CASE STUDIES OF 1959 NON-PROMOTION CHILDREN
OF FRISBIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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CASE STUDIES OF 1959 NON-PROMOTION CHILDREN
OF FRISBIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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The writer has been aware of the promotion problems for many years. For a few years the incidence of non-promotion in this particular school was very low; then in the spring of 1959 the number non-promoted was very high for such a small number of students.


INTRODUCTION

The problem of promotion or non-promotion plagues administrators and teachers every year. Henry J. Otto made this statement:

The ideal promotion plan has not yet been devised, and it is very doubtful whether it will be as long as pupil progress from grade to grade is to be determined on the basis of academic standards of achievement in terms of which the work of pupils has to be evaluated.¹

National Education Association Research concluded:

Although some children have to stay for a second year in the same school grade, this happens to fewer children than formerly. Research on the causes, effects and prevention of pupil failures and non-promotion have contributed to a change in promotion practices.²

The writer has been aware of the promotion problems for many years. For a few years the incidence of non-promotion in this particular school was very low, then in the spring of 1959 the number non-promoted was very high for such a small number of students.


I. PURPOSE OF STUDY

It was the purpose of this study: to examine the promotion and non-promotion practices that have been employed in public schools and to study a small group of children retained in Fristie School in June, 1959.

II. PROCEDURE

The investigator reviewed the literature concerning non-promotion. The investigator then determined from a study of the Fristie School files which students of the school had not been promoted in June, 1959.

The investigator next examined cumulative records, health cards, test cards, letters to parents, teacher reports, psychologist findings concerning the non-promoted students. Teachers, on the other hand, are trained to develop an objective attitude toward each child.

The investigator made visitations to the home of nine of the twelve non-promoted children. In two cases, the families moved before visitation could be conducted; in one case, the parents were not available. The investigator also interviewed teachers of the non-promoted students to learn about the children's social and emotional adjustments.

III. LIMITATIONS

Below are listed the limitations which pertain to this
study with like tests. Also the personalities given were

1. Because of the investigator's position as a teacher in Frisbie School, honest answers by the parents, theoretically, may not have been possible. The parents may have felt they should not contradict the investigator or any other teacher on whether or not their child should have been retained, because the teachers and principals are, supposedly, authorities on pupil needs. Likewise the parents may have been reluctant to state their honest reactions to the value of non-promotion for the same reasons or perhaps they feared an uncooperative attitude from school authorities at future times. And during the time of this study were made wherever the tests.

2. The emotional involvements of the parents with their child prevent the parents from seeing their child from a completely objective view. Teachers, on the other hand, are trained to develop an objective attitude toward each child, therefore, their opinions may differ as to the value of retention. The terms "non-promotion" and "retention" have been used.

3. Even though teachers are trained to be objective, it humanly would be hard to admit they had made an error in retaining a child. If an error had been made, some teachers might tend to justify the mistake rather than to admit that retention had not been effective.

4. Raw test scores were not used as means of evaluating the progress of the child because there could be no
comparison with like tests. Also the percentiles given were computed on the particular group of children who were tested in the Des Moines schools of that year. Therefore this could make the percentiles vary from year to year for scores that were identical.

5. The length of time since retention was too short to draw any concrete conclusions.

6. Two of the twelve non-promotion children moved away and the parents of a third were not available for interview. Standing with their fellows and their parents are affected by comparisons of student development from previous years and during the times of this study were made wherever the teacher remained the same. However, in the cases where the children had different teachers comparisons were not possible.

7. Comparisons of student development from previous years and during the times of this study were made wherever the teacher remained the same. However, in the cases where the children had different teachers comparisons were not possible.

Teachers and administrators are still faced with the problem of whether the slow child could gain in all areas of learning. Throughout this study these terms "non-promotion" and "retention" have been used synonymously to avoid repetition. Use of the word in either case refers to a student spending two years in the same grade, either "passed" or "failed" at the end of a school year. Instruction and learning were done between teacher and pupil; progress was not as much judged as expected. Goodlad, Estvan, and Sherman stated:

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The problem of promotion or non-promotion of elementary school children has caused much controversy which resulted in considerable research for many years. It is in the area of promotion, non-promotion, grouping, and marking that children are most directly affected by our school organizations. Their associations with other children and their standing with their fellows and their parents are affected by grouping, promotion, non-promotion, and marking. Consequently, it is in these special areas that practices should be consistent with sound educational theory. However, it would seem that no basic practice has been set and teachers and administrators are still faced each term with the problem of whether the slow child would gain in all areas of development by non-promotion or if he would do just as well if he were promoted.

Elementary schools functioned almost two centuries before children came to be taught in "classes" and before they either "passed" or "failed" at the end of a school year. Instruction and learning were done between tutor and pupil; progress was not so much judged as expected. Herrick, Goodlad, Estvan, and Eberman stated:

(References to specific literature or sources are not visible in the image.)
Not until after the Civil War, with the rise of urbanization, did the classification of pupils into grades become accepted practice. Then, in the effort to keep classes as homogeneous as possible, grading and promotional policies became so rigid that the education structure began to resemble the mass-production of the assembly line. By 1890, some large schools had set up flexible grading hoping it would lessen the amount of non-promotion.

In the first school the teachers, except those in one-room and two-room schools, had little to say in determining classified and introduced into various grades without pupil personnel practices. Such matters were then taken care of by the building principal or superintendent of schools. The result was a great lack of uniformity in the nature and skill required to master them.

Times, however, have changed and the classroom teacher has the greatest responsibility now in determining promotion and achievement in reading, spelling, arithmetic, and social studies. In regard to this responsibility Willard S. Elsbree stated: "To take this added responsibility it pre-supposes that teachers have a willingness to extend their sphere of interest beyond the limits of their own individual classroom; and second, it implies a knowledge of modern theories of school organization and administration and a well thought out philosophy of child development."

Hollis L. Caswell has said in regard to non-promotion of pupils: "Opportunity to advance from grade to grade is essential."

Too often non-promotion is employed without assistant teachers can be.


recognition of consideration of these characteristics: (1) There is no consistent generally accepted basis for non-promotion. (2) There is no consistent relationship between achievement and ability of the pupil and his non-promotion.¹

Achievement levels are usually unstable and are arrived at mostly without consulting experts in the field. Elsbree said in relation to the problem:

Curriculum materials have not infrequently been classified and introduced into various grades without assistance or advice of well-informed consultants. The result was a great lack of uniformity in the nature of materials included in the course of study and knowledge and skill required to master them.²

We usually think of progress through the grades dependent upon achievement in reading, spelling, arithmetic, and social studies, despite the recognition by teachers of a vast area of valuable human experience that has not been reduced to quantitative terms. Serious attempts to provide for growth in personality traits have been limited thus far. Some of the most common reasons for failure of a child with certain notable exceptions to a few educators bent upon poor academic achievement, poor attendance, immaturity, experimentation. Children have developed the feeling that educational problems. The validity and success of these it is an honor to advance from grade to grade.

The requirements for advancement are not consistent throughout the elementary schools. Standards can be

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² Elsbree, op. cit., p. 3.
³ Elsbree, op. cit., p. 4.
dependent on the teachers, central office staff, and sometimes by local rules. In some instances repeating a grade only twice is the rule, or the requirements for one certain subject may be a deciding factor for a certain grade.

In more recent years it seems the problem of over-age and maturity has overshadowed the advantages claimed for minimum grade standards, but there is still an effort to hold to the "grade standard" theory. Many efforts to reduce retention have failed. Elsbree gave these devices.

1. Re-division of the year into smaller segments of time--quarterly and semi-annual promotions.

2. Homogeneous grouping--involved the revision of grade standards in keeping with relative abilities of the groups formed.

3. Departmentalization in grades, hoping that increased specialization would alleviate the non-promotion problem and that promotion by subjects would reduce the total failure rate.¹

Some of the most common reasons for failure of a child are poor academic achievement, poor attendance, immaturity, and emotional problems. The validity and success of these have been questioned and authorities have investigated. The National Education Research Bulletin gave these reasons for non-promotion:

Irregular attendance--with adequate help the student should be able to make up the work missed, and automatic non-promotion merely because of absence is likely

¹Elsbree, op. cit., p. 4.
to be more harmful than helpful to the pupil.

Emotional maladjustment, difficult home conditions, unnoticed physical defects, and low intelligence affect the child's ability to learn. Symptoms of social and emotional maladjustment in pupils who have experienced failure in school were greater than among those who have not.¹

The National Education Association Research Bulletin arrived at these conclusions:

Threats of failure do not necessarily motivate children to work hard...

Non-promotion does not always increase mastery of subject matter...

