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STRAITSMORE PARCERMENT

A STUDY OF PARENTS' OPINIONS REGARDING CERTAIN ASPECTS
OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA

REYNOLDS

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A STUDY OF PARENTS' OPINIONS REGARDING CERTAIN ASPECTS
OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA

By

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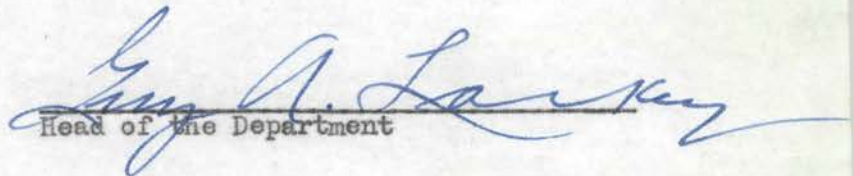
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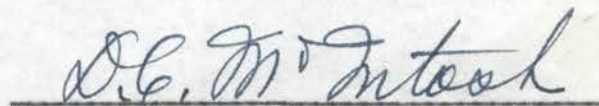
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O. J. S.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years an ever increasing number of school administrators has come to recognize the need of a continuous public relations or educational interpretation program. In the preface to "Interpreting the Public Schools," J. Erle Grinnell¹ indicates quite clearly the present trend.

Out of the recent troubled years of tax reduction and budget slashing has come a new consciousness of this principle: If our communities are to support a forward-looking program of free public education, they must be told, not once a year in a formal report, but day after day, week after week, from September to June, and in vacation time. They must be told through every voice the school can command. They must see as well as hear. They must feel pride in the achievements of the schools. They must hold their schools not as less than their prisons and fire departments and sewage-disposal plants, but as the very life of the community and its only real chance for future prosperity and distinction.

The dereliction of educational leadership in this all-important duty of keeping the public informed has been frequently noted. It is pleasant, therefore, to remark the vigor with which leaders are now throwing themselves into the full and fascinating discharge of that duty. Experiment in interpretation follows experiment. Newspapers, magazines, bulletins, exhibits, demonstrations--scores of ways have been found to carry the story of the schools to the homes. Progressive school officers are convinced that the community hereafter must be taken along with the schools, that it can no longer be left behind with concepts of "no lickin'," "no larnin'," and the ancient trinity of "readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic." They are urging the school heads of America to learn as quickly and completely as possible the best ways of showing and telling their communities all that the schools are doing.

¹ J. Erle Grinnell, Interpreting the Public Schools, p. v, 1937.

The increasing need for a systematic program of educational interpretation is clearly shown by Benjamin¹ in the editor's introduction to "Interpreting the Public Schools." He writes:

Democracy as a system whereby the masses of men order their own ways for their own benefit, demands that its institutions shall be firmly based upon popular appreciation and understanding. Of all democratic institutions, the public school is most in need of this support. It is the instrument whereby the members of a democratic system change their ways to meet the ideals of that system. To inspire and inform the supporting public concerning the goals and practices of modern education is therefore a chief function of the school. The democratic school system whose procedures and goals are kept hidden from the public in some pedagogical corner is a contradiction in terms. A proper education for all the children of all the people must be comprehended by all the people of all the children.

In a less complex age, this popular understanding of the school was relatively easier to secure than at present. There were two chief reasons for this condition. First, school procedures changed so slowly that a citizen's memories of his own school days gave fairly accurate representations of current educational practice. Second, schools were smaller than they are now, and they were centers of smaller communities. They bulked larger in the lives of their communities and were therefore easier to see and understand.

With marked changes in school organization and practice and with a growth in size of schools and of the communities which they serve, it has become increasingly important for those charged with the administration of schools to supplement in systematic fashion the public relations work which in simpler times was carried on incidentally.

If public schools are to have the support of the people in the various communities, school officials must provide a public relations program that will develop a favorable attitude toward the school. Guilford² says, "We are favorable or unfavorable toward a person, an institution, a proposal, or a social issue. We are for or against something."

¹ Ibid., p. xi.

² J. P. Guilford, General Psychology, p. 336, 1939.

An unfavorable attitude toward one particular aspect of public education may cause an individual to become antagonistic toward the entire system of education. This unfavorable attitude in many cases is based upon misinformation, preconceived notions, or prejudices. Regardless of the reason for its existence, however, it contributes to disunity and consequently to lack of adequate school support.

Since the questionnaire used in this study asks parents to express opinions, it will be well at this point to distinguish between the concept "attitude" and the concept "opinion" as used in the study. The following definitions of the terms employed by Misner¹ in his "Survey of Public Opinion with Respect to Public Schools in Washtenaw County, Michigan" will be used:

The concept "attitude" will be used to denote the sum total of an individual's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specific topic. Thus an individual's attitude about discipline in the schools means here all that he feels or thinks about freedom and obedience. It is admittedly a subjective and personal affair. The concept "opinion" will here mean a verbal expression of attitude.

This series of quotations shows to some extent the great need for doing everything possible to develop favorable attitudes toward the public schools.

If the parents are critical of the school and of the teachers, the child will become so.²

¹ Paul J. Misner, A Survey of Public Opinion with Respect to Public Schools in Washtenaw County, Michigan, Unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1935.

² Joseph Tiffin, Frederic B. Knight, and Charles C. Josey, The Psychology of Normal People, p. 119, 1940.

Men and women who haven't been inside a public school in thirty-five years, whose own children have long been out of school, will still stand firmly for talent and buildings worthy of the ideals for which the school stands. Perhaps they will have little accurate information about the schools. They may not know definitely of any important reform or innovation in curriculum, in instruction, in care of health, or in administration. They may oppose bitterly some important change, some valuable addition to the curriculum, because they have not understood it, because they have had only misinformation in the matter. They may, therefore, appear to school officials as perverse, small-minded obstructionists, but they profoundly believe themselves to be and they are friends of the school. To call them less would be to insult them.¹

Of constant recurrence are cries against "fads and frills" and against modern teaching methods. The public still gropes for explanations of A. Q.'s and I. Q.'s while school men go blithely on to still more mysterious innovations. The result is indifference, even antagonism.²

Teachers, too, have probably been remiss. They have not often enough conceived their duty as embracing work with the elders of the community. They have given their whole working time (for which they were paid) to their pupils and their leisure to their colleagues. They have not considered that they had any further responsibility to discharge, save, perhaps, assisting with church work or with community character clubs. They have not endeavored to clarify larger aims to their pupils that the pupils might be better interpreters. Nor have they gone into the homes to attempt a material understanding. Perhaps they have shared with one greater part of the public the simple faith that schools are good for society and that nothing specific need be done about understanding them. It is extremely probable, as a matter of fact, that a majority of the teachers are not themselves sufficiently conversant with the whole school program and its objectives to be more than indifferently successful as apostles.³

-----in every locality cries for further retrenchment from taxpayers' committees, citizens' budget commissions, the bankers, the power interests, the merchants' associations, and the real-estate associations are being heard. To a large extent these have already been heeded, and at a time

¹ J. Erle Grinnell, op. cit., p. 2.

² J. Erle Grinnell, op. cit., p. 9.

³ J. Erle Grinnell, op. cit., p. 16.

when unprecedentedly heavy demands are being made on our public schools, they have been forced almost everywhere to run on reduced budgets, to cut teachers' salaries, to increase the size of classes, and to drop such "fads and frills" as the teaching of music, child-guidance work, playground work, school gardens, vacation schools--in short, all the myriad developments of the school system which are intelligent responses to the complex needs of the community, the very features which make the public-school system, with all its weaknesses, an asset to democracy.¹

The Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to provide objective evidence regarding parents' opinions of the Tulsa elementary schools upon which to base a program of educational interpretation.

The Significance of this Study

In his review of "Interpreting the Public Schools," Belmont Farley² says, "The arguments advanced for interpretation constitute a veritable catalogue of misconceptions of education which can be righted, and of antagonisms which can be removed through an effective program."

It seems to the writer that the public schools cannot be effectively interpreted until the nature of these misconceptions and antagonisms is known. This study attempts to find out what some of them are in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It shows the opinions of 2908 parents regarding twenty-eight aspects of elementary education.

¹ Eunice Langdon, "The Teacher Faces the Depression," Nation, vol. 137, August 16, 1933, p. 182.

² Belmont Farley, "The School and the Public," Elementary School Journal, vol. 38, pp. 627-628, April, 1938.

If the opinions of parents regarding a particular aspect of public education are not favorable, school officials and teachers after carefully studying the situation, should make desirable changes in the schools or through proper means of interpretation should justify the procedures now being used.

If the opinions of parents regarding public education are favorable, school officials and teachers should give attention to those warnings given by Miller¹ in his discussion of "Public Opinion Polls and Public Schools":

The good in such a poll as this lies not so much in the findings but rather in the discussion which may be provoked by publication of the findings--discussion in terms of concrete goals and practices. Such discussion naturally would relate schools to the lives of the people and to the world in which they must live and make a living. It would involve creative thinking. It would make less likely the danger of the schools becoming a channel of communication for the propaganda of some dominant group. It would reveal the importance of minority opinion. If this were done there would be no danger of smug self-satisfaction on the part of educators in a vote which revealed 80 per cent or 90 per cent of the public being "for" the schools as they are. That satisfaction on the part of public and educators can cause, as it has throughout history, educational systems to remain respected and respectable long after they have served their purpose.

.

Critics of the polls maintain that findings fail almost utterly to indicate the intensity with which opinions are held. Counting up "yesses" and "noes" and listing "no opinions" may add up to exactly nothing, say these critics, if the persons polled are poorly informed, if they are ashamed to answer "no opinion", if they fail to understand the question asked.

¹ Clyde R. Miller, "Public Opinion Polls and Public Schools," Teachers College Record, vol. 43, pp. 245-254, January, 1942.

Related Studies

One phase of the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards was a study of judgments of parents concerning American secondary schools¹ in two hundred high schools. Parents of 20,481 seniors were asked to rate the high schools as exceedingly satisfactory, very satisfactory, not very satisfactory, or exceedingly unsatisfactory on the following twelve points:

1. General quality of teaching.
2. Friendliness and helpfulness of the teachers.
3. Pupil development through pupil activities (athletic, musical, dramatic, literary, artistic, etc.)
4. Development of good health habits.
5. Development of good reading habits and interests.
6. Development of desirable social life.
7. Training in good citizenship.
8. Information and advice on further education.
9. Information and advice on choice of vocation.
10. Training that will help in getting a job and earning a living.
11. Development of good character.
12. All round development and general experience in the school.

Fifty-five per cent of the parents of private school pupils returned their cards, while only thirty-one per cent of the parents of public school pupils responded.

A percentage distribution of the total number of responses to the twelve aspects follows:

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Public Schools</u>	<u>Private Schools</u>
Exceedingly satisfactory	22.8	46.9
Very satisfactory	44.3	38.0
Satisfactory	21.7	9.1
Not very satisfactory	6.0	1.9
Exceedingly unsatisfactory	2.5	0.6
No reply	2.7	3.5

¹ Walter C. Bells, "Judgments of Parents Concerning American Secondary Schools," School and Society, vol. 46, pp. 409-416, September 25, 1937.

The greatest degree of satisfaction was found for the schools of the southern states and the least for those in the northwest area.

A study entitled "What People Think about Youth and Education" was made by the American Youth Commission at the suggestion of the Committee on Implementation of Studies in Secondary Education. Arrangements were made with the American Institute of Public Opinion to collect and tabulate the necessary facts. The study was reported in a National Education Association research bulletin.¹

The following conclusions were stated:

1. The American public has a generally favorable point of view toward the present day program of public education.
2. The public believes that the public school should offer fair and equal opportunities to all youth.
3. The public favors a special program for unemployed youth who are not in school.
4. The public is for freedom in teaching and in learning.
5. The public will not be satisfied with a static educational program.

"A survey of Public Opinion with Respect to Public Schools in Washtenaw County, Michigan" was made by Misner.² He used the interview technique with twenty-six questions of this type:

1. When should education at public expense begin?
2. Why do you favor or oppose the kindergarten?
3. How far should the individual be permitted to continue his education at public expense?

¹ National Education Association, "What People Think about Youth and Education," Research Bulletin, vol. 18, no. 5, November, 1940.

² Paul J. Misner, op. cit.

4. What do you expect the school to do for its pupils?
5. What objection do you have to the assessment of taxes for the support of schools?
6. To what extent should the control of our educational system be made a function of the Federal government?

In connection with a study of the adaptability of public school systems, Mort, Cornell, and Hinton¹ developed a questionnaire, "What Should Our Schools Do." According to the authors, it was developed chiefly for the purpose of determining the extent to which parents and teachers are willing to accept newer practices in education. It contains one hundred items. The person marking the questionnaire is instructed to underline the word "agree" or the word "disagree." These are examples of the items:

1. Schools should not expect all children to reach the same standard of achievement.
2. Changes in public school programs are not justified if they require the expenditure of more money.
3. Kindergarten programs are mostly play and therefore are not essential.
4. Many practices in education exist simply because of tradition.

Using the interview technique in a study of "Opinion Conflict and School Support" in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Rope² asked this question: "In general do you think that the public schools of Pittsburgh are doing a good job or a poor job?" He reported that 77.46 per cent of the responses were favorable.

¹ Paul H. Mort, Francis G. Cornell, and Norman H. Hinton, What Should Our Schools Do?, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938.

² Frederick T. Rope, Opinion Conflict and School Support, Contributions to Education, no. 858, 1941.

A study, the results of which have not been published, was made in the schools of Chicago Heights, Illinois by Raymond D. Meade, Dorothy Martin, Dwight Allard, and Ben A. Sylla. They asked parents to respond to a number of statements by checking "only one of the alternatives in each case". The following statements are typical of those which were used in their study:

1. School expenditures should be:

- _____ a. Reduced, even if some school services may have to be discontinued as a result of such condition.
- _____ b. Kept at the present level.
- _____ c. Increased, to provide additional services the schools should render and to increase efficiency.

