Evaluation of the Non-Graded Primary Reading Program at Munich Elementary No. 1

Charles R. Hammill

Central Washington University

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EVALUATION OF THE NON-GRADED PRIMARY READING PROGRAM AT MUNICH ELEMENTARY NO. 1

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

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

by
Charles R. Hammill
August, 1967
APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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Appreciation is also expressed to the teachers at Munich Elementary #1, Munich, Germany, who returned questionnaires used in the study, and to his wife, Cleo, for her continual encouragement.
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

The children in primary school today, next year, and the years to follow will be participating members of society in the year 2000. Preparation in the primary level for future schooling is the first step toward preparation for life. Preparation for life, obviously is necessary in order to be a well-informed, contributing member of society.

Today, and in the years to come, it is vital that every student realize his maximum potential and transfer this to a useful contribution in an ever-changing world.

Pressures from the society of today have caused educators to appraise the curriculum and, as a result, there are many revolutions occurring in the field of education.

New insights gained in the area of child development make it more evident that children come to school with a wide range of differences in ability, experiences, social background, levels and rates of maturation, and physical and emotional make-up. These differences increase as youngsters gain new insights and understanding from the organized experiences offered by the school.

Therefore, there should not be an attempt to eliminate variability through the impossible goal of a single standard of achievement for all children of a specific age
or grade level. The task at hand is to accept each child as he is and where he is, and after obtaining all possible information about him, to provide the guidance and learning situations which will enable him to develop to his potential.

Conscientious teachers have always searched for more satisfactory ways for teaching and meeting individual differences. The teaching staff of Munich American Elementary School No. 1 is no exception. After diligent research and discussion, it was decided to enter the 1965-1966 school year using The Nongraded Primary or Continuous Progress Program.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this study to (1) evaluate the implementation procedures of the nongraded reading program at Munich Elementary No. 1; (2) determine whether reporting and recording student progress met the needs of the students and teachers; (3) discover any difficulties inherent in the present system of assigning and grouping children; and (4) relate the level of achievement experienced in this program to the previously employed program as revealed by an opinion survey of the teachers involved in the program.
Importance of the Study

Thorough and conscientious preparatory planning prior to initiating a new program is of vital importance to the success of any program. Equally important after implementation is evaluation to determine the program's effectiveness in achieving previously ascertained goals.

There is a need in our schools today that cries out for stability and confidence. This need is shared by teachers, pupils, and parents. If education is to remain in the hands of the educators, we must not leave ourselves vulnerable to changes of careless or casual tampering (30:274).

Within recent months some staff members of Munich Elementary No. 1 have expressed frustrations regarding some aspects of the nongraded program. Thought has also been given as to the feasibility of continuing the program in the intermediate grades. These factors made it desirable to determine with some clarity what aspects of the present program need reorganization and which were assets to the program.

In this study the questionnaire and opinion techniques were employed to gain the insight of the many teachers and staff members involved in the program. The importance and necessity for this was clearly stated by E. L. Hanson:

All of the staff who are involved in the learning situation are also responsible for improvement of same (24:71).
Limitations of the Study

Population. The population of the study included the twenty-six teachers actively involved in the implementation and operation of the nongraded program at Munich Elementary No. 1. Because of the small number of respondents, this was seen as a factor in limiting the study.

Questionnaire. The use of an opinion questionnaire as a sole means of gathering data makes the study subjective and hence becomes a limiting factor.

Geographic location. Munich Elementary No. 1 is the only all American staffed school in Munich, Germany, with a nongraded reading program. This isolation makes comparison with other schools rather unrealistic. Geographical isolation in this situation became a limiting factor in the study.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Achievement. Success experienced in the improvement of reading skills.

Assignment. The placement of a student in a specific reading level.

Continuous progress or nongraded. Grouping of children by chronological age, social and emotional maturity, then permitting them to progress at their own rate without the confines of static grade lines.
Grouping. Organizing the school population so the children with similar instructional needs are together.

Level of instruction. The point at which the child's background of word-attack skills and ability to comprehend the material are sufficient to assure him success. Advancement of learning proceeds from this point.

Movement of children. The transferring of children from one room to another.

Primary unit. The first three years of formal education in the elementary school.

Recording progress. The act of indicating on individual student records the achievement made within the program.

Reporting progress. Informing parents as to their child's success within the program.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

The remainder of this study is divided into three chapters. Chapter II will include a review of literature and recent research dealing with the nongraded primary.

Chapter III includes a description and discussion of the situation in Munich Elementary No. 1, the questionnaire used, and questionnaire results.
Chapter IV is composed of interpretation of information gained from the questionnaire and recognition of program achievement as well as any deficiencies or recommendations for improvement.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is designed to provide the background for the historical development and justification for the nongraded movement, its philosophy, and difficulties in evaluating nongraded programs.

I. HISTORY OF THE NONGRADED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The history of the nongraded program is elusive. One must pick out various threads and try to satisfy the desire to know where and when it all started. Rather than think of nongrading as a positive historical movement, one must think of it as a reactive program. This was aptly stated by Hillson:

It seems that as early as the Quincy Grammar School set up its graded program in 1846 counter action movements were established. Steps were introduced to keep the less able students up with the grade (26:294).

The Batavia plan employed two teachers per class to help the less able and accelerate the intellectually gifted, while in St. Louis, several years later, a reclassification of classes every six weeks was initiated as a means of advancing the brighter ones. Perceptive educators admitted the impossibility of keeping everybody on the same level, and so many schema were advanced to compensate or "get around" the graded organization.
To answer the needs of children, educators tried extra help activities, differentiation of assigned materials, and acceleration. But the grade basis remained. Pupil retention practice remained. Grade terminology as it regarded progress remained (26:294).

These conditions have remained with us for several reasons. One cause has possibly been the widely preached principle of "the same education for everybody." This really denies equal opportunity because differently endowed pupils would undoubtedly obtain different kinds, rates, and degrees of education if truly given "equal opportunities."

Ernst supports this idea when he states:

Educational identicism is antidemocratic. Every school is a variable population and true equality for the pupils can be achieved only by making allowances for these differences (16:648).

Genuine concern about these factors and realization that gradedness is incompatible with scientific findings on child growth and development, as well as the demands of mass education condemning many to failure and the very able to boredom and mediocrity, made action necessary.

In 1936 and 1947, Richmond, Virginia, and Western Springs, Illinois, experimented with a form of nongrading but made no formal attempt at evaluation. These were formative years, but it wasn't until after World War II that nongraded programs received their greatest impetus. The technological advancements brought on by the war and new realizations about the individual confronted all aspects of
our society. It became evident that the graded structure was not able to cope with the knowledge explosion.

In Milwaukee in 1942 the nongraded as a modern cohesive concept of elementary organization took root. The program in Milwaukee is probably the oldest which is still in effect. Goodlad and Anderson refer to Milwaukee as the capital city of the nongraded school movement (19:53).

The interim years have seen the implementation of nongraded programs throughout the country. The state of California has been very active in experimenting with the nongraded program. For example,

In 1952 Jefferson School in Hawthorne, California, was organized as an ungraded primary school. In this plan a child remains ungraded for four years. The child is first placed with his age group, but the plan is flexible so that a child may be moved according to his own individual growth pattern. The administrators of this program believe that it provides for individual differences and assures satisfying and successful experiences in school (3:146).

