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Pupil progress in Millis.

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PUPIL PROGRESS IN MILLIS

Submitted by

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

An approach to the problem.--No problem has caused more headaches and heartaches to teachers, parents, and pupils in the organization of our graded schools than that of pupil progress. Communities must constantly study the problem in all its related aspects to be aware of the effect which their policies and practices are having on pupil progress. Otto has stated the problem generally:[1]

> "There is probably no single aspect of the organization of graded elementary schools which continuously confronts teachers and administrative officers in a more baffling manner than that of children's progress through school. For a nine year period, beginning Januaryl, 1934, bibliographies in education totaled more than four hundred research studies and articles dealing with various phases of pupil progress and the recording and reporting of pupil progress. It is generally agreed that a school system should be organized and administered so as to provide for the smooth, continuous, natural progress of every pupil. Yet there are many vital questions that need be answered and many procedures that must be worked out before actual practice can attain that goal. If teachers and administrators at any one level and at different levels in the school system can cooperatively arrive at reasonable agreement as to the fundamental principles and the administrative practices which should govern promotion--that is, the advancement of a pupil from one grade to another and from one school to another--perhaps the principal factor contributing to inarticulation in public education would be removed."

1/Henry J. Otto, Elementary School Organization And Administration, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1944, p. 200.

In spite of much research on the problem, no tailored plan has been found that will meet the needs of all localities. Each community must study its own problems and must attempt to arrive at its own solutions. Otto[1] in commenting on much of the research in the field of pupil progress reaches the following conclusion:

> "Perhaps the outstanding conclusion that can be drawn from the data reported is that there is no single concept or group of united threads which can be said to constitute the promotional policy of the school systems studied. There is much confusion of thought on the part of all groups of educational workers regarding what is a desirable and justifiable plan for the promotion of pupils. This chaos is enhanced by the fact that people disagree as to the fundamental nature and functions of the elementary school as an educational institution. It is not clear whether the elementary school shall be an institution in which training in tool subjects shall be the major objective, or whether the chief concern of the school shall be the development of well-adjusted, wholesome personalities. Or, is it likely that both of these objectives (and perhaps certain others) shall receive equal attention? If the latter be true, then how are these various objectives to be represented in the promotional practices? Or is it likely that pupil progress can be administered quite apart from the instructional objectives? In any event, it seems clear that many of the above questions must be answered before a concrete promotional policy can be worked out."

Statement of the problem.--The writer proposes to determine what plans for pupil progress, kindergarten through grade six, should be taken in the town of Millis, Massachusetts.

Source.--In September, 1951, the writer began his first full year as elementary supervising principal for the town of Millis, Massachusetts. The previous year, the writer had observed the placement and grading of pupils for the coming year.

1/Henry J. Otto, op. cit., p. 211.

In talking with the teachers, the writer had found considerable doubt and confusion as to what to do with children of doubtful ability, doubtful achievement, or both. To promote or not to promote was the question. There seemed to be a great deal of confusion among the teachers as to what the basis was for promotion.

Justification.--The following reasons would seem to justify an investigation of the problem:

1. In any school system there should be uniform promotional and grading policies. Inquiry of the teachers suggested to the writer that there was not uniformity in decisions made in Millis.
2. Every school system should have on file definite information showing the effect which its grading and promotional policy is having on pupil progress. No collected body of information in regard to this problem was available in Millis.
3. Promotional and grading policies need to be constantly evaluated in the light of newer practices which seem to be proving successful. A growing trend exists which points the way toward more flexible promotional and grading policies. Plans for continuous progress are being tried in many localities. Millis needs to evaluate its present promotional and grading policy in relation to this trend. Again, inquiry of the teachers

showed that this had not been done within the memory of any teacher.

Scope.--The experience of all children now in school in Millis will be studied in relation to progress from kindergarten through grade six. Progress plans will be formulated only for pupils in kindergarten through grade six, as pupils in other grades are beyond the jurisdiction of the writer.

Logical analysis.--In order to determine what plans for pupil progress should be taken in Millis, it would seem that the following questions must be answered:

1. What do we find in authorities and current practice in regard to pupil progress?
2. What is the present pupil progress policy in Millis?
3. What has happened with regard to progress in kindergarten through grade six to the pupils entering the Millis Consolidated School from 1940 on? (Pupils who entered in 1940 would be seniors in 1951-1952.)
4. What has caused this to happen?
5. What recommendations for pupil progress, kindergarten through grade six, should be made in Millis in view of the above findings?

Research procedure.--The following research procedure would seem to be indicated:

1. Investigation of the literature on pupil progress and plans of pupil progress.

2. Obtaining an understanding of the pupil progress policy accepted by the teachers by means of an inquiry of the teachers, kindergarten through grade six, now in the system.
3. Investigation of records to find out what happened to the classes which entered from 1940 on in regard to promotion, kindergarten through grade six, and tabulation of the data.
4. Examine the records of pupils retarded or accelerated to determine the reasons for retardation or acceleration. This will be done in relation to age, achievement, and ability.

Data needed.--The following data were needed:

1. Understanding of progress policy accepted by the teachers in kindergarten through grade six since 1940.
2. Number of pupils retarded and where.
3. Ages, intelligence quotients, achievement test results, and report card marks of pupils retarded.
4. The same for any accelerated pupils.
5. Chronological ages of all pupils in the school.

Procurement of data.--An inquiry form was used to obtain an understanding of past progress policy accepted by the teachers. Ages were obtained from the Massachusetts school register. Intelligence quotients and achievement test results were in the pupil's

cumulative record folder. Report card marks and the number of retardations and accelerations were found on the white "Life" cards and the cumulative record folder.

Treatment of data.--Tables were set up to show the following information:

1. Teacher interpretation of past progress policy.
2. The number, sex, and present location of pupils retarded from September, 1940, to the present.
3. The places where retardation took place for these pupils.
4. The ability of these pupils as measured by intelligence tests.
5. The achievement of these pupils as measured by achievement tests and by report card marks.
6. Enrollment trends in Millis from 1940 to the present.

CHAPTER II

PHASES OF ATTAINING PUPIL PROGRESS

Definition of pupil progress.--From the writer's viewpoint it seemed essential to develop a clear definition of what is meant by pupil progress. In an examination of the literature on pupil progress, the writer found no universal agreement on what is meant by pupil progress. Pupil progress does not mean the same thing to all people. In defining pupil progress the problem resolves itself, not to a simple definition of pupil progress, but what should an acceptable definition be for a modern elementary school. Several questions arise when one tries to define pupil progress.

1. Is pupil progress concerned only with the movement of the pupil from grade to grade?
2. Should pupil progress be concerned only with the mastery of certain prescribed skills and the memorization of facts?
3. Is pupil progress concerned only with the intellectual progress of the pupil?
4. Does pupil progress mean the total development of the individual as a continuous ongoing process?

Burton[1] in considering the relation of experience to learning has defined progress in terms of the learner:

> "Preparation for life is not something to be imposed upon the learner far in advance. It is rather the development of those understandings, attitudes, and abilities which the pupil needs now in the solution of his current problems. These turn out to be similar to those which he will need later in solvin g adult problems. Pupils will progress through levels of maturity, participating at each level in rich and varied learning experiences. Understandings, attitudes, and abilities needed in adult life begin in the nursery. They will grow and expand through continuing experiences until the learner emerges into adult life. That is, pupils will pursue problems and projects of value to them now. To do this they will need to work together, to plan procedures, to make decisions, to understand differing personalities, to be tolerant of differences of opinions, and so on through hundreds of items. But all of these items are equally necessary in adult life. The learner progresses toward adulthood by developing through experience at each maturity level better insights, better attitudes, better abilities."

Otto[2] in discussing children's progress through school cites examples of what items are given the greatest weight in determining whether a pupil should be promoted or retained:

> "In 1934 two hundred superintendents and principals of elementary schools and 1,702 classroom teachers in thirty-five representative school systems in northern Illinois, exclusive of the city of Chicago, were requested to list the item or items which they considered most important or gave greatest weight in determining whether a pupil shall be promoted or retained. Twenty-eight different items were mentioned, achievement in subjects of study being named more than twice as often as any other item. Mental ability, chronological age, various character traits, home conditions, health, attendance, and conduct were among the other criteria named. If all the different items had been tabulated exactly as they were reported, the list would have contained more than seventy-five rubrics."

1/William H. Burton, The Guidance of Learning Activities, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1944, p. 82.

2/Henry J. Otto, op. cit., pp. 202, 203.

It is readily seen from the preceding that a clearcut definition of pupil progress cannot be given apart *from* its related setting. There are many definitions of pupil progress available. The question is---which one should the school accept? To find the answer the writer turned to an examination of some of the related phases of pupil progress.

