A STUDY OF PARENT AND TEACHER ATTITUDE
TOWARD NEWER PRACTICES IN KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION
AND
PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES
IN THE ELKHART PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dorothy K. McHargue
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PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES IN THE ELKHART PUBLIC
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Committee on thesis:

Clyde E. Caner
Lloyd N. Smith
Charles W. Harkaway, Chairman

Representative of English Department:

James R. Bash

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of the study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions of terms used</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten roundup</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of the study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the remainder of the study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former practices in regard to entrance</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present practices in regard to entrance in the Elkhart kindergartens</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. SOURCES OF DATA AND GROUPS STUDIED</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The questionnaire</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to questionnaire</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude of parents toward newer practices in kindergarten orientation and parent-teacher conferences</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude of teachers toward kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orientation and parent-teacher conference</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Record of Questionnaires Sent to Elementary School Principals</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Parent Attitude toward Kindergarten Roundup</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Physical Examination of Kindergarten Children in Office of Family Physician, December, 1953</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Parent Attitude toward Scheduled Kindergarten Parent Conference</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Parent Attitude toward the Rapport Maintained During the Conference</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Teacher Attitude toward Kindergarten Roundup and Parent Conference</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Types of Relationships with Parents Teachers Considered most Valuable</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

What to tell parents about their five-year-olds just starting to school, how often to confer with them on the child's progress, and the method of conferring with them have presented some very real problems to teachers and school administrators.

Providing for individual parent-teacher conferences posed problems for the Elkhart schools both from a financial standpoint and from the time element. School officials felt they could make a beginning, particularly with parents who were entering children in kindergarten, if a plan could be arranged that would prove convenient to both teacher and parent and that would not be prohibitive as far as school budget and finance were concerned. Such a plan, if successful, might point the way to a more extensive use of conferences at all levels.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study (1) to review the progress made toward better kindergarten orientation procedures; (2) to review the progress made by the Elkhart Public Schools toward the parent-teacher conference at kindergarten level; (3) to touch upon the problems
such parent-teacher conferences would pose for all concerned; (4) to evaluate parent attitude toward the parent-teacher conference at kindergarten level; (5) to present an overview of the values of the parent-teacher conference as a means of exchanging and sharing information pertinent to the child, the mutual concern of both parent and teacher; (6) to give helpful hints and suggestions to teachers as a means of promoting better face-to-face relationships with parents; and (7) to note possible changes that might lead to improved practices regarding kindergarten orientation and parent-teacher conferences in the Elkhart Public Schools.

Importance of the study. Educators today are agreed that the traditional means of communication between parent and teacher, the report card, cannot convey a complete picture of the child. They are in accord that:

Any real success in helping a student achieve the maximum development of which he is capable comes through an understanding of the individual's growth pattern and of his personality adjustment problems rather than through an attempt to view academic success or failure as an isolated area.¹

There is every evidence that progress is being made in planning and evaluating the child's education. Much progress has taken place in the appeal made to parents to confer

with the school staff and to assist in making school experiences meaningful and happy for the child. In other words, there is a growing concept that education is a cooperative undertaking involving parents and teachers as real partners.

This desirable change has taken place in part because mental hygienists, teachers, and others have come to the realization that methods used heretofore have been inadequate and in many cases have done the child incalculable harm.

Better and more effective means of partnership between teachers and parents must be sought. Frequent school-home relationships of the right sort must be encouraged as they result in better understanding of the total aspect of child development. The education of the child cannot be viewed as a task for the school alone. Parents can help solve problems. They have information about the child that would help the teacher guide the child's growth more effectively. They know many things about the physical development of the child that they could tell the teacher. In addition, they have information about the child's behavior and personality characteristics as seen in the home and community situations.

It is logical to assume that the people most concerned with the child should get together in planning for, and evaluating, the child's education. "The wise teacher, the wise parent, and the growing child working together form an
II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Conference. Throughout this presentation the use of the term "conference" should be interpreted as having the following meaning—a specified time spent in discussing and studying a problem or situation. Time spent by parent and teacher in discussing the progress of the student may result in more effective experiences for him.

Kindergarten roundup. This is a period of orientation planned for both the parent and the child as a means of better preparing them for the child's entrance to school in the fall.

III. METHOD OF THE STUDY

The questionnaire method was used to determine parent and teacher reaction to the kindergarten orientation and to the parent-teacher conference program for kindergarten. During the second week of September, 1953, questionnaires were submitted to parents entering children in school and to teachers of kindergarten children in the Elkhart schools. In addition to the questionnaire submitted to teachers, a personal interview was held with each of the ten kindergarten

teachers in the school city. Data relating to the findings from the questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A return of 323 questionnaires out of 781, a response of 41 per cent, was secured. This was rather limited, possibly due to the fact that the kindergarten children who took the questionnaires home to the parents were still unaccustomed to the procedure of carrying written messages home and assuming responsibility for their safe return.

In the matter of parent response to question six, which dealt with the type of meetings parents felt were most worthwhile in helping them to a better understanding of teacher and child, the response was limited due to the mechanics of the questionnaire. (See appendix, page 56.) It had been considered inadvisable to have parents rate suggested meetings, as in the teacher questionnaire, since this might influence their reaction to the type of meetings with the teacher. Perhaps the response would have been better had the parents been asked to rank the suggested items. Many parents omitted the item. Still other parents showed by their response that they did not understand what was meant.

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

In Chapter II there will be a review of related litera-
ture and a discussion of the background of the study. Chapter III will give the sources of data and groups studied. This will include an explanation of the questionnaire and the procedure used in the study. Chapter IV will give the presentation and analysis of findings. The response to the questionnaire will be discussed, and the attitude of parents and teachers toward kindergarten orientation and parent-teacher conferences will be reviewed. Chapter V will give the summary of the study, conclusions drawn, and recommendations given.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The child's entrance into school is an important occasion for the parents as well as for the child. The fact that our public school children are young in these grades makes home and school cooperation and understanding very important. There are things that parents want to know concerning how the teachers go about the job of helping beginners. There are things that teachers would like to know about the children, things which they must learn from the parents.

Parents and teachers, whether they realize it or not, stand side by side in helping to build the thoughts and lives of those who will participate in the shaping of our civilization in years ahead.¹

A study of a number of Kindergarten Handbooks⁴ reveals that many school systems are attempting to minimize the confusion associated with the opening of school and are attempting through work with both parents and children to make the child's first impression a wholesome and happy

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⁴ "Kindergarten Handbooks" from other schools, see bibliography for a complete list.
one--free from pressures, tensions, and fears. "The child's first impression of school, the self-confidence he feels, and his initial success in association with his peers may color for years his attitude toward school."^5 Or again, "Whether this introduction be a happy or unhappy one sometimes determines an attitude of the pupil which he carries with him throughout his entire elementary school life."^6

Since this entrance into school is of such importance, considerable planning for it should be done in advance by both parents and schools. An excellent help for parents in this preparation is "Happy Journey."^7 In this handbook parents are given information about the skills, the experiences, and the health habits each child should have before his school days commence. It gives the parents advice in home-school relations and lists questions about the school that parents should know.

Helen Beck has this to say to parents:

Wise parents prepare Tommy or Sue for skating. They hold him up until he gets his balance and make sure that he learns that, although falling may be

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^5 Martin W. Essex and Staff, "Getting Parents and Children Ready for Kindergarten," The Nation's Schools, 47:46, April, 1951.


part of skating, he will fall less frequently after he learns to skate. School entrance should be approached in the same way.\(^8\)

Edith M. Leonard and Associates have written concerning the opening day of school:

The importance of minimizing the details of registration in order that the teacher's attention may be directed to the children cannot be over-emphasized. That is why a pre-registration is especially desirable, wherein an extra day or more is allotted for the parents to bring the child to school, meet the teacher and confer with her while the child plays under other supervision.\(^9\)

These writers\(^10\) also tell of a staggered entrance plan used by some schools by which only a few children start to school each day for the first week. This plan could be used along with the parent-teacher conference plan, thereby simplifying the entrance for the child.