2. The annual salary for a good experienced school teacher should be at least:

- _____ a. \$1000 _____ b. \$1500 _____ c. \$2000
- _____ d. \$2500 _____ e. \$3000

3. In comparison with the schools you attended, the public elementary schools of Chicago Heights in recent years have taught the children:

a. To read:

- _____ (1) Less well
- _____ (2) About as well
- _____ (3) Better

b. To spell:

- _____ (1) Less well
- _____ (2) About as well
- _____ (3) Better

c. To write:

- _____ (1) Less well
- _____ (2) About as well
- _____ (3) Better

d. To use arithmetic:

- _____ (1) Less well
- _____ (2) About as well
- _____ (3) Better

Except for the fact that it is done on the elementary level, the present study is nearest in purpose to the study of judgments of parents concerning American secondary schools¹ made in connection with the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards.

The Data

The data used in this study were secured through the distribution of a questionnaire to parents of children in grades two, four, and six in thirty Tulsa, Oklahoma elementary schools.

Preparing the Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the present study originally contained many more items and was entirely different in form. Over a period of several months, suggestions for improving the form of the questionnaire were secured from many people, including professors of education, elementary school principals, teachers, parents, and finally the superintendent and the assistant superintendent of Tulsa schools who offered suggestions when it was presented for their approval. The "Informal Rating Plan for Questionnaires" recommended in the National Education Association study of questionnaires² was used as a guide in the entire process of preparation.

¹ Walter C. Eells, op. cit.

² National Education Association, "The Questionnaire," Research Bulletin, vol. 8, no. 1, January, 1930.

To avoid influencing opinion, the twenty-nine items to which responses were to be made were not stated in the form of questions. Parents were asked to answer eight questions on the last page of the questionnaire in order to provide information for studying the data in terms of the sex of parents, the length of time the child had attended Tulsa public schools, the educational background of parents, the occupations of parents, and the interest shown in the schools as indicated by voting in school elections, visiting classes, and attending meetings held at the school.

The questionnaire in its final form is found on the next four pages.

Distribution and Return of Questionnaires

Principals of the thirty elementary schools of Tulsa agreed to be responsible for distributing the questionnaires in their respective buildings. One-half of all the children in grades two, four, and six received questionnaires and were instructed to take them home to their parents. To determine which children should receive questionnaires, they were asked to number off in ones and twos. All children who were number one received two copies of the questionnaire in a nine by twelve inch manila envelope, specially prepared for returning them. (Two ^{omit} copies were provided in case both parents wished to respond.)

To encourage parents to express themselves freely and frankly, they were asked not to sign their names and to seal the envelope. The envelope was addressed to the writer and parents were told that

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TULSA
OKLAHOMA

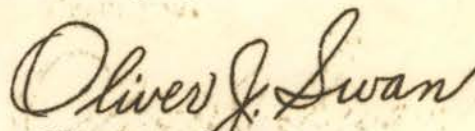
March 6, 1942

Parents of Tulsa Children:

It is of value periodically to study the reaction of parents toward the public schools. This questionnaire is being sent to the parents of children in the second, fourth, and sixth grades of the Tulsa schools.

We are asking you to state your honest opinion concerning certain aspects of public education in Tulsa. You are neither asked to praise nor to defend the schools, only to judge them in terms of your child's school experience. Please indicate your opinion on each statement, and send the questionnaire by your child to the office of your school principal. Two copies have been provided in case both parents wish to express opinions. An envelope is being sent for your convenience in returning them. No attempt will be made to find out how any individual has checked the statements. Please do not sign your name.

Thank you,



Oliver J. Swan
Committee on Educational Interpretation
Tulsa Public Schools

DIRECTIONS FOR MARKING

Under each statement you will find five possible responses. Draw a line under the one which best expresses your opinion.

If you feel that you do not know enough about the statement to form an opinion, you should underline the words "No Opinion".

Please use the margin or the back of this questionnaire for writing any remarks which you wish to make about these or any other aspects of public education in Tulsa.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|--------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| 1. | TRAINING IN GOOD CITIZENSHIP | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 2. | THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD CHARACTER TRAITS | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 3. | THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD HEALTH HABITS | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 4. | THE TEACHING OF READING | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 5. | THE TEACHING OF ARITHMETIC | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 6. | THE TEACHING OF SPELLING | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 7. | THE TEACHING OF PENMANSHIP | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 8. | TEACHING CHILDREN TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES WELL IN WRITING | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 9. | TEACHING CHILDREN TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES WELL ORALLY | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 10. | STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL GOVERNMENT (STUDENT COUNCILS, SCHOOL PATROLS, ETC.) | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |
| 11. | OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUPIL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS MUSIC, ART, AUDITORIUM, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION | | | | |
| | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory | |
| | | No Opinion | | | |

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 12. | OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN CHILDREN TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CARRY THEM TO COMPLETION | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 13. | THE EMPHASIS UPON SAFETY EDUCATION | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 14. | THE AMOUNT OF SUBJECT MATTER LEARNED | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 15. | THE AMOUNT OF HOME WORK ASSIGNED | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 16. | THE PLATOON TYPE OF ORGANIZATION USED IN TULSA (WHERE EACH CHILD SPENDS HALF OF THE DAY IN HOME ROOM AND THE OTHER HALF DAY IN ART, MUSIC, LIBRARY, AUDITORIUM, SCIENCE, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES) | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 17. | SCHOOL DISCIPLINE | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 18. | THE AMOUNT OF FREEDOM ALLOWED CHILDREN IN THE TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 19. | REAL INTEREST SHOWN BY TEACHERS IN THE CHILDREN'S PROGRESS | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 20. | THE WILLINGNESS OF TEACHERS TO GIVE HELP TO CHILDREN WHO NEED IT | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 21. | THE REPORTING OF PUPIL PROGRESS TO PARENTS | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 22. | THE SIZE OF CLASSES | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 23. | THE GROUPING OF CHILDREN IN CLASSES WITHIN EACH GRADE (CHILDREN CAN BE GROUPEd ACCORDING TO THEIR ABILITY TO DO SCHOOL WORK OR WITHOUT ANY REFERENCE TO ABILITY) | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |
| 24. | THE ABILITY AND TRAINING OF THE TEACHERS | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
| | | | No Opinion | | |

25. PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION
 Very Satisfactory Satisfactory Unsatisfactory Very Unsatisfactory
 No Opinion
26. FRIENDLINESS OF TEACHERS
 Very Satisfactory Satisfactory Unsatisfactory Very Unsatisfactory
 No Opinion
27. WILLINGNESS OF TEACHERS TO EXPLAIN THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL TO PARENTS
 Very Satisfactory Satisfactory Unsatisfactory Very Unsatisfactory
 No Opinion
28. COOPERATION OF THE SCHOOL WITH THE HOME
 Very Satisfactory Satisfactory Unsatisfactory Very Unsatisfactory
 No Opinion
29. GENERAL RESULTS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS SHOULD BE YOUR GENERAL IMPRESSION OF THE TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS)
 Very Satisfactory Satisfactory Unsatisfactory Very Unsatisfactory
 No Opinion

WE SHALL ALSO APPRECIATE HAVING YOU GIVE US THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

30. WAS THIS QUESTIONNAIRE FILLED OUT BY A MOTHER? _____ BY A FATHER? _____
31. HAS THE CHILD WHO BROUGHT THIS QUESTIONNAIRE HOME RECEIVED ALL OF HIS OR HER SCHOOL TRAINING IN THE TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS? _____ IF NOT, ABOUT HOW MANY MONTHS HAS HE OR SHE ATTENDED OTHER SCHOOLS? _____
32. WHAT IS THE HIGHEST GRADE YOU REACHED IN SCHOOL? _____
33. WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION OR TYPE OF WORK? _____
 IF A HOUSEWIFE, WHAT IS YOUR HUSBAND'S OCCUPATION OR TYPE OF WORK? _____

34. HAVE YOU VOTED IN A SCHOOL ELECTION DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS? _____
35. APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY MEETINGS HAVE YOU ATTENDED AT YOUR SCHOOL DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS? _____
36. HAVE YOU VISITED ANY OF YOUR CHILD'S CLASSES DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS? _____
37. DO YOU CONSIDER THE TEACHER'S ADVICE CONCERNING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION AS VALUABLE AS YOU DO THE DOCTOR'S ADVICE CONCERNING YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH? _____

REMARKS:

it would not be opened until it reached the person to whom it was addressed. They were also told that no attempt would be made to find out how any individual had marked the questionnaire.

The note to parents and the address appeared on each envelope in the order and position shown on page ^{blank} eighteen.

When the questionnaires had been returned to the principal's office by the children, he sent them to the Board of Education Building where they were received and opened by the person to whom they were addressed.

have
The total number of families receiving questionnaires was 2805. In 722 of these families both parents expressed opinions. In addition to the 1444 questionnaires returned by these families, 1464 responses were received from families where only one parent expressed opinions. Thus, it can be seen that the 2908 responses received represented a total of 2186 families or 75.1 per cent of the total number of families receiving questionnaires.

Tabulation of the Data

After the envelopes containing questionnaires were opened, these steps were taken:

Step 1--If only one parent responded, the questionnaire was coded to represent an individual response. If both parents responded, the two questionnaires were stapled together and coded to represent responses from both parents.

Step 2--Questionnaires were grouped according to schools and grades. A code representing the school was placed on each questionnaire when it was taken out of the envelope. The date on the letter accompanying the questionnaire indicated the grade to which it was to be given. March 2

IMPORTANT

PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRES IN THIS ENVELOPE. BE SURE TO SEAL IT. THE ENVELOPE WILL NOT BE OPENED UNTIL IT REACHES THE PERSON TO WHOM IT IS ADDRESSED. NO ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO FIND OUT HOW ANY INDIVIDUAL HAS MARKED THE QUESTIONNAIRE. DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME.

TO OLIVER J. SWAN
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETATION
TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION BUILDING

CARE OF THE PRINCIPAL _____ SCHOOL

indicated second grade, March 4 indicated fourth grade, and March 6 indicated sixth grade.

Step 3--A serial number was placed on each questionnaire.

Step 4--Responses to the first twenty-nine statements and to the eight questions on the last page of the questionnaire were coded in the margin to the left.

Step 5--The data were punched on Hollerith cards, checked and sorted, and tabulated by International Business Machines.

Step 6--All comments written on the questionnaires were typed on cards so that they might be studied more conveniently.

Analysis of the Data

Since the data are to be used as the basis for a program of educational interpretation, it will be important to know which aspects of elementary education present the greatest need for interpretation. It will also be important to study the data in terms of various classifications of parents so that the emphasis upon interpretation may be directed toward the parent group where the greatest need exists.

Opinions of parents regarding each of the aspects of elementary education will be discussed in terms of the following classifications:

1. Responses Classified According to the Sex of Parents. To determine whether the responses made by mothers differed appreciably from those made by fathers, the data for each were tabulated separately. Since there was also a possibility that significant differences might exist between grade levels, tabulations were made for mothers and for fathers at each of the three grade levels

included in the investigation. Additional tabulations were made for mothers and for fathers in the cases where both parents expressed opinions. The purpose of making these tabulations was to determine whether there were significant differences of opinion between wives and husbands when both responded.

2. Responses Classified According to the Length of Time Children Have Been in Tulsa Schools. To provide data which would indicate the influence of the length of time children have been in the Tulsa public schools upon the opinions of parents, those who participated in this study were asked the following questions: "Has the child who brought this questionnaire home received all of his or her training in the Tulsa public schools? If not, about how many months has he or she attended other schools?"

Responses were divided into the following three groups:

- a. Responses of parents whose child had received all of his or her school training in the Tulsa public schools.
- b. Responses of parents whose child had received one-half or more of his or her school training in the Tulsa public schools.
- c. Responses of parents whose child had received less than one-half of his or her school training in the Tulsa public schools.

3. Responses Classified According to the Educational Background of Parents. Parents who expressed opinions which are being used in this study were asked to indicate the highest grade which they reached in school. The purpose of this request was to make possible a comparison of data in terms of the educational background of the

parents expressing opinions. Responses were divided into the following four groups:

- a. Responses of parents who did not attend school beyond the eighth grade.
- b. Responses of parents who attended high school.
- c. Responses of parents who attended college.
- d. Responses of parents who received college degrees.

Parents who did not specifically state that they had finished college or that they had received college degrees, were placed in the group which had attended college but had not received degrees.

4. Responses Classified According to the Occupations of Parents.

Information upon which to base a study of opinions in terms of the occupational status was obtained by asking parents to answer these questions: "What is your occupation or type of work? If a housewife, what is your husband's occupation or type of work?" No attempt was made to include all occupations in the study. It was the writer's opinion that the study of a few selected occupational groups would be sufficient. It was decided to use the following three groups:

- a. Business and professional men and the wives of business and professional men.
- b. Men who have trades and the wives of men who have trades.
- c. Common laborers and the wives of common laborers.

These groups were selected because they were, in the opinion of the writer, representative of three fairly distinct levels so far as training and salary were concerned. Only the responses clearly belonging in one of these classifications were included.

5. Responses Classified According to the Parents' Indication of Interest in the Public Schools. Three important ways by which parents show interest in their public schools are:

- a. By voting in school elections
- b. By attending meetings at the school
- c. By visiting their children's classes

The study of opinions in terms of interest shown in the public schools will be based upon these three ways of showing interest. Since the questionnaire used in the investigation was distributed early in March, it seemed wise to use a period of two years instead of one in these questions which parents were asked to answer: "Have you voted in a school election during the last two years?" "Approximately how many meetings have you attended at your school during the last two years?" "Have you visited any of your child's classes during the last two years?"

The frequency of responses in each of these classifications and the percentage of responses that were checked very satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, very unsatisfactory and no opinion will be presented in a table for each item regarding which parents expressed opinions.

Plan of the Report of Results

Tabulations of responses to each of the twenty-nine items are reported in Chapters II, III, IV, V, and VI. Opinions regarding the more formal aspects of elementary school curriculum in Tulsa are reported in Chapter II and opinions regarding the less formal aspects are given in Chapter III. Chapter IV is devoted to

opinions regarding the administrative organization of the elementary schools. Opinions regarding school personnel are discussed in Chapter V. Home-school relationships as parents see them are presented in Chapter VI. Chapter VII is devoted to a study of written comments made by parents in addition to the objective responses which they had made to the twenty-nine items in the questionnaire. A summary of findings and implications of the study is found in Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER II

OPINIONS REGARDING THE MORE FORMAL ASPECTS
OF THE TULSA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Many parents of children in the elementary schools today evaluate the program of elementary education in terms of the "grade" school which they attended. From the time they finished the elementary school until the time their first child entered school they had, in most cases, given very little attention to education's continuous adjustment to the progress in social organization.