A philosophy of education.--In making any study of pupil progress it would seem necessary to examine to some extent the basic philosophy of the elementary school. This may be found in written form in many schools, or it may be implied in the practices which the school employs. What are the goals toward which a good elementary school is heading? In a study of pupil progress it would seem logical to first determine toward what it is trying to progress. Progress implies a goal which gives direction. It is not the purpose here to formulate a complete philosophy of education, which might be accepted or rejected in part or in total. It is rather the purpose to provide a guide to one's thinking in the formulation of a philosophy. One of the prime needs of our school system or any school system is a clear statement of the goals and purposes toward which it is aimed. Lane[1] has stated the problem clearly and concisely in the preamble of his charter for the elementary school.

1/Robert H. Lane, The Teacher in the Modern Elementary School, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1951, p. 8.

> "The great majority of Americans are seriously concerned over the direction which our elementary schools should take. There are millions of kindly intelligent people who recogmize many of the desirable achievements of the modern elementary school, but at the same time question certain methods and practices as unsound in preparing children to meet life effectively on their age-level. There is a great and urgent need for clarification of the philosophy of elementary education in the United States today."

A philosophy may be defined as a set of beliefs which guide. In a school system in actual practice as it daily affects children's living and learning, it is the set of beliefs held by parents, teachers, and administrators, and as such it should be worked out. What are the major objectives of elementary education? Toward what should it be heading? Much has been written on the goals and purposes of education in American democracy. The Educational Policies Commission in its book on elementary education[1/] has defined three major values which it feels should guide and direct the education of all American children. These are stated below in condensed form:

> "1. A good elementary school will help to develop those basic skills and that sturdy independence and initiative which will enable our citizens to attack the problems that face them and to press forward toward ever improving solutions.
>
> 2. A good elementary school strives for the discovery and full development of all the humane and constructive talents of each individual.
>
> 3. A good elementary school emphasizes social responsibility and the cooperative skills necessary to the progressive improvement of social institutions."

1/Educational Policies Commission, Education for All American Children, National Education Association of the U.S. and the Association of School Administrators, Washington, D.C., 1948, pp. 3,4.

At his inauguration as president of Columbia University in 1948 General Eisenhower made the following observation:

> "At all levels of education, we must be constantly watchful that our schools do not become so engrossed in the techniques, great varieties of fractionalized courses, highly specialized knowledge, and the size of the physical plant as to forget the principal purpose of education itself--to prepare the student for effective personal and social life in a free society....General education for citizenship must be the common and first purpose of them all."

Lane has attempted to clarify the purposes and procedures of the elementary school in his "Charter for the Elementary School."[1] The first two articles deal with the philosophy and objectives of elementary education:

"Article I

An Acceptable Philosophy of Education

1. The major purpose of elementary education is to ensure succesful growth of children.
2. All kinds of growth are equally important.
3. Each child grows in an environment-physical and social which conditions his growth.
4. The growing child's day is made up of experiences within his environment.
5. The major task of the teacher is to direct the growth of the child from each level of his development to the next higher level.

Article II

The Objectives of Elementary Education

The major objective which the elementary school should reach is to give its boys and girls a thorough grounding in the fundamentals of good living."

The unique feature of American education which must be kept in mind in the formulation of an acceptable philosophy is

1/Robert H. Lane, op. cit., pp. 8-11.

that education in America is education for all children regardless of race, color, creed, or mental ability. The preceding quotations give some trends in modern educational philosophy in the elementary school. A clear statement of educational philosophy worked out for a school should help to bring changes in practices and procedures.

Understanding of child growth and development.--How should child growth and development enter into our pupil progress policy? There are three major phases of child growth and development. These are anatomical and physical growth, social and emotional growth, and intellectual growth. Often these are treated as separate and distinct phases of child growth. It should be kept in mind that these three constantly interact. Many times in the past, educational psychology has been concerned with isolated phases of growth and development which had little relation to, or practical value in the education of children. Gradually a concept has evolved which treats the child as a whole organism. Total behavior patterns are described rather than isolated phases of growth. Children are being studied in the laboratory rather than from an armchair. Experimental schools, guidance clinics, and child study laboratories have all added their part to our present knowledge of children's behavior. In the past a child's progress through school was determined almost solely by his intellectual achievement

with little regard for any other phase of growth. The child survived or fell by the wayside purely on the basis of whether he achieved the desired academic standard required by that particular school at that particular time. A pupil progress policy which takes child growth and development into consideration should of necessity consider other phases than intellectual achievement alone.

Principles of growth.--Millard[1/] has suggested four principles of growth which have many implications for an acceptable pupil progress policy:

"1. Growth is qualitative as well as quantitative.
2. Growth is continuous.
3. Growth is individual.
4. Growth is modifiable."

What are some of the implications behind these four principles? It would seem that education to date has been concerned mainly with the quantity of growth and quality was not considered. The implication for pupil progress would seem to be this---are we pushing children ahead or retarding them solely on the basis of the quantity of work done? The idea that growth is continuous is difficult for many to accept. Growth is far more orderly within the child's own pattern than was before suspected. Does the school help or does it interfere with this aspect of growth? That the growth of children is individual would be denied by few today. The acceptance of this

1/C.V. Millard, Child Growth and Development in the Elementary School Years, D.C. Heath, Boston, 1951, pp. 11-18.

principle has great implications for pupil progress. Can the acceptance of grade standards be reconciled to a program which will provide for individual differences? Is it possible to accept both ideas? It would appear to the writer that to accept one would be to reject the other. Conscientious teachers have attempted to adapt work to the ability of their pupils, but working under the grade standard theory when it came time for marking or promotion they were faced with a dilemma. The teachers said, "He is doing the best he can. How can I retard or fail him?" Yet under the grade standards idea they cannot promote him until he has reached the level of attainment specified for that grade. The impulse to grow is innate and will continue. The pattern of growth may be modified. This is the important consideration for teaching. How growth can be modified is generally misunderstood. Millard[1] has said:

> "Attempts at modification through pressure, excessive drill, and extended practice periods are usually ineffective when measured in terms of permanent learning."

In regard to emotional and social adjustment and the problem of adjusting to individual abilities, Pressey and Robinson have suggested the following:[2]

> "Different schools show differences in the average ability of the children. In a given class the children vary greatly in ability. Different grades markedly overlap; thus some third grade children may be above the

1/C.V.Millard, op. cit., p. 17.

2/Sidney L. Pressey and Francis P. Robinson, Psychology and the New Education, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1944, p. 109.

> average sixth grade child in ability. Such a child cannot be advanced in school in proportion to his ability for fear of social maladjustment. But maladjustment will also follow if each child's ability is not recognized. A flexible system of progress through school which will take account, with the best compromise possible, of each child's total stage of development seems best. It must be recognized that children of different abilities have different futures to prepare for. A bright child is headed perhaps for a profession; a dull child, toward some type of unskilled work. Though constitutional capacity cannot be increased, by bringing it about that children will more adequately realize their potentialities an increase in the general level of abilities is possible."

Again the same authors[1] suggest a less rigid promotion plan as the only way to truly answer the problem of individual differences:

> "Instructional materials and procedures are increasingly being so organized as to be readily adjustable to the needs of each pupil. Now there are special materials for sight saving classes, special classes for the subnormal, Increasingly, the writers believe, there will be flexibility in promotion so that children of superior maturity may be moved ahead more rapidly than the average. In class there can be such a variety of possible work that each pupil can do somewhat as he desires and proceed at his own pace. With ingenuity all this can be done with out any impossible burden on teachers or educational facilities. In fact, it might be said that the problem is to free each pupil from unnecessary routine and to give him maximal means and opportunity for self-education; in proportion as this is done, the task of the teacher will be lightened"

Administrative practices.--Underlying all provisions for a pupil progress policy there is one of two opposing theories. Caswell designates these two theories as the "grade standards" theory and the "equalization of educational opportunity" theory.

1/Ibid., p. 358.

Caswell[1] has defined the "grade standards" theory in the following manner:

> "One theory of regulating progress has its origin in the graded system. As pointed out in the preceding chapter, the process of grading was originated as a means of dividing large groups of pupils into small instruction groups which would be relatively homogeneous in achievement. In making these grade divisions, standards were set up for each grade and a pupil was placed in a grade to which the teacher believed his achievement, when compared with the grade standard, entitled him. This procedure led directly to the retention of pupils in a grade until the teacher believed they had reached the standard for the grade."

In defining the "equalization of educational opportunity" theory, Caswell quotes from Mort:[2]

> "The schools of a democracy should offer to each pupil those unique opportunities for acquiring skills, for practice in precise thinking, and for growth in power of appreciation which are attainable by one of his intelligence. This ideal requires that we adjust our standards to the ability of our pupils. Every pupil in the ideal school system is judged by the best which he can do and not by the median performance of an unselected group."

In 1933 Caswell made an extensive survey of seven states and thirty-seven cities on the status of nonpromotion. The following conclusions were reached:[3]

> "1. The rate of nonpromotion in different cities and states varies widely. The range approximates two per cent to twenty per cent.

1/Hollis L. Caswell, Education in the Elementary School, American Book Company, New York, 1942, p. 251.