Willey\(^11\) has said that the teacher should know in advance something about the children who will be under her supervision. He suggests that a part of this pre-preparation could be carried through in parent-teacher groups or by sending questionnaires to the parents of entering children.


\(^{9}\) Leonard and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

\(^{10}\) Loc. cit.

\(^{11}\) Willey, *loc. cit.*
Grace McKenna\textsuperscript{12} in writing about the pre-school orientation at Lincoln School, Hingham, Massachusetts, has said that instead of having regular school attendance the first week, the kindergarten teacher uses this time in scheduled half-hour conferences with the parents. While the parent and teacher are talking, the child plays with toys in the kindergarten room, thus becoming acclimated to the room. During the conference the parent and teacher discuss the school's policies, ways in which to help the child in his new experience, and the parent gives the teacher information about the child which is essential and which would otherwise take the teacher weeks or even months to acquire. After the conference an older child acts as a guide and shows the parent and child the entire school building, pointing out the places with which the child would need to be familiar. This alleviates any fears that the child might have in being in a strange building.

She said of this program:

The results of these conferences were most gratifying. We did not have to register children on the first day of school. Clerical work, such as checking birth and vaccination certificates, was taken care of at the time of the conference. There were no unpleasant scenes on opening day.

The kindergarten teachers are convinced that the preschool orientation conference was very much worth while. From the first day, kindergarten was a happy

\textsuperscript{12} Grace McKenna, "PreSchool Orientation," \textit{The Instructor}, 61:21, June, 1952.
experience for teacher and children.  

Martin W. Essex and Staff relate that in Lakewood Public Schools, Lakewood, Ohio, the child that enters kindergarten in the fall comes to school in May of that year and for a half-day is entertained with kindergarten activities by the teacher and four or five children of the present kindergarten. While the child is being cared for, the parents gather for a conference period at which time they are given information by the principal, school nurse, and kindergarten teacher. Copies of the kindergarten handbook are also given to parents. Registration routine is taken care of at this time. Those with individual problems may make appointments for future conferences. This first week in May is set aside as Pre-Kindergarten Week, and each day is registration day for two of the ten elementary schools. The local newspapers feature the announcement of hours and purposes. In August a postal card is sent to the child's parents informing them of the morning or the afternoon assignment to kindergarten.

At Fielding School, Maplewood, New Jersey, registration for entrants of kindergarten is also in the spring of the year.

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13 Loc. cit.
14 Essex and Staff, loc. cit.
15 W. Edward Young, "Introducing the Kindergarten to Parents," American Childhood, 36:12, February, 1951.
At this time the children are given a health examination by the school doctor and nurse. The mother and child then visit the kindergarten where they are given an opportunity to talk and share information with the kindergarten teacher. During the first week of school in September the P. T. A. Executive Board has a tea for all the "new mothers." At this tea the kindergarten teacher explains her program and suggests to the parents ways for helping their child make the adjustment to the school situation.

In the Des Moines Public Schools the kindergarten teachers invite the mothers of pre-school children to a Spring Tea in the kindergarten rooms. At this time the teachers and parents talk over preparations for school entrance, the time and procedure of registration, and any other matters that may pertain to kindergarten classes. An attractive handbook made by a committee composed of principals and teachers is given to the mothers at this time.

Another way of securing information is told by Evelyn C. Ziess:

There have been developed a number of ways of teachers and schools becoming acquainted with kindergarten children before their entrance into school, but the most expedient one for actual guidance with the beginning school child is Kindergarten survey. In this type of survey, the teacher takes a summer month to call on the parents.

in their homes of all the children to enter her class in the fall (list taken from school census). A letter explaining the objects and benefits of the call should precede the visit. After the interview, the teacher should record the siblings, their age, and any special notations, the health and any significant case history facts regarding the child, a general statement about the home and neighborhood situation, and any special parental situation which might be apt to influence this child. The child's birth certificate should be noted. The parents should be provided with a school health blank for the doctor's examination and given a booklet containing pertinent information about the school and its requirements. The response from the parents to this form of interviewing is very gratifying. They learn what Kindergarten actually does and feel a warmness for the school for "being so interested in our child." It can readily be seen that a Kindergarten survey also affords a wonderful opportunity to improve home-school relations. In many systems where the summer work of the teacher would be out of the question, it would still have benefit at the beginning of the term even if it were necessary to shorten the Kindergarten school day for a period to permit time for the teacher to make calls.

There is evidence to show that many schools do realize the importance of this first entrance to school and are making every effort possible to improve their program in trying to help the beginner and his parents.

Former practices in regard to entrance. Prior to 1951 in the Elkhart school system, all children in kindergarten enrolled in a group the first day of school. This group enrollment did not seem desirable as there was a great deal of confusion and coming and going of both parents and child-

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It was almost impossible for the teacher to care for all of the details of first-day enrollment, such as checking registration, enrolling pupils new to the city who had not participated in the May Roundup, accepting rental fees, and answering parents' questions, as well as caring for the timid, frightened child who clung tearfully to the mother's hand or for the overly aggressive child who rode the tricycle too fast around the room. All in all, this did not present a wholesome atmosphere for the child just beginning a new experience. It was then decided to try the experiment of individual conferences with the parents and to see the kindergarten children as a class group after these conferences were completed.

Previous to 1949, the Elkhart Public Schools secured the necessary information on the home background from the forms that were filled out in the fall when the child entered school. There was little effort made to study the emotional background of the child. The physical examination and disease history, as well as other pertinent information concerning the child, were secured through the "May Kindergarten Roundup" which was held "army style" in the gymnasium of each school building. The help of P.T.A. mothers was solicited in securing a tentative list of new students who would enter school the following September. Under this plan parents were notified through their school news bulletin and the local
newspaper just when the parents with their children were to report for the registration and physical examination. It was necessary under this arrangement to secure the service of any doctor and dentist who might be willing to volunteer to give a few days of his time to serve the schools. As the service entailed much work and was time-consuming, doctors and dentists found it advisable to rotate the obligation so that no one doctor or dentist was unduly burdened and kept away from private practice too long. No fee was granted to them by either the school city or parents--all the work was done gratis.

In order to process the large numbers of children and parents in as short a time as possible, tables or screened-in areas were set up around the gymnasium for the convenience of each individual who had a share in either the registration or the examination of the pre-school child. Under this system it was necessary to keep the lines moving as rapidly as possible, and under this procedure there was no guarantee that some timid child, confused by the commotion of adults and children in various degrees of emotional upset or aggression, would not suddenly burst into tears or attempt to resist some part of the examination. The doctor's examination of necessity, too, had to be at best a rough screening since there was neither time nor opportunity to give much personal attention to each case.
The school nurses conducted the rough screening for visual defects. For this they made use of the Snellen chart and on the basis of the findings reported the abnormal cases to the doctor. Those children with defects of any kind, including the need for immunization or booster shots, were referred to their own family physician or dentist for diagnosis and treatment. An attempt was made to have a conference with the parent before he left the roundup in order to make suggestions; however, these conferences were too rushed to be satisfactory.

There was general dissatisfaction with this procedure of orientation for the following reasons: (1) in so short a time and with so many children the examination could not be complete and thorough; (2) there was too much confusion, which in many instances was harmful to the small child; (3) some parents preferred having their family physician examine their child; (4) wrong impressions of the school might be conveyed to both the child and the parent; (5) inadequate information was given to the parents on how parents could help prepare the child during the summer for the new school experience in the fall; (6) the information secured was inadequate for the classroom teacher, and much time was consumed in the fall, filling in gaps, time that could better be spent in planning for the child.
Present practices in regard to entrance in the Elkhart kindergartens. At the present time the kindergarten registration and orientation for fall opening actual begin in April or May of the preceding year, at which time a survey is conducted in each school district to determine as accurately as possible the number of five-year-olds who will be entering kindergarten in the fall. Blanks prepared by the school nurse and signed by the superintendent of schools are sent to all parents by the children that are attending the school. Parents are requested to submit the names of any child or children they think will be eligible for kindergarten. The accuracy of this response is checked against the census cards kept by the principal of each school. These cards listing all families of the school district are kept up to date, for the census is taken each five years and is considered fairly adequate. To take the census, teams of volunteer workers visit the home of each family and list all children of school age. The work is made less cumbersome for any one worker since each school principal divides his school into easily administered neighborhood or block units and prepares a spot map from which the health chairman of each school district can plan the taking of the census. Through the use of the census cards, birthdays can be checked and any children who are not of age to enter can be eliminated. In addition, to keep records accurate, the health
chairman keeps a record of births announced in the local paper for her district and enters the child's name in appropriate form to be filed for ready reference. A check is kept of any newcomers in the school district or any families who should happen to move out of the district.

