THE AGE-GRADE STATUS OF 46,409 ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL PUPILS IN THE STATE OF KANSAS

by

CLIFTON B. HUFF
B.S.Educ., Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, 1928
M.S.Educ., Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, 1932

Submitted to the Department of
Education and the Faculty of the
Graduate School of the University
of Kansas in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy.

Advisory Committee:

[Signatures]

August, 1942
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to his advisory committee for the many helpful suggestions and criticisms that were made during the preparation of this dissertation. Also to the State Department for aid in securing data from some of the county units. Likewise to all superintendents, supervisors, county superintendents, and teachers who cooperated in making this study possible. I wish especially to thank the members of the State Supervisors Association for their helpful suggestions regarding the presentation of data.

Finally to the three assistants in my office who aided in the statistical work and to my wife for her encouragement and suggestions throughout the entire period of the study.

C. B. H.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Historical Background of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Early Attempts to Adjust Pupil Progress</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Plan</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Plan</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Annual Plan</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo Plan</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Plan</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge Plan</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batavia Plan</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Denver Plan</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Barbara Plan</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burk's Individual Plan</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnetka Plan</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalton Plan</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrison Plan</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. More Recent Trends in Meeting the Needs of Pupil Progress</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial Promotion</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Promotion</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester Plan of Promotion</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Promotion</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Promotion</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Age Promotion</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Age Promotion</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronological Age Promotion</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Promotion</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. The Problem</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of the Problem</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure and Scope of Study</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Age</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Age</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Age</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Progress</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow Progress</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Progress</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retardation</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elimination</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First class cities</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second class cities</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER

Third class cities ........ 72
Rural Schools ............ 72

V. Age-Grade Status of Kansas Children .... 73
  Introduction ......... 73
  Table I - First class cities .... 74
  Table II - Second class cities .... 75
  Table III - Third class cities .... 76
  Table IV - Rural class cities .... 77
  Table V - Colored Children .... 78
  Table VI - Composite of all Children 79
  Conclusion ......... 80

VI. Factors Frequently Contributing to Pupil Failure .... 82
  Introduction ......... 82
  Table of Causes ......... 83
  Inadequate Mentality ......... 83
  Irregular Attendance ......... 87
  Physical Defects ......... 91
  Out-Of-School Causes ......... 93
  Relation of Entrance Age to Progress 95
  Insufficient Achievement ......... 97
  Inappropriate Administrative Practices ......... 99

VII. The Effect of Non-Promotion upon Children 101
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of Failure on School Costs</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Promotion and Achievement</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Promotion and Personality Traits</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Effects of Promotion and Non-Promotion</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Observations, Recommendations, and Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-ageness and School Entrance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-Ageness</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-Ageness Among Boys</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored-Mexican Children</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Age</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Recommendations</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualizing Instruction</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Records</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Books</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teacher and Pupil Progress</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In tracing the evolution of grading and promotion in public elementary schools of America, naturally one must go back to colonial history. Of all those who came to America during the early period, the Puritans who settled New England contributed most that was valuable for future educational development.

Between 1628 and 1640 about twenty thousand English Puritans migrated from England to New England.¹ They settled in towns and in a short time established conditions of living similar in many respects to those in England. There was continuity and similarity in social life except where difference in conditions demanded change. This continuity of social tradition was characteristic of the provisions made for education and schooling.

At first, home instruction and apprenticeship training were depended upon to furnish the necessary ability to read and to participate in the religious

services. The great religious purpose which had brought the colonist to America was the motive which insured such instruction. In the homes of this time, family worship and Bible reading were important phases of life, and these naturally led the children to read.

The early colonists soon began to reproduce in the different communities the main types of schools at that time existing in the mother country. These were the Dame School, the Writing School, and the Latin Grammar School for those who could afford to pay for education.

The youngest children were taught in the Dame School which was strictly private. This school accepted children at the age of four and retained them until the age of seven. Instruction in the A. B. C's and the elements of reading and writing in it became a prerequisite for admission to the town grammar school.

The second type of school brought over was the Writing School, in which writing and reckoning of merchants' accounts were taught. Sometimes the instruction was given in a separate school taught by a "scrivener" and arithmetic teacher; and sometimes the writing and reckoning were taught by a peripatetic scrivener, who moved about as business seemed to warrant. The writing school never became common in New England as the
exigencies of a new and sparsely settled country tended
to force a combination of the Dame and Writing Schools
into one, thus forming the schools of the so-called
3 R's -- Reading, "Riting," and 'Rithmetic -- from which
our elementary schools evolved.

The first general legislation concerning
establishments of schools occurred in 1642,\(^2\) when a law
was enacted in Massachusetts requiring all children to
be taught reading, the capital laws, and the principles
of religion. In 1647 a general compulsory law was
enacted. This required towns of fifty families to support
a grammar school for fitting boys for the university.

The Latin Grammar School was established in
Boston, as required by the law of 1647. This school was
to prepare boys for Harvard College, which the colonial
legislature had established in 1636.\(^3\) The Latin Grammar
School took the boys from the Dame School at the age of
seven and prepared them for college at fifteen or there-
about. The boy in the meantime learned to read and
write, to make his own quill pens, and to master suf-

\(^2\) Elwood P. Cubberley, *Public Education in the United

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 16.
icient Latin to enter the college. He was usually ignorant of numbers and was unable to write English with any degree of fluency or accuracy. He was, however, well schooled in the Latin tongue and the elements of Greek as well.

The most prominent characteristic of all the early colonial schooling was the predominance of the religious purpose in education. This is clearly shown in the textbooks used for instruction. The Hornbook, the Primer, the Psalter, the Testament, and the Bible were the books used.

Instruction everywhere began with the Hornbook, from which children learned their letters and began to read. The child next passed to the Catechism and the Bible. These constituted the entire range of the reading in school.

In 1690⁴ there appeared a wonderful little volume known as The New England Primer. This book was used for the next century and a quarter. Such spelling as they had was taught from it also. It was very religious in content. The Psalter, the Testament, and the Bible were used in their natural continuation and

⁴ Ibid., p. 32.
constituted the main advanced reading books in the colonies before 1750.

A textbook was seldom used in teaching arithmetic by the colonial schoolmasters. Instruction to the pupil was dictated. Each pupil made his own written book of rules and solved problems, and most pupils never saw a printed arithmetic. Writing, similarly, was taught by dictation and practices.

The second century of education in Massachusetts was marked by an effort to adapt the school system to the needs of a widely scattered agricultural population. Moving schools went around spending a few weeks or months in each community. Later, divisions of towns were made into districts, and the district school was common in all except large towns. These schools were kept by men a few months in winter for boys and larger girls, and by women a few months in summer for younger children.

This system started in 1750, was authorized by law in 1789, attained its zenith in 1827, and was abolished in 1862. During this period of decentralization, the ancient Grammar School disappeared from

all but the largest towns and was replaced by incorporated academies endowed by private funds and aided by public grants.

The academy, while retaining the study of Latin and Greek as taught in the Latin Grammar School, added a number of new studies. These were adapted to meet the need of a new society. English grammar was introduced and soon rose to a place of great importance. Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, geography, and astronomy were in time added. Girls were admitted freely to the academies, whereas the grammar school had been exclusively for boys.

In 1818 Public Primary Schools were born. These resulted from the Infant Movement in England and other countries.

These schools were to admit children of four years of age. They were to be taught by women and were to prepare the children for admission to the city schools which by this time had become known as the English Grammar schools. The course of study in the primary school was arranged into four classes. Those who read in the Testament were placed in the highest or first class.

Those who could read easy reading were in the second class. Those who could spell in two or more syllables were placed in the third class, while those learning their letters and monosyllables were placed in the fourth class.

Complete mastery of the limited curriculum was demanded for promotion which took place annually or every six months.

The first high school in the United States was established in Boston in 1821. Boys to be admitted were required to be at least twelve years of age, instead of nine, as in the Latin Grammar School. They were to be well acquainted with reading, writing, English grammar in all its branches, and arithmetic as far as proportion. Three years later, English literature and geography were added. No other language than English was to be taught. English declamation, science, mathematics and its applications, history, and logic were the principal studies. The course of instruction was definitely built upon that of the English reading and writing and grammar schools, instead of paralleling these.

Preceding this period of the history of American

7. Ibid., p. 190.
education, it is very easily seen that education was conceived simply in terms of subject matter. It should be noted carefully that each move of education during these years was toward the sort of organization that, of necessity, rooted more deeply than ever the so-called fundamental skills as the educational objective. This seemed to be inevitable. Schools could not exist in their unorganized condition. Organization was easiest when it could proceed with some fixed factors; hence, its organization eventually took place around the 3 R's, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic.

Horace Mann and Henry Barnard urged widespread grading of schools between 1820 and 1850.

There seems to be general agreement that the Quincy School, opened in Boston in 1848 with John D. Philbrick as principal, was the first graded elementary school in the United States. It had twelve classrooms and twelve teachers. 9

About the middle of the nineteenth century state departments of education grew rapidly, and in the years from 1850 to 1860 various state superintendents of public instruction urged the organization of grades

upon local authorities.\textsuperscript{10}

In 1860, Henry Barnard, United States Commissioner of Education, made a nationwide survey of educational progress. It was obvious that at this time grade organization was general throughout the country.\textsuperscript{11}

When the schools had been graded into classes, and the curriculum into sizeable units for each year's work, the question of promotion presented itself for solution. The first solution was that the "school committee" should spend the last few days of each term examining the scholars in the subject matter which had been apportioned to their year. At first these were oral examinations. As the work grew heavier, the committee began to compose written examinations which determined fitness for promotion to the next grade. The first written examination to classify pupils was given in Boston in 1845.\textsuperscript{12}

For the next ten years examinations were strongly urged, but by 1858 evils began to appear. Discussions continued and modifications were made, and by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p. 368.
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 383.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Loc.cit.
\end{itemize}
1890 examinations as a sole means of promotion, at least in the elementary schools, were abolished.\textsuperscript{13}

The problem of promotion of children from grade to grade has received thoughtful attention by educators of every period since the graded school was organized. In the following chapter, a number of plans which have received recognition will be discussed.

\textsuperscript{13} Loc. cit.
CHAPTER II
EARLY ATTEMPTS TO ADJUST PUPIL PROGRESS

With the grading of the elementary schools in the United States, the question of a basis on which the children would progress from grade to grade soon became real. The rigid standards and formalized procedures which accompanied the development of the graded school soon created much dissatisfaction, and various attempts were made to correct the evils of the then existing graded system.

In an attempt to correct these evils, various systems of promotion were inaugurated. Many of these methods of promotion never received wide attention and were used for a brief period of time. Other methods were widely accepted, and some of them are in use to the present day. In this chapter a few of the more prominent early plans will be discussed.

I. THE ANNUAL PLAN

The Annual Plan of promotion came into existence in this country with the graded school. From 1860 to 1880, annual promotions were the vogue "in nearly every town of any considerable size."¹

By 1870, the graded schools in many of the cities had become so thoroughly organized and systematized that many undesirable practices had developed. Among the evil effects of the rigid organization and the prevailing annual promotion plan of the early graded school were non-promotion, over-age-ness, and elimination from school. The pendulum had swung from no system to nothing but system.

Leading educators were recognizing the defects of the graded school with its annual promotions, and attempts were made to remedy the situation. This plan, however, is still in operation in many of our schools today.

The Committee on Articulation of the Department of Superintendence in 1930 gathered statements from 555 superintendents of schools regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the promotion plans then operative in their schools. The advantages of annual promotions, as summarized from the replies of 300 superintendents of school systems in which promotions are made annually, and in order of frequency of mention, are as follows:

2. Ibid., p. 199.
1. Annual promotions are easier to administer, particularly in small school systems. A number of superintendents of small school systems wrote that annual promotion is the only plan feasible in small schools.

2. When pupils are promoted annually, a teacher has the same pupils throughout the whole year.

3. Annual promotion eliminates the necessity of having two or more half-year grades in each room in small elementary schools.

4. With annual promotions there is no loss of time due to periods of reorganization at mid-year.

5. Annual promotion lowers cost, particularly in small schools.

6. Annual promotions do away with small mid-year classes.

7. Annual promotions make possible homogeneous grouping in small school systems.

8. Homogeneous grouping gives all the essential flexibility claimed for semi-annual promotions.

9. Annual promotions are in accord with practice in most of the school systems of certain states. Hence pupils transferring from one school system to another usually fit into assigned grades.

10. With annual promotions a smaller teaching force is required, particularly in small school systems.
11. The annual promotion plan makes it possible to run the school plant more economically, for fewer rooms are required.

12. With annual promotions there are no mid-term high school graduates who usually have to wait until September to enter college.

13. Annual promotions conform with the customs of the community.

14. Annual promotions offer more opportunity for emphasis on the "child" rather than on a set course of study.

15. Annual promotions give time in summer vacation to make a very careful reorganization of the schools.

16. With annual promotions parents are more apt to learn to know their children's teacher. 3

The disadvantages of the annual promotion plan, as reported by the same 300 superintendents and arranged in order of frequency of mention, are as follows:

1. There is a loss of a whole year instead of a half year in case of non-promotion.

2. Annual promotions have a tendency to retard the superior child.

3. Annual promotions are not flexible enough for the welfare of individual pupils.

4. Pupils entering from systems which have semi-annual promotions are in an unfortunate position since under the annual promotion plan classes begin basic courses only once a year. As a result, students moving into a system having annual promotion often lose a half year.

5. Annual promotions sometimes reduce length of school attendance. When a pupil in one of the upper grades fails, there is often a tendency for him to drop out of school if he is required to repeat a whole year's work. He loses interest in graduation.

6. Annual promotions increase the amount of pupil retardation.

7. Annual promotions raise per capita cost, for when a pupil fails he repeats a whole year instead of a half year.

8. Annual promotions prevent beginners at mid-term.

9. Annual promotions make program-making in the high school very difficult, since pupils who fail at the end of the semester have few opportunities to take up other subjects.

10. Annual promotions do not give a chance for a change of teachers for pupils who need a certain type of teacher.4

Data gathered by the Department of Superintendence in 1931 from 555 school systems5 show that

4. Ibid., pp. 71-72.
5. Ibid., p. 65.
within the preceding ten years, fifty-one cities had changed from semi-annual to annual promotion plans.

A report was made by Leslie L. Chism in 1932 on the classification and promotion practices in the elementary schools in 490 cities with populations of 2,500 to 10,000. The cities were selected from all sections of the country. This report shows 55.71 percent of the cities reported were using annual promotions.

