

1933

Public school publicity

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Thesis

PUBLIC SCHOOL PUBLICITY

Submitted by

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PUBLIC SCHOOL PUBLICITY

INTRODUCTION

The function of public school publicity is to make for better relationships between the public and the schools. It is a two-fold function; to bring about more intelligent co-operation between the school and the home which will result in a better education for the boys and girls; and, because public schools depend upon public attitude for financial support, to guarantee appropriation of adequate funds to carry on education in a satisfactory manner.

We will attempt in this paper to prove, in a measure at least, that a well-informed public is an intelligently co-operative public. If this be true, public school publicity becomes the problem of getting sufficient information before the public in such a way as to build adequate confidence in the public schools. For this reason, the major portion of this writing will deal with ways and means of getting proper information before the public in a form that will be of such interest as to attract attention.

There are two kinds of publicity: that known as campaign publicity, which is spasmodic and is used for

the purpose of getting some special item such as a new school building, a new playground, or the like; and continuous publicity, upon which depends to no small degree the daily success of our educational program. This paper will deal primarily with the latter -- continuous public school publicity.

Little attempt will be made to present new material on the subject. The purpose is rather to gather the essence of what has been done in this field, and to form conclusions based upon the sum total of many sources. We shall endeavor in making this summary to emphasize practical applications founded upon actual experience of authorities on the subject, which may again be used by any who may desire to improve public school relations. That is to say, we intend to recognize only that theory which has actually been put to the test.

Because the subject lends itself so readily to rationalization, many quotations drawn from as wide a field as possible are inserted in an attempt to support the position taken. While at times this procedure may seem repetitious it is intentionally used, in order to strengthen the arguments set forth. General agreement on the part of many recognized authorities, coupled with as much logic as possible,

are virtually the only means of proof available that can be brought to bear upon a subject involving so many factors beyond control. The differences in social, religious, political, and economic standing of various communities directly effect to such an extent the educational needs and the ability to support education that it will be necessary to write in general terms a greater part of the time, but this should in no way seriously diminish the value of the findings.

The author fully realizes that under present existing conditions schools cannot be carried forward successfully without definite and proper contact with the community. Therefore, it is the intention of the writer to compile a handbook of public school publicity hints, which summarizes the best that is to be had at the present time, followed by recommendations in accordance with general agreement among authorities on the subject. It is hoped that bringing so much information together in this way may provide a working basis for the school administrator or publicity agent who would successfully improve public school relations without having to cover such a vast amount of material as is now available.

We shall endeavor to consider the major divisions in the following order:

1. A brief resumé of points set forth by writers on the subject to date.
2. What does the public want to know about its schools?
3. What information is the public getting?
4. Some ways and means of putting before the public the information most desired.

A BRIEF RESUME OF POINTS
SET FORTH BY WRITERS TO DATE

Doubtless, one of the major difficulties that is retarding education in acquiring its proper place as a profession is the lack of uniformity within its own ranks. This may be due to the fact that we are dealing with human nature which is ever changeable and usually manages to react in some different manner when subjected to a given procedure. However, this is not so with public school publicity. As one reads treatise after treatise on the subject he becomes more and more aware that there are neither pros nor cons regarding the major problems. Only in the minute details is there any mere hint at disagreement; yet, each study appears to have been made independently of the rest and, in most cases, in widely separated localities. It is gratifying, therefore, to find one phase of education in which there is such general agreement. Consequently, we can proceed to summarize what has been done in a straightforward manner without being continually hampered by having to present one side of an argument, then another.

The Need

We, as Educators, who have been in direct contact with educational progress for the past decade, or longer, have constantly studied its advancement and believe thoroughly in what is being done. This is not the case with the man on the street; he views schools largely in terms of what they were when he attended and compares that with the increase in the number of dollars he pays in taxes. Is it any wonder that when we, who are constantly in touch with our educational progress, often find ourselves baffled, that the general public is pretty much in the dark, and that there is complaint because of the heavy burden of taxation required to support public education?

"The development of public schools in our cities, especially in the last generation, has far outrun the development of widespread popular understanding of them. Those in charge have been generally too fully absorbed in the immediate problems of the schools themselves to give adequate attention to the information of the public concerning the institution that the public is supporting. Too often, teachers and school officials, through temperament or misconception or both, have been quite indifferent, even strongly opposed to revealing to the public that

knowledge essential to any real understanding. This is not the infamous 'public-be-damed' policy, but rather the 'public-be-shunned' policy. The inevitable result of this policy or attitude on the part of teachers and school officials -- the very people and the only people fully competent to give to the public needed information -- has been much lack of understanding by the people of the public school of today. The public press, the chief avenue of general publicity, has found it easy to present educational innovations in a sensational and unfavorable light to a public whose standards of interpretation have been mainly derived from childhood experiences, frequently under the most primitive rural school conditions. In taking advantage of this easy opportunity the press gives no sure evidence of sensationalism or of insincerity; the press itself is not seldom in need of better understanding as well as the public."¹

And, what is being done to enlighten the public? There may be cases where publicity has been used for purposes of personal aggrandizement to win political favor and public acclaim to the detriment of the school system represented, but this is not effec-

1. Miller, Clyde Raymond and Charles Fred, Publicity and The Public School, p.VI. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

tive public school publicity. It is just such practices as these that point to a definite need for a constructive program that will unify the system, and place it in its proper setting before the community. The essential purpose of publicity is to keep the schools out of politics as much as possible, and not to play up to the party that is most likely to win. A school system should have the undivided support of the community for without solid backing it cannot possibly do its best work. Only by placing complete, unbiased information in the hands of the public can this be accomplished. In order to do this, there are certain obstacles to be overcome.

Moehlman, in his "Public School Relations", informs us that but 4% of the average citizen's time can be devoted to keeping informed upon Economics, Transportation, Utilities, Health, Religion, Sports, National Politics, Recreation, Society, Inventions, Crime, and Schools. When we sub-divide that proportion of the 4% of available time which can be devoted to keeping informed about schools into the following phases: Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Special Schools, Junior High Schools, Senior High Schools, Lunches, Transportation, Baths, Operation and Upkeep of Buildings, New Buildings, Teachers, and Board of

Education, we begin to see what a complex problem we have at hand.¹

According to Farley, "Poffenberger describes two kinds of attention as applied to advertising: 'involuntary attention; where the strength of the stimulus offered by the advertisement determines the reaction; and 'interest or spontaneous attention', where the nature of the reaction is determined by the inherent characteristics of the individual rather than by the form or color or motion, or other qualities of the advertisement itself."²

It is no small task to attract public attention sufficiently to develop proper understanding, but only by doing so can we hope even to maintain the standards already set. Beyond a doubt, we must rely chiefly upon "interest or spontaneous attention" to get our message across, for the reason that education does not readily lend itself to the colorful treatment given advertising in the Sunday papers and popular magazines. There are, however, certain types of education that can be displayed to some extent in

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1. Moehlman, Arthur B., Public School Relations pp.8-12. New York: Rand McNally & Company, 1927
 2. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, p.2. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.355. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

this manner so that form and color have sufficient appeal to attract attention. These will be considered in section four of this paper.

If it is necessary for school administrators to devote a large portion of their time to keeping up with educational progress, it is not to be wondered at that if we wax eloquent we cannot reach the average voter upon whom this educational progress depends. He does not understand educational discussion phrased in professional terms and when confronted with them he is very apt to accuse us of dementia praecox; expressed in his own language, "We are crazy". This approach will never accomplish our aim. We must meet him on his own level and strive to win his confidence by convincing him that he is getting value received for every penny of his investment. It is his attitude which decides whether or not he will support public education as it should be supported, and when we consider the amount of his time that is available for getting this information we can readily see what a tremendous responsibility rests upon effective publicity.

I quote here: "The chief aim of educational publicity is to secure the acceptance by the public of the educational program initiated by the educator,

and the recognition by the public that the planning and execution of this program are within the province of public school education. This acceptance depends not only upon the understanding of the educational program brought about by a lucid exposition of its processes and objectives; but also upon the confidence that is founded upon belief that its ends are being economically and efficiently achieved.

"The presentation of the aims and achievements of public education, in order to secure consent and support for them, is not unlike the presentation of the merits of a commodity to secure its purchase and use by the consumer. 'Selling Education' is not an inapt phrase to describe the process of inducing the patrons of the schools to contribute to the support of an institution which has promised him a product that he has been led to believe will be useful to him."¹

And again: "Educational progress in America rests almost entirely upon the understanding which the American public has of its school system. The democratic nature of our institutions makes this

1. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, p.1. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.355. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

truth axiomatic and places upon those in charge of our public schools responsibilities that are far-reaching."¹

Thus far, we have considered the need for public school publicity chiefly in terms of financial support. It has no lesser value in terms of a better understanding that will make possible a more effective program for the pupils. Without this understanding we cannot hope to secure the co-operation between home and school which is so necessary. Fortunately, this does not entail a wholly different type of publicity, for these two results go hand in hand.

Policies

All writers agree that a school system wins approval to the extent that the public is informed, provided this information is sufficiently favorable to warrant co-operation. This leads us to a discussion of what policies to pursue in disseminating information. Shall we follow the "cover-up" or "best-foot-forward" policy, or the "straight-forward admission of defect" policy? Extended further, the ques-

1. Miller, Clyde R., Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.1. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

tion is so broad in scope that it involves the whole school system and can be answered only when other phases have been cared for. Does a particular school organization actually deserve the support that it is given? Does it deserve more support than it is now receiving? If it does, effective publicity can bring about sympathetic understanding that will furnish the means to carry out the program. It follows, then, that it becomes the first task of any school administrator to see that his house is put in order. Any concern that labors under the strain of mis-management sooner or later will fail. With the school system so managed it is likely to be "sooner". It may take considerable time to get ready to venture upon a constant campaign but it is next to useless to launch such an enterprise until we can place both feet firmly upon sound footing. When we are sure of our ground there is nothing to fear if we follow the straightforward "eyes-to-the-front" procedure. Any other method is fraught with danger. A "cover-up" or "partial-fact" policy cannot long succeed. One can consistently and conscientiously defend the facts against all assailants, but one false move that results in any degree of misplaced confidence may ruin all that has been accomplished over a long period.

The following appeared in one of our local daily

papers:

"Censorship on school news submitted to daily newspapers by either students or teachers has been ordered by the Swansea School Committee and Superintendent of Schools Frank C. Chace has been named censor....."

The ruling, it has been learned from authoritative sources is the aftermath of a recently published news story relative to dissention among football players..... and another story pertaining to a grammar school teacher."¹

Now if this be necessary as a measure to insure that nothing but actual facts get into the hands of the public, well and good; but, if it is used as a "cover-up" or "partial-fact" policy it is dangerous.

The writer does not wish to be misunderstood at this point. In advocating a "straight-forward admission of defect" policy it is intended to apply strictly to the field of education. It would be hazardous and wholly unwise to take this attitude toward undesirable conduct upon the part of pupils or teachers or in matters bordering scandal. Publicity of this nature would do nobody any good and

1. From the Boston Globe, morning issue of December 12, 1932.

oftentimes would produce irreparable harm to the individuals concerned. Matters of this sort should be kept entirely within the circle of those concerned. In schools having student councils or service clubs that handle matters of conduct, the members of such organizations must be made to feel a definite responsibility toward those brought before them for discipline and guard their conversation accordingly when not in session. It must be impressed upon members that this is a matter of good citizenship on their part, and that it is their duty to help their fellow students rather than hinder them. Any form of student government that fails to get this point of view is bound to do more harm than good.