When the school principal has determined the tentative list of possible pupils for kindergarten, the report is sent to the office of school nurses, and plans are made to conduct the formal registration with parents.

Preliminary plans are made for the registration at a city-wide meeting of health chairmen who in turn make known the general procedures to each school principal. The principal of each building then makes arrangements with the chairman for his own program which usually falls within the framework of the larger plan. The principal is given leeway to conduct his registration as he may wish, conforming to the overall policy or pattern. In some school districts the meetings are held in the evening while in others afternoon meetings are held, and the parent brings the child. In each case where orientation and registration are held in the afternoon the principal formulates a program that may or may not include the oncoming class of kindergarten pupils. If the new children are included, they are given a party in the kindergarten room while their mothers attend the meeting. It is hoped the latter practice will begin to level off since authorities
feel the evening meetings are far more valuable as both parents are given the opportunity to learn more about the kindergarten program. Where evening meetings are conducted for parents, arrangements are later made for the children to visit the kindergarten room before the close of school at a time when the kindergarten teacher, released from responsibility for her current class, may give some time to her new group. In many cases the teacher may conduct a little demonstration of some of the activities in order that parents may visualize the experiences the child will have. In some cases the current class entertains the new class, and the children themselves play host to the new group. This is a valuable experience as the boys and girls prepare the little favors and plan how they are going to entertain their visitors. This type of program actually is conducted on a more mature level than the former procedure of having mothers "keep" the children or entertain them. More schools are moving toward this plan.

In regard to the meetings of parents, the actual proceedings of these meetings may differ from one another, but their objectives are the same in all school districts and follow the suggested pattern. The principal of the school gives a welcome to the parents and reviews the school policies in regard to kindergarten. Parents are given an opportunity to ask any questions that may confront them. The school nurse
discusses the physical examination of the child before entering school and assists the parents in filling out the medical report forms. (See appendix, page 63.) At this time the school nurse advises parents to be certain to draw to her attention in a written notation on the enrollment card any allergies or personal health problems that might lead to misunderstandings on the part of the teacher or nurse. (See appendix, page 61.) For example, unless the teacher is aware of an allergy, a child with a skin rash might be excluded as having a contagious disease. In the same category, a running nose and watering eyes might well be mistaken for a contagious cold. This attention to small details contributes to better public relations and assures the happiness and well-being of the child.

The parents are instructed to take the child to their family physician, who for a charge of two dollars agreed upon as a minimum fee gives the child a thorough examination. Forms completed by the family physician are mailed to the nurse during the summer. A discussion concerning enrollment and other information is given by the elementary consultant. The enrollment record card and the information blank for the cumulative record are explained to the parents, and these are filled out at this first meeting with the parents. This procedure assures all information being accurate and complete. For example, parents are encouraged to refrain from listing
a nickname as the legal name of the child. If the child answers to a nickname or a short form of his name and the parent wishes the child addressed in that manner, the parent is asked to place that name in the upper right hand corner of the enrollment card. A second telephone number is also listed in order that someone can be reached if the parent cannot. In addition, on the cumulative form parents are instructed to give additional information if they are not the natural parents of the child. All of this is considered important to those who deal with the child and assures better understanding and treatment of any problems which might arise. (See appendix, page 62.)

These are a few of many items that can be clarified and made more meaningful to parents as well as assure more accuracy and uniformity in making out the first record for the child. Too, much valuable time is saved for the teacher as it is not necessary to telephone the parent or to send home notes to secure scattered bits of information that are inadequate or have been omitted.

The kindergarten teacher next talks to the parents and briefly summarizes the goals for the kindergarten and solicits the cooperation of the parent in helping the child prepare for the new experience so that it will be a happy one, free from tension and fear. The teacher has access to a film and film strip showing some of these activities for the kinder-
garten child which she may show to the parents. A copy of
the kindergarten handbook, "Getting Ready for Kindergarten," is given to the parents and discussed with them. (See appendix, page 64.) The information given includes three large categories: (1) how parents can prepare the child for kindergarten; (2) responsibility of the teacher to the child; and (3) overview of the typical kindergarten day. Birth certificates are checked at the close of the meeting. Parents are given every possible opportunity to ask questions, and those with individual problems can make appointments for future conferences.

In the fall the kindergarten teacher spends the first week of school in individual conferences with each child's parent. The parent receives a post card the latter part of August giving all details of this scheduled conference. (see appendix, page 65.) The parents are urged to keep the time assigned, but if this is impossible, they are instructed to telephone the principal for another appointment.

The cooperation of the Superintendent of Mails is secured in clearing all mailed notices to parents as quickly as possible so that there is no danger, even in cases of change of address, that parents may not be informed prior to the opening of school. Teachers are given time in the pre-school conferences held one week before the opening of school to address the cards, and all cards are collected and mailed at

18 "Getting Ready for Kindergarten," Brochure prepared by the Elkhart Public Schools.
the same time. Conferences are then conducted while other grades of the school are in session their first week.

The kindergarten teachers do not meet the children as a group until all conferences are completed. These conferences are valuable in that they afford an opportunity for the teacher and parent to meet and, in a quiet atmosphere, to discuss questions pertaining to the child’s welfare, and to clear the details of entrance to school. The conferences permit the teacher and the parent, also, to note the reaction of the child to the classroom environment. This affords dignity and does not place the teacher in the position of "herding" children and parents through a hectic first-day group enrollment where timid children become frightened and where aggressive children bully others. The conferences also protect parents from the embarrassment of trying to handle a problem child who does not respond to suggestions. This protection permits parents to save face with other mothers—something not possible under the group situation.
CHAPTER III

SOURCES OF DATA AND GROUPS STUDIED

An overview of the preliminary planning for the preparation and the distribution of the questionnaire on the newer practices in kindergarten orientation and parent-teacher conferences in the Elkhart Public Schools will be presented.

The kindergarten program of the Elkhart Public Schools has undergone a number of changes within the past five years. To what extent these changes have improved the program was not definitely known either from the parent viewpoint or the teacher viewpoint. In order to clarify plans for the continued improvement or change in the program, the opinion and reaction of both parents and teachers participating was sought. A combination of questionnaire and personal interview was used.

The questionnaire. A total of 721 questionnaire was sent to parent of all the children in the fourteen elementary buildings of the school city of Elkhart in order to evaluate the attitudes toward the newer practices as compared with the earlier methods of enrolling and orienting children entering the public schools. The questionnaire to the parents consisted of three parts: Kindergarten Roundup, Parent Conference, and Human Relationships. Provision was made for parents to respond to the majority of the questions by checking Yes or No. They were also given an opportunity in some of the
questions to express a more subjective opinion if they had any criticism, suggestions, or comments concerning the program. Copies of the questionnaires may be found in the appendix, pages 56 and 58.

A questionnaire was also submitted to each of the ten kindergarten teachers. In addition, a personal conference was conducted by the investigator with each teacher concerned.

Procedure. The cooperation of principals, teachers, and children was solicited before sending out the questionnaire in the fall. Care was exercised to send out the questionnaires a few days after the parents had completed their individual conferences with the teachers in the fall. Thus, all the parents had participated in the total program of kindergarten orientation.