2/Paul R. Mort, The Individual Pupil in the Management of Class and School, American Book Company, New York, 1928, p. 5.

3/Hollis L. Caswell, Nonpromotion in Elementary Schools, Nashville, Tennessee, George Peabody College for Teachers, Division of Surveys and Field Studies no.4, pp. 24,25.

2. The average rate of nonpromotion for all grades approximates ten per cent.
3. There appear to be regional differences in the extent of the use of nonpromotion.
4. Schools in the same systems differ widely in the extent to which they employ nonpromotion, the difference in rate being as high as thirty per cent.
5. The rate of nonpromotion is significantly higher in grade one than in other grades.
6. The rate of nonpromotion in B sections of grades tends tobe higher than in A sections of grades.
7. The rate of nonpromotion for boys is higher than that for girls.
8. In general, the amount of nonpromotion has been somewhat lowered during recent years. The major characteristics of the practice, however, as pointed out more than thirty years ago, exist today in numerous schools. As these characteristics indicated an unsolved problem at that time, they suggest the persistence of the problem."

Does nonpromotion actually benefit pupils? Evidence seems to show that few pupils benefit from nonpromotion. Some do poorer work. Only a few actually do better work, and these not nearly in proportion to the time spent in repeating the grade. Otto[1/] comments on this phase of nonpromotion:

> "It is now evident that practically all of the notions previously held about the value of nonpromotion or the motivating value of the threat of failure have been exploded. Out of a group of repeaters, about 20 per cent will do better than they did the preceding term, about 40 per cent will show no change, and about 40 per cent will actually do worse. If doubtful cases are divided into two groups appropriately matched on essential items, and one group is promoted and the other group is held back to repeat the grade, several studies have shown that the achievement of the promoted group, as measured by standardized tests, is equal to or greater than the achievement of the group held back. If the objective of the school is to promote the optimum educational development of pupils, nonpromotion is not the way to get it."

1/Henry J. Otto, op. cit., p. 232.

The curriculum.--While administrative practices may affect individuals, they seldom affect all children. The curriculum affects all children continuously, and therefore, deserves serious thought and consideration in its relation to pupil progress. Many schools have set up on paper an ideal set of objectives, but have a curriculum setup which makes the objectives difficult to achieve. The curriculum should be set up to obtain the objectives which the school has accepted as its goals. The contrast between the new type and the old type of curriculum is stated by Lee and Lee:[1]

> "Until the present ideas of education were put into practice, the main purpose of teaching was virtually the memorizing of facts and acquiring of skills by practice and repetition. The materials and subject-matter were prescribed and the textbooks were provided. Contrasted with this we find modern education not nearly so directly concerned with facts and skills as with the growth and development of the individual child. We want him to develop adequate habits of study, abilities to find information he desires, to evaluate it and to use it to solve his own problems. Materials and subject-matter are left partially to the decision of teachers and pupils working together so that they may take advantage of the situation most pregnant with possibilities at that particular time. Textbooks have changed to libraries carefully built up to furnish valuable materials on particular subjects on a wide range of levels so that all in the group may find materials well within their abilities from which they may contribute their share."

There must be continued opportunities within the curriculum for all children to meet reasonable success throughout their elementary school years. Pupils should be in a group where

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1/Doris M. Lee and J. Murray Lee, The Child and His Curriculum, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Incorporated, New York, 1940, p. 94.

competition does not become destructive. Arbitrary assignment of curriculum to grades no longer has its place. If a pupil in the second grade did not complete his "so called" first grade work in reading, is it reasonable or sensible to start him on a "so called" second grade reading program leaving a gap in his attainment of the necessary skills involved in reading? Confusion and failure on the part of the pupil may, and in all probability, will be the result. One should not blame the first grade teacher for not properly preparing the child, or blame the child for not meeting an arbitrary requirement which in many cases is impossible for all children to meet at the same time. The intelligent capable teacher will know her pupils well enough so that she can determine the proper time at which certain phases of the curriculum should be introduced. This should be done in terms of pupils and not in terms of arbitrary grade levels. The importance of having a curriculum setup which allows continuous progress and success cannot be overemphasized. Burnham[1/] in The Normal Mind says:

> "This stimulus of success is an essential condition of normal development and mental health. Continued failure, on the other hand, is liable to develop an unsocial attitude, the shut-in personality, and to plant the seeds, perhaps, of mental disorder....The great and essential condition, if pupils are to have success....real success as the psychologist understands the word.... is the opportunity for doing things, for tasks worthwhile, purposeful activity, selfactivity of the highest kind. Without opportunity for this, pupils cannot succeed."

1/W.H.Burnham, The Normal Mind, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1924, pp. 458, 460.

Progress plans and practices.--Many different plans and practices are being tried in an effort to reach acceptable solutions to some of the previously mentioned problems. While efforts at change have been directed largely toward the primary grades, because numerous investigations have shown that the greatest percentage of pupil failures occurred in those grades, plans have been proposed and tried at all grade levels. Although the plans have many variations, the following features are usually found:

1. The plans are geared to a recognition of individual differences.
2. The plans recognize that individuals learn at different rates.
3. The curriculum is usually set up in two parts; the common essentials such as reading and arithmetic, and group and creative activities such as music and art.
4. The common essentials are broken down into small individual units of achievement.
5. The pupil progresses in the common essentials from one unit of achievement to another at his own rate. Grade promotion or failure as such is done away with. The pupil may move from one level of accomplishment to the next higher level at any time during the year.

Social maturity is considered in moving from one grade to the next.

6. In group and creative activities such as art and music, participation for all children is recognized as desirable, but there is no set standard for all children to meet. Social consciousness and the urge to create and develop to the best of the pupil's ability are stressed.

The writer investigated many plans for pupil progress. The following quotations are taken from the bulletins, manuals, or books written on some of the outstanding progress plans. They suggest reasons for starting the program, principles to be followed in setting up the program, and some of the features found in the various progress plans.

The Baltimore program.[1]--The following suggests some of the influences which led the Baltimore schools to instigate a plan of continuous pupil progress:

> "Three major influences have served as the yeast for this educational ferment. They are: first, our growing knowledge of human development; second, our expanding concept of what constitutes a desirable educational program; and third, our concern over the unsatisfactory results of accepted practice in classifying, grading, and advancing pupils.
>
> As has been said, the first and perhaps the most significant of the factors leading toward change is our emerging and increasing understanding of child growth and development.

1/Mary A. Adams, "Continuous Growth," Baltimore Bulletin of Education, 1948, Baltimore, Maryland, Vol. 25-Nos.7-8-pp. 258-260.

A second major influence in developing a concern for continuous pupil progress is found in the educational objectives under which the Baltimore schools operate. These objectives are consistent with our democratic faith which esteems the individual, which rests for its success upon a literate and informed citizenry, and which strives for the improvement of group living through achieving effective human relationships.

The ineffectual and sometimes damaging results of existing methods of classifying, grouping, and promoting children have led educators to see the need for a change. Teachers have long been familiar with the records of pupils who continue to show poor or deficient ratings, in spite of numerous non-promotions. They have seen too many children made ashamed in the eyes of their classmates because they were not able to "pass" with them. They have witnessed too many instances of children so greatly overage because of retardation as to be misfits in their interests and in their social relationships with their fellow-pupils."

The Milwaukee program.--Ten years ago Milwaukee started a primary progress plan. Florence Kelly[1] in the December, 1951, issue of the N.E.A. Journal suggests from their experiences five principles to be followed in setting up the program:

"1. Orient teachers and parents first. Explain program and have it accepted.

2. Initiate the program with groups of children coming from kindergarten. Let it progress to higher levels with them. It is unwise and confusing to ungrade children who have been graded.

3. Start the program in one school for at least one year. Then add others gradually.

4. Continue the parent program for parents of each new group coming from kindergarten and for those new to the neighborhood.

5. Have periodic meetings for teachers and parents of children who have been on the primary plan."

1/Florence C. Kelley, "Ungraded Primary Schools Make the Grade in Milwaukee," National Education Association Journal, (December, 1951) p. 15.

The Winnetka plan.--The Winnetka plan was developed by Frederic L. Burk in the training school of the San Francisco State Teachers College in 1913. Although certain features were accepted by school systems in various parts of the country, it was not until nearly a decade later that the plan reached a high degree of development. Under the direction of Superintendent, Carleton W. Washburne, in the schools of Winnetka, Illinois the plan reached a high degree of development and consequently acquired the name of Winnetka plan.[1] The plan in its essential elements consists of the following:

> "Progress in the common essentials is strictly individual. Each child progresses through each unit of work at his own rate. He stays on one unit of the work until he masters it and then goes on to the next. The time required by the child to finish each particular unit of any of the common essentials varies greatly. The units of work are distinctly units of achievement, not units of time....The general technique by which this individual progress is brought about consists of (a) breaking up the common essentials curriculum into very definite units of achievement; (b) using complete diagnostic tests to determine whether a child has mastered each of these units, and if not just where his difficulties lie; and (c) the full use of self-instructive self-corrective materials."