Failure may be a usual and necessary part of adult life and adults may develop a number of ways to cope with it, but the continuous and disastrous failures that accompany some children throughout their school careers, with no acceptable escape from the situation, may have serious effects on child's personality.

Non-promotion does not always achieve academic aims. Studies have shown that some of these pupils did worse the second time in subject than the first time.²

In regard to promotion policies Henry Otto said:

1. Each child seems to grow and develop in accordance with his own growth pattern. Hence, it is illogical to expect a group of children of same age to show highly similar "stature" in any of a group of attributes, including previous attainments or development during a given year in academic areas.

2. The rate at which children grow and develop ranges all the way from "very slow growers" to "very fast growers", with the majority of them clustering


²Ibid., 16-17.
around the midpoint between two extremes. The slow grower is not necessarily doomed to an ultimate small stature, nor is fast grower destined for an ultimate high stature. These generalizations apply in academic areas as well.

The child who doesn't learn to read until age ten may become an outstanding reader. The child who learns to read before age six may not be the best reader in high school.

3. Growth in achievement in school is closely associated with growth of the organism as a whole. The child who in general is a slow grower will usually manifest slow or delayed progress in school subjects, and vice versa. If normal resources and good teaching prevail, the slow grower as well as the fast grower will partake of the curriculum nourishment at the rate at which the individual growing organism can utilize it.

4. If absurd extremes are avoided, exact grade placement has little or no bearing on the educational development a child will make during a given year. The same is true of academic matters. If efforts are made to meet individual learning needs, grade placement loses its significance. Hence, children might as well be grouped with their age group and maturity peers.

5. Repetition of grades has no special educational value for children....The boredom inherent in repeating a grade tends to dampen development whereas the exploration of new fields in a new grade has some motivating value. Being already for the work of a grade will not be corrected by repeating that grade....

6. Standards are highest in school systems with high promotion rates. Failures tend to overload grades with average and retarded pupils....

7. Marks are not needed to insure proper motivation.

8. The child's social and emotional adjustment has much to do with his educational progress.... Thus, children might as well be grouped in school into reasonably homogeneous age and maturity peer groups.


9. Individual differences must be met under any kind of grouping and promotion plan. ¹

It is a fact that the number of non-promotions in the elementary school is decreasing, but from one to three elementary school children each year still fail to be promoted to the next grade. In 1909, Ayres reported an average rate of failure in all grades to be 16 per cent. Caswell reported 10 per cent in 1933, Brueckner 8.5 per cent in 1937, Saunders reported 4 per cent for large cities of over 100,000 in 1939, and an unpublished study of a large city indicated a failure of 8.3 per cent for 1957.²

Studies have shown the greatest per cent of failures to fall in the first grade. In a recent study it was found that "one of every ten first graders flunk." There seems to be the feeling that unless a child has a good beginning especially in the reading area, he will have difficulty in all the academic areas in the later grades. Abraham Willard made these generalizations after his study:

1. The average child who repeats first grade learns no more in two years than the non-repeater of the same mental age in one year. Nor do most repeaters ever catch up academically.

2. Being unready for the work of a grade will not be corrected by repeating that grade....

3. Success and praise work better than failure and reproof in the educational setting, just as they do elsewhere.

4. The promoted slow-learner needs to do the work of grade is frustrated and discouraged develops an inferior feeling which education should not foster.

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4. A threat of failure or impending failure doesn't necessarily result in better work....

5. Children who drop out of school have frequently been first-grade failures.

6. Cost of failures is very high, much more expensive than the solutions which are suggested for preventing them. From the writer's efforts to find research results both for and against non-promotion, it appears that nearly all research finds that non-promotion is not successful for the development of the child. Herrick, Goodlad, Estvan, and Eberman, however, gave these reasons for non-promotion:

1. When promotion is assured, pupils are unconcerned about their school work developing poor work habits and careless attitudes.

2. Bright children come to resent equal promotion rewards for work obviously inferior.

3. Because of the need for teachers to spend a disproportionate amount of time with slow learners, the presence of these children in the room serves as a hindrance to progress....

4. Achievement levels are enhanced through repetition of only partially learned material. Will be found in an ungraded primary school, through which each child moves at a pace which each child

5. Immature children, through grade repetition, are more likely to find suitable play and work companions at the lower grade level.

6. The promoted slow-learner unable to do the work of grade is frustrated and discouraged, develops an inferior feeling which adversely affects his social relationships and personality development. 2


1Ibid., pp. 35, 72.

2Herrick, op. cit., p. 394.
Lewis Baxter stated it thus:

It has been found that a child's social maturity is probably the best indicator of where he will do best. It is his ability to associate happily with children in work and play that has most to do with the quality of his present and future growth. A child should be placed with those children who give him the most happiness.... Wherever children are placed it is important that they continue learning where they left off. When a system of individual guidance is used, teachers need to know as much as possible about incoming children.1

With all the research against non-promotion there still seems to be no real answer to solving the problem. In addition, either academic or on chronological age is the elimination to some devices already tried as grouping, quarterly and semi-annual promotion, and departmentalization, authorities have not mastered; the system of classification is still further suggestions.

Paul Woodring stated:

There is no possible solution that is going to satisfy everyone. When promotion is based strictly on academic achievement, the lower grades become filled with older children who can't learn at a normal rate.... Efforts have been made to individualize instruction within a mixed class but this is rarely proved satisfactory....

I think the long-range solution will be found in an ungraded primary school, through which each child moves at his own rate, followed by ability grouping in each separate subject in higher grades.2

2Henry J. Otté, op. cit., p. 129.

Henry J. Otto said:

One way to meet this problem in an educationally sound way is to group pupils on the basis of age and all-round maturity, eliminate the use of a comparative and competitive marking system, and report to parents by means of individual conferences. Adequate cumulative records and samples of children's work gathered over a two or three-year period are essential for making such a plan work.

The National Education Association Research Bulletin made this statement:

An alternative to promotion or non-promotion on either academic or on chronological age is the elimination of grade levels and development of an ungraded program in which the pupil proceeds at his own best pace and repeats only specific work that he needs and has not mastered; the system of classification is usually known as "continuous progress." A reasonable small percentage of retardation with ample justification for retarding the pupil should be regarded as a desirable practice.

Every child should be placed where he will be assured a maximum of growth. Physical, mental, social, and emotional factors should be considered in making any assignments. Teachers should use results of achievement tests, intelligence tests, informal teacher-made tests and teachers' opinions and good judgment in making assignments. A systematic effort should also be made to keep the chronological age range at a minimum.

It is the responsibility for the teacher in consultation with the principal to judge when it is in the best interest of some children to be retained in order to give time for growth so that with the added maturity he can experience success. Perhaps it will be necessary to retain some children more than one year in the elementary school. This should be the exception. Most pupils will progress normally with each grade. However, a small percentage may fall behind in the grades. However, a significant number of children may occur in the kindergarten of first three grades.
CHAPTER III

The need for some pupils should be viewed in the same manner as a retention. Every use of all available guidance, test, and service may be made at any time during the school year. Accelerations must have the approval of the Department of Child and Youth Services. For the most part the non-promotions are left to the teacher and principal for final decision. The following is an excerpt from the Manual of Policies and Procedures for Elementary Schools in Des Moines Public Schools:

**PROMOTION POLICIES:**

Generally, promotional policies which cause unjustified and excessive retardation or acceleration, or policies which result in complete chronological or social promotion without adjustment to individual differences are considered undesirable.

A reasonable small percentage of retardation with ample justification for retarding the pupil should be regarded as a desirable practice.

Every child should be placed where he will be assured a maximum of growth. Physical, mental, social, and emotional factors should be considered in making any assignment. Teachers should use results of achievement tests, intelligence test, informal teacher-made tests and teachers' opinions and good judgment in making assignments. A systematic effort should also be made to keep the chronological age range at a minimum.

It is the responsibility of the teacher in consultation with the principal to judge when it is in the best interest of some children to be retained in order to give time for growth so that with the added maturity he can experience success. Perhaps it will be necessary to retain some children more than one year in the elementary school. This should be the exception. Most pupils make normal progress through the grades. However, if it seems advisable to have a child remain in a grade more than one year, it is usually preferable to have this occur in the kindergarten of first three grades.
The need for acceleration of some pupils should be viewed in the same manner as a retention, e.g., use of all available guidance tools and services in arriving at the decision. Accelerations, as retentions, may be made at any time during the school year. Accelerations must have the approval of the Department of Pupil Adjustment.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE STATEMENTS

An interview with Director of Elementary Education brought a group of personal policies and some figures compiled through his office concerning non-promotion trends in Des Moines.