II. ST. LOUIS PLAN

Of the early plans for making progress of the pupils through the elementary school less rigid and mechanical, the plan for flexible promotion received much attention. Under the straight annual promotion plan, the pupil who failed at the end of the year was required to repeat a grade. In some instances there was a damaging effect of failure on the pupil. Under this arrangement it was difficult for a deserving pupil to attain or "skip" annual promotion.

Philbrick in "City School Systems in the United States" stated how an attempt was made to solve this problem.

"To get rid of the evils which inevitably result from the plan of uniform yearly promotion, some cities, going to the extreme have reduced the intervals between promotions to a fourth of a school year, that is, about fifty days. St. Louis seems to have taken the lead in experimenting with this plan. In this city, although the grades or classes correspond to years of schooling, as in most other cities, each grade is broken into four sub-grades, corresponding to the quarter of the school time. This expedient has been resorted to in order to reduce the intervals between classes to a minimum, to facilitate the individual promotion. . . . The point aimed at is to give flexibility to the graded system and maintain the closeness of grading in classes by unduly restraining the foremost pupil and unduly urging forward the hindmost."7

Although this plan of advancement was in operation in the public schools of St. Louis when William T. Harris became superintendent in 1867,8 it was largely through his efforts that the flexible promotion measures were popularized. The finer divisions of the school year of the St. Louis schools were correlative


with a hierarchy of subject matter standards of each quarter-grade level and with pronounced reliance on the textbook.

This fact is clearly shown by excerpts taken from a report of the superintendent.

"A scholar can change schools from the remotest part of the city without any loss of time or detriment to his progress. As the questions asked him will be, how far has he advanced in the textbook of the various branches and he is then placed in the classes that are at the same stage of progress and proceed with as much rapidity in his studies, and recites with the classes so as not to be distinguished either in manner, formula or words from them, and feels no more inconvenience than he would in his former school . . . . The system adopted first determines the work to be done, then the manner of doing it, and lastly parcels out to each grade of schools its proper part."9

When viewed in the light of the quarterly plan as sponsored by Harris, flexible promotion has as a basis the mastery of a well defined course of study. The emphasis was placed on the efficient assimilation of quotas of subject matter based largely on selected textbooks. Certain facts and methods were learned, and these

could be mastered by means of the printed page.

The needs of the individual were viewed only as they might be in agreement or discord with the prerequisite learning of the grade level. With the reliance placed on the textbook, the quarterly promotion plan was distinctly of the attainment type. Upon fulfillment of the requirements of a quarter, the pupil was ready for the next.

"The process of continual readjustment of classification in our schools will render the whole school system elastic and mobile. Like the current of a river there will be everywhere forward motion -- in the middle the current is more rapid, at the sides the current flows more slowly."10

Thus the quarterly promotion plan aimed to advance pupils at any time, to provide a shorter period for repeating in case of failure, and to provide an easier step for rapid progress.

The extent to which the quarterly promotion plan has been adopted is not clearly established.

A study made by Henry J. Otto11 in 1929 of promotion practices in cities ranging in population from

10. Ibid.

2,500 to 25,000 revealed only four cities out of three hundred ninety-five in which promotions were other than annual or semi-annual.

A similar summary from five hundred fifty-five school systems in cities of all sizes, reported in 1931, showed only five cities in which was evident a tendency to promote pupils at any time during the year; in three of these cities, quarterly promotions were favored.\(12\)

In 1932, Leslie L. Chism\(13\) showed only 0.2% of the 490 cities reporting were using quarterly promotions.

Although there may be a number of school systems which did not report when the above studies were made, it seems safe to conclude that quarterly promotions have not been adopted widely.

III. SEMI-ANNUAL PLAN

The semi-annual plan of promotion was a compromise between the two extremes of annual promotion and quarterly promotion. This plan provided two grades, an A and B, for each school year. Pupils failing of

---


promotion need repeat only a half-year instead of a whole year. This idea was introduced in 1875 and has since become an established institution in our American schools.

The advantages of semi-annual promotions as reported by 225 superintendents of school systems in which promotions are made semi-annually, and listed in order of frequency mentioned, are as follows:

1. Semi-annual promotions make it unnecessary for pupils to repeat the entire year's work, if they fail either on account of non-attendance, lack of application, or inability. A pupil frequently needs to repeat a part of the work of a grade, when it would not be wise for him to repeat the work of an entire year.

2. Semi-annual promotions result in a more flexible school organization -- they make frequent adjustments possible.

3. Semi-annual promotions make it easier to accelerate those of superior ability. Double and trial promotions can be more easily made. Frequently a pupil can do three terms work in two or he can skip a half year with less loss.

4. With semi-annual promotions the cost of operating the schools is less. If it is necessary to have a pupil repeat his work, it is more economical to have repetition restricted to a half year.

5. Semi-annual promotions result in more frequent evaluations of the achievements of the pupil. They force a careful evaluation of pupil status twice instead of once a year -- in fact, they compel frequent judgment of pupils by teachers.

6. Semi-annual promotions make it easier to accommodate the transient school population which enters by transfer from other school systems, especially from those systems where the semi-annual promotion plan is followed. They also enable pupils forced to be out of school temporarily to return with minimum loss of credit and time.

7. Where ability grouping is not practiced, semi-annual promotions usually provide fewer extremes in ability and achievement than do annual promotions. They tend to keep pupils of more nearly the same social age together.

8. The goal of promotion is more immediate where promotions are made semi-annually. Pupils are stimulated to a greater effort since there is an accounting twice during the year, and their goals are more real than when they are nine or ten months in the future.

9. Semi-annual promotions result in less discouragement for pupils. They abolish the condition where a pupil relaxes effort early in the year when he knows he is going to fail, as is frequently the case in annual promotions.
10. Semi-annual promotions permit mid-year entrance. Some pupils gain a half year by entering at the middle of the year. Entrance into the kindergarten is not delayed for six months or more. Hence children are nearer the same social age when they enter.

11. Semi-annual promotions reduce the amount of retardation.

12. Semi-annual promotions result in more teacher contacts. A pupil has a shorter time with a poor teacher. Or if he doesn't get on well with a particular teacher, he has a chance to change sooner.

13. Semi-annual promotions call for a definite curriculum for each half year. The result is that the curriculum is better fitted to the pupil. Basic curriculum units short enough not to become wearisome to teacher and pupil have to be provided.

14. Parents do not object so seriously if pupils are retained an extra half year in a grade as when they are retained a full year.

15. Semi-annual promotions provide for administrative relief in the shifting of pupils and teachers if necessary.

16. Semi-annual promotions help to hold pupils in school longer.

17. With semi-annual promotions, each teacher becomes more of a specialist in his half-year's work.

18. Semi-annual promotions, distribute the enrollment load over the school year.15

The disadvantages of semi-annual promotions, as recorded by the same 225 superintendents and arranged in order of frequency of mention, are as follows:

1. In small school systems, semi-annual promotions bring too many small sections into both the elementary school and the high school at the beginning of the second semester.

2. Semi-annual promotions require too frequent exchange of teachers; as a result a teacher does not have time to get well acquainted with his pupils.

3. Homogeneous groupings are more difficult to arrange when pupils are promoted semi-annually. In many small school systems, semi-annual promotions prevent homogeneous groupings.

4. Semi-annual promotions often result in a loss of time in reorganization of classes at the beginning of each term. Furthermore, new situations may result in loss of time for pupils. Too often a child has just adjusted himself to a situation when he is taken away from that and put into another which also requires a period of adjustment.

5. Semi-annual promotions multiply the work of organization and involve a great deal of administrative work.

6. With semi-annual promotions, a larger teaching force is required because classes are smaller.

7. Semi-annual promotions increase the amount of clerical work.

8. Pupils graduating from a school in mid-year are at a disadvantage when they immediately enter another school. The school receiving them is usually not well prepared to take them at mid-year.
9. High school promotion in mid-year without having mid-year graduation requires students to finish in $3\frac{1}{2}$ or $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, or in four years without graduation exercises.

10. Semi-annual promotions make schedule-and-program-making more complex.

11. With semi-annual promotions, some teachers tend to withhold promotions in borderline cases because such pupils "will lose only half a year."

12. With semi-annual promotions, some parents overstress rate of progress of pupils through the grades; others worry about children entering school at mid-term.

13. With semi-annual promotions, work is more likely to become stale for teachers; when teaching the same half year's work over and over again, unprogressive teachers get in a deep rut.

14. Semi-annual promotions encourage a teacher to think in terms of grade levels rather than pupil growth.

15. Testing and promotion expenses are doubled with semi-annual promotions.

A questionnaire sent to two hundred superintendents in 1922 by Ayers revealed that 85 cities or 68.5 per cent of the one hundred twenty-four cities from which replies were received were using semi-annual

promotion.

The report made by the Department of Superintendence in 1931\textsuperscript{17} showed that sixty-eight cities had changed from the annual to the semi-annual plan since 1921. Cities using this plan of promotion had a population of 30,000 or more.

Chism's report\textsuperscript{18} shows in 1932 that 40.41 percent of the cities were using the semi-annual plan of promotion.

IV. THE PUEBLO PLAN

Preston W. Search has been named as the first one in America to voice loud protest against the lock-step method of teaching and to urge complete individual progress in teaching. He put his ideas into practical operation in Pueblo, Colorado, while engaged there as superintendent of schools from 1884-1894.\textsuperscript{19}

The work was outlined so that each child pro-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Five Unifying Factors in American Education, op. cit., p. 65.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Elementary School Journal, 1932, op. cit., p. 98.
\end{itemize}
gressed at his own rate. All units in each course were studied by each pupil, but were completed at different rates. No marks were given. The teacher's records merely indicated the number of units each student had completed satisfactorily. In this plan the individual is the unit of study, recitation, and promotion. Each pupil began in September where he had left off in June. There were no failures.

A survey made by a joint committee of the New York Teachers' Associations and reported by C. S. Hartwell\textsuperscript{20} in 1910 showed that two hundred three out of nine hundred sixty-five cities reporting had tried the Pueblo Plan and that in two hundred seventy-eight other cities the plan was favored. The report by Hartwell does not make clear whether the Pueblo plan was adopted in its entirety by these two hundred three cities, or whether only certain elements were introduced; neither does it show in what grades or subjects the Pueblo idea was used.

A questionnaire sent to two hundred superintendents in 1922 by Ayers\textsuperscript{21} revealed the Pueblo plan in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} C. S. Hartwell, "The Grading and Promotion of Pupils," \textit{Address and Proceeding of the National Association}, 1910, p. 296.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ayers, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 37.
\end{itemize}
operation in thirteen of the one hundred twenty-four cities from which replies were received. In Ayers' investigation the various promotion plans were defined in such a way that an item might be checked with a positive reply if a school system was using only one or more of the elements basic to a given plan. The report of the study does not indicate clearly the extent to which the cities reporting the existence of the plan were following it in its entirety.

As far as the writer knows there are no recent data on the extent to which the Pueblo plan is in operation in public schools. Perhaps the term "Pueblo Plan" has been obscured or lost as the elements of individualization and enrichment for brighter pupils have undergone new developments in the hands of educators who have worked in this field since the time of Search's work in Pueblo.

V. THE ELIZABETH PLAN

In 1886, W. J. Shearer,\textsuperscript{22} superintendent of the schools at Elizabeth, New Jersey, worked out a scheme which came to be known as the Elizabeth Plan. The

essential feature of this plan was that each grade was divided into three or four sections so that pupils could be grouped together homogeneously. As soon as any pupil showed that he was ready, he was moved up from one section to the next higher or to the grade higher. The plan was meritorious in that pupils who suffered much loss of time through illness did not repeat work but continued to the point where a favorable reclassification would be made.

Hartwell's report\(^{23}\) shows that two hundred seventy cities had tried the Elizabeth plan in 1910.

Ayers’s study in 1922 showed that forty-five cities were following this plan.

In the questionnaire used by Ayers, the Elizabeth plan was described as follows: "Pupil promoted whenever ready for advanced work, regardless of time of year."\(^{24}\) Doubtless some superintendents were led to check this item with positive answer even if only an occasional student profited by this policy; and the plan was not the standard, prevailing practice.

The extent to which the Elizabeth plan is found in public schools at present is not known. It is

\(^{23}\) Hartwell, op. cit., p. 296.

\(^{24}\) Ayers, op. cit., p. 516.
likely that the plan as such has lost its identity, but that such elements of it as individualization, division of the pupils of any one grade into three or four ability groups, and more rapid progress for capable pupils, have found ready acceptance in a variety of schools.

VI. THE CAMBRIDGE PLAN

The Cambridge Plan,25 established in 1893, outlined the same work for all pupils for the first three grades of a nine-grade elementary school course. The work of the last six grades was arranged into two parallel courses, the regular, which required six years for its completion, and a special course for brighter pupils which could be completed in four years.

A transfer could be made from one group to the other with little or no serious effect. In no case did a transfer entail more than two months repetition or skipping.

Once a year the transfer could be made by repeating or skipping a month's work, and once a year a pupil could go from one group to the other without any repetition or omission of work. Promotions were made three times a year, and occasional individual promotions were made.

This plan provided chiefly for the average and superior children.

This study by Hartwell\textsuperscript{26} previously referred to shows that seventy-eight out of nine hundred sixty-five cities reporting had tried the Cambridge Plan, and that it was favored in two hundred thirty-five other cities in 1910. Ayers' study\textsuperscript{27} in 1922 showed only three cities using the Cambridge Plan.

VII. THE BATAVIA PLAN

In 1898 Superintendent Kennedy,\textsuperscript{28} in Batavia, New York, originated another scheme designed to care for the stragglers without disrupting the usual class organization. In this plan large classes were provided with extra teachers who kept the laggards up to the level of the class.

The assumption underlying the arrangement was that with extra individual instruction each child could come up to the one definite standard.

The Batavia Plan required some type of examination system other than the grading of two teachers whose opinion may be subjective or based upon differing standards. Tests were prepared by the superintendent

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} Hartwell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 296.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Ayers, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 37.
\end{itemize}
at the close of each term, and all promotions were made upon the basis of these tests. Under this rigid system of final examination, there were practically no failures in promotions.

Hartwell's report⁴⁹ (1910) shows that one hundred thirty-five out of nine hundred sixty-five cities reporting had tried the Batavia Plan.

Ayers's study⁵⁰ in 1922 revealed twelve cities in which certain features of this plan had been adopted.