Care was exercised to assure parents that it was not necessary for them to sign their names on the returned questionnaires; therefore the sources of remarks were anonymous.

An effort was made to have the parents realize that they were contributing to the importance and improvement of their schools, and that the findings would serve as a basis for any necessary recommendations for improving the present program.
CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Information resulting from the questionnaires will be presented in this chapter with excerpts from the written comments by both parents and teachers concerning the attitudes toward the newer practices in kindergarten orientation and parent-teacher conferences.

I. RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Of the 781 questionnaires submitted to parents, 323 were returned. This represented a total response of 41.3 per cent. Table I shows the number of returns for the various elementary schools participating in the survey.

A complete return was secured from the teachers who participated.

II. ATTITUDE OF PARENTS TOWARD NEWER PRACTICES IN KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

In general, parent attitude toward the Kindergarten Roundup was favorable since 88.2 per cent indicated approval. Only four per cent indicated disapproval. There was no reply from 7.4 per cent. In the matter of the physical examination by the family physician as contrasted with the mass checkings, 91 per cent were well satisfied. Table II, page 28, shows the response to the questions asked. That more parents are
TABLE I
RECORD OF QUESTIONNAIRES SENT TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Questionnaires Sent</th>
<th>Usable returns</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beck</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beardsley</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daly</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorne</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middleburn (½ day session)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monger</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverview (½ day session)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>62.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ullery</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weston</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willowdale (½ day session)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>781</strong></td>
<td><strong>323</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.36</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE II

PARENT ATTITUDE TOWARD KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
<th>No reply</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel that the Kindergarten Roundup in May is helpful</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>88.24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the arrangement for the physical examination through the family physi­</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cian preferable to the mass check up?</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>91.33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.096</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

going to the family physical is shown in Table III, since a total of 93.5 per cent was reached for the school year of 1953. This represents an increase of twenty per cent over a period of two years. 19

In the matter of the individual conference scheduled by appointment, 93.498 per cent expressed approval, while 83.59 per cent indicated that it was helpful and that sufficient time had been allowed to talk things over with the teacher. (See Table IV, page 30.) Approximately three­fourths of the parents responding felt that the initial conference was not sufficient and that there should be other follow-ups.

19 Lucile J. Wilcox, School Nurse, School City of Elkhart, Elkhart, Indiana.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number Enrolled</th>
<th>Number not examined</th>
<th>Number examined</th>
<th>Per cent examined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beardsley</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>93.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Beck</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Daly</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorne</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middleburn</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monger</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Strong</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ullery</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weston</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willowdale</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>781</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>730</strong></td>
<td><strong>93.48</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you favor the opportunity for the individual conference with your child's teacher during the school day?</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the conference helpful to you?</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>83.59</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel that the conference might well be substituted for the more formal written report or report card?</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>35.29</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>50.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the amount of time allowed sufficient?</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>89.78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should there be other follow ups?</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>75.85</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition to individual conferences, do you think there would be any value in group conferences with the teacher?</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>45.82</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>40.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many parents reported that the tension of registration had been partially reduced for both the parent and child. The following comments will reveal the benefits as pointed out by parents:

This is my first experience in getting a child ready for school. However, I feel a check up with your family physician is more correct; as I am an ex-service woman, I know what mass examinations are like, and I know that during some parts of a physical you were rustled through. Therefore, I prefer an examination by your own family physician.

This new plan is a good one. In fact, I told Mrs., we mothers are a bit nervous as well as any of the children. I'm sure it help our boy ease into school much easier than the other method, as with all the confusion children get more upset. This way was more time consuming for the teacher, no doubt, but worth a lot to the children and mothers.

I think this plan of parent-teacher conference in the kindergarten is a wonderful change from the past registration. Everything was so calm and made the children feel at ease. I can see why a child would have a fear of entering with so many mothers waiting in line. It gives the teacher a chance to find out individual differences and be prepared before the child enters. It gives the teacher a chance to study the parent.

_____ was somewhat disappointed when he started. He expected to find children in a group as he had experienced when we visited school. Whereas, _____ had his first day with the group and no mothers present. I think having a helper to entertain the children during the conference is good.

I particularly liked having the mothers meet in the spring and get all preliminaries over. I think it is much better to have physicals from the family physician instead of the old time "round up" days. It was a round up, too! I am heartily in favor of the new system.

Still others felt that there was better opportunity for the parent, child, and teacher to get acquainted and to
become familiar with more problems of an individual nature:

I think the new kindergarten conferences are worthwhile. Besides giving a parent a chance to discuss any little problem with her child's teacher at the same time the parent and the teacher are becoming acquainted. My little daughter came home from her first full morning at school and tried to tell me everything that had happened. She concluded with, "of course you know my teacher, don't you mother?"

I think that thought gives a little child a much more secure feeling in her schoolroom.

In my opinion, the parent-teacher conference plan is beneficial to everyone concerned. As a parent I found it easy to discuss my child's any problems she might have in adjusting to kindergarten in the calm, unhurried and private consultation with the teacher. I also feel it will be easier for the teacher to understand my child after this discussion. Then, too, the child has an opportunity to investigate the room and acquaint herself without the overwatchful eyes of both parent and teacher.

All in all, I approve heartily of the plan and suggest it be adopted as a yearly practice.

The parent-teacher kindergarten conference seemed more organized and competent this year. I received nor gave no more information this year than last, however, the absence of interruptions and confusion in the conference room was appreciated. Both the teacher and I could concentrate on our business. I believe that the kindergarten registration could be conducted the same as previously if messengers, other teachers, and "strays" would refrain from interrupting the teacher.

This period as a conference time was of little value to me, for I had no special problem to discuss. I know that if any problems do arise, the school and teacher welcome me to discuss them at any time.

The parent-teacher conference was, in my estimation, a big step in the direction of better student-teacher relationship. I am certain the teacher will better understand our child's behavior because of the information I gave her. Then this she will be better equipped to cope with any situation that might arise.
Others appreciated the program as a time saver in preparing the child for the experiences:

Gives a parent time for dental and doctor appointments, and time to prepare smocks. (Garment worn by kindergarten-child for protection when doing anything that might soil his clothes).

It gave me time to make appointments for doctor and dentist. If it wasn't for this meeting I don't see how the teacher would have any idea as to how many children to expect.

It gives one plenty of time to make the necessary preparation for starting a child to school.

Some of the parents seemed to think it was helpful, too, in that it gave them time to prepare the child:

It gave me time to prepare my child to do some of the small things on his own that I had neglected, or had been doing myself, which may have hindered him in school. The booklet, "Getting Ready for Kindergarten," was very helpful.

It helped me in my efforts to prepare my child a bit in advance for his entrance into kindergarten, and it provided the answer to several questions in my own mind.

It gets some of the necessary details out of the way early. As getting things ready for school takes quite a bit of time and would prefer the time broken up as it is now.

Other parents felt that the new program was of value as a protection against starting a child too early, and they appreciated the advice given by the consultant in regard to readiness for school:

Helps you to know what is expected of you as well as your child. I think it is so wise to discourage parents from starting children too young.

Many of the parents felt that under the new plan a much
better idea of the kindergarten program and what was ex-
pected of the child were derived:

I liked the booklet of helpful hints.

You learn what is expected of our kindergarten child
and we worked on preparing for school.

It gave an opportunity for parent to meet the teacher
and supervisors and become acquainted with what will be
expected of the child. It provided an introduction to
the school, the pamphlets were very helpful and it
helped to acquaint the child with the teacher, room and
other children.

Introduces the child to the school building, kinder-
garten room and teacher. Gives basis for summer con-
vversations leading to school opening. Gives new parents
information concerning the kindergarten activities and
requirements.

It introduces the parent to the school and faculty;
it enlightens the parent and it makes a closer rela-
tionship with neighbors.

The talk given by the teacher and others was very
educational in regards to the procedure taken with
pre-school children.

Parents entering their first child in school thought
it was very helpful:

This was our first year to have a child in school so
we appreciated meeting the principal, teachers, and
other people who have children in the kindergarten.

