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## Changes in Elementary Pupil Report Cards in Stockton Unified School District

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*University of the Pacific*

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CHANGES IN ELEMENTARY PUPIL REPORT CARDS IN 2  
STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the School of Education  
College of the Pacific

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

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by  
Henry Schiffman  
June 1957

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION ✓

The history of human progress is also a history of the growth of evaluative processes. From simple types of self-analysis to complex stages of appraisal wherein survival depends on continuous research and intensive evaluation, human progress has gone hand-in-hand with evaluation. Concomitant with the evaluative process has been the interpretation and transmission of evaluation to the individuals concerned.

#### I. NEED FOR STUDY

Accurate transmission of thought is a difficult process. With the exception of mathematics and the sciences dependent upon it, a phrase, a word, a symbol can be, and too often is, interpreted differently by various individuals. Similarly, interpreting and communicating appraisals of pupil progress can be a difficult process. Since the teacher, the pupil, and the parent are all human beings with varied sets of standards, capacities, achievements, and potentialities, it is difficult, but yet important, to reach a point of effective communication between parents and teachers.

The Stockton Unified School District, cognizant of the difficulties in reporting pupil progress, has been seeking to improve its practices in this regard. Comprising as it does, a school enrollment of about twenty-eight thousand pupils of which approximately fifteen thousand are in grades one to six, it is quite important that methods of appraising and reporting pupil progress be as accurate, as objective, and as meaningful as possible.

## II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In 1948, the elementary pupil report card was changed from a competitive type of marking to an ability type. By means of the latter method, pupils were evaluated on the basis of progress made in relation to their own ability, with no reference to a standard of achievement set by school or society. Under this system, a three-point scale of descriptive phrases was used to evaluate the child. Although the method seemed advantageous, there were certain limitations. Chief among the limitations was the parental uncertainty as to the exact meaning of these phrases. Added to the uncertainty was an unexpressed desire of parents to know exactly where their child rated in educational attainment as compared with other children. These limitations, although unsupported by objective data, were recognized by the Board of Education through its

numerous contacts with parents and teachers. The board, therefore, asked that a study be made concerning the eventual formulation of a more meaningful elementary pupil report card, grades one to six. This report summarizes the progress made in attempting to reach that goal.

### III. DELIMITATION OF PROBLEM

Marking and reporting procedures with all the attendant ramifications of public relations, curriculum goals to be set up, achievement of pupils in terms of goals, parent conferences, and the special set of problems accompanying parent conferences, is a subject of such scope as to be worthy of a doctoral dissertation. This study, however, is focused on only a small part of such a subject, namely, the report card itself.

A report card is only one of the many ways of reporting to parents. Other ways of reporting to parents are by means of pupils' oral descriptions of school activities, daily school work sent home, phone calls by the teacher, notes to parents, formal parent-teacher conferences, parent visits, open-house during Public Schools Week and National Education Week, and news releases. To the exclusion of all of these methods, this paper is considering only the formal periodic report card and the procedure in its adoption by the Stockton Unified School District.

#### IV. PROCEDURE FOLLOWED

The plan followed in this <sup>paper</sup> report is a chronology of action taken and results effected in the process of revising the elementary pupil report card. Following the introduction and the review of selected literature, the writer's personal observations concerning the report card are presented. These observations are based on more than twenty-one years of teaching and administration in public elementary schools. Subsequent to this presentation a series of detailed committee recommendations are listed. These recommendations were presented to elementary teachers and to two groups of parents for reaction and opinion. Reactions are summarized by the listing of comments in tables, and by the reproduction of a series of quotations by teachers.

The core of this study is a report of a comprehensive survey of community opinion regarding the new elementary pupil report cards adopted tentatively by the Board of Education. The survey details the results of over 13,000 questionnaires sent to parents of elementary pupils, and also the results of questionnaires sent to 397 elementary teachers. Concluding the study are the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the writer.

## V. BRIEF SUMMARY

Two highly complicated processes are involved in reporting pupil progress. One of these is the art of evaluating the intellectual, social, and emotional progress of a rapidly developing human being. Another is the actual communication of such evaluation by means of written words or symbols. Within these processes are wide variations in the ability to evaluate, and also in the ability to transmit evaluation. Taking into account, also, the wide variations in the ability of parents to understand evaluations, the entire matter of reporting pupil progress is one that calls for much understanding on the part of all concerned. The extent to which extreme variations in the process of reporting can be minimized is the extent to which teachers can have greater rapport with parents. The efforts of the Stockton Unified School District in narrowing these extremes and in devising a more meaningful report card are hereby recorded in this study.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

#### I. CHANGES IN PROCEDURES OF REPORTING

One of the major trends since the turn of the century has been a shift from the one hundred point marking scale, or percentage marking, to the letter scale. Many school districts have settled on a five-point scale of A, B, C, D, and F marking. Others have changed to scales of two or more points such as S and U; Good, Average, Poor; Superior, Good, Average, Poor; and other variations. Odell<sup>1</sup> notes that among schools of all levels a system of five symbols, four of which are passing and one failing, is by far the most common. He also observes that the practice of employing only two symbols, most commonly S and U, is being frequently advocated and followed, particularly in the lower grades, and that the use of descriptive statements to parents appears to be increasing.

A popular trend has been the change to a type of marking by which the pupil is marked on the basis of his ability rather than on achievement alone. In addition,

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<sup>1</sup>C. W. Odell, "Marks and Marking Systems," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Walter S. Monroe, editor (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), pp. 711-17.

lists of work habits, social habits, and personal characteristics have been added to cards in an effort to appraise the child completely.

Districts have also experimented with personal notes written by the teacher. One author reports that such notes can be time consuming and frequently are beset with trite meaningless expressions which require careful editing. Her suggestion encompasses an in-service study program devoted to improving written communication.<sup>2</sup>

## II. CONFERENCES

The parent-teacher conference method is being tried in many districts. In favor of such a plan are two authors who plead to abolish report cards.<sup>3</sup> Their plea is based on elaborations of the following ideas:

Parents do not understand the bases for grading.

Competition is detrimental to the child.

The report card is used as a club.

The report card causes children to dislike school.

Marks are subjective.

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<sup>2</sup>Eloise C. Keebler, "Written Communications," Bulletin No. 62, Association for Childhood Education International (1953), 23.

<sup>3</sup>Helen Heffernan and Faith Smither, "Do Parents Want Report Cards?", California Journal of Education, XXI, No. 2 (February, 1953), 32-40.

The child gains a false impression of himself.

Marks do not stimulate laggards.

In some districts the conference supplements written reports. This is the case in the Stockton Unified School District in which, as established policy, parent-teacher conferences are being held in all primary grades to supplement information contained in report cards.

However, conferences bring forth a special set of problems which each district must solve for itself. One writer lists several problems to be solved, such as the proper training of teachers in the skills necessary for holding conferences, finding time for conferences, and using anecdotal and cumulative records.<sup>4</sup>

### III. REVISING REPORTING PROCEDURES

Notable among communities experimenting in procedures for reporting to parents has been the community of Greeley, Colorado. This community, under the direction of W. L. Wrinkle, Director of the Greeley College High School, spent a ten-year period in trying to devise an improved type of report card.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Byron Callaway, "Conferences," Bulletin No. 62, Association for Childhood Education International (1953), 26-27.

<sup>5</sup>W. L. Wrinkle, Improving Marking and Reporting Practices in Elementary and Secondary Schools (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1947).

The implications of this study for the Stockton experiment can be set forth as follows:

1. Each community must determine for itself what is best for that community. What works in one community may not work in another.
2. The search for adequate methods of appraising and reporting pupil progress is a continuous one. When the community has seemingly arrived at a solution, it has only reached a stage where further study is indicated.
3. Parents should be part of the planning team.

Parent polls and discussion groups seem to agree that specific information about a child is needed on a report card. Basically, parents seem to want to know whether or not the child is progressing, whether or not he is working up to his capacity, and how much he is achieving compared to others.<sup>6</sup>

Occasionally indiscriminate changes are made in methods of reporting pupil progress. One writer cautions that the method of reporting should reflect and reinforce the basic purposes of the school, and also that reporting

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<sup>6</sup>Katherine E. D'Evelyn, "What Should School Reports Tell Parents?" Child Study, XXX, No. 1 (1952), 14.

should be a two-way process whereby teacher and pupil should help each other to evaluate the amount of progress.<sup>7</sup>

In another article, the writers recommend the involvement of parents in modifying reporting procedures.<sup>8</sup> In addition, five steps are suggested in the process of such modification:

1. List the purposes of reports.
2. Analyze the report card in terms of the purposes.
3. Allow parents and teachers to suggest improvements for the card in use.
4. Consider the basic problems and issues in changing the card.
5. Review procedures of other districts, together with a review of literature.

#### IV. COMPETITIVE AND NON-COMPETITIVE MARKS

Much discussion has taken place concerning the question of whether to report pupil progress on a competitive

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<sup>7</sup> Anne Hoppock, "Who Tells What to Whom?", National Elementary Principal, XXXI, No. 6 (June, 1952), 4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Henry W. Magnuson, Carl A. Larson, and Thomas A. Shellhamer, "Evaluating Pupil Progress," Bulletin, California State Department of Education, XXI (April, 1952), 153-154.

basis or on the basis of individual pupil ability. Spirited controversies have stirred a number of communities regarding the merits of the two marking systems. One community, Pasadena, Texas, went so far as to hold an election to determine which of the two marking systems to use. The group favoring a competitive marking system won the election with 82.3 per cent of the votes.<sup>9</sup>

Another community, Danville, California, held protest meetings when the school board instituted a report card based on ability marking. The previous A, B, C, D, and E system of grading was restored while a citizens' advisory committee studied the matter.<sup>10</sup>

One periodical stated that an undetermined number of schools were using combination report cards in which both types of reporting were used, but that this type of card tended to be complicated.<sup>11</sup>

A broader point of view is one taken by McNally who suggests that there seems to be no specific type of

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<sup>9</sup>Howard Whitman, "Report Cards: EGFU, SNUX, or ABC?", Colliers (September, 1954), 58-61. \*

<sup>10</sup>News item in the Stockton Daily Evening Record, March 29, 1955.

<sup>11</sup>"What's All the Fuss about Report Cards?", Changing Times, IX (November, 1955), 39-42.

report which will cover all schools, but that it should be tailored to fit the individual community.<sup>12</sup>

Goodykoontz echoes the same sentiment and adds that while parents can gain information from visits to the school some sort of written report is needed and each community must decide for itself what it wants.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Harold J. McNally, "A Report Card Report," National Education Association Journal, XLIV, No. 6 (September, 1955), 350-351.

<sup>13</sup>Bess Goodykoontz, "A Report on Report Cards," National Parent-Teacher, L, No. 2 (October, 1955), 11-13.

### CHAPTER III

#### PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE PREVIOUS CARD

In this chapter, the writer's personal observations and opinions are offered in the hope that they may be of some value in the evaluation of the elementary pupil report card used in the Stockton Unified School District prior to 1955 (Figure 1). All opinions and observations are based on personal contacts with parents, pupils, and teachers over a period of twenty-one years of public school teaching and administration.

An examination of the report card indicates that it was intended to support the philosophy of ability marking, namely, that each child should be evaluated according to his own capabilities. The explanatory note within the card states, "Subject markings on the card are teachers' judgments of what your children are doing in relation to what they are able to do. The markings are not for the purpose of comparing one pupil with any other."

It was the writer's observation that the above idealistic purpose did not seem to be achieved in practice. One possible reason for such apparent failure could have been the lack of clarity of the descriptive phrases used. Another possible reason could have been the eagerness of parents and pupils to compare markings.



Subject markings on the card are teacher's judgments of what your children are doing in relation to what they are able to do. The markings are not for the purpose of comparing one pupil with any other. The teacher has checked only those items upon which there is enough evidence to grade pupils.

Uses good vocabulary.....  
Spells with reasonable degree of accuracy.....  
Writes legibly.....

Strives to develop his own interests.  
Participates in group activity.....

Is alert to current happenings.

Acquires necessary knowledge and skills.  
Contributes thoughtfully to discussions.....

Makes an effort.....  
Shows originality.....  
Derives personal satisfaction from art experience.....

Takes part in music activities.....  
Gains skill in instrumental music.

Is learning to use the library.....

Shows appreciative attitude toward books.

Practices good sportsmanship.

Takes part in activities.

Understands and observes rules for good health

	First Report	Second Report	Third Report	Fourth Report
er-	Capable of doing better			
	Satisfactory growth			
	Outstanding achievement			
	Capable of doing better			
	Satisfactory growth			
	Outstanding achievement			
	Capable of doing better			
	Satisfactory growth			
	Outstanding achievement			
	Capable of doing better			
	Satisfactory growth			
	Outstanding achievement			

REPORT CARD IN USE FOR GRADES ONE TO SIX BEFORE REVISION

**PARENTS' COMMENTS****TEACHER'S COMMENTS****FIRST REPORT****FIRST REPORT**

Parent's Signature

Teacher's Signature

**SECOND REPORT****SECOND REPORT**

Parent's Signature

Teacher's Signature

**THIRD REPORT****THIRD REPORT**

Parent's Signature

Parent's Signature

**FOURTH REPORT****FOURTH REPORT**

Parent's Signature

Parent's Signature

**STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA**

Reporting Progress of.....

School.....

Grade.....

Teacher.....

Principal.....

School Year 19 19

**Dear Parents:**

Your interested co-operation is of greatest value in helping teachers promote education for good citizenship. Such citizenship is attained by forming right attitudes and habits toward self, school, and associates. A happy successful life is dependent in part upon useful knowledge and skills, and in part upon a healthy personality.

This report is a message from the teacher to acquaint you with the progress of your child in his school life. We hope you will study the report, discuss it with him, and add to it your personal word of encouragement and commendation whenever possible.

You are urged to confer with the principal or teacher at any time to discuss your child's progress.

**NOLAN D. FULLIAM,**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Assignment For Next Year:**

In the judgment of the teacher and principal this pupil should work in

.....grade, beginning

Teacher

Principal

Concerning the lack of clarity, the phrases "Outstanding achievement," "Satisfactory growth," and "Capable of doing better" could have been interpreted in several ways. For instance, it was possible to define "Outstanding achievement" as accomplishment which surpasses the child's previous record. The same phrase could have been interpreted to mean accomplishment beyond that of children of a similar age. Of these meanings, unfortunately, parents seemed to prefer the one which suggested a comparison with other children.

The phrase "Capable of doing better" seemed to be vague enough to apply to most anyone. Its intent might possibly have been to describe slow progress as compared with the potential progress of that child. However, upon a moment's reflection, it can be noted that few persons really work at or achieve full potential. It can almost categorically be said that most people are "capable of doing better."

The phrase "Satisfactory growth" seemed to mean many things to many parents. Did it mean growth that was satisfactory to the teacher? Did it mean growth satisfactory for that pupil's ability, or did it mean growth that was satisfactory when compared to children of similar age and ability?

It is interesting to note the list of social and

work habits which was used to describe a pupil's progress:

- Respects rights and property of others.
- Shows courtesy in speech and action.
- Takes pride in personal appearance.
- Obeys rules and regulations
- Uses time wisely
- Is careful and accurate worker
- Uses reference materials intelligently
- Completes work begun.

Concerning this list it can be asked whether a pupil can be evaluated in these habits according to his own ability. Conversely, does society set certain standards in these characteristics, and then rate individuals on their accomplishment in approaching those standards?

In the report card, the note to parents cautioned parents not to compare pupils with one another. However, it seemed to be a human frailty for busy parents to skim over explanations that required careful reading. Consequently, the writer observed that many parents seemed to interpret a check in the column "Capable of doing better" as a "D" under the old letter grade system. A check in the column "Satisfactory growth" was interpreted as a "C" and a check in the column "Outstanding achievement" was thought of as an "A." This interpretation unwittingly succeeded in changing the intent of the card from a supposedly non-competitive type of evaluation to a competitive evaluation.

In addition, pupils, in spite of explanations to the

contrary, compared cards as to the number of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Capable" checks, which comparison, in effect, negated the original purpose of the card.

Another complaint of parents was that many pupils who were checked as having "Outstanding achievement" on a non-competitive report card were found to be actually mediocre or below average when marked competitively in a junior high school.

It is the writer's opinion, unsubstantiated, however, by objective data, that the foregoing confusion of ideas could be traced to the lack of a simple, clear, easily-read report card.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRELIMINARY ACTION LEADING TO TENTATIVE REPORT CARD REVISIONS

The intent of this chapter is to record committee recommendations and to indicate parent and teacher informal reactions to projected samples of report cards and guide lines for marking. The writer as chairman of the Report Card Committee was closely associated with all preliminary action leading to the adoption of new elementary grade report cards.