The plan is characterized by two distinct features. One is the required mastery of certain common essentials in fundamental subjects as reading, at the individual's own rate of progress. The other is a recognition that there are group and and creative activities which are highly desirable, but which

1/C.W.Washburne, Jabel Vogel, and W.S.Gray, A Survey of the Winnetka Public Schools, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1926, p. 15.

should require no set standards of achievement.

The Cleveland plan.--In 1942 the Cleveland Public Schools instituted a progress plan known as "The Cleveland Child Progress Plan." After preliminary experimentation the plan reached a high degree of development. Cleveland's progress plan[1] is explained in some detail as follows:

> "The name of the plan of instruction in the Cleveland Public Schools is 'The Child Progress Plan'. It includes levels of progress. The term 'level' is used to indicate a step or unit of progress. In the primary unit children do not advance by grades. Each child working with a group of children of more or less equal ability, progresses at his own rate. He moves form level to level when he shows that he has successfully mastered the materials and skills of that level. Then he is ready to progress to the next level, regardless of the time of year. No child fails or repeats a semester's work."

The pamphlet goes on to explain why they feel some children require more time than others:[2]

> "Since children differ mentally, they progress at different rates. Also, the rate of progress depends upon such factors as: difficulty of material, regularity of attendance, emotional disturbance at home or school, and the physical condition of the child. The time required for the completion of a level depends upon the needs and ability of the child, and also upon the requirments of that level. For these reasons, the total time required for the completion of all primary levels will not be the same for all children."

The following explains the organization of the primary unit in the Cleveland plan:[3]

1/Board of Education, A Guide to Cleveland's Child Progress Plan, Pamphlet, 1949, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 2.

2/Ibid,, p. 4.

3/Ibid., p. 5.

> "In the 'Child Progress Plan' a child progresses step by step in a natural, orderly, and systematic manner. Instead of the traditional organization of kindergarten, grades 1, 2, and 3, there are 26 levels in reading and 14 levels in arithmetic. Achievement tests have been provided to indicate the degree of mastery. In the reading program these tests are levels 3, 9, 13, 17, 21, and 25. Arithmetic tests follow arithmetic levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 13. A child progresses from one level to the next whenever he has mastered the material. Since there are no failures, no child repeats agrade or a semester. However, some children require a longer period of time than others to complete the primary levels."

In the plan as has been shown, the curriculum was organized on levels rather than grades in the primary unit. They indicate their reasons for doing so as follows:[1]

> "No failure or repetition.
> No time limit on the completion of any one level.
> More frequent recognition of achievement.
> Child progresses when he is ready. He does not wait until the end of a semester.
> Child progresses according to his needs and ability.
> Child gains confidence through a sense of mastery.
> Child derives satisfaction through progress.
> Child knows his goals."

In order that parents of children entering the Cleveland system for the first time may have an approximate idea of what grade the pupil is in they have set up the following level equivalents:[2]

> "While there are no grades in the primary division, the following outline may help parents to measure their Child's progress. Because children differ so greatly, this outline can be only approximate.

1/ Ibid., p. 6.

2/ Ibid., p. 8.

Approximate Level Equivalents.

Years in School	Reading Levels	Arithmetic Levels
Kindergarten	*Level 1	1-2
First Year	2-9	3-6
Second Year	10-17	7-10
Third Year (and Fourth if necessary)	18-25	11-14
Enrichment	26	

*Reading levels in the kindergarten and levels 2 and 3 are concerned with preparation for reading, not with reading in the technical sense.

A child of average ability will complete the above levels in three to three and a half years above kindergarten. Some children may require four or even five years in addition to kindergarten to complete this primary assignment. Only children who make rapid progress will read the books on Level 26."

The Gloucester program.--In 1949 a program of pupil progress was started in the public schools of Gloucester, Mass. similar to that of the Cleveland Public Schools. During the summer of 1949 a teacher workshop developed curriculum materials to aid in setting up Gloucester's progress plan. The following quoted material is from a bulletin of the Gloucester school system which was written by those participating in the workshop:[1/]

"The reading program is organized so as to insure continuous pupil progress for every child who works to the best of his ability. For most pupils the work should be completed in three years, but for the slow-learning pupils four or more years may be necessary. The progress, however, for these four or more years will be continuous, and there will be no repetition of the work of any level.

1/Workshop Committee, The Primary Progress Plan, Curriculum Bulletin, 1949, Number 7, Gloucester Public Schools, Gloucester, Massachusetts, p. 1.

It is necessary to keep in mind that many factors influence the rate of a child's growth and progress: social adjustment, emotional stability, and physical and mental maturity.

It is important that each child be aware of his own goals so that he may gain confidence and satisfaction through a sense of mastery and progress. The Primary Progress Plan provides for pupil awareness of goals in reading by means of the individual progress charts kept by each child.

This plan also should help to eliminate a sense of failure or repetition, since there is no time limit on the completion of any one level, and the content of no level will be repeated.

The reading levels are set up in terms of the basal texts. There are fourteen of these levels as follows:

Basal Program in Reading
(for all children)

Level 1- Readiness
Level 2 - Vocabulary Development
Level 3 - Pre-primer I
Level 4 - Pre-primer II
Level 5 - Primer I
Level 6 - Primer II
Level 7 - First Reader I
Level 8 - First Reader II
Level 9 - Readiness II
Level 10- Second Reader I
Level 11- Second Reader II
Level 12- Readiness III
Level 13- Third Reader I
Level 14- Third Reader II

The supplementary readers are assigned to the levels principally on the basis of the vocabulary load; they may be used for teaching purposes, as well as for extra independent reading.

Enrichment activities are intended for all levels and for both the slow-moving and the faster-moving groups. The enrichment program is based upon a less carefully controlled vocabulary, a broader field of interest, and a wider variety of activities."

The plan of progress in arithmetic is also set up in levels. The bulletin explains the plan of progress in arithmetic:[1]

> "The arithmetic program for the first three years is also divided into a series of levels. The charts presented in the following pages outline the content of each of these levels under the following main headings: Counting, Understanding of Numbers, Reading and Writing Numbers, Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division, Fractional Parts, Graphs, Estimating, Measurement and Denominate Numbers, Problem Solving.
>
> As in the case of the reading levels, the child is expected to proceed from one arithmetic level to the next when he is ready to do so. There will be no repetition of levels. Most children should complete the fifteen levels in three years, but more time may be required for some pupils. Each child will have a copy of the arithmetic chart, on which a record will be kept of his individual progress.
>
> Suggestions for enrichment are included at intervals on the chart. These enrichment activities should be a part of the work of all levels."

The Dalton plan.--One feature of this plan, as in some of the others, is the division of the subjects into two groups. One group is the academic subjects, and the other group the physical, emotional, and social subjects. The academic work is laid out in units and the pupil works at the subject of his choice in a laboratory. There are regular checks of progress, but the pupil exercises a great deal of freedom of choice. The pupil progresses at his own rate. Subjects such as music and physical education may be taught on the basis of group instruction. Helen Parkhurst, the founder of the

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1/ Ibid., p. 19.

Dalton plan, describes the plan in operation:[1]

> "----, it is evident that the Dalton Laboratory Plan exacts the establishment of laboratories, one for each subject in the curriculum, though with a small teaching staff two subjects may be studied in a single laboratory. A specialist in that particular subject, or subjects, should be in charge of each laboratory whose relation to the scheme I will deal with later on. For the moment I want to emphasize the point that these laboratories are the places where the children experiment-----where they are free to work on their jobs,----"

Few schools have used the plan below grade four, feeling that children below that grade level, were not able to exercise freedom of choice wisely enough. In the United States it has been used to good advantage in the high schools of several large cities. Schools in England experimented with the plan in collaboration with Helen Parkhurst and the plan reached a high degree of development there. The idea as a whole has been more widely accepted in Europe than here.

Evaluating pupil progress.--Several suggestions are given by Elsbree and McNally as to methods of studying pupil progress in a school.[2] One procedure is suggested as follows:

> "One procedure which can be carried out with profit is the conduct of age-grade and grade-progress studies in the school. Some schools already make this standard practice yearly. The study simply involves plotting somewhat graphically the ages of the children in each grade in the school, so as to indicate clearly the extent of overageness and underageness for grade, and the years in school for all pupils, and for boys and girls separately. A valuable companion study is to determine percentage of

1/Helen Parkhurst, Education on the Dalton Plan, E.P.Dutton, and Company, New York, 1922, p. 39.

2/Willard S. Elsbree, and Harold J. McNally, Elementary School Administration and Supervision, American Book Company, New York, 1951, p. 155.

non-promotion by grade and by sex over a ten year period, to note any trends or interesting patterns."