When these parents visit the school or listen to the child tell of his experiences at school, they perhaps wonder about many of the aspects of the newer type of education described by Otto:¹

In addition to, and perhaps quite apart from the quantitative expansion of elementary education, the school has assumed much wider functions and responsibilities than it did even thirty years ago. The progress in social organization and the accompanying changes in the general conditions of living have tended to shift the burdens for rearing and training children more and more from the home to the school. In response the school curriculum has expanded. New subjects have been added. The "extra-curricular" have become curricular. New activities--literary, dramatic, musical, athletic, civic, and social--have been developed. The modern school is no longer a mere place for academic instruction, for all aspects of child development are now the concern of the school. The schools have undertaken to direct many sides of juvenile life formerly controlled by the home, the community, the state, the church, or other agencies of organized society.

¹ Henry J. Otto, Elementary School Organization and Administration, p. 6, 1934.

Parents are likely to judge this newer type school in terms of their own experiences and to conclude that the school is not satisfactorily meeting the needs of their children because drill methods are not predominant and there is evidence that enjoyable school experiences have been substituted for the rigid discipline of the earlier school. This should certainly be kept in mind as opinions regarding the aspects of elementary education included in Chapters II and III are studied.

Regardless of the lack of understanding, the misinformation or the prejudices upon which unfavorable opinions are based, it is well to know to what extent they exist and in which groups of parents they are predominant. The fact should also be recognized that some of the unfavorable opinions are based upon correct information and a fairly thorough understanding of school conditions. If the percentage of unfavorable opinion regarding a particular aspect of education is higher than for most of the other aspects of education, it indicates a definite need for desirable changes or for effective interpretation. It certainly should cause school officials and teachers to study carefully the aspects of education toward which opinion is unfavorable. Such study should result in improvement or in attempts to justify the present procedure if it is found to be satisfactory.

Tabulations of opinions of parents regarding each of the more formal aspects of the Tulsa elementary school curriculum are presented in this chapter with their implications for interpretation.

To prevent excessive monotony in interpreting the data which are presented in the various tables, the writer has chosen to combine responses which were checked "satisfactory" and those which were

checked "very satisfactory" and to speak of them as favorable or as satisfactory. Responses checked "unsatisfactory" and those checked "very unsatisfactory" were combined in the same manner and spoken of as unfavorable or as unsatisfactory. Responses which were checked "no opinion" and those where none of the five objective responses were checked were also combined and spoken of in terms of failure to express opinions. If the reader wishes to know the exact percentage for each of the six types of response, that information is given in each of the tables.

Opinions Regarding the Teaching of Reading

Table I shows the distribution of opinions regarding the teaching of reading in the Tulsa elementary schools for each classification of parents used in the investigation. The numbers shown in the distribution represent the percentage of the total frequency for that particular classification of parents. The numbers from one to six in the extreme left hand column represent the types of responses which are explained in the footnote below the table.

Of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires, eighty-eight per cent were favorable in their responses to methods of teaching reading, eight per cent were unfavorable, and four per cent did not express opinions. In the opinion of the writer, this is a very favorable response considering the fact that the parents who expressed opinions learned to read under very different conditions in most instances. The fact that only four per cent failed to express opinions indicates that most parents have definite opinions regarding the teaching of reading. In their responses regarding several of the other aspects of elementary education in Tulsa, a much

Table I

OPINIONS REGARDING THE TEACHING OF READING

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																										
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses	
1	50	46	46	41	41	42	46	43	46	41	40	45	42	50	46	45	40	42	45	43	44	47	43	45	44	44	44
2	40	42	45	44	46	46	44	45	42	48	47	46	46	38	37	38	51	46	41	47	43	41	47	43	45	44	44
3	5	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	4	4	6	6	13	12	4	5	8	5	8	8	4	7	6	6	6
4	1	2	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2
5	3	3	1	4	3	3	1	3	2	2	7	4	3	2	1	2	1	5	3	3	3	2	4	2	4	3	3
6	2	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

greater percentage of these parents failed to express opinions. The classification of parents having the greatest percentage who failed to express opinions was parents whose children had received less than one half of their school training in the Tulsa Public Schools.

Most favorable responses came from fourth grade mothers, parents who had attended only elementary schools, and parents in the trades classification. These groups of parents were ninety-one per cent favorable in their opinions.

Although eighty-three per cent of the parents who have college degrees and the parents who are business and professional men or the wives of business and professional men were favorable in their opinions, they registered the largest percentage of disapproval of the reading program. The sixteen per cent of unfavorable opinions which they expressed was twice as great as the eight per cent of unfavorable opinions expressed by the 2908 parents of all classifications.

Slightly more favorable responses came from those who had not voted in school elections, those who had attended no meetings at the school, and those who had visited no classes than from those who had voted, those who had attended meetings, and those who had visited classes. It is the writer's opinion that this may be due to one or more of the following reasons:

1. Too often parents do not vote in school elections unless there is something they definitely wish to vote against.
2. Too often parents do not visit the school or attend meetings at the school unless a definite problem exists with respect to their child's school experiences.

3. Too often school officials and teachers do not take advantage of opportunities which they have when parents visit the school to interpret to them the activities of the school and to point out advantages over the traditional type school which the parents attended.

This will perhaps help to explain similar reactions to other aspects of elementary education in Tulsa to be presented later.

Opinions Regarding the Teaching of Arithmetic

As indicated by the distribution shown in Table II, parents are not as definite in their opinions regarding the teaching of arithmetic as they are in their opinions regarding the reading program. Although the percentage of unfavorable opinion was only one per cent greater, twice as many parents failed to express opinions. Eighty-three per cent of the 2908 parents expressed favorable opinions, nine per cent expressed unfavorable opinions, and eight per cent expressed no opinion. The highest percentage of favorable opinion was expressed by parents of the trades classification. Their opinions were eighty-eight per cent favorable.

Parents with college degrees were again the most critical. Nineteen per cent of them are dissatisfied with the teaching of arithmetic. Their critical attitude toward attempts to depart from the traditional in dealing with the more formal aspects of elementary school curriculum may be due to their ability to find defects in the program because of their superior educational background, or it may be due to their several years of additional contact with the traditional type of education.

Table II

OPINIONS REGARDING THE TEACHING OF ARITHMETIC

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	29	28	36	30	37	38	36	31	33	32	34	41	32	26	25	26	37	43	32	35	35	32	34	34	33	33
2	47	48	50	55	49	49	49	52	50	54	44	46	52	51	44	47	51	44	50	49	47	50	52	49	51	50
3	6	9	9	9	7	7	8	9	7	7	11	5	7	12	16	13	5	3	9	6	8	8	6	8	7	8
4	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	3	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1
5	14	11	3	2	3	3	5	5	6	5	9	5	6	7	10	9	4	5	6	7	7	7	5	7	6	6
6	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

The informal approach to arithmetic which places the emphasis on number concepts rather than manipulation of numbers in the primary grades of the Tulsa Public Schools is very different to the approach used in traditional schools of the type attended by most parents.

Common laborers and the wives of common laborers expressed the least dissatisfaction with the teaching of arithmetic. Less dissatisfaction was again expressed by those who did not vote, those who did not attend meetings at the school, and those who did not visit classes.

The highest percentage of parents expressing no opinion were parents of second grade children. This is perhaps due largely to the fact that little formal arithmetic is presented before grade three. Also high in per cent expressing no opinion and in per cent of unfavorable responses were parents of children who had received less than one-half of their school training in the Tulsa Public Schools. This is perhaps due to the more advanced program of manipulation of numbers in other schools which the children have attended.

Opinions Regarding the Teaching of Spelling

The teaching of spelling, like the teaching of reading, is an aspect of education regarding which most parents have opinions and are quite willing to express them. Table III presents data to show that eighty-eight per cent of all the parents expressed favorable opinions. Nine per cent of the opinions expressed were unfavorable and only three per cent failed to express opinions.

Table III

OPINIONS REGARDING THE TEACHING OF SPELLING

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings	(1761) Visited Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	46	43	42	36	41	41	44	40	42	40	45	45	42	41	33	33	41	44	39	45	43	41	44	43	42	42
2	44	44	43	51	43	45	45	47	46	50	45	46	48	44	47	47	51	42	47	46	47	47	46	47	46	46
3	4	7	7	7	7	8	6	8	7	8	5	5	5	10	12	13	4	5	8	5	6	7	6	5	7	7
4	1	1	1	3	2	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
5	3	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	2	4	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	2
6	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

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Parents who had visited classes were slightly more favorable in their opinions regarding the teaching of spelling than those who had not visited classes. This is possibly due to the fact that methods of teaching spelling have not undergone as great a change in most classrooms as have the methods of teaching reading and arithmetic.

College trained parents were again the most critical. In spite of their fifteen per cent of unfavorable opinions, eighty per cent of them were favorable in their attitude toward the teaching of spelling. Only five per cent of them failed to express opinions.

Ninety-two per cent of all parents in the trades classification were favorable. This group registered only five per cent of unfavorable responses.

The fathers of children in each of the three grades studied were more unfavorable in their responses than the mothers. Husbands, in families where both parents responded, expressed slightly more unfavorable opinions than their wives.

Opinions Regarding the Teaching of Penmanship

Approximately the same percentage of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires expressed unfavorable opinions toward each of the "Three R's." Fewer parents, however, felt qualified to express opinions on the teaching of arithmetic and penmanship than on the teaching of reading. According to the objective responses tabulated and reported in Table IV, eighty-three per cent of the parents are favorable toward the teaching of penmanship, eight per cent of them are unfavorable, and nine per cent of them expressed no opinion.

Parents of the labor classification were again the most favorable of any of the classifications with eighty-five per cent of them favorable, one per cent of them unfavorable, and thirteen per cent of them expressing no opinion.

The college degree parents rose to a new high in their unfavorable opinions regarding the teaching of penmanship with twenty-eight per cent of the responses registering unfavorable opinions and only sixty-three per cent of them registering favorable opinions. In comparing opinions expressed by each of the four classifications according to educational background, it is interesting to note that the per cent of unfavorable opinion increased with each higher level of educational background.

Parents who had visited classes responded slightly more favorably than those who had not visited. Those who had voted and those who had attended meetings continued to be more unfavorable in their opinions than those who had not.

The highest percentage of parents expressing no opinion were those who were parents of second grade children. This is likely due to the teaching of manuscript writing in grades one and two. The reasons for using manuscript writing in these grades apparently have not been satisfactorily explained to parents.

The opinions expressed by mothers were much more favorable than those expressed by fathers in each of the three grades studied. In grade four, ten per cent of the fathers' opinions were unfavorable, while only five per cent of the mothers expressed unfavorable opinions.

Opinions Regarding Teaching Children
To Express Themselves Well Orally

Although the curriculum of the Tulsa Elementary schools is one in which unusual emphasis is placed upon teaching children to express themselves well orally, the data presented in Table V indicate that a large percentage of the parents do not understand what is being done well enough to express opinions. Approximately sixteen per cent of the 2908 parents failed to express opinions. This fact should be taken into consideration in planning the program of educational interpretation. Parents should be made conscious of the fact that good oral expression is one of the important aims of the elementary school.

Of the eighty-five per cent who expressed opinions, seventy-eight per cent were favorable and seven per cent were unfavorable. The labor classification was again most favorable in expression of opinion with eighty-six per cent of them favorable and only four per cent of them unfavorable. Ten per cent of them expressed no opinion.

Parents with college degrees again expressed the highest percentage of unfavorable opinion even though seventy-four per cent of them replied favorably and thirteen per cent of them did not express opinions.

Parents who had not voted and those who had not attended meetings at the school reacted more favorably than those who had voted and those who had attended school meetings. Those who had visited classes reacted very slightly more favorably than those who had not.

Table V

OPINIONS REGARDING TEACHING CHILDREN TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES WELL ORALLY

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632) [*] Mothers Grade	(298) Fathers Two	(622) Mothers Grade	(332) Fathers Four	(590) Mothers Grade	(320) Fathers Six	(722) Wives Same	(722) Husbands Family	(2064) All of the time Child Has Attended Tulsa Schools	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary Educational	(1442) High School Background	(335) College of	(230) College Degree Parents ^b	(253) Business and Professional Occupations	(468) Trades of	(97) Laborers Parents	(1454) Voted School	(1251) Did Not Vote Elections	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings Attendance	(1232) More than 3 Meetings at School	(718) No Meetings Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes Class	(985) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2908) Total Responses
1	27	28	29	26	30	28	30	27	27	28	31	31	27	32	24	26	27	32	28	28	27	29	28	29	28	28
2	47	47	50	53	52	52	50	52	50	53	46	48	52	45	50	48	55	54	50	50	49	50	50	50	50	50
3	4	6	5	8	5	7	6	7	6	5	5	3	5	7	12	10	4	4	8	4	8	5	4	6	6	6
4	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	19	16	12	10	12	13	12	12	14	11	17	15	13	15	11	13	12	5	12	15	12	13	15	12	15	14
6	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	2	4	1	3	2	1	2	2	2	5	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Mothers were more favorable in their opinions than fathers. There was little difference in the opinions expressed by husbands and wives in the 722 families where both parents responded.

Opinions Regarding Teaching Children
To Express Themselves Well in Writing

Teaching children to express themselves well in writing seems to be another of the important objectives of elementary education which parents do not understand.

The distribution of opinions in Table VI shows clearly that too large a percentage of parents are not familiar with our attempts to accomplish this objective and with the results obtained. Eighteen per cent of the 2908 parents failed to indicate whether or not they felt that the schools were doing a satisfactory job. Seventy-six per cent of them expressed satisfaction and six per cent of them expressed dissatisfaction with teachers' efforts to teach children to express themselves well in writing.

It is interesting to see that the parents who had attended only elementary school were most willing to express opinions. Only eleven per cent of them failed to express opinions, while for the high school group it was twenty per cent, for the college group twenty-one per cent, and for the college degree group nineteen per cent.