#### I. EARLY COMMITTEE ACTION

The steps leading to the latest revision of Stockton's report card began with a request by the Board of Education, in 1952, to evaluate the form of reporting to parents. In December of that year, the superintendent selected a committee of approximately twenty-five individuals to consider the problem. Teachers, parents, administrators, and a consultant were members of the committee. In May of 1953, the committee recommended initiation of a plan of parent-teacher conferences for parents of kindergarten pupils. It also recommended that meetings be held to familiarize teachers with the plan as rapidly as possible.

In the fall of 1953, the committee was reduced to five teachers, one administrator, and one consultant, and charged with the duty of examining reporting procedures further at the elementary level. This group, in June, 1954, recommended that elementary schools plan:

1. A group conference early in the fall.
2. Parent-teacher conferences during November and March.
3. Report cards twice a year, in January and in June.
4. Retention of the present report cards with a check sheet to be included for primary grades.

These recommendations were made to the Principals' Council, an advisory body to the superintendent, but were returned to the committee with the comment that further study was needed. A later report, accepted by the Principals' Council, included the following:

1. In kindergartens, individually scheduled and group parent-conferences would be held, using the extra time given them by the revision of the day's schedule as approved in June, 1954.
2. In grades one to six, the intermediate card would be used for one year with a three-point scale of marking: (a) Capable of doing better,

(b) Satisfactory growth, and (c) Outstanding achievement.

3. Diplomas for kindergarten children would not be used. In their place, kindergarten teachers would develop a report card for issuance at the end of the school year, or upon transfer.

Members of the Principals' Council felt that fundamental issues had not yet been considered. It was then suggested that a committee of teachers from each level be appointed by the superintendent to pursue the matter further. At this point it was also suggested that in order to save time, a small preliminary steering committee be appointed to determine agenda or submit sample report cards for the consideration of the larger teachers' committee. The suggestion resulted in the formation of a new committee composed of five administrators and two consultants.

#### Principals' Committee on Report Forms

Since the purpose of the committee was to save time in the forthcoming teacher discussions on report cards, the following agenda was submitted:

1. Determine basic philosophy of report card.
2. Choose type of card to fit philosophy.
3. Choose items to be marked.
4. Determine grade levels for the report card.



(One card for grades one to six, or separate cards for primary and intermediate grades.)

5. Determine the format of the card.
6. Determine the number of reports to be issued yearly.

In addition to the agenda, several incomplete sample cards were submitted as a basis or starting point for discussions on report cards.

Letter Grade Type of Report Card Selected by Council.

Upon receiving the report of the steering committee, the Principals' Council promptly ignored the original purpose of the committee (which was to save time by laying the ground work for future discussions), voted unanimously in favor of letter grade marking and retained the committee to formulate a card to fit that philosophy. The reason for this action was that since competitive marking was to be tried at this point a small committee could make more progress than a large unwieldy group.

Based on the wishes of the Principals' Council, the first tentative card for intermediate grades was formulated (Figure 2). The features of this card were:

1. The achievement grade was placed in one of three columns representing "effort." In this ingenious manner, a letter grade by its

	FIRST REPORT			SECOND REPORT		
	Works Hard	Avg. Effort	Little Effort	Works Hard	Avg. Effort	Little Effort
Reading						
Comments:						
Spelling						
Comments:						
Writing						
Comments:						
Language						
Comments:						
Arithmetic						
Comments:						
Social Studies						
Comments:						
Music						
Comments:						
Art						
Comments:						
Physical Education						
Comments:						
Science						
Comments:						
Library						
Comments:						

	WORK HABITS		SOCIAL HABITS	
	First Report	Second Report		
Uses time wisely			Obeys rules	
Works independently			Is courteous	
Completes work			Works well with others	
Is careful & accurate				

Attendance: Reg. \_\_\_\_\_ Irreg. \_\_\_\_\_

- A - Superior
- B - Above average
- C - Average
- D - Below average
- F - Minimum effort

TENTATIVE REPORT CARD FOR GRADES FOUR TO SIX

position would indicate two ideas, effort and achievement.

2. A five-scale letter grade system was included with a check (✓) for "Needs improvement."
3. The usual meaning of "F" was changed to "Minimum effort."
4. A special arrangement was devised for slow pupils for whom the competitive grading system would seem unfair. It consisted of a "C" with an asterisk before it to indicate "Working at top ability."
5. Attendance was indicated only as "Regular" or "Irregular." One reason for this decision, as reported by the committee, was that the clerical work involved in transferring attendance to the report card was deemed excessive for the results attained. Another reason was that knowledge of regularity or irregularity of attendance was considered to be more important than knowledge of the actual number of days of absence.
6. Tardiness and height-weight measurements were eliminated. The reasons for the elimination were:

- (a) Tardiness can be kept in class record sheets and parents notified whenever necessary.
- (b) There is no real need for recording physical measurements on report cards. Heights and weights are recorded twice annually on cumulative records, thus providing a continuous record for the school nurse.
- (c) Because of variations in pupil physique it was determined that teacher observation of pupil health be emphasized rather than recording the physical measurements.

In May of 1955, tentative report cards with an accompanying letter (Figures 3 and 4) were distributed to all elementary school teachers. The letter urged teachers to communicate to the committee their personal reactions to the tentative proposed cards. Reactions were sought especially on such items as the number of reports to be made yearly, format of the card, marking of slow pupils, competitive marking, and listing of work and social habits.

Major changes in the revised versions consisted of a provision for three reports yearly, an asterisk to indicate "Please confer with teacher," and a check (✓) for "Needs improvement."



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE

**Stockton State Hospital**

810 E. MAGNOLIA STREET  
STOCKTON 3, CALIFORNIA

May 20, 1955

Principal  
Weber School  
701 N. Madison  
Stockton, California

Dear Mr. McDonald:

As a parent, I have been asked to comment on a proposed change in the type of elementary Report Card.

Any comments that I will make relative to the present type of report cards are based entirely on opinions of a parent who has four children in school at the present time. When I came to Stockton nine years ago, I was totally unfamiliar with the California methods of reporting and I found it very difficult to understand or to accept the form of report cards that were in current usage. This is a matter that I have discussed with other parents whose children not only attend the Stockton Unified School System, but also schools in neighboring districts. I have been impressed with the amount of confusion that has existed in attempting to interpret just how well a child is doing in school based on the report cards. In general they seem to reflect only the teacher's impression of how hard the child is trying. Without receiving some supplementary information from the teacher, it is almost impossible to know whether the child is meeting a certain standard that would justify passing on to a higher level in academic training. This has resulted in a false sense of security on the part of the parent who, on reading that the child is working hard, tends to feel that the child is progressing satisfactorily in fundamental subjects such as the "3 R's". This has led to disillusionment when they are apt to find out the child is in the fifth grade and may only be doing second grade reading. This has a disastrous effect when the child goes on up to the high school level where they are placed on a competitive basis and become hopelessly lost.

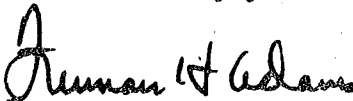
As it relates to the proposed new form for elementary report cards, I can see very little change in the system. If this is to continue to be the method of reporting in the elementary schools, I can see little chance of the parents knowing just how the child is doing without individual conferences with the teacher, which of course is very desirable. This is not practical

Re: Elementary Report Cards

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at times and if a concerted effort was made on the part of parents to seek such interviews with teachers, I doubt if the teachers would have the time to meet this need. There should, in my opinion, be some method of reporting to the parents as to whether or not their child is making a passing grade in keeping with the class in which they are currently enrolled. This might enable the parent to supplement training at home on a realistic basis or enter the child in summer school.

Very sincerely yours

  
Freeman H. Adams, M.D.  
Supt. & Medical Director

FHA:ms

## II. PARENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Two parent groups, at the request of two elementary principals, met and discussed features of the new card. Both groups were asked to consider what features they found most desirable and what suggestions they had to offer for report card revisions.

One of these groups, composed of twelve P.T.A. parents from the Lottie Grunsky School, met with the writer and made the following recommendations:

1. An achievement type of card is desirable.
2. A, B, C, D, and F marking scale is a good one.
3. The achievement card should be used from the second grade up.
4. A separate ability-type card should be used for the first grade.
5. Cards should be issued four times a year for the second to sixth grades, with conferences where needed.
6. Issue three reports plus needed conferences in the first grade.
7. Use check marks (✓) under "Work habits" and "Social habits."
8. Use an "A" for high-achievement-low-effort pupils, and an asterisk to indicate that a conference is needed.

9. For low-achievement-top-effort pupils use the actual achievement mark, with an asterisk to indicate that a conference is needed.
10. Mark on normal average, not on class average.
11. Use the word "Failure" in place of "Minimum achievement."

Another group, composed of twenty-seven P.T.A. members and an elementary principal, met for a two hour discussion at the El Dorado School and unanimously proposed the following points:

#### Primary Card

1. Use competitive grading in primary grades.
2. Mark on ability in primary grades.
3. Include "Social habits" and "Work habits" on the primary grade card in exactly the same form as on the intermediate grade card.
4. In the primary card under each of the main subject headings insert several sub-headings in order that the teacher may check (✓) where specific improvements are needed. (Somewhat like the yellow card used at present but not so many sub-headings.)
5. Allow ample room for teacher and parent comments. Arrange card so that it is not "crowded."



Intermediate Card

1. Use competitive grading in intermediate grades.
2. Place an asterisk alongside the slow pupil's grade. Insist upon parent conferences so that parents may be properly informed as to their child's ability on a competitive basis.
3. Do not reveal actual I.Q. scores to parents, but indicate level of ability, such as average, below average, quite slow, above average, superior, outstanding, etc.
4. Show achievement test scores to parents, when necessary, and discuss them with parents in confidential, private conferences.
5. Place list of habits on another page. Leave ample room for comments.

A letter (Figure 5) regarding the proposed changes in the elementary report cards was received from the superintendent-medical director of the Stockton State Hospital. The writer of the letter, a parent of four school-age children, was quite concerned that ability marking did not provide sufficient information as to the exact educational status of his children. His preference was for a system of marking according to fixed standards. The letter is included in this study because of the provocative nature of the comments.

FIGURE 5  
PARENT LETTER

Both intermediate and primary cards underwent further modifications as suggested by informal opinions of parents and teachers. In addition, throughout all discussions of the Report Card Committee, it was felt that if a letter grade type of reporting was going to be tried again, then teachers needed definitions and guiding principles upon which to base their reports. It was also agreed that since reporting seemed to be notoriously subjective, in order to minimize the subjectivity, a letter grade must have, as nearly as possible, the same meaning for all teachers and parents.

As an initial step toward objectivity, the document appearing as Figure 6 was formulated, appended to the revised cards, and then sent to all of the 397 elementary teachers to elicit reactions. This document lists tentative principles and marking practices to be followed by teachers when marking according to a fixed standard. Also set forth are general instructions for marking slow and average pupils. The importance of this set of definitions and instructions lies in the fact that it pointed to the need for setting definite standards in assigning marks. This need was tentatively met by Curriculum Bulletin No. 77, "Definitions, Guiding Principles, and Suggestions to be Used by a School's Staff in Reporting to Parents, Kindergarten-6" (Appendix C). Bulletin No. 77 has attempted to define just exactly what

DEFINITIONS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO BE  
USED BY A SCHOOL'S STAFF IN ASSIGNING GRADES  
(Grades three through six)

(NOTE: Tentative report cards for grades 3-6 and 1-2, together with accompanying sheets are being submitted for your reaction prior to final revision. Each teacher is asked for a reaction to all four sheets. We are also soliciting as much parent comment as possible. Call Lottie Grunsky for extra copies. Please return to Lottie Grunsky by Friday, June 3.)

The following principles are to be used as the controlling factors in interpreting definitions and assigning marks:

1. Letter grades are to be used for subjects, work habits, and social habits.
2. Comments which the teacher thinks are necessary or helpful must be written in a courteous manner.
3. A letter grade shall be given in each area when the attendance for a grading period has exceeded one month.
4. The maximum mark for a student who expends little effort should be a "B". A parent conference must be requested when this "B" is given to a student who is achieving well above grade level.
5. A mark of "F" is compulsory when a pupil is being retained in grade.
6. It is not compulsory to give a failing mark to the pupil who is absent too frequently to do passing work.
7. A grade of "C" is to be given to a pupil of low ability who works hard, even though he is not achieving at grade level. When this "C" is given, a comment specifying a conference must appear on the card.
8. When a child of low ability is not doing grade level work, a grade of "D" is to be given for an average amount of effort. An accompanying comment which specifies a conference must appear on the card when this "D" is given.
9. The achievement mark is to be placed in the effort column which shows hard work when a student applies himself sufficiently to work near capacity.
10. The achievement mark is to be placed in the average effort column when, in the teacher's opinion, the student expends an amount of effort which is comparable to the amount spent by a majority of students of this age.
11. The achievement mark is to be placed in the little effort column when, in the teacher's opinion, the student continually wastes time.

DEFINITIONS FOR LETTER GRADES

Grade level and the degree above or below grade level are determined by the teacher. However, the teacher's judgment should be in agreement with valid standardized test scores. (A standardized score is valid only at the time the score is obtained.) In cases of mistaken judgment any grade is subject to review.

- A - represents work well above grade level norms.
- B - represents work above grade level norms.
- C - represents work near grade level norms.
- D - represents work below grade level norms.
- F - represents work which is failing. A failing mark is given when any one of the following things would be the result:

- a. The pupil would not achieve at "D" level or above early in the following year.
- b. The pupil, due to lack of application, does not understand daily assignments.
- c. The pupil fails to complete assignments to the teacher's satisfaction.

(Failing, as defined here, does not apply to the very slow child who expends average or better than average effort. Such a child will receive a "C" for great effort and a "D" for average effort. See 7 and 8 above.)

	FIRST REPORT				SECOND REPORT				THIRD REPORT			
	Works Hard	Avg. Effort	Little Effort		Works Hard	Avg. Effort	Little Effort		Works Hard	Avg. Effort	Little Effort	
Reading Comments:												
Spelling Comments:												
Writing Comments:												
Language Comments:												
Arithmetic Comments:												
Social Studies Comments:												

Music  
(Classroom)  
Comments:

Music  
(Instrumental)  
Comments:

Art  
Comments:

Physical  
Education  
Comments:

Science  
Comments:

Library  
Comments:

Attendance

First Report		Second Report		Third Report	
Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.

- A - Superior or outstanding
- B - Above average or commendable
- C - Average or near grade level
- D - Below average
- F - Failing

	Work Habits			Social Habits			
	First Report	Second Report	Third Report		First Report	Second Report	Third Report
Uses time wisely				Obeys rules			
Works independently				Is courteous			
Completes work				Works well with others			
Is careful and accurate				Demonstrates good sportsmanship			

FIRST REPORT

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

SECOND REPORT

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

THIRD REPORT

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Stockton, California

School Year 19\_\_ 19\_\_

Reporting Progress of \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Letter)

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT YEAR:

In the judgment of the teacher and principal this pupil should work in the \_\_\_\_\_ grade, room \_\_\_\_\_, next fall.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher will check (✓) appropriate column

	FIRST REPORT			SECOND REPORT			THIRD REPORT		
	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress
Reading Comments:									
Numbers Comments:									
Writing Comments:									
Spelling (2nd Grade) Comments:									
Attendance	First Report		Second Report		Third Report				
	Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.			