Another suggested procedure is to examine the records of pupils who have failed in the past and to attempt to analyze their reasons for failure. These may be broken down into categories and may point the way to elimination of many causes of failure. Several kinds of records may shed light on the problem. Achievement test results, cumulative record folders, anecdotal records, intelligence test results, and report cards for past and present years upon examination should suggest possible reasons for pupil failure. Elsbree and McNally [1] suggest other studies should be made than those of academic progress to determine possible sources of difficulty:

> "Study of their home backgrounds, relationships with their companions, the pattern of their play experiences, of their personality and intelligence pattern, and of their problems, fears, and interests, usually indicates clearly to teachers that non-promotion is not the solution to the problems these children are facing."

Burton [2] in discussing the measurement of learning outcomes distinguishes between quantitative and qualitative measurement of outcomes. He suggests that perhaps qualitative measurement evaluates the more important outcomes of learning:

> "The term measurement usually refers to the use of objective tests or instruments of precision which yield quantitative data. These precise, quantitative data are direct measures of the pupil's achievement in fact and skill learnings or in rote mastery of subject matter."

1/Ibid., p. 158.

2/William H. Burton, The Guidance of Learning Activities, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1944, p. 413.

> "The term evaluation usually refers to the use of behavior records, inventories, scales, or check lists which yield descriptive, qualitative data. These qualitative data form the basis for judgements about the pupil's acquisition of the more general, more subtle, and more important outcomes."

The writer would suggest that both quantitative and qualitative measures of progress should be used in any study of pupil progress.

Summary of suggestions from authorities.--It can readily be seen from the writer's investigation of the literature on pupil progress and various plans of progress, that pupil progress cannot be dealt with apart from its related setting. The philosophy of the school, an understanding of child growth and development, administrative practices, the curriculum, the recording and reporting of pupil progress, and the evaluation of pupil progress are all areas which should be considered in any reorganization of the present pupil progress policy in Millis. The writer believes that an acceptable definition of pupil progress is one that concerns itself with the total development of the individual as he progresses through school. This means then, that there must be changes in many areas of the school program. Change by administrative edict alone would bring only superficial change. The writer believes as does Burton[1] that the community must be carried along with any change:

1/William H. Burton, op. cit., p. 234.

> "The community must be carried along with the program since it is fundamental that parents be informed, understand the new, and believe that they are fully in the confidence of the school leadership. Finally, the new curriculum and methods should be introduced gradually through tryouts here and there, with replanning in the light of these tryouts. Final introduction of the new on a system-wide basis should come when all have had opportunity to inform themselves, to observe, to try out under sympathetic supervision."

Millis needs an investigation of its present pupil progress policy and the effect it is having upon the pupils. As the writer pointed out in chapter one, this had not been done within the memory of any teacher now teaching in kindergarten or the first six grades. Only then can it decide whether the present policy is a justifiable policy in the light of newer practices and plans described by the writer.

CHAPTER III

STUDY OF PUPIL PROGRESS IN MILLIS

1. Past Pupil Progress Policy

The approach.--The writer, having stated the views of authorities and areas of research in the field, and having investigated some newer practices in regard to pupil progress plans, turned to an investigation of the situation in Millis. Initially, the writer's purpose was to determine what the pupil progress policy, as understood by the teachers in kindergarten through grade six, had been in the past. This was to be done by means of an inquiry of the teachers at a teachers meeting. The writer then proposed to determine what had been the experience of pupils in kindergarten through grade six in relation to this progress policy from 1940 to the present. Finally, the writer proposed to examine the records of pupils failing to make normal progress to determine possible causes for this happening. Normal progress for a pupil will be assumed, for purposes of this study, to mean a child who advances one grade for each year of chronological age. The data will be tabulated to show possible areas of difficulty in relation to progress. Recommendations will be made in the final chapter to overcome difficulties found.

Limitations.--While the writer has included all children now in the Millis Consolidated School within the scope of the study, the writer is concerned only with their experience in regard to progress in kindergarten through grade six. This was done for two reasons. The first reason was to broaden the scope of the study to cover the experience in relation to progress of pupils in kindergarten through grade six over a twelve year period. Second, the reason experience in relation to progress was limited to kindergarten through grade six, was that grades beyond grade six are not within the jurisdiction of the writer. No recommendations for change could properly be made by the writer for grades beyond grade six. The writer is also limited in the tabulation of data by that which is found available. Preliminary investigation of the records showed that many were not complete, or that information available was not pertinent to the study.

Organization of the Millis Consolidated School.--An understanding of the organization of the school will facilitate interpretation of the data to follow. The Millis Consolidated School consists of kindergarten and grades one to twelve. It is organized on a 7-2-4 basis. Grades seven and eight are classified as junior high school, with grades nine through twelve classified as high school. Grades seven and eight are somewhat departmentalized with no departmentalization below grade seven. Until April of 1951, the high school principal had supervised

all grades, kindergarten through high school. In April of 1951 the writer became supervising principal for kindergarten through grade six. The faculty consists of twelve teachers in grades one through six and kindergarten, and ten teachers in grades seven through twelve. Of the twelve teachers in kindergarten and grades one through six, there are two who have had no previous teaching experience in Millis or elsewhere.

Inquiry of teachers.--On the present cumulative record folder of each elementary school child, there is found one of the following notations after each grade level designation: 1. Promoted 2. Transferred 3. On Trial 4. Retained. The inquiry consisted of asking the ten teachers in kindergarten and grades one through six, who had previously taught in Millis, to define briefly the preceding four terms. Two teachers being new to the system were eliminated. The ten teachers were asked to define each of the four terms on the basis of past decisions which they had made. By doing this in writing on a mimeographed form, there was no opportunity for comparison or discussion until the teacher had written down her answer. This gave a purely individual reaction to the inquiry which, for the purpose of this study, seemed valuable.

Results of the inquiry.--Where general agreement was found on the inquiry, the results were summarized; where the range was great, the answers were reported in some detail. On the first three terms; promoted, transferred, and on trial,

general agreement was found. On the fourth term, retained, considerable divergence was apparent. Because of this, the first three items were summarized and the fourth reported in some detail.

"Promoted"--generally agreed to mean a pupil who had satisfactorily completed the work for that grade. He had met the grade standard.

"Transferred"--generally accepted to mean a child of low mental ability who has not met the grade standard, but for social and emotional reasons would be a problem if retained.

"On trial"--generally understood to mean a child of average ability or better who because of illness could not meet the grade standard. When there was definite knowledge that the pupil would be tutored during the summer, the pupil could be put ahead "ontrial" in June. In September, the pupil could take an examination to see if he could then meet the grade standard. If he did so, he was permanently promoted. If he did not meet the grade standard, he was retained in the grade of the previous year. Also mentioned was a child transferred from another school. In this case, it was mentioned, that the teacher, or teachers concerned, wished more time to observe the pupil's performance before making a final decision, as to promotion.

"Retained"--no general agreement found. Because of the diversity of answers given as reasons for retention of a pupil, the ten answers are given in some detail in the following paragraph.

The ten answers seemed to fall naturally into three classifications: the slow and immature learner, the learner of low achievement and high ability, and the learner who the teachers felt would profit by retention. The following answers were taken directly from the inquiry sheets indicating different types of pupils retained.

A. Immature and slow learners.

1. Too immature to read--grade one.
2. Slow learners--low mental ability.
3. Immature--slow learner.

B. High ability, but low achievement learners.

4. Ability present--achievement low.
5. A child who can be held accountable for new learnings and improved study habits.
6. Low in reading and arithmetic achievement--physically and socially immature--I.Q. indicated better work possible.
7. Low in achievement.

C. Learners who would profit by retention.

8. A child who would get a good foundation by review and drill.
9. Only those I was sure would profit by retention.

D. No answer.

10. One paper had no answer given.

The inquiry of teachers involved seemed to show general agreement on the three items: "Promoted"-"Transferred"-and "On Trial". On item number four-"Retained"- there was considerable

diversity of opinion as to what the basis had been for retention of a pupil. The words or phrases, slow learners, immature, or not working up to capacity were frequently mentioned in the answers given. No distinction seemed to be made between an immature and a slow learner. While only two teachers mentioned children they felt would profit by retention, the others implied this by mentioning pupils who were not working up to capacity. No teacher mentioned how far below the grade standard a pupil had to go in order to be retained. No specific behavior traits were mentioned to aid in classifying a pupil as immature. While the results of the inquiry showed pupils were retained because they were slow learners, or the teacher felt they were not working up to capacity, the teachers did not mention a specific amount of work to be accomplished by the pupil in their grade. Further inquiry of the teachers in the primary grades was made to determine if there was any specific quantity of work a pupil had to accomplish in grades one, two, and three to be promoted. There was agreement among the teachers on the following standards for promotion to be met.

1. From Grade One to Grade Two--Read fluently and with understanding in the third preprimer.
2. From Grade Two to Grade Three--Read fluently and with understanding in the second reader for readiness, plus one half the arithmetic prescribed for that grade.

3. From Grade Three to Grade Four--Read fluently and with understanding in the readiness third reader, plus one half the arithmetic prescribed for that grade.

This then was the teachers' understanding of the pupil progress policy as it had operated in past years.