Accurate information as to the extent of its present use is not available, but it would seem safe to conclude that there are few cities at present in which may be found two full time teachers in a classroom. Elements of the Batavia Plan may be recognized, however, in various special classes, especially those designed to bolster up the achievement of over-age and retarded children.

VIII. THE NORTH DENVER PLAN

The North Denver Plan was devised by J. H. Van Sickle in 1898.⁵¹ He made use of a short and

⁴⁹ Hartwell, op. cit., p. 296.
⁵⁰ Ayers, op. cit., p. 37.
⁵¹ Daggett, op. cit., p. 516.
varying interval in the first four grades and a semester plan in the upper grades as convenient grading mechanism.

In each subject of study there was a minimum requirement for which all pupils were held responsible. As soon as the more capable pupils had mastered the minimum requirement in a subject, they were excused from the group to engage in supplementary work. Meanwhile, the slower pupils completed the minimum requirement, after which all pupils in the group came together again for work on a new assignment.

While the chief emphasis was placed on adjustment through enrichment, a certain amount of acceleration was also practiced.

In any school having semi-annual promotion, it is easy to permit a bright student to move forward more rapidly than a grade a year.

Hartwell's report (1910) shows that one hundred sixty-two cities had tried the North Denver Plan.

Ayers' investigation of 1922 showed fifteen cities using it. Recent data as to the extent of its use are not available.

32. Hartwell, op. cit., p. 296.
33. Myers, op. cit., p. 515.
IX. SANTA BARBARA PLAN

The Santa Barbara Plan originated in Santa Barbara, California, in 1898.34 This plan provided for differentiation of pupils as well as for differentiation of the curriculum.

The pupils in each of the eight grades of the elementary schools were divided into three sections, A, B, and C. All groups did the basic content included for the C level, but the B group did more extensive work than the C group, and the A groups did more than the B groups. Promotions occurred at any time. When a group in an A section was ready for the next grade, it was promoted to the C section of that grade.

According to Breed:

"Promotions may be made either to the higher levels within a grade or, at the end of the year, to the same level of the next grade."35

Ayers36 reported four cities using this plan in 1922, but no data are at hand as to the extent of the present use of the plan.

---

35. Ibid.
X. BURK'S INDIVIDUAL PLAN

In 1914 Frederick Burk,37 whose name is closely associated with plans for individualized instruction, began his work along this line. In the San Francisco Normal School, Burk revived the idea of, and put into effect in a very thoroughgoing manner, the Pueblo Plan with which Search had struggled. He dispensed with class organization and divided the curriculum into units which the child should master individually, thus providing a scheme by which the individual child might progress in each school subject as rapidly as his ability permitted. The plan was carried out by giving each child a copy of the course of study for each subject he was to master. The child was tested on the material for the grade in any subject as soon as it was completed. Promotion from a subject to the next higher grade in that subject was based on the examination. No class recitations were held and no daily assignments were given. The child had the syllabus of what his grade expected of him in any subject, and with the help of the teacher in con-

37. Washburne, op. cit., p. 76.
ferences, he was expected to go ahead as rapidly as he could.

No data are available to the extent of the use of this plan.

XI. THE WINNETKA PLAN

From the influence of Burk came the development of Washburne's individualized instruction technique now so famous in Illinois. The plan was established in 1913. According to Washburne38 there are no recitations. Each child prepares a unit of work, checks his results with an answer sheet, and goes on to the next unit. When he has done a small group of units -- an amount of work which may have taken him three days or two weeks -- he tests himself on this group; if he finds that he has mastered it, that his practice test is 100 per cent right, he asks the teacher for a real test. This test the teacher corrects. If the score is not 100 per cent, the child practices again on the weak points shown by it, then asks for a re-test. When he shows the teacher that the group of units (called a "goal" in Winnetka) is mastered, he works on toward the next goal.

38. Ibid., p. 79.
In this plan there is no grade promotion or failure. The process is continuous, the child picking up where he left off. There are no failures since no child is measured by the status of another child.

Washburne says:

"The general plan of the system is to permit the promotion of each individual pupil in each subject whenever he completes the work of his grade in that subject. He may complete fourth grade arithmetic in February, fourth grade language in June, and fourth grade spelling the next October. Other members of his class will complete the same subject at widely different times. But each one, when he finishes the grade's work in a certain subject, either proceeds to the next grade's work in that subject, or uses the time to bring up other subjects in which he is behind."39

An inquiry addressed to all secondary schools on the mailing list of the United States Office of Education in 1930 showed the Winnetka technique to be used in only 119 schools or a little more than one


per cent of the 8,594 schools who replied. The 119 schools using the plan represented all geographical areas distributed fairly evenly through 37 states.

XII. THE DALTON PLAN

Shortly after the inauguration of the Winnetka Plan, Helen Parkhurst41 introduced her plan of individual instruction in the schools at Dalton, Massachusetts, in 1920.

This plan divides the curriculum into contract jobs which cover the work of the month. Within that month the child is allowed to budget his own time for completing his jobs. According to Miss Parkhurst:

"A pupil may do all of his work, subject by subject, one subject at a time, or a little of one and much of another. He is free to plan his own time and discover his own better method of work. . . . The work of any job is very carefully outlined, sometimes by the teachers, often by the pupils, depending upon the kind of schools. Each job corresponds to what can easily be done within a school month or 20 days."42

This plan provides for liberating the pupil

42. Washburne, op. cit., p. 86.
by permitting him to move forward as rapidly as his ability allows. "It is the essence of the Dalton laboratory plan that pupils should progress each at his own rate." Under this plan, there is no grade repetition.

The inquiry of 1930 indicated that the Dalton Plan was reported in use by only 162 schools, or less than 2 per cent of the 8,694 schools who replied. Forty-two states were represented by the 162 schools reporting the use of the Dalton Plan. No state was represented by more than 16 schools. Schools in which the Dalton Plan was used in any state did not exceed 7 per cent of the schools of that state. In many states the per centage of use was as low as 1.

XIII. THE MORRISON PLAN

The Morrison Plan was developed by Henry C. Morrison, Professor of Education in the University of Chicago. This plan, sometimes referred to as the unit mastery plan, involves features regarding the nature of units.

43. Breed, op. cit., p. 303.

Under this plan a pupil is promoted in a subject only when he has finished the unit for that subject. In case a pupil fails to complete one or more units in the year, he is permitted to take these units the following year without repeating units which he has already passed.

The pupil's age and mental ability, the nature of subject matter, and the number of trials which the pupil has made at the unit influence promotion.

The inquiry made by the Department of Interior showed that 737 schools, or nearly 9 per cent of the 8,594 schools whose replies were tabulated, reported the use of the Morrison Plan. The schools in 46 states were using this plan.45

The Morrison Plan is the last of a selective list of promotional plans reviewed in this report.

Certain of the typical and better known plans have been discussed in order that the new plans that are employed today may be appreciated.

45. Loc. cit.
CHAPTER III
MORE RECENT TRENDS IN MEETING THE NEEDS
OF PUPIL PROGRESS

Growing complexities in civilization and rapid changes in our national life have made new demands upon education, which can no longer be met by the simple schemes that served an earlier state of society. The number of types of pupils in the schools has been multiplied and the range of subjects and objectives have been enormously increased. The teaching profession has been put upon its mettle to devise more effective ways of discovering and training all the children of all the people. At the same time educational psychology and the educational tests and measurements have come to yield a rich mine of information concerning the differences in individuals and have come to afford better methods of meeting individual needs. Schools everywhere are striving to meet these needs through proper classification and promotional policies.

An analysis of the literature concerning current plans of classification and promotions reveals
that a number of plans are in use. A few of the most prominent of these will be discussed in this chapter.

I. TRIAL PROMOTION

Trial promotion constitutes a device which has been used for some time as a plan of promotion. Rather than to fail a pupil outright, the pupil is given a clear understanding that he will be demoted to the original grade after a month or six weeks if he does not show satisfactory achievement.

Responsibility for the success of the conditionally promoted pupil is placed upon the receiving teacher. The receiving teacher follows a prearranged plan of work for each probationary pupil.

Work planned for the receiving teacher involves keeping a record for every probationary pupil, which shows the child’s record of work done during the trial period, what has been done for him by the receiving teacher, and her recommendation at the close of the probationary period. Specific activities have been suggested for receiving teachers; these include: visiting the pupil’s home, interviewing the parents, giving the pupil help outside of school hours, adjusting the course of study, varying the method of teaching, using pupil
co-operation, reporting daily to parents, and sending home pupil classwork.

The probationary plan was used in two Illinois cities, Springfield and Decatur, during the years 1918-1920. In the first semester of its use more than 75 per cent of the 1,276 children promoted on trial made good. Of these, 172 were recommended for failure at the close of the semester. The plan reduced failure 5 per cent.

In 1922, R. C. Matson, Superintendent of Schools at Martin Ferry, Ohio, promoted 115 pupils on trial, with the result that 74 per cent of them were retained in the higher grade.

A. G. Yawberg, County Superintendent, carried on a probationary experiment in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, in 1923. Of 194 pupils in Grades I to VIII advanced on probation, 138 or 71 per cent made good.

3. Ibid., p. 724.
In 1927, Henry Cowles Marshall\textsuperscript{4} selected seventy-eight pupils of the Junior High School in Columbus, Ohio, who had been listed for failure in one or more subjects and offered them a trial in advanced classes during the first six weeks of the next semester. Ninety-three per cent of the subject promotions were successful during the six weeks trial that ended in the middle of March, while seventy-five per cent also achieved success in June at the end of the advanced semester.

These studies have very significant implications. They not only answer pertinent questions regarding trial promotion, but they also challenge the whole promotional machinery of public schools. When the practice of promotion on trial is evaluated in terms of the percentage subsequently demoted, the percentage of cases who sustain themselves in the new grade, or the promotion which receives subsequent regular promotion as determined by teacher marks and judgments, one may question the reliability of the results. Since it is frequently embarrassing to demote a pupil, a trial promotion usually means a

\begin{flushright}
\end{flushright}
permanent promotion. Also, if the proposed failures are selected by the subjective method which may be in error as to the true educational status of the pupil, those who are promoted on trial may be the ones who would have been considered potential failures in terms of actual achievement. When subjective ratings are eliminated, however, and conclusions are based on objective measurements of the educational growth of children, the evidence cannot be brushed aside lightly. As far as trial promotions are concerned, the data speak for themselves.

II. DOUBLE PROMOTION

One of the simplest plans of enabling a bright pupil to progress more rapidly is to allow him to skip a grade from time to time. Instead of promoting a child from the fourth to the fifth grade at the close of the term, he is promoted immediately from the fourth to the sixth.

The plan as carried out in the McComb City School, Mississippi, is based upon the following conditions:

1. The teacher's recommendation that the pupil is qualified to make the attempt of double promotion.
2. A certificate from a reputable physician to the effect that the pupil is perfect in health and that in his judgment extra study and school work will not result as detriment to the pupil's health.

3. The double promotion shall not result in making chronological age of the pupil at the opening of the term when the pupil is to take up his advance standing younger than the following: 8 years for grade 4B, 8 years and 6 months for grade 4A, 9 years for grade 5B, 9 years and 6 months for grade 5A, 10 years for grade 6B, 10 years and 6 months for grade 6A, 11 years for grade 7B, 11 years and 6 months for grade 7A, 12 years for grade 8B, 12 years and 6 months for grade 8A. The school records showing data of birth are used as the authority for determining chronological age.

4. The pupil must have made an honor roll grade in the school work for the term previous to the request for double promotion.

5. The pupil must not have lost for any reason more than ten days from school during the term previous to request.

6. The pupil must have been tested in standardized achievement up to the standard of the grade into which he desires to be promoted in the following subjects: reading, spelling, composition, and arithmetic.
7. There are certain subjects in grades 4B to 8A which should not be skipped no matter how proficient a pupil may be in the mechanics of arithmetic, reading, or composition. These subjects are: 4B Geography, 4A Geography, 5B Hygiene, 5B Geography, 5A Geography, 6B Agriculture, 6A Geography, 6B History, 7B Hygiene, 7A History, 7B History, 7A Geography, 7B Geography, 8B History, 8B Agriculture. It will be necessary for the pupil to take these subjects in a course under a teacher of the city schools under the direction of the superintendent to show that he has fairly made himself master of the content of these subjects in the grade he is applying to omit.\(^5\)

In 1922 Joseph Gibson, Superintendent of the McComb City School, Mississippi, tried out the double promotion.\(^6\) Twenty-nine pupils received double promotion in the fall of that year; at mid-term, thirty pupils were doubly promoted. He found that the pupils who had double promotion records continued to make the honor roll grades in the grades to which they had received double promotion, and out of the total number for each term, one pupil had failed in one subject and another pupil had failed in two subjects.


\(^6\) Loc. cit.
Engle, Superintendent of Senior High School, Michigan City, Indiana, carried on an investigation in 1930 to determine how the high school records of pupils with double promotion in the elementary school compared with other pupils. Marks of 46 pupils in the Senior Class of 1930 with one, two, and three double promotions, and average number of grade points of each promotion were compared with marks and average number of grade points of the remaining 110 members of the Senior Class and with 46 pupils selected at random from total high school enrollment. It was found that the percentage of As and the percentage of Bs and Cs received by the accelerated pupils exceeded the corresponding percentage received by the non-accelerated Seniors by 4.7 and 7.0 per cent respectively. On the other hand the percentage of Ds and Es received by the non-accelerated seniors exceeded the corresponding percentage received by the accelerated pupils by 9.5 and 2.1 per cent respectively.

A recent study of elementary school pupils is reported by McElwee in Public School 208, Brooklyn.  


Teachers of the second, third, and fourth grades were to check a miscellany of traits indicating which of the traits described each pupil in their classes. Groups of one hundred who had been doubly promoted one or more terms, one hundred regularly promoted and one hundred retarded were selected from the entire enrollment in these grades. Fourteen traits were deemed desirable and seven undesirable. The group who had double promotion possessed all the desirable traits to a greater degree, and all the undesirable traits to a smaller degree than did the other groups.

III. ROCHESTER PLAN OF PROMOTION

A plan for continuous progress of pupils through the public schools of Rochester was put into effect in September, 1933. The school system was composed, for administrative purposes, of four promotional units -- kindergarten through grade 3, grade 4 through 6th, grade 7 through 9th, and grade 10 through 12th. Provision is made for slow, normal, and rapid progress through each promotional unit. Progress will be made

through the first unit known as the kindergarten-primary unit in four years by the normal group. It will take five years for the slow and three and a half years for the rapid moving group. In the same way it will take three years for the normal group to complete the second or elementary grade unit, four years for the slow and two and one half for the rapid group. It is expected that no pupil over ten years of age will remain in the first promotion unit, and none over 14 years in the elementary school.