The school seeks optimum development for each child in accordance with his ability during the time he spends in thirteen to seventeen years in the elementary school so he is more suited to his age group by the time he leaves the school

The following is a copy of policies which were formulated by the Director of Elementary Education:

PROMOTIONAL POLICIES:

Generally, promotional policies which cause unjustified and excessive retardation or acceleration, or policies which result in complete chronological or social promotion without adjustment to individual differences are to be considered undesirable.

A reasonably small percentage of retardation with ample justification for retarding the pupil is also to be regarded as desirable practice.

Our promotion practice is based on the fact that all children are different in the factors of physical, social, and emotional development as well as in chronological age, mental age, and actual progress in the skills.

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It is the responsibility of the teacher in consultation with the principal to judge when it is in the best interest of some children to be retained once in their elementary school career.

Pupils progress through school at varying rates because of their wide differences in capacity, interest, and background of experiences. The range of individual differences in any class increases as long as the pupils remain together. Finally the differences become so wide that it is necessary to re-assign some pupils in order that the class may be efficiently taught by one teacher in the same classroom. The need for acceleration of some pupils and the retardation of a few, results from the need for this periodic reorganization and regrouping of pupils into classes to reduce the spread in the teachability of pupils assigned to any one teacher.

The school seeks optimum development for each child in accordance with his ability during the time he spends in the elementary school when he reaches twelve or thirteen to send him on to the junior high school so he may have the advantage of a school program more suited to his adolescent needs.

Deliberate steps are taken to keep the age-range for each grade within reasonable limits.

An attempt is made to adjust the work of each to the individual needs and abilities of the children by the following practices:

1. In an interview with the principal of Frisbie School

Most pupils make normal progress through the grades. However, if it seems advisable to have a child remain in a grade more than one year, it is usually preferable to have this occur in the kindergarten or first three grades.

The following figures show the trend of non-promotion in the Des Moines schools since 1951:

1. Director of Elementary Education, Des Moines Public Schools. Promotion Policies.
The figures obtained from the Director of Elementary Education gave evidence that there was more non-promotion in kindergarten and the primary grades. In the spring of 1960 these figures were shown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>June 1951</th>
<th>June 1958</th>
<th>June 1959</th>
<th>June 1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of possible promotions</td>
<td>17,826</td>
<td>24,985</td>
<td>25,311</td>
<td>35,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number not promoted</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of failures</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of promotions</td>
<td>17,448</td>
<td>24,422</td>
<td>24,691</td>
<td>24,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of promotions</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>97.7</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>97.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following case studies were representative of all children who attended Frisbie Elementary School during the spring of 1960. The school consisted of grades ranging from kindergarten through sixth, averaging about eighteen to twenty pupils per grade.

Children were expected to be retained if there was evidence of retardation and intellectual and social capacities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Kdg.</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students</td>
<td>4,423</td>
<td>3,660</td>
<td>3,660</td>
<td>3,524</td>
<td>3,435</td>
<td>3,194</td>
<td>3,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number retained</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In an interview with the principal of Frisbie School these statements were brought out:

The principal felt that non-promotion should be a last resort and a thorough investigation of social and emotional problems as well as academic achievement should be made. In addition the principal felt efforts to have parents agree and understand were of utmost importance, and the school program should allow for developmental changes during the summer which
might permit the child to continue with his class.

The information for this study was taken primarily from the Frisbie School files, using cumulative records.

II. CASE STUDIES

The following case studies were written concerning children who attended Frisbie Elementary School, located in southwest Des Moines, Iowa. The school consisted of grades ranging from kindergarten through sixth, averaging about eighteen to twenty pupils per grade. Grades one and two, three and four, and five and six were combination rooms.

The school was composed of children drawn primarily from the laboring group of people.

Children were grouped according to ability within the classrooms by means of teacher evaluation of the child's intellectual and social capabilities.

Case Study A

I. Identifying data.

Name -- Referred to as John. Age -- seven.

Birth: Removed of tonsils and adenoids except for poor articulation.

Nationality -- Dutch and (Unknown). School -- Frisbie

The following information was written in a letter by the Elementary School. Grade -- Kindergarten. Religion -- Protestant. Lives with parents.

On March 2, 1959, I visited with (parent) regarding her son, John. She did not seem too concerned about his speech because, as she said, her eldest son had an interview with Ann Schott, Principal Frisbie School, Des Moines, Iowa.

She said that her daughter had been helping John
II. Sources of information

The information for this study was taken primarily from therapy sessions in the past and knew the Frisbie School files, using cumulative record, school health card, letter to parents, report to psychologist, and letter to principal from speech teacher. An interview with parents and teacher also furnishes some of the information. But with spring approaching he should attend more regularly. If not, I will call.

III. Problem

Non-promotion of John from kindergarten in the spring of 1959.

Behavior, determined from teachers' reports:

IV. Physical Description (Spring 1959)

A. Behavior during year of 1958-1959.

Weight -- 45½ pounds. Height -- 43½ inches.

Mannerisms -- John often talked to himself.

John was small in size and had sandy hair and blue eyes. During John's first year in school he had his tonsils removed. According to a physical examination John had a good year, got along well socially and given by the Des Moines schools he had no irregularities accepted his responsibility much better, after removal of tonsils and adenoids except for poor articulation.

A. Home

The following information was written in a letter by the speech therapist to the principal at John's school:

On March 2, 1960, I visited with (parent) regarding her son, John. She did not seem too concerned about his speech because, as she said, her eldest son had had speech therapy and now has intelligible speech.

She said that her daughter had been helping John
with his speech and would continue to do so. I did not have an opportunity to talk with the girl myself but as I understand it, she has observed speech therapy sessions in the past and knows how to help John with his work at home. She is, however, in school herself and doesn't have too much time to devote to John.

Since my visit to their home, John's attendance has been rather poor. (Parent) said that she would not send John to speech because of inclement weather. Because of this lack of attendance John has fallen in his speech progress, but with spring approaching he should attend more regularly. If not, I will call (parent).  

If you have any questions regarding this visit, I will be glad to come in and talk to you.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports:

A. Behavior during year of 1958-1959:

John at times lost his temper but ordinarily had a sweet disposition. Sometimes John tired of trying to get people to understand him.

B. Behavior during year of 1959-1960

John had a good year, got along well socially and a meat packing plant for at least six or seven years. accepted his responsibility much better.

VI. Physical environment determined by visitation.

A. Home

John's home was large and rather unkempt, partially because of size of family. The home was modern "painted" and the mother said there was no money for and had a television set.

The house was situated on a blacktopped street

C. Mother's family

and the yard not neatly kept, otherwise the outside
of the house appeared neat.

B. Neighborhood

The neighborhood did not give the appearance of wealth and it was not uncommon to see toys, old tires, old boards, and other debris laying on the yards or near the street.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation.

A. Father's family

Information not available, (mother didn't know).

B. Father

John's father came from a family of nine children, and attended school through ninth grade. Father had shown little outward interest in school, records give no evidence of father ever visiting school, even for Open House or conference. The father has shown the ability to hold his job at a meat packing plant for at least six or seven years. The family income according to their set of values seemed adequate but the management was not always the best. This was evidenced by the fact that John did not have a dime for milk money until after "pay day" and the mother said there was no money for dental bills and glasses in the family.

C. Mother's family

John's maternal grandparents came from Holland and
farmed near Newton.

D. Mother

John's mother came from a family of eight children and attended school through eighth grade. The mother seemed to show interest in the subject's progress but found it hard to believe he really had a speech defect, and felt removal of tonsils and adenoids was the answer to his problem; but after their removal she was willing to concede to speech therapy and cooperated greatly during the summer of 1959. The nurse and speech therapist reported in the spring of 1960 that the mother felt the speech problem not serious, but John's father, when spoken to on the phone, seemed to think all possible should be done, but without cooperation of the whole family it was difficult to accomplish much.

E. Siblings

John had five older brothers and two older sisters. According to records found in Frisbie School, the older brothers and sisters had rather poor grades with the exception of the youngest of his brothers. This boy, who was in Frisbie School at the time of John's entry into kindergarten, seemed capable of average work, but because he needed glasses very badly, he was having difficulty achieving up to his
ability. It became John's brother's responsibility to look after John and John in turn became quite dependent on him for walking to and from school, although the second year in kindergarten, John walked to school alone for speech therapy.

VIII. Personal history, determined from school records.

A. School mental development

John entered Frisbie School September 2, 1958. John went to kindergarten with much reluctance. The first four weeks of school he refused to participate with the group and of his own choice sat on the floor in the corner. He would hardly speak to anyone except another teacher in the building who had been his brother's teacher. Curiosity concerning stories finally led John to join the group and later to participate in the activities.

