THE SUMMARY LETTER AS A FORM OF REPORTING
PUPIL PROGRESS IN KIPLING SCHOOL

DEERFIELD, ILLINOIS

A Field Report
presented to
The Graduate Division
Drake University

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

by
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I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. It was the purpose of this study to evaluate only one phase of pupil reporting, that is, the summary letter written to parents in the Kipling School in Deerfield Illinois. This particular method is one of relatively recent innovation and is in current use in the school.
THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The problem involves one of the areas of education that is somewhat evolutionary in nature. It merits current consideration and study in modern education as it has since the time of Horace Mann's days of issuing reports primarily for the purpose of preparing attendance reports. Shane and Yauch reported that:

"Of all the points of contact between schools and parents probably none are more important to good home-school relationships than are promotion and pupil reporting."

As an area of the utmost importance in the total educational process the technique of letter writing, as a form of reporting pupil progress, has its place in meritng attention through critical study. As a summary letter, and its potential in influencing the total school program, the study of this problem has been undertaken.

Statement of the Problem. It was the purpose of this study to evaluate only one phase of pupil reporting, that is, the summary letter written to parents in the Kipling schools in Deerfield Illinois. This particular method is one of relatively recent innovation and is in current use in the school for the purpose of this study the letter may be defined as a formal letter written to parents, as an extension of the various areas of growth and treat.
system involved in this study. The summary letter can be a highly useful method of reporting pupil progress, and the use of it has gained considerable recognition from authorities in the field of education. As in other phases of education today, the summary letter has been subjected to its share of criticism from the various factions of the school community. There seems to be some doubt as to whether or not the summary letter is fulfilling the requirements of being the best method of pupil progress reporting. The basic consideration of this study will involve an analysis of parent and teacher opinion of the summary letter. The problem, therefore, presents the following question: Is the summary letter, as a method of reporting pupil progress, accomplishing the results that its potentialities afford? Because of the criticism that has been directed toward the summary letter, and its potential in influencing the total school program, the study of this problem has been undertaken.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Summary letter. In some schools the summary letter to parents has taken the place of, or has been used to supplement the report card and conferences in reporting pupil progress. For the purpose of this study the letter may be defined as a formal written communication from the teacher to the parents giving an account of the various areas of growth and trait
development. A typical example of a summary letter was used in Strang's book and is shown in Appendix A.  

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE: Literature related to pupil progress reporting is very abundant and dates back to the very early days of formal education in the United States. It includes research, reports, opinions, and historical accounts of the evolution and development of reporting. Examples of the various methods are found in numerous books and periodicals devoted to education. However, there are few actual studies, of a scientific nature, concerned specifically with the summary letter as a method of reporting pupil progress. It has in recent years become more prominent as one of the methods and is used primarily to supplement the report card or the parent-teacher conference. Strang reports that:

> In some schools the report card has been replaced by freely written reports in the form of letters which describe the pupil's progress in all phases of his school achievement.

In other schools, as reported by Strang, "Some teachers combine all these methods of reporting: marks, letters, and conference.

As evidenced in the literature, there is a trend

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Related literature. Literature related to pupil progress reporting is very abundant and dates back to the very early days of formal education in the United States. It includes research, reports, opinions and historical accounts of the evolution and development of reporting. Examples of the various methods are found in numerous books and periodicals devoted to education. However, there are few actual studies, of a scientific nature, concerned specifically with the summary letter as a method of reporting pupil progress. It has in recent years become more prominent as one of the methods and is used primarily to supplement the report card or the parent-teacher conference. Strang reports that:

In some schools the report card has been replaced by freely written reports in the form of letters which describe the pupil's progress in all phases of his school achievement. In other schools, as reported by Strang, "Some teachers combine the development of the letter-type of report has not all three methods of reporting: marks, letters, and conferences."  

As evidenced in the literature, there is a trend

2Ibid., p. 32.
developing toward a more informative type of report to parents.

Reeder's statements are typical of the many contentions of writers supporting this trend.