Promotion to the next promotional unit of the system will be determined on a basis of teacher judgment, city-wide tests, chronological age, and evidence in individual cases secured by the child study department.

This plan is the result of five years of study and experimentation in the school system. The semi-annual plan of promotion has proved unsatisfactory.

It is believed that the new plan will be at least as economical as the old and will have numerous advantages, such as: (1) elimination of repetition and failure; (2) provision for continuous growth; (3) provision for greater unity in the organization of the school system; (4) elimination of wasted time in the
making of schedules, keeping records, etc.; and (5) stimulation of learning and teaching by giving the teacher an opportunity to consider the child's growth for three years or more instead of five months.

IV. SUBJECT PROMOTION

Subject Promotion is a relatively new practice. Under this plan, the pupil is promoted by subjects. He is given the program of the next grade, and the subject which he must repeat is substituted for the same subject in the new grade.

To a large extent this means has been adopted by the advocates of departmentalization, but has been used sparingly otherwise.

Heck says:

"The practice of causing a child to repeat several subjects in which he has done satisfactory work because of failure in another is surely wasteful of time and discouraging to the pupil."

The Classification Committee of Ohio outlined detailed steps which should be taken for subject classification. These are:

1. Arrange the program of studies so that all recitations in a given subject occur at a given hour.

2. In order to provide variation in length of periods in the several grades, schedule non-promotional subjects such as music, drawing, and physical training to follow immediately the recitation in subjects in which subject classification is in effect.

3. Select subject matter tests appropriate to those studies in which subject promotion is allowed.

4. Classify the children according to their grade ability in those subjects basing the classification on the result of these tests.

This same committee suggests the following advantages of subject promotion in the elementary grades:

1. It makes definite provisions for special abilities and disabilities among children.

2. It permits more rapid advancement through the grades.

3. It makes possible a closer articulation of work of one school with the work of another in the case of all children who have transfers.

4. It causes a more homogeneous grouping of pupils in a given subject.


12. Ibid., p. 29.
The report made by Leslie L. Chism in 1932 on the classification and promotion practices in the elementary schools, showed 8.16 per cent of the cities required pupils who had failed in one subject to repeat a grade; 9.39 per cent had the pupils who had failed in one subject repeat a half grade.

V. SPECIAL PROMOTION

A variation of the double promotion plan is the special promotion plan. According to this scheme, a pupil might be selected any time during the year for promotion to the next grade. Thus a pupil might be promoted to the fifth grade from the fourth grade even though he had been in the fourth grade only two weeks.

Gist has stated the case for increased acceleration from studies made in Seattle. At the B. F. Day School in Seattle, Washington, as high a percentage of the total school population as ten may be promoted twice in a single year.


There were 302 pupils in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. These 302 pupils during their school life had 209 special promotions and 135 failures, with a net gain of 74 in favor of the special promotion. On the basis of the cost per pupil to be educated in the elementary schools of Seattle, the saving to the district was $2,647.86.

The first semester of the school year in 1917, there were 78 special promotions, slightly less than 10 per cent, and 26 failures, a net gain in favor of the special promotion of 52 and a saving of $1,787.50 to the district.

An honor roll of the Lincoln High School to which these pupils were sent later showed about 12 per cent of the list was made up of the former pupils of the B. F. Day School, many of whom received special promotions while in high school.

Everett B. Sackett15 reports an experiment carried out in the schools of the Panama Canal Zone. Twenty-five elementary special promotions in 1930 gained

---

more in educational quotient and achievement quotient than did a group of pupils at the same level who progressed normally.

This further substantiates the belief that many pupils may complete the required course in much less time than is required of all without loss to themselves.

VI. SOCIAL AGE PROMOTION

Social age is gaining recognition as an important factor in the classification of pupils. A pupil's social age is a determining factor in the attitude he develops toward his teachers, his school-mates, his school activities, and school in general.

If the school is looked upon as a place in which is provided a wholesome environment in which children may develop normal health and normal mental attitudes and ideals, social age or social maturity becomes a factor in classification which can hardly be ignored.

In order that such classification be carried out, it is essential that all children be promoted

regularly and periodically so that each child will be placed at all times in class groups which are relatively homogenous from the viewpoint of social maturity. This policy calls for 100 per cent promotion throughout the elementary school. To make this program more feasible, it is recommended that the term school grades be abandoned and that the children be designated as spending their "first year," "second year," or "seventh year" in the elementary school. After a child has spent his seven years in the elementary school and has reached the age of 12 years or 12 years and six months, he transfers to the secondary school. In this way pupil progress will be regular and continuous.

This promotion plan has been formulated in the firm belief that one of the major purposes of the elementary school is to provide a wholesome environment in which children may grow up. The aim at all times should be to provide class groups in which children of about the same age and maturity will participate extensively and in a wholesome fashion, in which, it is hoped, the aim of the elementary education will be attained.

At no time should a child be placed in a situation which will cause him to develop a defense mechanism or undesirable character and personality traits.
Almack\textsuperscript{17} feels that social age is a very important fact in classification or promotion of pupils. He found that choice of associates, which is a social activity, has a close correlation to mental ability.

Chism's report\textsuperscript{18} shows that 80.82 per cent of the cities were using social maturity as a basis for promotion.

VII. EDUCATIONAL AGE PROMOTION

Classification by educational age brings together pupils of equal educational status.\textsuperscript{19} Educational age shows directly which pupils are of equal educational attainment. The educational age is in reality, a resultant of mental age, health, industry, attendance, and attitude toward school work.

Under this plan of classification, the pupils are required to meet the required standards for the grade in certain learning fields, such as reading, writing, or arithmetic fundamentals before being pro-

\textsuperscript{17} J. C. Almack, "The Influence of Intelligence on the Selection of Associates," \textit{School and Society}, Vol. 16, November 4, 1922, p. 529.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Elementary School Journal}, October, 1932, op. cit., p. 89.

moted from one grade to another. In other words academic achievement is the basis for promotion.

VIII. PROMOTION BY CHRONOLOGICAL AGE

Classification and promotion of pupils on the basis of chronological age is probably the simplest method known. A child enters school at the normal age-of-entrance and each year automatically passes to the next grade. Thus, years in school and grade coincide, except that some schools which employ this plan use acceleration as a means of enriching the work for unusually bright children.

This plan is based on the theory of equalization of educational opportunity which assumes that all children should be provided a curriculum through which they can progress regularly year by year, non-promotion being rarely, if ever, experienced.

Chism's investigation20 shows that 83.78 percent of the cities were using chronological age as a factor in determining promotions.

IX. PRIMARY PROMOTION BY READING LEVELS

In the primary grades, reading dominates the

20. Loc. cit.
curriculum, thus making it necessary to base the educational adjustment of pupils on that one subject. Even pupils well along in third grade work have not yet progressed far enough with their schooling to show variations in relative standing from subject to subject of a degree which would warrant making different pupil classifications in each subject field for purposes of teaching. Language and spelling are so closely related to reading at the primary level as to be practically a part of the latter.

Any study of primary geography or history really is nothing more or less than reading books with social-studies content. At these lower levels, only arithmetic can be a subject sufficiently distinct from reading to offer much chance for pupils to show achievement scores different from their scores on reading. When the arithmetic curriculum follows the postponed schedule which was recommended by the studies of the Committee of Seven,21 and which is found in most of the newer textbooks, formal arithmetic is begun in Grade III. It will

be almost Grade IV, then, before the pupil will show any appreciable spread in arithmetic learning. Classification and promotion based largely on reading achievement, therefore, are quite practical through the first three grades.

Thus we see from the various plans, the question of pupil promotion remains in a relatively chaotic condition. One needs but to scan any one of the recent investigations to become convinced of the fact that there are today no generally accepted policies or practices regarding promotion of pupils.
CHAPTER IV

THE PROBLEM

The entrance of pupils into the beginning grades of the elementary school and their subsequent progress up through the higher grades have been problems of increasing concern to the public school administrators since the beginning of the present century. During the past decade this concern has risen to a position of major importance. Under the general stimulus of more inclusive and drastic compulsory education laws, greater and greater numbers of children of tender years have been drawn into the public schools and carried to higher levels of education. The earlier seemingly idealistic concept of a public school system for "all the children of all the people" has become one of practical reality. At what ages to take these pupils in, how rapidly to promote them, and how far to carry them, are problems not only of theoretical concern, but ones which have to be met with definite and far-reaching programs of classification and promotion.
This study has for its inception a belief on the part of many school administrators that there are some existing age-grade-progress conditions in Kansas that are undesirable. Many feel that there is a need for uniformity, clarification, and probably some definite legislation or at least remedial steps taken in entrance age and progress of children throughout the state.

Realizing that a diagnosis of the situation must precede successful remedial work, the present study is an attempt to diagnose the conditions in Kansas through an age-grade progress study.

The following are some questions which seem pertinent to consider in such a study:

1. What is the actual percentage of underage pupils in certain types of school organizations?

2. What is the actual percentage of over-age pupils in certain types of school organizations?

3. What is the actual percentage of over-ageness among the Mexican and Negro children?
4. What is the over-ageness and under-ageness of boys compared with girls?

5. How does the age-grade status of the primary level compare with the intermediate level?

6. What is the history of promotion or progress plans in school systems?

7. What early attempts have been made to adjust pupil progress?

8. What are the recent trends over the nation in meeting the needs of pupil progress?

9. What is the present progress or promotional practices in use in Kansas schools?

10. What are the entrance age practices for pupils in Kindergarten and First Grade in Kansas Schools studied?

**Importance of Problem**

One of the most urgent needs in a school system is child accounting by means of an age-grade progress survey. Certain definite justifications of the study are apparent.

1. It gives a graphic picture of the classification conditions existing in a school system so far as chronological age and school progress
are concerned.

2. It gives a quantitative statement of the output as compared with the intake of human material.

3. The facts disclosed by the survey furnish an important check on the grading and promotional machinery and the general management of the pupils.

4. It provides a valuable index as to the efficiency of the curriculum. A large amount of slow progress means a too difficult or ill adapted curriculum.

5. It is important in determining the cost of instruction. A child who spends eight years in doing seven years of school work is a case of eight units of cost for seven units of accomplishment, and so an exhibition of poor economy.

If such unsatisfactory conditions exist in the whole state or in certain types of school systems the first step toward improvement is the discovery of these conditions.

Procedure and Scope of Study

It was decided that in order to make this study
representative of the schools of Kansas, it should include some first, second, and third class cities and rural schools of the State. With this aim in mind five first class cities, six second class cities, twelve third class cities and thirty-one county units were selected for the study. This group of schools include 46,409 children and they represent every section of the State.

The following items of information were gathered for every child in these schools: Date of birth, race, sex, and grade as of September, 1941. The information was collected by use of the sheets, copies of which are included here.

The age-grade data were taken directly from the school records of each school and county studied. The data were classified into tables showing the number and percentage of under-age, normal, and over-age pupils in every grade of each type of school studied. The data were classified further into studies of the age-progress of boys and girls in each school. Further tables were made for colored and Mexican children.
AGE-GRADE-PROGRESS SHEET

Grade _______ School _______ Teacher _______

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Pupil</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. What do you consider the most frequent cause of retardation and failure in your classroom?  

2. What remedial factor do you feel would be most effective in decreasing retardation and failure in your classroom?
AGE-GRADE-PROGRESS SHEET

County ____________________________ County Supt. Reporting ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>4½</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>5½</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>6½</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>7½</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>8½</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>9½</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>10½</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>11½</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>12½</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>13½</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>14½</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>15½</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>16½</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>17½</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Compute age of child from Sept. 1st by chart given on back of this sheet.

2. Place in the year column the number of pupils in each grade who were that age Sept. 1st, 1941.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since Nov. 30, 1936</td>
<td>4½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1936 to Nov. 30, 1936</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1935 to May 31, 1936</td>
<td>5½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1935 to Nov. 30, 1935</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1934 to May 31, 1935</td>
<td>6½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1934 to Nov. 30, 1934</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1933 to May 31, 1934</td>
<td>7½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1933 to Nov. 30, 1933</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1932 to May 31, 1933</td>
<td>8½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1932 to Nov. 30, 1932</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1931 to May 31, 1932</td>
<td>9½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1931 to Nov. 30, 1931</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1930 to May 31, 1931</td>
<td>10½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1930 to Nov. 30, 1930</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1929 to May 31, 1929</td>
<td>11½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1929 to Nov. 30, 1929</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1928 to May 31, 1928</td>
<td>12½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1928 to Nov. 30, 1928</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1927 to May 31, 1927</td>
<td>13½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1927 to Nov. 30, 1927</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1926 to May 31, 1926</td>
<td>14½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1926 to Nov. 30, 1926</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1, 1925 to May 31, 1925</td>
<td>15½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Dec. 1, 1925</td>
<td>over 15½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Through the use of questionnaires, teachers were asked to list according to frequency the causes of slow progress among the pupils in their classroom. The results from these questionnaires were classified into seven classes: namely; inadequate mentality, irregular attendance, physical defects, out-of-school causes, too early school entrance, insufficient achievement, and inappropriate administrative practice.

Finally each teacher was asked to recommend methods for improving the progress of pupils in Kansas. These were classified into seven divisions: namely; greater provision for individualized instruction, improvement in textbook situation, raise age-entrance requirements, complete and uniform cumulative record system, more flexible curriculum, closer home-school relationship, and removal of remedial physical defects.

As the writer worked with the records of the various schools, some important facts regarding the condition of records and lack of data pertinent to the progress of the pupils were noted and are discussed in this study.

