THE CLASSIFICATION OF PUPILS
IN
THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF OSAGE COUNTY

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By

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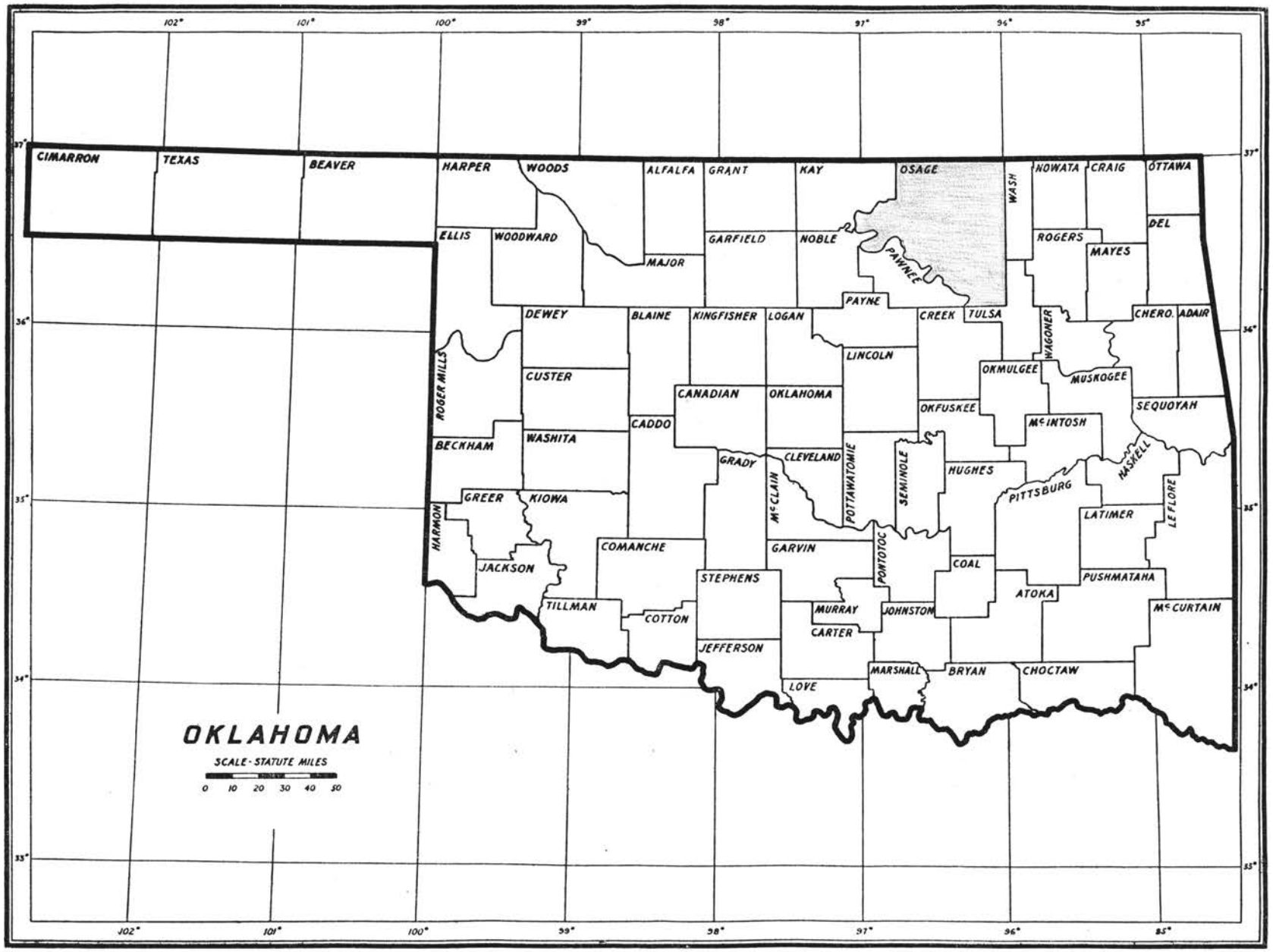
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

History of Problem

The classification of pupils in school into their proper grade and group is a problem of long standing. Countless educators have met with it, and have attempted to offer a solution only to meet with criticism from other school men on various parts of their theory which would not work in all cases and under all conditions. This problem exists in all school systems in all states from the one room rural school to the four year high school, and has existed ever since schools began dividing pupils by grades more than a century ago.

If we are training pupils in school so that they will be better equipped to live happily in a democracy, then our educational program must be adjusted to fit the changes in democracy.

The Educational Policies Commission has divided the progress of democracy into three periods, the first, from Washington's administration to the administration of Andrew Jackson, the second period from the time of Andrew Jackson to the World War and the third period from the World War to the present time. In view of the changes in democracy and social adjustment it seems that education must undergo similar changes.[1]

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1. The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy, Educational Policies Commission, Washington, D. C., p. 9.

Our system of classifying pupils into grades with a definite course of study for each grade has been a little static during these periods of change, and it seems that more study in our system of classifying pupils into various grades would be helpful in accomplishing the aims of education.

There are two general plans established and used in our school systems in regard to promotion and retardation of pupils. One plan is to start a pupil in the primary grade at six years of age, and to promote him according to his achievement through the eight elementary grades. If he fails to make sufficient grades according to his teachers, he is retained in a grade more than one year, or until he has made sufficient achievement to be promoted to the next grade. If a pupil is retained, he is required in most cases to take the same work over for another year, using the same books and in many cases sitting in the same seat. This is the old traditional method and was established when educators had never thought of individual differences in pupils, and in the days when home life and environment of the entire group in a school was practically the same for all pupils.

The other system being practiced by our more modern educators is to keep our former system of dividing school children by grades, but never retaining a pupil because of low achievement. All pupils finish the eight elementary grades in eight years. Along with this method comes our

system of homogeneous grouping, the dividing of classes into groups of fast and slow pupils, and then giving them work according to their capacity to learn.