The tendency is away from the old-fashioned report card, which reported only such facts as the pupil's scholarship, conduct, and attendance, and toward a more comprehensive report form containing information on the pupil's habits and character traits. In fact, many schools have abolished the old-fashioned report card and have substituted for it a personal letter written to the pupil and his parents at the close of each semester or school year.1

The newer types of reports represent attempts to provide more information for parents.

Another trend developing is that of less frequent reporting periods. The traditional report card was usually sent home at the end of six weeks periods or, in some schools, every nine weeks. One writer points this out, "good schools today, and good teachers, are reporting less often but are doing more reporting."2 He contends that schools are finding many more ways of reporting to parents even though they are sending home fewer forms labeled as report cards.

The development of the letter-type of report has not been revolutionary in nature. Some schools have, through other areas of criticism, that of the teacher's inability to

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1Ruth Strong, Reporting in Education (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947), P 153.
gradual additions to the traditional type of report, set up the practice of reporting by letter. Other schools have made the change more abruptly with varying degrees of success. Regardless of how the changes have been made there have been a number of criticisms directed toward this type of reporting. Some disadvantages have become apparent:

(1) letters take a large amount of the teacher's time, (2) they are frequently over-weighted with cliches and fall into stereotypes, (3) poorly written letters may create unfavorable attitudes, (4) not all teachers write good letters, (5) teachers avoid pointing out faults for fear specific critical statements, misinterpreted, may bring an irate parent to school, (6) the absence of restrictions or regulations in reporting may be considered as an open invitation to violate the basic principle that evaluation must be based on objective evidence. See

The disadvantages seem to fall into two classes; those involving the time element, and those involving the teacher's inability to write desirable letters. The criticism involving the time consuming factor originates with the teachers, and seems to be justifiable in that many hours of work are involved in writing letters for all pupils in the class. This is especially true if large classes are the rule and the letters conform to the most acceptable high standards. The other area of criticism, that of the teacher's inability to write acceptable letters, originates with the parent group. There is some justification for such criticism in that some

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letters do not reflect the most acceptable standards of communication. As one writer stated, "every group has its secret language, but educators face a special job of communication." The language used by teachers and others in the field of education is not always the type that parents readily understand. Occasionally communication breaks down as a result of the type of language used. Al Barandon gives special emphasis to this in a satirical way in his column in the Chicago Tribune:

Parents are you bewildered by those comments the teacher writes on your youngster's report card? With the help of college professors and the school janitor, I succeeded in translating them. Following are typical comments and their translation:

"Michael does not socialize well." This means Mike is always beating some other kid's brains out.

"Henry seems emotionally immature for the first grade." Get out little Hank's birth certificate, Mother--this means that teacher thinks you lied about his age to get him in school.

"Jerome participates very fully in class discussions." This may be good or bad. It means that Jerry never shuts his big yap. Perhaps he'll grow up to be a salesman.

"John is progressing well for him." Don't feel so happy, Pappy--this means Johnny is a dope. He's twelve years old and has just learned two and make four, as teacher points out, is progress for him.

"Robert is a well-adjusted, wholesomely integrated individual." Jackpot, brother, you're in. Bobby is teacher's pet.

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Although bordering on the humorous side, the above does emphasize the need for a language that is commonly understood in order to insure good communication between the school and home.

General acceptance of the letters in many schools seems to indicate that the advantages of this type of reporting equal, or perhaps surpass, the disadvantages. Ross and Stanley have noted some of the advantages:

1. Closer personal relationship is developed between the teacher and parents,
2. The letter is easily adapted to individual differences of pupils,
3. More information can be provided, particularly of a diagnostic nature,
4. Teachers have to give very serious thought to the evaluation of each pupil's progress,
5. It often encourages more frequent communication between home and school,
6. It represents a great improvement over the traditional type of report card,
7. It provides the parents with a written record of the child's growth.¹

The advantages listed above are directly related to the quality of the letter that the teacher is able to write. Poorly written letters would not, of course, have the above advantages.

Recent literature contained only brief references to use of the summary letter as apart of pupil progress reporting procedures. There was little specific information on the use and effectiveness of the summary letter itself in the recent writings.