The following is a complete list of the city and county units studied together with the officials cooperating in the study of his school system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Supt. of Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allen</td>
<td>Esther McKenna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourbon</td>
<td>Mona Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Ida Vinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark</td>
<td>Fay Harcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>Lilly Brenner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corvley</td>
<td>Anna Hight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards</td>
<td>Pearl Peterie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Florence Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geary</td>
<td>Jane Roether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham</td>
<td>Hester Gordon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwood</td>
<td>Gwendolen Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>John Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>J. D. Everett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kearny</td>
<td>Helen Coons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan</td>
<td>Mark Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osborne</td>
<td>Frank Paschal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawnee</td>
<td>Bertha Marymee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratt</td>
<td>Lottie Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reno</td>
<td>A. R. King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic</td>
<td>Fannie Dilsaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>Lewis Baldwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley</td>
<td>Agnes Engstrand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooks</td>
<td>Edith Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Supt. of Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawnee</td>
<td>H. Manshan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevens</td>
<td>Rhylow Cott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Bill McArthur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabaunsee</td>
<td>Ralph John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Curtis Wieland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodson</td>
<td>Josie Cooper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyandotte</td>
<td>Donald McCully</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**City Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Supt. - Supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas City</td>
<td>Ernestine Leasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chanute</td>
<td>Eva King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffeyville</td>
<td>Dorothy McPherson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldorado</td>
<td>Rebecca Watson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emporia</td>
<td>Delore Gammon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutchinson</td>
<td>R. C. Woodard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Willard Graff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iola</td>
<td>J. A. Fleming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsons</td>
<td>Wallace Guthridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburg</td>
<td>Pauline Staats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salina</td>
<td>Grace Stewart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Definition of Terms

Before considering the material bearing on these questions, it seems well to make clear the meanings ascribed to certain terms employed in this study.

Normal age refers to entrance at six years of age and advancing one grade per year.

Under age means entering the first grade before six years of age or advancing more than one grade per year.

Over age is late entrance in school or failure to progress one grade per year.

Normal progress is the completion of one grade per year.

Slow progress exists when a child takes more than one year to finish a grade.

Rapid progress occurs when a child takes less than a year to complete a grade.

Acceleration is the accumulation of promotion more rapidly than one grade per year. It is synonymous with rapid progress.

Retardation occurs when a child takes more than one year to complete a grade. Retardation and slow progress are synonymous.
Failure means non-promotion from a school grade to the next higher grade.

Promotion refers to passing a pupil from the grade in which he is enrolled to the next higher grade.

Elimination occurs when the child leaves school.

First Class cities in Kansas are defined as those having 15,000 or more inhabitants.

Second class cities are designated as those having 2,000 but less than 15,000 population.

Third class cities include all incorporated communities under 2,000 population.

Rural Schools include all those not within the boundaries of an incorporated community.

Above classification of cities corresponds with that of the Kansas Educational Directory of 1941-42, compiled by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
CHAPTER V

AGE-GRADE STATUS OF KANSAS CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

The relative number and per cent of under-age pupils in the elementary schools gives a significant index of the general status of pupil progress as found in the various types of schools in question.

One of the oldest measures of pupil progress is the pupil's age in relation to the grade in which he finds himself. Other things being equal, the younger the pupil is for a given grade, the greater is the indication that he has been making rapid progress. The greater also is the chance that he will complete the elementary school before the end of the compulsory attendance period with its accompanying tendency for over-age pupils to drop out of school.

In order to analyze the conditions it is first necessary to break down the pupil population into types of school organization, grades, sex, and race. The reader will find that the chapter contains tables that apply to girl or boy, white or colored in every grade and type of public school system in Kansas which he might wish to study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE I: Showing Number and Per Ccnt of the Under-Age, Normal-Age, and Over-Age Children for Grades One to Six in First Class Cities of Kansas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table II: Showing Number and Per Cent of the Under-Age, Normal-Age, and Over-Age Children for Grades One to Six in Second Class Cities of Kansas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>No. of Under-Age Children</th>
<th>No. of Normal-Age Children</th>
<th>No. of Over-Age Children</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>1266</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>100.4</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE III** Showing Number and Per Cent of the Under-age, Under-age, and Over-age Children for Grades Due to Right in Third Class City of Korea.
| Grade | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total | Girls | Boys | Total |
|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| I     | 124   | 77   | 201   | 129   | 81   | 210   | 131   | 83   | 214   | 138   | 91   | 229   | 145   | 97   | 242   | 163   | 119   | 282   | 169   | 114   | 283   | 185   | 128   | 313   | 185   | 128   | 313   |
| II    | 112   | 66   | 178   | 127   | 75   | 202   | 139   | 88   | 227   | 152   | 94   | 246   | 170   | 110   | 280   | 181   | 124   | 305   | 194   | 133   | 327   | 201   | 154   | 355   | 201   | 154   | 355   |
| III   | 107   | 62   | 169   | 118   | 66   | 184   | 131   | 80   | 211   | 151   | 93   | 244   | 157   | 98   | 255   | 172   | 114   | 286   | 189   | 128   | 317   | 207   | 155   | 362   | 207   | 155   | 362   |
| IV    | 103   | 62   | 165   | 114   | 64   | 178   | 129   | 81   | 210   | 150   | 91   | 241   | 171   | 107   | 278   | 182   | 119   | 301   | 200   | 129   | 329   | 210   | 159   | 369   | 210   | 159   | 369   |
| V     | 100   | 60   | 160   | 106   | 59   | 165   | 113   | 72   | 185   | 151   | 90   | 241   | 174   | 107   | 281   | 185   | 109   | 394   | 204   | 133   | 337   | 218   | 152   | 370   | 218   | 152   | 370   |
| VI    | 99    | 58   | 157   | 101   | 55   | 156   | 110   | 67   | 177   | 147   | 90   | 237   | 175   | 97   | 272   | 184   | 113   | 397   | 207   | 131   | 338   | 218   | 152   | 370   | 218   | 152   | 370   |
| VII   | 97    | 56   | 153   | 100   | 54   | 154   | 107   | 64   | 171   | 145   | 88   | 233   | 172   | 88   | 260   | 185   | 104   | 389   | 211   | 132   | 343   | 223   | 155   | 378   | 223   | 155   | 378   |
| VIII  | 93    | 53   | 146   | 98    | 51   | 149   | 101   | 62   | 163   | 141   | 86   | 227   | 167   | 85   | 253   | 184   | 102   | 386   | 213   | 132   | 345   | 225   | 155   | 380   | 225   | 155   | 380   |

**Table II:** Showing Roster and Per Cent of the Under-Age, Normal-Age and Over-Age Children for Grades One to Eight in the Rural Schools of Kansas.
### Table V Showing Number and Per Cent of the Under-Age, Normal-Age and Over-Age Colored Children for Grades One to Eight in All Types of School Organizations of Kansas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grade I</th>
<th>Grade II</th>
<th>Grade III</th>
<th>Grade IV</th>
<th>Grade V</th>
<th>Grade VI</th>
<th>Grade VII</th>
<th>Grade VIII</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>169</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. & % of Under-Age Children: 11 7.1 12 7.6 15 9.4 9 5.3 19 11.1 26 15.7 10 23.0 12 24.9 1107
No. & % of Normal-Age Children: 116 68.6 91 57.9 81 53.2 96 56.8 69 43.1 89 43.4 18 81.7 13 27.0
No. & % of Over-Age Children: 42 24.3 94 33.5 36 37.0 64 37.7 76 45.3 94 45.3 15 34.6 23 46.1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grade I</th>
<th>Grade II</th>
<th>Grade III</th>
<th>Grade IV</th>
<th>Grade V</th>
<th>Grade VI</th>
<th>Grade VII</th>
<th>Grade VIII</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4½</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5½</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>926</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2769</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3046</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6½</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2742</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>2630</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>3261</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7½</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>2893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2138</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8½</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1609</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>2260</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>2269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11½</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15½</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE VI** Showing Number and Percent of the Under-Age, Normal-Age, and Over-Age Children for Grades One to Eight in All Types of School Organizations of Kansas
CONCLUSION

General Outstanding Facts Indicated

By the Tables

1. The general age-grade situation in Kansas shows that 31.2% of the pupils in Kansas are retarded one year or more. The type of school organization seems to have little influence on the age-grade situation.

2. Children of the rural and third class schools enter school at a much earlier age than do children of the first and second class cities. Twenty-two and six tenths per cent of the first grade children of the rural and third class cities are underage as compared with 7.7% in the first-second class cities.

3. Colored children are much more over-age than the white children. Forty-eight per cent of the colored children are one year or more over-age as compared to 26.6% of the white children. There seems to be little difference in the over-ageness of colored children attending separate and mixed schools.
4. Boys are more over-age than girls in all types of schools. Thirty and nine tenths per cent of the boys are one year or more over-age as compared with 22.9% of the girls.

5. Ten per cent more children are making normal progress in the first and second class cities than in the rural and third class cities.

6. Over 45% of the eighth grade boys in third class cities are one year or more over-age. Boys of rural schools are next with 34.7% retarded one year or more.

A further discussion of the indications of the preceding tables will be presented in the following chapters.
CHAPTER VI

FACTORS FREQUENTLY CONTRIBUTING TO PUPIL FAILURE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to consider the prevailing causes of slow progress in the elementary schools of Kansas as viewed by representative Kansas teachers. As a basis for the discussion of this problem six-hundred teachers in the schools studied were asked to submit the most frequent causes of slow progress as they had observed them in their own classroom experience.

The results for the purpose of discussion will be grouped under seven headings: namely; inadequate mentality, irregular attendance, physical defects, out-of-school causes, too early entrance into school, insufficient achievement, and inappropriate administrative practices. These factors will be discussed in an attempt to evaluate the factors in the light of educational research, principles of mental hygiene, and a philosophy of education.
Table Showing Causes of Slow Progress As Reported By Six Hundred Kansas Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Mentality</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular Attendance</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Defects</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-School Causes</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Early School Entrance</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient Achievement</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Administrative Practice</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INADEQUATE MENTALITY

One hundred forty-two teachers mentioned inadequate mentality as a cause of slow pupil progress. Mental retardation is cited as a cause of non-promotion in schools which do not adapt their school work to the abilities of their pupils. But slowness in school work was often listed in reports studied as lack of mental ability, when such is not the case. For example, in an experiment¹ which dealt with causes of failure and

success, six out of a group of forty-eight children were considered to be definitely feeble-minded. On further examination, every one of the six was found to have a physical basis for his incapacity. Moreover, it was discovered that twenty-three of the pupils scored low on intelligence tests because, as a result of environment and limited experience, they lacked the vocabulary and concepts necessary for correct solutions to the questions. Many children who scored low on group intelligence tests rated considerably higher when they were given individual tests. Many teachers reason that promotion of certain pupils is unwise because these pupils are not ready for the work of the higher grade; but a study in Philadelphia concluded that children were largely unready because of their slow-learning rate, which did not improve through repetition of the grade.

Their achievement was found to be little greater after repeating the grade. Whatever gains were attained were made at a sacrifice of efficiency in terms of achievement per year of instruction. Similarly, an

investigation\textsuperscript{3} by Farley, Frey, and Garland showed that children with low I. Q.'s who had repeated several grades were not doing so well in their work as children of the same ability who had been kept in grades with those of approximately their own age. It was apparent that the natural weakness of the repeaters was aggravated by the maladjustments in the classroom. Caswell\textsuperscript{4} concluded that children of less than average ability gained little more by repeating a grade than they gained by trial promotion, and that those in grades four, five, and six profited more from trial promotion plan than did those in grades two and three. Nonpromotion was apt to be a deterrent instead of an impetus to acceptable achievement.

One indirect and two direct procedures seem to offer help to the dull child. According to the work of Wellman, Newman, Freeman, Skeels and others, there appears to be some possibility of altering the I. Q. of children through a change of environment. Another hope is in the location and treatment by medical science of


the physical causes of low mentalities. Pupils who were failed because of slow-learning abilities evidently could not do the prescribed school work. Therefore, the logical solution was to change the standards of achievement to fit mental age levels rather than chronological age levels, provide courses definitely adapted to individual pupil needs, and furnish psychologically correct methods of teaching. Among the many plans suggested for the reorganization of the public elementary school that of Robinson is one of the most practical. He suggested that at the end of the second grade all children be sorted into three groups on a basis of their complete records and psychological tests. About two per cent, according to Robinson, would fall in the anti-social and feeble-minded group; approximately 15 per cent would be classified as slow-learners; and the remainder would be normal or above normal in their abilities and capacities. The first group could be taught by means of an ungraded class; the second by means of a concrete type of teaching like that employed in "progressive" schools; and

the third by "regular" methods. Thus, by means of many visual aids, concrete experiences, and well-qualified teachers, the pupils, who learned slowly could acquire the same knowledge as "normal" students without special emphasis on reading.

While more research is needed in this area of education, it may be concluded from the data available that to fail a child because of his slow-learning ability or lack of adequate mentality to master subject matter is not a justifiable practice or policy.

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

Insufficient attendance is a cause of failure, according to the judgments of 124 teachers. Daily attendance seemed to be more of a problem in rural areas than in city schools, no doubt because of longer travel distances, inadequate transportation facilities, poor roads, and improper methods of keeping roads open in the winter months. With the correction of these deficiencies with the past few years in many rural communities, daily attendance has probably decreased in importance as a stated cause of non-promotion.
A study completed in 1932 revealed that the problem of daily attendance occurred in kindergartens and first grades with greatest frequency because of such factors as health, transportation, and parents' attitudes.

There is little evidence regarding the extent of pupils' absences before failure is incurred. Keyes stated that pupils who had missed up to twenty-five days made up for the lost time and maintained their grade in 60 per cent of the cases studied. He claimed that with twenty-five to forty-five days of absence there was one chance in two of avoiding failure. As many absentees succeeded in keeping the pace as failed and fell behind. When absence rose to fifty days or more, there was only one chance in four of avoiding arrest. Large losses of time were invariably the result of illness and most frequently that of contagious diseases.


7. C. H. Keyes. "Progress Through the Grades of City Schools." Contributions to Education - Teachers College, Columbia, N.Y.
Modern improvements in municipal, school and household sanitation have probably eliminated much of this cause of failure. Robinson thought that experience proved that children of average or better intelligence, if given the opportunity, made up as much as 50 per cent of the year's work missed by absences.

If the work missed by absentees cannot be made up and is necessary for that of the succeeding grade, failure might be justified on that count. Since as much as 50 per cent of the year's schoolwork could be made up by the majority of pupils, it was necessary to examine the question of whether or not the work of one grade was requisite of the next. Experience indicated that possibly the only subject in the elementary school which necessitated a continued study in the various grades was arithmetic. Certain educators even questioned the advisability of retaining all of the arithmetic that was traditionally taught in the elementary school. Regardless of this decrease in the content of arithmetic courses of study, a remedial program was found necessary to help the child who was absent any considerable length of time.