	FIRST REPORT			SECOND REPORT			THIRD REPORT		
	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest
Social Studies Comments:									
Science Comments:									
Art Comments:									
Music Comments:									
Physical Education Comments:									

FIGURE 6

GUIDE LINES AND TENTATIVE REVISIONS OF PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE REPORT CARDS



(Teacher will check (✓) in appropriate column)

(For Use in First and Second Grade)

	WORK HABITS						SOCIAL HABITS					
	First Report		Second Report		Third Report		First Report		Second Report		Third Report	
	Excellent	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good	Poor
Uses time wisely							Obeys rules					
Works independently							Is courteous					
Completes work							Works well with others					
Is careful and accurate							Demonstrates good sports-manship					

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Stockton, California

School Year 19\_\_ 19\_\_

Reporting Progress of \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Letter)

FIRST REPORT	
Teacher's Signature _____	Parent's Signature _____
SECOND REPORT	
Teacher's Signature _____	Parent's Signature _____
THIRD REPORT	
Teacher's Signature _____	Parent's Signature _____

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT YEAR:

In the judgment of the teacher and principal this pupil should work in the \_\_\_\_\_ grade, room \_\_\_\_\_, next fall.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

(TENTATIVE)

General Suggestions for Filling Out  
First and Second Grade Report Cards

(Also applicable to intermediate cards)

1. Use conferences as much as possible to explain marks. There is no real substitute for contact with parents.
2. It is suggested that unusually low marks should not come as a shock to parents. Many parents ask, "Why wasn't I informed long before this?" For aggravated cases, try to contact parents long before card is due.
3. Use short, meaningful, positive comments. Try to tell what steps you are taking to improve the situation.
4. Certain words cause emotional stress and angry reactions on the part of parents. Choose your words carefully.
5. Be sure to confer with parents of "low achievement, top effort" pupils. Have a clear understanding with parents concerning your evaluation of this type of pupil.
6. For "high achievement low effort" type of pupil, schedule conferences.
7. Keep adequate records and samples of work. Definite evidence of achievement should be available to parents who wish to be more accurately informed regarding a child.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

constitutes an A, B, C, or D in each subject area. Yearly adjustments in the guide lines are contemplated until standards agreeable to parents and teachers are reached.

### III. INFORMAL REACTIONS BY TEACHERS

#### Tabulation of Comments.

Of the 397 elementary teachers who received the forms, there was an 80 per cent return. Favorable comments on the intermediate card were made by 67 per cent of those replying. Almost 18 per cent were not in favor of the intermediate card while 15 per cent had no comments.

Comments on the primary card showed 76 per cent were in favor of the card, 11 per cent had no comment, and 13 per cent either did not like the card or preferred other methods of reporting.

It is interesting to note that of the twenty-seven teachers (represented by 13 per cent) who did not like the primary card, fifteen teachers expressed a preference for letter grades.

Tables I through XI tabulate informal teacher reactions to guide lines for marking, and reactions to sample cards.

Table I. Significant items in Table I indicate the following opinions:

1. Checks (✓) are preferred rather than letter grades for work and social habits.

2. Pupils who do superior work with little effort should not be limited to a "B."
3. A mark of "F" should not be compulsory for a pupil being retained in grade.
4. Marking of slow pupils needs to be given greater consideration.

Table II. The scattered opinions as represented in Table II indicated that a number of teachers were confused regarding the attempt to diminish the degree of subjectivity in the awarding of letter grades. Another group of teachers thought that the general idea was a good one.

In its discussions, the Report Card Committee was of the opinion that there should be a correlation between valid standardized test scores and letter grades. It is recognized that not all standardized test scores are completely reliable or valid. Also, standardized achievement tests are not usually administered immediately preceding each issuance of the report card. In these circumstances, the teacher's judgment becomes the most important factor in the marking of pupils.

The table, in general, indicated that much study needed to be made in defining subject achievement marks for report card purposes.

Table III. Scattered returns in Table III showed no

TABLE I  
INFORMAL TEACHER REACTIONS TO GUIDE LINE  
STATEMENTS ON MARKING

Guide Line Statements	Reactions to Statements	Total
1. Letter grades are to be used for subjects, work habits, and social habits.	Letter grade for subjects only, (✓) for effort. Checks (✓) should be used. Prefer percentage marking. Disagree, too confusing. Agree, good, O.K. Letter grades for subjects only. Use checks (✓) for work habits and social habits. Use checks (✓) for library, music, art, and P.E.	1 2 1 5 8 7 24 7
2. Comments which the teacher thinks are necessary or helpful must be written in a courteous manner.	Unnecessary reminder. Add "and positive." O.K. or good. Make up sample comments.	1 5 6 1
3. A letter grade shall be given in each area when the attendance for a grading period has exceeded month.	Two months. Not clear, reword. Yes, O.K.	2 4 7
4. The maximum mark for a student who expends little effort should be a "B." A parent conference must be requested when this "B" is given to a student who is achieving well above grade level.	O.K. but difficult to explain to parents. O.K. Excellent. Confusing. Question mark. Disagree with "must." Disagree.	2 5 7 1 3 5 13

TABLE I (continued)

Guide Line Statements	Reactions to Statements	Total
5. A mark of "F" is compulsory when a pupil is being retained in grade.	Disagree. Question mark. On how much of card? How many times? For retention of immature child why mark "F"? O.K. Not always true. Confusing.	16 1 6 1 4 8 1 7
6. It is not compulsory to give a failing mark to the pupil who is absent too frequently to do passing work.	Disagree. What do you do? Agree or O.K. Confusing. Should make up work.	6 1 8 13 1
7. A grade of "C" is to be given to a pupil of low ability who <u>works hard</u> , even though he is not achieving at grade level. When this "C" is given, a comment specifying a conference must appear on the card.	Disagree. Confusing. Question Mark Disagree with "must." Mark higher than "C" Mark lower than "C" Give ability mark. Excellent, yes. Place among letter grade definitions.	12 5 2 4 4 1 1 10 1
8. When a child of low ability is not doing grade level work, a grade of "D" is to be given for an <u>average amount of effort</u> . An accompanying comment which specifies a conference must appear on the card when this "D" is given.	Disagree. Disagree with "must." Excellent. Confusing. Question mark. O.K. Should be "C."	12 5 5 5 1 5 1

TABLE I (continued)

Guide Line Statements	Reactions to Statements	Total
9. The achievement mark is to be placed in the <u>effort</u> column which shows <u>hard work</u> when a student applies himself sufficiently to work near capacity.	O.K. Confusing. Excellent. Check (✓) column Change "near" to "at or above capacity."	11 8 2 1 1
10. The achievement mark is to be placed in the <u>average effort</u> column when, in the teacher's opinion, the student expends an amount of effort which is comparable to the amount spent by a majority of students of this age.	O.K. Confusing. Specify class, nation-wide, etc. Excellent.	8 6 2 2
11. The achievement mark is to be placed in the <u>little effort</u> column when, in the teacher's opinion, the student continually wastes time.	O.K. or yes. Reword. Confusing. Excellent.	9 2 3 2

TABLE II  
INFORMAL TEACHER REACTIONS TO DEFINITIONS  
FOR LETTER GRADES

Statement	Reaction to Statement	Total
Grade level and the degree above or below grade level are determined by the teacher.	Definite grade level standards needed.	1
However, the teacher's judgment should be in agreement with valid standardized test scores. (A standardized score is valid only at the time the score is obtained.)	Equate standards to our district.	1
In cases of mistaken judgment any grade is subject to review.	Principles very good.	7
	O.K., good.	8
	Confusing.	13
	Very sketchy.	1
	Change "should" to "must."	1
	Define norms.	2
	Who decides "mistaken judgment."	1
A. Represents work well above grade level norms.	Achievement test before each card?	2
B. Represents work above grade level norms.	Letter grades should be self-explanatory.	6
C. Represents work near grade level norms.	Teacher's judgment more important than standardized test scores.	2
D. Represents work below grade level norms.	What is "average"?	1
F. Represents work which is failing. A failing mark is given when any one of the following things would be the result:		
1) The pupil would not achieve at "D" level or above early in the following year.		
2) The pupil, due to lack of application, does not understand daily assignments.		
3) The pupil fails to complete assignments to the teacher's satisfaction.		

\*Failing, as defined here, does not apply to the very slow child who expends average or better than average effort. Such a child will receive a "C" for great effort and a "D" for average effort.



significant reaction on any of the items listed under "Work and Social Habits" on the intermediate report card. However, simplified wording was suggested for several of the items. For example, "Works by self" was suggested in place of "Works independently." "Shows good sportsmanship" was suggested for "Demonstrates good sportsmanship." Lack of concerted opinion regarding any of the items seemed to indicate teacher approval of that section of the report card.

Table IV. The largest group of suggestions in Table IV concerned the need for more space on the report card for comments. The remainder of the remarks or suggestions, while not concentrating on any one item, nevertheless produced practical points, some of which eventually found a place in the final report card. The limiting of the teacher's signature to the upper part of the first page, the placing of all subjects on the left side of the second page, the addition of the phrase "Improvement shown," and the grouping of language arts subject areas all were included in the final version of the report card.

Table V. In Table V the most significant group of comments concerned the need for explaining the new cards to parents. This suggestion was carried out by the formulation of a superintendent's letter to parents, (Appendix B) in which the superintendent explained the report cards to

TABLE III

CHANGES SUGGESTED BY TEACHERS UNDER "WORK AND SOCIAL HABITS"  
(INTERMEDIATE CARD)

Suggestions	Total
Use "Works by self" instead of "Works independently."	1
Use "Finishes work" in place of "Completes work!"	1
Use "Polite" instead of "Courteous."	1
Use "Shows good sportsmanship" in place of "Demonstrates good sportsmanship."	1
Use "Fair" for "Good."	1
"Poor" not a good word.	1
Add "Personal care, appearance."	3
Add "height, weight, health habits."	1
Add "Behavior in class."	1
Add "Neatness."	1
Add "Attitude."	1
List more habits.	1
Mark by "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory," or "Plus (+) or minus (-)."	1
Place "Works well with others" under "Work habits."	1
Add "Care of property" under "Work habits."	1
Add "Respects school property."	1
Eliminate "Work and social habits."	2
Leave space for additional social habits for Special Education pupils.	1

TABLE IV  
TEACHER REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS ON FORMAT  
AND WORDING (INTERMEDIATE CARD)

Remarks and Suggestions	Total
Room number not usually known in June--delete.	7
Comments for each subject unnecessary.	3
Change "Writing" to "Handwriting."	1
Change "Works hard" to "Above average effort."	1
Simplify "Effort" columns.	1
Eliminate "Effort" columns.	3
One large space for comments.	2
More space for comments.	20
What constitutes "irregular" attendance?	1
On first page of card, place "Date" instead of "Next fall."	2
Divide reading into "Oral" and "Comprehension."	1
Use one general space for language arts.	1
Add column for health and posture.	1
Add "Height" and "Weight."	3
Add column for "Improvement shown."	1
Not necessary for teachers to sign in front.	1
Use separate card for instrumental music.	2
Use check (✓) for P.E., but no grade letter.	1
Do not slant lines above columns.	1
Eliminate teacher and principal's signature at bottom of first page--duplication.	4
Problem of making duplicates if part of card is on last page.	1
Eliminate duplicates if grade books are used.	1
Place all subjects on left.	1
Divide right hand side into three horizontal comment sections.	1
Use back page for parent signatures.	1

TABLE V  
MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS BY TEACHERS  
REGARDING INTERMEDIATE CARD

Remarks	Total
Show achievement scores to parents.	1
Show pupil's reading group.	1
Teachers' guide lines for marking should be given to parents also.	2
Conferences difficult to arrange.	1
What about parents who do not show up for conferences?	1
Allow time for suggested conferences.	2
No compulsory conferences.	1
Question wisdom of conferences, unless parent requests conference.	1
Too many conferences needed to explain card.	5
Suggest guide for conferences.	1
Suggest two yearly reports and two conferences.	1
Three reports yearly.	1
More than three reports yearly.	6
Explain cards to parents.	29
Issue progress reports early in year for pupils failing.	1
Show grade level of achievement.	1
Set standards of minimum levels of achievement to complete a grade.	5
Card should tell achievement in relation to grade and achievement in relation to own ability.	1
Will take more teacher time.	2
Find out what parents want to know.	1
What about the marking of pupils doing satisfactory work in a slow group?	1

parents, and invited comments and suggestions. The letter accompanied the first issuance of the report card in the Fall of 1955.

Table VI. In Table VI, regarding the marking system of the intermediate card, scattered comments showed that a significant number of teachers preferred letter grades. Another group of teachers was non-committal regarding marking. All comments were offered freely as part of the general informal evaluation of the tentative card, but not in answer to a direct question regarding the marking system.

Tables VII and VIII. The tabulation of teacher comments as shown in Tables VII and VIII, indicated that twice as many teachers approved of the tentative intermediate report card as those who disapproved.

Table IX. Suggestions listed in Table IX for marking primary cards are basically acceptable in the teaching profession, and as such were inserted more to remind teachers rather than to gain reactions. Nevertheless, parent-teacher conferences seemed to have the general approval of teachers.

Table X. Scattered comments regarding the primary cards are listed in Table X. Several trends of opinion were outstanding. Teachers were definite in asking for more

TABLE VI  
TEACHER COMMENTS REGARDING MARKING SYSTEM  
OF INTERMEDIATE CARD

Comments	Total
Like letter grades.	14
O.K.	2
For subjects only.	1
Use letter grades for grades one to six.	1
No comments.	22
Do not like.	8
Use checks (✓).	2.
Use checks (✓) for "effort" column.	2
Prefer "Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor."	1
Base grades on achievement tests.	1
Parents will not understand.	1
Slow children should not be graded so heartlessly.	2
Discouraging to parents of slow children, but truth is needed and parents will adjust.	1
Will take more time of teachers to make out.	1
Reproduce card on large chart, and explain marking system to P.T.A.	2

TABLE VII  
TEACHER COMMENTS INDICATING APPROVAL  
OF INTERMEDIATE CARD

Comments	Total
Improvement over present one.	32
Well done.	6
O.K.	39
Like card.	45
Highly in favor.	6
Total	128

TABLE VIII  
TEACHER COMMENTS INDICATING DISAPPROVAL  
OF INTERMEDIATE CARD

Comments	Total
Fair, but will parents understand it?	4
No improvement over present card.	2
Confusing or complicated to parents and teachers.	48
Do not approve of philosophy.	10
Total	64

TABLE IX  
TEACHER REACTIONS TO SUGGESTIONS FOR  
MARKING PRIMARY CARD

Suggestion	Reaction	Total
Use conferences as much as possible to explain marks. There is no real substitute for contact with parents.	Make marks self-explanatory.	2
	No time.	3
	O.K.	16
It is suggested that unusually low marks should not come as a shock to parents. Many parents ask, "Why wasn't I informed long before this?" For aggravated cases, try to contact parents long before card is due.	O.K.	13
Use short, meaningful, positive comments. Try to tell what steps you are taking to improve the situation.	O.K.	7
	O.K., plus conference.	1
	No.	1
Certain words cause emotional stress and angry reactions on the part of parents. Choose your words carefully.	O.K.	11
Be sure to confer with parents of "low achievement, top effort" pupils. Have a clear understanding with parents concerning your evaluation of this type of pupil.	O.K.	9
For "high achievement, low effort" type of pupil, schedule conferences.	O.K.	9
Keep adequate records and samples of work. Definite evidence of achievement should be available to parents who wish to be more accurately informed regarding a child.	O.K.	12



space for comments for the inclusion of the third grade in the primary report card system rather than in the intermediate report card system, and for the listing of days of absence rather than checking attendance as regular or irregular.

Since no radical changes in marking were proposed for the primary report card, there were no reactions on this point. All other comments concerned no significant suggestions.

Table XI. Teacher comments concerning the entire primary card are presented in Table XI. A total of ninety-six teachers approved of the card, while ten teachers did not like the report card. Eleven teachers had no comment.

#### Teacher Comments of Interest

In reviewing the many comments concerning the sample cards submitted to teachers, assorted reactions are set forth below with no attempt to classify them. Underscoring is in the original. The following pertain to the primary card:

In this difficult job, it seems that at least two things were forgotten. First, simplicity is the mark of genius. Second, the teacher's judgment is much more important than the standardized test in the primary grades.