A great deal of study, and discussion has taken place regarding these two systems of classification, and it seems that both systems have several disadvantages which will be discussed in a later chapter.

It seems that a system which will meet with success in one school system may not be so good in another, and it is very noticeable that the rural schools of one-two-and-three rooms have no definite program of promotion and classification which will solve their problem on this subject.

Osage County is the largest county in the state and is known throughout the nation for its wealth in oil and the raising of cattle. It is the home of the Osage Indians with their agency at Pawhuska which is also the county seat of Osage County. It has 69 rural schools from one to five rooms each, which employ 104 rural teachers.

Schools Studied

Due to the high valuations of school districts the rural schools have enjoyed the use of school equipment which many schools of other counties could not afford. There has been some annexation of smaller schools to the larger systems which seem to have been very successful after the first year, however this practice of annexation almost always divides the community into two factions, those who favor annex-

TABLE I

The Types of Schools in Osage County

Type of School	No. of Schools
One Room	42
Two Room	21
Three Room	5
Four Room	0
Five Room	1
TOTAL	69

ation and those who do not. Upon investigation it seems that whether the schools should have been annexed or not the objections or sanctions to the movement are usually personal. In this case as in many others in our schools we often lose sight of the objective of education, that schools are being maintained for the education of the boys and girls who go to school, and not to create jobs for teachers, bus drivers, and janitors.

The pupils who attend the rural schools in Osage County come from two distinct groups. One, from families who work for oil companies which is the larger group, and the other from farmer families. As a rule these children live comfortably and come from good families. In contests Osage County schools rank high, and are interested in exhibits and fair work.

The rural schools of Osage County are above the average in finance, however this has tended to decrease during the last few years due to decreased valuations. The people in the county believe in helping keep up the finance of the school which is indicated by voting a nine months term of school and a ten mill levy in every school district in the county almost every year.

This study shows that the pupils in this county are poorly classified which will be discussed in a later chapter. Not all pupils are retarded but some are accelerated as well. To solve this problem it seems advisable to study the teachers who work in these schools, and see if they are partly responsible for the poor classification of pupils.

Teachers Studied

TABLE II

Number of Teachers in Osage County Schools, With Years of College Training[2]

Years of college training	No. of teachers	% of teachers
Less than two years	None	----
From two to three years	28	26.9
From three to four years	15	14.4
Bachelor's Degree	61	58.7
Master's Degree	None	----

2. Annual Personnel Report, Osage County Superintendent's Office, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, 1939.

Table II shows that 26.9 per cent of the teachers of the county have just enough college work to obtain a certificate. This may indicate that the teachers are a little weak in keeping up with modern trends in the classification of pupils.

Upon investigation it was found that many of the teachers in the lower educational level are married women who received a life certificate when the requirement was only 62 college hours. They also taught a few years and married expecting to quit the profession. Then when the depression came on in 1929-1930 they were forced back into the profession in order to maintain their present standard of living. Some are interested in teaching and improving their work by attending summer school and keeping up with the modern trends in education, but many are interested only in the salary they receive and the pupils they teach are not given serious consideration.

On the other hand 58.7 per cent of the teachers in this study have received their bachelor's degree in education. Thus is an indication that they have chosen teaching school as a permenent profession and probably will grow professionally with the modern methods in education.

Table III shows that out of 104 teachers 73 are women and 31 are men. It is interesting to note that 47 of the 104 teachers are married women. It is also true that 15 of the 47 married women have had less than three years of college work.

TABLE III

The Marital Status of Teachers and the Number of Men and Women in the Rural Schools of Osage County[3]

Marital Status of Teachers	Total	Women	Men
Married	75	47	28
Single	26	23	3
Widows	3	3	--
TOTAL	104	73	31

It is a custom in many two room schools in the county to employ a man and wife for teachers. However for the last few years there has been a tendency among the people in the rural communities to employ single teachers. The idea is not necessarily to get better teachers, but to give more single people work. Here again school boards seem to lose sight of the fact that schools are run to educate boys and girls and not to make jobs for needy people.

Table IV above shows that fifty-two teachers or fifty per cent, stay less than three years in a place. This constant shift of teachers from one school to another causes an observer to ask the question, "why does this happen?" There are many reasons why a teacher can do better work after he or she has been in the same position longer

3. Annual Personnel Report, Osage County Superintendent's Office, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, 1939.

TABLE IV

The Number of Years of Teaching Experience of the Rural Teachers in Osage County, Together with the Number of Years Experience in their Present Position[4]

Years of Experience	Total	Years Experience in same school
One to two years	5	52
Three to Four years	11	24
Five to Six years	13	14
Seven to Eight years	14	7
Nine to Ten years	17	5
More than Ten years	44	2
TOTAL	104	104

than two years. They become more familiar with the community, they know the problems that exist, and they have more time to plan long time goals and work out a good educational program.

The best teachers we have are those who study their communities and plan their work over a long period of time. A longer period of tenure with job security would enable all teachers to work out a better program, while a short tenure may cause some teachers to feel a lack of responsibility, and give them an idea that they are working only to help their successor rather than themselves.

4. Annual personnel Report, Osage County Superintendent's Office, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, 1939.

As a general rule the boards of education in rural schools employ the teachers. The boards are composed of three members, a clerk, director and member; one member is elected each year by the people at the annual school meeting, and holds office for a term of three years. It is difficult to get the best citizens of a district to accept a position on the board, because there is no salary in connection with the job, but plenty of criticism if the school does not happen to please every patron in the district. For this reason many board members are men who aspire to the position for personal reasons: to employ a friend for a teacher, to buy supplies from a friend, to dismiss a teacher who may not have pleased him personally, or perhaps his child failed to be promoted or was assigned more homework than his mother thought he should do.