There was no mention of any evaluation of the Jefferson School program; however, the report indicated the staff thought that they had many evidences that the plan was beneficial and worthwhile.

In 1950 and 1956, Park Forest, Illinois, and Maple Park Elementary School in Edmonds, Washington, respectively, instituted nongraded primary units. To this date, neither had made a formal evaluation of the program but continuation and expansion of the program indicated confidence in the superiority of the nongraded system.
In September of 1957 the Bellevue Public Schools, Bellevue, Washington, developed the Continuous Growth Program, experimentally basing its first grouping processes upon demonstrated ability to read. Bellevue developed its reading program during the first three years after kindergarten in accordance with eight general levels and one enrichment level.

The teacher's judgment, tests, and conferences were used in appraising children's progress from one level to another (3:7).

One of the latest endeavors in the nongraded has involved the Brevard County Schools in Florida. They have appropriately identified their program with the letters SPACE (Selective Phasing A Continuous Education). SPACE has six levels, each covering the work roughly of one grade. Each level has three phases: basic, regular, and advanced.

In SPACE a student may be in the advanced phase in reading, for example, but assigned to a regular phase in mathematics or science. In the areas of social studies, physical education, art and music, groupings are for the most part heterogeneous (38:19).

The variety of these programs is evident. This variety is a blessing so essential in meeting the needs of the individual. But basic to all is a philosophy which encourages exuberance in modifying and improving the instructional program.

II. PHILOSOPHY OF THE NONGRADED

A "nongraded" elementary school is one which accepts the reality of individual differences and organizes its classes in such a way that each pupil has an opportunity to
learn all that he can as fast as he can in a well-balanced program of instruction. Children are usually grouped chronologically by age with a wide range of interests and abilities preferred so that in the skills subjects there will be pupils working at different levels of difficulty at the same time. Temporary groups are often formed according to particular instructional needs. All groups are flexible and any arrangement is satisfactory if it promotes worthwhile learning experiences for everyone concerned.

Normally each child progresses from class to class or from year to year with his classmates. But his needs as a whole child are studied continuously. If there comes a time when another class could provide a better learning environment for him, he should be transferred as soon as all of the individuals concerned have agreed that this would be beneficial.

An ungraded school denotes a type of organization, not a method of instruction. Its chief purpose is to free the teacher to use for each child the methods and materials which will work best for him.

An essential facet of the nongraded elementary school is a close and friendly relationship between the home and school. This enables the teacher and parents to develop a
common understanding regarding the work the child is to do: his progress, his strengths and weaknesses, his talents, his needs and his interests. His parents are entitled to know how his achievements compare with other members of the class, and how his achievements compare with the norms for a child of his general ability.

In the nongraded, children are under less pressure, but they have greater responsibility, and they usually work because it is work which is specially selected to meet their individual requirements. The program may be adapted to the needs of individual pupils, but each child works through his program in a systematic manner as rapidly as he is able with the best instruction available. Sequential progress does not mean steady and even progress. The nature of learning is sometimes rapid, sometimes slow, and sometimes uniform. The nongraded philosophy requires consideration of these factors as well as the social, emotional, physical, and mental factors that affect learning. The nongraded philosophy, if implemented, not only requires consideration of the above factors, but in addition admonishes the teacher to attempt to do something about them with the best interest of the child in mind.

The dominant philosophy in a nongraded school is one of acceptance--each child is accepted and valued in his own right (23:3).
III. EVALUATION OF THE NONGRADED

One major difficulty of controlled research in this area is that clear cut models of gradedness and nongradedness are not yet available. This problem was brought into sharp focus in a recent study by Robert F. Carbone.

Seeking to find differences between the two types of school organization, Carbone revealed in effect that the curriculum and practices of instruction in the nongraded schools in his study were imperfectly related to the theoretical idea of the nongraded practice (26:334).

Another limitation which plagues the researcher in his attempt to evaluate the nongraded stems from the questionable validity of employing evaluative devices constructed with a graded philosophy. Comparative studies using such instruments may indicate few advantages and perhaps even show disadvantages. Thus, the need for adequate assessment of nongraded procedures is forestalled by the necessity of designing instruments compatible with the nongraded philosophy. Goodlad and Anderson express themselves on this subject in an article in the Elementary School Journal.

... inquiry into the progress and the merit of nongraded organization will be facilitated by an increase in descriptive reports and by careful attempts of self-appraisal (2:269).

One device immediately available to the researcher is the questionnaire technique. Although fraught with many inherent inadequacies it nevertheless can obtain the perceptions of those involved in active implementation of the
nongraded theory. In order to obtain data of this type Goodlad and Anderson conducted a questionnaire survey of eighty-nine communities with nongraded schools in 1960.

The questionnaire sought information on reasons for introducing a nongraded plan, on changes effected in any part of the school program as a part of the process of bringing the nongraded plan into existence, on changes in program that followed introduction of the nongraded plan, on current modifications in school practices related to nongrading and on long term plans for the future (18:37).

This device has also been used by many school districts in an attempt to gain some insight into their own nongraded programs. One such school district was the Bellevue Public School system in Bellevue, Washington. After two years of active participation in a nongraded program, the district employed a questionnaire to determine the parents' opinion of their child's progress in the nongraded program. Later in 1959 the Bellevue Public Schools employed another questionnaire to determine teacher reactions to the program.

The need for action research as well as basic research is evident. The use of the questionnaire technique is a beginning, but basic research may require more sophisticated devices that are not bound to subjectivity but evaluate the nongraded on objective data. However, at the present, the questionnaire appears to be one of the more effective means of determining teacher attitude concerning the nongraded program.
CHAPTER III

QUESTIONNAIRE, RESPONSES, AND COMMENTS

The purpose of this chapter was to review the plans made by the primary staff for establishing and operating the nongraded program prior to its implementation. Insight into the effectiveness of the plans for establishing the program, assigning children, movement of children, reporting student progress, and recording student progress has been gained by the use of a questionnaire. The teachers' responses to the questionnaire have been tabulated in this chapter on a "by-item" basis with annotated teacher responses included for further elucidation.

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAM

Initial Organization of the Program

The nongraded program at Munich Elementary No. 1, Munich, Germany, was developed through administrative encouragement to improve the reading program. After having an opportunity to listen and question Dr. R. H. Anderson, the primary grade teachers felt it would be of value to know more about the possibility of establishing a nongraded program at Munich Elementary No. 1. Time was spent attending in-service meetings conducted by consultants, reading literature on the subject, and discussing the pros and cons
of a continuous progress program. A committee observed the nongraded program at the Stuttgart School and reported back to the teachers at Munich Elementary No. 1. Plans were made to conduct a series of group meetings for parents, to answer any questions about the program. In preparation for this meeting, a series of questions and answers related to the nongraded program were prepared. A copy of the questions may be found in Appendix A.

Mechanics of Establishing the Program

The program was set up so there were ten levels of reading instruction. Reading was selected as the basis for establishing the program because of its importance in the curriculum at the primary level. A copy of this plan of arrangement may be found in Appendix B. The placement of students at the beginning of the 1965 school year was on a tentative basis. During September, individual informal reading analysis tests were administered by classroom teachers to further determine each child's reading level.

