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## An Evaluation of the Intermediate Progress Report of the Wenatchee Schools

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AN EVALUATION OF THE INTERMEDIATE PROGRESS  
REPORT OF THE WENATCHEE SCHOOLS

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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

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by  
Jan Gerry Theriault  
July, 1967

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Teachers in our elementary schools find that they are constantly communicating with the home; reporting growth and achievement of pupils. The communication does not rest with one medium. The report card, more currently known as the "progress report", is one of the most frequently used media in reporting to the home. In recent years the progress report is being supplemented by other more personalized methods of reporting.

The endless struggle for a reporting system which satisfies parents, children, and teachers usually centers upon the form of the reports, the mechanics of the evaluation to be accomplished and the aspects of children's learning worthy of evaluation (5:45-46).

The problem of providing understanding to any reporting system is one that involves continual evaluation. The progress report must be in keeping with the philosophy of the school district and the needs of the pupils, parents, and teachers. How well do parents of Wenatchee school children understand the progress report and how adequately are teachers able to report achievement? How well can they use the progress report to its fullest potential with a minimum of labor and a maximum of mutual understanding between school and home? These were questions to be considered in this study.

## I. THE PROBLEM

This study was primarily concerned with the format of the progress report in direct relation to the needs of the pupil, the parent, and the teacher. The need for this study arose out of a concern by the researcher to adequately report the progress of pupils to parents. The researcher has used the present card for the past six years and during that time has been unable to provide meaningful information of a personal nature that a teacher feels is necessary in reporting.

Furthermore, teachers' candid remarks during the course of a school year reflected an eagerness to report child growth and achievement that truly reflects individual characteristics. With these thoughts as a stimulus, the problem was undertaken to discover the status of the present progress report of the Wenatchee School District.

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was (1) to evaluate the present progress report extensively and critically; (2) to determine the attitudes and opinions of the teachers and parents toward the present progress report; (3) to make the results of the study available to the school district.

Importance of the study. The continual evaluation of the practices and objectives of educational tools is never ending. Educators must constantly be aware of the limitations of these tools, reviewing and re-structuring existing objectives to meet

ever changing needs. The values and weaknesses of these tools must be agreed upon and mutually accepted by the school and the community.

No matter how diligently committees of parents and teachers may work to design report cards, the product, unless thoroughly understood and accepted by all persons involved, will be of limited value (20:23).

The reporting practices of our schools are changing continually. This part of the curriculum seems to be in a state of controversy, where no universal method of reporting has been accepted. Reporting systems are reflections of the goals of the schools. Consequently, few schools agree on any one way of reporting. Thus individuality in reporting might be an indication of sound planning.

Method of investigation. In order to secure adequate knowledge upon which to base conclusions, a sample of field opinion was conducted which included a survey of parents and teachers. The survey inquired into current attitudes, opinions, and needs regarding the present progress report.

The questionnaire and a letter of explanation were included with the third quarter report card. The researcher believed that a good return would be made if the questionnaire was conveyed in this manner and returned to school with the card. Teachers cooperating with the study, returned the questionnaires to the researcher via the school district messenger. The researcher tabulated the data after the questionnaires were returned.

Teacher questionnaires were presented, filled out, and returned during intermediate level meetings held at the various schools participating in the study. The researcher believed that maximum participation and correct interpretation of the questions would result if teachers met together and discussed the purpose of the study during a specified part of their teaching day.

Further discussion of the research procedure can be found in Chapter III.

Limitations of the study. This study was conducted during the 1966-67 school year, in the Wenatchee Public School District. In order to have an entire cross section represented, the parents and teachers of six of the seven elementary schools participated.

The study was limited to parents whose children attended the Wenatchee public schools during the time of the survey. The study was further limited to parents of third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children. Two or three classes from each school were chosen at random to participate.

Teachers participating in the study were those intermediate (third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades) teachers who taught on the intermediate level, in the Wenatchee School District during the time of the study.

The questionnaire sought to discover the likes, dislikes, and suggested changes to be made upon the format of the present progress report, by those participating in the study.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Traditional report card. This is a system of reporting pupils' marks based on class standards.

Progress report. Numerous schools have adopted the term "progress report" in place of the term "report card", as a means of indicating that their objective is to help pupils achieve and develop.

Reporting. This is the process of communicating results of evaluation and marking.

Marks and marking. The teacher assigns marks on the basis of evaluation. Marks may be presented as numbers or letters, or in more elaborate forms.

Growth. The progress of a child using self as a measurement and not based on class or grade level standards.

Subject. One of the branches of learning studied in school.

Titles. A division of the report card indicating a subject or trait to be reported.

Item. A subdivision within the report card found under CITIZENSHIP.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In reviewing the available literature on the subject of report cards, the researcher has found much information in the discussion of reporting to parents; however, he will relate only the pertinent discussion of what a report card should be. At best, the review of the literature will aid the reader in understanding what an effective report card is.

Examination of the literature concerning the philosophy of effective reporting revealed much in common among the various authorities. What and how to report pupil progress seems to be a greater problem than ever, for while teachers have become sensitive to the discouraging effects that poor marks have on children, parents often hold traditional expectations regarding marks or grades. Reporting can be complex when we consider variations in the learning characteristics of pupils. Some of these include motivation, applied effort, personality problems, maturity, and attitudes toward school. It is widely agreed that the progress report can be a powerful force in protecting the child's self respect and self confidence, and it can be an incentive toward further growth and self evaluation.

A major agreement by the authorities indicates that the progress report, at best, is only one part of the reporting process and cannot be fully depended upon to explain, without

question, the progress of pupils.