It seems that the school boards in our rural schools have too much influence upon the policies of the school in regard to promotion and retardation. Because of this fact teachers feel the need of trying to hold their jobs rather than work out a scientific program of classification, which they may not be able to carry out anyway.

The average salary of each rural teacher in Osage County was $1,129 per year or about $127 per month. This salary was above the average for most of the counties in the state, and should make it possible for Osage County to get the best teachers if they are properly selected.

Investigation has shown that it is an established custom in most schools to promote pupils every year, however this practice is limited by the use of the state accrediting test and county examinations, the results of which are used as a basis of promotion in the upper elementary grades.

All schools are given an accrediting test each semester by the County Superintendent or county supervisor. Pupils who score above the state norm on these tests, in most cases are promoted. The fact that these tests are given each year as a basis of rating schools, pupils and teachers, has a tendency to cause teachers to give their pupils a great deal of drill work, with the fundamental purpose of passing the test.

It is also a custom in many rural school districts to permit children to start to school before they are six years old, in many cases they are permitted to start to school in the primary grade if they will be six years old by January 1st, of that school year. When a child five years of age starts to school and is promoted one grade each year he is automatically under-age for his grade. It may be that he will not even reach reading readiness until he is six, making him a slow or failing pupil all through the elementary grades. To correct this situation it is necessary first of all to make a diagnosis of the extent of acceleration and retardation, find the reasons for the condition and then set up a remedial program to correct it.

A more detailed discussion of this diagnosis in the form of a testing program will follow in a later chapter.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE IN THIS FIELD

History of Present Grading System

The classification of pupils, their assignment to proper grades, and sections is one of the manifestations of the scientific movement in the field of education. To be scientific and accurate this classification must be based upon objective evidence as to the pupils capacities and achievements, and in order to determine capacity and achievement standard tests should be used.[1]

We probably do not know when grades first were introduced. There is evidence, however, that some elements of grade grouping go back at least to the latter part of the eighteenth century.

The English High School about 1790 had five rooms. The principal taught the highest class in all subjects; two submasters each taught half of the middle class in all subjects, and the two ushers instructed the lowest class in the same way.

In American schools, usually if not always admittance to a school was based upon both achievement and age. For example, in the schools of Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1835 primary schools were for those below seven.

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1. Dr. William A. McCall, "How To Classify Pupils," Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, Doctor's Thesis.

The great principle to be regarded in the classification, either of the schools of a town or district, or of scholars in the same school, is equality of attainment, which will generally include those of the same age.

The building of the Quincy School, Boston, in 1848 probably marked the beginning of the elementary school. Instead of several separate schools there was one school having several rooms, each presided over by a teacher and with separate desks and chairs for each pupil. There in some respects, our modern elementary school was first brought into existence.

From all available data it seems clear that our present system of grading had its beginning at least as far back as 1790. Definite grading restricting the amount of ground to be covered by each teacher, all have greatly improved instruction, but like efficient supervision, has its dangers when considered from the standpoint of the interests of the individual child.

No consideration was made of innate differences in pupils, and the general impression is left by the educators of those early days that no such differences existed.

The division of pupils into eight or nine grades had its beginning during the early part of the 19th century, however probably did not attain its complete development until well on in the 80's of the past century. From the beginning a grade meant a certain level of achievement and it was observed that this generally meant certain ages.

Promotion under these conditions was open to those who had successfully mastered the work of the lower school or class. All pupils were thought to be on about the same mental level and if one did not make sufficient marks of achievement for promotion, it was believed due to lack of concentration. Thus, educators placed great emphasis upon the development of traits in individuals for better concentration.

It is practically within our present century that we have come to realize the extent to which individuals differ from each other with respect to innate ability to learn. We now know that we shall find great differences both in achievement and intelligence between children of supposedly the same school grade and children of the same age.

Up to recent years courses of study have been written with the idea of providing material for different grades, but now there is a trend to arrange the courses of study, to furnish material for the different groups within a grade as well.[2]

How shall we group our pupils for purposes of instruction? This question is not often considered due to the established custom of grouping children into either eight or six grades in the Elementary School.

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2. Warren W. Coxe, Grouping Pupils for Purposes of Instruction, Nation's Schools, Vol. 3, p. 47-54, May 1929.

There is hardly a school system in the United States that desires to be progressive that is not attempting some modification of the traditional grade organization. Below are methods employed:

A. Individual Instruction

B. Ability Grouping

C. Special Classes Organized

There are two general lines of procedure in general use for grouping children.

1. A grade mean may be made a level for promotion and promote pupils only when they have satisfactorily completed the part of the course assigned to the grade.
   a. Individual differences may be provided for by varying the rate of progress through a single course of study.
   b. This procedure in forming teaching groups, forms our traditional practice.
2. A grade mean is used as base of promotion using the chronalogical age as the best useable measure for grade placement.
   a. Promote each pupil every calendar year.
   b. Individual differences may be provided for by several courses of study prepared specifically for bright, average and dull groups. Although promoted to the next grade every year, the pupil will be assigned to the

group following the course of study that most nearly meets this requirements. The groups within a grade will therefore differ mainly in the general level of achievement.[3]

Homogeneous Grouping

In order to carry on the second line of procedure for grouping it is necessary to divide the children into homogeneous groups, and here we meet with conflicting theories in regard to the good and bad points of this procedure.

The ninth year book of the Department of Superintendents lists arguments for and against homogeneous grouping of pupils which are as follows:

Argument in Favor of Homogeneous Grouping.

1. Makes differentiation of curriculum easier.
2. Better opportunity for differentiation of courses of study without resorting to individual instruction.
3. Slow learners in separate groups are not discouraged by the superiority of others.
4. Grouped together pupils feel freer to admit their slowness and to ask questions.
5. It sets a standard that is attainable.
6. Does away with idleness of brighter pupils.

