

observation in specific kinds of situations

III. Physical Features

- A. The stock on which records are printed should be:
1. Durable enough to withstand years of use.
 2. Substantial enough to stand in a file.
 3. Thin enough to require minimum filing space.
 4. Light enough to be economical in mailing.
 5. Free from glare, and suitable for ink or pencil writing and for erasing.
 6. Of a color which is attractive, restful to the eye, easily distinguishable, and light enough to contrast well with writing.
- B. Different colored stocks should be used to distinguish forms which require different handling. Color differences should be reserved for this purpose.
- C. Forms should be of such size and shape that they are easy to file, handle, transport, and mail.
- D. Forms should be reasonably low in cost.
- E. The filing system should be one which is commonly used, is economical, is

simple to operate and does not require unusual equipment or forms.

- F. Forms should be planned to accommodate supplementary materials conveniently.
- G. Records should be so designed that only a reasonable amount of clerical work will be required for maintenance.

Importance of Philosophy

The most important element in any system of cumulative guidance records is the understanding with which they are used. Like dynamite in the hands of a workman, records may be dangerous if misused, worthless if neglected, and capable of moving mountains if employed properly. No guidance service can offer maximum value without the help of an adequate system of records, but the most carefully developed records are nothing more than a clerical burden to the teacher who lacks a positive guidance philosophy or opportunity to act upon it.

When the curriculum consisted of an inflexible series of predetermined tasks for which every child was accountable, teachers required little knowledge concerning their pupils. In the modern curriculum the teacher is no longer a taskmaster, but a guide and counselor. Performance of the guidance functions involved in this position requires adequate records properly used.

California Develops a Cumulative Guidance Record for Secondary Schools

HAROLD B. BROOKS

At a meeting of the State Representative Council of the Association of California Secondary School Principals held in October 1935, the high school principals of California determined to work together to prepare a better cumulative record form. At that time the conclusion was reached that the cumulative record forms used in a large majority of the secondary schools of California needed to be improved. The forms in use were inadequate in several respects: (1) as aids in achieving the objectives of the guidance program, (2) in the space provided for evaluations of the personality growth of the pupils, and (3) in provision for the required information for the official state transcript.

The committee appointed to make a study of cumulative records analyzed some 527 record forms in use in all types of secondary schools and obtained from 410 secondary school educators in California evaluations of a provisional form of a cumulative record.¹ The cumulative record forms in use in California at the time the study was made were characterized by extreme diversity in use, size, form, and the number and kind of individual items.

The items used on the forms fell into five

¹ Brooks, Harold B., *Secondary School Cumulative Records: Their Function, Form, and Administration*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, 1938, 410 pages.

classifications in information, namely, personal, marks and credits, home and relatives, attendance, and entrance-graduation-withdrawal. There was, apart from "pupil's name," no consistent agreement on any other item. Seventy different sizes of forms were in use, and the median size was 6 by 8 inches.

The California State Board of Education requires transcripts of high school and junior college records. Examination of the forms then in use showed: (1) only six of the twenty-four items required for state transcripts of high school records were found on 75 per cent or more of the cards; (2) only nine of the forty-three items required for state transcripts of junior college records were found on 75 per cent or more of the cards.

Information Desired by California Educators

In their appraisal of the provisional form, California educators expressed a desire for a cumulative record card which included: (1) items which had been carefully selected for guidance and administrative purposes and (2) items needed for official transcripts and reports. The inaccuracy and inadequacy of present methods and terminology of evaluating behavior characteristics caused them to question the advisability of including such items even though they are important.

The educators, therefore, favored space for comments rather than extensive lists of items and subjects to check, and they emphasized the need for accurate and complete test data. There was a tendency, also, to favor a separate record for junior colleges. Further agreement was shown toward a simple, accurate, complete record, organized to provide for continuity and ease of interpretation. Preference was expressed for the folder card, 9½ by 11¼ inches, rather than for the smaller one then in common use.

For general use in California, it was agreed that the junior and senior high school cumulative record should be kept on the same form. The record of health, the educators believed, should be stated on the form in general terms, and an auxiliary record relating to specific health and physical education should be developed and maintained wherever possible. Furthermore, they agreed that some provision should be made for variations between schools with respect to course names and graduation requirements.