All this is equally true of the whole school organization. The open policy advocated should apply strictly to educational matters and not in cases of personal conduct. Oftentimes it takes considerable judgment to distinguish between the two, but it is always better to be careful than to regret.

✓ Mr. Wriggley recently stated: "There is one thing that I insist upon, and that is that I, and I alone, be the czar of my company's advertising. Everything relating to it must pass over my desk."¹

1. From an editorial published in the Concord Herald issue of February 2, 1932.

What is true in business is equally true of school news; but this attitude should be taken only to insure that nothing but the actual facts be known. If these facts are suppressed simply because they are unfavorable they will eventually get out and will be far more serious if coming to light after having been repressed than if they had been frankly admitted.

"Effective publicity, whatever its object, works by indirection. Palsome praise, either of a brand of soap or of a school system, is always discounted. School publicity must have as its only object the telling of the story of education. If it is a good story, true and interesting, the reader will draw from it those inferences which will win his confidence and enlist his support."¹

In an honest administration, frank admission of defect, particularly if it is due to inadequate equipment, more often than not brings about the curing of that deficiency. When the public is informed by the department that it is aware of its deficiencies, and then proceeds to outline and put into effect a constructive program, confidence can be secured that could not possibly be developed in any

1. Miller, Clyde R., Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.174. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

other manner. The grave danger is that the organization may be caught napping or be found in the position of attempting to mislead the public. If this be the case, and the contention can be to any degree well-founded, trouble is sure to follow. Frankness and honesty can never in the long run be defeated when the program is anywhere within reason. This point will be dealt with more fully in section four of this paper, but this point of view strengthens our stand; that, if we concern ourselves wholly with getting the facts to the public in an interesting way and in terms that can be easily understood, it relieves the pressure always present when discussing matters that often become controversial when handled in any other manner.

Let us consider next the matter of continuous vs. spasmodic publicity. One argument often heard against continuous publicity is, that it becomes monotonous, uninteresting, and, therefore, lacking in appeal. As a matter of fact schools cannot avoid constant publicity. Through pupils, teachers, visitors, parent-teacher associations, the press, etc. information of one sort or another regarding schools is continuously reaching the public. It cannot be

kept from them. Because of this, it becomes the task of publicity to utilize these agencies effectively, and their very existence can be converted into most helpful machinery for the dissemination of information with a constructive end in view. The fact that this situation prevails gives the alert public school man his greatest opportunity. His, is the task of getting this machinery into as nearly perfect running order as possible. Too often are school administrators loath to take advantage of this opening. As has already been quoted: "It is not 'a public-be-damned' policy, but rather 'a public-be-shunned' policy", and this will never do. With the rapid progress that is being made in education today the public will misunderstand, and lack of understanding is bound to be followed by lack of support. Spasmodic publicity can never carry out an effective program. When the many agencies for making contact are taken into account, monotony can easily be relieved. Therefore, the only argument against continuous publicity is defeated.

Further than that, with a satisfactory program of constant publicity in effect there is little or no need for the spasmodic campaign. When the public is sufficiently informed as to the needs that require

publicity drives, the drive becomes unnecessary, for the voter over and over again has proved that he is ready to rise to the occasion whenever he is shown that there is a real need to be met.

The effectiveness of spasmodic publicity is always a matter of grave doubt which is never settled until after the votes have been counted. This type of publicity depends largely upon the heat of enthusiasm to accomplish its purpose and even those who sponsor a campaign usually have their regrets, in one form or another, after it is over. Also, it is generally followed by misgivings on the part of the citizenry at large and oftentimes is accompanied by scepticism which entirely defeats the objective sought. Constant publicity, on the other hand, brings about a stabilized point of view on the part of the taxpayer who feels more sure of himself than because of any campaign. There is far greater probability of satisfaction for everyone concerned when progress is made via the constant publicity method.

To quote again from Miller and Charles: "So the spasmodic campaign must be dropped from consideration as an effective factor in school publicity. Rather, publicity must be so managed that it will result in a constant, constructive, and sympathetic attitude

on the part of the public -- not once a year, but every day in the year. The citizen must feel that the schools of his community are being effectively administered and he must always be in the mood to cooperate. When that happy result has been achieved, the "drive" for support becomes unnecessary. The voter is in possession of all the necessary information as to the needs of the schools.

"This presupposes, of course, honesty and intelligence upon the part of the school administration. It presupposes, too, a complete willingness to state adverse facts and to admit shortcomings.

"Effective publicity, then, to repeat, is not a matter of occasional drives; it aims to promote complete all-year-round support and sympathy between the taxpayer and the school by the use of every legitimate means by which the school can tell its story."¹

"What the schools need and what the public will increasingly demand is continuous and reliable publicity."²

For such, the problem is how to proceed in this new field.

1. Miller, Clyde R., Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, pp.164-5. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

2. Same, p.VIII.

Organization

The general public will not voluntarily come to the schools to secure information. The schools must go to the public. Ideally each school system should have a director of publicity, who, when the system is sufficiently large, should devote full time to the work. The director should be one who is equally conversant with school procedure and publicity. He must know the schools so well that he is able to discuss them intelligently, and, since the newspapers are constantly used and have the broadest appeal, with the exception of the school system itself, should become fully acquainted with newspaper methods. Although newspaper editors are usually glad to write favorably of schools, they cannot do so unless kept amply informed and up to date upon matters pertaining to education. It is safe to say that very few, if any, newspaper men understand fully even the fundamentals of educational procedure of the present day. They, as well as the public at large, think of schools in terms of their own experience and feel quite justified in asking the question, "Why all this additional expense? Why, when we went to school," etc., etc. Nor can we expect them to catch the gleam over night; it takes many weeks of constant contact to build an

intelligent understanding of modern education.

It becomes the task of the publicity director to make sufficient contact with local dailies and weeklies that they may at least know the facts. Inferences drawn from facts, unless they are deliberately distorted, seldom prove to be other than helpful. As will be pointed out later under newspaper publicity, only a very small percentage of editors intend to do us harm. The danger lies rather in the fact that they are usually misinformed. A good publicity director will relieve this handicap.

A director of publicity must possess a considerable amount of tact, be frank at all times, and aim to secure for himself and his organization the confidence they should justly receive. He cannot be too aggressive or those whom he wishes most to reach will become suspicious. It would be unwise for him to continually present to the press news or articles pertaining to his educational organization. Rather, he should assume the role of mediator who will put the press in touch with his system in such a manner that it can quickly get information. He must motivate the interest of the press to seek school news and be able at all times to put reporters directly in touch with the right sources. It would be un-

wise for him to quote either teachers, administrators, or committee members. Instead, he should connect the press with those who wish and have the authority to speak. The director of publicity should write articles for the news only when requested to do so by editors or reporters, and should make sure, in all cases, that the departments concerned have knowledge of what is to appear. It is only fair also, that articles submitted for publication receive the approval of those departments concerned.

Newspaper publicity is only one phase of the director's work. All other types of publicity should come under his supervision. He should at all times be ready, upon short notice, to either speak before groups when called upon, or be able to arrange to have a duly authorized member of the organization do so. In short, all types of publicity should come under his supervision. They are listed under the next sub-heading.

In systems too small to provide a director of publicity, the administrative staff must carry on the work as best it can, recognizing always a proper balance between this and other duties. There is always the advantage here, however, that the community being smaller is easier to reach, which in a measure, offsets the lack of a director of publicity.

Types of Publicity

The avenues to public support and confidence briefly enumerated are:

1. The school system itself through the following sources:

Superintendent
Principals
Teachers
Pupils
Other employees

2. Newspapers
3. Student publications
4. A department of school information
5. The school "House Organ"
6. Bulletins to keep the public informed
7. Superintendent's annual report
8. Public bulletin boards
9. Exhibits
10. Post office or store-window displays
11. Activities (Health Day, Pageants, etc.)
12. Public spirited citizens
13. Pupil's home work assignments
14. Dad's night
15. Special school visiting days
16. Athletics
17. Broadcasting
18. Slides at the theaters
19. Addresses
20. Home visitor
21. Organizations

Parent-Teacher Associations
Clubs - Rotary, Kiwanis, Woman's Clubs, etc.
Civic centers
Chamber of Commerce
Others.....

A discussion of how to effectively utilize these types of publicity will form the fourth part of this thesis.

II

WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC
WANT TO KNOW ABOUT ITS SCHOOLS?

While from time to time more or less information has been reaching the public through the many channels open for publicity, very little consideration has been given to what is of most interest to the citizenry. The following table taken from a study made by Farley, while it covers only the field of newspaper publicity, shows clearly the tendency to disregard readers' interests. This tabulation represents the preference of 5,067 school patrons and the topics are arranged in rank order, those at the head of the list having received the most first choices. The third column shows the number of inches of news space in the local papers that was devoted to the first and second halves of the list and the third column lists the corresponding percentages in the same papers.

Table I¹

Rank According to Interest	Topic	Inches of Space Covered	Per Cent of Total News Space
1.	Pupil progress and achievement		
2.	Methods of instruction		
3.	Health of pupils		
4.	Courses of study	9,675.25	24.6%
5.	Value of education		
6.	Discipline and Behavior		
7.	Teachers		
8.	Attendance		
9.	Buildings and building program		
10.	Business management and finance		
11.	Board of education		
12.	Parent-Teacher association	29,589.75	75.4%
13.	Extra-Curricular activities (Including athletics)		

Thus, we readily see the radical disagreement be-

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1. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, p.53. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.355. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

tween interests of the patrons and news space given to topics of most interest. While this study covered only one locality it will be shown in the next section of this paper that the same condition prevails generally. It may be claimed that this table covers only newspaper publicity, but we must remember that the newspaper deserves serious consideration.

But little reflection is necessary, however, to prove to us that what is true of the news is also true of other types of publicity even if to a lesser degree. What is it the youngsters enthuse over at home? Is it Mathematics or English or French? The answer is, "No!", unless the enthusiasm is denunciatory to the Nth degree. Their real enthusiasm is over the question of whether the game with the time-honored rival will be won or lost. Here again may we point out that the school system is its own best advertising medium. If we could get that same enthusiasm aroused for the academic work that is manifested for athletics the whole problem of publicity would be solved. This perhaps we cannot hope to do, but through good teaching methods and proper contact we can approach it. The taxpayer who feels, because of the attitude of his boy and girl and the evident progress they are making, that the school is doing a good job

is willing to support it and co-operate to the fullest extent. Proper morale must be cultivated upon which to build an effective publicity program. Publicity gained through the enthusiastic support of the student body is second to none. A student body that is solidly behind the faculty and administration can do more to win public support than all the rest of the forces combined including even the newspapers. This we will discuss at greater length in section four.

The following is a rank order list of topics of interest to 39 school board presidents from 30 states taken from the same study by Farley as Table I.

Table II¹

1. Pupil progress and achievement
2. Teachers and school officers
3. Courses of study
4. Business management and finance
5. Health of pupils
6. Methods of instruction
7. Value of education

1. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, p.37. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.355. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

Table II

(Continued)

8. Discipline and behavior of pupils
9. School buildings and building program
10. Board of education and administration
11. Attendance
12. Extra-Curricular activities
(Including athletics)
13. Parent-Teacher association

It is interesting to note that "Business management and finance" receives fourth place in this table because boards of education must concern themselves frequently with this item, yet, it takes tenth place on the list from the public at large. One would suspect, judging from general conversation, that this topic far outweighs in interest when compared to pupil progress. Here it is clearly proved that pupil progress and achievement are by far of most concern, for they take first place on each tabulation. It is evident that Mr. Taxpayer is willing to pay when assured that the children are getting adequate returns.