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3. Warren W. Coxe, Ibid.

7. Teacher is allowed more latitude in experimentation.
8. Gives more time for individual attention.
9. Teacher can analyze each individual.
10. Competition is keener, pupils are more apt to work to their capacity.
11. Adds to the happiness of children.
12. Lessens pupil failure.
13. Leaders are developed in all groups.
14. Reduces discipline problems.
15. Provides groups which are more congenial socially.
16. Prevents inferority Complex and superiority complex.

Argument Against Homogenious Grouping.

1. Lower groups loose the stimulus and contributions of the brighter pupils.
2. Pupils in the lower group sometimes develope a sense of inferiority.
3. Less democratic.
4. The adjustment of teachers to the lower group is difficult.
5. Teachers object to teaching the lower group.
6. There are no outstanding leaders.
7. Difficult to divide pupils.
8. Lower groups are often referred to as dumb-bells.

9. Sometimes resented by parents.
10. Complicates school administration.
11. Impossible except in larger schools.
12. Teachers are satisfied with low achievement in lower groups.
13. Pupils with poor social background are frequently grouped together.
14. It is good for the bright pupils to help the dull child.
15. Causes jealousy and resentment.
16. Some bright pupils will do poor work to get in the lower group where less work is required.

Age Grade Study

It is becoming more and more an established policy to keep pupils grouped as nearly as possible according to age, on the theory that pupils will be better satisfied if they are in a group of the same age. On the other hand pupils have a tendency of becoming discouraged if they are not able to do the work of the rest of the group and develop a habit of being a slow pupil. Now the question is: Which placement in school is best for the child, being in a group of pupils of his own age but of superior ability or being with a group of pupils of his own ability but much younger?

TABLE V

Age Grade Table[1]

Grade	Age 4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Average Age	% of pupils in grade	Total in Grade
1	34	252	561	200	54	20	7	1									6.1	14.8	1129
2		11	216	452	225	74	21	8	2	1							7.2	13.2	1010
3			9	218	452	227	95	27	8	6							8.3	13.6	1042
4				18	192	450	228	126	38	21	6	2		1			9.5	14.3	1082
5					16	193	379	261	127	38	18	3			2		10.5	13.6	1037
6						19	153	294	242	98	52	22	5				11.9	11.6	885
7							31	144	296	217	124	34	11	2	2		12.5	11.3	861
8								16	104	200	160	76	25	3	1	1	13.5	7.6	586
TOTAL	34	263	786	888	939	983	914	877	817	581	360	137	41	6	5	1			

The above table represents 45 consolidated schools throughout the United States.

1. D. T. Blase, Office of Education, United States Department of Interior.

If the first procedure is used then it is necessary to divide the group homogeneously, and the question then arises as to how small a group can be divided homogeneously to an advantage for the pupils. In most rural schools the average class is about six pupils, which is too small to divide, and even if it could be divided the teacher would have very little time for each group.

It seems that it is necessary in all small schools to do more individual teaching than in larger groups.

Some research information indicates that there should be a close correlation between age and grade placement and several studies have been made showing the distribution of grade placement according to age. A good example of age grade study was made by D. T. Blose, Principal Statistical Assistant, for the United States office of Education. This study was published by the Office of Education in 1932.

This study was made in forty five consolidated schools over the United States and included 7,632 students. An age grade table was made showing the distribution of pupils according to age.

You will note from table VI above that there are a great deal more pupils under age than average in the lower grades, but as they advance into the upper grades the average group and underage group have a tendency to become nearer equal.

TABLE VI

The Percentage of Pupils Who are Under Age, Normal Age and Over Age

Grade	Percent of Pupils Under Age	Percent of Pupils Normal Age	Percent of Pupils Over Age
1	25.3	67.4	7.3
2	22.5	67.0	10.5
3	21.2	65.2	13.0
4	19.4	62.7	17.9
5	20.2	61.7	18.1
6	19.4	60.6	20.0
7	20.3	59.6	20.1
8	20.5	61.4	18.1
All Grades	21.3	63.5	15.2

This large number of underage pupils in the first grade is probably due to the fact that many pupils started to school before they were six years old and as a result were not able to keep up with those who were six. Each year some were retarded or dropped out of school until the number of under aged pupils was decreased. This is a good indication that five-year old pupils should never be grouped with those who are six.

Classification Studies

Important developments relative to both the theory and the practice of classification have taken place within the past few decades: Grade groups have become far less homogeneous, ability grouping has become widely accepted, the lack of complete homogeneity within ability groups has been better recognized and an increased recognition has been given to the fact that ability grouping is just a first step in trying to solve the problem of caring more adequately for individual differences. There has also been a recognition of the importance of adjusting methods and curricula to ability. Grouping has shifted from the collection of opinions to the setting up of controlled experiments.

The development and use of standardized achievement and mental tests during the past two decades have forced teachers, and administrators to recognize that wide differences exist among children of the same group.[4]

Harry J. Baker, Director of Psychological Clinic, Detroit, Michigan, presents such evidence, and his results are but typical of the great differences discovered among school children of a given grade by a large number of investigators.

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4. Arch O. Heck, Contributions of Research to the Classification, promotion, Marking and Certification of Pupils. Thirty-Seventh Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education. P. 187.

Just what is meant by the bright pupil as determined by classification tests is summed up very well by Mr. Harry J. Baker, in chapter eight of the thirty fifth yearbook, of the National Society for the study of Education published in 1936.

In this chapter Mr. Baker has the following to say under the title of, "The Education of Bright Pupils".

Bright pupils maybe more or less arbitrarily defined as that group of about twenty to twenty five percent of the school population at the upper end of the learning range. Most of these bright children have intelligence quotients lying in a twenty point range from approximately 110 to 130. There are usually a few in this group who are somewhat less intelligent, but who have successfully capitalized their habits of industry, their fortunate home backgrounds, or their desirable social and personal traits beyond that expect of their mental level.