2. Pupil Progress from Entrance through Grade Six of Pupils Now Found in the Millis Consolidated School

Per cent of pupils now in high school who entered grade one in Millis.--By checking grade one registers for the years, 1940-1943, against the present high school enrollment lists, the percentage of pupils, now in grades nine through twelve, who had made normal progress from grade one in Millis to those grades was found out. If pupils were not found on the present high school lists, one of two possibilities existed; they had either left the school system, or they had been retarded. Those pupils who had left school for various reasons did not concern the present study of the writer. The pupils who had made normal progress from grade in Millis to the present high school grades were located. Table 1 shows the per cent of pupils who entered grade one in Millis and were now found on the present high school enrollment lists. In order to determine if remaining pupils in grades nine through twelve had been retarded in Millis below grade seven, an examination of their cumulative record cards was necessary.

Table 1. Pupils Who Entered Grade One in Millis and Are Now Found on High School Enrollment Lists, Expressed in Percentages

Pupils	Entered 1943 Per cent now in grade nine	Entered 1942 Per cent now in grade ten	Entered 1941 Per cent now in grade eleven	Entered 1940 Per cent now in grade twelve
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Boys	27	43	30	38
Girls	42	43	57	47
Total	34	43	42	43

Table 1 should be read as follows: Thirty-eight per cent of the boys who entered grade one in Millis in 1940 are now found on the grade twelve enrollment list.

It is interesting to note, in relation to Table 1, that less than fifty per cent of the pupils who had entered grade one during the years, 1940-1943, had progressed steadily to their present position in high school. One of two possibilities existed for those remaining: (1) a large percentage of pupils entering during those years had left school, or (2) a large percentage of these pupils had been retained at some point in their progress through the lower grades.

Location of retained pupils.--The writer then attempted to locate those pupils now in school who had been retained at some grade below grade seven. This was done by an examination of the cumulative record folders and white "Life" cards

of all pupils now in school, exclusive of those shown in Table 1. Pupils in Table 1 could be eliminated, because they had progressed one grade for each year of chronological age since entering grade one in Millis. On the cumulative record folder of each pupil retained at any grade level there was the notation -- "Retained". The writer eliminated all pupils retained above grade six, as these did not concern the present study. Table 2 shows the present location of pupils who had been retained in any grade below grade seven in Millis.

Table 2. Present Location, by Grades, of Pupils Who Had Been Retained in Some Grade Below Grade Seven

Present Location (1)	Pupils Retained		
	Boys (2)	Girls (3)	Total (4)
Grade one....	1	0	1
Grade two....	3	0	3
Grade three..	2	0	2
Grade four...	6	1	7
Grade five...	2	1	3
Grade six....	2	2	4
Grade seven..	3	2	5
Grade eight..	4	0	4
Grade nine...	0	0	0
Grade ten....	2	0	2
Grade eleven.	1	2	3
Grade twelve .	1	0	1
Total.....	27	8	35

Table 2 should be read as follows: Three pupils, now in grade eleven, had been retained in some grade below grade seven.

Table 2 shows that there were over three times as many boys who had been retained in some grade below grade seven as there were girls. Otto[1] comments on similar studies done in the field of pupil progress:

> "For every grade the percentage of retarded boys is larger than that of retarded girls; in some instances the percentage of retarded boys is fifty to seventy-five per cent larger than the retarded girls. For every grade the percentage of accelerated girls exceeds the percentage of accelerated boys. Corresponding sex differences are present regarding the age-grade status of pupils."

The pupils retained were now located.

The places of retardation.--The next step was to find out in what grades the retardation had taken place. Table 3 shows the place of retardation and the number of retardations which took place in the first six grades for the thirty-five pupils retained in those grades.

Table 3. The Place of Retardation, and the Number of Retardations, Which Took Place in the First Six Grades for the 35 Pupils Retained in Those Grades

Place of Retardation	Number of Retardations	Place of Retardation	Number of Retardations
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Grade one...	13	Grade five..	5
Grade two...	13	Grade six...	0
Grade three.	4		
Grade four..	2	Total.....	37

Table 3 should be read as follows: Thirteen retardations took place in grade one.

1/Henry J. Otto, Elementary School Organization and Administration, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1944, p. 213.

It should be pointed out in relation to Table 3. that while only thirty-five pupils were retained; there were thirty-seven retardations. The two extra retardations show, because two pupils had been retained twice. One pupil, retained twice, had been kept back in grades one and two; the other in grades four and five. Table 3 also shows that of the thirty-seven retardations, twenty-six had taken place in grades one and two. This meant, that of the total number of retardations which had taken place in grades one through six, seventy per cent had taken place in grades one and two. Grades one and two definitely seemed to be the areas of greatest difficulty. Otto[1] comments on this problem:

> "Non-promotion invariably takes its largest toll in the primary grades. It is not uncommon for twenty to thirty per cent of first grade children to be asked to repeat the grade at least once. Non-promotion is not as frequent in the second and third grades as it is in the first grade, but the first three grades together accumulate about eighty-five per cent of the non-promotion awarded in the typical school. Once a child is past the third grade, his chances of being asked to repeat a grade are small."

Transferred pupils.--According to the inquiry, a transferred pupil was one of low mental ability who had not met the grade standard; but for social and emotional reasons would have been a problem if retained. Fifteen pupils now in school had been transferred from one grade to the next higher grade a total of sixty-two times.

1/Henry J. Otto, op. cit., p. 213.

No child transferred had an intelligence quotient of above ninety as measured by a group intelligence test. Of the fifteen transferred, thirteen had been retained in one of the primary grades one year, and then transferred for each succeeding year.

Pupils promoted on trial.--The inquiry had shown that teachers defined a pupil going ahead on trial as one that had average ability or better who could not meet the grade standard in June, because of poor attendance caused by illness. If, after tutoring during the summer, they could pass an examination in September which showed they could then meet the grade standard; the pupil was promoted. The two pupils who had been sent ahead twice on trial were retained the year following their second trial promotion. One other pupil, of the nine sent ahead on trial, had been retained the year following his promotion on trial. This would seem to indicate that while extra help during the summer had enabled these three pupils to go ahead in September, the results were not of a permanent nature. The other six pupils with the extra time and help during the summer had gone ahead in September, and from then on had made normal progress. While the teachers had mentioned putting a transfer pupil from another school ahead on trial, examination of the records did not reveal any pupil in this category.

3. Possible Causes of Failure to Make Normal Progress

The cumulative record form.**The writer had located the pupils retained in grades one through six, and had determined the grades which had presented the greatest difficulty for those pupils retained. If possible, the writer wished to determine from an examination of their cumulative records some of the possible reasons why these pupils had not been promoted. Preliminary examination of the cumulative record form used in Millis showed that this was possible in three areas: (1) Intelligence; (2) achievement as measured by achievement test results; and (3) achievement as measured by report card marks. No anecdotal records, or record of conferences, if any, with parents had been kept. No notations about home background, or influences outside of school which could have caused failure to make progress had been kept. The cumulative record form was a commercial product designed for general use. The same form was used for all grades, from grade one to twelve. Many items were not appropriate, or did not apply at all, to conditions in Millis. Space was limited and items had to be crossed out and written over in order that they apply to the situation in Millis. Records had not been adequately kept, and in many cases, items which should have been filled in were left blank, or were improperly filled.

Intelligence of pupils retained.--The writer wished to determine what the intelligence was, as measured by an intelligence test, of those pupils retained. Had lack of intelligence been the reason those pupils retained failed to meet the grade standard? Table 4 shows the range of intelligence for the thirty-five pupils retained in grades one through six.

Table 4. Range of Intelligence Quotients for 35 Pupils Retained

Range of I.Q.	Number of Pupils	Range of I.Q.	Number of Pupils
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Below 70.....	0	110-119.....	2
70-79.....	4	120-129.....	1
80-89.....	9	Above 129....	0
90-99.....	10		
100-109.....	9	Total.....	35

Table 4 should be read as follows: Nine pupils retained in the first six grades had intelligence quotients ranging from 100 up to 110.

The writer wishes to point out in relation to Table 4 that the thirteen pupils who had intelligence quotients below ninety were retained one year and then transferred for each succeeding year. The other twenty-two pupils retained had average or better than average ability. This would seem to indicate that lack of intelligence was definitely not the

reason for these pupils failing to meet the grade standard. It would suggest that causes other than lack of intelligence had contributed to their being retained. Three pupils retained had considerably better than average ability.

Achievement test results.--Achievement test results were not found on some children's folders. It should be noted in regard to the achievement test results which were available, that during part of the twelve year period with which this study is concerned; the results of the tests were published in the local newspaper. There was a strong competitive feeling between the three towns of the school union in regard to this. Pressure upon the teachers, such as this, could have caused the results to be inflated; or caused teachers to give more help than was allowable in the testing situation. The writer does not propose that this assumption be made in regard to achievement test scores; and only wishes to point out that there was a great deal of significance attached to achievement test results. The only score recorded on the cumulative folder was the average achievement score which was a composite of the several parts of the test. The writer wished to determine how far below the standard to be met had these pupils fallen. Table 5 shows the results for the year before retention for the thirteen pupils retained in grade one.

