real goal of the school; "A well-balanced child capable of meeting and accepting the challenges of youth."

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APPENDIX

COPY

VANCOUVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School District No. 37
Vancouver, Washington

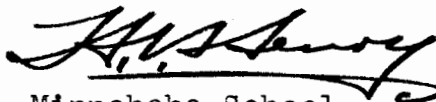
Dear Patrons:

A sincere honest effort is being made to improve the Minnehaha school program and home relationships. This survey is conducted in the hope that you will be a willing participant and answer honestly and sincerely all questions.

The results will be compiled and carefully analysed for their significance. Your efforts contributed in filling out this questionnaire will greatly aid in achieving the goal. Please do so immediately if possible, use pen or pencil and return the completed inventory by your child or mail to the Minnehaha school.

Do not sign your name on this inventory. By making it impossible for outsiders to know who says what, most people are more likely to say what they really think. Print or write as you wish.

Sincerely,



Minnehaha School
Principal

MINNEHAHA SCHOOL COMMUNITY

What do the people of Minnehaha community think about the Minnehaha School Program and its P.T.A.? (Please feel free to write your reaction at any place in this questionnaire)

1. Are you a member of the Minnehaha P.T.A.?

Yes _____ No _____
 Do you believe in it? _____ Would join
 if contacted _____

2. Do you hold an office or work as a member of a committee in the Minnehaha P.T.A.?

Yes _____ No _____
 Do not care to have office _____ Never have
 an opportunity _____

3. Are you acquainted with objectives of the P.T.A.?

Yes _____ No _____
 Work in P.T.A. but no one ever informed me _____
 Work in P.T.A. but too much trouble to find
 out what they are _____ Uncertain _____

4. (a) Do you think the homeroom mother's organization is worthwhile? Yes _____ No _____

Partially so _____ I have no opinion _____

(b) List any suggested improvements _____

5. Do you believe that the P.T.A. should have an active part in running the school?

Yes _____ No _____

6. Do you approve of the way your last year's P.T.A. organization functioned?

Yes _____ No _____

7. Did you like the programs that the P.T.A presented last year?
Yes _____ No _____ I have no opinion _____
Partially so _____

8. What suggestions would you care to offer for improvement of the Minnehaha P.T.A. Organization?

The School Organization in General

9. In general are you satisfied with the school program?
Yes _____ No _____ Partially so _____
I have no opinion _____

10. Are you satisfied with the progress your child is making in all school subjects?
Yes _____ No _____ Partially so _____
I have no opinion _____

If not satisfied please indicate which subjects _____

11. Are you acquainted with your child's teacher?
Yes _____ No _____

If not, do you have a reason? _____

12. Are you acquainted with your child's principal?
Yes _____ No _____

If not, do you have a reason? _____

13. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way your child is treated by the teachers and other school officials?

Very well satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
 Satisfied _____ Very much dissatisfied _____
 Partially so _____ I have no opinion _____

If there are ways in which the teacher and other officials are unfair to your child, tell them here. _____

14. Does your child feel he is a member of the group and belongs to the school?

Yes _____ No _____ Uncertain _____

15. Does the school staff seem really concerned about the welfare of your child?

Yes _____ No _____

16. How much help do your child's teachers usually give him in his school work?

All the help he needs _____ Most of the help he needs _____
 Only part of it _____ Practically none _____
 I have no opinion _____

If you think he needs more help list what kind you think he needs. _____

17. Do you believe your child should bring school work (homework) home to do?

Yes (a great deal) _____ None _____
 Yes (some) _____

18. Do you assign chores or work for your child to do at home?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you allow time for play at home after school?

Yes _____ No _____ About how much time? _____

19. Do you believe in Minnehaha School's philosophy as stated herein?

"The general objective of the Vancouver Schools is to develop individuals who will be able to live effectively in a democratic society.

"Therefore, we are trying to achieve this goal through a school program which provides experience, learning, over-all growth and development in these areas: (1) Physical (good health,) (2) Mental and emotional stability, (3) Social understanding, (4) Creative expression, (5) Economic efficiency.

"We do stress the basic skills or tools, as we call them; reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, civics, language or grammar, spelling, listening, hygiene, art, music, physical education, science or nature study, and library, to assist in reaching our objective."

Yes _____ No _____ Partially _____ Do not understand _____

20. Are you satisfied with the lunch program?

Yes ___ No ___ Partially ___ I have no opinion ___

List below any suggested improvements: _____

21. (a) Are you satisfied with the physical education (health and athletics) program Minnehaha School teaches?

Yes ___ No ___ Partially ___ I have no opinion ___

(b) If not list below what you think could be changed to improve the program _____

22. Is the school discipline too strict or not strict enough?
 Too strict _____ About right _____
 Not strict enough _____ I have no opinion _____
-

23. (a) Are there things that your child should be learning right now which are not taught?
 No, none _____ Yes, a few _____ Many _____
 I have no opinion _____

- (b) If there are things which you think your child should be learning which are not being taught now, list them here _____
-

24. (a) Do you think the school has as much equipment as it needs?
 Yes _____ No _____ Partially what it needs _____
 I have no opinion _____

- (b) List below any you feel it should have that it now does not have. _____
-

25. Do you think your child's teacher welcomes your visits to school?
 Yes _____ No _____ Uncertain _____ I have no opinion _____

26. How do you get information about your child's school?
 Visiting school _____ P.T.A. _____ Homeroom Mothers _____
 Talking with children _____ Talking with neighbors _____
-

27. (a) Do you approve of the movies at school?
 Yes, educational kinds _____ Yes, all kinds _____
 No, none, _____ I have no opinion _____

- (b) Does the amount of money required make it impossible for the "financially embarrassed" to take part in as much as they should?
 Yes, most of the time _____ Yes, sometimes _____
 No _____ I have no opinion _____

28. (a) Does the school present as many all-school programs as it should?

Enough___ Few more___ Too many___
I have no opinion___

(b) List what types or kinds of all-school public programs you would care to attend. _____

29. Are you satisfied with our youth programs, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cubbing, Campfire Girls, Bluebirds, and 4-H?

Yes___ No___ Partially___

If not explain why not _____

30. Are you satisfied with the way pupil progress is reported? (Teacher parent conference)

Yes___ No___ Partially___ No comment___

Transportation

31. (a) Does your child ride the Minnehaha school bus?

Yes___ No___ He could ride but we have him walk___

Lives close to school so does not ride___
Only in inclement weather___

(b) If your child does not ride, why not? _____

32. Do you understand state rules and regulations of school bus transportation including routing and stops?

Yes___ No___ Uncertain___

33. (a) Are you satisfied with your school bus transportation to Minnehaha School?
 Yes___ No___ Partially___

(b) If not, list what is wrong. _____

34. Place any suggestion you have regarding school bus management below.

Personal Facts

35. Which parent filled out this questionnaire?
 Father___ Mother___ Male guardian or step-
 father___ Female guardian or stepmother___

36. What grade is your child or children in?
 Circle one or each. K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

(If more than one in same grade place number above circled grade.)

37. How far did you yourself go in school?

Grades: 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 College 1 2 3 4 5

Put a check here___ if you have attended vocational school.

38. Are you steadily employed?
 Father___ Yes___ No___ Part time___
 Mother___ Yes___ No___ Part time___

39. What is your occupation?

Father _____
 Mother _____

40. Do you own your own home?

Yes___ No___ Plan to leave community___
 Plan to live in community indefinitely___