Although we have a somewhat changed order from these people as against the rank and file, "Extra-

"Curricular activities" and "Parent-Teacher associations" are at the foot of the list in both cases.

Are we taking advantage of the situation? It will be shown in Section III of this thesis, which directly follows, that the bulk of school publicity is not concerning "Pupil Progress and Achievement", "Methods of Instruction", "Health of Pupils", "Teachers", "Courses of Study", and the other items of major interest to school patrons.

III

WHAT INFORMATION IS
THE PUBLIC GETTING?

Giving our attention again to newspaper publicity, we find the editors' point of view set forth by Farley: "Types of School Information Which 101 Weekly and 15 Daily Editors of Minnesota Believe Most Apt to Have General Interest".

Table III¹

Items	Weekly Editors	Daily Editors
Athletics	88	12
School honors	64	10
School board proceedings	57	10
School notes or department	49	2
Parent-Teacher association activities	45	9
Rural schools	31	5
School policy	29	3
Scholarships	25	3
Teachers	16	2

1. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, p.57. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.355. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

And to show that this rating is exceedingly effective in the selection of school news printed, may I present the following chart from the same study.

"Percentages of News Space
Devoted to Various School Activities."

Table IV¹

Topic	Per Cent
Extra-Curricular activities (Including athletics)	47.1
Teachers and school officers	9.2
Parent-Teacher associations	8.2
Pupil progress and achievement	5.6
Board of education and administration	5.2
Course of study	5.0
Business management and finance	4.8
Buildings	4.1
Health	3.3
Methods of instruction	2.9
Discipline	1.7
Value of education	1.5
Attendance	1.3
Total	99.9

1. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, p.49. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.355. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

"Extra-Curricular Activities", which appears at the foot of the list from the standpoint of interest, covers nearly half the total space devoted to school news. Of this amount, athletics takes 25% of all news space concerning schools. What does this show? For one thing, it proves an earlier assertion, that newspaper editors are not sufficiently acquainted with schools to discuss them intelligently. Doubtless, this type of news, because of its objectivity, is easier for the reporters to secure. Another factor is the lack, in most school systems, of adequate publicity personnel. Again, all too often school men, believe that a winning school team builds sufficient prestige and good will. Finally, few school men, because of the pressure of other duties, acquaint themselves with effective methods of gaining public support and co-operation.

Tables I to IV were selected from some eighteen in Farley's, "What to Tell the People About the Public Schools".¹ His study was made in Minnesota. In order to make a comparative study of Massachusetts school systems, seventy-five copies of the following

1. Farley, Belmont Mercer, What to Tell the People About the Public Schools, Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 355, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

questionnaire were distributed at random, no two to the same system, and fifty-nine were returned.

Tables V and VII are tabulations of the results from the fifty-nine returns made.

Questionnaire

Please check, in the following list, the avenues to public school publicity which have been utilized by your school system during the school year 1931-1932.

1. The school system itself through the following sources:
 - Superintendent
 - Principals
 - Teachers
 - Pupils
 - Other employees
2. Newspapers
3. Student publications
4. A department of school information
5. The school "House Organ"
6. Bulletins to keep the public informed
7. Superintendent's annual report
8. Public bulletin boards
9. Exhibits
10. Post office or store-window displays
11. Activities (Health Day, Pageants, etc.)
12. Public spirited citizens
13. Pupil's home work assignments
14. Dad's night
15. Special school visiting days
16. Athletics
17. Broadcasting
18. Slides at the theaters
19. Addresses
20. Home visitor
21. Organizations
 - Parent-Teacher Associations
 - Clubs - Rotary, Kiwanis, Woman's Clubs, etc.
 - Civic centers
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Others.....

Questionnaire

(Continued)

22. Others.....

Please number the following fourteen items (1-14) according to the proportionate amount of publicity each has been given in your school system during the school year 1931-1932.

Athletics
 Extra-Curricular activities
 Teachers and school officers
 Parent-Teacher Association
 Pupil progress and achievement
 Board of Education and Administration
 Courses of study
 Business management and finance
 Buildings
 Health NAME.....
 Methods of instruction (May be omitted if
 Discipline you prefer)
 Value of education POSITION.....
 Attendance (Please fill in
 this item)

The results of the survey of the fifty-nine Massachusetts school systems are listed in rank order in the same manner as in the preceding tables. The results of the second part of the questionnaire are listed first.

Obviously, from the returns on the questionnaire, the percentage each item received could not be obtained. Instead, the aggregate score is tabulated

for each item giving us the distribution which is sufficient for rough comparative purposes. Since these items were rated 1 to 14 in order of preference, those showing the smallest aggregate received the greatest amount of publicity, while those showing the largest aggregate received the least.

Table V

Rank	Item	Aggregate Score
1.	Athletics	238
2.	Extra-Curricular Activities	251
3.	✓ Pupil Progress and Achievement	300
4.	✓ Health of Pupils	309
5.	✓ Courses of Study	343
6.	Teachers and School Officers	359
7.	Board of Education and Admin.	402
8.	Attendance	412
9.	Value of Education	452
10.	Business Management and Finance	453
11.	✓ Methods of Instruction	478
12.	Parent-Teacher Associations	479
13.	Buildings	505
14.	Discipline	531

In comparing these results with Table I (p.26) on patrons' interests we can note that, on the whole, in Massachusetts we are meeting these interests more satisfactorily than in Minnesota, because there is no wide gap between the first two items and the rest of the list. In spite of this, the two topics of least interest to the general public still head the tabulation. It is encouraging, however, that "Pupil Progress and Achievement" is a close third with "Health of Pupils" directly following. We all know that this latter item has been receiving much attention in Massachusetts within the last decade which undoubtedly accounts for its rating fourth place. "Health" took ninth place in Minnesota.

Table I puts "Methods of Instruction" second. If there is any point in modern education upon which the public needs information it is modern methods of instruction. We should be gratified that there is this keen interest, because it affords an excellent opportunity for supplying a present felt need. Yet, Massachusetts and Minnesota are doing very little about it, for we find "Methods of Instruction" in eleventh place on both Tables IV (p.32) and V (p.36). We are doing more in Massachusetts than in Minnesota to bring the people to realize the "Value of Education",

but we would do well to do more, particularly, to inform the public about the value of many new courses such as: guidance, art, clubs, library, home-room activity programs, auditorium programs and many others peculiar, especially, to the Junior High School.

The rest of the Massachusetts list correlates satisfactorily with Table I (p.26) except "Discipline and Behavior". By comparing Table I (p.26) with Table V (p.36) it can readily be seen that parents are more interested in the conduct and citizenship of their children than in many items that are receiving much more publicity. We would not advocate making publicity of undesirable activities of boys and girls in school. Surprising as it may seem, publicity does not always indicate public announcement. There is a most effective type of publicity that can be carried on which concerns only a few individuals at a given time. This program must go on by means of co-operation between the individual home and the school, but it is a very definite type of publicity, although apparently seldom realized as such by administrators.

As an interesting side-light on this particular subject, I happened to over-hear some discussion

among a group of school men regarding my questionnaire. Two of them had received a copy. It took me a very short time to find out just how much it was worth. The following remark (I am omitting two of the stronger adjectives used) is an example of how highly it was valued by them, "Now take that topic of 'Discipline'. What does that amount to from the standpoint of publicity!"

One questionnaire was returned with the following statement after "Discipline", "I consider this a matter of regular routine and not in any way connected with publicity." Doubtless, others who did not express themselves felt the same way.

However, Table I (p.26) lists "Discipline and Behavior" in sixth place. It might be well to compare this with the patrons' placement of "Athletics" and "Extra-Curricular Activities."

The following table is the estimate of a group of fifteen graduate students and the professor, in an advanced seminar class in secondary education, as to where the emphasis should be placed in public school publicity. This estimate was made previous to any particular study of the topic and before a report on this thesis was made to the class.

Table VI

Rank	Topic
1.	Value of Education
2.	Pupil Progress and Achievement
3.	Courses of Study
4.	Methods of Instruction
5.	Health
6.	Teachers and School Officers
7.	Extra-Curricular Activities
8.	Parent-Teacher Associations
9.	Athletics
10.	Buildings
11.	Attendance
12.	Business Management and Finance
13.	Discipline
14.	Board of Education and Administration

When compared with Table I (p.26), this tabulation of the estimate of the graduate students is, by far, more in keeping with patrons' interests than any yet presented.

While it may have no particular bearing upon this study (chiefly because the sampling is too limited) it is included because it is interesting, and because it does show in a measure, at least, that progressive educators know what should be stressed in this field, but possibly do not understand what means to use in reaching the goal. In the next section of this writing under, "Some Ways and Means of Putting Before the Public the Information Most Desired", we shall endeavor to offer help in this direction.

The next table shows the rank order of the avenues to public school publicity as they were utilized by fifty-nine school systems in Massachusetts during the school year 1931-32.

Table VII

Avenues (In rank order of use)	Number of School Systems
1. Newspapers	50
2. Athletics	46
3. Exhibits	43
4. Activities (Health Day, Pageants, etc.)	43
5. The School System Itself	
Superintendent (Including his annual report)	43
Principals	41
Teachers	38
Pupils	33
Other Employees	4
6. Student Publications	38
7. Organizations	33
Clubs - Rotary, Kiwanis, Woman's Clubs, etc.	33
Parent-Teacher Associations	23
Chambers of Commerce	10
Civic Centers	2
8. Special School Visiting Days	28
9. Addresses	22
10. Home Visitor	15
11. Post-Office or Store-Window Displays	15
12. Bulletins to Keep the Public Informed	15
13. Public Spirited Citizens	14
14. Public Bulletin Boards	7
15. Dad's Night	7
16. Broadcasting	5

Table VII
(Continued)

Avenues (In rank order of use)	Number of School Systems
17. Slides at the Theaters	4
18. The School "House Organ"	4
19. A Department of School Information	4
20. Others Reported (one each)	
A Harmonica Band	
Police Department (Supervision of Traffic Patrols)	
Research Workers from Harvard (The publication of their reports makes for publicity)	
School Orchestra (Appeared at many functions out- side the schools)	
Parent Nights	
Athletic Night	
Poster Contests	

The first nineteen of the topics will be taken up fully in the next section of this thesis. Comments relative to this Table will be made at that time.

IV

SOME WAYS AND MEANS
OF PUTTING BEFORE THE PUBLIC
THE INFORMATION MOST DESIRED

Here, we come, by far, to the most important part of this problem. It is a fact recognized by the advertising profession, that the more numerous the contacts and the more varied the approach the greater the success of the advertising. This is based upon the sound psychological principle of individual differences. What may be of interest to some may not be to others. What is true of business advertising is equally true of public school publicity. Those who cannot be reached through one medium may be attracted through another. Hence, a varied approach is necessary. Again, by the use of the many avenues open to us through which to gain public support and confidence, we can keep up a constant campaign of publicity without its becoming monotonous.

From the results of our survey, Table VII (p.42), it has been shown that most of the avenues open to public school publicity are being utilized. May we ask: "How intelligently?" Let us deal with them now individually as to their proper uses and values

when used intelligently and with sufficient organization to give each its most forceful bearing.