If it were felt a child would gain more from work in another group, this was discussed with the reading consultant and guidance counselor before a final decision was made. The parents of the child were then informed of the planned move by means of a letter. A copy of the parent contact letter may be found in Appendix C.
To facilitate the ease of moving students from one instructional level to another, the children were organized so a teacher would have three levels in the room. This could include two groups of children working on the third instructional level and one group of children working on the fourth instructional level. Thus, when a child completed the skills in level three, he could stay in the same room and still move to the next instructional level. There was always an attempt made to provide the child with the possibility of advancing from one level to another without changing rooms or teachers.

Assignment of New Children

As each new child of primary-unit age and experience level enrolled in the school, it was planned that he or she be given a series of tests by the reading specialist. These could include selections from Durrell's Reading Analysis, Bett's Informal Reading Inventory, or an informal reading inventory of comprehension. Other factors that entered into the decision of placement were teacher judgment and the child's previous school record.

Movement of Children

It was proposed that a teacher would submit a form to the reading specialist and school counselor stating the reason for suggested change, present reading level, and
proposed reading level. A copy of this form may be found in Appendix D. The reading specialist would then listen to the child read and check the child's comprehension for the level of instruction the child was preparing to leave. The reading specialist could then affirm the classroom teacher's proposal or suggest more instruction in specific areas.

**Reporting Student Progress**

A school-wide parent conference time after the first quarter was planned, followed by report cards for the remaining three marking periods. This was to be supplemented with additional parent conferences as need directed.

**Recording Student Progress**

A card file system was developed to answer this need. Pertinent student information retained on the card included I.Q., reading test scores, books read, behavior problems, and present reading level. A copy of the card may be found in Appendix E.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

A tentative questionnaire was formulated after careful study of a program proposal submitted by the primary unit to the administration and evaluation of the responses to Goodlad and Anderson's questionnaire survey of districts with successful nongraded programs.
The following is a list of the ten most frequent recommendations to school districts contemplating the introduction of nongraded plans from districts in which the program has been successful as extracted from the tabulated results of Goodlad and Anderson's questionnaire.

1. Take time to get full parental understanding and consent.
2. Get the cooperation of all teachers and staff members; common philosophy and knowledge.
3. Move slowly, evaluate every move.
4. Work closely with your P-TA and keep them informed on progress.
5. Introduce the plan in one grade at a time, over a period of years.
6. Have a sound program of testing and evaluation.
7. Help teachers toward a complete understanding of child development.
8. Study other nongraded plans in operation; adapt as necessary.
9. Do not do it simply to be doing something new; it takes desire and hard work.
10. Above all, understand what you are doing and why.

Ten factors that most frequently contributed to the successful development of nongraded programs were:

1. Strong interest and desire on the part of teachers
2. Careful study by the staff of other plans in existence; local research
3. Effective use of P-TA and other public relations channels
4. Staff concern about pupil retentions and related pupil adjustment problems
5. Parent conferences--parent meetings
6. Special interest and leadership shown by a teacher, principal, superintendent, or supervisor
7. Continuous parent education emphasis
8. Successful efforts to explain and promote the plan to parents
9. Very careful planning, step by step
10. Help given by other school districts and college personnel.
Ten most frequent difficulties that had to be overcome in establishing a nongraded program were cited as:

1. Grade-level-expectation habits of teachers
2. Reluctance of traditionalists among teachers to try something different
3. General problems of providing understanding to parents
4. Problems or retraining or orienting new staff members to the plan
5. Problems of designing an appropriate report card or reporting procedure
6. Grade-level-expectation habits of parents
7. Dealing with the parents whose children need more time in primary
8. Continuous influx of new pupils and parents unfamiliar with the plan
9. Fears and doubts of teachers
10. Students moving away who have been under the plan ("Loss of investment") (19:171-173)

Following the development of the tentative questionnaire, ten of the faculty members of Munich Elementary No. 1 were asked to evaluate and make suggestions for improving the questionnaire. The questionnaire was rewritten and submitted to the thesis chairman for evaluation. The questionnaire was then revised according to the suggestions given by Dr. Davis and prepared for distribution. A copy of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix F.

The completed questionnaire was designed to gain opinions of teachers in the program on such factors as preparation for the program, assignment and grouping of children, movement of children in the program, recording and reporting student progress, and student achievement.
Selecting the Population

The members of the Primary Unit during the school year 1966-1967 were asked to participate in the study. This was a total of twenty-six teachers.

Administration of the Questionnaire

On May 15, 1967, the questionnaires were distributed to the teachers involved in the program with a cover letter concerning the evaluation of the nongraded program and a request that they not sign or identify the questionnaire in any way. A copy of the cover letter may be found in Appendix F. The teachers were requested to return the questionnaire by May 19, 1967.

Final Analysis of the Responses

Twenty-six questionnaires were distributed and of this number, twenty-four were returned. This is a 92.3 per cent response.

III. TABULATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Each item on the questionnaire was tabulated on a "by-item" basis. The findings were presented as follows: (1) the question, (2) the responses to the question tabulated by number of respondents and per cent, and (3) annotations of respondents.
Preparation for the Program

Item 1. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought the time spent in organizing the non-graded program at Munich Elementary No. 1 was sufficient or insufficient.

The responses indicated that two (8.32%) deemed the preparation for the program sufficient, eighteen respondents (75%) stated the preparation was insufficient, and four (16.66%) did not respond. The reasons given for the preparation being insufficient included: "report card not planned," "Inadequate leadership in implementation and no clear statement of philosophy."

Item 2. Item two of the questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate if they felt the teachers participating in the program, when implemented in September, 1965, were well informed, poorly informed, or moderately informed about the nongraded program.

None of the teachers thought the group was well informed. Nine of the respondents (37.5%) indicated the teachers were poorly informed. Eleven respondents (45.82%) considered the teachers to be moderately informed, and four (16.66%) made no response.

Item 3. The respondents were asked to recall whether the teachers involved in the planning of the program in
1965 were enthusiastic, skeptical, or possibly a combination of the two choices.

One respondent (4.16%) was of the opinion that the participants were enthusiastic. Six (25%) of the respondents felt the group was skeptical. Fourteen of the respondents (58.32%) stated the participants could be best described as neither enthusiastic nor completely skeptical. Three (12.5%) of the teachers returning the questionnaire did not answer the question.

Item 4. Item four asked the respondents to recollect if the parents were involved in the planning of the nongraded program by means of parent meetings, notes sent home, or if no communication was made.

The responses indicated that two (8.32%) felt the community had been involved through P-TA and by individual teacher conferences. Ten (41.66%) of the respondents stated that notes sent home with the children were used as a means of informing the parents. Nine respondents (37.5%) were of the opinion that no real communication in the planning stage had involved the parents. Four (16.66%) made no response and justified this by indicating they were not in Munich during the planning stage of the nongraded program.
Item 5. Respondents were requested to indicate whether the goals and objectives were discussed or not discussed prior to implementation of the nongraded program. Fourteen (58.32%) stated the goals and objectives were discussed, but some of them expressed reservation as to the adequacy of the discussions. Nine respondents (37.5%) were of the opinion that the goals and objectives were not discussed. One (4.16%) of the teachers returning the questionnaire did not answer this question.