Literature related to Kipling School. The letter is used in Kipling school, one of the three elementary schools in Deerfield, Illinois, as final summary for pupils in Kindergarten through grade four. Teachers begin writing the letters three or four weeks before the close of the school year. Parents receive the letters through the mail after the vacation period begins.

The practice of writing letters to parents was initiated by the present superintendent of schools in 1948. At that time the teaching staff consisted of only eight teachers with two hundred and fifty children. There are fifty staff members at present with twelve hundred pupils. Approximately 3 years of background work preceded the change over from the traditional type of report card to letter writing. Scores of meetings and panel discussions with parents, teachers, the Board of Education, the Parent Teacher Association and study groups were held. The letter was initiated first in kindergarten, and then progressed through grade four.

In the early development of this method of reporting the teachers were instructed by the superintendent as to the mechanics, form, organization and content of the letters. The first draft of the letter was submitted to the superintendent for his criticism, and after any necessary revisions the final draft was mailed to the parents. With a small staff of teachers, adequately skilled in this form of reporting the practice
writing letters became popular with the parent group. It experienced enough favorable support that the practice has been continued throughout the past ten years.

As indicated above, the Deerfield community has gone through a period of growth which has tripled its community and school population. In the face of this rather rapid development the community has held to its high standards for education and provided adequate classroom facilities, a well trained staff, and enthusiastic support of the school program.

The status of reporting pupil progress today is much the same as in its early development. The letter is still used as a summary of the year’s growth and development for the pupil.

However, prior to the writing of the letter the teacher has had at least two conferences with the parents of each child. The final approval of the letters, through a series of staff meetings and the conferences with the parents enable the teacher to accumulate a fund of knowledge about the parent-child relationship, the teacher-child relationship, and the parent-teacher relationship. A specific criteria for letter writing is usually agreed to. Through the writing and filing of notes at conference time, the teacher has information for reference when it is time to write the letters. The conferences, to a large degree, aid the teacher in establishing rapport with the parents. The contents of the letters must be typed on standard school copy, and the carbon copy be filed in the cumulative file of each child. Content and approach in each letter can be individualized to meet the needs of each situation.

The administrative procedures involved in regarding the letters are conducted largely by the principals of each building (Deerfield, Illinois: 1967), p. 11.
rather than through the superintendent as was the custom earlier. However, the superintendent's manual of policies and procedures and his bulletin to parents does contain a general statement in regard to reporting to parents:

Lower grade teachers will call you for an appointment for conference. Reports sent to you are the result of an honest effort by the teacher to convey the development of the student in scholastic and social growth. Any embarrassment caused a child through comparison or fear defeats the purpose of a report. We urge frequent communication between teacher and parent so that the best development of each child results from such common understanding.1

The superintendent's policy does allow considerable latitude for principals and teachers in organizing and planning for the letter form of reporting.

The principal of each building is responsible for the background of planning, and for advising, criticizing, and the final approval of the letters. Through a series of staff meetings, bulletins, and individual conferences the teachers and principal plan in regard to the mechanics, content, tone, and form. A specific criteria for letter writing is usually agreed upon by the teachers and principal. The criteria includes the following:

1. the letters must be typed on standard school stationery, (2) the original copy is sent to the parents, and the carbon copy is filed in the cumulative folder as a part of the pupil's school records, (3) the letters must be friendly in approach and sympathetic to the pupil's needs, (4) the basic growth areas; social,

emotional, physical, and academic must be the core of the letter, (5) they must be written in simple "everyday" English, and avoid the use of unusual technical words. (6) general judgements about the child are avoided, and statements should be documented as objectively as possible.

The organization of questionnaires to parents. In

The letters must conform to the above criteria and be accurate as to mechanics of usage and grammar.

As in the developmental stages of the letter the first draft is submitted to an administrator, at the present time to the principal. Any necessary changes can be made before the final draft is ready to mail to the parents.

There were one hundred sixty one sets of parents represented in Kipling school. Obviously some were represented more than once by their children at different grade levels.