Newspaper Publicity

It is not surprising to find that newspaper publicity is the most important means of reaching the public in Massachusetts, where at least 84% of the school systems use this means of advertising. Other studies in different localities report a percentage as high as 85%. How effectively is this means being employed? How intelligently are school men meeting the newspapers half way? One questionnaire was returned with the item on "Business Management and Finance", Table V (p.36) commented upon as follows: "According to our newspapers this statement should read, 'Business Mis-Management and Finance!'"

While in some cases newspaper policy is to be blamed for taking such an attitude, in most instances of this sort it is the schools that are at fault. If there is mis-management, the school administration must straight-way correct the condition. If the charge is not true, the newspaper needs enlightenment and it is up to the school department to furnish the correct information.

Rollo G. Reynolds finds, in a very comprehensive study, that very few newspapers intend to do us harm. He states that the bulk of school news is constructive or informational and that less than 6% of all school news is sensational or destructive. Here is his summary of this point:

"Newspaper editors in general are without question interested in school news. They are sympathetic toward public school systems. They are willing to meet the school people more than half way in putting before the public information relative to the public schools.

"The general summary and conclusions given above are based on the information submitted by 98 editors representing 40 different states."¹

✓ The newspaper cannot be blamed for printing the facts. We cannot expect them to do otherwise. More often than not it is the fault of the educator when newspapers distort information. Every school man must strive to win the confidence and respect of newspaper men in a sincere, straightforward manner. He must meet the reporters cordially and openly and be glad to give them information.

1. Reynolds, Rollo G., Newspaper Publicity for the Public Schools, p.26. New York: A.G.Seller, 1922.

Moehlman, and others, go so far as to say that reporters should have free access to the schools at all times,¹ but it seems to me that there is danger here of mis-interpretation of school procedure due to the lack of adequate training on the part of reporters along educational lines. It would seem to me that definite provision must be made to insure careful explanation of what is going on and its educational value. Of course, those who advocate such an open policy, do so feeling that it is the best means of establishing the confidence that is so necessary.

I quote here from Miller and Charles, "Assuming that a school system is honestly and intelligently administered, it cannot help but profit from all the publicity which newspapers may see fit to give it."²

And again from Hines and Jones, "If school officials cultivate full, frank, free relationship with the newspapers, if they are honest and fair, if they are patient with editorial and reportorial shortcomings and, above all, if they are sincerely trying to do their best to promote the welfare of the

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1. Moehlman, Arthur B., Public School Relations, New York: Rand McNally, 1927.
 2. Miller, Clyde R., and Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.119. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1924.

children, they will have gone far toward solving the complex problem of public school publicity. It should not be inferred, however, that school executives should stand aloof from the newspapers. On the contrary, they should enter into co-operation with them to this end that the papers more and more will come to recognize the importance of public education. It is advisable to be able every day to suggest to the newspapers' representatives some items of interest. Out of this co-operation will come the slow-growing but lasting confidence which is essential to the continued and wholesome development of the schools."¹

Rollo G. Reynolds has made a very exhaustive study of newspaper publicity. I submit his rules for preparing school news. They are bound to prove invaluable to anyone who is interested in this phase of publicity.

"Rules and Suggestions For The Preparation
of School News In Daily Newspapers."

"From the Reports of 98
Newspaper Editors"

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1. Hines, Harlan Cameron, and Jones, Robinson G., Public School Publicity, p.37. New York: Macmillan, 1923.

"1. Subject Matter.

- a. 'Write news, not propaganda -- news is something happening, an event of some sort, not an argument to prove or disprove some theory or proposition.'
- 'Give information rather than advice or instruction.'
- b. Be accurate, truthful, meticulously exact as to facts, names, and details.
- c. Write news for the public and not for the purpose of personal exploitation.
- d. Names have great news value.
- 'A story about an individual is always better than group facts.'
- e. 'Eliminate favoritism and personalities in preparing articles.'
- f. 'Eliminate inconsequential details, trivial happenings, commonplaces in general.'
- 'Don't overemphasize non-essentials.'
- g. 'Run in a humorous phrase when it doesn't hurt anybody and when it does not spoil the text.'
- h. 'Make the story appeal to the average reader -- more human stuff.'
- i. 'News should be written from the standpoint of the public, not from the standpoint of the school.'
- j. 'In general avoid submitting the achievements of precocious children unless the newspaper invites such contributions. Remember that every parent imagines his child to be a marvel.'
- k. 'Give the news about exceptional pupils, the latest experiments in education, and the like.'

2. Newspaper Style

- a. 'Study the style of the newspaper and follow it.'
- 'Make every contribution interesting by employing newspaper rather than literary diction.'
- 'Write news, not literature.'
- b. 'Use news style as distinct from editorial style.'
- 'Avoid the expression of opinion -- merely recite what happened without interpreting what it means.'
- 'Do not usurp editorial prerogatives by calling the attention of the public to school needs. Acquaint the editor with such needs and let him do the crusading.'
- 'News is not editorial discussion.'
- 'Give facts, not opinion.'
- 'Get away from the academic.'
- 'Get out of the idea of "we" and "our".'
- c. Use a simple style.
- 'Keep away from the technical and get down to simple terms.'
- 'Avoid attempts at "fine writing".'
- 'Use more American and less English.'
- 'Be concise.'
- 'Write clearly and to the point.'
- 'Use short words instead of long ones.'
- 'Avoid the use of too many adjectives.'
- 'Use fewer capital letters.'

- 'Don't be flamboyant.'
 - 'The public does not want "fancy work" in news -- just a simple statement of facts.'
 - 'Do not write in an ornate or didactic style -- make it snappy.'
 - d. Be brief.
 - 'Make it short.'
 - 'Make it brief and snappy.'
 - 'Don't use too many words to say little.'
 - 'Don't be verbose.'
 - e. Get the main facts into the first paragraph.
 - 'Get the gist of the story into the "lead" and avoid mistaken headlines.'
 - 'Write the story in the first paragraph and let the details follow.'
 - 'State principal facts first.'
 - f. Avoid repetition.
3. News Sense and News Interest.
- a. 'Develop a news sense and a sense for "human interest" stories.'
 - 'Learn to spot "news" when seen or heard.'
 - 'Learn what live news is and stick to it. The public can't be interested by long drawn out essays.'
 - 'It is the unusual that makes news.'
 - 'Realize the value of the news feature article.'
 - 'In writing news items, feature the unusual.'

'Write about those things only which actually possess the elements of general interest.'

'Learn to see the "story" in the news.'

'Regular routine matters do not interest readers.'

'Keep the paper informed of all innovations.'

4. The Collection of School News.

a. 'Establish a publicity department that will act as a clearing house for the school news of the entire system.'

'Organize publicity within the school system and prevent much school news of interest from being lost.'

'A press publicity department for schools in every city would be a grand institution.'

b. 'Assign to one teacher in each school the collection and preparation of school news. Have it turned in to some central office where it will be available daily to the press.'

'Make somebody in each responsible for the news of that school.'

'Have each room appoint a press agent.'

'Have teachers direct the writing of school news by pupils and give them school credits for work produced.'

'The Board of Education should make it compulsory for some one in each school to send daily to the newspapers or to the superintendent a news digest.'

c. 'Engage a skillful newspaper photographer to supply pictures for school news.'

d. 'Collect news systematically not hit or miss.'

e. Co-operate with the newspaper organization.

'Remember that the newspaper is willing to co-operate but expects co-operation.'

'Remember that a newspaper must pay its way, and don't expect too much space.'

'Don't suppress news just because it seems to reflect against the schools. Such action turns co-operation into a scrap between the editor and the school authorities for the news.'

'Keep in close touch with editor and reporters. They will appreciate being called on the phone and told of anything that looks like news.'

'Gauge your contributions by the size of the paper and the space allowed other public activities of a local nature.'

'Welcome representatives of the press, deal with them frankly, and tell them the truth.'

'Don't be backward about calling the attention of the press to the schools.'

'Establish cordial relations with the press.'

'Don't find fault and criticize when the editor finds it necessary to alter or change news.'

'Keep in mind that newspapers have to be edited in the newspaper office.'

'When school people acquire a liking for the aroma of printer's ink, school news will cease to be a fizzle and tax payers will stop kicking at school appropriations.'

'Don't be partial to one newspaper in the community. Use them all alike.'

5. The Delivery Of School News.

- a. Get school news in on time.
 - 'Deliver the news promptly.'
 - 'Give news as far in advance as possible.'
 - 'Announcements are worth more than reports -- both to school and newspaper.'
 - 'Get news in the day it happens if possible. Dailies like fresh stuff.'
 - 'Don't let news get cold.'
 - 'Don't let news become ancient history.'
 - 'News value depends largely upon recency of happening.'
- b. The use of the phone for transmitting news tends toward inaccuracy.

6. The Mechanics of School News Copy.

- a. 'Use paper for copy $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$ with lines running the long way. The size of the linotype keyboard determines this, not the whim of the editor.
- b. Use one side of the paper only.
- c. Typewrite all copy or write it clearly.
 - 'Submit clean copy.'
- d. Double space or triple space your copy. This is a great benefit to the editor.
- e. Don't write the headline.
 - 'Leave one third of your title page blank for the use of the newspaper headline writer.'
 - 'Headline writing is a technical newspaper function.'

'Don't disgust the editor by writing the headline for him.'

'Material for a headline should be found in the first paragraph or "lead" of copy.'

- f. 'If a name is spelled in a peculiar manner, write "correct" after it.'
- g. 'Use as few capitals as possible.' ¹

Many school men are very much out of patience with the newspapers because of their attitude toward schools, school news, and school support. On the other hand, just as many editors and reporters are out of patience with school management. There is need for more co-operation between the two; and the newspapers are more willing, if anything, to do their share to bring about the proper relationship.

First of all, school executives must realize that newspapers must pay their own way. In order to do this they must make a strong bid for advertising, because it is the advertising that supports the paper, not the money received from paid circulation. However, in order to attract advertising a paper must have as wide circulation as possible. It is the purpose of news to produce circulation. In order to do this, news must not only be interesting,

1. Reynolds, Rollo G., Newspaper Publicity for the Public Schools, pp.32-36. New York: A.G.Seiler, 1922.

it must be interesting to a wide variety of people. Nearly everybody is interested in school news either because of being a parent and having children in school, or, being a taxpayer and helping to support education. In many cases, there is this two-fold interest. It is due to this fact that editors are anxious to secure school news and are willing to devote much free space for the purpose. Naturally, educators have a love for academic phraseology, but the editors know that the average run of the public does not comprehend and will not read such writing. They wish to reserve the right to put the news into terms that are most easily understood by the greatest number of readers. Educators object, hence much lack of co-operation. Upon this point Meehlman says, "What ever individual opinion may be upon this score, it is well to remember the terrific problem of the editor in circulation building and to appreciate the fact that the individuals who furnish our news are quite human and, with rare exceptions, basically honest. The faults of the press, when interpreted in the light of conditioning factors, are not so serious as when viewed in isolation. Upon the whole, considering time and economic pressure, the daily editor does a remarkably fine piece of

work."¹

When educators come to realize that newspaper writers know best how to reach the general public, and that by giving them more or less of a "free hand" the story of education will reach the greatest number of people, much of the present lack of co-operation should disappear.

Again, newspaper editors are human and there is bound to be more or less competition in a community having more than one journal. For the same reason that educators should not play up to one political party, all local newspapers should be treated alike. There should be no favoritism shown in this respect. The schools need the undivided support of the local papers for even a weak publication can do irreparable harm if it is opposed to a school organization. Support by all newspapers is not usually difficult to secure provided school authorities use reasonable tact and give equal consideration to all.