It was my first experience with school since my own
graduation. Being new to the town and community, it
introduced me to some of my neighbors sooner than
otherwise.

It is particularly helpful to the parent who is en-
tering his oldest child in school and also to all parents
new in the city or new to a particular school district.
The contact parents may have with school nurses, teachers,
and with the principal should make the May Roundup very
beneficial.
Warmer personal relationships seemed to be an outgrowth:

Made us realize how nice the people were our child would be learning to know and that you regard each child as a different person.

It was nice to meet the person your child will spend his time with and if anything arises during the year, you feel more on a friendly basis.

School starts so much more smoothly in the fall—we talk about our new teacher all summer.

A few of the parents voiced objection to having the child in the room during the conference:

I felt the parent-teacher conference was good. My only thought was, if your child did not have to be in the room with you, it would make it easier to tell the teacher things concerning your child.

Some problems are often discussed more freely if the child is not present at the conference.

I feel that one can not present a problem to the teacher about one's child, when it is also present. The best way would be to see the parent alone.

The parent should have a better opportunity to discuss the child with the teacher without his hearing.

We all know that there are times when it is best not to have a discussion in the presence of the child. Therefore, make this an understood factor to parents and teacher. For the child's welfare let him be excluded when necessary.

I think the conference was successful, only I think that the child should not be present during all of the conference, because the child should not overhear the conversation about him.

They were not in favor of substituting the personal conference for the formal report card as 50.77 per cent expressed their disapproval:
The kindergarten child looks forward to bringing home his report card and is anxious to identify himself as much as possible with the school activities of his older brothers and sisters.

I think the report card, itself, means a lot to the kindergarten child.

I believe in written report cards, but would prefer a personal contact for discussion of a problem of any sort.

I think an individual conference will help to improve the child's ability and progress through more cooperation and understanding, however, lets keep the report card and have them both, if possible.

It seems to me that all children, at least I know mine do, like to get the card and are proud to show it.

I would not like to see the conference substituted for the report card, but used in conjunction with it.

In regard to the rapport maintained during the conference, 93.189 per cent expressed that they felt at ease with the teacher and that there was mutual sharing and talking together. Table V shows the response.

I have no suggestions toward improvement because I was so pleased and relieved after the conference and it was so much happier an experience than a previous conference when our older child entered kindergarten. I found the teacher sympathetic, understanding, and serene, three important requisites for a kindergarten teacher. She made me feel comfortable, welcome and wanted! And that is gratifying.

I think the informal attitude on both the parent's and teacher's part lend an air of comfort, friendliness and trust. Also, frankness as both parties have the child's interests at heart.

I enjoyed my conference with Miss . At no time did I hesitate to ask her advice. I realized she was a sympathetic person and that she has a sincere interest in my daughter.
TABLE V

PARENT ATTITUDE TOWARD THE RAPPORT MAINTAINED DURING THE CONFERENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Per</th>
<th>Per</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>reply</th>
<th>Per</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you really feel you have learned to know your child's teacher as a person</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>52.94</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>33.13</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you feel at ease with the teacher during the conference?</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>93.19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you able to present your problem?</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you secure suggestions for help on the problem presented?</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>43.65</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was there mutual sharing and talking together?</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>80.81</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the teacher do most of the talking?</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>19.51</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>54.49</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you, the parent, do most of the talking?</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>60.37</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This conference was very interesting and helpful to me. I felt that the teacher had learned to know my child better than she would otherwise and also that I learned what they expected to do. I am in favor of conferences in all grades, not just kindergarten, the more the better.

I think the idea of having conferences are in themselves a step toward better relationship between teacher-pupil-parent. I think the conferences are fine and suggest only that they be continued throughout the child's school year, not just at registration.

I think I had a very nice visit with Miss ____. She was very sympathetic and most understanding. She answered all of my problems with perfect ease and I felt free to talk with her. It was very helpful to me because of the recent illness my son had.

In reply to the question of what relationships they as parents felt would best help them understand the teacher and in turn help them as parents to help the child, a total of 212 out of 323 made a response. Of the total responding, 64 per cent felt that the individual conference was the most important means of keeping in touch with the school. This was in keeping with the opinion of teachers who also ranked the conference first in a list of many suggestions. Parents and teachers differed in their opinions as to the effectiveness of telephone calls. Teachers ranked this as second most effective, whereas parents regarded it very lightly, only three mentioned it as having any value. The parents viewed friendly visits and talks with teachers at P T A as third in importance. This differed from the teacher viewpoint as P T A visits were not regarded by them as having any significance.
and received only slight mention. The following comments from the parents might contain food for thought:

The parent who is interested will find the correct way to contact the teacher. If there seems to be no great problem, the P T A is enough.

Visiting the school, learning just what the children do, knowing the stories and poems the teacher reads would help both teacher and parent.

It seems to me that a conference with the teacher every now and then, would help the parent to know exactly how the child is doing. If the child is having difficulty, these talks with the teacher will help the parent and teacher solve the problem.

Just getting together, more can be accomplished by talking things over than any other way.

Have parents, come and watch, do things with the teacher, children as a whole. Have the teacher give the parents helpful hints on different projects, as art, music and working together to help the child.

I feel that a teacher's visitation in the child's home would do much to help a teacher understand a child, and in turn help the child.

It would be helpful and interesting if there were an arrangement whereby parents could observe the kindergarten activities without the children being conscious of their presence.

Meeting the teacher under social conditions such as P T A and so forth would do most to make you feel at ease and so help you to present your problem to them.

I like to feel free to drop in whenever I can, though not so often as to be a nuisance.

Both group and individual conferences seem to me to have the most value in helping the teacher and parent work together for the good of the child.

I always get the impression that the teacher is hurried and doesn't really have the time to visit with a parent. Most of them act like they have no time to spare in a mere chat with parents.
It seems to me there should be more intermingling of teachers with parents after PTA meetings. My experience has been that the teachers are always quick to leave after the meeting.

Next in order of importance as listed by parents was the unplanned visitation to the classroom. This was in contrast to the teacher viewpoint as they considered the planned visit as being more valuable. The teachers ranked the unplanned visit as third most effective.

III. ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARD KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

In reply to the question, "Is the Kindergarten Roundup in May of value to you?", nine out of ten teachers responded affirmatively. In one instance, in the case of a new teacher, the response was omitted. All but one approved the plan for the individual conference in the fall. (See Table VI.)

Teachers stated many reasons why the roundup was of value. They are briefly listed as follows:

1. Provided teacher with a tentative list of new children. Gave teacher an idea of the approximate enrollment to expect.

2. Gave children a chance to be in school and meet the teacher.

3. Provided an opportunity on part of school personnel
to impress parents with health values and the importance of health in school life.

4. Provided opportunity to meet parents and give them an idea of what kindergarten is like.

5. Gave parents information useful for school preparation and allowed time during summer to get the child ready.

6. Saved much time in the fall by having blanks filled out before the opening of school. This was much appreciated by the teachers.

7. Created less confusion.

8. Assured accuracy of data given by parents.

In response to the question, "In what ways has the Roundup been of least value?" the following attitudes were revealed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
<th>No cent</th>
<th>Per reply</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the kindergarten roundup in May of value to you as a teacher?</td>
<td>9 90.</td>
<td>1 10.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you approve the plan for the individual parent-teacher conference in the fall?</td>
<td>9 90.</td>
<td>1 10.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Names on the list have not all be accurate.

2. Teacher was not given enough time to converse with the parents.

3. Perhaps there is likelihood that too much information is being given to parents in too short a time.

4. Three teachers out of the ten responding felt that dividing time between talking with parents and having a children's party was somewhat difficult.

5. One of the two teachers felt that it was not at all necessary to have the children at this time.

In response to the changes suggested in the procedure for the May roundup, five out of the ten teachers had no changes to suggest. The remaining five teachers had these comments to make:

I would like to try having the meeting in the evening with parents rather than an afternoon meeting and party with children.

Have the parents leave the children at home and allow the teacher to meet the parents and talk to them.