I consider this an improved card. I do think, that some parents will require explanations as to the

TABLE X  
TEACHER COMMENTS REGARDING PRIMARY CARD

Comments	Total
Show grade level of achievement.	1
Discuss test results with parents.	1
Files needed for keeping track of progress.	1
Send home folders of work with card.	1
Place all grading on one side.	1
Omit "science."	2
Eliminate "science" and "art" for grades one and two.	1
Rearrange order to read--numbers, reading, writing, spelling.	2
Many second grades do not teach spelling.	2
Provide space on card for parent to check (✓) if he wants to talk to teacher. Seems to be a great effort for parents to write comments.	1
Conference needed for all primary pupils.	1
Make more complete card for parents who cannot come to conference.	1
Two afternoons per year should be allotted for conferencing, one at beginning, one at end.	1
Favor conferences only.	4
Favor conferences for abnormal cases only.	1
No time allotted by administration for conferences.	3
Conference method best way of reporting.	3
Give teacher time for conferencing.	2
Omit room number on first page.	1
Do not use abbreviation for "average."	1
Mark only regular and irregular attendance.	9
What constitutes irregular attendance?	2
Mark tardiness.	6
Mark days absent.	10
Work and social habits O.K.	4
Use checks (✓) for work and social habits.	1
Record height, weight, and health.	2
Add health habits under P.E.	1
Use intermediate card for primary.	1
Use intermediate card for third grade.	3
Guide needed in avoiding poor terminology in teacher comments.	4

TABLE X (continued)

Comments	Total
Need place for "shows improvement."	1
Need place for "behavior."	1
Use "satisfactory" in place of "shows normal progress."	1
"Shows rapid progress" is misleading. Change to "works hard."	1
Define "normal progress."	1
Change "slow progress" to "some progress."	1
Record effort and apparent ability.	1
Add column for "failure."	1
Add "average" to column.	1
Does not show <u>quality</u> of work.	1
State reading level.	3
More space needed for comments.	15
Place comments on last page.	1
Space for comments O.K.	1
Not necessary to comment on each subject for each report.	1
Enlarge inside space for comments. Do not place on last page.	1
Center fourth page of card.	2
Like "progress" grading.	3
Like "participation" marking.	2
Use letter grades for first page only.	2
Prefer letter grade for primary.	2
Prefer anecdotal reporting.	1
Include third grade in this primary card.	17
Issue four reports yearly.	2
Send home achievement test results three times during the year and samples of work monthly.	1
Prefer wording on second page of intermediate card for primary.	1
No provision for child who does not progress.	1
Card should be self-explanatory.	1
More frequent tests needed.	1
Difficult to get parents to conference.	3
Should conference be held at home or at school?	1

TABLE XI

## TEACHER ACCEPTANCE OF PRIMARY CARD

Comments	Total
O.K. or satisfied.	45
Improvement over present card.	19
Good.	32
Do not like card.	10
"No comment."	11

relation between effort and grade, however, the child can see what he has done. I don't consider this card a threat to the pupil, but I do consider it an incentive. Something concrete he can read with his own eyes. A reward to some, and a danger signal to others.

I see no improvement in this report card. Although I feel that conferences are fine and in many cases necessary--the outcome of a conference does not show a child his marks in black and white. This card, as far as I can see does not grade, but comments.

There is no space for the child slower than "slow progress." After all, there is such a thing as "practically no progress" that a teacher is in no way responsible for. The best parent-teacher contact, many times can do nothing to alter an environment. To sum up, I think that even first and second grade pupils should have a definite mark, whether it's one he is proud of, or one he will feel he must work to improve--I like the report card for third to sixth grade for this reason. The parents will get their shock when they get the third grade card for the first time. A conversation and a grade are so different.

Parents want a report that places greater emphasis upon accomplishment in subject matter. Parents are fed up with a camouflage report. They want us to be honest with them, honest with the child, and honest with ourselves.

The following comments pertain to the intermediate card:

Life is made up of competition so why not prepare our children for it. When a child takes home a report card that says he is doing satisfactory work, his parents are often startled to find that he is working far below grade level.

This seems a workable card. I like the idea of having achievement marks. I have heard many parents express dissatisfaction in not knowing a norm rating for a child before seventh grade. They feel "satisfactory" is working at grade level.

Please note. Why do we have to make report cards so complicated? I like the plain A, B, C method--simple as that--why all the extra comment--in intermediate anyway--can't it be set up so we just can check one such as Arith\_\_\_\_\_, etc. Why do we have to go

Grade  
through this thing called effort, working habits, etc. I just like it to the point--why all this other extra stuff.

I like this report card, because the intent seems to be to convey accurate information to the parents. It strikes me as being a definite step forward.

This card is more meaningful than the present report card.

Will require a great deal of explanation for many parents, and will actually make a parent sit down and do a little concentrating on his child's report card rather than merely glancing down a column and counting the "outstanding" or "capable of doing better" checks. For a child that is not an "A" student or superior student and can never be more than a "C" student, his parents will probably find this a very discouraging report. In time, however, I think they will adjust themselves to not only the report but also the truth. This type of report will take more time of the teacher but it will cover a much broader area.

This report card is an improvement over the present one. I think the administration is afraid to simplify it to the point where most of the parents can understand it.

Congratulations for a clear, concise guide. It is evident that much sincere effort has gone into this improved draft. The comment space is small, but perhaps it will suffice.

This is a good step toward uniformity in marking cards. The committee is to be praised for their fine work. I would prefer not basing a grade on standardized test scores.

Suppose Joe Doakes, a boy with a low I.Q., has very good work habits. The highest grade that he can receive is a C. In a way this can discourage a young-

ster because he can't move forward except in Art, P.E., Library, or Music, etc.

If there was a class of low I.Q. pupils, the teacher would have to arrange a conference every report period because of seven and eight.

I can't think of a better method, however. This type of card should give the parents a more concrete concept of where their children stand. I'm sure the parents will appreciate this type of card, even though the truth hurts.

This card is exactly what seems to be needed and here achievement is pinpointed to mean something to the parent in addition to effort exerted.

Teachers are more apt to be more consistent in their grading limits and meanings.

#### A Very Good Report!

This is too complicated for a great many of the parents to understand.

I feel that the intermediate grades should have a report similar to the primary--a check system.

Letter grades--when the inept (low ability child) can obtain no more than C or D--are, in this teacher's opinion, unfair. Each child has the right to a balanced experience of successes and failures. Though constant C and D grades are not marks of failure, neither are they marks of success. These children, making up the majority of the enrollment at McKinley, for example, will never experience that coveted B and A--the marks of success, though they might be doing B and A work on their own level. This limitation is not just nor psychologically healthy for an elementary school child.

It should be remembered, that life, outside of school and afterwards does allow an individual to find his "class" so as to speak. Ordinarily civilized life doesn't force the very weak to compete with the very strong--civilization does give the opportunity for balanced experiences of success and failure. Why should school programs impose limitations?

My only comment is that I'm glad I teach primary! I am violently opposed to this type of report card and all the confusion, retrogression, and parental consternation it represents. Is this return to letter grades the result of extensive research in educational psychology or a catering to parental whims so they can compare Johnny with Jimmy over the back fence?

This report is much too complicated. I favor an easier to read and interpret card one which both teachers and parents will be more likely to interpret in the same manner.

I am very disappointed to think that the S.U.S.D. is reverting to an "A, B, C, D, F" reporting system! Are we not going entirely backward instead of forward, in the light of what is known about the development of children? For many years I have preferred the parent-teacher conference to any type of written report, for it is much fairer to the child than "marks." Furthermore, a report card that requires conferencing to explain it is a long way from adequate, is it not?

This is, apparently, parental plus teacher confusion personified. I think it is a bigger mess than the one we now have. Why don't we try simplifying the report card instead of complicating it?

It is impossible for me to see that this type of report card with letter grades and the emphasis on academic achievement reflects the philosophy adopted by the district--the philosophy which should be reflected in our type of reporting as well as in every aspect of the educational program.

With the foregoing reactions in mind, the Report Card Committee made the following changes in the two report cards (Figures 7 and 8):

1. Space for comments was provided on one complete page instead of under each subject area.
2. Work habits and social habits were to be marked with a check (✓) rather than by letter grades.



3. Four letter grades were adopted, rather than five, for the intermediate grade card.
4. Letter grades were defined more closely than previously.
5. The cards were reproduced by multigraph process rather than by printing. This was done because of lower costs, and because of relative ease in making subsequent necessary changes.

With the superintendent's approval, the report cards were presented to the Board of Education in June of 1955 and were formally adopted on a trial basis for the school year 1955-56.

## CHAPTER V

### SURVEY OF COMMUNITY OPINION

Included in this chapter are two extensive surveys of community opinion regarding the new report cards. These surveys are closely analyzed and summarized. Ending the chapter are recommendations of the Report Card Committee, based upon committee study and results of the survey.

The report cards adopted for the school year 1955-56 were evaluated by means of two questionnaires during that school year. One questionnaire, prepared by the writer with the assistance of members of the Report Card Committee, was directed to parents and accompanied the second issue (February 1, 1956) of the report card for that year. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out what parents thought of the new card. The other questionnaire, also prepared by the writer with committee assistance, was distributed to teachers on the date of the third issuance (May 2, 1956) of the report card. A similar purpose characterized this questionnaire, that of finding out what teachers thought of the new card.

#### I. PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

A total of 6,057 questionnaires were sent to parents

		1st REPORT			2nd REPORT			3rd REPORT		
Teacher will check (✓) appropriate column		Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress
Reading										
Language										
Writing										
Numbers										
Spelling (2nd-3rd- Grade)										

		1st REPORT			2nd REPORT			3rd REPORT		
		Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest
Social Studies										
Science										
Art										
Music										
Physical Education										

ATTENDANCE					
1st Report		2nd Report		3rd Report	
Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.

## TEACHER COMMENTS

1st Report

2nd Report

3rd Report

FIGURE 8

REPORT CARD FOR 1955-56 GRADES ONE, TWO, AND THREE

# WORK AND SOCIAL HABITS

	1st REPORT			2nd REPORT			3rd REPORT		
	Excellent	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good	Poor
Uses Time Wisely									
Works Independently									
Completes Work									
Is careful and accurate									
Obeys Rules									
Is Courteous									
Works Well With Others									
Demonstrates Good Sportsmanship									

## PARENT'S COMMENTS

1st REPORT

Parent's Signature

2nd REPORT

Parent's Signature

3rd REPORT

Parent's Signature

Grades 1--3

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Stockton, California

School Year 19\_\_\_\_19\_\_\_\_

Reporting Progress of \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent:

This report is intended to provide you with important information regarding the progress of your child. We believe it deserves your thoughtful consideration.

A conference with the teacher is suggested once or twice each year to supplement the limited information presented in this formal report.

Very truly yours,

*Nolan D. Pulliam*  
Superintendent of Schools

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT YEAR:

In the judgment of the teacher and principal this pupil should work in the \_\_\_\_\_ grade, room \_\_\_\_\_, next fall.

Teacher

Principal

## CHAPTER V

### SURVEY OF COMMUNITY OPINION

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#### I. PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

A total of 6,057 questionnaires were sent to parents

of intermediate pupils (Figure 9). Of this total 4,375, a 72 per cent return, were completed and returned.

### Question 1

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Partly</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
This card tells me what I want to know.	83%	2%	8%	7%

The intent of Question 1 was to ascertain if the information which parents desired concerning their children was actually included in this card. Disregarding the vagaries of semantic interpretation, 83 per cent of the parents seemed to think that the card told them what they wanted to know.

### Question 2

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Partly</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
This card is easily understood.	85%	2%	5%	8%

Question 2 attempted to determine the clarity or simplicity of the card. The response seemed to indicate that this was generally accomplished.

### Question 3

- a. In marking, I prefer that my child be marked only on his progress in keeping with his own ability. 32% In Favor
- b. In marking, I prefer that my child be compared to the majority of children of similar age and grade. 20% In Favor

- c. I prefer a combination of the above two items. 38% In Favor  
No answer. 10%

Question 3 was interesting in its results and possibly points to the old assertion that all questionnaires are suspect. An analysis of the card shows that it is essentially one employing competitive marks with an attempt at the same time to mark "effort." Letter grade marks based on a standard are achievement marks and presumably are not based on ability. Unwittingly, these marks actually do indicate ability. Ability is a necessary quality in high achievement. Therefore, achievement marks are also ability marks.

It should be assumed, however, that the regular meaning of "ability marking" was what the 32 per cent preferred, namely, that children would be marked only in relation to their own ability, not compared with a standard, or compared with other children.

Yet, the results of Question 1, taken at face value, point out that of the parents who replied; 83 per cent agreed that the card told them what they wanted to know. Since the card is one based on a standard, or competitive grading, it could be presumed that the 83 per cent favored competitive marking. Yet, in Question 3, 32 per cent preferred no competitive marking, which indicated

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Stockton, California

February 1, 1956

Questionnaire on Report Cards

(IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD IN GRADES FOUR TO SIX, FILL OUT ONLY ONE QUESTIONNAIRE)

To Parents of Pupils in the Fourth to Sixth Grades:

This year's card is different from the one we have been using. You can help us greatly by putting a check mark in the square which best tells what you think about this type of card.

*Wolau D. Pulliam*  
(Superintendent of Schools)

	Yes	No	Partly
1. This card tells me what I want to know.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What other things should be included?			

	Yes	No	Partly
2. The card is easily understood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What parts are not too clear?			

	Mark one square
3. a. In marking, I prefer that my child be marked only on his progress in keeping with his own ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. In marking, I prefer that my child be compared to the majority of children of similar age and grade.	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I prefer a combination of the above two items.	<input type="checkbox"/>

METHODS OF MARKING	Mark one or more squares
4. a. I prefer letter grades (A, B, C, D) plus a short comment, as we now have.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I prefer a (✓) on such headings as "could do better", "is satisfactory", etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I prefer a note from the teacher about my child's work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I prefer a talk with the teacher from time to time.	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I prefer a combination of: a b c d, as listed above. (Circle those methods you would like to have included)	

List on the back other changes you would like made in the card.



a change of heart for a certain number of parents.

However, 20 per cent of the parents were in favor of competitive grading, while 38 per cent, the largest group, seemed to solve the dilemma by preferring a combination of both methods.

#### Question 4

Methods of Marking.		<u>Letter Grades</u>	<u>Other Methods</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
	<u>In Favor of:</u>			
a.	I prefer letter grades (A, B, C, D) plus a short comment, as we now have.	36.4%		
b.	I prefer a check (✓) on such headings as "could do better," "is satisfactory," etc.		1.6%	
c.	I prefer a note from the teacher about my child's work.		2.4%	
d.	I prefer a talk with the teacher from time to time.		3.5%	
e.	I prefer a combination of: a b c d, as listed above.			
	Combination a, d	18.5%		
	Combination a, c	9.3%		
	Combination a, c, d	7.0%		
	Combination a, b, c, d	3.3%		
	Combination a, b	3.1%		
	Combination a, b, d	2.3%		
	Combination c, d		1.7%	
	Combination a, b, c	1.3%		
	Combination b, c		.9%	
	Combination b, d		.8%	
	Combination b, c, d		.8%	
		<u>81.2%</u>	<u>12.7%</u>	<u>6.1%</u>

Concerning Question 4, a total of the combinations in which "a" (letter grades) occurs, showed that 81.2 per cent were in favor of either the letter grades then being used, or letter grades in combination with the three other reporting methods--b, c, or d. A total of the combinations in which "a" does not occur showed that 12.7 per cent were in favor of other methods of pupil appraising. Of those who favored other methods, the largest group, 3.5 per cent, preferred a talk with the teacher from time to time.

A most interesting observation is that 81.2 per cent of the Stockton parents and 82.3 per cent of the Pasadena, Texas, parents preferred competitive marking. (See page 8.)

Interesting parent comments on intermediate card.

The varied character and quality of the comments made by parents regarding the intermediate card were difficult to classify. However, typical comments are presented here.

A, B, C, D, grades mean just what they did in high school and college to me. They are not suitable for grammar school grades.

If the grades must be put in columns, I would like to see the "little effort" column eliminated and use only the "works hard" and "average effort" used.

The present system is quite complete and sufficient. Any more additions would only serve to add burden on our teachers and contribute to lessening their efficiency.

How are the grades A, B, C, D, derived? Average is said to be "C." Is this in comparison with other children in her own class--Stockton Unified School District or of the whole country? Who sets these standards? Or is it set on a percentage grade? For instance: 95 - 100% = A, ? - 95% = B, etc.

We believe this card is very good in comparing the child with his classmates, yet telling us how he is working according to his ability. Please keep this type card!

Some of the headings above the grades may be confusing.

If he shows a downward progress between cards, please let me know.

Sometimes a child's readiness is slower than other times. It is unfair to give them a poor grade which might hurt certain personality traits, because their readiness isn't at their highest level.

Grading should be given in the higher grades (6th and up) because the personality is more or less formed.

#### Questionnaire to Parents of Primary Pupils

At the time of the distribution of the questionnaire to parents of intermediate pupils, a questionnaire (Figure 10) concerning the primary card was sent to parents of primary pupils. A total of 7,450 questionnaires was sent. The tally showed that 5,013 questionnaires, 67 per cent, were returned.

#### Question 1

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Partly</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
This card tells me what I want to know.	76%	3%	12%	9%

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA  
February 1, 1956  
Questionnaire on Report Cards

(IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD IN GRADES ONE TO THREE, FILL OUT ONLY ONE QUESTIONNAIRE).