More unfavorable responses were tabulated for the fathers of each grade than for the mothers. In the families where both parents expressed opinions, wives expressed five per cent unfavorable opinions while the husbands' opinions were eight per cent unfavorable.

Table VI

OPINIONS REGARDING TEACHING CHILDREN TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES WELL IN WRITING

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers Grade Two	(298) Fathers Grade Two	(622) Mothers Grade Four	(332) Fathers Grade Four	(590) Mothers Grade Six	(320) Fathers Grade Six	(722) Wives Same	(722) Husbands Family	(2064) All of the time Child Has Attended Tulsa Schools	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary Educational	(1442) High School Background	(335) College of	(230) College Degree Parents ^b	(253) Business and Professional Occupations	(468) Trades of	(97) Laborers Parents	(1454) Voted School	(1251) Did Not Vote Elections	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings Attendance	(1232) More than 3 Meetings at School	(718) No Meetings Visited Meetings	(1761) Classes Class	(955) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2906) Total Responses
1	27	27	29	24	28	30	30	27	27	27	33	35	27	25	17	21	27	36	27	29	30	26	31	27	29	28
2	45	49	49	50	49	50	49	50	49	49	42	49	48	46	46	43	52	47	47	50	46	48	50	48	49	48
3	3	5	4	7	5	9	4	7	5	6	5	4	4	7	14	12	5	3	8	2	5	7	4	5	5	5
4	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
5	22	17	16	15	15	8	14	13	16	16	18	9	18	20	18	21	14	11	17	16	17	17	13	17	14	16
6	3	3	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Opinions Regarding the Amount of Subject Matter Learned

One of the criticisms most often made of the modern elementary school is that not enough time is spent on learning subject matter. Table VII shows that twenty per cent of the 2908 parents who participated in this study failed to express opinions. This seems to indicate that the parents of Tulsa children have open minds regarding this question. It is now the responsibility of school officials and teachers to take advantage of this opportunity to show them that the teaching of subject matter is emphasized although it is not done to the exclusion of the other important offerings of the elementary school.

Thirty-three per cent of the parents in the labor classification did not express opinions, but only two per cent of the opinions which were expressed were unfavorable. The other extreme was the parents with college degrees. Only ten per cent of them failed to express opinions but fifteen per cent of the opinions expressed were unfavorable.

Opinions Regarding the Amount of Home Work Assigned

Table VIII shows the distribution of opinions regarding the amount of home work assigned. The percentage of unfavorable responses to this item is greater than for any other aspect of elementary education discussed in this chapter.

It has been the policy of Tulsa elementary schools to require very little work to be done by children at home. The fact that seventeen per cent of the parents are not satisfied with the amount

Table VII

OPINIONS REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF SUBJECT MATTER LEARNED

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																								
	(632) [*] Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes
1	24	22	23	20	21	23	24	22	23	20	20	22	21	23	26	18	25	23	21	20	24	21	23	20	22
2	48	50	54	56	55	50	53	54	52	54	49	47	54	53	51	55	52	40	51	52	54	53	51	52	52
3	4	5	4	6	6	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	5	7	12	8	6	2	7	3	6	5	4	5	4
4	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	3	3	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
5	18	18	16	14	15	17	14	15	16	15	20	22	16	8	8	7	18	26	14	20	16	13	19	16	18
6	6	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	5	4	3	2	2	4	7	3	4	4	3	4	3	4

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Table VIII

OPINIONS REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF HOME WORK ASSIGNED

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) Meetings More than	(1232) 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	15	15	16	17	18	20	18	17	17	14	17	21	15	16	14	15	15	23	16	18	18	24	18	17	17	17
2	46	45	52	52	49	50	51	51	50	49	42	53	48	48	48	46	52	52	50	48	46	51	49	49	50	49
3	10	14	15	11	16	18	14	15	14	17	17	10	16	17	15	15	15	3	15	13	16	15	13	14	14	14
4	3	5	2	5	3	3	3	4	3	4	6	2	4	4	4	5	3	1	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	3
5	21	17	10	12	11	8	11	11	13	13	16	11	15	12	14	16	11	12	12	15	14	13	13	13	13	13
6	6	4	4	3	2	3	3	2	4	4	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	2	4	3	4

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

of home work assigned and seventeen per cent of them expressed no opinion is an indication that this particular situation should be given careful study. If school officials and teachers, after careful study and after getting parents' reactions, remain convinced that the present policy is correct, they should certainly make every possible effort to explain to parents why it is best for their children.

Parents of the labor classification were the only ones who indicated that they were fairly well satisfied. Eighty per cent of them expressed favorable opinions, four per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and sixteen per cent of them expressed no opinion. The parents of children who had received less than one-half of their school training in the Tulsa Public Schools expressed twenty-three per cent of unfavorable opinion. This was the highest percentage of unfavorable opinion expressed by any group of parents and was perhaps due to the fact that they had become accustomed to having greater amounts of home work assigned in the other schools which the children had attended.

Concluding Statements

This chapter presents evidence of a need for more effective interpretation of some of the more formal aspects of the elementary school curriculum. Although opinions expressed were generally very favorable, there were entirely too many parents who were not familiar enough with the school program and the results obtained to express opinions.

If the hundreds of parents who expressed unfavorable opinions can be reached through an effective program of interpretation, the percentage of unfavorable responses, even though it is not large in most cases, can probably be decreased materially.

When parents who visit their children's classes and those who attend meetings at the school express a higher percentage of unfavorable opinions than those who do not visit classes and those who do not attend school meetings, school officials and teachers should attempt to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their use of these means of interpretation.

CHAPTER III
 OPINIONS REGARDING THE LESS FORMAL ASPECTS
 OF THE TULSA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Tulsa Elementary schools have made adjustments to the progress in social organization much as schools in other cities have done. Being a system of platoon schools, they perhaps emphasize the less formal aspects of the curriculum to a greater extent than many schools which use other types of organization.

In the study of time allotment practice in 444 cities including a study of trends from 1826 to 1926, Mann¹ found these percentages of total time in grades one to six allotted to the three R's, the content subjects, and the special subjects.

Per cent of Time Allotted

<u>Year</u>	<u>The Three R's</u>	<u>Content Subjects</u>	<u>Special Subjects</u>
1826	91.7		8.2
1856	70.1	15.7	14.2
1866	62.0	12.5	25.2
1904	61.8	12.3	25.9
1914	55.3	12.9	31.8
1926 (444 cities)	51.7	11.8	36.5
1926 (15 states)	48.9	13.8	37.3

Mann² made this concluding statement:

In spite of the fact that the percentage of time given to the Three R's has decreased from 91.7 per cent in 1826 to 51.7 per cent in 1926, the evidence indicates that the pupils in our school receive more hours of instruction in the Three R's than ever before, first, because the greatly increased length of school year has more than counterbalanced the decreased

¹ Carleton Hunter Mann, How Schools Use Their Time, Contributions to Education, No. 333, 1928.

² Ibid.

percentage of time given to the Three R's; second, because of the enormous increase in the average number of days of schooling received by each pupil between 1826 and 1926.

Since this greater emphasis is being placed on the less formal aspects of the elementary school curriculum, it is important to know whether parents are satisfied with the results the schools are obtaining. Tulsa parents have expressed their opinions. Data regarding these opinions are presented in this chapter.

Opinions Regarding Opportunities for Pupil Development Through Activities such as Music, Art, Auditorium, and Physical Education

The increased amount of time given to special subjects in American elementary schools has been pointed out in the introduction to this chapter. The Tulsa schools give approximately one-half of the time to the special subjects. Table IX shows the distribution of opinions expressed by Tulsa parents regarding the opportunities offered children through such activities.

Eighty-five per cent of the parents expressed favorable opinions, four per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and thirteen per cent of them failed to express opinions. Parents with college degrees were most unfavorable. Nine per cent of them expressed dissatisfaction with the special classes. Eighty-four per cent of them, however, expressed favorable opinions. In the labor classification only one per cent indicated that they were dissatisfied, however, twenty-one per cent of the laborers and the wives of laborers expressed no opinion.

Table IX

OPINIONS REGARDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUPIL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVITIES
SUCH AS MUSIC, ART, AUDITORIUM, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Opinion Expressed ^a	Grade		Two		Grade		Four		Grade		Six		Same		Family		Child Has Attended			Schools		Educational Background		of Parents		Occupations of			School Elections		Attendance at School			Class		Total Responses (2908)															
	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Wives	Husbands	All of the time	Half Time or More	Less Than Half Time	Elementary	High School	College	College Degree	Business and Professional	Trades	Laborers	Voted	Did Not Vote	1 to 3 Meetings	More than 3 Meetings	No Meetings	Visited	Classes	Did Not Visit Classes																			
1	(632)*	(298)	(622)	(332)	(590)	(320)	(722)	(722)	(2064)	(429)	(330)	(647)	(1442)	(335)	(230)	(253)	(468)	(97)	(1454)	(1251)	(562)	(1232)	(718)	(1761)	(985)	38	34	41	34	46	41	42	37	39	40	43	38	40	48	55	43	41	38	37	44	36	42	38	40		
2																										45	46	47	48	41	43	44	47	46	46	38	46	39	49	42	51	35	43	47	43	47	44	45	45		
3																										2	2	3	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	2	3	1	4	2	3	2	2	3	2	3		
4																										0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
5																										11	15	5	9	6	8	7	11	9	6	5	8	7	19	7	10	9	6	11	7	11	7	11	9	9	
6																										4	5	3	4	3	4	2	4	3	2	3	2	4	2	4	2	4	2	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

A slightly larger percentage of satisfactory opinions was expressed by parents who had attended meetings at the school and by those who had visited classes than by those who had not attended meetings or visited classes.

Only eighty-one per cent of the parents of children who had attended Tulsa public schools less than one-half of the time expressed favorable opinions, while those whose children had attended Tulsa Public Schools more than one-half of the time expressed eighty-six per cent of favorable opinions. Parents whose children attended Tulsa Public Schools all of the time were eighty-five per cent favorable in their opinions. This indicates that parents whose children have had more opportunity to be in special classes are more favorable toward them.

Opinions Regarding Training in Good Citizenship

Tulsa parents believe that the schools are doing a good job of training children in good citizenship. Data presented in Table X show that ninety-two per cent of the parents responded favorably. Only two per cent of the parents feel that citizenship training is unsatisfactory. Six per cent of them failed to express opinions.

In the final analysis, it is the purpose of every offering of the public schools to train for good citizenship. If parents responding to this questionnaire were cognizant of this point when reacting to this particular aspect of elementary education, they have placed their stamp of approval upon the forward steps which have been taken in public elementary education.

Table X

OPINIONS REGARDING TRAINING IN GOOD CITIZENSHIP

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(466) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings	(1761) Visited Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	37	40	37	33	41	41	39	38	38	37	39	43	38	37	31	34	38	41	37	39	36	38	40	39	38	38
2	55	52	57	57	53	52	54	54	54	57	53	48	56	56	61	57	56	46	55	54	54	55	53	54	54	54
3	1	2	1	4	1	3	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	2
4	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	5	3	4	5	6	3	5	3	5	4	4	5	4	5	4
6	3	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	2

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

The modern elementary school described in Chapter II comes more nearly providing opportunities for practicing good citizenship than did the earlier traditional type of elementary school. It has been the writer's observation that a great majority of teachers in the elementary schools of Tulsa think of children as school citizens and give them opportunities to participate in planning many of their activities and in solving many of the problems which arise in the classroom and in the school.

Opinions Regarding the Development of Good Character Traits

Parents do not feel that the Tulsa elementary schools are doing quite so good a job in the development of good character traits as they are in training in good citizenship. The data presented in Table XI show that eighty-seven per cent of the 2908 parents expressed favorable opinions, three per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and ten per cent of them did not express opinions.

The development of good character traits is the first aspect of elementary education regarding which the labor classification of parents expressed a higher percentage of dissatisfaction than the parents who have college degrees. Judging from remarks written on the questionnaires returned, a larger per cent of the parents in the labor classification than in any other are members of minority religious groups who feel that more emphasis should be placed upon Bible study in the schools, and who object to such phases of the curriculum as rhythms in physical education, which includes activities such as folk-dancing.

Table XI

OPINIONS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD CHARACTER TRAITS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																										
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses	
1	28	31	28	23	31	32	32	29	28	28	32	28	28	21	27	29	32	28	29	30	28	29	29	29	29	29	29
2	57	55	60	61	57	58	56	59	58	62	56	51	59	63	66	61	59	45	59	57	56	60	57	58	58	58	58
3	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	1	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	1	3	2	3	3
4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
5	8	10	8	9	7	7	7	8	8	6	9	10	8	5	6	6	8	13	6	9	8	6	10	7	9	8	8
6	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	0	2	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Opinions Regarding Opportunities Given Children To
Accept Responsibilities and Carry Them to Completion

A large percentage of the parents evidently did not understand the item regarding opportunities given children to accept responsibilities and carry them to completion or they were not familiar enough with such opportunities to express opinions. Table XII shows that twenty per cent of the parents did not express opinions. Seventy-five per cent of them indicated that the opportunities given are satisfactory and five per cent of them indicated that they were not satisfactory.

Parents with college degrees gave the highest percentage of unsatisfactory response; twice as great as the five per cent for responses of parents in all classifications. Several classifications of parents had only three per cent of unfavorable opinions. There were no exceptions in any of the classifications to the high percentage of parents expressing no opinions.

Although this item could have been considered a part of training in good citizenship, it was regarded as important enough to ask for an expression of opinions on it as well as on training in good citizenship. Since parents do not seem to be familiar with the emphasis placed upon this phase of training in citizenship, it probably should be one of the first things to be stressed in a program of educational interpretation.

Opinions Regarding the Emphasis Upon Safety Education

The parents who expressed opinions regarding the emphasis placed upon safety education were unusually well satisfied. Only one per cent of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires expressed unfavorable opinions. Eleven per cent of them evidently were not familiar enough with what is being done with reference to emphasizing safety education to express opinions.

In Table XIII we find that the parent groups having the highest percentages of parents expressing no opinions were laborers and their wives, eighteen per cent; those whose children had spent less than one-half time in the Tulsa Public Schools, seventeen per cent; and those who attended no meetings at the school, sixteen per cent.