Progress reports serve many uses; some of these detract from or distort the true reason for their use. McNally describes some of the characteristics of reports in his article "Report Card Report". Reports in the past, he cites, have served a variety of purposes:

. . . As a motivation to academic achievement; as a help in making decisions concerning pupil transfers; as a public relations instrument; and as a means of informing parents of pupil progress (11:350).

McNally emphasizes a point to be considered:

Perhaps the greatest sin of omission of reports has been their failure to give reasons for unsatisfactory growth or achievement. Only when parent and child understand the causes back of unsatisfactory progress can they take constructive steps to bring about improvement. Hence, good reporting should be diagnostic (11:350).

The letter grades A B C D F or per cent determinant seems to be a parent preferred mark, according to Wetzler (19:117). Parents seem to think that they understand what letter grades mean; however, this type of reporting lacks understanding of pupil growth and achievement because it does not tell what the child has learned. It does not tell what skills, attitudes, and knowledges that he possesses as a result of his accomplishments, nor does it tell the effort that was applied in the process of learning. Letter grades, therefore, give only vague evidence of progress.

The weaknesses of the traditional report card as reported by Hockstad are:



(1) its emphasis is placed entirely upon subjects and not upon the learner; (2) it gives an evaluation without making known the basis for evaluating; (3) it reports achievement without stating any good qualities that the child may be developing; (4) competitive marks affect the child in an adverse way (10:174-75).

Progress reports can oftentimes be misleading and can give both parents and children obscure feelings of pleasure or shame. A good system of reporting can help to achieve understanding which can remove pressures that sometimes plague young children (14:167-68).

At this point, the question should be raised as to whether the report is actually evaluating the child's progress or measuring the ability and skill of the teacher. Many of the authorities agree that both achievement and growth must be measured but some question the ability of the teacher to appraise effort adequately (8:141, 7:60).

Reports may depict growth, achievement or both. However, the teacher must be aware of what he is evaluating. Growth and achievement are different concepts. Growth means change or gain. To interpret growth adequately, the teacher must consider the individual, his ability, his background of experiences, his present environmental stimulation and so on. On the other hand, achievement means the pupils present status-- what he knows or can do now. Achievement is generally compared to norms or teachers' standards (2:359).

Wetzler reminds us that not every child is capable of attaining the grade level standards. Active competition among children of different abilities is unrealistic. In writing a progress report all data should point out his abilities, show achievement in relation to his abilities and serve also to indicate achievement in relation to grade level standards (19:20-21).

Anastasiow set forth the following questions that a faculty might ask themselves about their present system of reporting:

1. Does your present report make achievement easier?
2. Are students shown their strengths and weaknesses by the report? Does an awareness of these points lead to success?
3. Is the information reported in such a way that the students understand the evaluation?
4. Are the students aware of the purposes of the report? Do they realize current evaluations are to aid them in future achievements (7:60)?

Hockstad presented considerations for a progress report in her article, "Report Cards -- Helpful or Harmful". She explained that (1) grades are capable of varying interpretations because they are not scientifically determined and not objectively defined; (2) the report should encourage the child and parent, and show the reason why the child did not make the expected progress; (3) when the report is descriptive, parents will have a more realistic concern for the child's developing personality and his intellectual progress; (4) the progress report should not just pass judgement, but give an analysis of the difficulties and suggest ways of improvement (10:175).

The following generalizations about reporting practices, developed by Wrinkle, should be considered in improving a plan:

1. The statement of any outcome or objective to be evaluated should be analyzed into its specific meanings so that its meaning is clearly stated.
2. The number of different forms should be kept at a minimum. If two or more short forms are to be used at the same time, they should be incorporated into a single form.
3. The basis for an evaluation of the student's achievement should be decided upon.
4. In the interpretation of a report the likelihood of

misunderstanding by parents tends to increase in proportion to the number of details included in the report.

5. Students should have a real part in the development of new forms and practices.
6. Reporting on all students at one time during the school year is chiefly for the purpose of stimulating competitive comparisons; if such stimulation is not a purpose of the reporting, then reports should be made at different times to discourage such invidious comparisons.
7. The scale type evaluation form is unsatisfactory unless each scale item involves only a single outcome, the achievement of which can be expressed in degrees by clearly distinguishable descriptions.
8. The check form is simpler than the scale for use in reporting evaluations and is more economical of space on a printed form.
9. Check forms, unless they are carefully controlled, tend to become increasingly detailed and, therefore, increasingly impractical.
10. The best way to state objectives is in terms of desired behavior outcomes -- what the learner should do.
11. The most intelligible way to write supplementary comments in explaining evaluations is to tell what the student did (15:335-36).

As Ruth Strang points out, regardless of what pupil reporting procedures are used, it is extremely important that teachers and parents mutually understand their purpose. Strang presents the following questions and comments which serve as guides for reports which will convey meaning to parents.

1. Has your method of reporting to parents been developed cooperatively? Unless parents, teachers, and pupils work with the administrator in developing the report, they will not fully understand it . . . .
2. Does your report to parents show trends in each pupil's development? Pupils and parents are interested in progress -- the child's own progress. . . .
3. Is the report to parents in line with sound educational objectives? . . . .
4. Does your report to parents recognize individual differences in ability?
5. Is your report to parents constructive? Does it direct their attention to the future? Does it suggest how progress can be made?

6. Does your report accentuate the positive?
7. Is your report easily understood by the different parents in your community?
8. Can your report to parents be prepared without putting too great a burden on the teacher?
9. Do pupils share in the writing of their own reports of progress (16:3-6)?