Item 6. This question sought the respondent's opinion on whether the goals and objectives of the program were understood, or not understood, by everyone before beginning the program.

Seven (29.16%) of the respondents indicated the goals and objectives were understood by everyone before beginning the program. Fourteen respondents (58.32%) were of the opinion that the goals and objectives were not understood by everyone at the time the program was implemented. Three (12.5%) made no response to this question.

Item 7. Item seven asked the respondents to indicate if the orientation of new teachers to the program was provided for by special introductory reading, no provisions made, a colleague assigned for this purpose, a combination of the previous responses, or some other method.
One respondent (4.16%) stated that orientation of new teachers was provided for by special introductory reading. This respondent indicated reservations as to the effectiveness of this method. Fourteen respondents (58.32%) believed that no provisions had been made for orientation of the new teachers. One respondent (4.16%) stated that a colleague was assigned for this purpose. One respondent (4.16%) thought that a combination of reading and assignment of a colleague had been planned. Two respondents (8.32%) stated that the principal had planned to explain the program to new teachers. Five (20.82%) made no response.

Assignment and Grouping

Item 8. Item eight requested the respondents to indicate whether the initial instructional level placement procedures had been accurate or inaccurate in placing the students.

Eleven respondents (45.82%) respondents believed the initial placement to be accurate. Two of these respondents qualified their statements with these comments: "part of the time," and "initial placement was accurate but this is not true for the students enrolling during the year."

Twelve respondents (50%) were of the opinion that the placement system was inaccurate. One of these respondents expressed the opinion that reading alone was a very poor
way to place children. One (4.16%) of the teachers did not respond.

**Item 9.** The respondents were asked to indicate if the children initially assigned to their class read on the same reading level, nearly the same reading level, or on a wide range of reading levels.

One respondent (4.16%) stated that only in 1965 did the children assigned to her read on the same level. Three respondents (12.5%) indicated the children assigned them read on nearly the same reading level. Eighteen respondents (75%) believed a wide range of levels resulted from the initial assignment procedures. One of the eighteen even augmented her selection of response with "and how!" Two (8.32%) did not respond to the question.

**Item 10.** Respondents to this question were requested to determine if their classroom instructional group in this program contrasted to the previous means of grouping was about the same, more homogeneous, or more heterogeneous.

Fifteen respondents (62.5%) felt their class was about the same. Five (20.82%) felt the group was more homogeneous. One respondent said it was homogeneous at the beginning of the year but not later. Two respondents (8.32%) thought their groups were more heterogeneous. One blamed this on poor initial placement and the other believed it to be caused by a disregard for the nongraded philosophy.
Item 11. This question asked the respondents to determine whether children new to the program adjusted readily or did not adjust readily.

Twenty-two of the respondents (91.66%) were of the opinion that the children adjusted quickly. Six of these said this was because they were military children and accustomed to moving. One respondent (4.16%) indicated slow children didn't adjust readily. One respondent (4.16%) did not answer this question.

Item 12. The respondents were asked to determine if children with special emotional problems were given to certain teachers regardless of the level they taught, placed only according to their reading level, or given some special consideration.

Seven respondents (29.16%) were of the opinion that certain teachers received emotional problems regardless of the level they taught. Twelve (50%) felt they were placed according to their reading level. Three (12.5%) stated that special consideration was given to these children. They felt the special consideration usually included testing by the counselor, given to a teacher whose personality would be best for working with the child, or placed by age and size.
Item 13. The respondent's opinion was sought on whether kindergarten evaluation and recommendations were found to be accurate, inaccurate, or inadequate.

Four (16.6%) thought the records in this area were adequate. One respondent (4.16%) felt the material was inaccurate. Seven (29.16%) considered the material inadequate. Twelve (50%) did not respond. The basic reason given for not responding was that they did not use the kindergarten records at their level.

Movement of Children

Item 14. Question fourteen requested the respondents to indicate if they had moved any children from their room to another room having a lower level of instruction any time during the year.

Thirteen of the respondents (54.16%) indicated no children had been moved from their room. Two of these indicated they had attempted to move some but had been informed it was not possible due to class loads. One respondent stated that three of her students had been transferred without her knowledge of why they were moved. Six (25%) indicated they had moved from one to three children to another room during the year. Three respondents (12.5%) stated they had moved several children to other rooms. Two (8.32%) did not answer the question.
**Item 15.** Item fifteen of the questionnaire asked the respondents to state whether they had not moved children, had moved few children, or had moved several children from their room and level to another room and a higher level since the beginning of the year.

Fifteen (62.5%) indicated no children had been moved. Two of these stated they had requested movement of children but no action was taken. Three respondents (12.5%) stated they had moved from one to three students. Four (16.66%) replied they had moved several students. One of these respondents said these children left the room only for reading and returned for the rest of the curriculum. Two teachers (8.32%) did not answer the question.

**Item 16.** Respondents were asked if movement of a child from one room to another was determined by reading achievement level or for the purpose of evening up class load.

Thirteen respondents (54.16%) indicated this was determined by reading achievement level. Six (25%) stated it was to even up the class load. Five (20.82%) made no response to this question.

**Item 17.** The respondents were requested to indicate what method was employed in determining when a child should move to another level. The choices given were teacher
judgment, achievement tests, or recommendation of the reading consultant.

Fourteen respondents (58.32%) stated that teacher judgment was the determiner. Two of the fourteen stated achievement tests were also employed as a determiner. Five of the fourteen indicated the reading consultant was also a determiner. One of the fourteen respondents stated the administration aided in determining when a child should move. No respondents indicated achievement tests were the sole means of determining when a child should move to another level. Two (8.32%) replied the reading consultant's recommendation was the main determinant in moving children. One of these two respondents indicated she thought it was the reading consultant but she really was not sure. Six (25%) did not check any choice given. Three of these made comments such as: "would like to know--couldn't move any," "takes so long it isn't worth it," "organization is poor," "this just wasn't done."

**Item 18.** Item eighteen of the questionnaire asked the respondents to determine if teachers in the program tend to move the children to different rooms and levels of instruction or keep the same class throughout the year.

None of the respondents (0%) indicated that children were moved from one room to another room and level of
instruction during the year. Twenty-one (87.5%) replied that teachers keep the same class throughout the year. Three (12.5%) made no response to this question.

**Item 19.** Respondents were requested to indicate how many children they recommended for continuation on the same level of instruction at the end of last year.

Six respondents (12.5%) replied they did not recommend any continue on the same level. Seven (29.16%) stated they recommended from one to five of their children continue on the same level. Six respondents (25%) recommended that six to ten of their children continue on the same level. One (4.16%) of the respondents recommended ten of her children continue on the same level. Four (16.66%) did not answer the question.

**Item 20.** Question twenty asked the respondents to indicate when they informed the parents that their child would be expected to remain in the Primary Unit another year. The possible choices included: at the end of the first marking period, by the middle of the year, by the end of the third marking period, or at the end of the school year.

Two respondents (8.32%) stated they would inform the parents by the middle of the year. Thirteen respondents (54.16%) indicated they informed the parents by the end of
the third marking period. Two respondents (8.32%) replied this was done at the end of the year. One of these respondents felt this was the policy but that it was not fair to the child or parent. Seven (29.16%) did not select any of the choices given. Six of these indicated that this would be the responsibility of the third year teacher.