The job for educational interpretation here is to reach those who are not sufficiently informed to be able to express opinions. The data presented in Table XIII show clearly that parents who felt qualified to express opinions were satisfied with the emphasis placed upon safety education.

Opinions Regarding the Development of Good Health Habits

According to Table XIV, eighty-eight per cent of all parents are satisfied with the program for developing good health habits in the Tulsa elementary schools. Six per cent of the parents expressed unfavorable opinions and seven per cent of them did not express opinions.

The parents with college degrees and the business and professional classification of parents each expressed fifteen per cent of unsatisfactory opinions, which is two and one-half times as great as

Table XIII

OPINIONS REGARDING THE EMPHASIS UPON SAFETY EDUCATION

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632) [*] Mothers Grade	(298) Fathers Two	(622) Mothers Grade	(332) Fathers Four	(590) Mothers Grade	(320) Fathers Six	(722) Wives Same	(722) Husbands Family	(2064) All of the time Child Has Attended Tulsa Schools	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary Educational	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree Parents ^b	(253) Business and Professional Occupations	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) Meetings I to 3 More than	(1232) 3 Meetings at School	(718) No Meetings Visited Meetings	(1761) Classes Class	(985) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2908) Total Responses
1	42	40	40	35	45	40	42	39	41	41	40	37	41	51	40	42	40	34	42	40	40	44	37	43	38	41
2	43	44	49	50	46	48	47	48	48	46	42	46	48	41	50	47	50	46	48	46	49	47	45	46	47	47
3	1	2	1	3	0	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	9	9	7	9	7	8	7	8	7	8	14	12	7	5	5	5	6	11	6	10	6	5	13	7	9	8
6	5	4	2	3	2	1	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	7	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Table XIV

OPINIONS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD HEALTH HABITS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632) [*] Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings More than	(1232) 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	35	36	31	27	33	37	34	33	33	33	30	40	32	27	20	21	35	45	31	35	32	31	36	33	32	33
2	53	52	58	58	55	53	53	54	56	54	55	50	57	58	55	53	57	41	56	54	54	56	54	55	55	55
3	4	5	4	7	5	4	6	5	4	6	4	3	4	6	13	13	3	6	6	3	5	6	3	4	5	5
4	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	5	5	5	5	5	6	4	6	5	4	9	5	5	5	8	8	1	5	5	6	7	5	6	5	7	5
6	2	1	2	2	3	0	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

the percentage of unfavorable opinions expressed by parents of all classifications.

Eleven per cent of the parents whose children had attended Tulsa public schools less than one-half of the time failed to express opinions. This fact has the following implication for educational interpretation. Special attention should be given to informing parents and children new to the Tulsa schools regarding the health program of the schools

Opinions Regarding the Amount of Freedom Allowed Children in the Tulsa Public Schools

The newer concept of elementary education wherein the school is no longer a mere place for academic instruction but a place which is concerned with all aspects of child development is far different from the "sitting and listening"¹ concept of the traditional elementary school. Much more freedom is allowed. Much more activity is in evidence.

Tulsa parents were asked to express their opinions regarding this aspect of elementary education. Table XV presents the tabulation of their responses. Eighty-one per cent of them expressed favorable opinions, six per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and thirteen per cent of them failed to express opinions.

Parents with college degrees and those in the business and professional classification were most unfavorable in their opinions.

¹ F. N. Freeman, "Should the Curriculum Be Built on Children's Interests or Social Needs," School Executive's Magazine, vol. 50, pp. 553-579, August 1931.

Table XV

OPINIONS REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF FREEDOM ALLOWED CHILDREN IN THE TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings	(1761) Visited Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	25	26	27	28	29	28	28	29	27	28	28	34	25	30	20	23	28	32	27	28	29	27	28	28	26	27
2	54	52	56	49	56	55	57	52	54	54	54	50	56	53	57	54	58	46	53	55	55	55	53	55	53	54
3	3	5	5	8	4	7	5	6	5	4	4	3	5	5	9	10	5	4	7	3	4	6	4	5	5	5
4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	11	13	9	11	8	9	8	10	9	10	12	9	10	8	9	11	7	13	9	11	8	8	12	9	12	10
6	5	4	3	3	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	2	2	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Ten per cent of the opinions expressed by parents in each of these groups were unfavorable. Parents who voted in school elections expressed twice as great a percentage of unfavorable opinions as those who did not vote.

The fact that thirteen per cent of all parents who returned questionnaires failed to express opinions on this important aspect of modern elementary education is an indication that interpretation is needed.

Opinions Regarding School Discipline

Opinions regarding school discipline are closely related to opinions regarding the amount of freedom allowed in the schools. It seems reasonable to state that the idea of discipline carries with it, in the minds of most people, the idea of punishment. In judging the discipline of a particular school or classroom, people usually think in terms of certain standards which are set up and what is done about children whose actions are not in accord with these standards.

A ruling of the Tulsa Board of Education specifies certain conditions under which corporal punishment may be administered. Some parents and other patrons of the schools who believe in the old adage, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," have been critical of this policy of the Board of Education. There are others who possibly feel that certain teachers are too strict in their discipline.

Opinions of parents regarding discipline in the elementary schools of Tulsa are presented in Table XVI. Seventy-nine per cent of the parents expressed favorable opinions, seven per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and fourteen per cent of them did not express opinions. In the labor classification, thirty-two per cent of the parents did not express opinions.

Table XVI

OPINIONS REGARDING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																											
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses		
1	25	27	28	26	32	28	30	29	27	30	31	30	27	31	27	27	26	23	23	23	23	30	26	29	27	28		
2	53	50	55	54	48	50	52	51	52	52	51	45	54	55	48	51	54	38	52	51	53	52	50	52	51	51		
3	4	5	7	11	5	8	6	8	7	8	5	5	7	6	13	11	7	7	8	4	6	7	6	7	6	6		
4	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	0	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1		
5	12	12	6	6	11	11	9	9	10	8	11	15	9	8	7	7	9	24	7	12	9	7	13	8	11	10		
6	5	4	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4		

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Again the percentage of parents who failed to express opinions indicates a need for interpretation based upon this point.

Opinions Regarding Student Participation in School Government

A large percentage of the Tulsa elementary schools, if not all of them, have student councils, school patrols of various types, and many other means of making possible student participation in school government. In spite of the fact that these activities exist in the schools, twenty-three per cent of the 2908 parents, who returned questionnaires in this study, have indicated that they do not know enough about such activities to express opinions regarding them.

Table XVII presents data which show that thirty-five per cent of the parents whose children had attended Tulsa schools less than one-half of the time, thirty-one per cent of the second grade mothers, and thirty-three per cent of the second grade fathers failed to express opinions.

Even though only three per cent of the 2908 parents expressed unfavorable opinions, there are entirely too many parents who are not informed regarding this phase of the elementary school program. Perhaps those charged with organizing the program of educational interpretation should place more emphasis upon phases of education such as this, and less emphasis upon others that are possibly not so basic to accomplishing the objectives of the modern elementary school.

Table XVII

OPINIONS REGARDING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL GOVERNMENT
(STUDENT COUNCILS, SCHOOL PATROLS, ETC.)

The Opinion Expressed ^a	Grade		Four		Grade		Six		Same		Family		Child Has Attended			Schools		Educational Background		Parents ^b of		Occupations of		School Elections		Attendance at School		Class Visitation		Total Responses (2908)
	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Wives	Husbands	All of the time	Half Time or More	Less Than Half Time	Elementary	High School	College	College Degree	Business and Professional	Trades	Laborers	Voted	Did Not Vote	1 to 3 Meetings	More than 3 Meetings	No Meetings	Visited Classes	Did Not Visit Classes			
1	(632)*	(298)	(622)	(332)	(590)	(320)	(722)	(722)	(2064)	(429)	(330)	(647)	(1442)	(335)	(230)	(253)	(468)	(97)	(1454)	(1251)	(562)	(1232)	(718)	(1761)	(985)	34				
2	30	29	33	31	43	42	37	34	34	34	36	32	35	42	32	37	30	40	37	33	35	38	31	36	33	54				
3	35	35	44	43	40	43	41	41	41	41	35	38	41	37	40	39	45	24	40	39	41	40	40	39	41	40				
4	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	1	2	2	2	4	3	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2				
5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
6	28	30	17	20	13	12	17	20	19	19	27	23	19	15	20	19	19	32	17	23	18	17	24	19	21	20				
7	3	3	3	3	2	0	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	5	5	5	2	5	2	2	2	3				

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study
* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Concluding Statements

This chapter has again emphasized the need of an effective program of educational interpretation by which the large percentage of parents who are not well enough informed to venture an opinion regarding certain aspects of education can be reached.

The parents who expressed opinions regarding the less formal aspects of the Tulsa elementary school curriculum seem to be well pleased. School discipline brought the highest per cent of unfavorable response. Seven per cent of the parents felt that school discipline was not satisfactory.

CHAPTER IV
OPINIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF
THE TULSA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The elementary schools of early America were very simple and direct in their organization. The modern elementary school described in Chapter II, however, requires a much more elaborate plan of administrative organization. As the plan of organization becomes more complex, numerous administrative problems arise and the solutions decided upon seldom meet with the favor of all the parents whose children are involved. Parents who participated in this study were asked to express opinions regarding four administrative aspects of elementary education in Tulsa. Their opinions have been tabulated and are presented in this chapter.

Opinions Regarding the Platoon Type of Organization
Used in Tulsa

For several years Tulsa has used the platoon type of organization in its elementary schools. Each child spends one-half of the day in the home room where he is taught the language arts, arithmetic, and the social studies. The other one-half of each day he spends in special classes where he participates in such activities as art, music, auditorium, physical education, library and science under the direction of teachers, each of whom has had special training in the activity which he or she directs. The special classes are held in rooms which are equipped for each of the special types of activity. Children move from one room to another so that they might have the advantage of using the special equipment in each of the rooms.

The parents of children in the Tulsa elementary schools were asked to express their opinions regarding this plan of organization. The distribution of responses is shown in Table XVIII. Seventy-five per cent of the parents who returned questionnaires expressed favorable opinions, eight per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and eighteen per cent of them did not express opinions.

Those who were not satisfied with the platoon plan of organization gave a number of reasons in the remarks which they wrote in the margin of the questionnaire. The most common complaint was regarding changing classes in the buildings where the old unit type construction was used. In these buildings the children must go through open corridors to get from one class to another. Parents expressed the opinion that this was a menace to health. A number of parents offered the comment that the platoon school is satisfactory for older children, but not for children in the primary grades. They were also critical of the plan used in some of the larger schools of having two groups of children in the library and two groups of children in physical education classes during each period. It was their opinion that these classes were too large.

The fact that eighteen per cent of the parents failed to express opinions is evidence that school officials and teachers need to give them more information about the platoon plan of organization, as well as to give them the reasons for using the plan in the Tulsa schools.

Table XVIII

OPINIONS REGARDING THE PLATOON TYPE OF ORGANIZATION USED IN TULSA

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings More than	(1232) 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	33	28	35	28	33	30	35	30	32	31	34	32	31	38	33	38	29	30	32	32	30	35	30	33	30	32
2	41	45	43	42	47	46	44	45	43	45	44	40	45	43	42	37	48	37	44	43	46	44	41	43	44	43
3	4	4	4	6	4	5	5	5	5	6	5	3	5	4	8	7	5	6	6	3	4	5	5	5	4	5
4	4	4	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	1	2	5	7	8	1	2	5	1	2	4	2	3	2	3
5	14	15	11	17	12	15	11	16	13	14	13	20	14	5	6	7	15	18	11	17	14	9	20	12	17	14
6	6	4	4	2	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	7	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Opinions Regarding the Grouping of Children in
Classes Within Each Grade

No uniform plan of grouping children in sections within each grade is used in the Tulsa elementary schools. Some schools attempt to group children homogeneously, while others do not. The opinions expressed regarding this item will not indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with homogeneous or with heterogeneous grouping. The opinions will simply indicate the percentage of parents who consider grouping satisfactory or unsatisfactory in the schools which their children attend, regardless of the method of grouping used.

Data reported in Table XIX show that seventy-five per cent of the parents were favorable in their opinions regarding grouping. Four per cent of the parents were unfavorable, and twenty-one per cent of them failed to express opinions.

Parents in the business and professional classification registered the most unfavorable responses. The nine per cent of unfavorable response which they expressed was more than twice as great as the four per cent of unfavorable response expressed by parents of all classifications. Thirty-one per cent of the parents in the labor classification failed to express opinions.

In some schools very little information is given parents with reference to the plan used in grouping children. This may help to account for the large percentage of parents who failed to express opinions.

Table XIX

OPINIONS REGARDING THE GROUPING OF CHILDREN IN CLASSES WITHIN EACH GRADE

	Grade Two		Grade Four		Grade Six		Same Family	Child Has Attended Tulsa Schools	Educational Background of Parents ^b	Occupations of Parents	School Elections	Attendance at School Meetings	Class Visitation	Total Responses													
	Mothers (632)*	Fathers (298)	Mothers (622)	Fathers (332)	Mothers (590)	Fathers (320)									Wives (722)	Husbands (722)	All of the time (2064)	Half Time or More (429)	Less Than Half Time (330)	Elementary (647)	High School (1442)	College (335)	College Degree (230)	Business and Professional (253)	Trades (468)	Laborers (97)	Voted (1454)
1	27	25	28	25	28	26	27	26	26	28	29	27	28	26	20	21	24	23	26	28	27	27	27	28	26	27	27
2	49	49	51	49	46	48	51	50	49	49	46	43	49	54	55	54	53	44	49	48	48	50	47	49	48	48	48
3	2	3	1	4	3	5	3	4	3	2	2	2	3	1	6	7	2	2	4	1	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
4	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	16	19	13	18	18	18	15	16	16	17	18	23	15	13	14	12	16	26	15	19	19	13	19	15	19	16	16
6	6	3	6	4	4	2	4	3	5	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	5	5

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Opinions Regarding the Size of Classes

Table XX shows the distribution of opinions regarding the size of classes in the Tulsa elementary schools. Sixty-three per cent of the parents indicated that they were satisfied with class size. Thirteen per cent of the parents expressed unfavorable opinions, and twenty-four per cent of them did not express opinions. The highest percentage of unfavorable opinion was thirty-six per cent expressed by parents of the business and professional classification. Thirty-five per cent of the opinions expressed by parents with college degrees were unfavorable. Parents in the labor classification expressed only three per cent of unfavorable opinion.