Further research into the literature has presented the researcher with numerous attempts to design a progress report that will be accepted by everyone -- the child, the parent, the teacher, and the administration. While general criteria for a report that will best suit everyone, is in evidence here, there is no one progress report that proves to be a panacea. As the objectives of the school and as the people of the community change, so must the format of the progress report.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH PROCEDURE

#### I. THE REPORT CARD

The Wenatchee Report Card (See Appendix E.) is sent home with the pupil following the second, third, and fourth quarters of the school year. The first page of the card is concerned with expectations that the school has for the pupil in two areas; (1) SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS, (2) WORK AND STUDY HABITS. The items under each heading can be marked with either a plus which indicates outstanding rating, or a minus which indicates need for improvement. An item that is not marked by the teacher indicates satisfactory performance.

The section of the card titled SCHOLARSHIP is composed of a list of eleven subject areas that are taught in the intermediate grades. Some of the areas have subtitles and some do not. The basis for evaluation is upon the pupil's own growth compared to his ability. A check may be used to indicate progress in four categories of evaluation; (1) Outstanding work, (2) Normal progress, (3) Needs to improve, and (4) Finds work difficult.

The last page, titled CHILD'S RANK, has a list of six subject areas that are marked according to the pupil's standing in the class. This section is marked at the end of each semester. The remainder of the page is reserved for special comments by teachers and parents.

## II. QUESTIONNAIRE

Pertinent data regarding the Wenatchee Progress Report were gathered and achieved through a survey type questionnaire. For the sake of comparison, a nine item opinion analysis sheet was used for both respondent groups. A respondent was required to read the question and circle a response. (See Appendix A.)

Parent participants were asked to make comments about the report card on the reverse side of the questionnaire. A letter of introduction accompanied the questionnaire, identifying the problem and the researcher. The letter included a statement from the Wenatchee School Superintendent requesting participation in an effort to improve home - school communications. (See Appendix D.)

Teacher participants were given an additional two pages on which to make specific written comments to indicate change in specified areas of the card. These pages made possible constructive criticism of the card which could provide more effective communication in reporting to parents. (See Appendixes B and C.)

With this type of organization the researcher was able to discover the needs of the pupils, parents, and teachers in reporting pupil progress.

## III. DISTRIBUTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The teacher questionnaire was distributed and discussed by the researcher at a preconceived time directly following the dismissal of the school day. The school's principal had been

informed of the study and requested by the researcher to call a special meeting of all teachers of grades three through six. Five meetings were held and a total of forty-eight questionnaires were distributed and forty-three returned. All questions asked appear in the context of the results.

Sixteen teachers from six of the seven elementary schools were contacted and briefed on the procedure of distribution. Parent questionnaires were accompanied by a letter of introduction and placed inside the envelope with the third quarter report card. They were returned to school with the card and then sent to the researcher for tabulation. Four hundred fifty questionnaires were sent out and 307 returned. Wenatchee elementary pupils being evaluated by the progress report during the time of this study numbered 1,797.

#### IV. TABULATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

When the questionnaires were returned the responses were tabulated and the comments studied by the researcher. Most teachers completed the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher and returned it prior to leaving the meeting. Seventy-three per cent of all teacher questionnaires were returned. Sixty-seven per cent of the parent questionnaires distributed were returned. A discussion of the questions and responses is given in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

#### I. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE NINE ITEM QUESTIONNAIRE

As already indicated this study was conducted to determine the attitudes and opinions of the teachers and parents toward the present progress report and to evaluate it extensively and critically. The questions asked were based on general criteria of what the authorities in the field indicate a good report card to be.

For the sake of clarity in presentation of results each table will begin by stating a question from the questionnaire. After each table a discussion of the data will follow. The percentage figures used throughout the analysis are indicative of parent and teacher responses to the questionnaire and have been rounded off to the nearest whole number.

The response categories in the questionnaire can be brought under two general areas of response. The categories "Often" and "Always" can be considered as appraisals of positive statements regarding the report card. (See Table I, page 16.) "Seldom" and "Never" are negative reactions. The category, "Sometimes", may also indicate a negative response, but will not be considered as an appraisal of either.



TABLE I

DOES THE WENATCHEE INTERMEDIATE REPORT CARD  
SHOW GROWTH THAT A CHILD MAY MAKE  
FROM ONE QUARTER TO THE NEXT

Response Categories	Per cent of responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	20.	0.
Often	27.	2.
Sometimes	34.	49.
Seldom	13.	44.
Never	5.	5.

Teachers and parents differ in their response to the question in Table I. Forty-seven per cent of the parents responded positively and forty-nine per cent of the teachers responded negatively to the question, "Does the Wenatchee Intermediate Report Card show growth that a child may receive from one quarter to the next?"

The SCHOLARSHIP section of the report card is the only area in the card that truly reports growth. Suggestions for strengthening this part of the card are given on pages 29, 30, and 31.

TABLE II  
DOES THE REPORT CARD SHOW REASONS OR CAUSES  
FOR UNSATISFACTORY GROWTH OR ACHIEVEMENT

Response Categories	Per cent of responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	7.	0.
Often	12.	9.
Sometimes	25.	33.
Seldom	25.	30.
Never	31.	28.

Over one-half of both respondent groups indicate that the card seldom or never shows reasons or causes for unsatisfactory growth or achievement. Only nineteen per cent of the parents and nine per cent of the teachers responded positively.

TABLE III  
 DOES THE REPORT TELL WHAT  
 THE PUPIL HAS LEARNED

Response Categories	Per cent of Responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	11.	0.
Often	12.	2.
Sometimes	29.	10.
Seldom	19.	50.
Never	29.	38.