From the list of one hundred sixty one sets of different parents in the school, one hundred seven sets, or sixty six per cent were chosen to receive the questionnaires. The selection of those to receive the questionnaires began at the fifth grade level; because, they had, in most cases received the letter over a period of years. Parents that were new in the school system were eliminated from the selection. Respondents that were selected at the fifth grade level were omitted as possible recipients at another grade level in which they were represented by a child. Thus, the number eligible to receive the questionnaires became progressively smaller from fifth grade up to final grade. However, the percentage receiving

CHAPTER III

THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

The organization of questionnaire to parents. In organizing the questionnaire to be sent to parents the following were considered: (1) the number of parents represented in the school, (2) the number of parents represented at different grade levels, (3) the selection of parents to receive the questionnaire, and, (4) the content of the questionnaire.

There were one hundred sixty one sets of parents represented in Kipling school. Obviously some were represented more than once by their children at different grade levels. From the list of one hundred sixty one sets of different parents in the school, one hundred seven sets, or sixty six percent were chosen to receive the questionnaires. The selection of those to receive the questionnaires began at the fifth grade level; because, they had, in most cases received the letter over a period of years. Parents that were new in the school system were eliminated from the selection. Respondents that were selected at the fifth grade level were omitted as possible recipients at another grade level in which they were represented by a child. Thus, the number eligible to receive the questionnaires became progressively smaller from fifth grade on down to first grade. However, the percentage receiving questionnaires at each grade level was approximately the same.
Table one, page 14, indicates the number and percentage of parents receiving questionnaires at each grade level.

The purpose of the parent questionnaire was to gather information from this group concerning their opinion of the summary letter as a year end report. It was considered essential that some criteria be established by which the parent received the letter over the longest period of time were sent to the child's home and parents. It was considered that reports to parents should be clear, concise and honest, and be easily understood. Thus, each question was formulated on the basis of whether or not the summary letter did measure up to this criteria.

After numbering off the names on a one, two, three basis those numbered one and three were selected to receive the questionnaires returned out of one hundred seven that were mailed to parents. Question number one had been designed to get the number of years that the parents had received the summary letter as a year end report. As was intended in summary letter as a method of reporting. It was considered that the selection of the sampling group, those parents that had received the letter over the longest period of time were sent to respond to each question as: (1) Does the summary letter reflect a friendly attitude toward the child and parents? (2) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as and to each name the number one, two or three was given.

Alphabetized lists of names were used at each grade level, and to each name the number one, two or three was given.

Following are some of the questions and possible responses that parents were asked to answer:

The possible respondents were selected at random.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>ELIGIBLE</th>
<th>RECIPIENTS</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B, shows the questions and possible responses that parents were asked to answer.
ent group should judge the summary letter. This was accomplished through the utilization of the information that had been gained through the review of literature related to the letter method of reporting. It was apparent that reports to parents, regardless of kind or method, should measure up to a highly acceptable standard of content. For instance, authorities agree that reports to parents should; enhance the relationship between home and school, contain information as to such areas as the child's traits and academic growth, be sincere and honest, and be easily understood. Thus, each question was formulated on the basis of whether or not the summary letter did measure up to this criteria.

Appendix B, shows the questions and possible responses contained in the parent questionnaire. Parents were asked to respond to such questions as: (2) Does the summary letter reflect a friendly attitude toward the child and parents?, (5) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the social growth and development of the child?

Summary of responses from parents. There were ninety questionnaires returned out of the one hundred seven that were originally mailed to parents. Question number one had to do with the number of years that the parents had received the summary letter as a year end report. As was intended in the selection of the sampling group, those parents that had received the letter over the longest period of time were most
representative. Sixty seven of the ninety respondents had received the letter for three or more years; twelve for two years, and eleven for only one year.