Parents who voted in school elections, those who attended meetings at the school, and those who visited classes expressed a much higher percentage of unfavorable opinion than those who did not vote, those who did not attend meetings, and those who did not visit classes. The percentage of parents who did not express opinions was consistently high in all classifications of parents.

The implication for interpretation is that parents need to be told why classes are as large as they are and why the situation cannot be changed until finances are available to provide more teachers and more classrooms. They perhaps also need to be given information regarding class size in other cities. Comparisons might show a favorable pupil-teacher ratio in Tulsa schools. If not, the active efforts of a greater number of parents might be gained in attempting to get better financial support for education.

Table XX

OPINIONS REGARDING THE SIZE OF CLASSES

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632) [*] Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	16	17	17	16	18	23	19	19	18	16	19	24	16	16	7	11	18	26	15	21	19	24	21	16	20	18
2	45	44	47	47	44	45	45	47	46	50	41	43	48	45	43	39	49	40	45	47	45	48	47	47	45	45
3	8	7	11	9	12	8	13	8	11	8	10	3	10	17	25	27	7	2	14	6	11	14	4	12	6	10
4	3	4	4	5	3	3	4	4	4	1	2	1	3	6	10	9	2	1	5	1	3	5	1	4	2	3
5	23	24	18	20	20	20	16	19	19	21	26	25	20	14	12	11	21	28	18	24	20	15	25	18	24	20
6	5	4	3	3	3	1	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Opinions Regarding Playground Supervision

Playground supervision, especially at the lunch hour, is a difficult administrative problem. Teachers must have time to eat, and they should have some time for relaxation if they are to do effective teaching in the afternoon. The playground must have supervision at the same time. Most of the Tulsa elementary principals make a schedule assigning the responsibility for playground supervision to various teachers, each to serve for a specified length of time. One teacher with the assistance of student patrolmen has the entire responsibility for playground supervision during that period of time. The playground is usually without teacher supervision each day until the teacher has finished her lunch. With hundreds of children on the playground, situations arise which naturally bring criticism. It was with these problems in mind that parents were asked to express their opinions regarding the effectiveness of playground supervision.

Table XXI shows the distribution of responses. Seventy-one per cent of the parents who returned the questionnaires expressed favorable opinions regarding playground supervision, eleven per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and eighteen per cent of them failed to express opinions. Parents with college degrees were most unfavorable in their responses. Twenty-one per cent of them expressed the opinion that playground supervision was not satisfactory. All classifications of parents were consistent in having a high percentage of parents who failed to express opinions.

Table XXI

OPINIONS REGARDING PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	20	24	23	22	25	26	24	25	22	23	29	28	21	23	14	15	25	27	21	25	23	21	27	23	25	23
2	48	47	45	49	51	52	49	49	49	50	46	47	53	40	43	47	52	54	48	50	46	49	48	48	49	48
3	7	5	10	11	7	8	9	8	9	8	7	5	7	15	15	13	6	4	11	5	8	10	6	10	6	8
4	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	1	1	2	5	6	5	2	0	3	2	3	4	1	3	2	3
5	19	18	16	13	13	12	13	15	16	15	15	15	15	13	20	18	14	11	15	16	17	14	15	14	17	15
6	3	4	3	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	3	4	2	3	1	2	2	4	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Concluding Statement

Too large a percentage of Tulsa parents have indicated that they are not familiar enough with the aspects of elementary school organization and administration presented in this chapter to express opinions. From eighteen to twenty-four per cent of them failed to express opinions on each of the four items. This is a challenge to educational interpretation.

CHAPTER V

OPINIONS REGARDING THE SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Opinions which parents have regarding a particular teacher or principal in a school often influence their opinion toward the entire school and, in some cases, toward the entire school system. This idea is well expressed in these quotations from Grinnell:¹

In millions of homes throughout the country the teacher is the school. It is true in one-room school-houses on windswept northern prairies, in four-room schools in southern villages, and in huge bustling educational plants in the nation's largest cities. The first impressions the child brings home are of his teacher or teachers.

The teacher is the glass through which the child sees the school--and represents it to his family.

It is doubtful if any teacher ever tells herself the first morning of the school year, or any morning, "I am the interpreter of the school; I am its ambassador; it will be as great or as little as I make it in the eyes of these children today and every day."

Teachers are public figures; they cannot escape their roles as interpreters. If they recognize their quiet but constant part, they will serve the interpretation program by conforming to the best ethics of their profession, by maintaining constructive attitudes toward the school, by voicing criticisms only to appropriate school officers, being alert to trends in public opinion, by learning to talk of their schools as interestingly as doctors or engineers talk of their work, and, above all, by teaching to the best of their ability the knowledge, attitudes, habits, and skills for which the school exists.

It was with these functions of members of the school personnel in mind that Tulsa parents were asked to express opinions regarding five aspects of elementary education which involved opinions of

¹ J. Erle Grinnell, Interpreting the Public Schools, 1937, pp. 243-265.

teachers and their relationship to the children and to the parents. The data are presented in this chapter.

Opinions Regarding the Ability and Training of the Teachers

The ability and training of teachers in the elementary schools should certainly be of vital interest to parents of elementary school children. Although their opinions regarding this item in the investigation were, in many cases, not based upon definite information as to ability and training, their opinions are of value in a program of educational interpretation because they reflect the attitude of parents toward the school personnel. Table XXII shows that many of them realized that they were not qualified to pass judgment on the professional preparation and the ability of teachers to do a good job of teaching. Twenty per cent of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires did not express opinions. Thirty-one per cent of the parents in the labor classification failed to express opinions. Parents with college degrees evidently felt best qualified to pass judgment as only twelve per cent of them failed to express opinions. In view of the fact that parents with college degrees have been quite critical of most of the aspects of elementary education in Tulsa, it is of interest to note that eighty-seven per cent of them were favorable in their opinions toward ability and training of teachers, and only two per cent of them were unfavorable.

Two per cent of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires expressed the opinion that the ability and training of teachers was unsatisfactory. Seventy-eight per cent of them expressed favorable opinions, and twenty per cent of them did not express opinions.

Table XXII

OPINIONS REGARDING THE ABILITY AND TRAINING OF THE TEACHERS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers Grade	(298) Fathers Two	(622) Mothers Grade	(332) Fathers Four	(590) Mothers Grade	(320) Fathers Six	(722) Wives Same	(722) Husbands Family	(2064) All of the time Child Has	(429) Half Time or More Attended Tulsa Schools	(330) Less Than Half Time Educational Background	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree Parents ^b	(253) Business and Professional Occupations	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote Elections	(562) Meetings More than Attendance	(1232) 3 Meetings at School	(718) No Meetings Visited Meetings	(1761) Classes Class	(985) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2908) Total Responses
1	32	28	34	31	37	34	35	31	34	30	30	32	31	40	37	37	28	30	35	30	33	37	29	36	30	33
2	45	46	46	45	43	45	46	46	45	47	38	42	46	44	50	49	48	36	44	46	46	46	44	45	44	45
3	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2
4	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
5	17	19	15	19	16	16	15	18	15	17	28	20	18	10	9	10	20	27	15	20	19	12	22	14	21	17
6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	2	2	4	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

An effective program of educational interpretation should give parents information regarding the level of training which members of the school personnel have attained. It should also emphasize the importance of parent-teacher contacts of a type which cause parents to have confidence in the ability of teachers and school officials.

Opinions Regarding Real Interest Shown by Teachers
in the Children's Progress

It seems reasonable to say that every teacher worthy of the name shows real interest in the progress of the children with whom she works. There is perhaps a wide difference in the ways by which teachers indicate this interest and in some cases parents see practically no indication of it. The most successful teachers have become aware of the fact that parents appreciate evidence of interest being shown in the children's progress. They take advantage of every opportunity to tell parents of progress being made in certain areas, and also to tell them of lack of progress in other areas, which can possibly be corrected provided help and encouragement are given by the parents.

Table XXIII presents data which show the distribution of opinions expressed by parents regarding the interest shown by Tulsa teachers in the children's progress. Eighty-two per cent of them expressed favorable opinions, six per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and eleven per cent of them did not express opinions. Fifteen per cent, by parents in the labor classification, was the highest percentage of any group which failed to express

Table XXIII

OPINIONS REGARDING REAL INTEREST SHOWN BY TEACHERS IN THE CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	36	34	34	34	38	35	37	34	36	33	35	36	34	42	33	34	33	35	35	36	34	38	34	37	33	35
2	46	44	52	47	48	47	48	47	47	48	48	47	49	42	50	50	48	45	47	48	47	48	47	48	48	47
3	4	7	4	5	4	7	5	6	6	6	4	4	5	6	8	7	6	2	7	4	6	5	5	5	5	5
4	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
5	8	8	7	11	7	9	7	9	7	9	10	8	9	7	6	6	9	11	7	9	9	5	11	7	10	8
6	4	4	2	3	2	1	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	1	3	2	3	4	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

opinions, the various parent groups were quite uniform in the percentages of favorable and unfavorable opinions given.

Opinions Regarding the Willingness of Teachers

To Give Help to Children Who Need It

One of the criticisms sometimes made of teachers is that they do not seem willing to give help to individual children who need it. This is perhaps true with some teachers. On the other hand, it is likely that children sometimes accuse teachers of being unwilling to help them when parents question them too closely about their failure to master certain things which they were supposed to have learned. It becomes an escape mechanism which is probably accepted by the parents in many cases. Too often the parent becomes critical of the teacher without investigating further to determine the truth of the situation.

The large number of children in classes makes it impossible for a teacher who is conscious of the children's need for individual help to give them as much as she feels that she should give.

It was with these problems of teachers in mind that the opinion of parents was sought regarding this aspect of elementary education in Tulsa. The distribution of opinions expressed is given in Table XXIV. The various classifications of parents were very consistent in their expression of opinions. Eighty per cent of them were favorable in their opinions, seven per cent of them were unfavorable, and fifteen per cent of them failed to express opinions.

Table XXIV

OPINIONS REGARDING THE WILLINGNESS OF TEACHERS
TO GIVE HELP TO CHILDREN WHO NEED IT

		The Opinion Expressed ^a		
1	37	(632)*	Mothers	Grade
2	40	(298)	Fathers	Two
3	44	(622)	Mothers	Grade
4	48	(332)	Fathers	Four
5	52	(590)	Mothers	Grade
6	56	(320)	Fathers	Six
	60	(722)	Wives	Same
	64	(722)	Husbands	Family
	68	(2064)	All of the time	Child Has Attended
	72	(429)	Half Time or More	Tulsa Schools
	76	(330)	Less Than Half Time	
	80	(647)	Elementary	Educational
	84	(1442)	High School	Background
	88	(335)	College	of
	92	(230)	College Degree	Parents ^b
	96	(253)	Business and Professional	Occupations
	100	(468)	Trades	of
	104	(97)	Laborers	Parents
	108	(1454)	Voted	School
	112	(1251)	Did Not Vote	Elections
	116	(562)	1 to 3 Meetings	Attendance
	120	(1232)	More than 3 Meetings	at School
	124	(718)	No Meetings	Meetings
	128	(1761)	Visited Classes	Class
	132	(985)	Did Not Visit Classes	Visitation
	136	(2908)	Total Responses	

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Opinions Regarding Friendliness of Teachers

Schools, like churches and other similar institutions, sometimes have a reputation of being cold and unfriendly. Business institutions sometimes have the same kind of reputation. Church leaders have discovered that such a reputation does not build congregations. Business leaders have found that such a reputation causes them to lose customers. Although parents are required by law to send their children to school, leaders in education have learned that if schools are to have the undivided support of their patrons, an atmosphere of friendliness must prevail.

Parents have expressed their opinions regarding the friendliness of teachers in the elementary schools of Tulsa. Data showing the distribution of opinions are presented in Table XXV. Opinions expressed by eighty-eight per cent of the parents were favorable. Three per cent of the parents felt that teachers were not as friendly as they should be, and nine per cent of them did not express opinions. It is quite likely that as many as nine per cent of the parents have had no occasion to meet teachers and to form an opinion regarding their friendliness or unfriendliness. The various classifications of parents were quite uniform in their opinions except that seven per cent of the fathers of sixth grade children and seven per cent of the parents of the labor classification expressed unfavorable opinions.

Table XXV

OPINIONS REGARDING THE FRIENDLINESS OF TEACHERS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																											
	(632)* Mothers Grade	(298) Fathers Two	(622) Mothers Grade	(332) Fathers Four	(590) Mothers Grade	(320) Fathers Six	(722) Wives Same	(722) Husbands Family	(2064) All of the time Child Has Attended Tulsa Schools	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary Educational	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree Business and Professional	(253) Trades Occupations	(97) Laborers of Parents	(1454) Voted School	(1251) Did Not Vote 1 to 3 Elections	(562) Meetings More than 3 Meetings Attendance at School	(718) No Meetings Visited Meetings	(1761) Classes Class	(985) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2908) Total Responses				
1	44	36	42	35	45	35	43	36	41	38	41	38	40	47	40	43	37	34	41	40	38	46	37	44	35	40		
2	47	48	48	50	48	49	47	49	48	51	46	47	50	44	50	46	51	47	49	49	49	48	48	48	50	48		
3	1	3	3	4	2	5	3	4	3	2	1	3	2	2	4	4	2	7	3	2	3	2	2	3	3			
4	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0		
5	6	8	5	9	5	8	5	8	6	6	9	7	6	4	4	5	8	8	5	8	7	3	10	4	9	6		
6	2	5	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	3		

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Responses to the Question: Do You Consider the Teacher's Advice Concerning Your Child's Education as Valuable as You Do the Doctor's Advice Concerning Your Child's Health?

The practice of medicine is perhaps the best known and one of the most highly respected professions. It is also a profession with which virtually every man, woman, and child has had some contact. Teachers speak of teaching as a profession and often wonder if it is so considered by people outside the teaching group. Since parents are familiar with the profession represented by doctors and since the doctor's advice concerning a child's health is usually highly valued by parents, they were asked to honestly express their opinions on this question: "Do you consider the teacher's advice concerning your child's education as valuable as you do the doctor's advice concerning your child's health?"