Athletics

As has already been shown, the subject of ath-

1. Moehlman, Arthur B., Public School Relations, pp.82-83. New York: Rand McNally Company, 1927.

letics has been altogether over-emphasized, but as a medium through which to reach the public and from the standpoint of education it has a definite purpose. Many people make their contact with schools chiefly through their interest in athletics. As in teaching children, it is possible to capitalize this interest so that it will lead to a better understanding of the whole school organization.

Miller and Charles strike a keynote, "If the school would share in the picture of life which the newspaper paints from day to day, educators must expect that its interesting activities will be emphasized at the expense of what some teachers may feel to be the more important. The essence of good publicity is to see that the interesting story also contains information of importance made interesting."¹

It is possible to do this very thing with athletic news. At present too much importance is attached to the competitive side of athletics and individual accomplishments, and not enough is written about their educational value. The situation is not hopeless however, for more and more athletic

1. Miller, Clyde R., and Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.118. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1924.

coaches are becoming physical directors who are imbued with the educational value of their field. We do not need less athletic news; we need better athletic news. Again, we do not need less news concerning athletics; we need more news relative to other phases of education.

Athletic news, because of its general appeal can serve very well as an entering wedge. The fundamental principles of physical education are identical with the rest of the educational program. Once these are better understood the carry-over should not be difficult.

Exhibits

One of the most common types of publicity that has come into use is the exhibit. It strongly appeals to the public and although school administrators fully realize that the most valuable school work cannot be effectively set forth in this manner, the exhibit is most worth while as a stimulator of good will. Earlier in this writing we spoke of certain types of education that can be displayed in a manner so that form and color have sufficient appeal to attract attention. The exhibit is one example of this.

There is always a possibility that a few unfavorable comments may arise from an exhibit that will over-shadow many good ones. For this reason, it becomes very important that every precaution be taken to minimize this possibility. Inaccuracies of any kind in subject matter, incorrect spelling, poor penmanship, etc. must be watched carefully. This does not mean that we are to display only the very best that we have. To do this, would be misleading and tend to arouse suspicion. Patrons who visit the schools from time to time and see some of our poorer work cannot be "fooled" so easily. Once people suspect that much is being kept under cover, they will lose faith in exhibitions and attendance will decrease, the result being a general feeling that there is misrepresentation. Every child in school should have some work on display, be it ever so poor. Some have found it to advantage for this purpose, to take interesting projects including the results of all the members of the class. Parents who have been finding fault with marks received, oftentimes will come to realize the reason, when they see their child's work in comparison with the others. There is every reason why we should present all of our good work, but some of our poorer work

should also be shown. The writer has seen some samples of penmanship taken in May posted beside some samples taken in September from the same pupils. While some of those taken in May were comparatively poor, when compared to the September results, of the same pupils, marked improvement could be noted. This could be clearly seen by the patrons and the accomplishment readily appreciated. Such clear evidence of improvement is bound to build confidence and the public must be lead to realize that it is not nearly so much what pupils can do today that counts as what they can do today in comparison with what the same pupils could produce six months or a year ago.

The general public can assimilate less than we are apt to take for granted. An exhibit to be effective must have some continuity of purpose. It is essential, in order to accomplish this, that each exhibit stress some one phase of the school work. To present a mass of material, in hit or miss fashion merely results in bewilderment and loss rather than gain. If one but listens to the comments of visitors it is clearly demonstrated how little is really taken in, especially from the standpoint of educational value. Almost every item presented must

be carefully labeled with explanatory foot-notes if we wish it to be understood. Care should also be taken to see that there is logical sequence of material so that one step naturally follows another. If the exhibit is so arranged that visitors naturally follow this sequence much more can be accomplished than as if they simply wander about in a hit or miss fashion. If these factors are taken into consideration, almost any subject can form the center of interest, the rest correlating with it. Of course, Art, Shop-Work, Domestic Arts, English, or the Social Studies are among the best to use for the central unit.

In some cases, teachers may not wish to present their work in subordination to a subject they do not teach that is used as the center of interest. If they are given to understand that another year their subject may be the center of interest this difficulty usually disappears, but as in most cases of this sort it depends upon the successful leadership of the principal to bring about harmony and co-operation. One of the best methods of handling the organization of an exhibit is through a committee of teachers.

Activities

Activities, as here intended, include: pageants, health-day programs, debates, musical contests, auditorium programs and the like. In fact, activities, as here intended, mean any performance of pupils under the direction of the school which may be attended by the public with or without admission charge. Activities then, in this sense, are closely akin to exhibitions and differ only in that one displays the product of pupils, the other displays the pupils in action. It is interesting to note on our rank order scale, Table VII (p.42), that activities and exhibits share equally in relative frequency.

The points of view set forth regarding exhibits hold equally true in the case of activities. Due to the fact that activities have a stronger human interest factor and are constantly in motion there is far less danger from unfavorable comment than with the exhibit. There are, however, certain difficulties in the way of this type of publicity, but the advantages to be gained far out-weigh the disadvantages.

Just how much time we are justified in taking from regular routine to prepare activities is often a big problem. Ideally, they should not require any

time from regular procedure, but should naturally be some of the results of it. Through our clubs, dramatics, musical organizations, auditorium programs, home-room activities, physical education, etc. most of what we need for publicity purposes should be forth-coming without interrupting our established routine to any great extent. One of the most common criticisms of present day progressive education is that we run too much to "frills" and "fancies" without enough time for the "three R's". We are unwise if we over-stress this side of our program until the general public better understands its full educational significance. Care should always be taken, when presenting this side of our school work to the public, that they may understand the fundamental objectives. Oftentimes this explanation can be worked into the program itself, sometimes it can be taken care of by rather brief announcements, and sometimes by printed or mimeographed programs with explanatory notes, or even, to some extent, through press notices or in the form of news of school activities. Of course, it is always better for the explanation to precede the demonstration. Misunderstandings are easier to avoid than to correct. Throughout all of our pub-

licity program we must ever keep it uppermost in our minds that public support of education is determined chiefly by the degree to which it is generally understood.

Just because we find "Extra-Curricular Activities" at the foot of Table I (p.26), it does not indicate that the public is not interested in these activities. This table is relative to newspaper information regarding them. To be present when these programs are in action is quite another thing from reading about them afterward. To witness the heavy attendance at a pageant, or health-day performance, is sufficient evident of interest. From the standpoint of publicity it is up to us to capitalize this interest and to weave into these activities as many of the fundamentals of progressive education as possible, without detracting from the programs themselves. From these activities, as with our athletics, we can lead the public to a better understanding of the whole educational process, and can develop, no doubt, a keen desire for more knowledge about the whole organization.

The School System Itself

The Superintendent

The publicity policy of any school system rests directly with its superintendent. Since he is the sole agent working between the school system and the board of education, he is entirely responsible for getting approval of what is, or, of what is not to be done. It is also his duty to see that whatever methods may be adopted are carried out to the best of his ability. If any money is to be expended for a purpose, it rests with the executive to secure approval of this expenditure. If there is to be a director of public relations or a department of school information it must come largely through the efforts of the superintendent. Regardless of what the program may be, and few school systems are without some sort of program, the appraisal of results and determination of their effectiveness falls almost wholly upon this office. The appraisal of results, especially where expenditure is involved, is fully as important as the program itself, for it is unwise to continue to stress types of publicity that are not effective in any given community.

A superintendent's relationships with the press are highly important to the system which he repre-

sents. On this point Moehlman says, "One of the first acts of an incoming superintendent should be a visit to the editors of the several papers for the purpose of getting acquainted. Nothing is so valuable as a personal contact. The executive can explain his policies and his attitude toward the press, and invite co-operation.

"If he can assure the editor of his honesty and sincerity, it is usually not difficult to enlist his support. Editors are human beings and feel flattered to be consulted and to have their influence recognized. If they understand what is being attempted by the schools, their handling of straight news will be more constructive than otherwise. When any basic change in policy is considered, it is wise to present the entire problem to each of the editors, explaining the subject completely and making it easy for them to understand.

"The next task of the superintendent is to meet the reporters assigned to the schools and assure them of his desire to help them secure the news and to deal with them upon a basis of frankness and honesty. The average reporter can be intrusted with confidences and can be depended upon to keep them. He, again, is a friendly human being who will re-

act well to kind treatment."¹

The attitude of a superintendent's subordinates may make or break him. Happy should be the man in this office who can feel confident of loyalty and support from those who look to him for guidance. The support of those next below, or lack of it, is bound to filter down through the whole organization into the homes and throughout the community. The atmosphere within is sure to be reflected without.

The following is from Miller and Charles, "If the superintendent shows a disposition to monopolize all the publicity for himself, he will find himself unpopular with the press. He must be frank in assigning proper credit to his subordinates, remembering that the problem is to win respect and confidence for the entire school system, rather than for any single individual.

"But when he is careful to point out the good works of his subordinates, he probably will find that they will be equally generous in emphasizing his own good works."²

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1. Moehlman, Arthur B., Public School Relations, p.78. New York: Rand McNally & Company, 1927.
 2. Miller, Clyde R., and Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.169. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

There is probably no way in which a superintendent can build confidence in his organization as through his daily personal contacts with members of the community. Any man in this position will do well to make as many contacts as opportunities afford through clubs or civic and community undertakings. A community that finds a man conscientiously and consistently interested in the welfare of that community will generally find itself interested in the success of that man and be very likely to give him their utmost co-operation and support. A man who has a retiring nature will find it difficult to win the confidence of those about him. The public is more willing to support individuals than it is ideas, except as it trusts the ideas of those who have won its confidence.

Any executive is continuously being called upon to speak before groups regarding the organization he represents. A superintendent of schools should cultivate a definite poise for such occasions, for, more often than not, it is this factor that determines his success than what he actually has to say. If he has a personality that carries his audience with him he will have little trouble in winning their confidence, but if he lacks this what he says will be of little avail. A winning manner can be cultivated

to a considerable degree and whatever may be a man's feeling toward his ability in this direction he should continuously strive to improve it.

A superintendent should seek to take advantage of every opportunity to bring about a better understanding, on the part of the public, of what he is endeavoring to accomplish. In short, the superintendent is the key man of the whole organization. As well as with every other phase of the whole system, upon him depends, more than upon anyone else, the success of the entire publicity program. Most superintendents are coming to realize this and are doing more and more to improve this part of their work.

The annual report will be discussed under the topic, "Bulletins to Keep the Public Informed."

Principals and Teachers

The matter of relationships between teachers and principals is so broad in scope that it involves a complete study in itself. In fact, it is so extensive that many studies have already been made. Not the least among these is the work of Barr and Burton, "The Supervision of Instruction".¹ The

1. Barr, A.S., and Burton, William H., The Supervision of Instruction. New York: D.Appleton and Company, 1926.

topic not only includes supervision and administration but the whole field of inspirational leadership, co-operation, professional growth, and ethics for both teachers and pupils.