B. Physical development

John had a speech problem and gave some evidence of immaturity in attention span and other areas. His teacher, principal, and mother agreed to another year in kindergarten with outside speech therapy during the summer. Cumulative records gave these reports concerning John's second year in kindergarten. John seemed very happy and proud to come to school this year.
signed by He had speech therapy all year. Handwork was

This much better this year, and he had improved con-
"Reporting Conference" we had March 11 at that
siderably in all areas. He took things slowly
have another year in kindergarten.

but was willing to try now. He was encouraged to
John is a happy little boy and I told you he is
never speak slowly as his speech was much plainer when
of "immaturity" and "readiness" for school. But after
six months did he feel he is about where I would have ex-
pected him to be last fall when he first came to kinder-
garten.

Emotional development

I teacher indicated John would become angry when he
vision and when he does go to first grade he will be
much better could not get some of his work finished properly.

Thus or he would sometimes "balk" at doing required

Free work. In this letter and return to school so we
will know you received it.

The mother did not indicate that this problem was
Following is included from the report of the subject's
evident at home, probably because there was always

teacher to the school psychologist:

some one older there to help him.

I. Statement of problem:

The teacher recommended that John be given some

A. General statement of problem and reason
for responsibilities of his own.

1958 -- for four weeks set by doctor, never spoke or
joined. Psychological development but speech was so
poor, child was unable to get anyone to understand
him.

John adjusted to kindergarten quite well his second
child began to enter into activities--handwork very
poor--year taking his school responsibilities more as
beginning to do things he should have done in Septem-
ber. Willingly than the first year.

five time--parents cooperated by sending John to speech class in

summer. As of June, 1960, records were left on file for
this fall--I can see growth--but to someone else it
looks like the Pupil Adjustment Department to have the sub-
ject tested by a psychologist.

On the following page will be found information from
in school, playground, and at home. Sometimes appears
the letter concerning retention written to John's parents and
signed by the teacher and principal.

This letter is to confirm our decision made at the "Reporting Conference" we had March 11. It was agreed at that time that it would be beneficial for John to have another year in kindergarten.

John is a happy little boy and I told you he is never a discipline problem. His problem has been one of "immaturity" and "readiness" for school. Now after six months I feel he is about where I would have expected him to be last fall when he first came to kindergarten. in fifth grade any and quiet child.

I can assure you that John will benefit by this decision and when he does go to first grade he will be much better prepared.

Thank you for being so cooperative in this matter.

Please sign this letter and return to school so we will know you received it.

Following is material from the report of the subject's teacher to the school psychologist:

I. Statement of Problem:

A. General statement of problem and reason for referral. John entered kindergarten September, 1958 -- for four weeks sat by door--never spoke or joined the group. Finally did--but speech was so poor, child was unable to get anyone to understand him--Group acceptance was good in spite of this and child began to enter into activities--handwork very poor--coordination poor--in fact about June child was beginning to do things he should have done in September. During year speech therapist gave time--parents cooperated by sending John to Smouse speech class in summer--also therapist and nurse have worked with him this fall--I can see growth--but to someone else it looks like a standstill.

IV. What in your opinion is the basis for the child's problem?

B. Duration and intensity of problem.

C. Ways in which problem is exhibited by child in school, playground, and at home. Sometimes John gets tired of trying to get us to understand what he is telling
at "telling time" but we usually "wade through" and he is very pleased with success—older brother helps me sometimes to understand.

VI. Child's awareness of and attitude toward his problem. Child is happy—and no social problem in group. Once in a while when others are talking he interrupts.

VII. List specific techniques you have used to understand the child. E. Family's awareness of and attitude toward the child's problem. Family cooperative (mother more than father)—financial situation poor—mother's speech poor—does not wear teeth—never have seen father. Brother in fifth grade shy and quiet child.

III. Particular abilities, interest, attitudes, and difficulties. Learned to skip this year and very proud—knows some of the colors, red and blue.

A. Abilities and interests in art, music, sports, etc. Loves to sing—plays and romps with others at recess—also likes to pretend he's building a house on jungle gym.

B. Attitudes toward adults, peers, school, etc. Attitude has completely changed since September, 1958—now accepts strangers well.

C. Interests outside of school. ?

D. Difficulties in socialization and academic areas.

III. Family and social history.

A. Economic and social status of family and success—

B. Living conditions in the home. (Number of people in home, adequacy, etc.)

C. Stability of home. (Marital status, permanency of residence, significant health factors among family members, attitude of family toward school.) Large family. Control his temper was much better, except on occasion.

IV. What in your opinion is the basis for the child's problem?
V. What in your opinion is the intellectual ability of this child? Not genius but not retarded, except by home and speech.

VI. List the areas in which the child finds success. (Both academic and non-academic.)

VII. List specific techniques you have used to alleviate the problem in your classroom. (Conferences with parents, conferences with principal and nurse, types of discipline, discussion of problem with child, adjustment of academic program, sociometrics, etc.)

IX. Reaction of parents and teacher to John's non-promotion.

A. Parents

Grade -- Four; Religion -- Protestant; Lives with parents.

The mother felt that having the child repeat a grade was for his own benefit and that he never would have been able to do first grade work.

She stated that one or two of the other children should have been retained and that they would have gotten along better in the upper grades if they had been retained.

B. Teacher's statement

Non-promotion of subject from fourth grade in spring 1959.

The teacher felt that John had a happy and successful year. He was able to be a leader of his group, control his temper was much better, except on occasion when he became disgusted when people could not understand him. The teacher did not feel John was mentally older than his peers even though

The teacher's statement concludes with the note that John's progress was monitored through conferences with parents, discussions with the principal, and ongoing observations in the classroom. The teacher feels that John's retention was necessary for his overall development.
She felt that John was much more ready for first grade work now.

**Case Study B**

I. Identifying data

*Nationality* -- German.  *School* -- Frisbie Elementary.  

II. Sources of information

The information for this study was taken primarily from the Frisbie School files, using cumulative records, letters to parents, test card, health card, and parent and teacher interview.

III. Problems including television

Non-promotion of subject from fourth grade in spring of 1959.  Outside the yard was quite well kept.  The outside 
*Weight* -- eighty-five pounds.  *Height* -- 53 inches.  
*Mannerisms* -- Rather nervous and cries easily.

Linda was of average physical maturity; for a time she was a little overweight but that soon disappeared.

She wore glasses but felt they weren't necessary.  In the fall of 1959 Linda's tonsils were removed in hopes that this would make her less susceptible to colds.
V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports:


The Linda seemed very conscientious but would give up easily and cry. She appeared to lack self-confidence. He graduated from high school in


Then Linda tried even harder and fought her tears when she felt defeat. She always completed her work, and even though it took much effort and time on her part. Linda still seemed to lack self-confidence but her condition improved.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation.

A. Home

Linda's home was a rather new small house and very neat and kept. Her home had many of the modern con-

B. Neighborhood

The nearest homes in the block were quite new but not all of the homes and unkempt yards.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation.

A. Father's family. She gave two subjects.
The subject's paternal grandparents were German farmers living near Pulaski, Iowa. There were three boys in the family.

B. Linda's father was thirty-six years of age at the time of the study. He graduated from high school in Pulaski and was working for a lumber company in Des Moines. Later found school very difficult and she didn't. The father seemed to take much interest in his family and attended Parent Teacher conferences regularly. He seemed quite concerned about Linda's progress.

C. Mother's family

Linda's maternal grandfather was dead, but her grandmother was living. They were of German descent and lived in Unionville, Iowa, before moving to Moulton, Iowa. In the third grade it appeared the work became

D. More difficult for her and non-promotion was con-

Linda's mother came from a family of thirteen children of which ten were living. She was forty-two years of age and had graduated from high school in Moulton, Iowa. Would benefit by non-promotion. The teacher and the mother tried very hard to help her daughter with her problems both in maturity and with her school work. The mother worked part of the time and gave some of the responsibility of caring for herself to Linda in hopes of helping her to mature. She gave the subject the
money needed for a baby sitter if she would take care of herself.

E. Sister

Linda's older sister was eighteen years of age and married. She did not finish high school. Parents indicated at conferences that Linda's sister found school very difficult and she didn't take it seriously.

VIII. Personal history, determined from school records.

A. School

B. Emotional development

Linda entered kindergarten at Frisbie School in September, 1942. She gave evidence of being ready for reading the following year, and progress through second grade doing average work, great pride in the responsibilities she was taking

In the third grade it appeared the work became more difficult for her and non-promotion was considered but dropped mainly because of her physical maturity. During the first year in fourth grade the parents at conferences asked if Linda would benefit by non-promotion. The teacher and principal agreed another year's growth at this level would help her. Linda's parents were to approach her concerning retention and prepare her for it. Linda later went to the teacher and stated she wanted to be retained, as she felt it
would help her.