The responses to the other fourteen questions are summarized in Table II. One of three possible responses were given to each question: usually, seldom, or uncertain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A friendly attitude toward the child and parent</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sympathetic attitude toward the child</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A closer personal home-school relationship</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to social growth</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to physical growth</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to emotional growth</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to academic growth</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to the child's work habits</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to the child's attitudes</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for the child's improvement</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information as to how you can help the child</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincere and honest evaluation</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language content that is easily understood</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The type of report you wish to receive for the grade levels at which it is used</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
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</table>
### Summary of Responses of 90 Parents to Questionnaire Concerning Use of Summary Letter, Kipling School, Deerfield, Illinois

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Number Responding</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the summary letter effect, provide or reflect the following?</td>
<td>Usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) a friendly attitude toward the child and parents</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) a sympathetic attitude toward the child</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) a closer personal home-school relationship</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) adequate information as to social growth</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) adequate information as to physical growth</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) adequate information as to emotional growth</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) adequate information as to academic growth</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) adequate information as to the child's work habits</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) adequate information as to the child's attitudes</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) suggestions for the child's improvement</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) adequate information as to how you can help the child</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) a sincere and honest evaluation</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) language content that is easily understood</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) the type of report you wish to receive for the grade levels at which it is used</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions two, three, and four concerned the degree of rapport or the type of relationship that was established by the teacher through the letter. The number of parents responding "Usually" ranged from sixty three to ninety. The number responding "Seldom" ranged from none to thirteen, and none to as many as nine indicated they were uncertain.

Questions five through ten had to do with the adequacy of the trait and academic information provided in the summary letter. This type of information concerned; social growth, emotional growth, academic growth, work habits, physical growth, and attitudes. In each of these six areas forty nine to seventy two parents indicated usually, ten to twenty four seldom, and from seven to twenty one marked uncertain as their response.

In questions eleven and twelve the parents were asked to indicate if suggestions were given as to how the child could improve and if adequate information was provided as to how the parents could help the child. On the basis of the responses fifty five indicated that suggestions were usually provided as to how the child could improve, thirty that such information was seldom given, and five were uncertain. Twenty eight respondents believed that adequate information was given as to how the parents could help the child, thirty four indicated that such information was seldom provided, and twenty eight were uncertain.
Parents evaluated the summary letter in questions thirteen and fourteen in terms of honesty and sincerity, and the understandability of the language content. "Usually" was the response given in eighty one cases as to sincerity and honesty of the letter. Nine indicated they were uncertain. Eighty five parents indicated the language content was usually understandable, and five were uncertain.

The final question in the parent questionnaire asked if the summary letter represented the type of report the parents wished to receive as an end of the year evaluation. Sixty one responded that it usually represented such a report, "seldom" was the response given by eight, and twenty one were uncertain.

The organization of questionnaire to teachers. The organization of the teacher questionnaire followed the same general pattern and the same basic principles of good reporting that were considered in the parent questionnaire. For instance, the same criteria, those which were considered essential to high quality reporting, were used in determining the type of questions that would lead to judgments of the letter. Appendix C shows the teacher questionnaire. The relationship between the planning and content of the teacher and parent questionnaire was very close. In question number two of the parent questionnaire they were asked to indicate whether or not the summary letter did evidence a friendly attitude toward the parents and child; and, the teachers were asked in question two if they were able
through the summary letter to evidence a friendly attitude toward the child and parents. This same basic plan for the teacher questionnaire was followed throughout, even to the numbering of the questions in most instances.

Eleven teachers make up the present staff of Kipling school, ten of whom had had experience in writing summary letters. Those ten teachers were asked to give their opinion of the summary letter on the basis of the criteria that had been set up in the questionnaire.

(1) Summary of responses from teachers. All ten of the teachers receiving questionnaires returned them. In response to question one, four teachers had used the summary letter for five or more years, one had used it for three years, two for two years, and three for only one year.

(2) The responses to the other sixteen questions are shown in Table III. One of three responses was given to each question — "yes", "no", "uncertain".

Questions two through four were related to the rapport or the type of relationship that the teachers were able to establish through the use of the summary letter. From six to nine indicated that a friendly and sympathetic attitude could be evidenced. Six teachers believed that a closer home-school relationship could be developed through the letters, two indicated "no", and two were uncertain.

(16) a type of report is which the information as to the child's habits provides adequate guidance for the teachers.