**Recording and Reporting Progress**

**Item 21.** Respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought the present method of recording student progress was satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Seven respondents (29.16%) were of the opinion that the present method was satisfactory. Sixteen respondents (66.6%) indicated the present method of recording was unsatisfactory. Reasons for indicating the method was unsatisfactory included: "not enough space for comments," "teachers use different philosophies in grading," "check sheet of skills not available," and "report card does not have provisions for informing parents of specific weaknesses." One teacher indicated she would like to return to the use of letter grades A, B, C, etc. One (4.16%) of the teachers did not answer the question.

**Item 22.** Respondents were requested to indicate if information received from previous teachers in the program about the children was adequate or inadequate.

Twelve (50%) of the respondents indicated the
information received was adequate. Nine respondents (37.5%) stated the information received was inadequate. The reasons given were: "no check sheets of skills," "skills not defined," "validity of comments depends on what teacher wrote it," and "insufficient information in general."

Three (12.5%) of the teachers did not answer this question.

**Item 23.** Item twenty-three asked respondents to indicate whether the present report card was satisfactory or unsatisfactory for the nongraded program.

Four (16.66%) deemed the report card satisfactory. Eighteen respondents (75%) stated the report card was unsatisfactory. Their explanations for rating the card unsatisfactory were: "information on levels is inadequate," "terminology is graded," "parents do not understand reading levels," and "it does not tell the parent how much the child has achieved." One individual indicated that it would be helpful if a chart were provided on the card with grade equivalents opposite the reading level. Another respondent thought letter grades would be more helpful in evaluation. Two (8.32%) of the teachers did not answer this question.

**Item 24.** Item twenty-four of the questionnaire asked if parents indicated by their comments if they understood the report card, did not understand it, or if they did not respond at all.
Four respondents (16.66%) were of the opinion that parents understood the card. Two (8.32%) indicated parents did not understand the card. Eighteen respondents (75%) stated the parents made no comments so it was difficult to determine if they understood the card. Two of the eighteen pointed out that one reason parents do not comment was because there is not a place provided on the card for parents' comments. One teacher (4.16%) did not respond to the question.

**Item 25.** Respondents were requested to indicate when they recorded a student's completion of an instructional level. The choices on the questionnaire were: at the end of the quarter, immediately, or at the end of the year.

Nine respondents (37.5%) stated they recorded the results at the end of the quarter. Thirteen respondents (54.16%) indicated they recorded the results immediately. Four of the nine stated the information was also recorded with the counselor at the end of the year. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer the question.

**Item 26.** The respondents were requested to indicate if they considered the check list of skills for each level to be adequate, inadequate, or indicate if it was not available.
Four respondents (16.66%) stated the check list of skills for each level was adequate. Twelve (50%) indicated a list was not available. Seven (29.16%) considered the list to be inadequate. They felt it was inadequate because the skills were not clearly defined and they were not organized effectively for work with a large class. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer the question.

**Achievement**

**Item 27.** Respondents were asked if the children in this program read at their level of instruction, below their level of instruction, or above their level of instruction.

Nineteen respondents (79.16%) indicated the children read at their level of instruction. Two respondents qualified their statements. One said, "This is the way it is supposed to operate and it looks good on paper." Another one of the nineteen respondents indicated she tried this whenever possible but said, "There is a limit to the number of groups a person can handle successfully in teaching reading." Three (12.5%) stated some children read below their level of instruction. One (4.16%) indicated that a child is often placed because of class load or he might be a discipline problem and so might read on, above, or below his instructional level depending on which teacher could handle the child. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer this question.
Item 28. Respondents were asked to estimate if the student's achievement in reading was as good as, better than, or poorer than the previous reading program.

Fourteen (58.32%) of the respondents indicated the children did as good as in the previous program. Eight respondents (33.32%) estimated the children's performance to be better than the previous program. One respondent (4.16%) felt the performance of the children was poorer because the class loads were too great and too many groups in a class did not allow time for adequate individualization. One of the teachers (4.16%) did not select any of the responses.

Item 29. Item twenty-nine requested the respondents to determine if motivation for improvement was greater than, less than, or the same as the previous reading program.

Seven respondents stated motivation was greater than the previous program (29.16%). One of the seven indicated this was not true for all students. She felt the slower students were not as motivated in the nongraded program. Sixteen (66.6%) of the respondents considered the level of motivation to be the same as the previous reading program. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer the question.
**Item 30.** Respondents were asked to indicate if provisions for enrichment in the program included special enrichment levels, no provisions, or if this was left to the discretion of the individual teacher.

One respondent (4.16%) stated no provisions were made for enrichment. Twenty-two respondents (91.66%) indicated this was left to the individual teacher. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer the question.

**Item 31.** The respondents were asked to express their opinion as to whether the program had increased, reduced, or had no appreciable influence on the frustrations of the slow learner.

Three respondents (12.5%) stated frustrations of slow learners had increased. The reasons given were class loads were too great and children were moved back. Eleven (45.82%) indicated the program had reduced the frustrations of slow learners. Nine respondents (37.5%) were of the opinion that there was no difference between this program and the previous one in regard to the frustration of slow learners. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer the question.

**Item 32.** Respondents were asked to determine if the academically talented were provided with the same opportunities, greater opportunities, or fewer opportunities in this program in contrast to the previous program.
Thirteen respondents (54.16%) indicated the opportunities were the same as the previous program. One teacher in this group stated the reason for this was due to the discipline problems caused by her low group which took too much of her time. Ten respondents (41.66%) were of the opinion that greater opportunities were provided for the academically talented. One teacher (4.16%) did not answer the question.

**Items 33-34.** Items thirty-three and thirty-four requested the respondents to indicate how many of their children would be reading above grade level and below grade level in a graded system. The responses to these items are shown in Table I.

The data indicated that out of an average enrollment of thirty-two pupils per room, 131 (17.8%) of the 736 pupils indicated in this report were reading above grade level. It is also evident that 164 (20.9%) of the 736 children from the twenty-three classes tallied were reading below grade level. A natural assumption would be that the remaining 431 (61.3%) of the students would be reading at the grade level in which they would be working in a graded situation. These figures and percentages cause some uncertainty as to the teacher's ability in this situation to determine whether a child is reading above or below grade level.
### TABLE I

NUMBER OF STUDENTS CONSIDERED BY RESPONDENTS TO BE READING ABOVE OR BELOW GRADE LEVEL PER CLASSROOM

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<th>Above Grade Level</th>
<th>Below Grade Level</th>
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CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the data recorded in Chapter III of this study, the following conclusions were drawn. These conclusions have been organized into five sections: preparation for the program, assignment and grouping, recording and reporting progress, movement of children, and achievement.

Preparation for the Program

The respondents felt that none of them were well informed and that a general skepticism permeated the staff. It was felt that neither planning time nor leadership was sufficient to develop an understanding of the nongraded philosophy. They acknowledged the fact that the nongraded philosophy had been discussed but indicated confusion regarding the part the parents played in planning the nongraded program. Concern was expressed by more than half the teachers about the apparent lack of planning relating to the orientation of new teachers entering the program.