Below is the information from a letter written to Linda's parents by the teacher concerning non-promotion:

This is the time of the year we inform parents concerning next year's assignments for children. We have already discussed Linda's progress at conferences but I want to verify this with you. After working with Linda since talking with you, I still believe she would profit much by doing work at fourth grade level next year.

I think it is fine that you have prepared Linda for this, she seems very reconciled and makes me feel that she too can realize her problem. He has continued to work right along.

B. Emotional development
Linda was easily upset and cried. She didn't have real close friends but got along well with all of the other children. Linda seemed to take great pride in the responsibilities she was taking at home and delighted in talking about them. Also, she delighted in saving all the money she earned by taking these responsibilities herself.

Linda took roller skating lessons during the school years of 1959 and 1960. She tends to be a perfectionist in some areas and would work at even skating until she would be satisfied with her accomplishment, and ignore the fun others were having while she tried.

Linda had become a 4-H member and her mother
reported that she was doing more than the projects required and enjoying them.

C. Psychological Development

Linda seemed quite well adjusted to non-promotion and tried very hard her second year in fourth grade to make up the things she had felt inadequate in previously.

This girl did not seem to have any trouble adjusting socially. She did spend a great deal of her time studying, but when she finished she would join her friends in games during recess.

IX. Reactions of parents and teachers to Linda's non-promotion.

A. Parents

The mother felt non-promotion helped her a great deal, she had improved in many ways and really should be able to do a lot better work in fifth grade.

B. Teacher

Linda gave the impression of being very happy except on occasion of difficulty in meeting new situations or when she feared not being able to complete her work. Linda was capable of doing average work during the year and felt a degree of success in being able to complete her work without
so much help.

She seemed to have no social adjustment problems.

She was able to make some rather close friends
which she hadn't done previously. She would be
more capable of fifth grade level material after
a year of retention.

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<td>Weight -- 66½ pounds. Height -- 54-3/4 inches.</td>
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<td>VI. Mannerisms -- Jean sometimes sucked her fingers or pencils. She was of average physical maturity, wore</td>
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glasses part of the time, and was very susceptible to colds. She was absent twenty-one days during the year of 1958-1959, and thirty days during the year of 1959-1960. Her poor attendance was not the reason for retention, but it did tend to make her work more difficult for her.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports.

A. Behavior during 1958-1959

Jean was not a discipline problem but she didn't appear to care if her work was good or completed. She had an indifferent attitude and would take work home and bring it back unfinished.


A. Jean still did not take her responsibilities seriously, she would hurry through her projects and did them incorrectly. In the beginning of the year there were emotional and social problems as brought out in the psychologist's report, but by the spring of 1960 the problem was reported to have been overcome and she had made good adjustment. Jean's parents were unhappy with her social and emotional problems also, but they too, later agreed that these had diminished.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation

A. Home
Jean's home was very well kept, and located away from the street, making it an acreage on the edge of town. The home had the modern conveniences including television. The road or lane leading to the home was graveled. The yard conditions were rather poor but not cluttered. In the yard was a barn where the family had formerly kept some livestock.

B. Neighborhood
There were no close neighbors but the nearest street was blacktopped and the houses on it were mostly old ones and unkempt.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation

A. Father's family
The subject's paternal grandparents were of Italian descent and lived where the subject is living now. Earlier their acreage was larger and they did some farming. There were thirteen children in the family. One had rather poor eyesight and wasn't able to do her work as well as Jean, except in Jean's father also attended Frisbie School and went to Lincoln High School but did not graduate. He found it necessary to quit and find work.

B. Father
Jean's father took much interest in his family and tried to help them when possible. He was working
for the city of West Des Moines.

C. Mother's family

Jean's maternal grandparents were still living. They were of German-Welch descent and lived in Adair, Iowa, for a time and then moved to West Des Moines. There were six children in the family.

D. Mother

Individual Stanford-Binet Mental Ability Test

Jean's mother was the only one in the family to graduate from high school; she did this at Valley High School in West Des Moines.

E. Siblings

Jean had two older brothers, one of which had graduated from Des Moines Technical High School in the spring of 1960, and another brother was in Roosevelt Junior High School. This boy had been retained when he was in the third grade. Jean also had a sister one year younger than she, who was in the fourth grade with her after non-promotion.

The sister had rather poor eyesight and wasn't able to do her work as well as Jean, except in writing. Jean's sister was very kind to never chide or tease her about non-promotion.

VII. Personal history, determined from school records.

A. School

At that time, Jean would have been entering kindergarten at Frisbie School in
September of 1954. She gave evidence, according to her records, of not being a good student from the beginning, but she had no social or discipline problems.

Data obtained from Jean's mental ability test follows:

Fourth Grade (1959-1960)

Individual Stanford-Binet Mental Ability Test
Chronological Age -- 10 years 4 months
Mental Age -- 9 years 2 months
Intelligence Quotient -- 89

Reactions of parents and teachers to Jean's non-promotion.

B. Emotional Development

Jean was quite well adjusted her first year in fourth grade, but during the fall of the 1959-1960 session she was very upset by the teasing and chiding she received concerning non-promotion. Later in the year this passed and she seemed very happy.

C. Psychological Development

The psychologist left these observations and recommendations after giving the Individual Benet test:

B. Teacher

Jean cooperated well in the testing situation. She lacked self-confidence and was inclined to distrust her own ability. She showed some nervous mannerisms such as twisting hair, and finger sucking. She expressed considerable resentment over her retention and on being in same class as her younger sister.

Jean is functioning as a slow learner. Visual and auditory memory span were especially poor. Visual-motor coordination very poor.

At that time, Jean would have been working up to
capacity if she was able to achieve at a third grade level. She should make slow progress in regular grades but should not be expected to achieve at grade level. Pressure for academic success should be alleviated and she should be helped to maintain the good social attitudes which she has demonstrated up to this time. Instruction should be given at her level of achievement.

In the spring of 1960 the psychologist spoke to Jean again and found she had made much progress in social adjustment and had regained much of her self-confidence.

**VIII. Reactions of parents and teachers to Jean's non-promotion.**

**A. Parent**

The mother felt retention had helped Jean academically and that she was happy and felt more confident about doing her work for fifth grade. The health and parent and teacher attitude towards Jean especially in the fall of 1959, but thought this had been overcome.

**B. Teacher**

Jean showed evidence of unhappiness early in school year, but that was overcome and she became the happy person she had been formerly.

Academically the improvement wasn't great and Jean showed no tendency nearly all the time. She could not sit still. Math was one of a set of twin girls, she made many errors. Jean could read quite fluently but her
comprehension was poor.

After the psychologist's report, it was evident that too much had been expected of Jean and efforts were made to accept her work according to her abilities.

Case Study D

I. Identifying data


II. Sources of information

The information for this study was taken from the files of Frisbie School, using cumulative record, test card, health, and parent and teacher interview.

III. Problem

Non-promotion of subject from fourth grade in the spring of 1959. Mannerisms -- Ruth was very flighty and nervous and chewed on pencils nearly all the time. She could not sit still. Ruth was one of a set of twin girls, she was a very tiny girl, but appeared to be in good health.
except some occasional stomach disorders.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports.


Ruth was a very nervous girl and was constantly jumping up and running around the room, especially if her sister happened to be doing something that would interest her. These girls were nearly inseparable and caused confusion for all in the room.

B. Behavior during 1959-1960

Ruth was very jittery and nervous. She caused much trouble among other children by fighting and urging others to misbehave. There seemed no let up in her discipline problems.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation

A. Home

This girl's home was a small older home which had been remodeled. The interior was very neat and clean. Parents, it seemed were always getting new modern conveniences. They had two television sets, so loaned one to the school all year. The exterior of the house was not well painted and the yard not well kept. The house was located on a blacktopped street.

B. Neighborhood

The houses on the street were rather old with the
exception of one new one, and most yards were
A. rather unkempt.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation
A. Father's family
Ruth's paternal grandparents were of Spanish
descent. There were five children.
B. Father
Ruth's father was born in Mexico. (Further inform-
information concerning the background was unavailable.)
The father was working in a cement plant in West
Des Moines.
C. Mother's family
B. Ruth's maternal grandparents were of Italian descent
and lived in Marshalltown, Iowa. There were five
children in the family.
D. Mother
The child's mother was born and raised in Marshall-
town. (Information concerning schooling was un-
available). Ruth was very demanding of attention.
E. Siblings' social development.
Ruth had an older brother and sister, who did not
finish high school. Both had married; the sister
was divorced and was living in the parent's home.
VIII. Race
Ruth's twin sister was somewhat physically larger,
and tended to dominate and mother Ruth.
The father felt non-promotion was good for Ruth.
VII. Personal history, determined from school records

A. School

Ruth entered Frisbie School in the fall of 1954 and successfully completed kindergarten. There were attempts to retain her in first and third grades, but parents were reluctant to agree because this would separate the twins. The parents consented to retention in the fourth grade, stating that they felt now separation might be better for both of them. There was a feeling that Ruth could be hampering the achievement of her sister, since Ruth asked so much help from her.