Table 5. Achievement Test Scores, for the Year before Retention, for 13 Pupils, Retained in Grade One

Score in Terms of Grade Level	Number of Pupils	Score in Terms of Grade Level	Number of Pupils
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
No score recorded on cumulative folder.....	1	(Standard 1-7..to be met).	0
1-2.....	1	1-8.....	1
1-3.....	2	1-9.....	0
1-4.....	1	2-0.....	0
1-5.....	5		
1-6.....	2	Total.....	13

Table 5 should be read as follows: Five pupils in grade one had a score of first grade, the fifth month, the year before being retained in grade one.

The writer wishes to poimt out three things in relation to Table 5: (1) One pupil actually scored above the standard to be met and was still retained; (2) two pupils scored within one month of the standard to be met and were retained; and (3) five pupils scored within two months of the standard to be met and were retained. Table 5 shows that there was not consistency between the standards for promotion which the teachers had stated in the inquiry and the achievement test results for these pupils. Table 6 shows the available achievement test scores for the thirteen pupils retained in grade two. Again there seemed to be inconsistency between the standards teachers had stated in the inquiry and the test results.

Table 6. Achievement Test Scores, for the Year before Retention, for 13 Pupils Retained in Grade Two

Score in Terms of Grade Level	Number of Pupils	Score in Terms of Grade Level	Number of Pupils
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
No score recorded on cumulative folder.....	5	2-4.....	1
1-9.....	1	2-5.....	0
1-10.....	0	2-6.....	0
2-0.....	1	(Standard 2-7..to be met)	0
2-1.....	3	2-8.....	1
2-2.....	0		
2-3.....	1	Total.....	13

Table 6 should be read as follows: Three pupils in grade two had a score of second grade, the first month, the year before being retained in grade two.

The writer wishes to point out in relation to Table 6 that again one pupil retained scored above the grade standard. Five pupils had no scores recorded on their folders for that year. They had either not been given the tests, or the scores had not been recorded.

The other nine pupils retained in grades above grade two had fallen a year or more below the grade standard on their achievement test scores, where scores were found recorded on the cumulative folder.

Report card marks.--Millis has a traditional report card marked on a basis of A,B,C,D,E,F. The letter mark was derived from a numerical basis, as A would represent 90-100. Inquiry of

the teachers, however, showed there was no general agreement on the value of the letter grades. The card is issued five times a year. The same card serves for grades one through six, and items not applying to the grade are crossed out, or left blank. Personal and social conduct are marked on aletter basis also. The report card mark, recorded on the cumulative folder, is a composite mark for the year, made up of an average of the five marks given during the year. An examination of the report card marks, for the thirty-five pupils retained, showed that all had received failing marks in arithmetic and reading the year before retention. Some had received a mark of D. Since the mark was a composite mark, this would suggest that the marks for the last term or two had been failing; while perhaps the ones for the first were passing. More weight could have been given to the marks for the last two marking periods than for the first three. The writer does not know this to be so, as only the composite mark was recorded. If this was not so, tha writer is at a loss to explain why pupils with D on the report card were retained, as D was considered a passing mark.

4. Other Conditions Affecting Pupil Progress in Millis

Entrance age.--Previous to 1945, there had been no kindergarten in Millis. Entrance age had been established at six years of age, on or before January 1, for entrance to grade one.

From 1945-1951, the policy varied each year. Entrance to kindergarten or first grade was set at five and six years of age respectively, on or before January 1. The variance came in the testing of children by means of the Stanford-Binet Tests of Intelligence to permit entrance below the set age levels. Children were permitted to enter kindergarten or first grade, whose fifth and sixth birthdays came on or before September 1, if they obtained a sufficient mental age on the Stanford-Binet test. Testing was discontinued for three years for kindergarten because of overcrowded and inadequate facilities. It was continued for grade one, however. This policy encouraged parents of children whose birthdays came between September 1 and January 1, but could not be tested for kindergarten, to have their children tested for entrance to grade one the following year. If these children passed the test at a sufficiently high level, they were then permitted to enter first grade, skipping kindergarten. While none of these children were retained in their progress through the succeeding grades, their social and physical maturity was questioned by all teachers concerned. While not failing, the quality of their scholastic work was poor. When placed with children who had kindergarten training and were well adjusted socially to school, the contrast was clear, and did not disappear in the years following grade one.

Enrollment trends.--The enrollment trend in Millis has definitely been toward the elementary grades. This has been in part due to the addition of a kindergarten in 1945. The

shift in school population has been away from the high school side into the elementary side. Table 7 shows the Millis enrollment trends over the past twelve years.

Table 7. Millis Enrollment

Year	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951
K	--	--	--	--	--	29	29	34	51	31	39	42
1	33	37	57	37	37	32	38	39	48	61	42	44
2	47	35	34	49	36	38	29	38	40	48	57	38
3	26	44	38	35	48	28	41	28	39	36	49	58
4	52	30	40	41	31	50	30	39	30	40	33	50
5	35	53	34	43	43	34	52	29	39	33	46	31
6	34	35	54	30	38	46	35	50	30	39	33	46
Total-	227	234	257	235	233	257	254	257	277	288	299	309
7	33	38	38	54	38	37	48	32	50	30	39	34
8	59	29	35	40	45	29	28	46	33	45	28	42
9	36	55	33	31	33	46	24	25	39	31	42	24
10	30	37	50	25	28	29	40	21	22	32	29	41
11	37	28	33	46	25	23	25	40	19	20	26	22
12	37	38	29	27	38	20	23	24	37	19	20	24
Total-	232	225	218	223	206	184	188	188	200	177	184	187
Grand Total-	459	459	475	458	439	441	442	445	477	465	483	496

*All enrollment figures are as of October 1.

Table 7 shows that from 1940-1951, the enrollment in kindergarten through grade six increased by eighty-two pupils, while the enrollment in grades seven through twelve dropped by forty-five pupils. This caused already inadequate facilities on the elementary side of the building to become seriously overcrowded. Rooms were small, and with the overcrowded conditions; the type of program which could be carried on was limited. Library corners or activity corners around the rooms were limited by lack

of space and facilities. These were more or less intangible conditions affecting pupil progress, but none the less real. The writer would only suggest that overcrowding and a high turnover of teacher personnel may have had a direct bearing on pupil progress in Millis.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this the concluding chapter, the writer proposes to give; first, a summary on phases of regulating pupil progress described in the literature; second, a summary of pupil progress in Millis; and third, his conclusions as to the effect of the past pupil progress policy and recommendations for change in order to better regulate pupil progress in Millis.

Summary of Phases of Pupil Progress

1. An acceptable definition for pupil progress can be given only if the total development of the individual is considered.
2. There is an urgent need for clarification of the goals toward which the pupil is trying to progress. A clear statement of educational philosophy should help to bring changes in practices and procedures. Writers in the field of pupil progress point out that underlying all pupil progress policies is the basic philosophy of the school.
3. Our present knowledge of child growth and development points the way for many changes in the traditional graded school pattern and in traditional methods of teaching.

4. An acceptable pupil progress policy treats the child as a whole organism and considers his physical, social, and emotional growth, as well as his intellectual growth.
5. Administrative practices vary widely in regard to pupil progress. The rate of non-promotion varies widely among schools in a city, from city to city, and throughout the country; the rate being significantly higher in grade one than in other grades, and boys having a higher rate than girls. Evidence seems to show that few children benefit from non-promotion.
6. The curriculum setup of a modern school system should be in terms of children, and not in terms of arbitrary grade level assignments.
7. The Dalton Plan, the Winnetka Plan, and Cleveland and Gloucester Plans are plans which are being tried so that progress can be made a continuous process in terms of the individual child.
8. Both quantitative measures, such as achievement tests, and qualitative measures, such as behavior records should be used in evaluating pupil progress.
9. Changes in a pupil progress policy should be made only with the understanding and cooperation of parents and faculty members.

Summary of Pupil Progress in Millis

1. That there was not uniformity of agreement among the teachers as to what past pupil progress policy had been.
2. That the present cumulative record folder and report card were inadequate for reporting and recording pupil progress.
3. That records of failing children were not completely filled out.
4. That the school population of the town as measured by the movement of children in and out of school was highly mobile.
5. Of the total number of children in school on October 1, 1951 in grades one through twelve, approximately seven per cent had been retained in some grade below grade seven.
6. Over three times as many boys as girls had been retained.
7. The majority of children retained were retained in grades one and two.
8. Of these children retained sixty-three per cent had average or better than average intelligence quotients as measured by a group intelligence test.
9. While sixty-three per cent of the pupils retained had average or better than average intelligence, their report card marks and achievement test results showed

them to be failing. No special provision had been made to try and locate these children early in the year and correct their difficulty so that retention be prevented. The other thirty-seven per cent according to intelligence test results appeared to have lower ability, suggesting that they would of necessity require a longer period of time to meet the standard.