To Parents of Pupils in the First to Third Grades:

This year's card is different from the one we have been using. You can help us greatly by putting a check mark in the square which best tells what you think about this type of card.

*Nolan D. Pulliam*  
Superintendent of Schools

	Yes	No	Partly
1. This card tells me what I want to know.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What other things do you think should be included?			

	Yes	No	Partly
2. The card is easily understood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What parts are not too clear?			

	Mark one square	
3. a. In marking, I prefer that my child be compared to the majority of children of similar age and grade.		<input type="checkbox"/>
b. In marking, I prefer that my child be marked only on his progress in keeping with his own ability.		<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I prefer a combination of the above two items.		<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	Don't Know
4. Besides the card, I prefer to have the teacher schedule me for a talk with her at least once during the year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments			

The results of Question 1 indicated that a strong majority of those answering was satisfied with the type of information contained in the card.

### Question 2

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Partly</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
The card is easily understood.	81%	3%	6%	10%

The results of Question 2 seemed to indicate that parents were having no trouble in reading and understanding the information therein.

### Question 3

- a. In marking, I prefer that my child be compared to the majority of children of similar age and grade. 18% In Favor
- b. In marking, I prefer that my child be marked only on his progress in keeping with his own ability. 31% In Favor
- c. I prefer a combination of the above two items. 42% In Favor
- No answer. 9%

Question 3 indicated that the largest group (42 per cent) of parents preferred both ability marking and competitive marking for their children.

Question 3 had approximately the same reaction as did the same question in the intermediate questionnaire. It is interesting to note the parallel results.

	<u>In Favor, Intermediate Card</u>	<u>In Favor, Primary Card</u>
Ability Marking	32%	31%
Competitive Marking	20%	18%
Combination	38%	42%
No Answer	10%	9%

#### Question 4

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
Besides the card, I prefer to have the teacher schedule me for a talk with her at least once during the year.	74%	5%	6%	15%

The results of Question 4 indicated that a substantial majority preferred parent-teacher conferences as a necessary adjunct to the card.

As a whole, the primary questionnaire had fairly complete coverage. All twenty-nine elementary schools were included. A 67 per cent return indicated a strong response. Parents were quite definite (76 per cent) in saying that the card told them what they wanted to know about their children. To 81 per cent of the parents the meaning of the card was clear and easily understood. A higher percentage (31 per cent) favored "ability marking" over "competitive marking" (18 per cent), but the largest group favored a combination of the two forms of marking (42 per cent).

### Summary of Parent Questionnaires

The total results for the February 1956 questionnaire showed that 13,507 questionnaires were sent to parents and 9,386 replies were received, a 69 per cent return. Each reply was counted as a return from one family. The number of families having both primary and intermediate children was not determined.

Generally, parents were satisfied that both cards included the information they wanted, and also felt that the cards were easily understood. The largest percentage, but not the majority, preferred a combination of "ability marking" and "competitive marking" in both cards. The letter grade type of mark on the intermediate card was favored by 81.2 per cent of the parents replying to the intermediate grade questionnaire.

## II. TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

In May of 1956, at the end of the third report period, separate questionnaires (Figures 11 and 12) were submitted to intermediate and primary teachers.

### Intermediate Teacher Questionnaire

Of the 163 questionnaires sent to intermediate grade teachers, 80 per cent or 130 replies were received. Of those replying, 54 per cent preferred the type of marking

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Stockton, California  
May 2, 1956

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE INTERMEDIATE REPORT CARD

Your reactions will be most helpful to the Report Card Committee in recommending changes for the year 1956-57. Committee: Barbara Anthony, Virgil Estes, William McClintock, David Smith, Roger Walton, Henry Schiffman (chairman).

1. The present card uses a single letter grade to mark achievement. Effort is shown by the position of the letter grade.

Comments or examples:

I prefer the present method . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to mark subjects on achievement alone . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to mark subjects on effort alone \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to mark by combining effort and achievement into a single grade . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

Other . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

2. The present card provides for four letter grades.

Comments or examples:

I prefer the present method . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer more letter grades . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer fewer letter grades . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

Other . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

3. The present card checks work habits and social habits with either "yes" or "no".

Comments or examples:

I prefer the present method . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to have more ratings on the scale . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

Other . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please list any other comments or suggestions that you think will improve the card:

QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS CONCERNING  
INTERMEDIATE GRADE REPORT CARD

FIGURE 11



(Please check the grade in which you teach)  
 Grade -     ,     ,     

1. The present guidelines recommend using achievement scores as one of the objective bases for assigning grades.

Comments or examples:

I agree . . . . .     

I do not agree . . . . .     

2. The present guidelines recommend that slow children with IQ's approximately 85 and below, be marked with a "C" or a "D" regardless of achievement.

Comments or examples:

I agree . . . . .     

I do not agree . . . . .     

3. The present guidelines recommend standards for marking in the grade you teach.

Please comment on the changes you would recommend in the nature or philosophy of any of the standards.

(Please check one of the 3 columns)

	Too High	About Right	Too Low
Reading (p.1 & supplement)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Spelling (p.2)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Handwriting (p.2)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Library (p.3)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Language (p.4)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Arithmetic (p.4)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Social Studies (p.5)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Science (p.5)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Art (p.6)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Physical Ed.(p.6)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Music (p.6)	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

4. Please list any other comments or suggestions which you think will improve the guidelines:

Approved: Nolan D. Pulliam  
 Superintendent of Schools

Please send the completed questionnaire to the Lottie Grunsky School by May 7, 1956.

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Stockton, California

May 2, 1956

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE PRIMARY REPORT CARD

Your reactions will be most helpful to the Report Card Committee in recommending changes for the year 1956-57. Committee: Barbara Anthony, Virgil Estes, William McClintock, David Smith, Roger Walton, Henry Schiffman (chairman).

1. The present card provides for a three-point scale for marking academic progress.

Comments or examples:

I prefer the present method . . . . .

I prefer more points . . . . .

I prefer fewer points . . . . .

Other . . . . .

2. The present card uses interest and participation as the factors for marking in Social Studies, Science, Art, Music, and P. E.

Comments or examples:

I prefer the present method . . . . .

I do not prefer the present method . . . . .

3. The present card checks work habits and social habits with a three-point scale.

Comments or examples:

I prefer the present method . . . . .

I prefer to have more ratings on the scale . . . . .

Other . . . . .

4. Please list any other comments or suggestions that you think will improve the card:

(over)

QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS CONCERNING  
PRIMARY GRADE REPORT CARD

FIGURE 12

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE PRIMARY REPORTING GUIDELINES

Please check the level on which you teach:

Grade 1\_\_\_\_, 2\_\_\_\_, 3\_\_\_\_

1. The present guidelines provide expectancies for grading.

(Please check one of the 3 columns.)

	Too High	About Right	Too Low
Reading (p. 1 & supplement)	____	____	____
Language (p.2)	____	____	____
Writing (p.3)	____	____	____
Numbers (p.3)	____	____	____
Spelling (p.4)	____	____	____

Please comment on the changes  
you would recommend in the nature  
or philosophy of any of the  
standards.

2. Please list any other comments or suggestions which you think will improve the guidelines:

Approved: Nolan D. Pulliam  
Superintendent of Schools

Please send the completed questionnaire to Lottie Grunsky School by Monday, May 7.

used, namely, a letter grade to mark achievement and by its position to show "effort." Thirty-one per cent preferred a single letter grade which would evaluate both effort and achievement. Eleven per cent preferred to mark on achievement alone with no consideration of effort. Two per cent were willing to mark on "effort" alone. Another 2 per cent preferred other ways of marking. Altogether, 96 per cent of the intermediate grade teachers preferred some form of competitive marking.

In answer to the question concerning the number of letter grades to be used in marking, 48 per cent of the teachers preferred the scale of four letters, A, B, C, D. Thirty-nine per cent preferred a wider scale. The addition of the letter grade "F" was mentioned frequently.

When asked if "yes" and "no" was a satisfactory scale for marking work and social habits, 52 per cent of the teachers preferred "yes" and "no" as a marking scale, while 40 per cent wanted more than a two-point scale.

Teacher reaction to guide lines for intermediate grade reporting (Figure 11) produced definite reactions. Seventy-four per cent agreed that achievement test scores should be used as one of the objective bases for marking.

The question of how to mark slow children presented a difficult problem. The guide lines recommended that slow children be marked with a "C" or a "D" on effort,

regardless of achievement. Fifty-three per cent disagreed with this statement. Forty-five per cent agreed.

Concerning the standards for marking, from 65 per cent to 76 per cent of the 130 teachers agreed that the various subject standards were set approximately at the correct level of difficulty. From 6 per cent to 22 per cent considered the standards too high. From .7 per cent to 5 per cent thought that the standards were set too low.

#### Primary Teacher Questionnaire

The questionnaire sent to 234 primary teachers produced a 74 per cent return. Forty-six per cent of the teachers accepted the three-point scale ("Shows rapid progress," "Shows normal progress," "Shows slow progress") for appraising progress. Forty per cent of the teachers desired a wider scale. Six-tenths of one per cent preferred a smaller scale. Five per cent preferred other methods.

In the marking of social studies, science, art, music, and physical education, 86 per cent of the teachers preferred the method used, that of evaluating the interest and participation of pupils. Ten per cent of the teachers did not prefer that method.

Fifty-six per cent of the teachers agreed that the three-point scale, "Excellent," "Good," "Poor," was adequate

in evaluating the work and social habits of primary pupils. Thirty-one per cent of the teachers preferred a wider scale. Three per cent of the teachers preferred other methods.

A majority of the teachers, 55 per cent to 68 per cent, thought that the expectancies for the various subject areas were approximately the correct level of difficulty for each grade. A significant minority, 24 per cent, thought that the reading expectancies were too high. Nine per cent were of the opinion that our expectancies in numbers were too low.

In the coverage for both questionnaires all of the 397 elementary teachers were contacted. Seventy-six per cent of the teachers responded. The net results of the questionnaires produced modifications in both guide lines and cards.

### III. ACTION BASED ON QUESTIONNAIRES AND COMMITTEE STUDY

Ending its work for the year, the Elementary Report Card Committee made recommendations (Figure 13) based upon the results of its own intensive study for the past year, and utilizing information from the results of the parent questionnaires and teacher reactions to the newly adopted report card. Most important among the recommended changes were:

CHADWICKIAN INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHADWICKIAN INSTITUTIONS

FIGURE 13  
FINAL REPORT OF REPORT CARD COMMITTEE

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Stockton, California  
May 18, 1956

Final Report of the Elementary Report Card Committee

The Elementary Report Card Committee makes the following recommendations based upon the results of its own intensive study for the past year, and utilizing information from the results of the Parent Questionnaire and Teacher Reactions to the existing report card.

Committee: Barbara Anthony, Charles Clark, Virgil Estes, William McClintock, David Smith, Roger Walton, Henry Schiffman (chairman).

The Elementary Report Card Committee recommends that:

1. The present marking system be used at each of the four reporting periods.
2. A card containing four identical spaces and procedures for reporting be used.
3. Provision be made during 1956-57 for further study and experimentation with the following:
  - (a) Individual conferences to be used in lieu of one formal report.
  - (b) Substitution of a final summary of the year's work in lieu of the fourth period report.
4. In the section entitled "work and social habits" on the intermediate card, the markings be changed to conform with the primary card.
5. In the section entitled "work and social habits" on both cards, the "habits" be restated in consistent terms, and the scale mark "good" be replaced with "satisfactory."
6. In the section entitled "work and social habits" on both cards, an asterisk be placed in the "poor" columns and the notation made below that the parent should arrange a conference with the teacher.
7. In the section entitled "teacher comments" on both cards, a phrase stating "Improvement is shown in \_\_\_\_\_" be inserted.
8. In the section entitled "assignment for next year", the reading be changed to "Fall assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ grade, room \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal"
9. A section on health education be included on both cards, the guidelines to be prepared by the consultant in this area.
10. The revised report card be carefully proofread to avoid the errors of the present card.
11. Time be made available in the early fall on a city-wide basis for teacher orientation and discussion of the following:
  - (a) Detailed summary of the Parent Questionnaire and Teacher Reactions to the report card.
  - (b) Detailed analysis of information influencing the above recommendations of the committee.

Approved: Nolan D. Pulliam  
Superintendent of Schools



1. Four reports to be made yearly.
2. Further study in substituting one conference for one written report.
3. Marking of work and social habits was to be done in the same manner on both cards.
4. An asterisk in the "poor" column under "Work and social habits" indicated that the parent was to request a conference.
5. The phrase "Improvement is noted in \_\_\_\_\_" was added to the section devoted to comments.
6. The subject area of health instruction was added to the list of subjects.

Figures 14 and 15 represent the improved card used during the second year, 1956-57, of experimentation with the revised pupil reporting system.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to trace the steps taken in improving the elementary pupil report card in the Stockton Unified School District. Prior to June 1955, parents received a quarterly report which attempted to evaluate pupil progress on the basis of pupil ability. In June 1955, the district Board of Education adopted a report card for grades four to six, which would report pupil progress by means of a four-point letter grade system based on fixed standards of achievement. A teachers' manual setting forth guide lines for marking was also formulated.

In addition to the intermediate grade report card, a report card for grades one to three was adopted in June 1955. The primary card evaluated pupils on the basis of interest and participation in the various subject areas, but did not attempt any competitive evaluation such as that used in the intermediate grade card.

To reach the point of adoption of the new report cards, a Report Card Committee, with the writer as chairman, informally surveyed parent and teacher opinion to find out what the community thought of the projected changes in the

## MARKING SYSTEM

Rapid Progress — above the average expected for the grade level  
 Normal Progress — within the average expected for the grade level  
 Slow Progress — below the average expected for the grade level

Teacher will check (✓) appropriate column	1st Report			2nd Report			3rd Report			4th Report		
	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress	Shows Rapid Progress	Shows Normal Progress	Shows Slow Progress
Reading												
Language												
Writing												
Numbers												
Spelling (2nd-3rd grade)												

	1st Report			2nd Report			3rd Report			4th Report		
	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest	Is Interested and Contributes	Is Interested	Shows Little Interest
Social Studies												
Science												
Art												
Music												
Physical Education												
Health Education												

## ATTENDANCE

1st Report		2nd Report		3rd Report		4th Report	
Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.	Reg.	Irreg.

## WORK AND SOCIAL HABITS

Teacher will check (✓) appropriate column	1st Report			2nd Report			3rd Report			4th Report		
	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor*	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor*	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor*	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor*
Use of Time												
Independence in Work												
Completion of Work												
Neatness												
Compliance With Rules												
Courtesy												
Cooperation With Others												
Sportsmanship												

\*Parent should request conference

## PARENT COMMENTS

1st Report

Parent Signature

2nd Report

Parent Signature

3rd Report

Parent Signature

FIGURE 15

REPORT CARD FOR PRIMARY GRADES, 1956-57

TEACHER COMMENTS

1st Report

Teacher Signature

2nd Report

Improvement is noted in.....

Teacher Signature

3rd Report

Improvement is noted in.....

Teacher Signature

4th Report

Improvement is noted in.....

Teacher Signature

Parent-Teacher Conference held on.....

Teacher's Signature

GRADES 1—3

**STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

School Year 19.....19.....

Reporting Progress of.....

School.....

Grade.....

Teacher.....

Principal.....

Dear Parent:

This report is intended to provide you with important information regarding the progress of your child. We believe it deserves your thoughtful consideration.

A conference with the teacher is a regular part of the reporting plan each year to supplement the limited information presented in this formal report.

Very truly yours,

*Walter A. Pulliam*  
Superintendent of Schools

Fall Assignment ..... Grade, Room .....

report card. Results were encouraging enough to recommend to the Board of Education that a change be made.

### Summary of Parent Reactions

During the first trial year of the new report cards, over 13,000 questionnaires were distributed to parents in an effort to ascertain what parents thought of the new report cards. Approximately 81 per cent of the parents of intermediate pupils approved of the letter grade system of marking used in the intermediate grades. Eighty-three per cent of the parents stated that the intermediate grade card told them what they wanted to know. Eighty-five per cent thought that the card was easily understood. Approximately 38 per cent desired both non-competitive and competitive appraisals.

Regarding the primary grade card, 76 per cent of the parents of primary pupils were satisfied that the card told them what they wanted to know. Eighty-one per cent said that the card was easily understood. Forty-two per cent of the parents wanted both non-competitive and competitive appraisals. Seventy-four per cent desired a conference to supplement the report card.

All replies were received after parents had taken the opportunity to study the report cards for the second time during that school year.