Sullenger\(^9\) believed the chief cause of truancy in Omaha was lack of home supervision or lack of cooperation of parents. The obvious remedy was better relationships between home and school. The cause next in importance was found to be insufficient income, the remedy of which is not simple.

Another educator\(^10\) thought that in most cities 60 per cent of the truants became unhappy in school. While a few were bored with school, the majority failed to comprehend what the lessons were about. Forty per cent of the truancy was caused by maladjustment at home or in the hours spent outside the home and school.

While there is no clear-cut evidence concerning the validity of absence as a cause of non-promotion, many means for decreasing pupils' absences are known. Preventive measures include pre-school clinics, activities of parent-teacher associations, better municipal, school and household sanitary conditions, curriculum fitted to the needs of individual pupils, and good recreational

---


10. B. B. Robinson, "Why Truancy?" *op. cit.*
programs. Corrective measures, such as additional homework, summer school, special tutoring by fellow pupils, teachers, or parents, help from visiting teachers, and supervised study periods, aid the pupil who missed school to continue his grade.

PHYSICAL DEFECTS

Physical defects were listed by 113 teachers as a cause of failure. The correction of physical defects does not in and of itself ensure learning, because many other factors, such as interest, industry, application, intelligence, etc., are operative in the learning process. It does, however, aid pupils who are so affected to learn more easily. Ayers\(^\text{11}\) found that the number of children with physical defects among bright and dull pupils did not differ greatly but that dull youngsters were much more defective in degree. The number of pupils with diseased adenoids and tonsils, enlarged glands, imperfect glands, and poor teeth was too consistent to be dismissed as accidental or unimportant. It is significant that Ayers found that children who suffered from physical defects made on the whole

\(^{11}\) Leonard Ayers, "Laggards in Our Schools," \textit{op. cit.}\
approximately 9 per cent less progress than those who had no physical imperfections. While in some situations the school is able to bring about the correction of physical defects through corrective exercises, provision of eyeglasses and medical care normally lies within the parental sphere of responsibility.

Lack of good health does not appear to be a valid cause of non-promotion. While the home should assume most of the responsibility for the removal or the remedy of physical handicaps of children, the school is not without its obligation in the matter. Whenever possible, the school should be staffed with physicians and nurses who are able to diagnose and treat physical defects. If the medical personnel is not available in the school, school authorities should be able to refer the cases to social agencies in the community where children may obtain the proper aid. Whenever poor health causes a child to miss part of the school year, the problem then becomes one of "inadequate mentality." Such causes of failure as defective tonsils, adenoids, teeth, glands, eyes, and the like are not justifiable excuses but an acknowledgement that the home primarily, and the school secondarily, are not adequately caring for their children.
OUT-OF-SCHOOL CAUSES

Late entrance to school, ignorance of the English language, poor home conditions, poor home study habits, outside activities, domestic trouble and moving about were given as causes of failure by 101 teachers. Such causes probably present the school with one of its most baffling set of reasons for retaining children in the grades. While late entrance to school has the same effect upon the child as inadequate attendance, since in either case the child loses much of the work of his grade, it is not necessarily a valid reason for non-promotion. A child who was tutored by his mother or by teachers engaged by the family might conceivably be ahead of his classmates in subject-matter achievements, although he might lag in social adjustments. Another child who entered the first grade in the middle of the year in a school which practiced annual promotion, for example, was approximately a year younger than the members of his class and of average intelligence. The problem in this case was one of entrance policy rather than promotion or failure. It might have been better for the child to have waited a half year longer and to have entered the school in the fall. Had he been
not only chronologically underage but of superior intelligence, he might have continued with his class and have been promoted without serious difficulties. Had the child been over-age and of superior intelligence, there would have been no advantage in repeating the grade. If he were over-age and of low mental ability, he would need a remedial program of teaching while continuing with his class. Late entrance to school is a problem whose solution lies in cooperative action by school, home, and community. The visiting teacher, classroom teacher, administrator, psychologist, social worker, pupil, parent, and parent-teacher group could combine their endeavors to the end of eliminating out-of-school causes of maladjustments and bettering the child's school adjustments.

Domestic trouble often disturbs pupils emotionally. Schools are able to alleviate the effect of these upsets to some extent while the child is under their jurisdiction, but they are usually unable to eliminate the causes. Scholastic institutions have not accepted their opportunities to remedy poor home conditions, if the report of McGinnis\textsuperscript{12} is typical of educational practice. He

showed in one investigation, which listed poor home conditions 110 times as a cause of pupil failure, that in only five cases (4 per cent) had any of the classroom teachers or school nurses made visits and in only ten cases (9 per cent) had there been conferences with parents.

While the school can do very little to provide economic security for the family and thus remedy moving about as a cause of non-promotion, it can provide complete and adequate pupil records. In this way schools to which pupils are transferred can evaluate their previous work and can make provisions for their continuous educational growth.

If out-of-school conditions which cause mal-adjustments of the pupil are adequately investigated and analyzed by the school, the home, and the social agencies of the community, there is reason to believe that such situations can be greatly improved. They no longer will remain the causes of non-promotion of pupils in the elementary school.

RELATION OF ENTRANCE AGE TO PROGRESS

Fifty-five teachers felt that too early school
entrance was the cause of pupil failure. What is the best age for children to enter the first grade? This is a question which has received wide attention for a good many years. The answer is tied up with the allied problem of what goes on in the first grade. Given the proper curriculum, teaching and guidance, children, no doubt, as young as three years may profit very materially under public school control. If, however, we omit consideration of the types of education, such as the nursery school or kindergarten program, which cater to the so-called pre-school ages and limit the problem to the type of education commonly know as formal education, the question of entrance age becomes acute. Somewhere, for example, in the first grade will begin the teaching of formal reading and similar types of instruction which as ordinarily conducted necessitate a certain level of mental ability for pupils to profit to best advantage. With this in view the different states of the Union quite generally have passed laws which prevent children from free attendance in the first grade until they have attained the age estimated to be the minimum essential to successful participation in first grade work. The most commonly legalized entrance age throughout the United States is the age of six years, but some States set the legal
entrance age at five, and still others have set the age at seven.

INSUFFICIENT ACHIEVEMENT

A cause listed by 43 teachers for failure is the fact that the pupils have not learned sufficient subject matter to warrant promotion. One of the greatest values for repetition of a grade, according to the proponents of the failure policy, is the mastery of unlearned subject matter. Since causes and values overlap so greatly, it is impossible to estimate the relative importance of insufficient achievement as a cause of non-promotion. Some light is shed on the number of failures by Pugsley, who reduced the studies of school failure to general trends and concluded that from one-third to one-sixth of the first grade children in those school systems which reported had failed. Of these failures 90 per cent were in reading. Would these children have learned more reading by repeating the first grade than they would have learned in the second grade had they been promoted?

A study in Newark, which used two groups of children equated on a basis of I. Q., mental age, and chronological age, showed dubious values of retardation. In a second study (Farley and his workers) concluded that retarded children were not doing work commensurate with their mental abilities and retardation and failure discouraged effort and progress.

Research reveals that a degree of failure in the first grade was preventable in schools which emphasized achievement of subject matter as a prerequisite for promotion. Pugsley showed that a child who had attended kindergarten had 33 per cent more of a chance to complete the first grade in one year than one who had not attended kindergarten.

From the evidence available it may be concluded that non-promotion of pupils in elementary schools in order to assure mastery of subject matter does not often accomplish its objective. Children do not appear to learn more by repeating a grade than they do when promoted and given subject matter on their level of ability. It would seem that the practice of non-promotion

---


15. C. A. Pugsley, op. cit.
because a pupil does not learn sufficient subject matter in the course of a school year, or for the purpose of learning subject matter, is not justifiable.

INAPPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

Inappropriate administrative practices were listed 22 times as a probable cause of slow progress among pupils. Out of a total number of 3,715 children who were not promoted in grades four, five, and six of the Seattle schools in 1922-1923, Ayer\textsuperscript{16} found "low mentality, school study habits, previous preparation, indifference toward school, size of classes, course too heavy, unsatisfactory textbooks, and double promotion" accountable for 63.9 per cent of the failures. Proper administrative practices by school executives and teachers could have eliminated all of these causes of failure. "Home environment, home study habits, physical causes, highly emotional children, outside activities, and domestic troubles" caused 30.4 per cent of the total failures. Correct administrative procedures, combined with the cooperation of the home, might have eliminated these causes of pupil failure. Therefore, in Ayer's study a total of 94.3 per cent of

\textsuperscript{16} Fred C. Ayer, \textit{op. cit.}
the causes of failure might have been removed. Adams estimated that teachers had much control over 40 per cent and the school over 33 per cent of the causes of failure. He concluded that there was little justification for inflicting non-promotion on children on bases listed by forty-one teachers who replied to his query concerning causes of pupil failure.

It must be concluded that inappropriate administrative practices are not valid reasons for failing pupils but are admissions that the school is not giving each child his maximum education according to his individual needs and capacities.

While a lack of proper administrative practices is an excuse used by some schools for failure, this is an entirely different concept from one whereby children are consciously failed in order to benefit them in some respect. The purpose of this study is not to justify non-promotion in practical situations where means for its prevention are lacking, but rather to determine whether or not failure of elementary school children serves any useful purpose, and if it does not, how can it be prevented or avoided.

CHAPTER VII
THE EFFECT OF NON-PROMOTION UPON CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

The history of the administration of Elementary Education in this country is replete with citations indicating the existence from colonial days to the present of a practice known as "pupil failure" or "repetition of grades". The professional literature dealing with pupil failure in the elementary school places much emphasis upon methods of reducing the number of failures, yet the impression is obtained from reading the literature on elementary school administration is that authors assume that non-promotion must prevail to a certain extent as an accepted practice. The general acceptance of school failure as an essential administrative device is further illustrated by the eagerness with which administrators and teachers seek comparison of their own percentage of non-promotion with those of other cities, and by the long-felt need for norms on acceleration, retardation and the age-grade status of children. Many of the standard teacher grade books contain the generally accepted standard percentage of 7% - A, 14% - B, 58% - C, 14% - D, 7% - failure, in bold face type in the front
of the book. Some teachers still check their final grades with these norms and feel something is terribly wrong if their class does not conform to such a scale. One encounters quite often the teacher who is afraid she has not rated her pupils properly if they all are promoted.

Before we accept these past attitudes regarding school failures let us examine carefully the effects of non-promotion upon the boys and girls who are unfortunate enough to fall in that group.

EFFECTS OF FAILURE UPON SCHOOL COST

In considering the effect of failures in the elementary school there is a tendency to estimate the loss in terms of dollars and cents. It is estimated that it cost the taxpayers in Kansas from $35 to $125, to maintain a student in the elementary school for one year. This study of 50,000 elementary school children in Kansas shows 30% of the pupils are retarded one year or more before completing the elementary school. This means that 15,000 of this group will cost the taxpayers one more year of school at an average cost of $60 per pupil or $90,000 per year.
Probably the most noticeable single aspect of retardation in the elementary school is the fact that it tends to increase teacher load, which eventually results in the addition of an extra teacher. Since this happens only in schools where the attendance is far above the average and the percentage of failures high, it is not to be considered a serious problem of added cost. It is in this type of school that teachers are needed to take care of failures, and even though teachers are added in the grades it means a teacher problem solved for the high school.

According to the semester report of the principals, the elementary school in Chicago failed to promote one-eleventh of its pupil membership at the end of the first semester of the school year, 1924-25. The report failed to show just how much it cost to fail these students, but Don G. Rogers, quoting a Chicago newspaper, said:

"The school board could close thirty schools, discharge thirty principals, and dispense with about one thousand teachers if so many pupils were not permitted to fail." 1

This report may confirm the findings of many other school administrators yet it is not a typical case since the number of pupils involved is far above the average school. These facts and figures cannot be applied to the general trends, but only to the exceptional cases.

While it is practical and wise to consider the cost of failures in dollars and cents, there are other factors to be considered. There is a danger of lowering school standards in order that a larger number of pupils may be passed through a given number of grades. Not only in respect to the performance in those subjects, the poorest students set the pace.

Although cost is a factor in pupil failure, other factors are more vital and are due more consideration.

NON-PROMOTION AND ACHIEVEMENT

A study was made by Henry Keyes in 1911 showing the relation of non-promotion to achievement in school subjects. This study covered a period of seven years and involved data from one school district with a yearly enrollment of approximately 5,000 pupils.
Analysis of the work done by pupils promoted, or as Keyes puts it, who were arrested, led him to the following conclusions:

"Repeating a grade does not result in any improvement of the scholarship of the arrest. . . Of the whole number of arrests, 21 per cent do better after repeating than before, 39 per cent show no change; and 40 per cent did worse."

A second study was made in 1927-28 in the schools of Long Beach, California. This study is so significant that a description of the plan of the experiment and the conclusions are given.

This study was undertaken during the school year 1927-28 because of a growing feeling that repeating a grade was of no real value. Two questions were to be answered by it:

1. Of two equated groups of potential failures, one group repeating and the other promoted on trial, which group shows the greater achievement during the succeeding term?

2. From results observed, does it appear that we are justified in requiring pupils to repeat a grade?

Early in the semester principals were asked whether they wished to co-operate in an experiment of this kind. With one exception, all enlisted. One week before the close of the term they reported on forms prepared for the purpose the

2. Charles Henry Keyes, Progress Through the Grades of City Schools, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1911, p. 63.
names of all pupils who would be expected to repeat the grade. This report included the pupil's name, grade placement, chronological age, mental age, intelligence quotient, and sex.

Upon the receipt of these blanks at the research department, the experimenter, a counselor, and the research director assigned the failures to two equal groups, taking into account chronological age, mental age, intelligence quotient, and grade placement. The assignments were then reported to each school. One hundred and forty-one children were on these lists. They came from II A to VI B inclusive. Seventy-one were assigned to a trial promotion group and were advanced to the next grade. Seventy were assigned to the repeat group and kept in the same grades a second term. The pupils were in fourteen elementary schools, each of which was under the care of a general supervisor.

Teachers and principals were asked to maintain an unbiased attitude toward the pupils on trial or repeating. Children and parents were not informed of the fact that an experiment was under way. It was felt that any undue interest on the part of either parent or children would influence results.

During the first week of the second semester educational tests were given to all pupils in both groups. Other forms of the same tests were given in June at the close of the term. All tests with their scoring and recording were in the hands of trained research workers.