The question in Table III elicited a forty-eight per cent negative response from parents as compared to twenty-three per cent who indicate that the card always or often tells what the pupil has learned. Eighty-eight per cent of the teachers responded negatively indicating that the report card seldom and never reports what the pupil has learned.

TABLE IV  
 DOES THE REPORT TELL WHAT SKILLS  
 THE PUPIL HAS LEARNED

Response Categories	Per cent of responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	10.	0.
Often	16.	2.
Sometimes	25.	33.
Seldom	23.	42.
Never	25.	23.

Table IV reveals that forty-eight per cent of the parent respondents and sixty-five per cent of the teacher respondents seldom and never find that the report card reports the skills that the pupil has learned. In contrast, two per cent of the teachers and twenty-six per cent of the parents gave positive indication.

Considering the responses to Table I through Table IV, it would appear that the card reports the teachers' judgements of children, rather than giving evidence of pupil growth and achievement.

TABLE V

DOES THE REPORT TELL THE EFFORT THAT WAS APPLIED  
IN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING

Response Categories	Per cent of responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	15.	0.
Often	15.	5.
Sometimes	32.	35.
Seldom	15.	26.
Never	23.	35.

Parent responses tend to be diversified and do not favor a definite positive or negative response to the question "Does the report tell the effort that was applied in the process of learning?" Sixty-one per cent of the teachers indicated that effort is seldom and never reported.

TABLE VI

DOES THE REPORT CLEARLY MAKE KNOWN  
THE BASIS FOR EVALUATING

Response Categories	Per cent of responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	15.	0.
Often	18.	0.
Sometimes	25.	25.
Seldom	18.	42.
Never	24.	33.

Seventy-five per cent of the teacher respondents indicated that seldom and never does the report card clearly make known the basis for evaluating. The twenty-five per cent that indicated "Sometimes" may be the third grade teachers who are designated to include the explanation of the evaluation basis with the grade three report card at the end of the second quarter.

An explanation of the evaluation basis is currently printed on a mimeographed sheet that may be, but as a matter of practice is not, accompanied with the report card at each reporting time. Parent responses tend to be diversified and do not indicate either a positive or negative reaction to the question.

TABLE VII  
 DOES THE REPORT REVEAL GOOD QUALITIES  
 THAT THE PUPIL MAY BE DEVELOPING

Response Categories	Per cent of responses	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	17.	0.
Often	33.	28.
Sometimes	33.	56.
Seldom	9.	12.
Never	7.	5.

A small minority of the parents and teachers indicate that seldom, if ever, are good qualities reported in the report card. Over one-half of the teacher respondents (56 per cent) indicate that the card only sometimes reveals good qualities that a pupil may be developing. Fifty per cent of the parents responded positively indicating that the report card often and always reveals good qualities that the pupil may be developing. A latter section of the questionnaire filled out by teachers asked for suggestions on how the report card could be more effective. Teachers' suggestions on how the report may more adequately reveal good qualities about a pupil are summarized on pages 26, 27, and 28.

TABLE VIII  
IS THE REPORT DESCRIPTIVE ENOUGH

Response Categories	Per cent of response	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	14.	0.
Often	12.	5.
Sometimes	32.	30.
Seldom	20.	40.
Never	22.	26.

Sixty-six per cent of the teachers indicate that the report is seldom and never descriptive enough. Forty-two per cent of the parent respondents indicate negatively that seldom and never is the report descriptive enough as compared to twenty-six per cent of the parents who responded positively. Only five per cent of the teachers indicated that often is the report descriptive enough.



TABLE IX  
DOES THE REPORT SUGGEST WAYS OF IMPROVEMENT

Response Categories	Per cent of response	
	Parent Percentage	Teacher Percentage
Always	8.	0.
Often	8.	2.
Sometimes	29.	23.
Seldom	22.	28.
Never	32.	45.

Table IX reveals that over one-half of each respondent group agree that the card seldom and never suggests ways of improvement. Only two per cent of the teachers and sixteen per cent of the parents responded positively to the question, "Does the report suggest ways of improvement?"

Summary. Data from the nine item questionnaire were analyzed to determine the report's effectiveness in the light of the characteristics of a good report that various authorities have listed in Chapter II. The data that have been supplied by teachers and parents and obtained from the tables and discussion in this part of the chapter lend themselves to nine statements of summary.

1. Teachers gave negative indication that the Wenatchee Intermediate Report Card shows growth that a child may make from one quarter to the next. Parent indication was positive.
2. Teachers and parents indicated that the report card seldom and never shows reasons or causes for unsatisfactory growth or achievement.
3. Teachers and parents indicated that the report card seldom and never tells what the pupil has learned.
4. A majority of teachers and parents indicated that seldom and never does the report tell what skills the pupil has learned.
5. Teachers indicated that the report seldom and never tells the effort that was applied in the process of learning.
6. Teachers indicated that seldom and never does the report clearly make known the basis for evaluating.
7. No definite positive or negative response was made by teachers when asked, "Does the report reveal good qualities that the pupil may be developing?"
8. A majority of teachers and parents indicated that the report is seldom and never descriptive enough.
9. A majority of teachers and parents indicated that the report seldom and never suggests ways of improvement.

The present report card of the Wenatchee School District does not meet the standards of a good report, as indicated by teachers and parents.

## II. INTERPRETATION OF THE WRITTEN COMMENTS

### Citizenship

The data to be examined in this part of the study has been taken from the section of the questionnaire dealing with CITIZENSHIP. The following are implications resulting from study of comments written by parents and teachers. Respondents were asked to constructively criticize the present progress report in an attempt to assess its effectiveness. The first section of the card to be discussed will be SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS. An attempt is made by the researcher to include the most pertinent remarks and those that are most representative of the respondent groups.