10. That no special adaptation of the curriculum had been been made for those children that were retained.

11. Children had been tested for entrance to first grade permitting them to skip kindergarten. This was not acceleration in any sense of the word, and in the long run had appeared to be a definite disadvantage to those children. While appearing to have the necessary intellectual power to enter grade one, they were socially and emotionally immature in the judgement of the teachers. Their physical maturity level was also below that of their classmates.

12. Because of the large number of pupils and wide range of grades under the supervision of one principal, prior to April, 1951, curriculum coordination had been difficult.

13. From 1940-1951 the enrollment in kindergarten through grade six increased by eighty-two pupils causing a

severe strain on already inadequate facilities on the elementary side.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Development of a philosophy.--In every school system there ought to be a definite philosophy regarding education which serves to guide administrative practices and procedures in relation to pupil progress. Millis needs to develop such a philosophy. It is the writer's belief that such a philosophy worked out jointly by school personnel, school committee, Parent-Teachers Association, and other interested groups would serve to greatly clarify the issues involved in regulating pupil progress. It is also the writer's recommendation that this be put in written form, clearly expressed. Then it may serve as a guide for those involved in making decisions regarding pupil progress in the years to come. The following steps might be followed in the development of such a philosophy:

1. Preliminary discussion between superintendent of schools and principal.
2. Preliminary discussion between superintendent, principal, and teachers at a teachers' meeting.
3. Superintendent bring the problem to the attention of the school committee.
4. A joint committee consisting of members of the P.T.A., school committee, and faculty work out an expression

of philosophy of education which will help in relation to pupil progress.

5. Phases of controlling pupil progress be explained to Parent-Teachers Association by school personnel.

Curriculum revision.--If Millis is to move away from its present traditional graded setup to a more flexible pupil progress policy, it must seriously consider some major curriculum changes. At present there is no course of study in Millis. Because of lack of experience, and little or no background in education courses on the part of several teachers in Millis, a course of study would seem desirable. The present curriculum setup contains much overlapping in some areas and gaps in other areas. From interrogation of the teachers, it is the writer's belief that this is caused partly by teachers not being aware of what precedes or what follows in the subjects being taught. This in turn was partly caused by the fact that the textbook was used as the course of study. Curriculum revisions along the following lines would seem adivsable:

1. That a course of study be developed by the teachers which is not based upon rigid grade levels, but rather upon attainment of objectives in a total program which it is hoped will be accomplished before the pupil leaves the sixth grade. This would make teachers more conscious of the total objectives to be achieved.
2. That within this course of study, the reading and arithmetic programs for grades one, two, and three be set up in a series of continuous units. That as mastery of the

unit of work is completed by the pupil, it will be recorded on his cumulative record folder. The teacher of the next year will take the child at the last recorded level and proceed from there. The writer finds this most generally done in grades one through three. After this has been done in grades one through three and the faculty has gained experience with the program, the writer suggests that the program could and should be continued on to grades four through six.

3. That textbooks be provided for each level required by pupils in the room.
4. That small room libraries be developed for each room with much supplementary and enrichment material being made available. This material should cover the levels in each room.

Revision of testing program.-- The present testing program consists of giving achievement tests in April or May to check progress at the end of the year. As has been pointed out previously, much stress was placed on obtaining high results on these tests. No diagnostic test was given at the beginning of the year to determine weaknesses early and apply corrective measures. The high percentage of children retained who possessed average or better than average intelligence would seem to indicate that difficulty was not diagnosed until too late to do anything about it but retain the child. If the difficulty

was emotional, rather than scholastic, this too should be investigated early in the year. Recommendations to cover this are explained under reporting pupil progress. The writer suggests that children in grades two through six should be given a diagnostic test in the skill subjects in the fall of the year as well as an achievement test at the end of the year. This dual testing program is suggested for several reasons. By giving diagnostic tests in the fall, the teacher who then has the pupil must correct and grade the tests. This should help to bring directly to the teacher's attention the individual strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and the group as a whole. Under a system of continuous progress, the writer feels also that objective testing should be done more than once a year. A pupil could make considerable progress between October and May. This would not show by an examination of achievement tests given in May. The writer wishes to point out in relation to cost, that one pupil retained unnecessarily costs the town more than would commercial diagnostic tests. All children entering grade one should be given a reading readiness test. They should be given achievement checks at the end of the primer, preprimer, and first reader. The reading system which has been put in use during the present year has such a sustem of checks. All children entering grade one should be given a group intelligence test to determine an indication of capacity. This should be rechecked at grade three and grade six level. Cases as to which there is doubt as to

the reliability of the score should be checked on an individual intelligence test.

Recording of pupil progress.-- The present cumulative record folder is in the form of a filing folder. It is a commercial product and was not designed to fit the particular needs of Millis. It covers grades one through twelve. With such a grade span on insufficient space, much of it not applicable to Millis, this cumulative record form is inadequate. It is the writer's recommendation that a new cumulative form be developed by the elementary teachers that would be more suited to elementary needs in Millis. The guidance counselor of the high school should work in conjunction with them to insure that guidance information needs by teachers of grades seven through twelve be included on the form.

Reporting pupil progress.--Millis has had a traditional report card marked on a basis of set grade standards. One report card served for grades one through six with items not applying to the grade being left blank. Scholastic ability and personal and social conduct are all marked on a basis of A,B,C,D,E, or F. The card is issued five times a year to all children. The present card is a reflection of the current practices now governing pupil progress in Millis. This is as it should be As Otto points out:[1]

> "It is essential, however, that the card express the objectives of the school program and rate pupil progress in a manner which conforms to the policies of the school

1/Henry J, Otto, op. cit., p. 244

and which conveys to the parents the relationship of the child to the desired goal."

A new system of reporting should be considered in Millis as a step in the adjustment of the present pupil progress policy. It is to be recommended that this new system of reporting have the following features:

1. Instead of the present single card, that one card be developed for grades one through three and another for grades four through six.
2. That these new cards be marked in terms of the individuals ability, rather than in terms of a fixed grade standard.
3. That the marks used be in terms of progress, and that there be not more than three marks. The writer suggests the following: S-Satisfactory Progress, O-Outstanding Progress, and N-Needs Improvement.
4. That there be adequate space left on the card for a written comment by the teacher. That this space be used to extend and clarify any difficulty a child is having, or to comment on any unusual progress or ability that the pupil has shown.
5. That there be a space for the parent to comment or to request a conference, or to report progress at home.
6. That the marking periods be cut from five to four in order to prepare better reports. At the first report period it is suggested that a system of scheduled con-

ferences between parents and teachers be worked out. Before the first written report went out parent and teacher would have discussed the pupil's progress to that date.

7. That the card be worked out by a joint committee similar to that suggested by the writer in the development of an expression of educational philosophy for Millis.

Entrance age.--It is to be recommended that testing of children for both kindergarten and first grade be discontinued. While Massachusetts law does not require compulsory attendance until reaching the age of six years, no policy should be maintained which encourages parents to have their children skip kindergarten training. As long as the town is willing to support a public kindergarten, a policy of persuasion and encouragement to have all children entering school enter in kindergarten should be adhered to. Registration of children entering kindergarten should be in May of the year preceding entrance. The parents of children who are eligible, but do not register in May should be contacted by the school. By explaining the purposes and advantages of kindergarten to them, it is hoped that all children eligible for kindergarten could be registered some time before September. A bulletin or pamphlet describing the purposes and advantages of kindergarten should be prepared. This could be mailed to parents where personal

contact was not possible.

Grouping of pupils.--Homogeneous grouping of pupils by grades is not possible in Millis. Due to school population changes, there is often only one class at a given grade level. Homogeneous grouping of pupils within classes is possible, however, and should be done especially in skill subjects, such as reading. These groups should be kept as flexible as possible, and children should be moved from one group to another at any time when the teacher feels it is advisable. Movement of children from one group to another should be accomplished by the suggested means of objective testing, plus the teacher's judgement. Homogeneous grouping within the classroom has been done on a somewhat limited scale. With the development of previously recommended measures, it would follow that this be done more widely and with more accuracy than before.

Retardation of pupils.--It is the writer's recommendation that any retardation of pupils be done on a purely individual basis. Social and emotional factors should be given as much consideration as scholastic achievement. Consultation between principal, teacher, and parent should investigate all possible effects of retardation on the individual concerned. If preceding recommendations are carried out, there should be little need for retardation. Pupils who deviated from the groups

within the grade to an extreme would be clinical cases and should be sent by the school to special clinics.

Continuous progress plans for Millis.--With the adoption of previously recommended measures, Millis should in effect have continuous progress. The beneficial or detrimental effects of these measures should be studied carefully. If the results prove beneficial in Millis, and after teachers in grades one, two, and three gain experience with the program, the writer suggests that as parents gain in an understanding of the program; it could and should be extended to cover grades four, five, and six. The program could then be extended to the point where grade level designations in grades one, two, and three be done away with, and retardation be greatly reduced.

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