Some consideration must be given to the validity of a response that requires the respondent to recall what his or her emotional response was two or three years ago. It
is likely that any positive reaction towards the program could have been forgotten if frustrations and negative situations have been experienced in the ensuing years. The apparent denunciation of the program may be a reactionary one that has developed and did not exist at the time of implementation.

However, considering the responses without reflection as to any possible negative experiences in the interim, the findings of this study certainly indicate a need for redefining the philosophy, improving communications, and sharing relevant operative procedures.

**Assignment and Grouping**

Almost all the teachers felt the children adjusted readily to the program. The teachers, however, were almost evenly divided concerning the accuracy of the initial placement of pupils on their instructional level. This placement, it was felt, created a wide range of reading levels in each room. These levels were considered by over half of the respondents to result in just about the same type of class instructional group as under the previous program. The justification for placement was considered by half of the respondents to be based on reading achievement with thirty per cent of the respondents of the opinion that children were often placed in a specific room because the student
was a discipline problem. The individuals depending on kindergarten records to aid them in placement of children in reading groups deemed the material available to be inadequate.

The success of the program in helping children to adjust quickly could be just that, or as suggested by some respondents, it could be due to the fact that these are military dependent children and accustomed to adjusting to new situations.

Three of the cardinal objectives for establishing the nongraded were to enable accurate reading level placement, minimize the range of reading levels in the classroom and thus improve the grouping for instruction. The responses indicated that none of these were achieved to any satisfaction. Was this due to inconsistent or nonexistent programs of testing for placement? Why wasn't this need communicated to someone who could initiate a change, or was there no one responsible for this aspect of the program? Why, for two years, were kindergarten records allowed to be inadequate for those who depended on them for placement? The persistent strident discord in these responses indicated lack of communication and actions that are not harmonious with the nongraded philosophy.
Recording and Reporting Progress

Over half of the teachers indicated they recorded a student's completion of a reading achievement level immediately while over one-third waited until the end of the quarter. The method of recording student progress was considered by over half to be unsatisfactory. This could be attributed partially to the fact that half of the respondents indicated no check list was available while approximately another third were dissatisfied with the check list they had.

About half of the teachers were satisfied with the information they received on students from previous teachers in the program, while one-third of the teachers considered the information inadequate.

Three-fourths of the group indicated dissatisfaction with the present report card. They also indicated concern as to whether the parents understood the reporting device.

It is apparent from the general response that well over half of the teachers in this program were dissatisfied with the entire system of recording and reporting student progress. Running the risk of sounding redundant, the causal factors for these conditions appear to be ineffectual planning, poor communication, and lack of guidance.
Movement of Children

Over half of the respondents believed teacher judgment was the big factor in determining when a child was ready to move on to the next level, and that this was based on reading achievement. Twenty-five per cent, however, were of the opinion that children were moved to even up the class load. The general impression was that a teacher tended to keep the same group of children throughout the year instead of moving them to another reading level. This impression was fairly well established with responses by over half the teachers indicating they did not move any children to a higher level or room nor to a lower level or room during the year. Some expressed frustrations about attempting to move children, so just gave up. There was, however, a small group of respondents that indicated they had moved some children to other levels and rooms.

Over half the teachers in June of 1966 recommended some children continue at the same level when school began in September. When it came to informing the parents about a child's need to experience a fourth year in the Primary Unit, over half of the respondents indicated they would inform the parents by the end of the third quarter, while one-third of the teachers stated this was the responsibility of the third-year teacher.
Children must, in the nongraded, be moved to a level most commensurate with their instructional level. Previous responses indicated the class assignment techniques plagued the teachers with extremely heterogeneous groups, but over half of the teachers did not move children to rectify this situation. The inconsistency here reflects the lack of a perceptive comprehension of the nongraded philosophy. The respondents indicated this inadequacy in their responses to questions one and two of the questionnaire.

Provisions in the planning stages were made for the systematic movement of the children, but for some reason these were not implemented. Three possible causes were seen for this lack of implementation: (1) needs of the teachers were not communicated, (2) ignorance as to the procedures, or (3) no one was responsible for this aspect of the program.

Achievement

One of the basic premises for establishing the nongraded was that it provided the opportunity for a student to work at his or her own level of instruction. The respondents indicate this was true for eighty per cent of the children. This level of instruction was indicated to be above what would be considered grade level in a graded situation for seventeen per cent of the students, while
twenty per cent were considered to be reading below grade level. From this it was inferred that the remaining sixty-plus per cent of these children were reading on grade level.

Motivation for achievement was considered by more than half of the respondents to be the same as the previous program. The factor of pupil frustration was believed by slightly less than half the respondents to have been reduced in this program while thirty-seven per cent of the respondents indicated no difference in, or reduction of, pupil frustration in learning to read.

Almost all the respondents felt the enrichment program was left to the planning of the individual teacher and indicated it should be more structured. This might be part of the reason why over half of the respondents considered the opportunities for the academically talented to be the same as the previous program, while only one felt this program was superior in providing opportunities for the academically orientated child.

It was encouraging to note that so many of the children were considered to be reading on their level of instruction, but it was this writer's opinion that all were supposed to achieve this in a nongraded program. It was indicated that about one-fifth of the children did not receive instruction on the level which was most compatible with their present level of maturity.
There was some indication of a lack of uncertainty as to where children were reading in comparison to a graded situation. It is conceivable that a comparative evaluation of this nature would be difficult when one of the main objectives would be to eliminate the graded structure thinking.

Benefits of the nongraded are supposed to include increased motivation for learning and reduction of frustration. The responses, unfortunately, did not indicate any significant success in these areas.

A further indication of the lack of uniformity and preparatory planning was indicated in the responses regarding the enrichment program and opportunities for the academically talented. Because of the basic philosophy change required in successfully implementing a nongraded program, it is essential that all facets be scrutinized and planned with continuity in mind. Nothing can be left to chance or whim if the teachers are to operate in a consistent manner within the security of a common philosophy.

Summary

The data and conclusions indicate the Nongraded Primary as it was operating in Munich Elementary No. 1, Munich, Germany, was not attaining the desired results. This requires either one of two plans of action to rectify
this situation: (1) Reject the idea of nongrading and concentrate on accomplishing a professionally competent job within a self-contained structure. (2) Restudy the demands of the Nongraded Primary and re-establish this on a limited scale with plans for evaluation of each step.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the possible benefits of the nongraded program and the conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are made with the premise that re-establishing the nongraded program under new guide lines would be advantageous to the children and Primary Unit teachers of Munich Elementary No. 1

General Recommendations for Re-establishing the Program

It is recommended that a general meeting of all teachers presently involved in the nongraded be called and they be informed of the findings in this study.

It is recommended that those interested in participating in reorganization of the nongraded program be formed into a committee.

It is recommended that teachers to be involved in the basic reorganization of the nongraded be provided with the opportunity to reorient their thinking and assumptions regarding the nongraded by attending a course of instruction presented by someone knowledgable in this area.
It is recommended that each teacher involved in the program be provided with a copy of *The Nongraded Elementary School* by Goodlad and Anderson.

It is recommended that a specific person be identified as being responsible for all aspects of the nongraded program. This person must believe in the nongraded philosophy and be knowledgeable regarding the successes and failures of other schools working with the nongraded program. Above all else, this person must be available whenever the teachers in the nongraded program need help.