Social and personal traits. An indication made by parents emphasized the necessity for a scale from high to low, to mark citizenship. A scale should be included because often there are no marks by the teacher at all in that section. Parents tend to interpret that no mark at all may mean neglect or an oversight by the teacher. The report card, however, specifically states that no mark, indicates satisfactory rating.

Teacher responses included a desire to transfer the two subtitles under HEALTH to the SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS section, since health habits are not directly related to scholarship. (See Appendix G.) The subtitle "Health Habits" does not imply a specific or particular trait, therefore, it was suggested that

"Clean and Neat in Appearance" would better describe this item.

Other changes preferred by teachers were: (1) to correct the printing error in spelling of the word accepts; (2) the item, "Works and plays well with others" has two different connotations and should be listed as two different items; (3) the item, "Behaves well in all situations" should be replaced with a phrase indicating satisfactory behavior; (4) the item "Avoids unnecessary whispering" may stifle free exchange that is necessary in a learning environment. It is not a trait that we want to develop and therefore should not be listed.

Teacher respondents suggested the inclusion of the following items: (1) Cooperation, (2) Respects authority, (3) Is developing leadership, (4) Accepts responsibility.

Work and study habits. An analysis of respondents' suggestions for the improvement of items under WORK AND STUDY HABITS follows. Specific suggestions were given almost entirely by teacher respondents.

Comments agreed upon by both parents and teachers included a need for an item measuring the effort that is involved in the learning process. A suggested item was "Works to the best of his ability".

Teachers' comments included a desire to clarify "Is accurate" and "Is neat", to give the items more meaning. "Is accurate" may signify either a lack of effort or ability or perhaps a lack of skills. "Tries to be as neat as he is capable of", was suggested

to better describe the latter. Other respondents suggested, "Keeps desk and papers neat", and "School work is neat".

Teachers recommended the following items for consideration under WORK AND STUDY HABITS: (1) Participates well in class discussion, (2) Shows leadership, (3) Accepts responsibility for corrections and make up work, (4) Uses time wisely.

Summary. The opinions of the parents and teachers were not all relevant to the evaluation of the report card. The researcher has not included the comments of all respondents in the interpretation of the data. See Appendixes G and H for a complete list of pertinent teacher comments concerning SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS and WORK AND STUDY HABITS. Parent comments about the total report card can be found in Appendix F. Data from parents has been kept in its entirety for the purpose of simplicity in organizing the limited number of datum recorded.

Preferred changes, deletions and supplements by the respondents, under CITIZENSHIP, indicate a need for the report to take a less general form and to be more personalized by requiring each item to be marked using a scale. Teachers indicate that there should be a way to show that a child has shown improvement even though he has not attained a satisfactory level of development.

### Scholarship

The following data to be investigated in this part of the

study have been taken from responses to the section of the questionnaire titled SCHOLARSHIP. This part of the report card indicates progress of a child compared not with his peers, but with his performance contingent upon his ability.

Parent response favored more than four categories of work evaluation. The need for more than four categories can be attributed to the fact that "Normal Progress" does not convey good understanding. In comparing this method of marking with the A through F method we find that "Normal Progress" could represent anything from B+ to C-. Teachers' response indicated that there is too much of a spread between "Normal Progress" and "Outstanding Work".

The A through F method is not a teacher preferred mark. It is, however, a parent preferred mark. (See Appendix F, page 48, number 18.) Twenty-six per cent of the eighty-two parents making written comment, reported that A B C D F was preferred. Literature indicated that A through F is a method of marking that parents feel they know most about. Literature further asserts that this method precludes good understanding of progress.

The category, "Needs to Improve" can be misinterpreted, report parent respondents. It has the connotation of a lack of progress without giving constructive criticism. Teachers indicated that "Outstanding Work", is not an appropriate term to be used for children of all ability when reporting growth. The categories, "Outstanding Work", "Normal Progress", "Needs to Improve", and

"Finds Work Difficult", also contradict each other, reported teachers. A child may be marked "Normal Progress"; however he may find work difficult.

Teachers suggested that space be given for individual comment on each subject. This might provide a chance for more meaning and less misinterpretation of marks.

Twenty-six per cent of teacher respondents made reference to the need for a mark in Physical Education, or physical ability. This is contradictory to the parent response that Physical Education, Music, and Art should not be graded assuming that they are natural talents. There was indication by teachers that Music and Art are difficult for untrained teachers in those areas to evaluate.

Thirty-five per cent of the forty-three teacher respondents indicated that Geography and History should be combined and listed as Social Studies. The combining of Science and Health to imply one subject area rather than separate subjects was also favored.

The inclusion of the following subtitles was indicated by teacher respondents to be appropriate as part of the Reading, Arithmetic, and Language categories:

- I. Reading
  - A. Phonics
  - B. Word attack
  - C. Library use
  - D. Dictionary use
  - E. Recreational reading
  - F. Book reports
- II. Math
  - A. Addition
  - B. Subtraction

- C. Multiplication
  - D. Division
- III. Language
- A. Speaks clearly and correctly
  - B. Expresses himself well in written work
  - C. Vocabulary development
  - D. Penmanship

Deletions were recommended by teachers and listed as follows:

- (1) "Posture and Health Habits", (2) "Music" only needs one mark and is over-rated as to its importance on the card, (3) "Music", (4) "Art".

Summary. In summary, it would appear that percentage determinants are not critical to the above evaluation. The reader must realize, however, that in this part of the questionnaire original comments were recorded and that there were no prearranged responses on the part of the participants. Appreciation must be made, therefore, to similar comments made by a number of respondents.