(17) a type of report in which the information about the child is too restrictive in its presentation.
TABLE III
SUMMARY OF RESPONSES OF 10 TEACHERS CONCERNING USE OF SUMMARY LETTER, KIPLING SCHOOL, DEERFIELD, ILLINOIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Number Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the summary letter method represent, or enable you to evidence, effect or provide the following?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) a friendly attitude toward child and parents</td>
<td>Yes 9, No 0, Uncertain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) a sympathetic attitude toward the child</td>
<td>Yes 9, No 0, Uncertain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) a closer personal home-school relationship</td>
<td>Yes 6, No 2, Uncertain 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) adequate information as to social growth</td>
<td>Yes 9, No 1, Uncertain 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) adequate information as to physical growth</td>
<td>Yes 8, No 1, Uncertain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) adequate information as to emotional growth</td>
<td>Yes 7, No 3, Uncertain 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) adequate information as to academic growth</td>
<td>Yes 7, No 2, Uncertain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) adequate information as to the child's work habits</td>
<td>Yes 8, No 2, Uncertain 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) adequate information as to the child's attitudes</td>
<td>Yes 8, No 0, Uncertain 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) adequate information for the child's improvement</td>
<td>Yes 6, No 2, Uncertain 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) adequate information as to how the parent can help the child</td>
<td>Yes 5, No 4, Uncertain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) a sincere and honest evaluation</td>
<td>Yes 4, No 1, Uncertain 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) the type of report you wish to make</td>
<td>Yes 1, No 5, Uncertain 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) require too much time</td>
<td>Yes 7, No 1, Uncertain 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16) a type of report in which the administration provides adequate guidance and assistance</td>
<td>Yes 3, No 4, Uncertain 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) a type of report in which the administration is too restrictive in its censorship</td>
<td>Yes 3, No 4, Uncertain 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next eight questions, five through twelve, asked if the summary letter method of reporting enabled the teacher to provide adequate information in the academic and trait areas. The number of positive answers for these questions ranged from six to nine, the number of negative from none to three, and the number indicating they were uncertain ranged from none to two.

In question number thirteen the teachers were asked if they could provide a sincere and honest evaluation or report through using the summary letter. Four responded with "yes", one replied with "no", and five indicated they were uncertain.

Question number fourteen had one "yes", answer, five marked "no", and four indicated they were uncertain. This question was phrased so that teachers responded as to whether or not they wished to use the summary letter method of reporting.

Question number fifteen was answered by seven indicating "yes", one indicating "no", and two marked "uncertain". For this question teachers were asked if the summary letter method required too much time.

Questions sixteen and seventeen concerned whether or not the school administration provided adequate guidance and assistance, and if administrative censorship was too restrictive. Three responded that the administration did provide
adequate guidance and assistance, four marked "no" for their
answer, and three were uncertain. According to three the admin-
istration was too restrictive in censoring the letters, four
indicated "no", and three were uncertain.

The problem, as originally stated in chapter one, involved the
evocation of the summary letter method of reporting in Kipling
school in Deerfield, Illinois. Opinions of parents and teachers
were utilized to determine whether or not the letter was ac-
complishing the results that its potentialities seemed to afford.

The conclusions were formulated on the basis of a cri-
tera of proportion and consistency of responses. If the an-
swers of the respondents to a particular question or group of
questions were consistently alike, and, if in a majority pro-
portion, some concluding statement was made. The following
conclusions were based on the strength and consistency of the
parent and teacher responses which were summarized in tables
two and three, pages 19 and 21.

(1) The type of relationship and rapport that was
established between teacher and parent through the sum-
mary letter was one of a very high degree.

(2) The adequacy of the information provided parents
as to the growth and traits areas was consistently satis-
factory.

(3) A majority of the teachers believed they could
provide adequate information in the growth and traits
areas through the summary letter method.

(4) A majority of the teachers believed they could
provide adequate information as to how the child could
show improvement, and the proportion of parents who be-
CHAPTER IV

Conclusions

The problem, as originally stated in chapter one, involved the evaluation of the summary letter method of reporting in Kipling school in Deerfield, Illinois. Opinions of parents and teachers were utilized to determine whether or not the letter was accomplishing the results that its potentialities seemed to afford.

The conclusions were formulated on the basis of a criteria of proportion and consistency of responses. If the answers of the respondents to a particular question or group of questions were consistently alike, and, if in a majority proportion, some concluding statement was made. The following conclusions were based on the strength and consistency of the parent and teacher responses which were summarized in tables two and three, pages 17 and 21.