It is recommended the basic committee be limited to nine teachers and the one coordinator for the ease of implementation and to provide ample classroom situations at the same level for control and experimental purposes.

**General Recommendations for the First Year**

It is recommended that the first year be set aside for establishing a common philosophy and organizing the mechanics of the program.

It is recommended that the committee be provided a minimum of one hour a week during the school day for organizational work.

It is recommended during the process of the year the committee formulate a common philosophy and commit this to written form.
It is recommended that during the year the committee establish a plan for orientating new teachers to the non-graded philosophy.

It is recommended that the committee organize the material for a series of meetings that will provide the parents with children in the nongraded with an understanding of the philosophy and reporting instrument.

Specific Recommendations for the First Year in the Area of Assignment and Grouping of Children

It is recommended that tests for placement of children be selected and evaluated for validity in determining the specifics the committee feels are important in placing children on their instructional level.

It is recommended that the committee organize a list of children's developmental characteristics including physical, emotional, and social growth for use in grouping children.

It is recommended that in May, 1968, the committee form two groups as nearly matched as possible from the kindergarten classes to be used in experimental and control groups in evaluating the nongraded program.
Specific Recommendations for the First Year Involving the Movement of Children

It is recommended that the committee establish a procedure for moving a child from one room to another room as the demand arises.

It is recommended that the committee establish a firm policy as to the criteria for moving children from one teacher to another.

Specific Recommendations for the First Year Involving the Recording and Reporting of Progress.

It is recommended that the committee construct a reporting device for the kindergarten teachers that will provide the essential information required by the nongraded program.

It is recommended that the committee construct a report card that will inform the parents of the growth their child has made without the limitation of using letter grades.

It is recommended that the committee formulate a permanent record card that is based on the nongraded philosophy.

It is recommended that the committee establish a definite procedure regarding informing parents about a child's continuation in the nongraded program after three years.
It is recommended that a check list of developmental skills for reading be established for use in recording each child's progress.

**Specific Recommendations for the First Year Involving Achievement**

It is recommended that the committee program a procedure of continual evaluation that will provide comparative information on the experimental and control groups of children.

It is recommended that the committee plan and organize enrichment material in line with the nongraded philosophy.

It is recommended that the committee construct several devices to determine the teachers' opinions in relation to the academic benefits the nongraded program provides or does not provide for the children.

**Recommendations for the Second Year of the Nongraded Program**

It is recommended that the nongraded program be instigated with only three first year classes for the purpose of assuring adequate classroom situations at the same level for control and experimental purposes.

It is recommended that the parents of these children be invited to a presentation on the history, philosophy, mechanics, and reporting procedures of the nongraded program. This may necessitate several meetings.
It is recommended that the committee continue to be provided with the minimum of one free hour a week during the school day to constantly evaluate all phases of the implementation procedure.

It is recommended that the experimental and control groups be carefully observed and tested as the committee feels this will aid them in determining the worth of the program.

**Recommendations for the Third Year of the Nongraded Program**

It is recommended that the second year students continue in the nongraded program and a new group of children and parents be initiated to the first year of the program.

It is recommended that the committee determine at this time if the program is strong enough to accelerate the implementation of some third-year students into the program. This will require orientation of children and parents to the philosophy and reporting system.

It is recommended that the committee continue to be provided with the minimum of one hour released time a week for evaluative and organizational problems.

**Recommendations for the Fourth Year of the Nongraded Program**

It is recommended that the nongraded program be extended to include third-year students if this was not deemed possible during the third year.
It is recommended that all aspects of evaluation and testing be continued to determine the value of the nongraded program.

It is recommended that procedures now well established for orientating first year children and their parents be continued.

Recommendations for Further Research

It is recommended that the committee evaluate carefully every step and procedure as the program matures.

It is recommended that this data be made available to any school requesting information on implementation of the nongraded primary.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PARENTS REGARDING
THE NONGRADED PROGRAM
1. What is the difference between the term "grade" and the term "level"?
   A. Grade means achievement within a time limit. Level means achievement without a time limit.

2. What is the basic purpose in using levels in the non-graded primary school?
   A. To place a child so that he advances continuously. He will experience progress and success at his own level of ability.

3. How can I be certain that my child is placed at the proper level?
   A. Continuous progress requires careful observation. Occasional shifting, group to group and class to class, is necessary so that each child is placed where he can develop best. Teacher judgment and child performance are the criteria used in making this decision.

4. Does the change to the nongraded primary plan mean changing teaching methods?
   A. The plan is an organizational device, not an instructional one. It provides the opportunity for the teacher to give better individual instruction because of the close group ability.

5. How will I know how my child is doing?
   A. A revised report card and parent-teacher conferences will provide this information.
6. What happens when a student advances beyond the highest level being offered in his classroom?
   A. He will be placed in another class which is working on the next level. Usually a group of students will reach this point at the same time and so a student will not find himself alone in new and unfamiliar territory.

7. Will there be changes in the curriculum in the nongraded classes?
   A. The curriculum will be enlarged to meet the demands of the children. Children will have the advantage of more individualized instruction. Also, there will be no gaps in the learning process.

8. Will the nongraded primary plan enable a child to complete his first three years in less time?
   A. No. Those children who can master the necessary levels more quickly will be able to participate in the enrichment program to be offered at a particular skill level. It is possible that some children will need an extra year before they are ready for promotion to the Middle School.

9. How many grades will be nongraded this year?
   A. The first three grades.
10. How will a teacher know when a child is ready for the next level?
   A. The decision will be based on the child's achievement. Conferences will be held with reading specialists, the counselors, and administration.

11. How will the students in the nongraded be taken care of when they reach the middle school?
   A. The individualized approach to teaching will be carried on in the middle school with its emphasis on team teaching.

12. Is it possible to arrange the classes so that they are completely homogeneous?
   A. From what is known about the varying abilities of children in different learning areas, it is virtually impossible to create a fully homogeneous class. However, students in a nongraded program are grouped to lessen the extreme span of ability from the very top to the very bottom.

13. What will be done about children transferring from a nongraded system to a graded system.
   A. We will be able to send a receiving school very complete detailed records of achievement and capacity on which placement can be made, together with a recommendation for grade placement. Children coming into our system from a graded one
will be placed on the basis of records brought with them as well as tests given by us. Once placed in an achievement level, a student will be evaluated continuously to determine when he should move from one level to another.

14. Will the nongraded plan be more demanding of teachers than the graded system?

A. This plan will demand more of a teacher's talents. He must see each student as an individual, assign work according to capacity, and keep detailed, accurate account of individual needs and development. He must be able to provide a program which meets these individual needs.