To summarize the data presented it must be said that there is desire for a change in the format of the SCHOLARSHIP section of the card. The categories of "Outstanding Work", "Normal Progress", "Needs to Improve", and "Finds Work Difficult", are not appropriate for their purpose, that being, to report progress in light of the individual's ability.

Parents have indicated a need for a better system of marking. Teachers have suggested items that should be included and excluded in the report to parents.



### Child's Rank

The resulting implications of the data supplied in the CHILD'S RANK section will be presented below. In this part of the report card scholastic achievement is reported once each semester. Here the child is marked according to his achievement within the class, comparing his progress with other members of the class or grade level.

Teachers could not agree on the importance of retaining the CHILD'S RANK section. Some teachers indicated that it is important to show not only the progress based on growth but also his scholastic achievement. Other teachers gave a negative response by interpreting class rank as not psychologically sound and as defeating to children. "The card is geared to the average child -- the slow deliberate child suffers from such an evaluation."

Parents' responses were also varied and could be classified into two diverse preferences. Certain responses by parents indicated that they liked to know the child's standing in the class while an opposing view stated: "Report cards discourage a discouraged child more. For an excelling child they add to his usually mistaken goals of excelling". This statement discourages the practice of reporting scholastic achievement based on class or grade level standards.

Teacher respondents urged the reorganization of the CHILD'S RANK, deleting Writing, and Phonics and adding Social Studies and Science. There was indication that this section should be marked

at each reporting period in contrast to the present practice of semester ranking.

Summary. The debatable question of whether to retain or delete the section showing the child's standing in the class cannot be decided here. There was no substantial evidence supporting either view. There is definite evidence supporting the reorganization of the items within this section as Appendix J implies.

#### Additional Implications of the Report Card's Effectiveness

The comments made by both respondent groups have been classified into four areas of concern. Three areas have been discussed. The fourth one will be examined below. It represents two integral parts of the card that are vital to the total understanding of the card, namely, the space for parent-teacher comments, and the explanation of the evaluation basis.

Beneath CHILD'S RANK a space is provided for two way communication. Favorable comments regarding this space were made by fifteen per cent of the eighty-two parent respondents making voluntary remarks. They reported that it is an important part of the card and that teacher comments are appreciated. Teacher response favored a larger space for parent-teacher remarks.

Responses by teacher and parent respondents indicates the importance of an explanation of the system of marking to be incorporated into the card. It would provide more understanding if the

basis for evaluating were always present to refer to. Several parents remarked that they do not understand the difference between CHILD'S RANK and SCHOLARSHIP. Other responses indicated that some parents have little understanding of the report card.

Varied and numerous responses from both groups lead to unfavorable implications about the card's ability to communicate. Both teachers and parents indicate that the card is not descriptive enough. They agree that it doesn't tell what the child has learned, how he can improve, or why he has not progressed normally.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The summary, conclusions, and recommendations contained in this chapter are a result of the compilation of data obtained from 307 parents and forty-three teachers of children in grades three through six of the Wenatchee School District. These numbers represent more than one-sixth of the total number of parents having children in these grades and seventy-three per cent of the total number of teachers teaching at this level in the Wenatchee School District.

The data that have been supplied by the teachers and parents in Chapter IV and the review of the literature in Chapter II lend themselves to three generalized statements of summary:

1. The report card as viewed by authorities in the field, should be mutually understood by parents, teachers, and pupils.
2. A questionnaire was formulated considering the criteria of a good report card as suggested by the authorities. The questionnaire was distributed, returned, and the data analyzed.
3. Parents and teachers gave suggestions for the report card in an effort to improve communication between the home and the school.

#### II. CONCLUSIONS

Upon reviewing the evidence presented in the preceding chapter it is apparent that the report card is in need of revision

due to its inability to adequately communicate with the home. The study showed that there is a definite need for reconsidering the present progress report in terms of its effectiveness and its ability to communicate pupil progress.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

It would seem appropriate to suggest in the light of this study that a total reorganization of the Wenatchee Intermediate Progress Report be initiated; that a committee of teachers use the data within this thesis as a guide in constructing a report card that will better meet the needs of the pupils, parents, and teachers of the district. Finally, the committee should be composed of teachers of grades three, four, five, and six.

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## APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

WENATCHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT 246

Wenatchee, Washington

Please circle your reaction to the following questions:

1. Does the Wenatchee Intermediate report card show growth that a child may make from one quarter to the next?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
2. Does the report card show reasons or causes for unsatisfactory growth or achievement?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
3. Does the report tell what the pupil has learned?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
4. Does the report tell what skills the pupil has learned?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
5. Does the report tell the effort that was applied in the process of learning?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
6. Does the report clearly make known the basis for evaluating?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
7. Does the report reveal good qualities that the pupil may be developing?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
8. Is the report descriptive enough?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER
9. Does the report suggest ways of improvement?  
ALWAYS      OFTEN      SOMETIMES      SELDOM      NEVER

We would appreciate any comments about the report card. Please use the back of this sheet.

APPENDIX B

Please use the sample report card to help you in evaluating.  
Turn to page two of the report card titled CITIZENSHIP.

Give the number of the social or personal traits that you feel could be improved by changes in the card. You may indicate how it could become more effective. Give any additional traits that you would like to have included.

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Give the number of the work and study habits that you feel could be improved by changes in the card. You may indicate how it could become more effective. Give any additional habits that you would like to have included.

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Additional comments for improving the CITIZENSHIP page may be listed on the back of this page.