As stated previously, this experiment started with seventy children in each group. In spite of the number of cases, the results are highly significant coming from a city where normal failure rate is low. Those failures that do occur are likely to be serious ones and are most likely to be cases new to the system . . .
CONCLUSION

1. It seems to be true, in the cases recorded, that, of two equated groups of potential failures, the trial-promotion group shows greater progress during the succeeding term than does the repeating group.

The experiment reveals:

a. Children of normal ability gain more from trial promotion than do children of equal ability from repeating a grade.

b. Children of less than average ability gain little more by repeating a grade than they gain by trial promotion.

c. Pupils in Grades IV - VI profit more from a trial promotion plan than do those in Grades II and III.

2. The indications are that we are not justified in requiring a child of normal ability to repeat in Grades IV - VI.

a. The trial group shows greater average gain in educational tests than does the repeat group.

b. On the basis of teachers' marks, the trial group sustains itself with success, with the mode at 3 (on a five-point scale) the average grade.

c. The record of promotion at the close of the term shows 90 per cent of the trial group promoted.

3. The evidence seems to indicate that there is more justification for requiring pupils to repeat in Grades II and III than in Grades IV - VI.³

A study of the effect of non-promotion in the schools of Philadelphia was made in 1932 by W. Walker Cheyney and Philip A. Boyer of the Division of Educational Research. In summarizing the result of their study, all evidence points to the conclusion that in general repetition of the work or grade section is less productive of educational gain to the pupil than regular progress through the grades.\(^4\)

The findings of these studies support the judgment of a number of competent students of education concerning the influence of non-promotion.

All things considered, it seems fair to conclude that non-promotion is apt to be a deterrent than an impetus to acceptable achievement. This may be explained in part by the fact that non-promotion often violates certain requirements of economic and effective learning.

Economical and effective learning requires, among other things, that the learner have a definite purpose which he believes he can achieve. The importance of this requirement has long been recognized by

---

psychologists. Concerning the importance of purpose to the learner, Meuman states, "We profit by continuous practice only in proportion as we incite the will to progress and arose an intention to improve."5

Meuman also noted the effects of belief in the possibility of achievement on observers in his psychological laboratory. He describes the effects as follows:

"So long as the observer in a psychological experiment does not suspect that he is able to improve in a mental capacity, improvement is sure to be lacking; but so soon as we arouse his intention to perfect the activity which is being practiced, the improvement itself ensues."6

A variety of experiments have demonstrated the importance of the purpose of the learner. Peterson7 had the members of a class copy twenty words from the black board. They believed that these words were to be used in an experiment. After the students checked the words, they were directed unexpectedly to turn the page


6. Ibid., p. 361.

and to write as many of the words as they could recall. The class was then given another list of words of equal difficulty and warned that they would be required to reproduce the words. Equal opportunity was afforded for studying both lists. On the second trial the students' recall was on the average about 22 per cent better than on the first, and after forty-eight hours recall of the words used in the second trial was about 50 per cent better. The difference was in the purpose of the learner.

Praise and reproof are used extensively as means of motivation, and research has shown that praise is more effective than reproof. Inferior children particularly are more responsive to praise than to reproof. As a rule, it is the below-average children who constitute the failure group. To most children non-promotion represents a sort of reproof, whereas promotion to the next grade is greeted with joy as it is looked on as a form of reward. Consequently, failure as a means for encouraging better work, is applied to

the children who respond least to reproof as an incentive and who might respond much more effectively to promotion.

Elizabeth Hurlock\(^9\) showed in an experiment how belief by students that they were failing or succeeding influenced their school work. She used 106 children from the fourth and sixth grades at Harrodsburgh, Pennsylvania. The pupils in one group were praised for the excellence of their work, encouraged to do better, and urged to avoid mistakes. The pupils in another group were severly reproved for their poor work and general inferiority. Both groups made progress for a short time, but very soon the work of the group that was reproved began to deteriorate. At the close of the experiment which was five days, praise proved decidedly the most effective incentive for greater progress.

These results are in harmony with those from other experiments which have been made on motivation. Gilchrist\(^10\) reports a study in which fifty members of a class in educational psychology at George Peabody College of Education, Baltimore, Maryland, were divided into two groups. The group of forty pupils which was praised for the excellence of its work made more progress than the other group of sixty pupils which was reproved for their poor work and general inferiority.

---


for Teachers constituted the subjects. The Courtis English Test 4B was given to the entire group. The class was then divided into two groups, placed in separate rooms, and the same test given again to the two groups. One group prior to taking the second test was reproved, and was told they did not do so well. They were asked to take the test again. The other group was praised and was told they did exceptionally well. They were also asked to take the test again. Results from the two groups show the first group made no improvement while the second group improved remarkably.

These same results were found by Kirby\textsuperscript{11} based upon an investigation in which he used 1,350 pupils from the third and sixth grades of New York schools to determine the value of encouragement upon their performance in addition. Chapman and Feder\textsuperscript{12} in 1917 reported an experiment in which a study of the relative value of certain incentives was made. The conclusions here are similar to the findings of Gates and

\begin{enumerate}
\item J. T. Kirby, "Practice in Case of School Children," \textit{School and Society}, 1923, p. 454.
\end{enumerate}
A second requirement of economical learning is that the learner have a clear idea of what he needs to do. He also needs to evaluate the contribution his activities will make to the realization of his purpose. When the learner has a clear idea of what he needs to do, learning activities are initiated with minimum delay and confusion.

Book emphasized this point as follows:

"The learner . . . needs to know the cause of his success in order that the successful responses may be purposely repeated. Similarly, the learner needs definite knowledge concerning his mistakes lest he practice his errors to such an extent that further improvement cannot be made." 14

Experiments have shown that in many instances of learning a clear knowledge of one's mistakes is prerequisite to further improvement.

Non-promotion is a practice which usually operates with the elementary school children in violation of both the afore-mentioned requirements for

---


economical learning. It is practically impossible for an elementary school child to discover relationship between his activities during a semester or year of school work and his failure to be promoted. He cannot at promotion time, evaluate activities directed toward trying to do his work and relate them to failure to be promoted. The elements in promotion are so uncertain, so varied and so far removed from the activities involved that it is practically impossible for children to make such connections. As a result, the child must go back to some more or less uncertain point in his work and endeavor to move forward again with little or no opportunity to profit from his past failure. Thus, fundamental requirements for economical learning are violated by non-promotion.

The failure involved in non-promotion, often leads the pupil to return to school with a weakened purpose to make a good record. Especially is this apt to happen when non-promotion has been experienced more than once. Having been unsuccessful in realizing his purpose to pass his work and knowing no better way to proceed than before, the pupil often discards the purpose. This reaction is frequently expressed in a
"don't care" attitude. Thus, interest in school work is destroyed, and the result of non-promotion is poorer achievement.

The extent to which a particular pupil is affected by non-promotion depends upon the individual and the circumstances under which he experienced non-promotion. In most cases repeated failure and retardation defeat their purpose. They do not stimulate effort, but on the contrary discourage it. The child who constantly fails receives no satisfaction from his work and frequently becomes so discouraged that continued effort seems futile. If confronted with impossible tasks, he is likely to become antagonistic. This may be expressed in sulkiness and poor behavior.

Bagley states the matter thus:

"The glow of satisfaction that comes from the consciousness of work well done sets free the energy that can be concentrated upon the new and more difficult task, thus multiplying the chances for a fresh triumph, and the sickening sense of failure will similarly choke up the channels of energy and multiply the chances for a second defeat." 15

NON-PROMOTION AND PERSONALITY TRAITS

In addition to affecting the achievement of pupils, non-promotion also influences the development of personality traits. Probably not a single child comes through a failing experience without some impairment of his mental and emotional health. One child assumes a heroic attitude and broadcasts his failure with loud boasting among his fellows. If he can only tell them with boasting before they can tell him with shame, he will be much more comfortable. Another becomes a bully and vigorously applies his feet to the shin of the incautious soul who ventures to speak accusingly of his ability. Another becomes callous and indifferent to school and its expectations of him. With another child this indifference sinks into dislike for school experiences and those fields of human learning in which he has failed, this dislike fixing undesirable attitudes for the rest of his days. He withdraws to himself with the feeling of being licked and socially disgraced. He is like an animal caught in a trap, and with no way to escape.

Examples of the unfortunate effect of non-promotion are abundant. The following account of a
case study illustrated the way in which one boy was affected:

"His school record showed that he has repeated 1A and 2A each once and 5A and 6B twice . . . In the classroom, Ralph towered head and shoulders above the other youngsters. He was very sensitive about being the biggest boy in the class, felt chagrined that he had to repeat classes, . . . and had the feeling that he was a failure and would never amount to anything. The other children called him a "dumbbell" and told him he hadn't any sense. He hated school, felt that it was a prison from which he could not escape, and was eager to leave and go to work. . . . The school, instead of recognizing his limited intelligence early, allowed him to fail repeatedly, resulting in the development of a depressed, discouraged attitude. Sensitive about being with younger children, baffled by repeated failure and inability to understand, taunted by his schoolmates, and nagged by his parents for his lack of school success, he struggled along silently hating the whole process."16

Stryker,17 a psychologist in the New Jersey State Department of Institutions and Agencies, reports a case of delinquency, that of a normal boy of twelve, committed to the reform school for truancy. School dissatisfaction due to loss of interest, as a result of demotion and consequent undergrading, was the

significant factor in this boy's truancy. By use of double promotion and the promise of early parole, the boy was motivated into doing excellent work. His entire attitude toward school and society was changed. Pride in achievement, success replacing failure, gave this boy a different outlook on life.

Psychologists have long recognized types of mental disorder where individuals attempt to escape from the demands placed upon them by taking refuge in the development of peculiar symptoms. These symptoms are often found in children who are being pressed to do work more difficult than they can perform, or in children who, because of failure to do what was expected, are nagged and scolded. They find relief by taking refuge in some sort of physical disability which will necessitate attention and care, and will encourage expression of concern.

Bassett cites the case of a seventeen year old boy who was forced into school work in which he could not succeed and had his personality disastrously warped. Nagged and prodded by his parents and sisters, he was pushed into first year of commercial high school. He was daily becoming more and more peculiar, withdrawing farther and farther within himself because only in his
own dream world of phantasy was he able to find the approval and satisfaction which were so completely denied him in the every-day world of reality. 18

Many educators have observed the effects of non-promotion on the personalities of children and have found the results bad.

Edith C. Peters, after a long experience as teacher and principal of the Dowing School, Cleveland, Ohio, expressed the results of failure as follows:

"And what of the child? humiliated, discouraged, bewildered, or worse still, callously indifferent, he listlessly attacks the same old problems which have just caused his downfall. Usually he must unlearn before he can relearn. Lacking proper habits of study, and not knowing what part of his . . . information is true and what false, he plods or loaf on without inspiration or hope of success. He lags behind the present class just as he lagged behind the class of the last semester, conscious of being outstripped by his juniors, and reacts to the situation with sullenness, indifference, rebellion, or heartache, according to his temperament." 19


Meek, when Superintendent of the Boise, Idaho, Public School, states his conclusions as follows:

"A study of the performance of the failure in Boise has convinced the entire force that the repeater is generally a quitter and does about as poor work in his second attempt as in his first trial at the work of a given grade. The stamp of disapproval has been placed upon him. He starts on his second attempt with a grievance against the teacher and the entire institution. The parent as well as the child feels injured, so that the teacher must combat both the antagonism of the home and the hostility of the pupil, who has been trained for failure and not for success, and who becomes either morbidly sensitive or brazenly indifferent."

Promotion and failure of pupils in the elementary grades involves a task of such magnitude that school administrators and teachers are baffled by its contradictions. Theories of promotion and failure are plentiful, yet scientific evidence is still very meager.

COMPARATIVE EFFECTS OF PROMOTION AND NON-PROMOTION

Values of a non-promotion policy, as contrasted with a one hundred per cent promotion policy, are closely related to the psychological values of success and failure. Advocates of a pupil-failure philosophy claim that if all children were promoted some would lack stamina and character. Wholesale promotion implies the discarding of educational standards and "soft" education. Children do not work hard when they are aware of promotion without much effort. Anyone knows that there has never been a "royal road to learning." Why should the dull child be promoted to the next grade where he would have more difficult work and where competition with children of approximately his own age would be keener? That would be fair neither to himself nor to his classmates. Children in his class would lose all incentive to do good work when they saw such incompetence keeping pace with them. Teachers would lose all desire to keep up grade standards. These, and many other arguments, are given by educators who favor non-promotion of certain pupils.

Some research has been undertaken regarding success and failure. In an experiment with two equated groups in the third and fifth grades, Otto and
Melby\(^1\) found that the group whose members were told throughout the semester they would not pass unless they worked diligently did no better than the pupils who were told they would be promoted regardless of their efforts.

A few of the arguments of the advocates of non-promotion have been adequately answered by Morgan\(^2\) who wrote as follows:

"Struggle is not undesirable or harmful. It is struggle, on the contrary, which gives stamina to the individual. Any educator who thinks only of making the road to adult character easy is attacking the problem in the wrong manner; no program which would eliminate struggle for the individual is a sound one. The critical thing to see is that the adjustment is made as a result of the conflict and is one that will ultimately benefit the individual. Character is not made by introducing hardship for the sake of hardship; but by the natural interaction between ego and reality. Life is one grand, glorious struggle, which every normal individual enjoys as long as the struggle does not result in the capitulation of his ego. To prove that we are the master of our environment, that the difficulties of life have only served to prepare us the better for the next conflict—that is life."


"The trouble comes when one cannot retain his ego in battle which prove too much for him. It is just such a situation which makes life unbearable for some unfortunate individuals and causes them to adopt peculiar reactions in an endeavor to save themselves."

Neither failure nor success is genuine unless the pupil understands its nature. The pupil needs a basis for judging his results in order to develop and retain a sense of honesty. He should not be encouraged in carelessness, indifference, and lazy habits by the acceptance of inferior or poorly prepared or executed work. He must learn to enjoy and appreciate his work to the best of his ability or capacity. Satisfaction comes from work well done and the child should experience dissatisfaction and disappointment from work which he knows is inferior. He needs perseverance in overcoming obstacles. The social group and the teacher should express their disapproval when he does anything detrimental to their welfare. Whenever he meets failure, he should be given sympathetic encouragement and wise guidance and, if possible, continue to the successful solution of his problems.

In the work of any grade children face problems and fail to find correct solutions for some. If, in the process, pupils grow in knowledge, in emotional and moral
strength, and in social adjustments, failure is a good experience. But the child who fails some of the daily schoolwork, who does not work to his capacity, and who fails to cooperate with his fellow pupils and teacher, should be clearly differentiated from the one who fails to be promoted. Repetition of a daily assignment is entirely different from doing the work of an entire academic year or semester again.