I would rather acquaint the child with the room in the fall instead of at the roundup. The teacher is busy with the parents and it just necessitates having an outsider look after them. I don't think anything is gained.

You have time at the personal conference in the fall to show the child around and talk to him.

Try a series of four group meetings with the help of the P T A--invite pre-school mothers.

In response to the query about the type of relationships with parents which teachers felt were of most value to
them, the following was revealed:

**Planned visits with the parent** were regarded as most effective. Next in order of effectiveness was the telephone conversation. The **unplanned visit** was regarded as third most effective, with the homeroom assignment receiving fourth place. Some slight importance was attached to P T A activities and casual meetings on the street and at social gatherings. Still less importance was attached to invitations to the home and to opportunities to get acquainted with parents through assistance on trips and excursions. (See Table VII.)

In response to question 3, "Do you approve of the plan for the individual parent-teacher conference in the fall?" all teachers reacted favorable and revealed from their comments that it had much value for them:

I have notes on all students, bits of information parents give me. Ordinarily it would take months to gather this valuable information.

Information concerning the physical and mental welfare of the child. More time to observe parent and child. An opportunity to collect fees and give information regarding absences and tardiness. An opportunity to find out how well the child has been prepared for getting safely to and from school.

I learned of physical and behavior problems that ordinarily have to be recognized by observation. This will be a time saver and my approach can be different. All rugs and smocks had names on them!

More knowledge of child's life habits and play interests, also playmates--his special interests--also more about his general life.

Meeting parents individually, their attitude toward
## TABLE VII

**TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS TEACHERS CONSIDERED MOST VALUABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>Total points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone conversations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned visits with parents</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(1)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written note describing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a situation</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplanned visits at school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitation to the home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent assistance on trips and excursions</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home room assignment as room mother</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. T. A. activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual meetings at the grocery, on the street, at social gatherings</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No. of ranks for each position.

** (Numbers in parenthesis are weighted points)

Note: In this Table, the number of place rankings has been counted for each item; then to determine the final ranking of each item, the number of first place rankings was multiplied by 5; second place rankings by 4; third place rankings by 3; fourth place rankings by 2; and fifth place rankings by 1. The total points are determined by adding the weighted points for each item.
their children, what they expected of the teacher in the way of disciplining the child.

Seeing the parent and child together has great value to me. Opportunity of talking to all parents and getting a slight insight of their home life.

The teachers sincerely felt that it had value to parents as well:

I believe the parents were more at ease and were given a chance to air things about which they were concerned and otherwise would not have mentioned.

I believe the parents gained knowledge that gave them a feeling of security, because I had no "parent problems" the first day.

Answers their questions. Acquaints them with needs and aims for child. Gives opportunity to discuss the child.

I believe most of the parents appreciated it; they met the teacher personally which wasn't possible for all at the "Roundup."

It gave the parents an opportunity to help the teacher understand the children by presenting the problems, fears, or difficulties they may have.

While most of the teachers revealed they liked the plan for the conferences as it now operated, some had these changes to suggest:

I wish there was a quicker, easier way of preparing the conference cards for mailing.

Have the individual conference four to six weeks after classes begin. Then both parents and teacher will have more questions and know more about the child respectively and more will be gained from the interview.

A mother-teacher conference with no child present.

In my school I need more time on the first day of school and we need to stress that the parents keep their appointments at the specific time allotted. I
am also in favor of private conferences instead of written reports.

In general then, parents and teachers agree that the orientation program and parent-teacher conferences prepare the child and assist the parents and teachers in a much more able fashion than the former plans used in the Elkhart schools.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary. This study was made in order to evaluate the changes in the kindergarten program of the Elkhart Public Schools. The program has undergone a number of changes within the last few years, but to what extent improvement has been realized was not definitely known. So parent and teacher reaction and viewpoint were sought in an effort to clarify practices and to help map plans for continued improvement.

During the second week of September, 1953, questionnaires were submitted to parents entering children in school and to the ten kindergarten teachers in the school city. In addition a personal interview was conducted with each of the ten teachers. Data relating to the findings from the questionnaires and interviews were tabulated and analyzed.

Conclusions. An analysis of 323 responses to the questionnaire on parent and teacher attitude toward newer practices in kindergarten orientation and individual parent-teacher conferences revealed that both teachers and parents were in agreement that the present plan is a great improvement over past procedures.

Parents found the medical examination by the family physician much more thorough and less trying than the mass checkups. The parents also revealed by their comments that
the orientation as conducted had much to offer them as parents. The following is a summary of some of the comments received:

1. Reduced tension.

2. Provided opportunity to get acquainted with the teacher and school personnel.

3. Provided time to prepare the child for the school experience in the fall.

4. Provided opportunity to inform the parents of the school program and what to expect of the child.

5. Assured a smooth beginning for the five-year-old—one free from tension or fear.

Approximately 75 per cent of the parents were in agreement that the initial conference in the fall was not sufficient and that there should be more follow-ups. They were not in favor, however, of substituting the personal conference for the formal report card since 50 per cent expressed their disapproval.

In the matter of relationships parents thought most valuable in helping them to understand the teacher and to help the child they ranked the individual conference as being the most effective. This was in accord with the opinion stated by teachers. Parents viewed the friendly visit with the teacher at P T A as being quite effective; however the friendly visit at P T A was not considered of much importance by
teachers who tended to rank planned visits with parents and telephone conversations as being the more valuable.

The analysis of teacher response to the questionnaire revealed that teachers heartily endorsed the new plan and felt that it was most valuable to them as teachers since it achieved the following:

1. Gave them opportunity to gather valuable information on the physical and emotional background of the child
2. Provided the opportunity to get acquainted with the parent and to establish bonds of mutual understanding
3. Cleared problems of behavior early with mutual benefit to all concerned
4. Assured accuracy of data collected on the child
5. Simplified record keeping for a teacher
6. Made possible a first-day experience at school free of tension for both children and teacher

The study achieved its original purpose, namely; to review the progress made toward improved kindergarten orientation procedures, to note the progress made, to evaluate attitude toward parent-teacher conferences at kindergarten level, and to note possible changes that might lead to improved practices in the kindergarten orientation.

Recommendations. Present orientation procedures, although much improved, should be constantly checked for weaknesses that may present themselves. As for parent-teacher
conferences, several points require thoughtful study—for example, the difference of opinion between teacher and parent concerning the value of P T A visits. Perhaps teachers are losing a golden opportunity for meetings with parents by minimizing the importance of the social gatherings there and by not allowing a little more time at the close of P T A meetings to speak informally with interested parents. Another suggestion which might be used for modification of teacher-parent conferences is that of the parents who hesitate to speak freely before a child who is alert and listening. Perhaps some plan can be devised to care for this situation. Then the suggestion coming from both parents and teachers that later planned conferences are needed might also be implemented to improve parent-teacher-child relationship, especially in those cases where such conferences are obviously needed.

In view of the reluctance of the parents to substitute parent conferences for the formal report cards, it would be well for the school city to approach this problem slowly and carefully and only insofar as parents would be willing to consider any change. Perhaps a combination of formal report card and parent conference could be tried as a means of bridging the gap. For example, the first and third reports could be given in personal conferences with the second and fourth provided by a written type.
Finally, the questionnaire might be used again within a year or two in order that a comparative study could be made of parent-teacher response.
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APPENDIX
(THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE PARENTS)

ELKHART PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SURVEY ON
KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND PARENT CONFERENCES

We are interested in determining parent attitude toward the plan for kindergarten registration as it now operates and hope that we can secure suggestions from parents as to how the program can be improved and extended. This also includes the parent conference in the fall as a part of the orientation program.

I. KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP

1. Do you feel that the Kindergarten Roundup in May is helpful? . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . YES NO
   If so, in what way has it been of value? ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

2. What suggestions would you have for the improvement of the program? ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

3. Is the arrangement for the physical examination through the family physician preferable to the mass check up? . . YES NO

II. PARENT CONFERENCES

1. Did you favor the opportunity for the individual conference with your child's teacher during the school day? . . YES NO

2. Was the conference helpful to you? . . . . . . . . YES NO
   In what ways was it most helpful? ____________________________
   ____________________________

3. Do you feel that a conference might well be substituted for the more formal written report or report card? . . . . YES NO

4. Was the amount of time allowed sufficient? . . . . YES NO

5. Should there be other follow ups? . . . . . . . . YES NO
6. What type of contacts do you feel would best help you understand your child's teacher and in turn help you to help your child? Please list those you consider most helpful.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

7. In addition to individual, do you think there would be any value in group conferences with the teacher? YES NO

III. HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

1. Do you really feel that you have learned to know your child's teacher as a person? YES NO

2. Did you feel at ease with the teacher during the conference? YES NO

3. Were you able as a parent to present your problem? YES NO

4. Did you secure suggestions for help on the problem presented? YES NO

5. Was there mutual sharing and talking together? YES NO

6. Did the teacher do most of the talking? YES NO

7. Did you, the parent, do most of the talking? YES NO

8. What suggestions would you, as a parent, have to make toward improving the conference? Please be frank.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

ELKHART PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SURVEY ON

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND PARENT CONFERENCES

We are interested in securing your evaluation of the kindergarten orientation procedures and would like your suggestions and comments on how the program can be improved.

1. Is the Kindergarten Roundup in May of value to you as a teacher?
   
   In what ways has it been of greatest value?

   In what ways has it been of least value?

   Are there any changes you would suggest?

2. What types of contacts with parents have been of most value to you? Please rank by numbering in order of value, the ones that apply to you.
   a. Telephone conversations.
   b. Planned visits with parents.
   c. Written note describing a situation.
   d. Unplanned visit at school.
   e. Invitation to the home.
   f. Parent assistance on trips and excursions.
   g. Home room assignment as room mother.
   h. P. T. A. activities.
   i. Casual meetings at the grocery, on the street, at social gatherings.

   yes no
3. Do you approve of the plan for the individual parent-teacher conference in the fall? YES NO

4. What values did you as a teacher derive from the individual conference?

5. Of what value was it to parents?

6. What changes would you advise for another year?

7. Other comments:
INVITATION CARD

USED BY HEALTH CHAIRMAN

Your Pre-School Round-up and Registration Is

Day Time Date

School
SCHOOL CITY OF ELKHART
ENROLLMENT CARD

Name: ____________________________ ____________________________ ____________________________

Last First Middle

Address: __________________________________________________________ Phone ______________

Is this address within the city limits? __________________________

Date of birth: ______________________________________________ Age _______

Month Day Year

Father's Name ________________________________________________

Father's Occupation ____________________________________________

Mother's Name ________________________________________________

Mother's Occupation ____________________________________________

Where to call in case of emergency ______________________________

Church Preference _____________________________________________

School last attended ____________________________________________ Present Grade _______

Date ____________________________________ 19

Teacher
To the Parent:

Please supply the following information and return the blank to the school at your earliest convenience.

1. Pupil's Name ___________________________ Last  First   Middle

2. Birthdate ___________________________ Place__________________________
   Month  Day  Year  City  State

3. Present Address ___________________________

4. Father's Name ___________________________
   Address ___________________________
   Phone ___________________________
   Birthplace ___________________________
   Nationality ___________________________
   Living (Yes) ___  (No) ______  Divorced (Yes) ___  (No) ______

5. Mother's full name ___________________________
   (including first, maiden, and married name)
   Address ___________________________
   Phone ___________________________
   Birthplace ___________________________
   Nationality ___________________________
   Living (Yes) ___  (No) ______  Divorced (Yes) ___  (No) ______

6. Are these the child's natural parents?______ If not, explain on back of sheet.

7. Occupation of parent:  Father ___________________________  Mother ___________________________
   Where employed:  Father ___________________________  Mother ___________________________

8. Number of brothers: Older ___  Younger ___  Sisters: Older ___  Younger ___

9. Other members of the family ___________________________

10. What language other than English is spoken in the home? ___________________________

11. Former schools attended and when? ___________________________
SUMMER ROUND-UP OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

______________________________
Birthdate

______________________________
School

______________________________
Address

______________________________
Phone

IMMUNIZATIONS

______________________________
Smallpox

______________________________
Revaccination

______________________________
Diphtheria

______________________________
Booster Dose

______________________________
Whooping Cough

______________________________
Booster Dose

______________________________
Tetanus

______________________________
Booster Dose

______________________________
Chest X-Ray

______________________________
No

______________________________
Neg.

______________________________
Date

EXAMINATION

______________________________
Vision: R. ______ L. ______

______________________________
Skin

______________________________
Ears

______________________________
Throat

______________________________
Lungs

______________________________
Reflexes

______________________________
Hernia

______________________________
M. D.

______________________________
Date of Examination

L EXAMINATION

______________________________
No. of Carious

______________________________
Abcess

______________________________
D. D. S.

______________________________
Date of Examination

Note: Please return form to Pupil Personnel Office, 228 W. Franklin Street,
Elkhart, Indiana
SUMMER ROUND-UP OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Child's Name: ____________________________ Birthdate: ____________ School: ____________
Parent or Guardian: ____________________________ Address: ____________ Phone: ____________

DISEASE HISTORY

Chickenpox: ____________________________ Smallpox: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Measles: ____________________________ Revaccination: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Three Day Measles: ____________________________ Diphtheria: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Whooping Cough: ____________________________ Whooping Cough: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Mumps: ____________________________ Booster Dose: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Scarlet Fever: ____________________________ Booster Dose: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Rheumatic Fever: ____________________________ Date: ____________

IMMUNIZATIONS

Contact with Tuberculosis: Yes No
Skin Test Date: ____________ Pos. Neg. Date: ____________
Other serious illness or surgery:

EXAMINATION

Height: ____________ Weight: ____________ Posture: ____________ Vision: R. ____________ L. ____________
Nutrition: ____________________________
Allergy: ____________________________
Eyes: ____________________________
Nose: ____________________________
Glands: Lymph: ____________________________
Heart: ____________________________
Abdomen: ____________________________
Genitalia: ____________________________
Comment: ____________________________

Date of Examination: ____________
M. D. ____________________________

Child's Name: ____________________________

DENTAL EXAMINATION

Teeth: Good No. Filled No. of Carious Abcess: ____________________________
Comment: ____________________________

Date of Examination: ____________
D.D.S. ____________________________

Note: Please return form to Pupil Personnel Office, 228 W. Franklin Street, Elkhart, Indiana
Getting Ready for KINDERGARTEN

Elkhart Public Schools
ELKHART, INDIANA
A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

The school staff extends a cordial welcome to you and your child who is entering school for the first time. Going to school is an event to which most children look forward with enthusiasm.

Kindergarten provides the kind of educational program best suited to the five year olds. Such a program is concerned with the physical, mental, social, and emotional needs of the child. Activities are planned to provide a balance of proper exercise, rest, and creative activities. Experiences and guidance help the child become self-reliant, adjusted to others, and emotionally secure.

Children vary in their growth patterns. Some children are not ready to enter school at the age designated as the entrance age. If there is doubt in your mind, discuss the matter frankly with a teacher or principal.
Kindergarten is not required in Indiana. In Elkhart, a child who is five years old on or before October 31 is permitted to enter kindergarten at the beginning of the school year.

Parents registering their children must present a birth certificate or some legal document bearing the date of birth.

Registration for kindergarten will take place in each elementary school in April at special meetings called to enroll September entrants. At that time the school nurse will give the parent an examination blank to be taken to the family physician and dentist. After completion, the blank is returned to the Pupil Personnel Office in the envelope provided. The physicians of Elkhart will examine children for a fee of $2.00 if the blank is presented.

A child's success in his school life is dependent on his health. It is important that defects be discovered early and corrected if possible. The physical examination should be given early so that the summer months may be used to make
necessary corrections.