APPENDIX C

Turn to the page titled SCHOLARSHIP.

Indicate below, the subjects and/or subtitles that could be added or deleted from the card.

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Special comments about this page and/or the final page of the card may be given below.

WENATCHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT 246

Wenatchee, Washington

April 10, 1967

Dear Parents:

We are constantly striving for more effective communication between the school and home. The report card is one of our communication tools.

The Wenatchee School District is cooperating in an attempt to assess the present effectiveness of the report card. The survey accompanying this letter is your opportunity to help us determine the card's strengths and weaknesses.

Please take a moment to fill out the attached survey. It may be returned to school with your child's report card.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

JAN G. THERIAULT

Parents:

Mr. Theriault, a district elementary teacher, is coordinating this project. On behalf of the staff we urge you to assist us in this project which can improve home - school communications.

Sincerely,

HAROLD E. KLOES  
Superintendent

JT/HEK:dc  
enc.

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons

Child's Rank . . . . . H - High M - Middle L - Low

QUARTERS	2			4		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Child's Rank						
Reading						
Writing						
Arithmetic						
Language						
Spelling						
Phonics						

Special comments by teachers or parents:

**Parent's Signature**

2nd Period \_\_\_\_\_

3rd Period \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature shows simply that the report has been inspected by the parents and does not indicate approval or disapproval.)

# Wenatchee City Schools

## Report of Pupil's Progress

### Grades 3-4-5-6



Name of Pupil \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School Lewis & Clark Year 19\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Principal



It is the purpose of this report to give parents a helpful analysis of the pupil's progress in school.

The report shows not only progress in school subjects but it also gives the teacher's estimate of the pupil's progress in citizenship and in desirable work and study habits.

Parents are requested to sign and return this report within three days and to confer with the principal or the teachers when progress does not appear to be satisfactory. Parents are invited to visit the schools.

PAUL F. FURGESON, Superintendent of Schools

APPENDIX E

### CITIZENSHIP

A (+) mark indicates outstanding rating.  
 A (-) mark indicates need for improvement.  
 No mark indicates satisfactory rating.

I SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS	1	2	3	4	
1. Is courteous and considerate					
2. Works and plays well with others					
3. Shows good sportsmanship					
4. Accepts criticism in good spirit					
5. Is dependable	Parent-Teacher Conference				
6. Avoids unnecessary whispering					
7. Behaves well in all situations					
8. Respects the property of others					
9. _____					
10. _____					
II WORK AND STUDY HABITS					
1. Follows Directions					
2. Begins work promptly					
3. Gives satisfactory attention					
4. Works independently					
5. Completes work on time					
6. Is accurate					
7. Is neat					
8. Finds worth while activities for extra time					
9. _____					

### ATTENDANCE

PERIODS	1	2	3	4
DAYS TAUGHT				
DAYS PRESENT				
DAYS ABSENT				
TIMES TARDY				

### GRADE ASSIGNMENT

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Teacher Principal

### SCHOLARSHIP

A check (✓) indicates progress of the pupil.

Subtitles may be checked if teacher thinks it necessary.

	1	2	3	4
<b>Fundamental Tools of Learning:</b>				
<b>READING</b>				
Oral				
Comprehension				
<b>LANGUAGE</b>				
Oral				
Written				
Library use				
<b>PENMANSHIP</b>				
Writes plainly and neatly				
Writes well in all work				
<b>SPELLING</b>				
Weekly Lessons				
All written work				
<b>ARITHMETIC</b>				
Reasoning				
Fundamentals				
<b>Social Studies</b>				
<b>HISTORY</b>				
<b>GEOGRAPHY</b>				
<b>SCIENCE</b>				
<b>HEALTH</b>				
Posture				
Health Habits				
<b>Creative Arts:</b>				
<b>ART</b>				
<b>MUSIC</b>				
Sings well				
Can read syllables				
Appreciates good music				

## APPENDIX F

### PERTINENT COMMENTS MADE BY PARENTS

#### ABOUT THE REPORT CARD

1. The card does not tell what kind of work the pupil is doing (1)\*
2. Would appreciate reasons why a child does not improve (3)
3. Citizenship page is informative (1)
4. Would like a scale from high to low to mark citizenship because teachers often neglect to mark this section (2)
5. Reasons for low marks can be found under CITIZENSHIP (1)
6. Wants to know what they can do at home to help (2)
7. Does not show effort (4)
8. "Report cards discourage a discouraged child more. For an excelling child they add to his usually mistaken goals of excelling." (1)
9. When the report says "Needs to Improve" it should tell why, so the parent can help (2)
10. Report card does not report the progress the pupil has made -- but the mental standing within the class (2)
11. Report card does not show the improvement that the teachers claim the child has made when you talk with them (2)
12. Teacher's comments are appreciated (12)
13. The report is not satisfactory or thorough enough (6)
14. "'Needs to Improve' can be misinterpreted. Have they not progressed?" (1)
15. "Physical Education, Music, and Art should not be graded. They are God given talents." (1)
16. Would like a standard set of norms that are followed in grading rather than comparison with student's immediate class (1)



Appendix F (continued)

17. The CHILD'S RANK is appreciated (4)
18. A B C D F preferred method of marking (22)
19. Does not understand the difference between CHILD'S RANK and SCHOLARSHIP sections of the card (4)
20. Four categories of work evaluation are not enough. "Normal Progress" can cover anything from B+ to C- (1)
21. Would like to know teachers basis for evaluating (2)
22. The present card is too difficult to understand (5)
23. The card is complete and does its job well (3)

\* The number of respondents making similar comments.