Farley\textsuperscript{3} summarizes the situation when he says:

"We force a child to undertake something that is impossible for him, and then we brand him as a failure on his report card, and in the eyes of his fellows because he does not achieve the impossible. If docile, he bears the ordeal as best he can; if he has more spirit he will revolt, and the problem of discipline and truancy will increase. Such a revolt is a wholesome sign. It indicates that the child possesses a spark that is worth guiding and developing."

Robinson\textsuperscript{4} reported that clinical studies of children who had not been promoted showed loss of self-confidence, loss of self-respect, and a weakened sense of security, and a feeling of disgrace. As a result of non-promotion, the children's social life was disturbed;

\textsuperscript{3} Eugene S. Farley, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 270-273.

\textsuperscript{4} B. B. Robinson, \textit{op. cit.}
they were separated from their playmates and friends, and they lost interest in their school work and the thrill of unexplored work.

CONCLUSION

Such data as have been assembled suggest that failure in school serves no useful value. The data also tend to indicate that the educational growth of children is less when they repeat a grade than when they are engaged in new work. Psychologists are generally agreed that failure not only affects the achievement in school subjects, but, when repeated, often affects unfavorably the child's personality, causing him to develop undesirable mechanisms against failure. Failure tends to discourage, disillusion, and defeat the child.
CHAPTER VIII

OBSERVATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter will be to summarize the conditions regarding pupil progress in Kansas as revealed by this study. Throughout the study an attempt has been made to present along with the statistical data the causes, effects, and remedial measures that might improve the present conditions regarding pupil progress. All suggestions have been made in light of the best educational principles applicable to the situation as the writer sees it. It is hoped that the suggestions will be applicable to the classrooms of the readers and that they may apply them to their own school situation thus improving the schools of Kansas. The writer will present his observations and conclusions as revealed during the study.

As a part of the study six hundred teachers were asked to make recommendations as to methods by which slow-progress of pupils could be improved. These recommendations will be summarized in table form under general headings, followed by a discussion of remedial measures.
UNDER-AGENESS AND SCHOOL ENTRANCE AGE

The study reveals a great many under-age pupils in all grades. Especially is noted the high percentage of pupils in the first grade who are 5½ or under. The greatest amount of under-ageness is found in the third class city and one-teacher rural school; pupils running as high as 24% in these schools. Some under-ageness exists in first and second class cities due to the annual shifting of the population from rural to urban communities. Thus, the study has revealed that the problem of physical and mental immaturity as a factor of failure may be closely related to the high percentage of under-ageness. One large city school system in a recent survey found that 25% of the pupils entering the first grade under six years of age repeated the grade. The age-entrance law of Kansas is antiquated and difficult to interpret. School people and judicial officials give greatly varying interpretations upon the present law. The law is not enforced in most rural and third class city schools. Teachers in these schools are subjected to embarrassing and disagreeable situations concerning entrance. In many cases county superintendents and Boards of Education tell parents of four or five year old children that they may enroll their children in first
grade if the teacher is willing to accept them. Usually the teacher desiring to avoid trouble against her better judgment admits the pupil. Much of this pressure on the teacher is due to the over-zealous parent who wishes to make a young genius of her child or get him out from under her feet at home. In other cases the Board of Education and the taxpayers desire to increase enrollment in this manner in order to participate in the State School Aid Fund.

Many school people sincerely believe that the legislature should pass a specific entrance age for first grade pupils at six years of age at the opening of school. The law should then be enforced by the proper administrative officials thus relieving a lot of undue pressure on the classroom teacher and eliminating unsatisfactory progress due to mental and physical immaturity.

OVER-AGENESS

The number and per cent of over-ageness in Kansas is too great. There are 31.2% of the pupils studied that are one or more years over age before they complete the elementary school. The type of school organization has some effect upon the over-ageness. Ten per cent more children are making normal progress in the
first and second class cities than in the rural and third class cities. However, children in the rural and third class cities enter school at a much earlier age than children of first and second class cities. Twenty-two and six tenths per cent of the first grade children in rural and third class cities enter school at 5½ years or younger as compared with 7.7% in first and second class cities. This would account for a decrease in over-ageness in the former type of school.

OVER-AGENESS AMONG BOYS

The results of this study show that there are 45% of the boys in third class cities and 34.7% in rural schools, 31% in first and second class cities who are one or more years over-age before they complete the elementary school work. This condition definitely reveals to us that the needs and interests of the boys are not being met successfully. Some schools have attempted to improve the situation by providing materials of instruction that will appeal to the interests of boys. The interests of boys and girls vary to such an extent that provision must be made for these variations if we are to successfully motivate their progress. Other schools are offering shop courses for boys on the inter-
mediate level. Elementary science courses are proving to be very stimulative to the interests of boys. Still others are finding that the situation is improved through a well-organized physical education, intra-mural and playground program.

The writer finds from his own experience that the above suggestions are motivating boys to do a far higher type of classroom work than they would otherwise. Finally, we must take cognizance of the fact that the teacher who understands boys is the key to the solution of the boy problem in our schools.

COLORED-MEXICAN CHILDREN

Table No. V reveals the fact that 48.1% of the colored and Mexican children are one or more years over-age before they complete the elementary school. This as compared to 26.6% in the white children shows a definite need for the adaptation of the school program to the interests and abilities of the colored children. It seems that the per cent of retardation is the same in mixed schools as the separate. This is due no doubt to the fact that the separate schools are under the same promotional standards as the white school.

It would appear that there must be a revision of the curriculum both in content and achievement levels
if we are to reduce the over-ageness of colored children. This problem is one that needs the attention of school people if we are to aid the colored people to live the best possible life and be of service to their communities.

NORMAL AGE

There are only 56.7% of all the pupils who are at normal age when they complete the elementary school. This condition is very unsatisfactory for proper social adjustment of pupils. However, if something definite is done to reduce both under-age and over-age percentages, the normal age factor will be improved.

Let us next examine the recommendations for improving the pupil progress conditions in Kansas as recommended by six hundred Kansas teachers.
Six Hundred Teachers Recommend Methods for Improving Pupil Progress in Kansas

Remedy | Frequency
---|---
Greater Provision for Individualized Instruction | 145
Improvement of Textbook Situation | 127
Raise Age Entrance Requirements | 118
Complete and Uniform Cumulative Record System | 103
More Flexible Curriculum | 41
Closer Home School Relationships | 39
Removal of Remedial Physical Defects | 27

INDIVIDUALIZING INSTRUCTION

One hundred forty-five teachers feel that the progress of pupils has been greatly improved through the gradual trend away from traditional methods of mass organization and teaching procedures. This traditional type of education was concerned chiefly with bringing the individual into conformity with a rigid set of educational offerings as well as ideals and behavior patterns of his social group. The modern school is guided more by the principles of mental hygiene that
concerns itself with the individual child and his learning to make an inner and outer adjustment to the environment in which he lives. Such teaching procedures require that the teacher not only must know her pupils, but also the environment, society, and culture in which he lives. Failure to individualize the school program has not only contributed to over-ageness of pupils, but in addition many pupils are dropping out of school at an early age. They are leaving school with not only a deficiency in the fundamentals or tool subjects, but also are without any training for the type of vocation through which they may earn their living. These pupils leave the schools because they are offered nothing in the school program in which they can use their individual abilities successfully. This defect in the present educational program is a crime against the individual and society.

It is impossible to set up a program of instruction that will meet the needs of all children in all communities. Many types of programs to care for the problem of individual differences are in use in the nation. These plans for meeting the needs of pupil progress have been discussed thoroughly in Chapter IV. It is hoped that the readers may be aided in meeting their own specific problems by the plans presented in the
above chapter.

It is evident that many adjustments of subject matter must be made to make individual instruction more possible. This means the elimination of the more rigid factual standards of subject matter in favor of a more flexible curriculum that is easily adaptable to the individual needs of all pupils in any type of school and community.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS

The writer found in the course of this study several deplorable conditions which exist concerning records in the schools of the State.

First, the records in many cases were incomplete. For example, many of the census cards show only the year of the child’s birth, totally disregarding month or day. In a few cases no census records were available in a district.

Secondly, many records were practically illegible. Names and dates written in long hand were so poorly written that they could not be interpreted if one were not thoroughly acquainted with the names of the pupils.

Thirdly, there is no uniformity in the State
for permanent records of children. It is impossible to pass on a complete record of the child who transfers from one district to another. Teachers lose much time in helping the child make an adjustment due to this lack of uniformity.

The writer would like to remind school people and interested laymen that the three above mentioned weaknesses in the records of pupils are a great handicap to the constructive development of not only the problem cases but of every pupil. This use of records in the making of provision for individual needs and capacities is the only justification for them.

Records are for the pupil. They are never an end in themselves, and have no value if they are incomplete, illegible and not uniform. Records are the means of accomplishing the teacher's main task, the best development of every pupil in the school. Teachers and administrators should see that the required records for their school are complete and legible. Every school person should encourage the adoption of a uniform cumulative record system for the children in Kansas schools.
TEXT BOOKS

One hundred twenty-seven teachers mention as a contributing factor to slow progress the lack of suitable text books. Especially is this true in the schools where the State texts are purchased by the pupils. Many schools have no supplementary readers and pupils must use the reader for their grade even though it is not suited to their reading level. It follows that many teachers are handicapped by the text book situation in their attempt to regulate the curriculum to fit the ability of the individual pupil.

Many teachers feel that much of the improvement of the slow-progress of pupils will be delayed until the text book situation is remedied. This is an administrative problem to the extent that teachers must follow the prescribed book list as authorized by the State Department or local administrative unit.

Many states have made an attempt to improve the situation by multiple-adoption of texts or by state or district owned texts.

The writer is not advocating free text books as a remedy for the situation, but does feel that some plan must be provided whereby the teacher will have suitable teaching material for meeting the individual
needs of her pupils. The discussion of a specific plan for providing texts is not included in this study, but all would agree that school people and interested laymen should work toward the early solution of a deplorable situation.

In its broader aspect, continued maladjustment of our school children means maladjusted adult individuals in near future years. With increasingly complex demands upon adult citizenry, it behooves all of us as educators to prepare children as best we can for efficient citizenry. The question becomes one of choice of the way by which each locality can best accomplish this end; the best way being one in which the largest number of persons are happily adjusted.

THE TEACHER AND PUPIL PROGRESS

The writer also asked Supervisors and County Superintendents to submit a list of the methods and means by which pupil progress could be improved. The list agreed with the list received from classroom teachers except that they included one item ranked by them as extremely important that was quite definitely omitted by the classroom teachers. Naturally, that factor was the classroom teacher. A discussion of that factor follows in the remaining pages of the study.
While age entrance, textbooks, methods of instruction, school-community relationships, cumulative records, etc., have their effect upon successful progress of all children, the teacher is endowed with the greatest responsibility of all. While teachers cannot by themselves eliminate all slow-progress, they are an extremely important factor in the process of pupil adjustment.

The teacher must study every child, and become thoroughly acquainted with his ability, his interests, his home environment, and the community. She must bear in mind that the child's needs are determined by the child's physiological and mental growth as they function in society. The teacher must bear in mind that these factors are in a state of continual change and are different for every child, both in degree of existence and in level of manifestation. Harmonious relations must exist between the child and the teacher if there is to be successful mental development and emotional good health. This implies also that at times the environment should be adapted by the teacher and the child to the latter's needs. At other times, the child should adapt himself to his environment with the help and guidance of the teacher. The fact that there is
seldom complete adjustment between the child and his environment offers the teacher a great challenge. Both society and individuals are continually in a state of flux with society making itself felt on the individual and the individual in turn helping to change society.

Since the teacher is so important in the successful school progress of the child, another factor or importance should be mentioned, namely, the selection and training of teachers. Much of the responsibility for the selection and training of teachers rests to a large degree with the teacher training institutions. It is quite obvious that teachers often take too many courses of a formal and theoretical character, when they should concern themselves more with the problems of wholesome living; more with the human element instead of the mechanical phases of education. The program of the teacher training institutions should direct more attention to mental hygiene, in terms of normal growth and development of children. Much is being done in these institutions toward a more practical program of training for prospective teachers and the results of such improvements will be shown in better teaching and thus in better pupil progress.
One may easily see that the teacher is a very important part of the program in the reducing of slow pupil progress. It is on him that the greatest responsibility falls for the decrease in over-ageness. It is chiefly his opportunity and challenge. The teacher must have concrete evidence as to "why the pupil did not do the work;" the teacher must realize early in the term that the pupil "has slow learning ability;" the teacher must discover why the child of normal ability is not progressing satisfactorily. He should then remedy the situation either by himself or with the help of administrators or through other agencies qualified to help him improve the situation.

In conclusion it may be noted that there are some hopeful signs in the picture of future pupil progress. More and more elementary schools are accepting more responsibility for the pupil's physical, recreational, educational, and social welfare in an ever-increasing sphere of activity. New positions in education, greater use of school facilities after school hours and during holidays; and increased coordination of school programs with other institutions and organizations interested in child welfare, bear evidence that many schools are surrendering the old concepts that schools alone educate the children and that schools are an agency solely for
formal education.

Although the teacher must exert great effort in preventing pupil failure, the responsibilities of parents, members of boards of education, administrative heads of school systems, supervisors, social agencies, the legislature, and the State Department, should not be minimized. Only through the combined efforts of all institutions and persons interested in the welfare of children may all pupils be assured of successful progress in relation to their varying abilities and interests. Through the joint cooperation of all persons and agencies children can be assured of successful progress; with great social, economic, intellectual, and moral gains to the individual and society.

The modern school program should seek to eliminate or greatly reduce such wastes as the cost of retardation in dollars and cents and the greater loss that comes from ill-health that may distort the individual's outlook on life, and materially impair his future usefulness. The objective of any school program should be to furnish an environment in which each individual can work with at least a fair degree of success, and can develop according to whatever talent he may possess.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


FARLEY, E. S., "Regarding Repeaters: Sad Effect of Failures Upon the Child," The Nation's Schools, 18: 37, October, 1936.


GIBSON, Joseph E., "Double Promotion in McComb City Schools," American.


KEYES, Charles Henry, Progress Through the Grades of City Schools, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1911.


SCHOOL BOARD JOURNAL, 67: 100-103, September, 1923.