B. Emotional development

Ruth was very emotional and flighty. Often told of the spankings she received at home and knew that she would get more if she misbehaved. Yet, she seemed to defy punishment and do as she pleased, then she was ready to tell about the trouble she had caused. Ruth was very demanding of attention.

C. Psychological development

Non-promotion was a very upsetting event for Ruth, especially, since her twin sister went on to fifth grade.

VIII. Reactions of parents and teachers to Ruth non-promotion.

A. Parents

The father felt non-promotion was good for Ruth
Sue academically but that it was too hard for her to adjust socially.

Mother had mixed feelings about the benefit non-academically promotion had done except academically. She was glad to have the twins separated on one occasion and wanting to find a way for Ruth to "catch up" of one another so that they could be together again.

**Boy Teacher**

The teacher felt there was definite gain academically, and Ruth's attitude toward her work was much improved. Without her sister to lean on she was forced to take more of the responsibilities on herself. The child took more pride in the quality of her work and was less careless about errors.

Ruth became quite emotionally upset because of non-promotion. Her teacher felt perhaps the social and emotional maladjustment was so great that it may have been a mistake to retain her.

**Case Study Behavior during 1959-1960**

1. **Identifying data**

   **Name** -- Referred to as Lola. **Age** -- eight. **Born** -- December 25, 1951. **Sex** -- Female. **Race** -- White. **Nationality** -- German. **School** -- Frisbie Elementary.

   **Grade** -- two. **Religion** -- Protestant. Live with parents.
II. Sources of information

The information for this study was taken from files of Frisbie School, using cumulative record, test card, health card, and parent and teacher interviews.

III. Problem

Non-promotion of subject from first grade in spring of 1959.

IV. Physical development (Spring 1959)

Weight -- 60½ pounds. Height -- 47½ inches.

Mannerisms -- Lola was jittery and seemed nervous.

She had no apparent physical defects and was of average size. She wore glasses to correct her vision.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports

A. Behavior during 1958-1959

Lola was inconsiderate of friends and found it hard to take turns. She was a poor listener and would go on about her way even though she had been told to do otherwise. She was sent to Mr. Jones during the year, usually

B. Behavior during 1959-1960: cent or truck driver.

Lola's social adjustment was fine, but she was still somewhat inconsiderate of others. She talked too much and often told untruths as was discovered in a parent-teacher conference.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation

A. Home
D. Lola's home was quite new and small. It was neat and well kept. The exterior of the house was well painted and yard was orderly. The house was situated on a blacktopped street.

B. Neighborhood
Most of the houses on the street were rather small new houses with the exception of one or two older ones. One house was very cluttered and untidy.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation
A. Father's family
B. Lola's paternal grandparents were of German descent and lived in Audubon, Iowa. The grandfather was a shoe repairman.

B. Father
Lola's father went to school in Audubon through the ninth grade. He was an only child. The father gave the impression of being quite unstable. He had many jobs during the year, usually as a filling station attendant or truck driver. He showed quite an interest in Lola but was rather passive on a decision concerning retention.

C. Mother's family
Lola's maternal grandparents were of German descent and lived in Hamlin, Iowa. Her grandfather was employed as a truck driver most of the time.
D. Mother

Lola's mother attended Hamlin elementary schools and three years of high school in Audubon. She was an only child.

B. The mother was a hard worker and tried to stabilize their home life by seeing there was money to pay the bills.

She took a great interest in her daughter but was willing to let the decision concerning retention rest with the teacher.

E. Siblings

Lola is an only child.

VIII. Personal history, determined from school records

A. School

IX. Reading

Lola entered kindergarten in Frisbie School in the fall of 1957 and did average work throughout the year. The following year of first grade the family moved away for the first semester. It seemed, according to the teacher's records, that Lola was having difficulty learning to read when she returned to Frisbie in January of 1959. It was necessary for her to have some speech therapy.

The parents, teacher, and principal agreed that non-promotion might help Lola in spring of 1959.

In the fall of 1959 Lola appeared to have made much
progress in maturity and ability to achieve. After six weeks of first grade work the teacher felt there was no challenge for Lola and promoted her to second grade.

B. Emotional development

Lola's records gave evidence of social problems from kindergarten on through second grade. The teachers felt being an only child, she hadn't learned to share with others.

C. Psychological development

Case Study: Non-promotion, it seemed, caused Lola to lose interest and not put forth much effort. After promotion to second grade, Lola took a new interest but had to work hard to keep up with the group.

IX. Reactions of parents and teachers to Lola's non-promotion.

A. Parent

Mother stated she would have accepted most any decision Lola's teacher had made, since she would know what was best for the child. She thought there had been much improvement in

III. Pro: Lola's reading and spelling achievement. She thought Lola would be ready for third grade.

B. Teacher

She felt subject was not being challenged in the
Phys first grade so she promoted her to second grade
half after about six weeks. Lola was pleased with the
responsibility of second grade and did it willingly
and happily. The teacher felt Lola did average
second grade work and would be ready to do third
grade work if she worked conscientiously.
but there was a time during the year when the teacher
feared Lola would not be ready for third grade,
Behabut later modified this opinion and she was promoted
A. to third grade. 1958-1959

Case Study F
tty had good social relations but found it dif-

I. Identifying data with some of the problems. She
Name -- Referred to as Patty. Age -- seven. Born --
Nationality -- German. School -- Frisbie Elementary.
Grade -- two. Religion -- Protestant. Lives with
parents. th and accepted her responsibilities more

II. Sources of information
The information for this study was taken from the files
of Frisbie School, using cumulative record, test card,
health card, and parent and teacher interviews.

III. Problematic and exterior
Non-promotion of Patty from first grade in spring of
1959. is a new and some older homes.
IV. Physical development (Spring 1959)

Weight -- 42 pounds. Height -- 44½ inches.

Mannerisms -- Patty had none out of the ordinary.

Patty was very small in stature, but according to her physical report appeared to be healthy.

She had a slight speech problem and had speech therapy, but by spring of 1960 she had overcome it and no longer needed therapy.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports

A. Behavior during 1958-1959

Patty had good social relations but found it difficult to cope with some of the problems. She seemed very immature and difficult to accept her responsibilities as a first grader.

B. Behavior during 1959-1960

Patty appeared much more mature in all areas of growth and accepted her responsibilities more readily.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation

A. Home

Patty's home was small and well kept, both on the interior and exterior.

Her home is situated on a blacktopped street with some new and some older homes.

Patty's maternal grandparents were of German descent.
B. Neighborhood

It was a neighborhood of many children. It was not uncommon to see toys nearly cut in the street and often times children running here and there without fear of cars. Finished high school in West Des Moines.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation

A. Father's family

Patty's maternal grandmother was living. The home originally was in Atlantic, Iowa, and later in Des Moines. They were of German descent and had two children.

B. Father

Patty's father finished eighth grade in Des Moines and was getting his high school education by correspondence and night school from Roosevelt High School.

VIII. Parents

A. The father was employed at a cement plant in Des Moines. Entered kindergarten at Frisbie School in

He showed much interest in his children, attended nearly all school functions except Parent-Teacher Association meetings. He suggested letting the decision of non-promotion rest with the mother and teacher. Parents, and principal agreed retention

C. Mother's Family

Patty's maternal grandparents were of German descent.
Only the grandmother was living. The home was in Maxwell, Iowa, before moving to West Des Moines. There were three children in the family.

D. Mother to second grade after the first semester

Patty's mother finished high school in West Des Moines. She worked in the office for Standard Oil Company. She was very concerned about Patty's achievement. She spent some time visiting her classes and discussing her work with the teacher. After much deliberation she agreed with the teacher and principal that Patty might benefit by non-promotion.

E. Siblings

II. Real Patty had two sisters, one two years old, and another in the third grade.

VIII. Personal history, determined from school records

A. School parents felt retention would help Patty. Because Patty entered kindergarten at Frisbie School in the fall of 1957 doing average work except in her ability to do handwork. The teacher's records stated that Patty was immature. This record of immaturity followed Patty into first grade and teacher, parents, and principal agreed retention in first grade would help her.
In the fall of 1959 it was found that Patty was capable of doing second grade work and had matured much faster than expected. She was promoted to second grade after the first month of school. Ability to do second grade work was above.