In addition to the questionnaires to parents, a formal questionnaire was distributed to elementary teachers on the date of the third issuance of the report card for that year. This was done late in the school year in order to allow teachers sufficient time to use and become familiar with the new report cards.

#### Summary of Reactions of Intermediate Teachers

Reactions of intermediate teachers toward the new intermediate report card were varied. In general, the card was accepted to the following extent:

1. Ninety-six per cent of the replies of teachers of intermediate grades showed a preference for some form of competitive marking.
2. Forty-eight per cent of the intermediate teachers liked the four-letter scale. Thirty-nine per cent wanted a wider scale.
3. Fifty-two per cent of the intermediate teachers liked the "yes" and "no" marking for work and social habits. Forty per cent wanted more than a two-point scale rating for work and social habits.
4. Seventy-four per cent of the intermediate teachers liked the idea of using valid achievement scores (Figure 6) as one of the objective

bases for assigning grades.

5. Fifty-three per cent of the intermediate teachers did not like the idea of marking limited-capacity pupils with a "C" or "D" regardless of achievement.
6. Sixty-five to 76 per cent of the intermediate teachers thought that the standards for marking as set forth in the guide lines were about right.

#### Summary of Reactions of Primary Teachers

While changes in the primary card were not as pronounced as in the intermediate card, the questionnaires to primary teachers produced the following reactions:

1. Primary teachers were almost evenly divided on the question of whether or not to use a three-point marking scale or a wider scale.
2. Eighty-six per cent of the primary teachers liked the idea of using interest and participation as the factors for marking in social studies, science, art, music, and physical education.
3. A majority (56 per cent) of primary teachers preferred a three-point scale in marking work and social habits. A substantial minority

(31 per cent) wanted more leeway than that afforded by a three-point scale.

4. The majority (55 to 68 per cent) of the primary teachers thought that the expectancies for grading in the primary subjects as set forth in the guide lines were about right. A substantial minority (24 per cent) thought that the reading expectancies were too high.

Because of the difficulties in finding time to meet after school hours, the final committee included five administrators and two consultants who met weekly during the school day. The disadvantage in not having classroom teachers on the final committee was offset by canvassing teacher opinion during the various stages of progress.

In general, the distribution of information and questionnaires involved as many teachers and parents as possible. The involvement itself, while primarily used as a means of obtaining opinions and information also served to acquaint teachers and parents with the problems encountered in reporting pupil progress.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

Resulting from this study are a number of observations of the writer regarding the appraisal and reporting of pupil progress:



1. Revision of reporting procedures is a continuous process. To solidify a system of reporting is to fail to serve the needs of a changing community.
2. Methods of reporting pupil progress should be acceptable, useful, and consistent with desires of parents in that community.
3. Parents and teachers should be part of the team in planning reporting procedures.
4. Simplicity in the format of a report card and ease in understanding are important points in public relations. Written appraisals of pupil progress should conform in these respects.
5. Report cards are at best a mechanical means of reporting. When marks vary considerably below average, personal contact with parents is indispensable.
6. Appraisal of pupils should be truthful. The profession does itself a disservice by not revealing what the parents want to know.
7. Ability, effort, and achievement are the three important factors when reporting pupil progress in subject matter. Communicating information regarding a pupil's ability seems best to be done in a conference.

8. Guide lines for reporting are necessary in order to minimize the subjectivity present in appraising pupil progress.
9. Slow learners, identified through daily observation and testing, have little to gain from a competitive marking system. These pupils should be evaluated in parent-teacher conferences. The teacher should be especially zealous in acquainting the parents with the facts. Utmost tact is needed, but not at the expense of the truth.
10. Social and work habits are an important part of pupil appraisal. Work habits, especially are closely related to pupil achievement.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of parents' expressed interest in non-competitive as well as competitive appraisal, the writer recommends that teachers utilize parent-teacher conferences and the comment section on the card for supplemental information to the parent.

A "Parents' Guide to Pupil Appraisal Practices in Stockton" is sorely needed. In this handbook in non-technical language, guide lines for marking, a discussion of pupil abilities, information regarding the testing program,

and information concerning parent-teacher conferences could be set forth.

A permanent committee on reporting to parents is needed. This committee should:

1. Coordinate reporting procedures of various segments of the school system.
2. Investigate methods and plans for parent-teacher conferences.
3. Plan for periodic evaluation of report cards.
4. Attend to subsequent revisions in the card.
5. Work closely with public relations committee in matters affecting reporting of pupil progress.

In the light of this progress report of the changes made in report cards and reporting procedures in the Stockton Unified School District, it is hoped that a better report card and reporting system will always be evolving, and that the last chapter of all future progress reports will always be a tentative one, but never a final one.

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APPENDIX A.

LETTER ACCOMPANYING NEW REPORT CARDS

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Office of the Superintendent

October 28, 1955

Dear Parent:

It is a generally accepted fact that a child's success in school is largely dependent upon common understandings and friendly working relations between his parents and his teacher. It is our belief that a formal written report can be helpful in building understanding by acquainting parents with their child's progress. Such a report if simple, direct and understandable can assist parents by revealing the points of strength and weakness in their child's school accomplishment. From one reporting period to the next it may measure the child's growth in knowledge and skill and afford some indication of his attitudes and working relations with his classmates and his teacher.

No report card can provide a complete basis for the kind of understanding which should exist between the teacher and the parent. From time to time, whether on a scheduled basis, or informally as the need arises, face to face conferences between teachers and parents should occur. Such conferences are needed to supply the detailed information required for common understandings and to develop the friendly personal relationships essential to the successful discharge of this shared responsibility.

This year we are using a new type of report card which was developed by our teachers and administrative representatives in cooperation with parents. The purpose of this card is to provide certain specific information concerning your child's progress. For the pupils in grades 1 - 3, a check mark will indicate whether your child is making rapid, normal, or slow progress in each subject. In grades 4th through 6th, letter grades will be used to report "superior", "above average", "average", or "below average" progress, and to note the apparent effort which your child is making in his school work.

We believe that you will wish to be kept accurately informed of your child's school progress. We trust that the new form of report will prove helpful in this process. However, it is experimental and we cordially invite your comments indicating either suggested improvements in the report form or your approval of the existing form.

Sincerely yours,

*Nolan D. Pulliam*  
Superintendent of Schools

NDP:in



APPENDIX B.

QUESTIONS AND MINOR CHANGES IN GUIDE LINES

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA  
March 1, 1956

Please clip to Definitions  
of Guiding Principles in  
Reporting to Parents

QUESTIONS RAISED BY PRINCIPALS ON REPORTING TO PARENTS  
February 14, 21, 1956

- \* Recommendations of Reporting to Parents Committee for action by Principals' Council.

- I. Is it possible to receive A's and B's with present standards without introducing work of the next grade?

Yes, it is certainly possible. The standards for each mark differ in quality and quantity from those of a C grade. The standardized test requirements in reading do not mean that the developmental work of the next grade must be introduced. Rather, children who do the kind of work needed for A or B will normally test within the categories stated.

The Principals' Council recommends that the Reporting Committee consider at this time the removal of two academic achievement qualifications in reading in the intermediate grades because of the difficulty in getting test scores which are current.

Statement now in the Guidelines:

A - Minimum Standards

4. Measures two or more years above grade level on reading achievement tests.

B - Minimum Standards

4. Measures one or more years above grade level on reading achievement tests.

- \* The Report Card Committee recommends that Item 4 above, under Minimum Standards for A and B, be changed to read:

A - Minimum Standards

4. Receives valid achievement scores well above grade level.

B - Minimum Standards

4. Receives valid achievement scores above grade level.

- \* The committee further recommends that the section on Definition of Letter Grades for the Intermediate Card include the following:

Children working in basic books below grade level should not be given A's or B's.

2. Do we use plus and minus on this card?

The instructions state that plus and minus are not to be used with the elementary card.

3. Who is the child of low ability? How do we mark him in intermediate grades?

The child of low ability is one who is approximately between 75 and 85 IQ. He may be marked as follows regardless of grade achievement:

- (a) A grade of "C" when he works hard.
- (b) A grade of "D" when he does not work hard.

A comment requesting a conference is to appear on the card of the child of low ability at least once during each school year. The purpose of this conference is to alert the parent to the fact that the child will be achieving below grade level regardless of the amount of effort expended.

The Principals' Council recommends that a table showing relationships between intelligence quotients, chronological ages, mental ages and suggested grade placement be developed to aid in showing the achievement potential of children of low ability. This table has been given to principals as of February 21, 1956.

4. Does the Reporting to Parents Guide mean the same standard in all schools?

Yes, the standards must mean the same in all schools. In some areas of the District more C's and D's will appear; in others more A's and B's.

The importance of these standards is noted particularly with transfers. If good judgment in combination with the Guidelines is used, a teacher receiving a transfer should rarely have to down-grade on her next report.

The Guide has been developed at the request of principals and teachers for more specific help in marking. As stated, it includes guidelines to help maintain conformity within the District. Teacher judgment will always be the most important element in determining the number of factors making up a grade. Again, A's or B's or "rapid progress" are not given when a child is obviously below grade-level achievement.

5. Does this Guide change the promotion policy stated in the Handbook?

The Principals' Council recommends that a committee be appointed to examine the promotional policy in the Handbook for Teachers. It was pointed out that the first statement therein may mislead the teacher to feel that non-promotions do not exist, when the real intent was to note that semi-annual promotions no longer exist in Stockton.

The Principals' Council recommends that the Reporting Committee consider the feasibility of one statement in the reporting guidelines which ties closely to the promotional policy:

Statement now in the Guidelines:

Reading - First Grade

Slow Progress - Mastery of pre-primers (with less than this mastery promotion would be doubtful).

- \* The Report Card Committee recommends that the statement be re-stated as follows:

Reading - First Grade

Slow Progress - Mastery of pre-primers.

6. Do the expectancies for second and third-grade reading mean the same as minimum standards in the fourth grade?

No expectancies have greater flexibility than minimum standards.

The Principals' Council recommends that the committee re-state progress at second and third grade to relate more closely to the fourth grade C grade.

Statement now in the Guidelines:

Reading - Second Grade

Slow Progress - Below the second-grade basic program.

Reading - Third Grade

Normal Progress - Completion of the third-grade basic program.

Slow Progress - Below the completion of the third-grade basic program.

- \* The Report Card Committee recommends that a change be authorized at this time to read:

Reading - Second Grade

Slow Progress - Below the first half of the second-grade basic program.

Reading - Third Grade

Normal Progress - Mastery of the first third-grade reader and several supplementary books.

Slow Progress - Below the first half of the third-grade basic program.

7. How can an "A" in "little effort" be justified?

This grade will be given only on rare occasions. When it is given, a parent conference should accompany the marking. It should never be given in terms of a child's finishing his normal work and having nothing further to do, for it is the teacher's responsibility to challenge the child through enrichment. The grade can be given, however, under the following conditions:

1. The child completes the minimum requirements for "A" but exercises little effort to work up to potential without persistent reminders from the teacher. Through a scheduled conference the parents should be alerted to their responsibility in challenging their child to exceed minimum requirements.

2. The child completes the maximum requirements for "A" with great facility. Through a scheduled conference the parents should be alerted to their responsibility for providing a maximum amount of enrichment outside of school.

8. How can parents be better informed about the marking system?

- \* The Report Card Committee recommends that the public relations office prepare a brochure on reporting for parents for fall distribution. The brochure would include the District philosophy of reporting and information about how primary and intermediate cards are marked.

Approved: Nolan D. Pulliam  
Superintendent of Schools

APPENDIX C.

GUIDE LINES FOR REPORTING TO PARENTS



DEFINITIONS, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND SUGGESTIONS

TO BE USED BY A SCHOOL'S STAFF

IN REPORTING TO PARENTS - KINDERGARTEN - 6

Nolan D. Pulliam, Superintendent of Schools  
Donald R. Sheldon, Associate Superintendent

Curriculum Bulletin #77  
Stockton Unified School District  
Stockton, California  
June 1956



## FOREWORD

Although any report to parents rightfully carries with it the subjective interpretation of the teacher, it is made meaningful when guided by system-wide standards for pupil performance. Such standards serve as a basis for both written reports and parent conferences.

The guidelines included in this bulletin aid the teacher in noting the expectancies and minimum standards for all subject areas. In the more academic areas of the curriculum the expectancies and minimum standards are listed in terms of comparative achievement. A three-point scale is used in primary grades; a four-point scale is used in intermediate grades. In the other areas of the curriculum each child is graded in terms of participation. A three-point check scale is used in primary grades; a four-point scale is used in intermediate grades.

The Stockton Unified School District is indebted to the Elementary Report Card Committee for preparing the 1955-56 report cards used in Stockton elementary schools for the first time; for evaluating reactions to the reporting plan made by parents, teachers, administrators, and supervisors; and for revising the report cards and guidelines for the year 1956-57. The following members served on the committee:

Mrs. Barbara Anthony  
Mr. Charles Clark  
Mr. Virgil Estes  
Mr. David Smith

Mr. Roger Walton  
Mr. Henry Schiffman, Chairman  
Mr. William F. McClintock, Consultant

No one type of report card can adequately serve as the sole means for reporting to parents. As an additional aid the elementary schools of the District are moving toward a uniform policy of one group and one individually scheduled conference each year. In 1956-57 this policy includes grades kindergarten to three.

The suggestions for holding parent-teacher conferences included in this bulletin were prepared by a committee during the 1955-56 school year. The School District is indebted to the following members for their work:


Mr. Lorne Patterson  
Mr. Richard Prescott

Mr. Frank Nash, Chairman  
Mr. William F. McClintock, Consultant

The suggestions for kindergarten reporting were developed by a curriculum committee of all kindergarten teachers over a period of several years. The Stockton Unified School District is indebted to these teachers and to Mrs. Grace Johnson, Consultant.

William F. McClintock  
Coordinator of Elementary Education

Approved:

  
Donald R. Sheldon  
Associate Superintendent



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SECTION I  
PARENT REPORTING AT THE  
KINDERGARTEN LEVEL



Parent reporting at the kindergarten level includes one group conference, one individually scheduled conference, and one formal written report at the end of the school year.

#### FORMS USED IN REPORTING

District forms and bulletins prepared to aid the kindergarten teacher in her reporting plan include the following:

1. Kindergarten Days - English and Spanish Editions  
This is a parent information bulletin given out at the spring enrollment during the week of May 1. It should also be available in the fall for the parents who did not enroll their children earlier.
2. K-Form I - This form is used optionally by the teacher as an anecdotal record of individual progress. It includes sections on (a) home environment and (b) miscellaneous factors (e.g., work habits, skills, behavior, health, etc.) In addition the form includes a more extended list of items for checking, differentiated into the following areas:

Work Habits  
Emotional and Mental  
Social  
Physical

3. K-Form II - This form is for the use of a parent observing in the classroom. It is to point up her observations and to act as an aid and supplement for parent conferencing.
4. K-Form III - This form is for reporting in writing to the home. It is to be filled out and given to each child at the end of the school year or at such time that he may transfer during the school year.

#### TACTFUL PHRASES FOR REPORTING

Written and verbal comments should always be constructive so that cooperation between school and home can be further stimulated.

The following are suggested as tactful phrases which can aid the teacher in being positive as well as objective in her reporting program.