Publicity to be gained through the media of principals and teachers is highly important to any system, but can be obtained only as a result of a satisfactory program of pre-requisites that lead to it. Suppose each teacher, besides her pupil contacts, has but twenty acquaintances in a community. This is setting it at a very moderate average figure. A teacher, who has been in a system a number of years, is likely to have literally hundreds with whom her single point of view is sufficient for them to feel whether or not the schools are competently managed. When we multiply these individual contacts by the number of teachers in any given organization we can readily see what a nucleus for publicity there is in this unit. Teachers meet their acquaintances, the acquaintances meet others, and the good (or bad) word is passed along. It is no small task for a principal to cope with this situation and make consistent progress. It can be accomplished only by winning the confidence of those under his direction. There is usually one or more on any teaching force who, by nature, are an-

tagonistic to any administrative organization. This always presents a serious problem for the reason that such people are likely to have considerable strength in shaping public opinion. There is satisfaction, however, in knowing that if a whole force is pulling together with the exception of only one or two that they usually cannot hold out for any length of time against the strong front of the united efforts of all the rest. Some principals have endeavored to please everybody to overcome such obstacles, but this procedure cannot long endure. It is vitally essential for a principal to "stand by his guns", and deal with everyone in the same manner and without showing partiality or favoritism. To do so will in the long run establish a confidence in his ability that will overcome these obstacles. He must deal with his force in a frank, straight-forward manner for it is this type of leadership that can withstand criticism.

We do not wish to imply that an executive should be autocratic and dictatorial. Quite the reverse is essential, for he must strive to get his force working with him, not for him. Oftentimes, when everything else fails, antagonistic people can be brought into line by appointing them to committees for the

study of certain puzzling phases of the program. More often than not, lack of co-operation on the part of teachers is due to misunderstanding, just as is the lack of support on the part of the public.

As has already been pointed out, effective publicity from this source can be expected only after "the house has been put in order", and, as a result of a complete understanding of the policies and objectives of the whole organization. In many cases, teachers need to be made aware of their responsibility in providing this link in the public relations program. They may not be interested in the technical side of education from the same standpoint as the superintendent, but, on the whole, teachers are a very conscientious group. They are interested in the welfare of the children, in finance as it concerns better materials and instruction, and from the angle of the salary schedule. Disloyalty on the part of teachers is usually the result of failure to fully understand policies, or, a lack of faith in the integrity of the administration. It is almost wholly the principal's responsibility to remove these difficulties. In his position, between the superintendent and the teaching force, he has this very definite duty to perform. The teachers must

be made to feel that the superintendent and board of education are operating the schools on a purely democratic basis with only the best interests of all the children at heart. There must be a complete awareness brought about, through both precept and example, of the honesty, fairness, and integrity of the whole administration. The teachers can make or break any program. The principal who understands human nature and sponsors a completely democratic program will find them exerting a strong influence on the thinking of the members of his community. The attitude within is bound to be reflected without.

Pupils

We have already stated the importance of the support of the student body. It is second to none, including even the newspapers. Publicity through this source is reaching the homes throughout the community daily. Everything above the pupils must be functioning properly to get the best support of the students. Wrangles among the teaching force or between teachers and superior officers are certain to be sensed by the pupils. On the other hand, harmony is just as quickly felt. As the pupils come in contact with the teachers, their attitude toward

the system can be pretty well shaped. If there is fairness and justice, there is likely to be loyalty between students and faculty. It is very seldom that pupils rebel against punishment of any sort that is deserved, and when they do there is little chance of being supported by their fellow-students. Unfairness will never be tolerated by any large number of pupils.

The question may be raised, "What does this have to do with publicity?" It is the very backbone of it. All the way from school board, to superintendent, to principals, to supervisors, to teachers and other employees, to pupils, to the general public there must be established not only by precept but by example, an attitude of fairness, honesty, and democracy if we are to have an effective publicity program that will build for confidence in the public schools. Only with this background, and especially so with the pupils, can we get the co-operation that we desire. The pupil who impresses his parents with a feeling of loyalty to his school, together with the fact that it is a serious undertaking from an academic standpoint, can do more to win the confidence and support of that parent than all the rest of the means put together.

As an agency for disseminating information, al-

most every home in a community can be reached within twelve hours through the pupils. Pupils' homework is one means of doing this. Parents are usually interested in the work to be done at home and are always glad to assist pupils when it is possible to do so. Because of this, ingenious ways of getting information to them through this source can be worked out. The following is a rather elaborate example. It is taken from William Hall Todd's study, "What Citizens Know About Their Schools" and was used in Montclair, New Jersey with good results.¹

Form A Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New Jersey

MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Home-work in civics and citizenship.

Directions: This paper contains a few questions concerning the Montclair Public Schools. Please answer them as best you can. Each question can be answered correctly by "Yes" or "No". To answer "Yes" to any question draw a line with a pencil under the "Yes" typed at the left of the question. To answer "No" to any question, draw a line with a pencil under the word "No" typed at the left of the question.

Please get your FATHER or your MOTHER,
or BOTH YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, to tell you the

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1. Todd, William Hall, What Citizens Know About Their Schools, pp.15-19. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No.279. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1927.

Form A Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New Jersey

(Continued)

answers to these questions as best they can. PLEASE DO NOT ASK TEACHERS OR SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR ANSWERS.

The Questions

- | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|--|
| No | Yes | 1. | Is the Chairman of the Board of Education Mr. Richard T. Green? |
| No | Yes | 2. | Can the Board of Education legally spend money for new buildings without favorable vote of the people? |
| No | Yes | 3. | Is Mr. Frank G. Picknell City Superintendent of Schools? |
| No | Yes | 4. | Are the regular meetings of the Board of Education open to the public? |
| No | Yes | 5. | Does Montclair receive any money from the state to help pay the cost of public education? |
| No | Yes | 6. | Is the tax rate for school purposes in Montclair greater than \$1.30 per \$100. assessed valuation? |
| No | Yes | 7. | Does Montclair have enough elementary schools so there is no overcrowding of classrooms? |
| No | Yes | 8. | Does Montclair employ as many as 350 teachers, supervisors, and principals in its schools? |
| No | Yes | 9. | Are there as many as 7000 pupils in average daily attendance in the Montclair Public Schools? |
| No | Yes | 10. | Do the public schools provide 12 years of education? |
| No | Yes | 11. | Do all pupils in the 8th grade in the Jr. High Schools take the same school work? |

Form A Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New Jersey

(Continued)

- No Yes 12. Does the superintendent of schools teach any subjects in the Senior High Schools?
- No Yes 13. Is the annual expenditure for schools in Montclair as much as \$60,000?
- No Yes 14. Do any Montclair school teachers receive a salary of less than \$1500. a year?
- No Yes 15. Are there as many as 190 teaching days in the regular school year?
- No Yes 16. Does every girl have to study home economics one or more years in the Senior H.S. to graduate?
- No Yes 17. Is the bonded indebtedness of Montclair for school purposes between \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000?
- No Yes 18. Do any of the Senior High School pupils have to travel to and from school more than 2 miles?
- No Yes 19. Does Montclair have as many as 40 new teachers coming on the teaching staff every year?
- No Yes 20. Are there as many as 2,000 pupils in average daily attendance in Montclair grade schools?
- No Yes 21. Does Montclair provide schools during the summer months for those who care to attend?
- No Yes 22. Does the state prescribe what is to be taught in the elementary schools?
- No Yes 23. Can a boy or a girl learn shorthand and typewriting in the Montclair Public Schools?

Form A Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New Jersey

(Continued)

No Yes 24. Is 5 acres more land than needed as a
site for a large elementary school?

In answering these questions I was helped by:

My Father..... My Mother.....

Both, My father and My Mother.....

Draw a line under the words "My Father" if helped
by Father.

Draw a line under the words "My Mother" if helped
by Mother.

Draw a line under the words "Both, My Father and My
Mother" if helped by both.

.....
Name of School

.....
Grade

.....
Write your name here

Form B Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New JerseyMONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Home-work in civics and citizenship

Directions: This paper contains a few questions concerning the Montclair Public Schools. Please answer them as best you can. Each question can be answered correctly by "Yes" or "No". To answer "Yes" to any question draw a line with a pencil under the word "Yes" typed at the left of the question. To answer "no" to any question, draw a line with a pencil under the word "NO" typed at the left of the question.

Please get your FATHER or your MOTHER, or BOTH YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, to tell you the answers to these questions as best they can. PLEASE DO NOT ASK TEACHERS OR SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR ANSWERS.

The Questions

- | | | | |
|----|-----|----|---|
| No | Yes | 1. | Are members of the School Board appointed to office by the mayor? |
| No | Yes | 2. | Is the superintendent of schools a college graduate? |
| No | Yes | 3. | Does Montclair have any small portable school buildings in use? |
| No | Yes | 4. | Does Montclair receive any money as school aid from the federal government? |
| No | Yes | 5. | Do Montclair school teachers remain in the service on the average as long as 5 years? |
| No | Yes | 6. | Are there as many as 1,500 pupils in average daily attendance in the Senior High Schools? |
| No | Yes | 7. | Does the Montclair school system provide kindergartens? |
| No | Yes | 8. | Do all schools in the town teach the same work in the 4th grade? |

Form B Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New Jersey

(Continued)

- No Yes 9. Does the board of education consist of six members?
- No Yes 10. Are 40 cents of every dollar raised by taxes for all municipal purposes spent in support of public education?
- No Yes 11. Does Montclair have six junior high schools in operation?
- No Yes 12. Do the salaries of teachers, supervisors, and school principals amount to as much as \$800,000. a year?
- No Yes 13. In the past three years has the number of school pupils in average daily attendance increased as much as 500?
- No Yes 14. Must a pupil study Latin to graduate from the Senior High School?
- No Yes 15. Does the board of education have legal power to levy taxes for school purposes?
- No Yes 16. Is the annual school expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance between \$140 and \$150?
- No Yes 17. Are 10 acres more land than needed as a site for a large Senior High School?
- No Yes 18. Do any Montclair junior high school teachers receive a salary of less than \$1,500 a year?
- No Yes 19. Does the Montclair school system provide continuation schools?
- No Yes 20. Does the state prescribe certain textbooks which must be used in the Senior High School?
- No Yes 21. Is Health Education taught in the elementary schools?

Form B Test Sheet Used at Montclair, New Jersey

(Continued)

- No Yes 22. Are members of the board of education chosen to office for a term as long as 5 years?
- No Yes 23. Is the taxable property in Montclair between \$115,000,000 and \$125,000,000 assessed valuation?
- No Yes 24. Does Montclair need more Senior High School accommodations to house its pupils?
- No Yes 25. Do the junior high schools try to teach a boy or a girl a trade?

In answering these questions I was helped by:
 My Father...My Mother...Both, My Father and My Mother....
 Draw a line under the words "My Father" if helped by
 Father.
 Draw a line under the words "My Mother" if helped by
 Mother
 Draw a line under the words "Both, My Father and My
 Mother" if helped by both.

.....
 Name of School Grade Write your name here

While this particular form was used in Montclair chiefly to determine what school patrons know about their schools, it has excellent publicity possibilities. A blank of this nature is sure to arouse considerable interest. This can be capitalized upon by publishing it, with the correct answers, in the local papers, thus putting before the public a vast amount of information in a form that will readily attract attention.

Some such statement as the following might head the publication of the correct answers,

"There has been such general wide-spread interest in the correct answers to a series of questions recently assigned for home-work in our citizenship classes that we are submitting them with the correct answers to this newspaper for publication."

This procedure is adaptable to almost any home-work assignment and can be revised so that almost any information concerning the schools can be presented in an interesting manner.

While the following instructions to teachers are not quite the same as those issued in Montclair they might be given to the teachers using the forms since they tell fully what is to be done,

"Please hand these forms to your pupils during

the afternoon session today requesting them urgently to do this 'Home-Work' and return same to you tomorrow morning. If any fail to return the forms tomorrow morning, urge them to do so after the noon hour. All forms must be brought in not later than the next following morning.

"As forms are returned to you by pupils, please check to see that the pupil has not neglected to underscore the word 'Father', or 'Mother', or 'Both, Father and Mother' as requested in footnote on each form.