Table XXVI gives the distribution of responses. Eighty-five per cent of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires answered in the affirmative. Seven per cent of them gave negative answers, two per cent of them wrote other responses, and seven per cent of them did not respond. Responses for parents with college degrees were seventy-five per cent affirmative, fifteen per cent negative, five per cent other responses, and five per cent of them did not respond. All other classifications of parents were fairly uniform in their responses. The responses to this question indicate to the writer that the parents think of teachers as a professional group.

Table XXVI

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: DO YOU CONSIDER THE TEACHER'S ADVICE CONCERNING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION AS VALUABLE AS YOU DO THE DOCTOR'S ADVICE CONCERNING YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH?

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632) [*] Mothers Grade Two	(298) Fathers Grade Two	(622) Mothers Grade Four	(332) Fathers Grade Four	(590) Mothers Grade Six	(320) Fathers Grade Six	(722) Wives Same Family Child Has Attended Tulsa Schools	(722) Husbands All of the time Half Time or More Less Than Half Time	(2064) All of the time Half Time or More Less Than Half Time	(429) Half Time or More Less Than Half Time	(330) Half Time or More Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary Educational Background	(1442) High School Background	(335) College of Parents ^b	(230) College Degree Business and Professional Occupations	(253) Business and Professional Occupations	(468) Trades of Parents	(97) Laborers of Parents	(1454) Voted School Elections	(1251) Did Not Vote 1 to 3 Meetings More than 3 Meetings	(562) Meetings More than 3 Meetings	(1232) 3 Meetings Attendance at School	(718) No Meetings Visited Classes	(1761) Visited Classes Class	(985) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2908) Total Responses
1	87	86	87	80	86	87	87	83	85	87	90	91	88	82	75	77	90	92	85	90	87	86	89	88	86	85
2	5	8	6	10	6	6	6	8	7	7	2	5	5	9	15	13	6	5	8	5	6	7	6	6	8	7
3	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	1	2	4	5	4	1	0	2	2	2	3	1	2	1	2
4	6	5	5	8	5	6	5	7	6	4	3	4	4	5	5	5	4	3	6	3	4	4	3	4	4	7

a 1-Yes 2-No 3-Other responses 4-No responses
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Concluding Statement

Opinions expressed by parents of children in the Tulsa elementary schools regarding aspects of elementary education pertaining to the school personnel indicate that they are generally quite well satisfied. There is little doubt, however, that with more emphasis placed upon the importance of public relations, teachers would be able to cause many of the parents who were unfavorable in their opinions, and many others who failed to express opinions, to become favorable in their opinions and consequently to become boosters for the public schools.

CHAPTER VI

OPINIONS REGARDING HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

Home-school relationships should be close enough to make it possible for a mutual understanding to exist between teachers and parents. Education is a cooperative responsibility. Teachers need information which parents can give them about the child and equally valuable information can be given parents by teachers. This requires more than a report card each six or nine weeks and an occasional note from a parent to the teacher. The human element is recognized as essential in business and it is needed even more in education.

Parent opinion was secured on three items regarding home-school relationships in this study. A report of the data follows.

Opinions Regarding Cooperation of the School with the Home

Many influences act upon the lives of American boys and girls. The influence exerted by the home and by the school are two important ones. Other influences are those of the church, the various children's organizations, the movies, the radio, magazines, newspapers, and many others. It seems reasonable to say that the school should recognize these influences and by means of a cooperative program utilize them to the best advantage of the boys and girls of the school.

The influence of the school upon the child is perhaps more effective than any other except the home. Assuming that this is true, it is most important that both the home and the school be conscious of the need for a high degree of cooperation between them. This cooperative relationship has received much emphasis in Tulsa. Each school has a Parent-Teacher Association which meets several times

during each school year and sponsors additional interpretation meetings of various kinds. A department of family life education with a director and two assistants is a part of the public school organization. Many family life education classes for parents are held in the elementary schools. Parents are invited and encouraged to visit the schools and special back-to-school nights are held in most of the schools during American Education Week each year.

Of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires, 1761 parents said they had visited classes during the last two years and 981 of them said that they had not visited classes. With regard to attending meetings at the school, 562 parents said they had attended from one to three meetings during the last two years, 1232 of them said that they had attended more than three meetings, and 718 of them indicated that they had attended no meetings.

When parents were asked to express their opinions regarding cooperation of the school with the home, the opinions expressed were distributed as reported in Table XXVII. Eighty-four per cent of the parents were favorable in their opinions. Two per cent of them expressed the opinion that the cooperation of the school with the home was not satisfactory, and thirteen per cent of them expressed no opinion. It is of interest to note that the classifications having the highest percentage of parents who did not express opinions were those whose children are in grade two, those whose children have attended Tulsa schools less than one-half of the time, those who did not vote, those who attended no meetings, those who visited no classes, and the labor and trades classifications.

Table XXVII

OPINIONS REGARDING COOPERATION OF THE SCHOOL WITH THE HOME

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers Grade	(298) Fathers Two	(622) Mothers Grade	(332) Fathers Four	(590) Mothers Grade	(320) Fathers Six	(722) Wives Same	(722) Husbands Family	(2064) All of the time Child Has	(429) Half Time or More Attended Tulsa Schools	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary Educational	(1442) High School Background	(335) College of	(230) College Degree Parents ^b	(253) Business and Professional Occupations	(468) Trades of	(97) Laborers Parents	(1454) Voted School	(1251) Did Not Vote Elections	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings Attendance	(1232) More than 3 Meetings at School	(718) No Meetings Visited Meetings	(1761) Classes Class	(985) Did Not Visit Classes Visitation	(2908) Total Responses
1	34	28	37	33	38	32	38	32	34	32	39	33	33	44	33	36	32	28	37	32	32	39	31	38	30	34
2	49	53	49	50	49	52	49	52	52	50	42	50	52	43	53	49	52	48	49	53	50	50	50	50	52	50
3	2	3	2	5	2	5	2	4	3	5	2	3	3	3	4	4	2	1	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	1
4	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
5	11	11	8	8	7	8	8	8	8	9	14	10	9	7	5	6	11	19	7	11	9	5	14	7	12	9
6	3	4	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	4	2	2	3	2	3	4	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	4

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

The fact that only two per cent of the parents were unfavorable in their opinions indicates that they are well satisfied with the manner in which the Tulsa schools cooperate with the homes.

Opinions Regarding Willingness of Teachers To Explain the Work of the School to Parents

The introductory statement in Chapter II emphasized the point that parents who have had few, if any, contacts with public elementary schools since their own elementary school days find it difficult to understand some of the methods used in the schools which their children attend. Many of them are eager to have teachers explain why manuscript writing is used, why the multiplication facts are not taught in tables, why the long division form is used in beginning division with single digit divisors rather than using the short division form, why units of work are used, and in a few instances why first grade children are not taught the letters of the alphabet during the first few weeks of the school year.

In order to determine whether parents were satisfied with the willingness of teachers to give such explanations they were asked to express their opinions regarding this phase of home-school relationships. The data are presented in Table XXVIII. Eighty-six per cent of the parents expressed favorable opinions, two per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions, and twelve per cent of them expressed no opinion. Again, parents whose children were in grade two, those who attended no meetings at the school, those who visited no classes,

Table XXVIII

OPINIONS REGARDING WILLINGNESS OF TEACHERS TO EXPLAIN

THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL TO PARENTS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	45	34	44	39	47	39	45	38	43	40	42	38	42	53	44	45	40	35	44	40	41	48	36	47	36	42
2	42	48	46	46	43	43	44	46	46	45	39	46	46	37	45	45	46	44	44	46	45	44	45	44	46	44
3	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	0	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2
4	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
5	9	12	6	10	6	13	6	11	8	9	15	10	8	6	7	6	9	16	7	10	8	5	14	5	14	9
6	3	4	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	4	2	1	2	2	3	4	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

those whose children had attended Tulsa schools less than one-half of the time, and those in the labor classification had the highest percentage of no opinion. Most of these are groups of parents who have given teachers little opportunity to explain the work of the school to them.

Opinions Regarding the Reporting of Pupil Progress to Parents

Outside the personal contacts between parents and teachers, the report card is probably the most important link between the school and the home. Many parents perhaps attach too much value to marks which teachers place upon report cards and do not take advantage of opportunities to get more complete statements regarding the child's progress by talking with the teachers.

The Tulsa schools use a system of school marks which records an "S" meaning "satisfactory" for a child whose level of achievement, in the judgment of the teacher, is in accord with his level of ability. When a child's achievement, in the judgment of the teacher, does not reach this level, a "U" meaning "unsatisfactory" is reported. A special progress report, indicating the child's lack of satisfactory achievement and suggesting means by which improvement might be made, is sent to parents at least three weeks before a "U" is recorded on the report card.

In this investigation parents were given an opportunity to express their opinions regarding this plan of reporting pupil progress to parents. The data are presented in Table XXIX. Seventy-five per cent of the parents agreed that the plan is satisfactory.

Table XXIX

OPINIONS REGARDING THE REPORTING OF PUPIL PROGRESS TO PARENTS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(468) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings Visited	(1761) Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	29	26	28	28	33	31	30	28	29	32	30	34	28	30	18	20	29	32	28	31	29	29	30	30	28	29
2	46	47	48	48	45	47	48	49	48	44	42	50	48	41	39	44	51	45	46	48	46	45	49	45	49	46
3	10	12	11	12	11	13	10	12	12	12	12	5	12	17	25	21	9	5	14	10	13	13	9	12	10	12
4	2	5	3	5	3	3	4	5	4	4	3	1	3	5	10	8	2	2	5	2	3	5	2	4	3	3
5	8	5	6	5	7	4	5	5	6	7	11	7	7	5	3	4	7	10	5	7	7	5	7	6	7	6
6	5	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	5	4	2	5	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	3

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

Fifteen per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions regarding the plan, and nine per cent of them did not express opinions.

The highest percentages of unfavorable response came from the parents having college degrees with thirty-five per cent, those of the business and professional classification with twenty-nine per cent, and those who attended college, but did not receive degrees with twenty-two per cent. All other classifications of parents were fairly uniform in their response except those in the labor classification who expressed only seven per cent of unfavorable opinions.

A committee of school officials and teachers is now studying the plan of reporting pupil progress to parents. Improvements which will probably be recommended by this committee should cause some of the parents who consider the present plan unsatisfactory to become better satisfied with the system of school marks used.

Concluding Statements

Parents who expressed opinions seem to be well satisfied with home-school relationships in Tulsa except for the reporting of pupil progress to parents, regarding which fifteen per cent of them expressed unfavorable opinions.

In addition to revisions of the plan of reporting pupil progress which will probably be recommended by the committee now studying the plan, those charged with the responsibility of formulating a program for interpreting education should be conscious of the need for reaching the nine to thirteen per cent of parents who evidently were not well enough informed to express opinions regarding home-school relationships.

CHAPTER VII

A STUDY OF COMMENTS WRITTEN BY PARENTS

In the directions for marking the questionnaire used in this study, parents were asked to use the margin or the back of the questionnaire for writing any remarks which they wished to make about any of the twenty-nine statements to which they were to make objective responses or about any other aspects of public education in Tulsa. Hundreds of remarks were written. As one would expect, the range was from very favorable to very unfavorable; from remarks indicating opinions based upon correct information regarding the schools to those indicating preconceived notions, prejudice, misinformation, and complete lack of information; from remarks concerning important phases of school activities to those concerning the most trivial; from remarks suggesting seemingly desirable improvements to those suggesting the most impractical or undesirable; from remarks indicating a desire to improve the school situation for all the children to those placing selfish interests above all else.

Although the objective data which have been presented in earlier chapters show that opinions of parents regarding the Tulsa elementary schools are generally favorable, it seems worthwhile to point out the few aspects of elementary education of which parents were most critical in the remarks written on the backs and in the margins of the questionnaires. Following the verbatim responses typical of criticism offered will be found a number of those typical of the many favorable remarks made about the schools and a number of those illustrating the wide variety of remarks written by parents.

Verbatim Responses Typical of the Criticism Offered Most Often

1. The plan of reporting pupil progress to parents:

"I prefer a grading system. After he gets out in the world he will not be judged by whether he is doing the best he can--and he may as well learn that in the first grade."

Mother--sixth grade

"A report card with an "S" means very little to me."

Father--fourth grade

"Give us more definite reports of individual progress."

Father--second grade

"I do not particularly care for the system of grading. After looking over report cards, I never feel that I know much more than I did before."

Mother--second grade

"A card with no checks and a run of "S's" does not mean a thing to me. I want to know where my children need to improve and I know they are not working like they should."

Mother--sixth grade

"The child quickly gets the idea the "S" means perfect, and this begets laziness."

Father--sixth grade

2. The size of classes:

"The classes are entirely too crowded. Some of the children don't get the attention needed."

Mother--fourth grade

"The classes are too large for the maximum of efficiency for the teacher and the child. However, I feel that the Tulsa teachers are above average and handle this problem exceptionally well."

Mother--sixth grade

"Tulsa schools are woefully over-crowded. Teachers have so many pupils that they are utterly exhausted when three o'clock arrives."

Mother--sixth grade

"Possibly there is not clear enough explanation of new processes to children the first time they come in contact with them. This is no doubt due to classes being too large."

Father--second grade

"I can only offer praise for our elementary school, and the remarkable patience and adeptness of our teachers. The school is vastly overcrowded which is no doubt a hardship."

Mother--sixth grade

"I can't find words to express one teacher over a class that has between 45 or 50 students and any one to expect results from either teacher or any student."

Mother--fourth grade

"Classes too large--I marvel how teachers manage 45-48 or more."

Mother--sixth grade

3. The platoon organization.

"From my experience I thoroughly dislike the platoon system in the first three grades. My child also had far too little drill in spelling and arithmetic, consequently I am afraid he will always be handicapped. Too much time and energy wasted on non-essentials."

Mother--fourth grade

"I personally think that the moving of children from one room to another for various classes is unnecessary. It would take less time and cause less commotion for the teachers of various subjects to go to the class room and teach their subject."