The California Cumulative Guidance Record for Junior and Senior High Schools has been revised four times since it was first developed in 1937 to the end that it might have simplicity, completeness, and be entirely practical. The latest revision has been in use since 1940. Samples were distributed widely and several city and county school systems are now using the Record or slight modifications of it. In addition, more than 50,000 copies are in use in various parts of the state in smaller districts. Use of the Record has increased each year. Distributed through the Association of California Secondary School Principals, it is the record most widely used throughout the state.

Description of the Record

The Record contains all the twenty-four items of information needed for the preparation of the official state transcript. These are designated with an asterisk. Incidentally these items form a minimum cumulative record for schools having limited facilities for recording extensive data. At the same time, of course, the form provides the opportunity for recording many additional items of information in schools where this is desired.

In all, fifty-two items are included in the Record, and they are numbered consecutively for convenience of description in the accompanying manual. The Record includes such basic information as the following:

1. Personal data and photograph
2. Scholastic record—grades 7-12
3. Graduation—date, rank in class, requirements
4. Family data and home background
5. Educational and vocational plans
6. Health record
7. Achievement, personality, and aptitude test data
8. Attendance record
9. Work experiences
10. Summaries of student's growth and status
11. Significant achievements
12. Type and amount of reading
13. Summary of significant interviews
14. Follow-up and school's recommendations.

The form is printed on a folder card 9½ by 11¼ inches. The folders can be filed in a

standard vertical letter-size file. This is the recommended method of filing because the home-room teachers, counselors, and clerks may use the records more conveniently if they are filed vertically. The need for expensive patented visible files is also eliminated. The size of the card also makes possible ample space for recording the data.

One of the most outstanding features of the California Record is the inclusion of space for the recording of pupil growth and development in personality characteristics as well as in subject achievement. Space is included for evaluations of four characteristics: responsibility, inquiring mind, social concern, and work habits. There is evidence that ratings in these characteristics can be effectively made by classroom and guidance teachers.

It has been demonstrated that it is possible to use effectively a cumulative record folder card similar to the one described here even in the smallest school system. Procedures have been worked out to eliminate any unnecessary clerical work. A review of the

amount of time now used in school systems in the preparation and transcription of records reveals that the plan which is suggested, with some modification, can be adopted without much, if any, increase in the expenditure of energy or time even in the smallest schools.

Scores of schools are photostating the form efficiently at a minimum cost. In this way the original form containing the complete record made in junior high school can be forwarded to the senior high school. Much tedious copying of records may thus be eliminated and more adequate information be made available for the senior high school.

In developing any cumulative record system, the first consideration is the belief on the part of the superintendent, the supervisor, the principal, the counselor, and the teacher that a good cumulative record can be a most effective aid in guiding boys and girls. If this is believed strongly enough by all concerned, the problems of the function, form, and administration of the cumulative record can be solved.

Using Cumulative Records

CLARENCE FIELSTRA

AS A REQUISITE to masterful performance, artists and artisans alike must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the materials with which they work. To educators, who work with human materials, that kind of knowledge and understanding is imperative. Accordingly, increased emphasis is being placed by administrators and teachers on obtaining more information about the children who are entrusted to their guidance and educational direction. Improved means of facilitating the keeping of adequate pupil records are likewise gradually being developed.

Cumulative records have no value unless they are used by teachers and counselors in providing educational, vocational, and personal guidance functions for their students. Clarence Fielstra, director of curriculum, San Diego County, California, points out the need for a cumulative guidance record and how it functions in a school's guidance program.

Who Should Use Cumulative Records?

Progress in the matters of obtaining and recording pertinent data concerning pupil personnel has been accompanied by the raising of certain problems relative to the use of such records. One of these problems is that of determining who in our schools should be given access to whatever guidance files are kept. To this question the educational profession has not formulated a reply which reflects unanimous opinion. A point of view which has gained wide acceptance, however, is that every teacher should know as much as possible about each of his pupils. It is believed that guidance should be the primary function of the classroom teacher and that he as well as the specialist in guidance should have access to all significant records.

In opposition to this point of view is the opinion that only good teachers who are truly professional can use pupil records intelligently. With this statement there can be little disagreement. It should be pointed out, never-

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