In educational achievement bright pupils tend to be accelerated one or more years beyond average children of the same age. There is a possibility that they will work more nearly up to their mental capacity if a suitable differentiation is provided.

Since bright pupils generally have mental qualities superior to average pupils, the nature and amount of these differences should be considered. As a group their median I. Q. is approximately 117, indicating a rate of mental

growth seven sixths the rate for normal or average children. These mental ages at the various age and grade levels are shown in the following table.

TABLE VII

Average Mental Ages of Bright Pupils by Age and Grade, Assuming Promotion by Chronological Age[5]

Grade	Chronological Age	Mental Age	Grade	Chronological Age	Mental Age
Lower 1	6-6	7-7	Lower 5	10-6	12-4
Upper 1	7-0	8-1	Upper 5	11-0	12-11
Lower 2	7-6	8-9	Lower 6	11-6	13-6
Upper 2	8-0	9-4	Upper 6	12-0	14-1
Lower 3	8-6	9-11	Lower 7	12-6	14-8
Upper 3	9-0	10-6	Upper 7	13-0	15-3
Lower 4	9-6	11-2	Lower 8	13-6	15-10
Upper 4	10-0	11-9	Upper 8	14-0	16-5

Table VII assumes that bright pupils progress in school by chronological age. It will be noted that such pupils have a mental acceleration of one year in the early grades, of two years in the sixth grade and probably will increase throughout their school work.

5. This table and a similar one for slow pupils in a later section are taken from Harry J. Baker, "Characteristic Differences in Bright and Dull Pupils", (Public School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Illinois, 1927), P. 105.

Harry J. Baker has also made a study of the slow group of pupils when divided homogeneously and defines them as a group making up about twenty to twenty five per cent of all the school population. Ordinarily it should not include the lower one or two per cent of school children who are more properly enrolled in special mental classes. The intelligence quotient of this group ranges from seventy to ninety. Slow pupils are mentally retarded more than one year at the time they start to school and fall farther behind as they continue through school. Because it is desirable that special study and attention be given to them as a group, some type of segregation that permits a study of their educational needs and learning processes is a minimal recommendation.

The mental ages of this group at the various age and grade levels are shown in the following table, and promotion by chronological age is assumed.

Table VIII shows that slow pupils bring into the early grades the accumulated effect of a slow rate of mental growth. They are generally retarded about one year at first and about two years by the time they are in the sixth grade. This first grade pupils mental growth is about eighty three per cent of that of a normal child which is not an unsurmountable handicap. But teachers must learn to avoid comparing them with average children and take them at their own level of development and their own rate of mental growth.

TABLE VIII

Average Mental Ages of Slow Pupils by Age and Grade, Assuming Promotion by Chronological Age.

Grade	Chronological Age	Mental Age	Grade	Chronological Age	Mental Age
Lower 1	6-6	5-5	Lower 5	10-6	8-9
Upper 1	7-0	5-10	Upper 5	11-0	9-2
Lower 2	7-6	6-3	Lower 6	11-6	9-7
Upper 2	8-0	6-8	Upper 6	12-0	10-0
Lower 3	8-6	7-1	Lower 7	12-6	10-5
Upper 3	9-0	7-6	Upper 7	13-0	10-10
Lower 4	9-6	7-11	Lower 8	13-6	11-3
Upper 4	10-0	8-4	Upper 8	14-0	11-8

If this is done the solution of their problems will not be so difficult.

It is possible that the curriculum of the upper elementary grades should be re-written for the slow pupils in order that its degree of difficulty may be in proportion with their immaturity. This solution seems more satisfactory than to retain such pupils in a grade corresponding to their mental age or to offer them the curriculum of that lower grade while having them enrolled in the higher grade.

Trial Promotion

Trial promotion has been tried in a few schools where pupils were promoted on condition that they make passing grades for the first six weeks. If they make proper-

achievement they are permanently promoted, but if not they are demoted one grade or forced to repeat the same grade they were in the previous year.

The best example of trial promotion was an experiment in the Long Beach schools in California, conducted by Ernest P. Branson director of research in the Long Beach schools.[6]

The procedure was as follows: One hundred forty one failing pupils were selected from fourteen different schools, each under the care of a supervisor. These pupils were divided into two groups of seventy and seventy one pupils respectively. The group of seventy one pupils was promoted and the group of seventy pupils was retained. Neither the pupils or their parents knew of the experiment, but the supervisors were well informed and asked to conduct their work the same as with other groups in the same school on the same level. When the experiment ended there were fifty pupils left in each group of the original group, and the following conclusions were reached.

1. The experiment revealed that the trial group made greater progress than the repeating group during the succeeding term.
2. Children of normal ability gain more from trial promotion than those repeating.

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6. Elementary School Journal, June, 1929. P.564-6.

3. Children of less than normal ability gain a little more by repeating.
4. Pupils in grades from four to six gain more than children in second and third grades.
5. The indications are that we are not justified in requiring normal pupils in grades four to six to repeat.
6. Evidence seems to point out that there is more justification in requiring pupils to repeat in the second and third grades.

A study of retarded children through teacher's subjective estimates was made by Mr. Bert Anson, for a Master's thesis in Indiana State Teachers College in 1938. This study was made to determine the factors observed by teachers in children who had failed of promotion.

A summary of the general conclusions which seem justified by the findings of this study are as follows:

1. Personal and mental traits possessed by the child are impressed upon the teacher.
2. Physical, social, and enviromental aspects of the child's life are unfamiliar to the teacher or are forgotten.
3. The educational influences of these latter traits are not sufficiently recognized by the teacher.
4. Children are retarded in their educational careers by conditions and traits, and the fact that various teachers notice and rate these conditions

and traits differently accounts for the wide variety in the degree of retardation.