Father--fourth grade

"I do not feel that the Platoon Type of Organization used in the Tulsa schools is satisfactory. After spending a half-day following my child from one class to another, I feel the only real work he accomplishes is in his home room. Besides losing so much going from one class room to another, I consider that going out of a warm room into the cold as he does at the school he attends is a serious detriment to his health."

Mother--second grade

"My one objection to the platoon type of teaching in our particular school is because no lockers are provided for children's wraps."

Mother--fourth grade

4. Playground supervision.

"Playground supervision is needed badly."

Father--fourth grade

"I believe we need more teachers to watch the children on the playground and the manner in which they play."

Mother--fourth grade

"I think boys should play on one side of the school ground and girls the other at all times."

Mother--fourth grade

"A playground supervisor for each school would be a help to both teachers and children."

Mother--fourth grade

"I think your play ground supervision is very lax in grade schools."

Father--second grade

5. School personnel.

"The work of some very excellent teachers is offset to a disadvantage by some very poor teachers--however I feel this is due to poor supervision and could be corrected."

Mother--fourth grade

"I would like to see more younger teachers in the schools. Tulsa has too many grandmothers trying to teach."

Mother--sixth grade

"We need more unmarried women teachers especially ones whose husbands are able to make a living."

Father--fourth grade

"There is one teacher that when she is angry calls the children, 'Little devils' 'crazy little fool' and such likes. Such teachers as these should not be allowed to teach in any school."

Mother--second grade

"I find that most teachers are very nice and will explain things to you very graciously. I have had one to be very rude to me when I visited her."

Mother--sixth grade

"My schooling was mostly in Tulsa schools, and I have the highest opinion of them, but some teachers should attend Mrs. Rebecca Nelson's classes, especially the old maids who have never come in contact with lively boys except in a school room."

Mother--fourth grade

"Some teachers are too old and cranky."

Mother--second grade

"You have some very good teachers who are interested and some who are not interested in doing enough to earn their salary."

Father--fourth grade

"A few teachers seem too cross and impatient, probably because of their advanced age. Why not pension them?"

Father--fourth grade

"There is more need for consecrated christian teachers. I don't like the idea of smoking teachers setting an example for my children. And there are plenty of such teachers in our school system."

Mother--fourth grade

"I think some of the teachers are just as sweet and some of them are impudent and I don't think there is very much in your Principal. He won't watch his children on the play ground."

Mother--second grade

6. The teaching of manuscript writing.

"Children should be taught to write earlier than the third grade when they show a desire to learn."

Mother--second grade

"It seems to me that printing in the first grade hinders writing later."

Mother--second grade

"Children in grades as low as the second grade should be learning to write instead of printing so much."

Mother--second grade

7. The teaching of arithmetic.

"Lack of drill--good old fashioned drill."

Mother--sixth grade

"Arithmetic in Tulsa Schools is far below standard."

Mother--fourth grade

"We have three children in Tulsa schools. Schools in other places seem to be more advanced than they are here, especially arithmetic. The multiplication tables are taught children in the third grade almost every where."

Mother--fourth grade

"Grade school arithmetic is not as far advanced as our county schools but more advanced in reading."

Mother--fourth grade

8. School discipline.

"Too much freedom--the children are unruly and difficult to manage at home."

Mother--second grade

"Need to not be so lax about corporal punishment. Some youngsters need it badly and can be corrected only by force."

Mother--second grade

"The freedom of our children is splendid for their growth but where there is freedom I believe there must be perfect discipline."

Mother--sixth grade

"I don't believe the schools of Tulsa has enough Discipline, however this same discipline is probably lax in the home, including this one."

Father--second grade

Verbatim Responses Typical of the Many

Favorable Remarks Made by Parents

"As one person's opinion I think Tulsa has one of the best school systems that I know of. I would certainly hate to have to change schools with my children."

Mother--sixth grade

"I have felt it a privilege for my children to receive the fine training they have received in the Tulsa Public School system."

Mother--sixth grade

"Having traveled the past three years on defense work, our children have been in numerous schools in various states and we can really say that Tulsa schools rate very high in comparison with most of the schools our children have attended."

Father--second grade

"In appreciation of the good work of teachers parents ought to support teachers pension plan."

Mother--fourth grade

"My children have attended schools in other large cities and I like Tulsa schools the best. The teachers interest and cooperation is a great benefit to Tulsa children."

Mother--second grade

"I think Tulsa Public Schools offer great opportunities for those who will take advantage of them."

Mother--sixth grade

"I would not change one thing in our school if I had the power to do so."

Mother--fourth grade

"I feel that we have reasons to be proud of the Tulsa schools. Of course there are little things that do not please us all, but that isn't possible, with as many parents as there are in a city this size. Those who are not satisfied with the schools are those who do not understand what is being done."

Mother--sixth grade

"My observation has been that the Tulsa schools are a long way ahead of the schools in some of the Western states. (We learned from experience.)"

Father--second grade

"I only wish my children had the advantage of this same planned activity through the summer month."

Mother--fourth grade

"Keep up the good work."

Father--fourth grade

"I appreciate the interest that nearly all school people show in the students. I also wish to commend you for making this survey."

Father--second grade

"I particularly want to compliment the schools on the method of teaching reading--and on teaching the child how to grasp the subject matter instead of just pronounce words."

Mother--sixth grade

"I have found that education in Tulsa has less objectional features than that of any other educational system in which I have had any interest as a parent or student."

Mother--fourth grade

"Am in close touch with the work that my child does in school and I am very much pleased with the results."

Mother--sixth grade

"I've been told Tulsa teachers as an average have had more training than any other system of a town this size."

Mother--fourth grade

"I find the teachers very interested in each and every child."

Mother--second grade

"I like the platoon type of organization as it assists in developing a child normally."

Mother--sixth grade

"I'm very well pleased with the teaching my children have received. Thank you."

Mother--fourth grade

"All our associations with the schools and their personnel have been highly satisfactory to us."

Mother--fourth grade

Verbatim Responses Illustrating the
Variety of Remarks Made by Parents

"Why is the 3rd and 4th grade in the same room? I think the child could do better if all one grade was in one room."

Mother--fourth grade

"My Boy didn't know how to use obscene language or act so, till he went to school."

Mother--second grade

"I like not having much home-work as it gives me more time to develop hobby instinct, music, play, manners, etc. for my child."

Mother--second grade

"I do not approve of dancing in the schools. I do not approve of literature that is full of obscene love making, I was shocked to know that you have such trash in your school library. Put more emphasis on God and prayer. We must keep up the christian morale of our children or this nation is doomed to fall."

Mother--second grade

"The school all right in it work But think you should close till you get rid of the head Lice I think it terrible."

Mother--fourth grade

"I don't think the teachers should drink soda pop or eat candy in class. Because some children can afford it and others cant."

Father--fourth grade

"I really do not get much out of P.T.A. meetings. Somehow the ones I have attended seemed to fall short of even being useful. I gained no knowledge of their purpose or intention."

Mother--second grade

"I have often wondered about the student patrols being so sassy."

Mother---fourth grade

"When a child wishes to be excused from class to answer Natures call--They should be allowed to go."

Father---second grade

"The slow child knows he is in the 'dumb' class and so classifies himself."

Mother---sixth grade

"When a child's parent holds an office in the P.T.A. or any other organization that child can get by with most anything and the parents will not be told about it."

Mother---sixth grade

Father---sixth grade

"Too little time spent on 'labor and learning'."

Mother---fourth grade

"If the parents do not cooperate with the teachers the child better stay at home."

Mother---second grade

"Those who throw their bats should not be allowed to play ball."

Father---fourth grade

"Pre-primary and kindergarten should both be made compulsory or discontinued. Personally I feel that both are impractical and one or the other must be a lot of foolishness."

Father---fourth grade

"There is only one thing that I do not like and I will be truthful about that. I have told my children to not pay any attention to that one teacher. I am a christian woman and I have raised my childred in the christian way. I believe the Bible from lid to lid, and when this teacher tell's them things, that are opsite to the teaching of the Bible I don't like it."

Mother---second grade

It is the opinion of the writer that a very large per cent of the criticisms written on the questionnaires would never have been written had two things been true:

1. Had these parents felt that they could have been assured of a friendly reception should they have wished to talk with the teacher or principal about the problem which was indicated in their criticism.
2. Had the principal and teachers used every means to establish a free and friendly relationship between the school and the home, having made sure that parents who had come to them with problems had gone away feeling that a satisfactory solution had been reached or that they would do everything reasonable to reach a satisfactory solution.

CHAPTER VIII

A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

It seems reasonable to assume that opinions of parents regarding a particular school or a particular school system would be formed upon the basis of their opinions regarding a large number of aspects of that school or of that school system. Based upon this assumption, and taking into consideration the fact that they had already expressed opinions regarding twenty-eight aspects of elementary education, was the request that parents express opinions regarding the general results accomplished by the Tulsa Public Schools. It was explained to them that their response to this item should be their general impression of the Tulsa Public Schools. The distribution of responses is reported in Table XXX. Eighty-two per cent of the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires were favorable in their responses. Two per cent of them were unfavorable, and fourteen per cent of them did not express opinions. Opinions were expressed by a higher percentage of parents who had attended college, those who have college degrees, and those in the business and professional classification, than by any of the other classifications of parents. This resulted in a higher percentage of favorable as well as unfavorable responses for these groups than was expressed by parents of all classifications. The responses indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the elementary schools of Tulsa.

Table XXXI presents a report of the opinions expressed regarding each of the twenty-nine items by the 2908 parents who returned questionnaires.

Table XXX

OPINIONS REGARDING GENERAL RESULTS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	The Opinion Expressed ^a																									
	(632)* Mothers	(298) Fathers	(622) Mothers	(332) Fathers	(590) Mothers	(320) Fathers	(722) Wives	(722) Husbands	(2064) All of the time	(429) Half Time or More	(330) Less Than Half Time	(647) Elementary	(1442) High School	(335) College	(230) College Degree	(253) Business and Professional	(466) Trades	(97) Laborers	(1454) Voted	(1251) Did Not Vote	(562) 1 to 3 Meetings	(1232) More than 3 Meetings	(718) No Meetings	(1761) Visited Classes	(985) Did Not Visit Classes	(2908) Total Responses
1	31	29	34	30	34	36	33	32	33	31	33	33	34	34	27	28	32	34	33	33	32	34	34	34	31	32
2	49	52	50	53	50	50	51	51	51	49	48	45	51	53	57	56	52	45	51	50	51	51	48	50	51	50
3	2	2	2	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	3	6	7	1	1	4	1	2	3	1	3	2	1
4	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1
5	11	9	7	7	7	6	8	7	7	10	12	13	7	2	3	3	8	11	6	11	8	6	11	7	9	8
6	6	6	5	5	6	4	4	5	5	7	6	6	5	5	5	3	6	7	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	6

a 1-Very satisfactory 2-Satisfactory 3-Unsatisfactory 4-Very unsatisfactory 5-No opinion 6-No response
Expressed to the nearest one per cent

b Includes wives of men in each of the three classifications selected for study

* Indicates the number of parents in each classification who returned questionnaires

TABLE XXXI

Opinions of 2908 Parents Regarding Certain Aspects
of Elementary Education in Tulsa, Oklahoma

Aspects of Elementary Education	Opinions Expressed*					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
The teaching of reading	44	44	6	2	3	1
The teaching of arithmetic	33	50	8	1	6	2
The teaching of spelling	42	46	7	2	2	1
The teaching of penmanship	31	52	7	1	7	2
Teaching children to express themselves well orally	28	50	6	1	14	2
Teaching children to express themselves well in writing	28	48	5	1	16	2
The amount of subject matter learned	22	52	5	1	16	4
The amount of home work assigned	17	49	14	3	13	4
Opportunities for pupil development through activities such as music, art, auditorium, and physical education	40	45	3	1	9	4
Training in good citizenship	38	54	2	0	4	2
The development of good character traits	29	58	3	0	8	2
Opportunities given children to accept responsibilities and carry them to completion	26	49	4	1	17	3
The emphasis upon safety education	41	47	1	0	8	3
The development of good health habits	33	55	5	1	5	2
The amount of freedom allowed children	27	54	5	1	10	3
School discipline	28	51	6	1	10	4
Student participation in school government	34	40	2	1	20	3
The platoon type of organization used in Tulsa Schools	32	43	5	3	14	4
The grouping of Children in classes within each grade	27	48	3	1	16	5
The size of classes	18	45	10	3	20	4
Playground supervision	23	48	8	3	15	3
The ability and training of teachers	33	45	2	0	17	3
Real interest shown by teachers in the children's progress	35	47	5	1	8	3
The willingness of teachers to give help to children who need it	36	44	5	2	12	3
Friendliness of teachers	40	48	3	0	6	3
Cooperation of the school with the home	34	50	1	1	9	4
Willingness of teachers to explain the work of the school to parents	42	44	2	0	9	3
The reporting of pupil progress to parents	29	46	12	3	6	3
General results accomplished by the Tulsa Public Schools	32	50	1	1	8	6

*1--Very satisfactory 2--Satisfactory 3--Unsatisfactory 4--Very unsatisfactory 5--No opinion 6--No response

Expressed to the nearest one per cent

The aspects of elementary education in Tulsa regarding which parents expressed the highest percentages of favorable opinions were training in good citizenship, the teaching of reading, the teaching of spelling, the emphasis upon safety education, the development of good health habits, the friendliness of teachers, and the development of good character traits.

The aspects of elementary education in Tulsa regarding which parents expressed the highest percentages of unfavorable opinions were the amount of home work assigned, the reporting of pupil progress to parents, the size of classes, and playground supervision.

Aspects of elementary education regarding which twenty per cent or more of the parents failed to express opinions were the size of classes, student participation in school government, the grouping of children in classes within each grade, the ability and training of teachers, and the amount of subject matter learned.

The objective evidence which has been presented in this study shows that parents who expressed opinions are well satisfied with the elementary schools of Tulsa. School officials and teachers should study carefully the aspects of elementary education regarding which the higher percentages of unfavorable opinions were expressed. Desirable changes or better interpretation of these aspects should be the result of their study.

Those charged with the responsibility for organizing and promoting an effective program of educational interpretation should give much consideration to reaching the parents who indicated that they did not feel qualified to express opinions. Effective interpretation might cause many of them to become enthusiastic supporters of the public schools.

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