(1) The type of relationship and rapport that was established between teacher and parent through the summary letter was one of a very high degree.

(2) The adequacy of the information provided parents as to the growth and trait areas was consistently satisfactory.

(3) A majority of the teachers believed they could provide adequate information in the growth and trait areas through the summary letter method.

(4) A majority of the teachers believed they could provide adequate information as to how the child could show improvement, and the proportion of parents who be-
lieved they received such information was about the
same... re-evaluate the position of

(5) A larger proportion of parents believed they
were receiving a sincere and honest evaluation, than the
proportion of teachers indicating they could provide a
sincere and honest evaluation.

(6) The language content of the summary letter was
such that it was generally understood by the parent
group.

(7) The summary letter method of reporting had the
support of a majority of the parents.

(8) The majority of teachers were either opposed or
uncertain as to whether or not they approved of the sum-
mary letter as a method of reporting.

(9) The summary letter method of reporting, accord-
ing to teacher opinion, required too much time.

(10) The administration provided too little guidance
and assistance for teachers that used the summary letter
method.

(11) The administration was too restrictive in its
censorship of the content of the summary letter.

Recommendations based on the conclusions. The follow-
ing recommendations were made on the basis of the evidence
that supported the conclusions:

(1) The summary letter method of reporting be con-
tinued at the grade levels in which it is now used.

(2) Teachers should give serious thought to the area
of providing more information as to how parents can help
their child.

(3) The school administration evaluate the provisions
and policies for guiding and assisting teachers with the
task of writing summary letters.

(4) The school administration provide clerical
assistance for teachers in regard to typing the letters.
(5) The school administration in cooperation with the teachers re-evaluate the policy of censorship of the letter content.

(6) The school administration provide the leadership that would enable the teachers to cooperatively undertake the task of improving the summary letter method of reporting.

(7) Constant provisions be made that would allow for the continued re-evaluation of the summary letter method in light of how further improvement can be made.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Books


BIBLIOGRAPHY


B. PUBLICATIONS


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A. Books


B. PUBLICATIONS


THE SUMMARY LETTER SHOWING TYPICAL STAGE, FORM AND CONTENT

Dear Mr. and Mrs. John Doe:

Michael works well and plays well. He is a spirited child. His captivating smile, his eagerness and ability to cooperate and play fair make Michael a well-liked individual in the group. His qualities make him an important member of the group and we miss him during his absence.

At first Michael was a bit shy and restrained when speaking to the group. Now he volunteers enthusiastically and is so eager to reveal his experiences to the class that I have to remind him to speak more slowly.

Michael has good physical coordination—he runs well, and can catch and throw a ball expertly. He is a hearty eater, and is always William Scotts foods that he does not particularly like. We find that Michael can make some time a social time, and yet easily handle his food with proper tools.

Michael’s progress in his academic work has been tremendous. He has always put forth effort, but just as sure repeatedly strikes a match and suddenly succeeds in lighting it, so have Michael’s efforts been rewarded. The readiness program has taken effect. Michael, if he had his way, would like to read or do arithmetic all day long. He is extremely reluctant to put his work away after these periods end.

All this eagerness has produced a considerable amount of excitement which is reflected, too, in his writing, drawing, and craft work. However, we feel Michael will relax as soon as he becomes adjusted to his new powers in reading and arithmetic.

Michael has definite preferences in choosing the children with whom he would like to work, build, and play. His choice of activities is influenced by these friends. He feels secure in the group, both with the children and with the adults with whom he works. He respects authority and is quick to utilize suggestions.
Dear Mr. and Mrs. John Doe:

Michael works well and plays well. He is a spirited child. His captivating smile, his eagerness and ability to cooperate and play fair make Michael a well-liked individual in the group. His qualities make him an important member of the group and we miss him during his absence.

At first Michael was a bit shy and restrained when speaking to the group. Now he volunteers enthusiastically and is so eager to reveal his experiences to the class that I have to remind him to speak more slowly.