"On the form returned by each pupil, please write the vocation of that pupil's parent or guardian, taking the data from your registers.

"Enclose this memorandum with the forms when you send in same. Please send the returned forms to the office as soon as all for your room have been returned that can be secured and you have finished discussing correct answers.

Number given to pupils.....

Number returned by pupils....."

It is necessary when using any such method as this that the teachers understand fully what is expected, or, the returns will be disappointing. It

is obvious that the information that can be secured in this manner can be entirely justified from the standpoint of education. Undoubtedly, teachers will wish to have a hand in formulating such blanks. They should. If these are to be discussed in class, and are to go out as home-work assignments, the teachers of the subject should work together making them out. Care should be taken not to over-do this type of publicity. Much shorter forms might be found of more value than such long ones as are given as examples.

As a means of reaching homes quickly and economically with notices of school activities, as a means of delivering bulletins etc., efficiently, pupils form an important link. But, it is not so much for this purpose that we should depend upon pupils, as their attitude and loyalty they can express and like to show when given an opportunity to do so. So much depends upon the support of the student body that we should never overlook its tremendous value.

Other Employees

Since the school nurse and attendance officers will be considered under "Home Visitors", we will discuss here publicity possibilities of the custo-

dians, janitors, their helpers, and people of the laboring class who are connected with the schools.

Fortunate is the school that has efficient janitorial service and congenial personalities among these employees. The public gets no small idea of a school by the appearance of the building and grounds. In this day and age, when so much importance is placed upon healthful conditions this is of no minor consequence. Again, people in this service have had no training in contacting pupils. The janitor's position in helping to maintain a high standard of control is an important one. He is often in closer contact with pupils in basements and corridors than anyone else. The responsibility on the part of pupils in maintaining good citizenship about the building can often be traced in no small degree to the attitude taken toward the janitor. There are popular custodians and there are those who challenge pupils to perform most unreasonable antics relative to the use of public property. Many school men find education in this direction very difficult. Yet, to be a good citizen one must respect the rights of others and develop a definite responsibility for the proper care and use of public property. A janitor can do a great deal to assist in this matter and

plays no small role in accomplishing this objective. A pupil's attitude toward his school property is of great importance from the standpoint of publicity.

The "Other Employees", for the most part, meet a wholly different strata of the population than any others connected with the schools. The votes of this class of people will always outweigh the rest. Because these voters have confidence in the "employees" on their own level, their attitude toward the schools is largely determined by what the "Other Employees" have to say about the organization. Because of this, the choice of a janitor or custodian is of major importance. Once hired, he should be given the same consideration as any of the rest and should be treated just as fairly and in full confidence. He should be made to feel the full value of his contribution to his educational system, and be given credit for faithfully executing these responsibilities.

Any school man who fails to take this position toward his "Other Employees" is headed for trouble and is not unlikely, in due course of time, to find himself out of a job. Properly treated they are usually anxious to show their loyalty which can be converted into a very definite force for increasing co-operation and maintaining the active support of

the laboring class.

Student Publications; Organizations; Special School Visiting Days; Addresses.

These four agencies are being so well utilized for purposes of publicity that we need discuss them only briefly.

Business concerns hoping for a permanently successful existence must rely upon a high quality of product. They know that good products are their best means of advertising. This holds equally true for the public schools. Most school systems are utilizing their student publications to this end. Well-written copy carefully set up brings praise for the school. Much of the point of view is bound to be expressed through this medium and since copies of these publications go into almost every home a broad avenue for indirect publicity is already set up.

Among the organizations being utilized for publicity are: Rotary, Lions, Elks, Kiwanis, Teachers Clubs, Knights of Columbus, Parent-Teacher Associations, Chambers of Commerce, and Civic Centers. Several schools report that their musical organizations entertain these clubs occasionally at their luncheons, etc. Others invite these organizations

to visit school in a body. Some of these units make it a point to aid the schools by arranging excursions for certain groups of pupils for educational purposes. In some places, pupils take over certain functions of city or town government for a day. Still others aid police in the form of junior traffic patrols. All these activities help to bring the leading citizens and general public into closer contact with the schools. Properly handled these become another important means of building confidence as well as having a high type of educational value particularly in conjunction with our guidance program.

Membership in such organizations gives a school man an excellent opportunity to extend his acquaintances in a community, which, if he is deserving, is bound to help build additional confidence. Here may we repeat, that the public is always more ready to support and follow individuals than ideas, except as those ideas are an expression of the purposes of those persons who have won public confidence. Opportunities for addressing these groups of people are always forth-coming when an educator is a member. The request for an address is a golden opportunity for any school man to influence the public toward him-

self and the organization he represents. We have already discussed policies to be followed. In addresses the only position to take is a frank straight-forward one, and realizing that the average citizen knows very little of progressive education, a wide-awake executive can enlighten his public considerably even in one address. Invitations to speak should be taken seriously. Real thought should be placed upon that which is to be said, and a sincere endeavor be made, on every occasion, to give the public a better understanding of modern educational practices together with something worth while to think about.

The biggest problem connected with special school visiting days is to get the public to attend. Every administrator has had cases without number, of people, who have visited school for the first time in several years, who came with a great deal of scepticism and went away heartily commending that which they had previously condemned. For so many years parents have been called to school only when their children have mis-behaved, that the pupils discourage visitation just so far as possible for fear that their parents may "find out" something about them. It will always be noted that the heaviest attendance on special visiting days is in the lower grades with almost no vi-

sitors in the high school. Everything must be done to off-set this situation. It is the result of years of improper contact between home and school. Students must be made to feel that the home and the school are working together for their benefit and the closer that contact the better it is for them. This is not an easy undertaking and can be accomplished only by persistent effort over a period of years.

Some school systems have tried evening sessions in an effort to get more men to attend. The chief criticism of this practice is that the schools are not fairly represented in this manner. The true school atmosphere cannot be maintained under such strenuous circumstances, the result being a second cousin to a vaudeville show. On the whole, this is not satisfactory. Some of this same difficulty is always experienced even in day sessions for special visiting, but not to the same degree as in the evening.

The best type of school visitation is incidental. That is, to encourage the public to visit school at its convenience. This gives teachers and executives a far better opportunity to make satisfactory contact and to explain what is being done. The rush of speci-

al visiting prohibits this, and, while there are advantages to be gained by it, the better visiting by far is incidental.

Home Visitors

Few school systems are so fortunate as to have a member of the organization who devotes full time to home visitation. It may be noted in our rank order list, Table VII (p.42), that we are now coming to avenues for publicity not so generally utilized. While fifteen report the use of home visitors, many of these specifically state that they have reference to the school nurse or attendance officer so that the number filling this capacity, in its truest sense, is far less than fifteen.

This is a comparatively new office and is the result of too rapid growth in the larger centers to permit close enough contact between home and school without such an individual. So far as the writer has been able to ascertain those who have a home visitor are unanimous in their feeling that the right type of person can do so much to benefit pupils that the added expense is justified. Some even claim that it is not an added expense due to the fact that the home visitor is able to make so

many re-adjustments that result in promotions which would otherwise mean retardation. Every school man is aware of the expenditure caused by pupil repetition.

Most schools have to rely upon the school nurse and attendance officer to fulfill this obligation. In some places, the guidance counsellor has time to devote to this purpose, while others try to accomplish this by teacher visitation. The teacher visitation is good practice, but it in no way supplants the home visitor. Many parents are sceptical of teachers and treat them with aloofness that cannot be of much benefit to the pupils, themselves, or the schools. Again, most teachers have prejudices for or against certain pupils that come to them for instruction. For these reasons, teacher visitation should be a supplement to the work of the home visitor, not a substitute for it.

Many parents, who never visit school, get their only contact with the educational system through the home visitor. A person in this capacity, whether it be school nurse, attendance officer, guidance counsellor or any other, who has tact and complete understanding of the school organization, which he or she represents, can make most parents realize that

the school is interested and just as anxious to help the boys and girls who attend as are the parents themselves. When this feeling prevails there is sure to be co-operation and support. At the same time, this is publicity of the highest order. It would be well for those of the 75% of the school systems that are not using this means and who wish more co-operation to give it more definite consideration.

Post Office and Store Window Displays

Here is another type of publicity in which we can depend upon form and color to attract attention. Much that has been said regarding exhibits applies to this form of advertising, as we have here virtually the miniature exhibition. Manual arts, domestic arts, productions of the art department, penmanship, projects, and activities are among the easier educational processes to display in this manner. Guidance and social studies posters also lend themselves readily to this treatment.

Care should be taken to arrange these exhibits in attractive form with complete explanation showing fully their educational value. It is better to display but one item or a series of related items to-

gether. By frequent change of subjects it is possible to get much constant contact over a rather wide field of educational procedure. There is bound to be comment and many questions coming back to the school department as a result of these displays. The more comment and questions the better, for as with selling any kind of merchandise this is evidence of interest and curiosity that must, first of all, be aroused before making a satisfied customer. The comments and questions should be heartily welcomed as they form the basis for getting "across" much valuable information. Occasionally, articles may be placed in the local newspapers relative to such exhibits, calling attention to them and by way of explanation.

It is not difficult to find store keepers who are, not only willing, but, anxious to devote store window space for this purpose. It has as much or more advertising value for them as for the school. It is somewhat of a problem to choose stores that are suitably located, and not offend those who are not requested to assist. This can be overcome, to some degree, by arranging a series of subjects to be displayed, one at a time, each in a different store window. Unquestionably the post office in a

small community is the best location possible; first, because the element of partiality is lacking; second, a larger percentage of the people frequent the post office than any other building. The consent of the postmaster is not usually difficult to secure.

Bulletins to Keep the Public Informed

Chief among these is the superintendent's annual report. In many towns these are printed in the annual town reports. In this form they reach the home of every voter in town. These should not be merely an annual report of statistical material. They afford an excellent opportunity to place, before the voters, information relating to aims, accomplishments, and needs of the schools. Most superintendents' reports that have come to the attention of the writer of this paper show evidence that superintendents, generally, are making every effort to produce a very worth while document. There are some, however, who are failing to recognize the full value of this opening. These men would do well to give more careful consideration to the matter, and awaken themselves to a complete realization, not only of the opportunity afforded,

but of their responsibility. Several systems have reported that principals' annual reports are also published along with the superintendent's.

One of the major problems confronting those who desire to make wide use of bulletins for public distribution is the item of expense. Very few budgets include any funds for this purpose and one might find it difficult to justify such expenditure. Most systems have little to spare beyond fulfilling needs for actual educational expenses. One inexpensive way is by use of the mimeograph machine. Most schools are equipped with these and copies can be run off at very little cost. Most bulletins need not be lengthy documents. A page or two often suffices. The "Detroit Educational Bulletin" is an excellent example of the more elaborate type.¹

Among the topics to be presented through this medium are those involving progressive changes in organization, aims, objectives, and routine matters. No school system can afford to be more progressive than is its public. The use of bulletins for keeping the public in step with progressive methods is not being fully appreciated as is evidenced by the

1. The Detroit Educational Bulletin, Board of Education, 1354-56 Broadway, Detroit, Michigan. (Published monthly except July and August.)

fact that only 25% of the schools reporting, Table VII (p.42), are making use of them.

Public-Spirited Citizens

Everyone knows the vast amount of influence wielded by a very few individuals on the floor of town meeting. Every town has its few leaders in whom the public at large has faith. To be sure, on most questions, there is a decided difference of opinion and each side of the question is likely to have its champion. This is where our publicity program needs to function, in order to win as many of these leaders to the cause of education as possible. A division of opinion on school matters is a hazardous situation.