It seems that there is a general tendency for schools in all parts of the country to promote a larger per cent of their pupils each year, which shows that educators are becoming convinced that some remedial program is better for the pupil than having him repeat a grade. Another reason for this trend is perhaps because of more accurate classification tests whereby teachers may measure the achievement and mental ability to a greater degree of accuracy and know what work is needed to correct a pupil's retarded condition.[7]

A study was made in the schools of New York City, by a former Superintendent of that school system, Mr. William Maxwell, and published in the Elementary School Journal in June 1930, which showed the following information in regard to the percentage of pupils promoted each year from 1918 to 1928.

Table IX shows an increase in the number promoted of 3.1 per cent over a period of ten years, which is an indication that there is a growing realization that very few pupils should be retarded.

The growing realization on the part of teachers and administrations of pupil differences unquestionably was

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7. Bert Anson, A Study of Retarded Children Through Teachers' Subjective Estimates, Indiana State Teachers College Journal, Vol. 9, June 1938, p. 88.

TABLE IX

Percentage of Promotions for
Ten-year Period, 1918-1927

Year	Per cent of Promotion	Year	Per cent of Promotion
1918	88.4	1923	89.1
1919	89.0	1924	90.9
1920	88.7	1925	91.3
1921	88.6	1926	91.8
1922	88.0	1927	91.5

responsible for the present day emphasis upon ability grouping.[8]

The first type of grouping was that of dividing children into grades. According to Mr. Boyer, there is no definition of a grade. He makes the following statement in regard to grade grouping. At one time it was thought that classification into grade groups would insure a high degree of homogeneity in knowledge and skills attained, and even of community of purpose. We now realize that our traditional system of grade groups has failed to produce the degree of homogeneity for which we hoped.

Present promotion practices are tending to eliminate the repetition of grades which reduces still further the

8. B. R. Buckingham, An Experiment in Promotion, Journal of Educational Research, May 1921.

range of chronological age within a grade. This being true makes it more necessary for the school to adjust its activities to the capacities of pupils as they grow year by year. School systems vary widely in the extent to which they make special provisions for exceptional pupils. Some schools provide special classes for as many as six per cent of the pupils while others reduce this to two per cent. Some schools provide special classes for the exceptionally bright, while others do not.[9]

It seems that there is a tendency to take into consideration more than one ability when grouping pupils homogeneously, and these different abilities seem to vary somewhat in different school systems, however most schools place three things first in their grouping program which are as follows; I. Q., Chronological Age and Achievement. If pupils are grouped according to differences in the above abilities it is necessary to have a variable course of study for bright, average and slow pupils in the same grade. This course of study should in no case be viewed as a rigid and inflexible list of instructions for standardizing teaching procedure, but as a guide for the teacher in helping present material for the best interest of the group she is teaching.

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9. Phillip A. Boyer, The Administration of Learning in Elementary Schools, Thirty-Fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. 1936.

To carry out a program of ability grouping it is necessary to set up standards for marking pupils according to their particular group.

Any absolute system of marking breaks down when we adjust learning activities to the average capacities of groups, or when we individualize the work in the classroom. Twenty six representative schools in nineteen states replied to the inquiry, "Do you differentiate your marking system for different ability levels"? Half the schools replied that the same marks were used for all ability groups, but that marks were defined differently. In most cases it was indicated that if a child is working up to his capacity he is marked S or satisfactory and promoted.

Many systems are discarding numerical or letter systems of markings in favor of a single statement of satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Some systems leave the entire matter of evaluation to the free and unstereatyped comment of the teacher. In smaller systems where only two groups are possible for advantage in grouping it is more necessary for the teacher to use her own ability and iniative in marking pupils correctly.[10]

Ability grouping has doubtless had considerable influence upon certain developments related to promotion, some of which are as follows:

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10. Philip A. Boyer, "The Philadelphia Experiment in Homogeneous Grouping." Thirty-Fifth Year Book, National Society for the Study of Education. 1936.

1. The shift from annual to semi-annual or quarterly promotions and back again to annual.
2. A tendency to fail fewer pupils extending even to 100 per cent promotion.
3. Promotion by subject rather than by grade.
4. Emphasis upon enrichment rather than upon rapid progress for superior pupils.
5. A consideration of many factors rather than only a few in deciding whether or not to promote children.
6. An expenditure of considerable effort in attempting to prevent failures.

One hundred per cent promotions seems to be gaining more popularity according to most studies. If this continues, pupils will be graduated from schools with a great variation of ability, which will necessitate a variation in certification. We are breaking away from uniform certification upon graduation.[11]

All of the studies made on classification probably need some modification in order to be adopted for use in small rural schools. Perhaps none of them may be applied to the rural school as it now exists in some counties of Oklahoma, and other states as well. However, it is probable

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11. Ray O. Billett, Provision for Individual Differences, Marking and Promotion. Bulletin No. 17, Office of Education, Washington, D. C. 1932.