Michael has good physical coordination—he runs well, and can catch and throw a ball expertly. He is a hearty eater, and is always willing to taste foods that he does not particularly like. We find that Michael can make lunch time a social time, and yet easily handle his food with proper tools.

Michael's progress in his academic work has been tremendous. He has always put forth effort, but just as one repeatedly strikes a match and suddenly succeeds in lighting it, so have Michael's efforts been rewarded. The readiness program has taken effect. Michael, if he had his way, would like to read or do arithmetic all day long. He is extremely reluctant to put his work away when these periods end.

All this eagerness has produced a considerable amount of excitement which is reflected, too, in his writing, drawing, and craft work. However, we feel Michael will relax as soon as he becomes adjusted to his new powers in reading and arithmetic.

Michael has definite preferences in choosing the children with whom he would like to work, build, and play. His choice of activities is influenced by these friends. He feels secure in the group, both with the children and with the adults with whom he works. He respects authority and is quick to utilize suggestions.
Although Michael is very neat about his person, he is a real boy—he plays hard and works hard. It is fun having him in our group.  

Sincerely,  

Rinderle = teacher

---

1. For how many years have you received the summary letter as a report of your child’s progress?  

Sincerely,  

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, more

2. Does the summary letter reflect Kindergarten teacher toward the child and parents?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

3. Does the summary letter indicate the teacher and school are sympathetic to the needs of the child?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

4. Does the summary letter enable to affect a closer personal relationship between the home and school?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

5. Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the physical growth and development of the child?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

6. Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the social growth and development of the child?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

7. Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the emotional growth and development of the child?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

8. Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the academic growth and development of the child?  

Usually Seldom Uncertain

9. Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to...  

APPENDIX B

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

(1) For how many years have you received the summary letter as a report of your child's progress?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, more)

(2) Does the summary letter reflect a friendly attitude toward the child and parents?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(3) Does the summary letter indicate the teacher and school are sympathetic to the needs of the child?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(4) Does the summary letter serve to effect a closer personal relationship between the home and school?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(5) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the physical growth and development of the child?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(6) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the social growth and development of the child?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(7) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the emotional growth and development of the child?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(8) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the academic growth and development of the child?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain

(9) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the development of the child's work habits?

Usually  Seldom  Uncertain
(10) Does the summary letter provide adequate information as to the development of the child's attitudes?

Usually Seldom Uncertain

(11) Does the summary letter provide suggestions for the child's improvement?

Usually Seldom Uncertain

(12) Does the summary letter provide information as to how you can help the child?

Usually Seldom Uncertain

(13) Does the summary letter represent a sincere and honest evaluation on the part of the teacher?

Usually Seldom Uncertain

(14) Is the wording of the summary letter of a nature that is easily understood?

Usually Seldom Uncertain

(15) Does the letter represent the type of report you want for your child, as an end of the year evaluation, for the grades in which it is used?

Yes No Uncertain

(16) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the emotional growth and development of the child?

Yes No Uncertain

(17) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the emotional growth and development of the child?

Yes No Uncertain

(18) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the academic growth and development of the child?

Yes No Uncertain
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

(1) For how many years have you used the summary letter method of reporting?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, more

(2) Does the summary letter method enable you to evidence a friendly attitude toward the child and parents?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

(3) Does the summary letter method enable you to indicate a sympathetic attitude toward the child?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

(4) Does the summary letter method serve to effect a closer personal relationship between the home and school?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

(5) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the social growth and development of the child?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

(6) Does the summary letter method require too much time?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

(7) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the emotional growth and development of the child?

   Yes  No  Uncertain

(8) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the academic growth and development of the child?

   Yes  No  Uncertain
(9) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the development of the child's work habits?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(10) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to the development of the child's attitudes?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(11) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to suggestions for the child's improvement?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(12) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide adequate information as to how the parents can help the child?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(13) Does the summary letter method enable you to provide a sincere and honest evaluation?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(14) Does the summary letter method represent the type of report you wish to make as an end of the year summary or evaluation?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(15) Does the summary letter method require too much time?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(16) Does the administration provide adequate guidance and assistance for this method or reporting?

Yes  No  Uncertain

(17) Is the administration too restrictive in its censorship of the letter content?

Yes  No  Uncertain