It is to our advantage that most of these people in whom the public has confidence deserve it. They are apt to be broadminded and almost always champion the cause of education when they fully understand the needs, and if these so-called needs involve a reasonably justifiable expenditure. However, we may feel, at times we are apt to ask for things we should not have anyway. When we do not get them we manage to get along some way or other. Sometimes, if we are frank and honest, we will have to admit

that requests have been made without much regard for the taxpayers' pocketbooks. So, when approaching these public-spirited citizens, we should make sure before hand that we can fully back our requests.

Then, there is another angle to be considered in winning over the support of the public-spirited citizens. Not only can we usually get what we need on the floor of town meeting, but the attitude of the whole community toward the school system is in no small measure traceable to the influence of these people. Every town is happy when it can express pride in its schools. It is an item that is always capitalized by the leading citizens whenever they feel that they can do so. We should make every effort to secure the united support of our public-spirited citizens.

The following is from Miller and Charles,
 "The interest of public-spirited citizens in a community's school system is a factor which every administrator can count as a natural avenue to the public at large....."

"Pride in certain schools also is operative within the community. A real estate dealer, trying to sell home sites, doesn't fail to mention, along with paved streets, water mains and electric light, the

fact that 'a good school is within five minutes' walk'. In a sense this is an acknowledgment of the great importance attached to education by the American people.

"Business men are proud to have their city known for the excellence of its schools, and for this reason Chambers of Commerce, advertising clubs and other organizations are often glad to co-operate in spreading the fame of the system."¹

More often than not the most influential citizens are the least informed about their schools. Once their united support can be secured and maintained the schools need have little fear of lack of co-operation by the citizenry at large.

Public Bulletin Boards; Dad's Night; Broadcasting;
Slides at the Theaters

Little can be said relative to any of these types of publicity that has not already been advanced in connection with other topics. It is surprising to note, however, the very small use made of public bulletin boards, and slides at the theaters.

1. Miller, Clyde R., and Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.82 and p.168. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

Of course, they can be utilized only occasionally and chiefly for the purpose of making announcements, although carefully planned graphs or illustrative material can be drawn up that will show standards of achievement. Theaters are generally glad to run a slide or two for us occasionally and space is usually available on public bulletin boards. It may seem that this means of reaching the public is relatively unimportant, but it affords another contact. The more contacts we make the better, provided there is sufficient variety to relieve monotony, and that what we have to show is worth while.

Dad's Nights differ only slightly from parents' visiting days, except some special attraction is usually afforded that is of particular interest to the men. In a few places these take the form of a "smoker", but this would be out of the question in many localities. The Father and Son Banquet idea has been used to some extent and usually works out very satisfactorily. On these occasions, there is speaking by both students and interested members of the group. A musical program can be provided by the school, and some form of brief entertainment always helps to put the program "across." Dads' Nights will usually attract more men than parents' nights.

For some reason, the fathers shift their responsibility to the shoulders of the womenfolk, whenever possible, in matters concerning education. This is impossible on Dads' Nights. Then too, the fact that it is called "Dads' Night" has a certain psychological stimulus. Because the men, for the most part, are the taxpayers, it is highly important to make contact with them.

Broadcasting is a special type of publicity in itself. More schools, than do, can arrange to broadcast either a band or orchestra program, a spelling bee, a short essay contest, a talk by a school executive, or something of this nature. It is possible to make direct contact with more patrons through broadcasting than by any other means. A program to be broadcast should be previously announced through the local papers which are always ready to make such activities known.

The School "House Organ"

This is essentially an inside influence to keep those in the organization in the desired frame of mind. It serves much the same purpose as business publications which are circulated within a given organization. The "House Organ" has its reason for be-

ing, in order to keep everybody better informed, in the belief that greater understanding makes for harmony and co-operation. The local school "House Organ" does not differ essentially from "The Massachusetts Teacher", or any other federation publication, except that it is smaller, is published less frequently and is more intimate. It affords the superintendent and other executives and supervisors an opportunity to explain their policies, and it gives the teachers an equal opportunity to express their views. Oftentimes the teachers present the most helpful suggestions.

The school "House Organ" should in no way be dominated by the superior officers of the organization. It should be a mutual enterprise and be open to all who have worth while views to put forth. Again, there must be a spirit of good sportsmanship about the whole thing and mutual give and take. Some of the most successful of the publications are controlled by the officers of a local teachers' club and are edited under their direction. News of activities concerning individuals in the system may be included, and each issue usually contains one or two outstanding articles relating to progressive education, written by an authority outside the sys-

tem. The easiest way to secure these is to get permission to reprint portions of a good article that has recently appeared in a standard publication. Permission is usually not difficult to secure provided full credit is given the parent magazine. This detracts not in the least from the value of the article. In fact, it may be the means of some teachers subscribing to the parent publication.

The school "House Organ" can become a very definite means for better understanding among members of a given organization. The very fact that its publication brings the teaching force and the supervisory staff into closer contact is bound to make for better co-operation, unless there is something fundamentally wrong with those concerned. This is apt, by far, to be the exception rather than the rule, particularly, if the publication is controlled by the teachers' club. The school "House Organ" is a type of publicity that builds within to be reflected without. Properly handled it has unique possibilities.

A Department of School Information

I quote here from Miller and Charles, "Every school system should have at least one responsible

official who is fairly well informed on the many activities of the system and who can give to the newspaper reporters all the time they desire. News stories that are accurate and written in full understanding of their subject matter are not developed in brief, hurried conversation with impatient officials.

"The director of information, if he does his work properly, will translate school news into terms that anybody can understand; that is, into terms of child welfare."¹

In spite of this statement less than 7% of the schools reporting have any such official. There are at least three reasons for this lack:

1. It is difficult to justify expenditure for this purpose.
2. School men, in general, are not fully aware of the value of publicity.
3. It is difficult to find one with satisfactory qualifications to do the job.

Earlier in this paper (pages 21-23), we have discussed qualifications and duties of a good pub-

1. Miller, Clyde R., and Charles, Fred, Publicity and the Public School, p.66 and p.68. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

licity director. It is futile to hope for such an official, in any but the largest systems, for some time to come. Consequently, we will confine ourselves to a consideration of a department of school information as a subdivision of some other major department.

Some schools have tried having student reporters, but this method sooner or later has usually lead to sorrowful results, even with abstract news, except when it has been carefully edited by some person of mature judgment. To edit in this manner requires nearly as much time as doing the whole job. Again, matters of true educational value cannot possibly be set forth in this way. No student sufficiently understands the fundamentals of education to even scratch the surface. In addition, this plan provides no competent person to meet reporters. In times of stress or in a crisis this arrangement falls down completely.

In most school systems the brunt of publicity falls upon the superintendent. It requires a great deal of his time to meet reporters, and would require considerable more if he were to handle publicity as the average superintendent would desire and at times is forced to do. He is the highest salaried

individual in the organization, therefore, publicity through him becomes far more expensive, and, because of his many other duties, less effective than if handled by a lower salaried employee devoting one-half or one-third time to publicity. Under our present organization this is the most satisfactory way of keeping the public informed. Some competent teacher can be selected and given program time for this purpose. The vice-president of the local teachers' club is a likely possibility.

Publicity handled in this way is the next best thing to a full-time publicity director. Being given program time for the purpose enables the one in charge to get around and make contacts within the system; to meet and talk with the superintendent, principals, supervisors, and teachers; to spot interesting projects and activities; to meet reporters; and to promote the whole organization in general.

Care should be exercised in the selection of the person to do this work. One should be chosen who meets, as nearly as possible, the qualifications set up for a full-time publicity director (see pp. 21-23), and should endeavor to follow the plan outlined for that official. The whole program of publicity should revolve around this department.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Public school publicity is the problem of getting sufficient information before the public in such an effective manner that it builds adequate confidence in the public schools.
2. The whole attitude toward public school publicity has changed even within the last decade.
3. Public school publicity must "sell" progressive education to the public in much the same manner as a manufacturer "sells" his product through advertising.
4. Educators fail to realize the ignorance of the average layman regarding progressive education -- he is apt to view present day education as being the same as when he attended school and feels justified in raising the matter of added expense as unnecessary.
5. The public is not all to blame for lack of insight and failure to co-operate.

6. The public will not voluntarily come to the schools seeking information. The schools must go to the public.
7. More interest must be aroused in order to get attention. The public is not getting the school news in which it is most interested.
8. A well-informed public is an intelligently co-operative public.
9. There is general agreement among writers on the subject, that, the straight-forward policy is the only safe one to follow. A "partial-fact" or "cover-up" policy is fraught with danger. In an honest administration, frank admission of defect, particularly if it is due to inadequate equipment, more often than not brings about the curing of that evil. When the public is informed by the department that it is aware of its deficiencies and then proceeds to outline and put into effect a constructive program, a confidence can be secured that could not possibly be developed in any other way.
10. Public support cannot be gained overnight. It takes many weeks of constant pub-

licity.

11. Constant publicity is better than so-called campaign publicity, but there must be variety in order to relieve monotony.
12. The public needs information especially regarding the value of our newer courses and is anxious to get it.
13. Newspaper editors are in no less need of correct information than are the citizens. The average newspaper man does not intend to do us harm. When this happens, it is usually because of lack of proper information.
14. A school system must, first of all, deserve the whole-hearted support of the community.
15. The taxpayer must be shown that economy is being practised.
16. Voters, over and over again, have proven that they are ready to rise to the occasion when they are convinced that there is a real need to be met.
17. There is need, not only for better financial support, but also for a better understand-

ing that will make possible better education for pupils through more intelligent co-operation.

18. It is not co-operation of the home with the school, but the co-operation between home and school that is needed.
19. There is direct relationship between parental attitude and pupil success. The parents of a failing pupil are not apt to be strong supporters of public schools.
20. Parents must be lead to realize that the school is interested and just as anxious to help boys and girls who attend as are the parents themselves.
21. The public must be made to see that it is not nearly so much what pupils can do today that counts as what they can do today in comparison with what the same pupils could produce six months or a year ago.
22. A pupil who impresses his parents with a feeling of loyalty to his school, together with the fact that it is a serious undertaking from an academic standpoint, can do more to win the

confidence and support of that parent than all the rest of the means put together.

23. Nothing, except the pupils themselves, can exercise as much power for public support of schools as the understanding newspaper.

24. Much confidence can be built by teachers and administrators through public contact in connection with community undertakings. Every member of the school system should enter into the life of the community.

25. Members of the school staff, especially the superintendent and principals, should affiliate themselves with local organizations.

26. The influence of influential citizens should never be over-looked as an important means of developing better understanding and support.

27. Throughout all of our publicity program we must ever keep it uppermost in our minds that public support of education is determined chiefly by the degree to which it is generally understood.

28. Few school men, because of the pressure of

other duties, acquaint themselves with effective methods of gaining public support and cooperation.

29. Every school system, that is sufficiently large, should have a director of public relations. When this is impossible, a definite program must be carried on by the school executives.

30. The chief avenues to public school publicity are:

The Newspapers

Exhibits

Activities

The School System Itself

Student Publications

Organizations and Civic Centers

Special School Visiting Days

Addresses

Home Visitors

Post-Office and Store Window Displays

Bulletins to Keep the Public Informed

Public-Spirited Citizens

Public Bulletin Boards

Dads' Nights

Broadcasting

Slides at the Theaters

The School "House Organ"

A Department of School Information

VI

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