15. Have other schools adopted the nongraded primary plan?

A. It is estimated that well over 200 school districts throughout the United States now use a form of nongraded plan. It is predicted that within a very few years, one out of every four school systems will have some form of nongrading.
APPENDIX B

LEVELS OF READING INSTRUCTION FOR THE NONGRADED PROGRAM
READING LEVELS AND TEXTS FOR EACH LEVEL

More Times and Places
X Sharing Adventures
Sharing More Adventures
Frontiers to Explore

IX Times and Places
High Roads

More Streets and Roads
Good Times Today and Tomorrow

VIII Good Times Together
Climbing Higher
Just Imagine
Paths to Follow

Streets and Roads

VII Looking Ahead
If I Were Going

More Friends and Neighbors

VI On We Go
Friends and Fun
Open Doors

What Next
Neighbors on the Hill
Open Roads

V Friends and Neighbors
Come Along

Our New Friends

IV Up and Away
Round About
On Four Feet

Open Windows
We Three
Down the River Road

Guess Who

III Fun With Dick and Jane
With Jack and Janet

Day In and Day Out
Ted and Sally

We Look and See
Tip

II We Work and Play
Tip and Mitten
The Big Show

We Come and Go

Skip Along
Under the Sky
Open the Door
High on a Hill

I Before We Read
Getting Ready
APPENDIX C

PARENT CONTACT LETTER
Dear

In an effort to better meet the needs of our primary pupils, Munich American Elementary School #1 established the Non-Graded Primary Unit at the start of this school year. Upon registration students were tentatively placed in classrooms where it was felt they would best perform. During the month of September individual Informal Reading Analysis' were administered by the classroom teachers to further determine each child’s reading level.

Consideration is being given to grouping pupils so as to reduce the range of reading ability within any given classroom. This would increase the possibility of more individualized instruction in each classroom.

It is now felt that a few changes in grouping are necessary in the Primary Unit. Effective today _______ will be moved from ______________________ room to ______________________ room, _______.

Thank you for your cooperation in this program. Please feel free to call on us if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

MARY M. MERCHANT
Principal
Munich Elementary
Munich American Elementary School #1
APPENDIX D

REQUEST FOR CHANGE FORM
REQUEST FOR CHANGES IN THE NON-GRADED PRIMARY

Date____________________

Name of Student____________________ Teacher____________________

Birthdate____________________

Reason for change________________________________________

________________________________________

Present Reading Book____________________ Level____

Proposed Reading Level____________________
APPENDIX E

STUDENT PROGRESS RECORD
(A copy of the file card for recording pertinent information related to students involved in the nongraded primary.)

Name____________________ Address____________________ Tel.____

Birthdate_______________ Rotation Date_______________

Special Considerations (behavior, physical, language, etc.)

_____________________________________________________

INFORMATION FOR PLACEMENT

Date____________________

Book currently reading  IQ  Reading Score  Name & Date Given

____________________   ______________  ______________

Level Suggested by Teacher______________________________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Level Assigned_______Teacher And Room___________Date____

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Changes  Date  Reason for Change

____________________  ___________  __________________

____________________  ___________  __________________

____________________  ___________  __________________
The Continuous Progress Reading Program has now been in operation in Munich Elementary #1 for two years. During this time many informal discussions have taken place regarding the program. The following questionnaire is an attempt to formalize and record some of your perceptions about the program.

I hope this will be of value to the program as well as providing me with information for my Master's Thesis.

I prefer that you not sign the questionnaire. In this way it should relieve any apprehension you may have regarding impropriety in relation to your confidence.

Due to the type of evaluation involved with a questionnaire, I would appreciate your concern and consideration in answering the following questions.

Thank you,

Charles R. Hammill
QUESTIONNAIRE

Preparation for the Program

1. The time spent in planning and organization of the continuous progress reading program was
   ___sufficient
   ___insufficient
   What do you feel should be added?

2. The teachers participating in the program when it began in September of 1965 were
   ___well informed
   ___poorly informed
   ___moderately informed

3. All participants involved in the planning of the program were
   ___enthusiastic
   ___skeptical
   ___a combination of both the preceding choices

4. The community was involved in the planning of the program by means of
   ___parent meetings
   ___notes sent home
   ___no communication
5. Goals and objectives of the program were

___discussed
___not discussed
before the program began

6. The goals and objectives of the program were

___understood
___not understood
by everyone before beginning the program

7. Orientation of new teachers has been provided for by

___special introductory reading
___no provisions made
___a colleague assigned for this purpose
___a combination of the above
___other, please explain__________________________

Assignment and Grouping

8. Initial instructional level placement procedures have been

___accurate
___inaccurate
in placing the students on their instructional level

9. The children initially assigned to your class read on

___the same reading level
___nearly the same level
___a wide range of levels
10. Your classroom instructional group in this program contrasted to the previous means of grouping is
   ___about the same
   ___more homogeneous
   ___more heterogeneous

11. Children new to the program
   ___adjust readily
   ___do not adjust readily

12. Children with special emotional problems are
    ___given to certain teachers regardless of the level they teach
    ___placed according to their reading level only
    ___given some other special consideration. If so, what consideration?

13. Kindergarten evaluation and recommendations have been found to be
    ___accurate
    ___inaccurate
    ___inadequate

Movement of Children

14. You have moved
    ___no children
    ___a few children
    ___several children

from your room to another room with lower levels of instruction since the beginning of the year.
15. You have moved
___ no children
___ a few children
___ several children
from your room and levels to another room with higher levels since the beginning of the year.

16. Moving children from one room to another is generally determined by
___ reading achievement level
___ the need for evening up class load

17. Moving a child to another level is generally determined by
___ teacher judgment
___ achievement tests
___ recommendation of the reading consultant

18. After the children have been assigned to a class do the teachers tend to
___ move the children to different rooms and levels of instruction
___ keep the same class throughout the year.

19. How many children did you recommend for continuation on the same level of instruction last year?
___ none
___ 1 to 5
___ 6 to 10
___ more than 10
20. How soon do you inform the parents their child will be expected to stay in the Primary Unit another year?

_____ at the end of the first marking period
_____ by the middle of the school year
_____ by the end of the third marking period
_____ at the end of the school year

Reporting and Recording Progress

21. The present method of recording student progress is

_____ satisfactory
_____ unsatisfactory. Why?

22. Information received from previous teachers in the program about the child is

_____ adequate
_____ inadequate. Why?

23. For use in a continuous progress reading program the present report card is

_____ satisfactory
_____ unsatisfactory. Why?
24. Parents indicate by their comments about the report card that they usually
   ___ understand it
   ___ do not understand it
   ___ make no comments

25. When a student completes a level you record his performance
   ___ at the end of the quarter
   ___ immediately
   ___ at the end of the year

26. The check list of skills for each level is
   ___ adequate
   ___ not available
   ___ inadequate. Why?
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________

    _______________________________________________________________________

Achievement

27. In this program children read
   ___ at their level of instruction
   ___ below their level of instruction
   ___ above their level of instruction

28. In your estimation, a child's achievement in this program is
   ___ as good as
   ___ better than
   ___ poorer than
   the previously used program.
29. Motivation for advancement is
   ___greater than
   ___less than
   ___the same as
   the previous reading program.

30. Provisions for enrichment in the program include
   ___special enrichment levels
   ___no provisions
   ___left to individual teacher planning

31. In your opinion the program has
   ___increased
   ___reduced
   ___had no appreciable influence on
   the frustrations of slow learners.

32. For the academically talented this program provides
   ___same opportunities as
   ___greater opportunities than
   ___fewer opportunities than
   the previous reading program.

33. If your children were working in a graded system, how
    many would be reading above grade level?

34. If your children were working in a graded system, how
    many would be reading below grade level?