Suggested Tactful Phrases

<p>Seldom stands up for his own rights.</p>	<p><u>Self Control</u></p> <p>Is trustworthy and may be left alone if necessary.</p> <p>Accepts suggestions and criticisms pleasantly.</p> <p>Shows good behavior in school.</p> <p>Waits his turn.</p> <p>Is an attentive listener.</p>	<p>Frequently resists suggestions.</p> <p>Tends to promote quarrels.</p> <p>Must have his own way more often than not.</p> <p>Has little respect for the rights of others.</p> <p>Talks out of turn frequently.</p> <p>Sometimes pouts or sulks.</p>
<p>Has little self-confidence.</p> <p>Cries with little cause.</p> <p>May be a day-dreamer.</p> <p>Appears to be unhappy.</p>	<p><u>Emotional Adjustment</u></p> <p>Seems happy.</p> <p>Is well adjusted.</p> <p>Has confidence in himself.</p>	<p>Gives way to anger easily.</p> <p>Is easily excited.</p>
<p>Shows inability to care for personal needs.</p> <p>Often needs to be urged to work.</p>	<p><u>Responsibility</u></p> <p>Can and does care for his personal needs.</p> <p>Has good work habits.</p> <p>Has sense of responsibility.</p>	<p>Goes from one activity to another. Seldom completes work begun.</p> <p>Often neglects or refuses to do his part.</p>
<p>Is very shy.</p> <p>Participates very little in activities.</p> <p>Has difficulty in making friends.</p> <p>Plays alone.</p> <p>Too afraid to try.</p>	<p><u>Social Relationships</u></p> <p>Mixes well with the group.</p> <p>Is popular with the group.</p> <p>Gives and takes well when working or playing with others.</p> <p>Plays fair.</p>	<p>Bossy - generally wants to be the leader.</p> <p>Sometimes resented by the group.</p> <p>Likes to show off.</p> <p>Has difficulty in keeping his hands to himself.</p>



## Suggested Tactful Phrases

<u>Initiative</u>		
Seldom takes the lead.	Keeps busy.	Often wastes time.
Must always be shown or told what to do.	Has constructive ideas and uses them.	Frequently tries to lead others into trouble.
Is inclined to copy.	Plans well.	
	Makes good choices.	
<u>Effort</u>		
Seldom tries.	Consistently does his best.	Appears to make a big effort but does little effective work.
Gives up easily.	Makes an effort to complete work.	
	Ready and willing to try any task given.	
<u>Courtesy</u>		
May not understand proper conduct.	Is polite and friendly.	Often does unkind acts deliberately.
Too shy to be friendly.	Is considerate of others and obeys rules.	Is aware of proper conduct but rarely follows it.
	Does kind things.	
<u>Citizenship</u>		
Too willing to tell on others the things that are not important.	Observes rules.	Frequently disobeys rules of the group.
	Keeps safety rules.	
	Shows concern for welfare of others.	Follows rules only when it pleases him.
<u>Speech</u>		
Is afraid to speak out.	Talks clearly and distinctly.	Speaks rapidly and excitedly.
Rambles in speech.	Expresses his thoughts well.	Enjoys hearing himself talk.
Stammers.		
Uses baby talk.		
Needs help in learning English.		

Additional suggestions may be found in the Observation Guide for Parents, K-Form II.



SECTION II

DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES

FOR MARKING THE REPORT CARD

GRADES 1-3



## DEFINITIONS FOR CHECKS IN READING, LANGUAGE, HANDWRITING, NUMBERS, AND SPELLING

- Shows Rapid Progress - above the average expected for the grade level
- Shows Normal Progress - within the average expected for the grade level
- Shows Slow Progress - below the average expected for the grade level

No letter grades are used in grades one through three in these five categories. Checks are used. The teacher may make the best use of the guidelines in this bulletin after thinking both of the yearly expectancies listed and the progress of the child at the particular reporting period.

## DEFINITIONS FOR CHECKS IN SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, ART, MUSIC, HEALTH, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

These areas are much more intangible to check than the previous section. Therefore they have been columned by an "interest" factor. Teacher judgment will determine the distinction between the "shows little interest" column and the "is interested" column. The column "is interested and contributes" is much more flexible than the "shows rapid progress" column and should allow for greater numbers of children to be checked there.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. The same standards for achievement exist for all schools. In some areas of the District more checks in the "slow progress" column will appear; in others more "rapid progress." The importance of these standards is noted particularly with transfers. If good judgment in combination with the guidelines is used, a teacher receiving a transfer should rarely have to down-grade on her next report.
2. Work habits and social habits are checked "excellent", "satisfactory", and "poor". When "poor" is checked, the parent is expected to take the initiative in seeking a conference with the teacher.
3. The phrase "Improvement is noted in \_\_\_\_\_" is placed on the card primarily to aid the teacher in showing that although the next highest grade has not been achieved improvement has been noted. This phrase serves as a positive incentive for child and parent. Additional comments should be written about no more than two subject areas in any one report. All comments should be written in a courteous manner.
4. If a child has been in attendance for one month preceding any regular reporting period, he should be given complete markings on the report card.



5. When a student may need to be adjusted at the end of the year, his report card should carry a number of checks in the "slow progress" column in the first two reporting periods. The parent should sign a notification of a possibility of adjustment no later than May 1. This is preferably done in a conference but may be requested by registered mail as a last resort.
6. Children working in basic books below grade level should not be given "rapid progress".
7. A student of low ability will rarely be given checks in the "rapid progress" column. He may, however, receive checks in the "is interested and contributes" column. Conferences with parents of children with low ability should be held at least once during each school year. If a child is qualified for a special class, every effort should be made to place him there as early as possible in his school career.

#### GUIDELINES FOR MARKING

##### READING

#### First Grade                      Expectancies at the end of the school year.

- Rapid Progress---Mastery of first grade basic program and several supplementary books.  
 Normal Progress--Mastery of basic primer and several supplementary books.  
 Slow Progress----Mastery of pre-primers.

#### Second Grade                      Expectancies at the end of the school year.

- Rapid Progress---Mastery of the second grade basic program and several supplementary books.  
 Normal Progress--Mastery of the first second-grade reader and several supplementary books.  
 Slow Progress----Below the first half of the second grade basic program.

#### Third Grade                      Expectancies at the end of the school year.

- Rapid Progress---Mastery of the third grade basic program, several supplementary books and facility in other independent reading.  
 Normal Progress--Mastery of the first third-grade reader and several supplementary books.  
 Slow Progress----Below the first half of the third grade basic program.

##### LANGUAGE

Because language is so inclusive a subject, it is difficult in a brief space to set up grade expectancies. Language includes speaking, listening, and the expression of ideas in writing and aims toward the development of word power and sensitivity, the establishment of correct form in speech patterns and in social usage, the development of appreciation through literature and dramatization--in short, the improvement of all phases of communication. Hence these guidelines point out only a few of the factors of evaluation and the judgment of the teacher remains of primary importance.



## First Grade

### Expectancies at first, second, and third reports.

Rapid Progress ) Category placement to be determined by teacher judgment  
Normal Progress ) on the basis of the child's ability to listen and to  
Slow Progress ) speak. The range of listening goes from little conscious listening through passive listening and into genuine participation. Rapid progress would be the last. Speaking goes from little sharing of ideas, through ability to talk with a few chosen children, ability to share an experience with the larger group, to the rapid progress abilities of planning, discussing, explaining and evaluating. There can be no specific set goals at this point. The important thing is progress.

## Second Grade

### Expectancies at first and second reports.

Rapid Progress ) The teacher's judgment must still determine progress  
Normal Progress ) placement in one of the three categories.  
Slow Progress )

### Expectancies at the end of the school year.

Rapid Progress----Ability to participate in planning or discussion, listening to contributions of others, and offering relevant suggestions. Ability to express ideas in writing, using simple short sentences, capital letters, periods, and question marks (with help from teacher in spelling hard words). Some ability to proofread work.

Normal Progress----Ability to participate in planning or discussion with teacher's guiding comments or questions. Ability to write stories or connected sentences after class discussion, using capitals, periods, and question marks (help from teacher in spelling hard words).

Slow Progress-----Inability to reach these goals in listening, speaking, and writing.

## Third Grade

### Expectancies at the end of the school year.

Rapid Progress----Ability to participate actively in group discussion and show leadership in initiating or selecting appropriate ideas, speak clearly and concisely and practice social courtesies in speaking and listening. Can write stories, letters, and paragraphs interestingly and correctly, using a variety of sentence forms and a good choice of words. Can use the tools of expression, capitals, punctuation, and page arrangement suitable to third grade. Proofreads his own work.

Normal Progress----Ability to participate but lacking initiative and leadership qualities most of the time. Can practice courtesies in speaking and listening. Can write sentences, paragraphs, stories, and letters correctly, using proper form for third grade. Proofreads with some direction.

Slow Progress-----Below these expectancies.



## HANDWRITING

### First Grade

#### Expectancies at first and second reports.

Rapid Progress ) Category placement to be determined by teacher judgment in relation to the child's readiness as indicated by interest, skill in handling crayons and pencils, and eye-hand coordination.

#### Third report, based on end-of-the year expectancies.

Rapid Progress ) Use standards of quality, page 15, Teacher's Manual in Handwriting, State Series, for placement in one of the three categories.

### Second Grade

#### Expectancies at first and second reports.

Rapid Progress ) Category placement to be determined by teacher judgment in relation to first and second-grade standards and the growth that takes place (page 15, Teacher's Manual, State Series).

#### Expectancies at the end of the school year.

Rapid Progress ) Can use writing satisfactory in size, form, and spacing with proper speed. Check standards as above.

### Third Grade

#### Expectancies at first report.

Rapid Progress ) Category placement to be determined by teacher judgment in relation to child's ability to make the transition into cursive writing.

#### Expectancies at second and third report.

Rapid Progress---- Use page 47, Third Book, State Series, -- lower example.

Normal Progress--- Use top example, page 47. Speed is 40-45 letters per minute.

Slow Progress----- Below these expectancies in speed and quality.

## NUMBERS

The Chart of Sequential Mathematical Learnings\* gives expectancies in terms of normal progress at the end of each grade. Those children checked as rapid progress would be those particularly adept in application; those marked slow progress would be those having difficulty in mastering the new learnings of their trade.

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\*Available through the principal's office.



## SPELLING

### Second Grade

#### Expectancies at first and second report.

Rapid Progress )	Category placement to be determined by teacher judgment.
Normal Progress )	
Slow Progress )	

#### Expectancies at third report.

Rapid Progress-----Mastery of 300 words and independent spelling of words used in written language.

Normal Progress-----Category placement to be determined by teacher judgment.

Slow Progress-----

### Third Grade

#### Expectancies at the end of the school year.

Rapid Progress-----Masters the required spelling lessons, and independently uses those words and such other words as are necessary in written work.

Normal Progress-----Completes the weekly lessons in the speller and is able to use words in written work.

Slow Progress-----Uses the speller with difficulty.



SECTION III  
DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES  
FOR MARKING THE REPORT CARD  
GRADES 4-6



## DEFINITIONS FOR LETTER GRADES

- A - Superior - consistently well above the average expected for the grade level
- B - Above Average - above average expected for the grade level
- C - Average - within the average expected for the grade level
- D - Below Average - consistently well below the average for the grade level

The guidelines presented in this bulletin are to aid the teacher in determining which of the marks listed above should be given a child. The average standards for any grade are set as C, with the other marks deviating above or below C depending on the quality and quantity of work done. The work of the next higher grade needs not be done to qualify a child for an A or B. However, children who do the kind of work required for these marks will normally score higher than average on standardized tests. The teacher's judgment, while a major factor in determining what marks are given, should be in agreement with valid objective data. In cases of variation from the specified standards, grades may be subject to administrative review.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. The same standards for achievement exist for all schools. In some areas of the District more C's and D's will appear; in others more A's and B's. The importance of these standards is noted particularly with transfers. If good judgment in combination with the guidelines is used, a teacher receiving a transfer should rarely have to down-grade on her next report.
2. Letter grades are to be used for all subjects. Plus and minus grades are not used.
3. Work habits and social habits are checked "excellent", "satisfactory", and "poor". When "poor" is checked, the parent is expected to take the initiative in seeking a conference with the teacher.
4. The phrase "Improvement is noted in \_\_\_\_\_" is placed on the card primarily to aid the teacher in showing that although the next highest grade has not been achieved improvement has been noted. This phrase serves as a positive incentive for child and parent. Additional comments should be written about no more than two subject areas in any one report. All comments should be written in a courteous manner.
5. If a child has been in attendance for one month preceding any regular reporting period, he should be given complete markings on the report card.
6. The letter grade is to be placed in the average effort column when, in the teacher's opinion, the child expends an amount of effort which is comparable to the amount spent by a majority of children of this age. The grade is placed in the works hard or little effort column as the child expends more or less than average effort.



7. Whenever a child expends little effort or receives a D, a parent conference should be requested.
8. When a student may need to be adjusted at the end of the year, his report card should carry a number of D's in the first two reporting periods. The parent should sign a notification of a possibility of adjustment no later than May 1. This is preferably done in a conference but may be requested by registered mail as a last resort.
9. A child of low ability is given grades as follows:
  - a. A grade of C when he works hard.
  - b. A grade of D when he does not work hard.

A comment requesting a conference is to appear on the card of the child of low ability at least once during each school year. The purpose of this conference is to alert the parent to the fact that the child will be achieving below grade level regardless of the amount of effort expended. In each elementary school office there is a table showing relationships between intelligence quotients, chronological ages, mental ages, and suggested grade placement. This table can be helpful to the teacher in determining the achievement potential of children of low ability. The scattergram is an additional aid to the teacher in measuring achievement in relation to potential.

10. Children working in basic books below grade level should not be given A's or B's.
11. An A in the little effort column will be given only on rare occasions. When it is given, a parent conference should accompany the marking. It should never be given in terms of a child's finishing a normal work load and having nothing further to do. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide an enriched program that will challenge the academically superior child to work toward his potential.
  - a. The child completes the minimum requirements for A but exercises little effort to work up to potential without persistent reminders from the teacher. Through a scheduled conference the parent should be alerted to his responsibility in challenging his child to exceed minimum requirements.
  - b. The child completes the maximum requirements for A with great facility. Through a scheduled conference the parent should be alerted to his responsibility for providing additional enrichment outside of school.



## GUIDELINES FOR MARKING

### READING

#### A - Minimum Standards

1. Masters the basic reader.
2. Correctly completes workbook lessons.
3. Completes several supplementary readers at a level higher than the basic reader. (This may follow the first reporting period.)
4. Measures two or more years above grade level on reading achievement tests.
5. Shows facility in locating, selecting, and interpreting reading material in content fields.
6. Reads widely and freely for enjoyment.

#### B - Minimum Standards

1. Masters the basic reader.
2. Correctly completes workbook lessons.
3. Completes several supplementary readers at a level at least as high as the basic reader. (This may follow the first reporting period.)
4. Measures one or more years above grade level on reading achievement tests.
5. Shows facility in utilizing reading skills in content fields.
6. Enjoys reading.

#### C - Minimum Standards

1. Performs satisfactorily with basic reader.
2. Completes workbook lessons with satisfactory level of correctness.
3. Completes several supplementary readers at a level below that of the basic. (This may follow the first reporting period.)
4. Measures within a year of grade level on reading achievement tests.
5. Reads in content fields at grade level.
6. Enjoys reading.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

### SPELLING

#### A - Minimum Standards

1. Masters the lessons in the speller for the grade.
2. Spells the words from earlier grades correctly.
3. Uses and spells correctly many words in composition which are above grade level.
4. Completes a program of spelling which is in addition to the lessons in the speller.

#### B - Minimum Standards

1. Masters the lessons in the speller for the grade.
2. Spells the words from earlier grades correctly.
3. Uses and spells correctly the grade level words in written composition when they are appropriate.

#### C - Minimum Standards

1. Completes the lessons in the speller for the grade.
2. Corrects mistakes in daily lessons and learns the words missed in spelling tests.
3. Can use the words in written composition.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.



## HANDWRITING

Consider both speed and quality of writing. Speed standards are given in the Teacher's Manual, New Laurel Handwriting, Page 47. Quality standards are given in the books for each grade or may be measured on a scale such as the Ayres's.

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Reaches standards in speed and quality two or more grades above his own.
2. Uses high quality in written work.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Reaches standards in speed and quality a grade above his own.
2. Uses good quality in written work.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Reaches standards in speed and quality at an acceptable level for the grade.
2. Uses acceptable standards for the grade in written work.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

## LANGUAGE

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Correctly completes written and oral work which is in addition to assignments given to the class as a whole (not interpreted as homework assignments.)
2. Speaks and writes with a correctness of expression which is appropriate for the occasion.
3. Practices the amenities of listening and speaking which are necessary for friendly conversations and discussions.
4. Speaks and writes in a manner which conveys ideas in an accurate and concise way.
5. Writes in such way as to show originality of expression and thought.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Correctly completes written and oral assignments which are given to the entire class.
2. Practices the amenities of listening and speaking which are necessary for friendly conversations and discussions.
3. Speaks and writes in a manner which conveys ideas in an accurate and concise way.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Acceptably completes written and oral assignments which are given to the entire class.
2. Practices the amenities of listening and speaking which are necessary for friendly conversations and discussions.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.



## LIBRARY

The Elementary Library Handbook, pages 15-19, provides the teacher with a list of activities appropriate to fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade children. The degree to which the children of a given grade achieve the appreciation and skills outlined should determine the mark given.

### Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades

#### A - Minimum Standards

1. Evidences high degree of enjoyment and interest in the activities outlined under item b at each grade level.
2. Consistently demonstrates good library behavior as measured by the activities outlined under item c at each grade level.
3. Consistently demonstrates understanding of and use of skills dealing with materials as outlined under item d at each grade level.