B. Emotional development

Patty gave no evidence of emotional problems except a few immature mannerisms which were overcome.

C. Psychological development

Patty did not give evidence of being upset about non-promotion and seemed to "bubble" with good ideas and good work after promotion to second grade.

IX. Reactions of parents and teachers to Patty’s non-promotion.

A. Parents

The mother felt retention would help Patty because she was so immature. She stated that she felt non-promotion to second grade might not have been the best as she felt Patty was still immature. The mother said later in the year Patty seemed to show more maturity in accepting her responsibilities.

B. Teacher

The teacher felt Patty’s immaturity had nearly disappeared by the fall of 1959 and promoted her to
Her second grade. She felt this child did a little
cay better than average work in second grade.
The teacher was very pleased with Patty's enthusi-
asm and her ability to bring out original ideas.
A. Her ability to do second grade work was above
average and the teacher felt she would be able to
continue in third grade.

Case Study

Behavior during 1959-1960

I. Identifying data

Name -- Referred to as Sandra. Age -- seven. Born --
April 3, 1952. Sex -- Female. Race -- White. Nation-
ality -- French, German, Irish. School -- Frisbie
Elementary. Grade -- one.

II. Sources of information

The information for this study was taken from the files
of Frisbie School, using cumulative record, health
card, test card, and parent and teacher interview.

III. Problem neighborhood

Non-promotion of subject from first grade in spring of
1959; rather old unkempt homes and yards.

IV. Physical development (Spring 1959).

Weight -- forty-nine pounds. Height -- forty-six

inches

Mannerisms -- Sandra spent much time daydreaming.
Sandra seemed quite average in her physical development.
Her only apparent defect was her teeth which were decaying very fast. Her parents did not seem to feel this serious, since they were only temporary teeth.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports

A. Behavior during 1958-1959

Sandra had no social difficulties and tried to cooperate.

B. Behavior during 1959-1960

Sandra gave no evidence of social or emotional difficulties because of non-promotion. She seemed rather passive and would try to do as she was told.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation

A. Home

Sandra's home was rather new and small and appeared well kept. The exterior was freshly painted, but the yard was unkempt. There was usually a car or two setting on the yard.

B. Neighborhood

Sandra's home was a newer home on a street of rather old unkempt homes and yards. The house was situated on a paved street very near the school.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation

A. Father's family

Sandra's paternal grandparents were of Irish descent
E. and lived in Elston, Iowa. There were five children in the family.

B. Father

Sandra's father attended school through the tenth grade in Elston.

He was working as a carpenter in a cement plant in Des Moines. The father showed much interest in her school work but felt her ability was better than her achievement. At first he was reluctant to agree to non-promotion because she would be older when she finished school.

C. Mother's family

Sandra's maternal grandparents were of French and German descent and made their home in West Des Moines. There were eleven children in the family.

D. Mother

B. Sandra's mother attended school in West Des Moines but did not finish high school. (Year of drop out not known).

C. She worked part-time in a restaurant.

The mother did not put forth much effort to show interest in Sandra's work. She attended one conference out of four scheduled in three years and was rather passive in making a decision on retention.
E. Siblings

Sandra has one younger sister who had not started to school.

VIII. Personal history, determined from school records

A. School

B. Sandra entered kindergarten in fall of 1957 doing below average work, but socially she had no difficulty. Teacher's record stated Sandra was mentally immature and lacked self-confidence in first grade. Teacher, parents, with reluctance, and principal agreed non-promotion would help Sandra academically. Parents gave evidence that their reluctance was due in part to the fact that a cousin in the same school would "catch up" with Sandra. This was their main objection to non-promotion.

Case Study

B. Emotional development

I. Sandra seemed emotionally stable and gave no evidence of problems. 

C. Psychological development. Teacher reports indicated that Sandra was mentally immature both in kindergarten and first grade.

IX. Reactions of parents and teachers to Sandra's non-promotion.

The information for this study was taken from the files...
A. Parent School, using cumulative reports, health care. The father felt non-promotion had helped subject Pro B
academically but suggested she was too old for Non-
second grade and would be older than others when 1959 she got out of school.
B. Teacher
We. Subject did good work during first semester but
Mand later in the year she gave evidence of falling back
Dann again. The teacher felt the second year at first
had grade level was for Sandra's benefit as she would
not have been capable of doing second grade work.
V. Behavior
Sandra's teacher felt that she would not be capable
A. of even average second grade work after two years
in first grade, but she hoped that Sandra would be
capable of more success than if she had not been
retained.

Case Study II
I. Identifying data
Name -- Referred to as Denny. Age -- seven. Born --
October 6, 1952. Sex -- Male. Race -- White. National-
ality -- Indian, Scotch, Irish. School -- Frisbie
Elementary. Grade -- one. Religion -- Protestant.
Lives with parents.

II. Sources of information
The information for this study was taken from the files
of Frisbie School, using cumulative record, health card, test card, and parent and teacher interviews.

III. Problem
Non-promotion of Denny from first grade in spring of 1959. New homes. Not all had neat, well-kept yards.

IV. Physical development (Spring 1959)
Weight -- 56½ pounds. Height -- 47½ inches
Mannerisms -- Denny had no mannerisms that were unusual.
Denny seemed to have average physical development. He had speech therapy while in first grade, but his physical report gave no other difficulties.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports
A. Behavior during 1958-1959
The teacher's report suggested immaturity in mental and social development. Denny couldn't sit still and bothered others which caused him to fall behind in doing his own work.

B. Denny gave evidence of growth in mental and social maturity. He was noisy and rather lazy, if allowed to be. He was less bother to his friends than the previous year.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation
A. Home
Denny's home was small and rather new. It appeared well kept and clean.
The exterior was neat and the yard quite orderly. The house was located on a blacktopped street.

B. Neighborhood

The homes in the neighborhood were small rather new homes. Not all had neat, well kept yards.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation

A. Father's family

Denny's paternal grandparents were of Cherokee Indian and Scotch Irish descent and lived in Oneida, Kansas. There were three children in the family.

B. Father

Denny's father attended school in Oneida, Kansas, through high school.

The father showed passive interest in Denny's school work. He would come only for very special occasions, such as Open House. Denny's father worked for a manufacturing company in Des Moines.

C. Mother's family

Denny's maternal grandparents were of Scotch Irish descent and lived in Des Moines, Iowa. There were six children in the family.

D. Mother

Denny's mother completed high school at East High School in Des Moines.

The mother showed active interest in the boy's
The information for the family was taken from the file.

IX. Reactions of parents and teachers to Denby's non-promotion.

Parents were notified that Denby's Grade was another
with a mental age of 5 years and 8 months.

Satisfaction reported in kindergarten and
junior kindergarten reports indicated that Denby seemed
German School.

Denby seemed to accept non-promotion as a matter of

B. Promont development.

benefit. Giving him more time to mature
promoted a need for non-promotion would be for Denby's
while in the first grade. The teacher, mother, and
stated that Denby was mentally and socially immature.
Before school age was reached, the teacher had
students below average work and showed evidence of
Denby attended kindergarten in the fall of 1957.
A. School records which were indicated.

VIII. Personal history determined from school records.
Denby had one younger brother.

E. Statistics, 1959 (open house). If he could see so much
Teacher association meetings.
Education conferences but the did not attend Parent-
school work and activities.
A. Parent School

The mother stated that non-promotion caused her
inteen unhappiness at first, but later, particularly in

III. ProbNovember, 1959 (Open House) she could see so much
Non-improvement in Denny’s work and thought his

IV. Physmaturity had given him a chance to feel success.
WeighHe seemed much more interested.

B. Teacher

Mary The teacher felt Denny had been immature and had
weneeded more time to grow mentally and socially.
or tShe suggested that he took his work more seriously
headthan the average first graders and did better work
surin some areas. She felt that Denny was feeling
had success and at times could be a leader of his group,
The if he wasn’t being lazy. The teacher stated that
giveDenny was still in need of speech therapy.

Case Study I

I. Identifying data: Then permission was granted.

Name — Referred to as Mary. Age — nine. Born —
July 28, 1950. Sex — Female. Race — White. Nation-
ality — German, Indian. School — Frisbie Elementary.
Grade — three. Religion — Protestant. Lives with
parents. Did not play with other children very much.

II. Sources of information

The information for this study was taken from the files
of Frisbie School using cumulative record, health card, test card, psychologist notes, and parent and teacher interviews.

III. Problem

Non-promotion of Mary from third grade in spring 1959.

IV. Physical description (Spring 1959)


Mannerisms -- Mary spent much time day dreaming.