## APPENDIX G

### TEACHER COMMENTS AS DIRECTED TO THE SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS SECTION

1. The items "Posture" and "Health Habits" should be transferred to the SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS section (2)
2. "Avoids unnecessary whispering" should be restated to imply a desired trait (1)
3. "Is dependable" should be clarified (3)
4. "Works and plays well with others" should be in two separate categories (1)
5. The items in this section are too general (1)
6. "Shows sportsmanship and fair play on the playground" is better stated for number #3 (1) (See Appendix E, page 46.)
7. A trait should not have a negative connotation (1)
8. Reword number #5 to "Is dependable most of the time" (1) (See Appendix E, page 46.)
9. Correct the printing error in number #4 (4) (See Appendix E, page 46.)
10. Teachers suggested the following items for adoption:
  - A. Cooperates with teachers and pupils (5)
  - B. Has the necessary materials to work with (1)
  - C. Has a good attitude toward school and learning (2)
  - D. Clean and neat in appearance (4)
  - E. Respect for authority (all teachers) (1)
  - F. Is developing leadership and initiative (1)
  - G. Participates well in class discussion (3)
  - H. Respects his personal property (1)
  - I. Emotional habits: (1) poor eater, (2) nail biting, (3) cries easily, etc. (1)
11. Teachers recommended deletion of the following items:
  - A. "Behaves well in all situations" (11)
  - B. "Respects the property of others" (6)
  - C. "Avoids unnecessary whispering" (4)
  - D. "Works and plays well with others" (1)

## APPENDIX H

### TEACHER COMMENTS AS DIRECTED TO THE WORK AND STUDY HABITS SECTION

1. "Is accurate", "Is neat" should be spelled out in more detail (2)
2. "Is neat" could be reworded to "Keeps desk and papers as neat as he is capable of" (1)
3. There should be a place to show improvement even though the pupil has not reached a satisfactory stage (5)
4. The terms are too general (1)
5. This page is too subjective (1)
6. There are too many items listed under SOCIAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS (1)
7. This section seems to be adequate and covers the habits well (1)
8. Teachers suggested the following items for adoption:
  - A. Keeps the room and school neat (1)
  - B. Shows conscientious effort (13)
  - C. Accepts responsibility for corrections and make up work (2)
  - D. Attention span satisfactory for age and grade level (1)
  - E. Curiosity for knowledge (1)
9. Teachers recommended deletion of the following items:
  - A. "Begin work promptly" (2)
  - B. "Gives satisfactory attention" (1)
  - C. "Finds worthwhile activities for extra time" (1)

## APPENDIX I

### TEACHER COMMENTS AS DIRECTED TO THE SCHOLARSHIP SECTION

1. Combine Geography and History and call it Social Studies (14)
2. Combine Science and Health to be graded as one subject (2)
3. Add phonics and word attack to Reading (7)
4. Give level where child is reading (1)
5. Under Penmanship add learning to write cursively - (grade three) (1)
6. There should be more space for individual comment on each subject. This would allow for more meaning and less misunderstanding. (2)
7. "Shows Improvement" should be added between "Needs to Improve" and "Normal Progress" (1)
8. Transfer "Library use" to Reading (4)
9. Include "Creative Writing" under Language (1)
10. Music needs only one mark and is overrated as to its importance (7)
11. Health should be "The study of". It should not have the existing subtitles (8)
12. This section doesn't show what the pupil has learned (1)
13. The categories of "Outstanding Work", etc., contradict each other. A child can be marked "Normal Progress", however, find work difficult (1)
14. The card should provide information on: (1)
  - A. List of units covered
  - B. Grade on each unit
  - C. List causes for success or failure on each unit
  - D. List skills taught
15. "Appreciates good music" has a middle class connotation (1)

Appendix I (continued)

16. Grade Art and Music with S (Satisfactory) and U (Unsatisfactory) (1)
17. Omit oral reading. It could be confused with reading aloud. List it as creative reading (1)
18. The term "Outstanding Work" should not be used for children of all ability (1)
19. Geography needs the subtitle "Map study skills" (2)
20. Change the title "Arithmetic" to "Math" (1)
21. Penmanship should be a subtitle under Language (1)
22. Art and Music are difficult to mark accurately for an untrained teacher in those areas (1)
23. Change the title Language to: (a) "Oral Communication", (b) "Written Communication" (1)
24. Teachers suggested the following items for adoption:
  - A. Physical Education or Physical ability (12)
  - B. Math processes
    1. Addition
    2. Subtraction
    3. Multiplication
    4. Division
  - C. Reading subtitles
    1. Recreational Reading
    2. Book reports
  - D. Language subtitles
    1. Speaks clearly
    2. Expresses himself well in written work
    3. Vocabulary development
    4. Use of the Dictionary

## APPENDIX J

### TEACHER COMMENTS AS DIRECTED TO THE CHILD'S RANK SECTION

1. The card is geared to the average child. The slow deliberate child suffers from such an evaluation (1)
2. This section should include Social Studies and Science (4)
3. It is good to have both individual and class rank (2)
4. This section is defeating to children and is not psychologically sound (2)
5. CHILD'S RANK should be marked at each report period rather than after each semester (1)
6. Teachers recommended deletion of the following items:
  - A. Phonics (7)
  - B. Writing (7)
  - C. Spelling (1)

## APPENDIX K

## GENERAL COMMENTS MADE BY TEACHERS

1. There should be a larger space for parent-teacher remarks (1)
2. Leave out "Times tardy" (1)
3. Would like a place for child's ability to be marked (2)
4. There should be an explanation on evaluation basis (1)
5. The explanation of the system of marking should be part of the card and not a separate sheet (2)