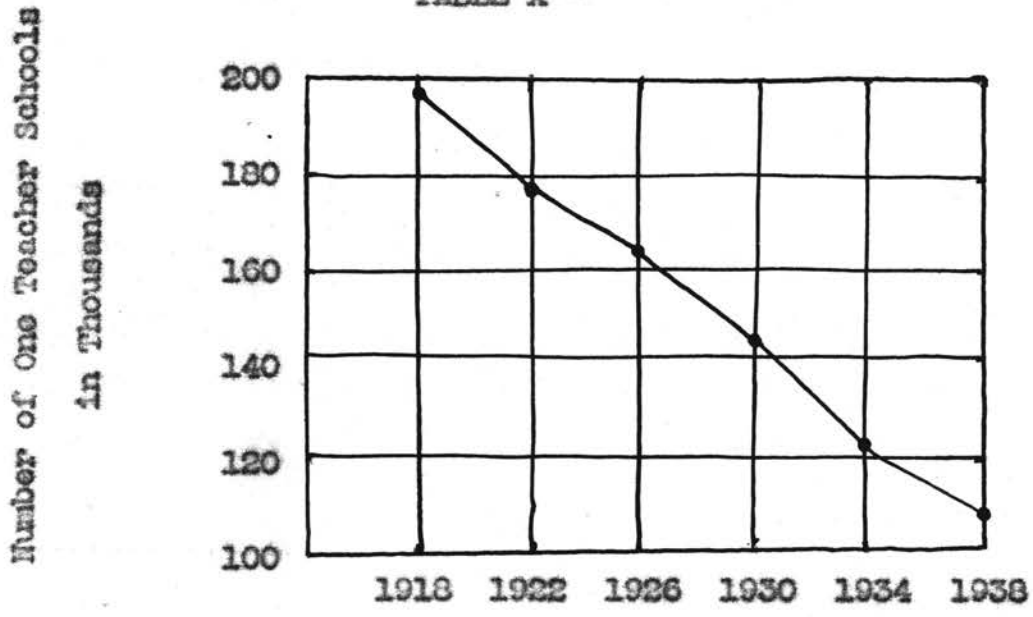
that through the studies which have been made in ability grouping it is recognized more and more by leaders in education that schools should be consolidated into larger units for a good classification program to function.

Consolidation

There was a tendency beginning about 1918 to consolidate rural schools into larger units throughout the United States. A study by the Office of Education has shown that the average number of rural schools consolidated each year has been over 1000 since 1918, and that this movement is being carried on in all states.

Below is a graph showing the decrease of one teacher schools in the United States from 1918 to 1938.

TABLE X[12]



12. Timon Covert, Rural School Consolidation, Pamphlet No. 6, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

Table X shows that the number of one room schools in the United States has decreased from about 195,000 in 1918 to about 105,000 in 1938. If this movement continues it will make it much easier to carry on experiments in ability grouping in the rural schools, and perhaps help to solve the classification problem.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE IN THIS STUDY AND DATA OBTAINED

In making a study of the classification of children in any particular group, it is necessary to carry on a testing program to find out something about the ability of the children in the group and the progress they have made in school.[1] For this classification study of the rural schools of Osage County the Otis Classification Test was selected, and used.

The Otis Classification Test is a combination of an achievement test and a mental ability test. The mental ability test is the intermediate Examination of the Otis Self-Administering Tests of Mental Ability, published by the World Book Company of New York. The Achievement Test consists of a list of one hundred fifteen questions covering reading, spelling, grammar and diction, arithmetic reasoning and fundamental operations, geography, history and civics, physiology and hygiene, literature, vocabulary, music, art, and general information. The question of the Mental Ability Tests were so selected that ability to answer them would depend as little as possible upon school training, while those of the Achievement Tests were selected as depending almost altogether upon school training.

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1. Dr. William A. McCall, How to Classify Pupils, Doctor's Thesis. Columbia University, 1928.

The test is designed for grades four to eight, but it is also applicable to grades three and nine. The pupil is allowed thirty minutes of continuous working time for each part of the test. It is possible, therefore, to test both the Achievement and the Mental Ability of a group of pupils in a little over one hour. Since the test combines the measurement of both achievement and mental ability, and since the norms for the Achievement Tests and Mental Ability Tests are based upon the same data and are directly comparable, it is possible to obtain an Accomplishment Ratio which is not subject to the errors arising when the Achievement Tests and Mental Ability Test are separately standardized.

In this study the Otis Classification Test was given to all the rural school children in Osage County from grades three to eight inclusive. The total number of children tested was 1169. The children were from 69 schools in the county.

For comparison, this test was also given to grades four to eight in three city schools in Osage County. The number of pupils tested in the city schools was 734.

The results of the test in both rural and city schools are shown by the following tables:

TABLE XI

The number of Children in Various Groups According to Their Achievement by Grades, in Rural Schools

Grade	Normal Grade	Accelerated	Retarded	Total
3	63	35	92	190
4	51	51	106	208
5	26	34	111	171
6	24	54	125	203
7	15	84	111	210
8	15	82	90	187
TOTAL	194	340	635	1169
PERCENTAGE	16.6 %	29.1 %	54.3 %	100 %

Table XI shows that only 16.6 per cent of the pupils in the rural schools are properly classified. It also shows that 54.3 per cent are retarded. These results indicate that some remedial work is necessary to help reduce this large retarded group.

TABLE XII

The Percentage of Children in Various Achievement Groups by Grades, in Rural Schools

Grade	Normal Grade	Accelerated	Retarded	Total
3	33.42%	18.42%	48.42%	100%
4	24.50%	24.50%	51.00%	100%
5	15.20%	19.89%	64.91%	100%
6	11.82%	26.60%	61.58%	100%
7	7.14%	40.00%	52.86%	100%
8	8.02%	43.85%	48.13%	100%

Table XII shows that the percentage of pupils in the normal group has a tendency to decrease as the pupils progress from the lower to the higher grades. The accelerated group has a tendency to increase at about the same rate, while the retarded group remains about the same percentage in each grade. This is an indication that the pupils in the normal group either remain normal, or are accelerated, while those in the retarded group remain retarded all through school.

TABLE XIII

A Comparison between the I. Q. and Achievement of Pupils in the Rural Schools, by Grades

Grade	I.Q. 100 or Above	Achievement Normal or Above	I.Q. Below 100	Achievement Below Normal
3	89	68	101	122
4	96	92	112	116
5	72	91	99	80
6	88	77	115	126
7	105	112	105	98
8	82	137	105	50
TOTAL	532	577	637	592

Table Xiii shows the relation between the I. Q. and the achievement scores on the Otis Classification Test by grades.