Mary gave no evidence of physical deficiencies. Parents were quite protective of her, fearing she might fall or be hurt by other children. Mary had a very serious head injury when small. The parents seemed to feel sure there were after effects, even though the doctor had assured them there were not. The parents had refused to have the school physical given to the child. They also refused permission for teeth cleaning until Mary observed others, and realized it would not hurt; then permission was granted.

V. Behavior, determined from teachers' reports


Mary caused no discipline problem but would daydream and not complete her work.

She did not play with other children very much.

B. Behavior during 1959-1960

Mary seemed to want to be by herself. She still
daydreamed a great deal especially after illness. She caused no problems and would have to be reminded to get to work.

VI. Physical environment, determined by visitation

A. Home

Mary's home was an older home; it was clean and neat on interior. Her home had modern conveniences and a television set. The furnishings gave evidence of a low income.

The exterior of home was unkempt, needed paint, screens torn and the yard cluttered with at least two or three wrecked cars.

B. Neighborhood

The neighborhood consisted of rather nice homes with the exception of one or two older unkempt houses. Across the street was an electric light transformer.

VII. Family history, determined by visitation

A. Father's family

Mary's paternal grandparents were of Dutch and German descent and lived at Mingo, Iowa, on a farm. There were six children in the family.

B. Father

Mary's father attended school in Mingo through the eighth grade. Then he worked on farm.
The father had formerly been employed with a home building company but he had been unemployed nearly all the school year of 1959-1960.

A. The father showed little or no interest in Mary's progress in school but would take her to school three blocks to avoid fear of her getting hurt.

C. Mother's family

Mary's maternal grandparents lived in Norwalk, Iowa, and the grandfather was a laborer for the city. (The nationality was not known.) There were eight children in the family.

D. Mother

Mary's mother attended school through the eighth grade, when her mother died and she found it necessary to care for the rest of the family.

The mother gave evidence of little interest in Mary's progress academically. Records showed that she or the father never came to parent teacher conferences during the three years of attendance at Frisbie School. Mary's physical protection appeared to be the main concern. The mother made frequent calls to see if Mary got to school safely or to have her wait at school for a ride home.

E. Siblings

Mary had two older sisters. The older one did not
C. Finish high school and the other was in Roosevelt Junior High.

VIII. Personal history, determined from school records

A. School

Mary started kindergarten in the fall of 1955. Her attendance record was very poor during her first two years of school, attending only thirty-eight days of 180 in kindergarten and 130 days of 179-1/2 in first grade.

Her grades were below average and while in the third grade, the teacher, mother, and principal agreed that non-promotion might help Mary to improve academically.

Data obtained from psychologist's testing follows:

Individual Wechsler Intelligence Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Scale Intelligence Quotient</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Intelligence Quotient</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Intelligence Quotient</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Emotional development.

Subject gave no evidence of emotional disturbances. Her associations with other children were few. She did not play with others in school and spent little time outside playing while at home. She spent much time watching television.
C. Psychological development

Subject had hydrocephalus in fall of 1960 and it was reported that there was some brain damage. Doctor stated to the teacher that her ability to learn was affected. He felt since Mary repeated third grade at that time it may have been to her advantage, but hoped she could be treated as a normal child in classroom.

Following are the observations and recommendations of school psychologist to whom subject was referred:

**OBSERVATIONS AND TEST INTERPRETATION:** Mary participated willingly in the testing situation and showed little outward anxiety about the test or her performance. Although her physical appearance was one of calmness (possibly partly due to the effect of medication), Mary was verbally highly distractable. She seemed to notice every minor outside sound and these led her thoughts to wander from the task. She could return readily to the task, however, when directed.

The Verbal Scale I.S. of 104 indicates that Mary is able to function in the average range of mental ability in areas which require verbal skill, however, the performance scale I.Q. of 69 indicates that functioning is impaired to a great degree in the performance areas. This apparent discrepancy between verbal and performance ability is not uncommon among children who have suffered an organic impairment of functioning. Mary's medical history indicates that this is most likely the main cause of her difficulty.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Mary's overall ability will enable her to function as a slow learner, however, particular areas of strength of weakness will be much more apparent than with the ordinary slow learner who has suffered no specific organic damage.
Mary is very easily distracted, both extraneous stimuli and by her own ideas. Her teacher should try to minimize this as much as possible in planning her classroom seating. She should be seated away from direct paths of traffic such as doorways, windows, and other points of importance in the room. Facing a corner or a wall where no one need pass in front of her would be good, if it can be arranged.

Mary has average ability to understand social situations and know what should be done, but her ability to perform is impaired. Therefore, being fearful of the errors of judgment and performance which she knows she is likely to make if she participates, she tends to avoid the situations in which her performance may bring embarrassment or criticism. She will also tend to make up excuses and rationalize her reluctance to participate. This sort of behavior will be most apparent to the teacher in physical education activities, games, and other organized social activities. She should, however, be encouraged to try these activities, even though the teacher may need to simplify her part to an extreme, or physically guide her through the activity so that she does not become confused.

Mary lacks the ability to visualize the whole as the sum of its separate parts. She is unable to correctly put together a simple puzzle which most pre-school children could do easily. Even simple tasks involving perceptual visualization will present a great problem for Mary. Handwriting and art work will always be laborious tasks.

Mary will learn most easily when material is presented orally or when visual presentation is supplemented by verbal explanation. Her attention span is very poor and she will not be likely to work well independently for very long.

In spite of Mary's disability, she should be able to make an adjustment which will enable her to function successfully in society.
IX. Reaction of parents and teachers to Mary's non-promotion.

A. Parent

The mother felt non-promotion gave Mary time to grow and she was especially glad since Mary's illness would have made her even less ready for fourth grade. In public schools and to study a small group of children retained, a Teacher School in June 1959.

The felt non-promotion of Mary could not be evaluated as in most cases. Mary seemed to be out of non-contact with reality when she first returned to school after her illness. She appeared to have no Frisbee conception of time, she would stare in space at been promoted until it was suggested she had work to do.

There was some improvement in her ability to do health carer work throughout the year, but there was still evidence of blankness at times. She did not like to participate in group games and would rather have of thwatch. She did enjoy jumping rope. two cases, the families moved before visitation could be conducted; in one case, the parents were not available.

5. The investigator interviewed teachers of the non-promoted students to learn about the children's social and emotional adjustments.

The conclusions to be drawn from this study are few and cannot be used to set any standards for promotion or
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the purpose of this study: to examine the promotion and non-promotion practices that have been employed in public schools and to study a small group of children retained in Frisbie School in June 1959.

The following procedures were used:

1. The investigator reviewed the literature concerning non-promotion.

2. The investigator then determined from a study of the Frisbie School files which students of the school had not been promoted in June, 1959.

3. The investigator next examined cumulative records, health cards, test cards, letters to parents, teacher reports, psychologist findings concerning the non-promoted students.

4. The investigator made visitations to the home of nine of the twelve non-promoted children. In two cases, the families moved before visitation could be conducted; in one case, the parents were not available.

5. The investigator interviewed teachers of the non-promoted students to learn about the children's social and emotional adjustments.

The conclusions to be drawn from this study are few and cannot be used to set any standards for promotion or
non-promotion in any other situation. This merely was a study of nine isolated cases to see what was done at Frisbie School.

By examining the information gathered for this study it was found that in all cases non-promotion was an attempt to allow for growth in mental ability or social maturity. In the cases represented in this study either growth in mental maturity or social maturity seemed to be accomplished. According to records and interviews the parents of two children were reluctant to agree to non-promotion. In one case the parent was reluctant because his child would be too old. In another case the parent originally opposed non-promotion because it meant separating his child from her twin sister. However at the conclusion of the school year when the child had been retained, the parents in all cases indicated that there had been academic gain. Even though an academic gain was shown, one parent remained unhappy because he felt his child would be older when he finishes school, and another hoped that his child could "catch up" with her twin sister.

Teacher evaluations of non-promotions indicated that academic gain was accomplished in all cases. One teacher suggested possible problems caused from social maladjustments which increased because of non-promotion. This particular child engaged in attention gaining devices such as antagonizing her friends, deliberate misbehavior, and impudence.
Although these problems were present previous to non-promotion they grew progressively more acute. The teacher after careful consideration concluded that the child would have been less maladjusted if she had been promoted.

Except for this one case it would appear that non-promotion has not been harmful for these students. Parents and teachers agreed that academic achievement was increased and individually the children showed no marked personality maladjustments. They seemed to adjust to the new situations, accepting it as a policy of the school for their benefit.

With the results shown in the study it would appear that non-promotion is advisable in some cases, but there must be a careful investigation of students before retention.

In a school the size of Frisbie a re-grouping or shifting of children to other groups would be impossible. Non-promotion based upon a careful examination of the needs of the child seems to be a practical answer for the slow learner and the socially immature.
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B. PERIODICALS


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