#### B - Minimum Standards

1. Usually evidences high degree of enjoyment and interest in the activities outlined under item b at each grade level.
2. Usually demonstrates good library behavior as measured by the activities outlined under item c at each grade level.
3. Usually demonstrates understanding of and use of skills dealing with materials as outlined under item d at each grade level.

#### C - Minimum Standards

1. Enjoys library activities as outlined under item b at each grade level.
2. Demonstrates acceptable library behavior as measured by the activities outlined under item c at each grade level.
3. Uses library skills satisfactorily for his grade level.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.



## ARITHMETIC

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Completes the daily assignment correctly and quickly at grade level.
2. Masters all fundamental processes.
3. Demonstrates knowledge of mathematical concepts through use in practical situations.
4. Does additional challenging assignments within the school day.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Completes the daily assignments correctly.
2. Masters all fundamental processes.
3. Demonstrates knowledge of mathematical concepts.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Completes assignments and corrects mistakes.
2. Shows reasonable command of the fundamental processes with average ability to use them.
3. Shows reasonable understanding of mathematical concepts.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Completes regular assignments with skill and understanding.
2. Understands and uses, independently, reference skills and materials.
3. Works exceptionally well as a group member.
4. Makes worthwhile contributions, through discussions, reports, and materials brought to class.
5. Acquires and applies basic understandings of man and his environment as introduced in the grade.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Completes regular assignments.
2. Understands and uses reference skills and materials.
3. Works well as a group member.
4. Makes worthwhile contributions, through discussions, reports, and materials brought to class.
5. Acquires and applies basic understandings of man and his environment as introduced in the grade.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Completes regular assignment.
2. Demonstrates interest by participation in group work.
3. Uses the necessary reference skills and materials to complete class work.
4. Is beginning to understand man and his environment as introduced in the grade.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

## SCIENCE

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Demonstrates consistent understanding of science generalizations and makes use of these principles in solving science problems.
2. Does research independently.
3. Consistently makes outstanding contributions through individual and class projects.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Usually shows understanding of science generalizations that are developed.
2. Does research independently.
3. Makes contributions through individual and class projects.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Shows evidence of interest in science through participation in class activities.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

## ART

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Shows orderliness, planning, and care of materials.
2. Consistently shows originality in all art expression.
3. Seeks self-expression through art media.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Shows orderliness, planning, and care of materials.
2. Shows originality and individuality in his art expression.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Shows orderliness, planning, and care of materials.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Displays good sportsmanship.
2. Participates enthusiastically.
3. Cooperates at all times.
  - (a) in playing.
  - (b) in physical education discussion groups.
4. Displays good playing skills.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Displays good sportsmanship.
2. Participates enthusiastically.
3. Cooperates at all times.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Displays good sportsmanship.
2. Cooperates at all times.

C - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.



## HEALTH

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Shows superior understanding of basic health facts outlined in Health Instruction Guide for appropriate grade level.
2. Consistently participates in assigned class health activities and projects.
3. Consistently practices good health habits in school.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Shows good understanding of basic health facts outlined in Health Instruction Guide for appropriate grade level.
2. Usually participates in assigned class health activities and projects.
3. Shows improvement in good health practices in school.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Shows satisfactory understanding of basic health facts outlined in Health Instruction Guide for appropriate grade level.
2. Occasionally participates in assigned class health activities and projects.
3. Shows evidence of some improvement in good health practice in school.

## MUSIC (Classroom)

Grades given should take into consideration motivation and musical growth for each child through participation in a variety of planned musical experiences for his level through singing, listening, playing, creating, or moving to music.

### A - Minimum Standards

1. Participates willingly, consistently, and with ability in at least four of the five aspects of music experience.

### B - Minimum Standards

1. Participates willingly and consistently in at least four of the five aspects of music experience.

### C - Minimum Standards

1. Participates in several aspects of experiences.

D - Anything significantly lower than the standards for a C grade.

## MUSIC (Instrumental) Optional

A grade prepared by the instrumental teacher is placed on the report card by the classroom teacher. Any parent comment in this area should be referred to the instrumental teacher for review.



SECTION IV  
SUGGESTIONS FOR CONFERENCE REPORTING  
IN PRIMARY GRADES



## GROUP CONFERENCE

Every primary teacher will hold a group conference by the middle of October. An invitation is issued to all parents of a class. The main purposes of the meeting are to encourage school and home cooperation and to orient the parent to specific grade level plans and procedures. At the meeting these items would generally be covered:

An overview of the class program for the year.

Growth and development patterns of the age group.

Class procedures for democratic control and discipline.

Plan for meeting the needs of the individual at school.

Plan for meeting the needs of the group at school.

Suggestions for guiding the child's interest and efforts at home.

Procedures for reporting to the parents through the report card and individual conference.

It is the responsibility of each building principal to determine how this conference program is to be planned throughout his primary grades.

## SUGGESTED PREPARATION FOR INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE

The teacher has two major purposes to achieve in the conference. First, she must share the information concerning school progress of each child in a manner which is easily and objectively understood by the parent. Second, she must learn more about the child by encouraging the parent to discuss the child's out-of-school problems and activities.

A conference limited to thirty minutes cannot hope to complete two-way communication in all areas. It plays a valuable face-to-face introductory role, however, which in many cases clears up misunderstandings which might otherwise exist. In other cases additional conferences are necessary to achieve the two purposes adequately.

The following are important for teacher preparation:

Understand the school and district policies, i.e., homework, reporting, promotion, grade level expectancies, etc.

Review growth characteristics of the age group.

Utilize the child's anecdotal records.



Have the report card handy as one of the bases for discussion. Though it is not compulsory that the card be made in advance, it is to be filled out and sent at the reporting period immediately following the conference.

Prepare a folder of the child's work illustrating the type of performance noted at any previous reporting period or to be noted at the next period.

Be alert to answer typical questions of parents --

When will my child learn to read well?

Is phonics part of the reading program?

When will arithmetic begin?

What are social studies?

Why print instead of write the child's name?

Why use only the one capital letter in writing the child's name?

Can my child be changed from one group to another?

Should I teach my child the alphabet?

When does my child get a book in spelling?

What is the promotion policy of the District?  
(See Handbook for Teachers)

What homework can I have to bring my child up to grade?  
(See Elementary Homework Policy, May 1955)

What is the I.Q. of my child? (See Page 21)

Review techniques for being a good listener. The parent's story is important.

#### GUIDES FOR DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT MATTER

The teacher should use the following to illustrate and amplify the subject-matter areas she wishes to discuss:

##### Reading

Shows interest in reading.  
Learns and uses new words.  
Understands what he reads.  
Reads well aloud.  
Completes independent reading activities.  
Applies techniques in other subject areas.



### Language

Takes part in class discussions and conversation.  
Tells experiences interestingly.  
Speaks clearly and distinctly.  
Is able to listen.  
Applies techniques in independent group writing.

### Writing

Makes letters correctly.  
Writes legibly and neatly.

### Numbers

Has clear number concepts.  
Knows and uses number facts for the grade.  
Uses numbers to solve problems.

### Spelling

Is learning names and sounds of letters.  
Is learning to spell new words.  
Uses words in sentences and stories correctly.

### Social Studies

Takes part in class planning.  
Contributes useful information and materials.  
Helps solve individual and group problems.  
Is increasing understanding of world around him.

### Science

Shows interest in the world around him.  
Brings materials to the classroom.  
Takes care of the science area.

### Art

Uses various art materials with skill.  
Expresses his ideas creatively.

### Music

Takes part in group singing.  
Responds to rhythm.  
Listens and appreciates good music.  
Creates simple songs.

### Physical Education

Is friendly and fair in games.  
Shows progress in learning skills.  
Plays and enjoys games at school.  
Participates in group activity.



## MECHANICAL DETAILS FOR CONFERENCING

### The Schedule

1. Plan your conferences for periods of thirty minutes each. At least ten minutes should be reserved between them.
2. Schedule your conferences within the two-week period preceding the first three reporting periods. The District provides minimum days during the week immediately preceding each of the reporting periods. The staggered reading schedule is maintained within this period by dismissing the early group at 1:40 p.m. and the late group at 2:40 p.m.
3. Plan to confer with some parents at times other than after school. Working schedules of these parents may conflict with the date made available by the District.

### The Appointments

Each parent should receive a personal request by letter or phone, either specifying a certain time for conference or inviting a choice of times. If a letter is sent, enough time should be allowed for its return or for a second request to be made.

It is very important to receive a note back from the parent that she is coming. A tear-off sheet to be returned to the school is of help here. A written reminder from the teacher is also valuable.

### The Physical Set-Up

Be relaxed and pleasant so that this mood may be reflected by the parent.

Arrange the meeting place attractively with a minimum of clutter.

Have the room well lighted and adequately ventilated.

Avoid interruptions by locking the door or placing a sign on the outside.

Provide materials for the young child or baby who may accompany the parent.

Place the parent near you at the table rather than opposite your desk chair.

Have all materials you may wish to use readily available.

## PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING THE INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE

The teacher holds the key to a successful parent-teacher conference. Though some teachers naturally meet people with more difficulty than others, no one needs feel that a successful conference hinges solely on this point. Careful planning, a relaxed beginning, an objective and pleasant discussion, and an unhurried conclusion about how teacher and parent may go forward together, all will insure a successful conference.

### Starting the Conference

Give a friendly greeting to relieve the tension most parents feel at the beginning.

Establish rapport by first asking about such generalities as --

- Number of children in the family.
- Location of the home in relation to the school.
- Problems of getting the child to school.
- Etc.



Give the parent time to talk about any of the above. (Be a good listener. A moment of silence does not mean that the conference is going poorly. It takes a little time for most people to think about what they would really like to say, especially to a teacher.)

Let the parent know what you would like to accomplish during the conference time limits.

Inform the parent that the conference discussion will be kept confidential.

### Discussing the Child's School Work

Use the report card framework as a guide. Verify your opinion with data from the classroom, i.e., workbook, pictures, anecdotal records, etc.

Remember that professional ethics keeps you from discussing any other child, family, teacher, school, or district policy in negative terms.

Leave exact I.Q.'s out of the conversation. Speak in terms of fast, normal, and slow ability. If the parent seeks more specific information, set up a three-way conference with the principal.

Be a good listener so as to understand the parent and the child better.

If the parent seems worried, ask if you can help. Then be silent long enough for her to express her worry. It takes time.

Start with the subject area in which the child is successful.

Balance areas of need with areas of strength.

Keep the strengths and limitations of the child always in front of you.

Tell the truth with tact. An unkind gesture often stops communication and the conference becomes only one way -- your way.

Ask yourself how you would feel if you were the parent of the child. It is often difficult for the parent to be objective and unemotional about her child.

Show no surprise at rationalizations given by the parent. Help point out additional reasons, if and when the parent will accept them.

Think through several ways in which an unfavorable condition could be improved before you discuss it.

Wait for parental acceptance of a problem before proposing action.

Help the parent suggest a plan of action when needed. It may be your own plan re-stated by the parent as her own. Let her take credit for it.

Point out growth no matter how little. Because of anxiety the parent often overlooks the small gains which are being achieved by the child.



### Concluding the Conference

If the parent brings up a last-minute discussion topic, feel free to limit the discussion. This illustration might provide an answer:

"Let's talk briefly about that for our last three minutes. If we do not have time to make a complete plan, let's meet again after this series of conferences is over. I'll contact you."

Then close the discussion promptly within the three minutes.

Close the conference pleasantly by summarizing the discussion reviewing any suggested plan of action, indicating your mutual interest in the child, and thanking the parent for her contribution.

### FOLLOW-UP OF THE CONFERENCE

Plan a time for making a record of the conference. It is helpful if notes can be written immediately after the interview. You will want to file your notes for future reference. The date of the conference is to be placed on the report card and signed by the teacher in advance of the next reporting period.

Let each child individually learn how much you enjoyed meeting his parent. He needs to know that the two of you like each other.

In some cases the parents should be contacted again in a week or two. A note or telephone call from you will be an indication of your continued concern for the problems discussed and will serve as a reminder to the parents of plans made for the child. This is especially important if you have indicated you will keep the parent informed.

If an agreed-upon plan is not followed by the parent, do not feel that part of the conference has been necessarily unsuccessful. It sometimes takes many patient reminders and face-to-face meetings before parental anxieties are overcome. The father may not agree with the plan, the mother may not have accurately interpreted her role, or the family situation may be totally unchangeable at the moment. Your objective analysis on the record card will remind you and others to meet the parent again at a later date and to start anew.

In most cases the rewards of the conference are immediately apparent. Since the child now feels that parent and teacher have a common feeling for him, his attitude and classwork should continue to improve. Such behavior is an all-important clue for which you should watch.



SAMPLE LETTERS OF INVITATION

Dear Parents:

Parent-teacher conferences are being held this year as a regular part of the reporting program. It is very important that you as a parent or guardian come to the conference at the scheduled time. In the thirty-minute conference you will go over your child's work with the teacher. Your questions will be welcomed at that time. In this way both school and home can work together better for the welfare of your child.

Nolan D. Pulliam  
Superintendent of Schools

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Your conference time is \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Please cut off the form below and return it in an envelope to the teacher so that she may know when you will come.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

-----  
Please  
Check

I will be able to come for my parent-teacher conference  
on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock.

I cannot come for my parent-teacher conference on \_\_\_\_\_  
at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock. I could come on any of the following days of  
the week: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

or

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

The following conference times are available. Please choose the one you wish, returning the lower section with your child.

\_\_\_\_\_ date and time

\_\_\_\_\_ date and time

\_\_\_\_\_ date and time

Please cut off the form below and return it in an envelope to the teacher so that she may know when you will come.

-----  
I will be able to come for my parent-teacher conference on  
\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian



APPENDIX D.

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Nolan D. Pulliam, Superintendent of Schools  
From: Principals' Council Committee on Report Cards --  
Henry Schiffman, Chairman  
Subject: Present Responsibility of Principals' Council Committee on Report Cards

The Principals' Council Committee on Report Cards appointed March 22, 1955, met recently to discuss unsolved problems contained in Mr. McClintock's report to the Board of Education on January 22, 1957.

Only one of the problems relates specifically to the report card alone. Some relate both to the card and to conferencing procedures; others relate only to conferencing. It is felt that these unsolved problems are of sufficient importance to warrant study by a committee which will have a broader responsibility than that given to the present committee.

After due deliberation, the Committee respectfully submits the following recommendations to you:

1. The present Principals' Council Committee on Report Cards and Conferencing be discharged with thanks. Membership on the present Report Card Committee includes the following:  
Charles Clark, Virgil Estes, David Smith, Roger Walton, Barbara Anthony, Henry Schiffman, Chairman; William McClintock, Consultant. Membership on the present Conferencing Committee includes: Richard Prescott, Lorne Patterson, Frank Nash, Chairman; William McClintock, Consultant.
2. A new committee on reporting to parents' procedure be appointed at the elementary level. Either one or two members of the existing committees should be part of the new committee. The following members are suggested: Henry Schiffman, Charles Clark, Barbara Anthony, Jack Hyman, Richard Prescott, Chairman; William McClintock, Consultant.
3. The new committee be charged with examination of the unsolved problems contained in Mr. McClintock's report, plus an analysis of the existing subject matter guidelines to reporting at the elementary level.
4. The secondary schools, through the secondary principals, review and state specifically their reporting procedures, particularly the marking of slow learners and near gifted children, so that greater coordination may be achieved between elementary and secondary schools regarding reporting procedures.

2/18/57



APPENDIX E.  
COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

# Stockton Unified School District

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STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

February 14, 1957

NOLAN D. PULLIAM  
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SECRETARY BOARD  
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ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT

THOS. H. MCCANDLESS  
ASST. SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Henry Schiffman  
Lottie Grunsky School  
Stockton, California

Dear Mr. Schiffman:

You are hereby designated as a member of the Reporting to Parents Committee. The full roster of members appointed to this committee is as follows:

Jack Hyman, Chairman  
Henry Schiffman  
Loren Patterson  
Charles Clark  
Barbara Anthony  
William McClintock, Consultant

This committee will have overall responsibility of dealing with problems relating to the report card and to conferencing procedures, plus an analysis of the existing subject matter guidelines to reporting at the elementary level.

We will assume you have accepted this appointment unless we are otherwise advised. Your committee chairman will notify you of the first meeting.

Sincerely yours,

*Nolan D. Pulliam*

Superintendent of Schools

NDP:in