TABLE XIV

Age Grade Table
For the Pupils in the Rural Schools

Grade	Age 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Average Age	Total in Grade
3		12	91	51	23	7	2	1	1	1	1			8.7	190
4		1	14	84	62	25	15	5	1	1				9.8	208
5			1	12	56	43	39	10	7	3				11.6	171
6				1	9	84	60	29	10	7	2	1		11.9	203
7						11	80	69	37	9	4			12.8	210
8							7	66	49	39	20	6		13.5	187
TOTAL		13	106	148	150	170	203	180	105	60	27	7			1169

Table XIV shows the age grade range of pupils in 69 rural schools. It shows that 39 per cent of the pupils are normal age and that 54 per cent are average. This large average group shows that many pupils have been forced to repeat some of the lower grades.

TABLE XV

The Number of Pupils in Various Groups according to Their Achievement by Grades, in three City Schools.

Grade	Normal Grade	Accelerated	Retarded	Total
4	30	19	115	164
5	26	33	79	138
6	17	36	69	122
7	19	80	76	175
8	11	82	42	135
TOTAL	103	250	381	734

Table XV shows that the number of pupils in the normal group decreases as the pupils advance from the third to the eighth grade. It also shows a large increase in the number of accelerated children from the third to the eighth grade. This table differs from Table XI for the rural schools in that the retarded group tends to decrease as the pupils advance.

TABLE XVI

Percentage of Pupils in Different Achievement Groups in Three City Schools

Grade	Normal Grade	Accelerated	Retarded	Total
4	18.3	11.5	70.2	100%
5	18.8	23.9	57.3	100%
6	13.9	29.5	56.6	100%
7	10.9	45.7	43.4	100%
8	8.2	60.7	31.1	100%

Table XVI shows the percentage of pupils in different achievement groups in three city schools in Osage, County. This table shows that the retarded group decreased from 70.2 per cent in the third to 31.1 per cent in the eighth grade. Table XII for the rural schools shows no large decrease in the percentage of retarded pupils as they advance by grades. This fact seems to indicate that the retarded group has an advantage in the city schools over the rural schools.

TABLE XVII

Age Grade Table
for Three City Schools in Osage County

Grade	Age 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Average Age	Total in Grade
4			7	80	56	12	4	4	1					9.6	164
5					68	32	19	13	4	2				10.6	138
6					6	60	35	7	14					11.6	122
7						10	89	49	17	6	3	1		12.6	175
8							7	71	36	13	6	2		13.6	135
TOTAL			7	80	130	114	154	144	72	21	9	3			734

Table XVII shows the various age grade groups, of the 734 pupils tested in three city schools of Osage County. 50 per cent of this group are normal age and 44 per cent are average. This table shows a decrease in the percentage of overageness in the city schools under that of the rural schools.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study of the classification of pupils in the rural schools of Osage county was made to determine the extent of poor classification, and to arrive at some conclusions why this condition exists. The writer was also interested in a comparison of the results of the rural school study with that of the three city schools, tested in the same county.

The available literature on classification studies seems to place considerable emphasis upon ability grouping, variation of curriculum and 100 per cent promotion in helping to bring about better classification of pupils. However, these programs seem to get better results in larger school systems than in small rural schools.

In reviewing the results of the testing program made in this study many interesting facts are established. Table XIV for the rural schools shows that only 16.6 per cent of the pupils in the rural schools are in their normal grade and that 54.3 per cent are retarded. It is also shown that the number of retarded pupils has a tendency to remain the same, while Table XV for three city schools of Osage County shows a large decrease in the number retarded as the pupils advance in grades.

Table XII for the rural schools shows that the percentage of retarded children remains almost the same as

the pupils advance, while in contrast, Table XVI for the city schools, shows that the percentage of retarded children decreased from 70.2 per cent in the fourth grade to 31.1 per cent in the eighth grade. This may indicate that the city schools are able to reduce this large retarded group.

Table XIII shows the relation existing between the I. Q. and achievement of pupils in the rural schools by grades. The large number of pupils with low I. Q. indicates that this may be partly responsible for the large retarded group. According to the educational literature in this field, a variation in the curriculum and ability grouping would help make these pupils better adjusted.

The age grade table XIV for the rural schools shows that 54 per cent of the pupils are over age. In the city schools Table XVII shows that this is reduced to 44 per cent. Many of the pupils in the rural schools are from farm families and are forced to stay out of school to work at home. This may be partly responsible for the overageness in this group due partly to poor attendance.

Osage County has 104 rural teachers and Table II shows that 26.9 per cent of those teachers do not have a bachelor's degree. Table III shows that 47 of those teachers are married women and that 15 of the 47 have less than three years college training. This fact may be partly responsible for so many retarded children in the group studied.

Table IV shows that the tenure of teachers of the rural schools of Osage County is short. Fifty percent of the teachers have a tenure of two years or less and only two teachers in the County have a tenure of more than ten years. This short tenure may be due to two things: It may be due to an established custom among school boards of changing teachers before one gets too well established. The other reason for short tenure which seems more reasonable at this time, is the fact that many teachers begin teaching in rural schools with the expectation of getting into a larger system as soon as possible. If the latter is true, then it is easy to see why, the rural school children would be subjected to very poor teaching in some cases. The teachers who remain in the rural school for a longer period of time are usually those with the lowest qualifications.

Table X shows the decrease in the number of rural schools in the United States over the period from 1918 to 1938. There has been a decrease in the number of rural schools during these two decades of about 70,000. This decrease in the number of rural schools has been consistent each year and may be an indication that the number will continue to decrease until all the rural schools have been consolidated into larger systems.

The fact that this consolidation movement has been so widely accepted may be an indication that consolidation

helps to solve many of the problems which exist in the rural schools. Consolidation will make better teachers available, make ability grouping possible, make for a broader curriculum and more efficient administration of the schools.

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