A fee of $2.00 a year for materials used in the kindergarten is payable on the date of enrollment in September.
THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

In kindergarten, your child will learn these things:

TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS

share experiences as well as toys
learn to control anger
learn to be a leader
learn to be a follower

TO EXPRESS HIMSELF

work with his hands
sing
learn many rhythms
dramatize stories

TO UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE BASIC SKILLS

recognize his name
enlarge his spoken vocabulary
listen to others
converse with others
play with others
follow directions
enjoy simple number games
enjoy stories and poetry
TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES

put away toys
care for class pets
pass out materials
care for own clothing
THE KINDERGARTEN DAY

There are two sessions of kindergarten...

A morning session beginning at 8:30 and ending at 11:00; and an afternoon session beginning at 12:55, ending at 3:20. A child attends but one session.

Assignment of children...

Usually the younger children attend the morning session and the older ones, the afternoon session.

Time to leave home...

Do not send your child to school too early. Ten minutes is time enough for him to take off his wraps. Estimate his walking time from home to school and allow an extra ten minutes. School patrol boys are usually on duty at this time. The patrols provide protection before each session and at dismissal time.
KINDERGARTEN READINESS

For safety's sake...

1. Your child should know the shortest, safest way home.
2. He should be independent, not dependent on another child to get him home.
3. He should walk on the sidewalk.
4. He should cross streets at intersections only.
5. He should watch for cars, trucks, and trains.
For physical well being...

To have a fair chance in school, your child should be strong and healthy.

Cleanliness is the first law of health. Your child should be an example of this.

The home and school can help children develop desirable health habits and attitudes by encouraging:

1. Independence in caring for physical needs—toilet habits, washing and drying hands, using a handkerchief, etc.

2. Cleaning of teeth after meals.

3. Wearing proper clothing for different types of weather.


5. Keeping hands, clothing, and foreign materials away from eyes, ears, mouth and nose.

6. A daily rest period at home.

7. Going to bed at 7:00; Friday night the only "late night."
8. The eating of well balanced, nutritious meals—discouraging eating candy and cookies between meals.

First aid

First aid is furnished for accidents occurring at school. In case of accident or illness, parents are reached before a child is sent home. It is important that the parent furnish the school with home and emergency telephone numbers.

Symptoms of illness

Children who show the following symptoms of illness should remain at home: sore throat, headache, cough, skin rash, fever, diarrhea, nausea.

A note should accompany the child upon his return to school following absence for any reason.

Children who have been absent from school due to contagious diseases are required to have a release from the family physician.
HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

1. Put your child's name on all of his possessions—coats, caps, boots, rain coats, and anything else he might bring to kindergarten.
2. Buy galoshes and rubbers large enough for your child to put on by himself.
3. Buy garments the child can fasten and unfasten by himself so that he will gain independence.
4. Teach your child his full name and address.
5. Notify the school if you plan to move and give the new address.
6. Read all notes and notices sent from school.
7. Teach him to speak clearly and distinctly and overcome baby talk.
8. Teach your child the way to and from school and to be able to go alone.
9. Give him responsibilities suited to his age and ability.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome in kindergarten. It is suggested that visiting be postponed until after the first month of school which is a period of adjustment. During this time, the child needs to help himself adjust to a new
situation, new friends, and school life in general.

Incidentals

If a child is bringing money for stamps, etc., enclose it in a purse or sealed envelope with his name and the purpose of the money written on it.

Writing

Many children like to write their names. If they ask for assistance, the teacher will help them individually, always using the following letter forms:

```
Aa BbCc Dd Ee
Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
```

RIGHT John       WRONG JOHN
Report Cards

Report cards are sent home four times a year. Remember that the card is an individual report giving a picture of the growth of your child in terms of attitude, habits, skills, social and character development. You can help your child feel secure by avoiding comparison of children's marks. Please sign before returning the report card. We are interested in your comments.

Parent-Teacher Association

You are urged to attend the meetings of the Parent-Teacher Association and Parent Education Group. Such contacts help in a better understanding of the problems common to all children.
HELPFUL BOOKS

Suggested books for parents

Parents Can Be People ............ Dorothy W. Baruch
Let's Talk about Children .......... Elizabeth Bradford
The Child from Five to Ten ........ A. L. Gesell
These Are Your Children .......... Gladys G. Jenkins
When Home and School Get Together .......... Redding
Understanding Your Child ........ James L. Hymes

Suggested stories to read to children

Candlelight Stories ............... Hutchinson
Favorite Stories Old and New ......... Gruenberg
Fireside Stories ................. Hutchinson
Golden Goose Book .............. Brooke

Picture and story books for young children

Little Golden Books Series

Alphabet from A to Z
Animals of Farmer Jones
Nursery Tales
Poky Little Puppy
Three Little Kittens
Adventures for Beginners .......................... Friskey
Chicken Little Count-to-Ten .......................... Friskey
Child's Garden of Verse ............................... Stevenson
Cry Baby Calf ......................................... Evers
Johnny Cottontail ....................................... Friskey
Little Airplane .......................................... Lenski
Little Train ............................................. Lenski
Me, Too .................................................. Willis
Kittens ................................................... Newberry
Mother Goose (Illustrated by Tenggren) . Mother Goose
Night Before Christmas ............................... Moore
Red Mittens ............................................. Bannon
Runaway Bunny .......................................... Brown
Spotty ..................................................... Rey
Tale of Peter Rabbit ..................................... Potter
NOTICE TO PARENTS CONCERNING
INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

School City of Elkhart
Elkhart, Indiana

The Elkhart Public Schools are making available parent-teacher conferences for parents entering children in kindergarten.

You are requested to report with your child at

_________________________ School, Room ____________________

on ___________________ Sept. __________________ at ______

Please, if at all possible, adhere to the time assigned as all parents are being definitely scheduled in order to afford time to talk with the teacher concerning the child. If impossible to keep the appointment, please call the school, phone __________________, to arrange another time.

Child assigned: A.M.____ P.M.____ Teacher________________
NEWSPAPER NOTICES CONCERNING

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Mary Daly school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend a registration meeting at 7:30 p.m. Monday at the Mary Daly School. Birth certificates are to be presented. There will be no facilities for children that evening.

ARDSDALE ROUNDUP
Pre-school registration will be held at 1:30 p.m. Thursday for parents in the Beardsley school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall. Birth certificates are to be presented. Facilities will be available for children Thursday night.

LINCOLN ROUNDUP
Pre-school registration will be held at 1:15 p.m. Wednesday for parents in the Lincoln school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall. Birth certificates are to be presented. Facilities will be available for children.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Rice school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend a registration meeting Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. The group has been divided by appointment cards. Those who have not received cards may attend at either time.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Middlebury school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend a registration meeting Friday at 1:15 p.m. at the school. Birth certificates are to be presented. There will be no facilities to care for children that afternoon.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Roosevelt school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend registration meetings at the school Monday afternoon. Those whose last names begin with A to M are to meet at 1 p.m. Those whose last names begin with N to Z are to meet at 2:15 p.m. Birth certificates are to be presented.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Monogram school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend a pre-school registration meeting Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the school. There will be no facilities for children. Birth certificates are to be presented.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Samuel Strong school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend a meeting at 1 p.m. Thursday in the school. Birth certificates are to be presented. There will be no facilities for children.

ULLERY ROUNDUP
Parents of children who will enter kindergarten at Ullery school next fall are to attend a pre-school roundup Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at the school. Birth certificates are to be presented. There will be no facilities for children at the roundup.

WESTON ROUNDUP
Pre-school registration will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday for parents in the Weston school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall. Birth certificates are to be presented. Facilities will be available for children.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Parents in the Riverview school district whose children will enter kindergarten next fall are to attend a registration meeting Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at the Riverview school. Birth certificates are to be presented. There will be no facilities for children.

WILLOWDALE ROUNDUP
Pre-school registration will be held Monday at 1:30 p.m. for parents in the Willlowdale school district whose children will enter kindergarten this fall. Facilities will be available for children and birth certificates are to be presented.