

**MODERN EDUCATION** is committed to the fact that evaluation is continuous and an integral part of the learning program. It is an activity in which teachers, children, parents, and administrators share. In keeping with this concept, the curriculum, children's growth, in-service processes, and educators themselves all become subjects for constant appraisal. And so, in this issue on evaluation, we look at workshops, curriculum planning, children's growth, conferences with parents, report cards, and the teacher herself. The picture is not complete. We believe, however, that it does present a concept of the place of evaluation in the schools of today.

## *Basketball Victories— or Child Development*

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J. MURRAY LEE

It is encouraging to learn that theories have actually become practice in any field of endeavor. J. Murray Lee, dean, School of Education, State College of Washington, Pullman, paints a promising picture of the use of evaluation in today's schools and defines the concepts which make it a valuable tool for use by teachers, parents, and the children themselves.

"WHAT ARE some interesting things happening in your school this year?"

"Our basketball team is doing pretty swell. We have won five games and lost only two," replied the superintendent.

"Let's forget basketball for a minute. What else is of interest?"

"Well," he said apologetically, "people are interested in basketball. Everything else is going on about as usual."

Basketball scores are objective, the community understands them. When the superintendent gets his hair cut he is greeted with, "The team is really something this year." Yet—every parent with a child in school uses different values. They may not be expressed in high-sounding educational terms but they are there nevertheless.

Let's listen in after the kids have been put to bed. "Darling, what's come over Harry lately? He's a changed boy. When we ask him to help he cheerfully

says, 'Sure.' He talks so much more about what is happening at school."

"I think I know," mused his wife. "You know he was having a lot of trouble with his reading. Miss Camp began to give him a little extra help."

"Do you mean that a little individual attention has made all this change?"

"I believe it's been the start. He feels that someone at school is really interested in him."

"He's certainly changed. His grades are better; he's cheerful and cooperative."

### **A New Scoreboard Might Work**

Obviously these changes in Harry are much more important to his parents than the score of yesterday's basketball game. Too bad, isn't it, that there isn't a score board in the center of town which would work automatically? Such an imaginative scoreboard might register the following scores:

Children today who were:

Encouraged	?	Discouraged	?
Stimulated	?	Bored	?
Given new insights	?	Swamped with new confusions	?
Aided in better adjustment	?	Pushed toward maladjustment	?
Helped to acquire or further develop lasting values	?	Required to recite only facts mostly unrelated	?

As teaching progressed during the day the scores would be changing. Can't you see the people crowding around the board? Our evaluation problem would be solved! The community would be concerned with what was really happening in the school. Teachers could know at the end of each day exactly how they had affected children during the day. (Our machine would print a separate score slip for each teacher and it would have sense enough to give it only to the individual teacher.) New experiences for children and new subject matters could be very quickly evaluated.

### Let's Take the Cue from Children

But such day dreaming of an easy way to get answers should not prevent real attempts to get the same answers. Evaluation must be in terms of those values we consider most important. Basketball victories are easy to evaluate. Changes in children are difficult to evaluate and take time and work.

Evaluation procedures for today's schools have been discussed thoroughly in the professional literature of the day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A few good references are:

Warren R. Baller, "Evaluation and Effective Guidance", *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 12, Feb. 1942, pp. 33-37.

It is not the purpose here to rehash these treatments. Rather it is to stress the importance of a program of evaluation in each school which trains the spotlight on what happens to boys and girls.

Trying to determine what is happening to youngsters as a result of their school experiences pays big dividends. It is one of the best approaches to curriculum development. When a faculty asks itself these questions and attempts to get answers something happens:

- What changes do we want to make in boys and girls?
- What behaviors will indicate that these changes have taken place?
- What experiences can be provided to bring about these behaviors?
- How can we determine whether these changes have taken place?

Lester A. Kirkendall, "The Problems of an Evaluation Program", *Educational Administration and Supervision*, Vol. 29, Sept. 1943, pp. 377-82.

J. Murray Lee and Dorris May Lee, *The Child and His Curriculum*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940, Chap. XV.

Harry Smallenburg, "Evaluating Pupil Progress", *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 2, March 1945, pp. 290-93.

Ralph W. Tyler, "General Statement on Evaluation", *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 35, March 1942, pp. 492-501.

J. Wayne Wrightstone, "Can Pupils Help Evaluate Their Growth?", *School Executive*, Vol. 62, August 1943, p. 22.

## The Picture Is Improving

Obviously no faculty really attempting to obtain these answers has been satisfied with only results of tests of skills and information. The formulation of the evaluative points of view by Tyler and its implementation by his workers, Wrightstone, and others, the stress on studying children by Prescott, Jersild, and others have brought about many worthwhile changes. Additional concepts have been added to the accepted evaluation formula. Their acceptance and importance is apparent in both theory and practice.

The need to appraise "the way in which the student organizes his behavior patterns" is stressed by Tyler. He points out that there "is always the danger that the identification of various types of objectives will result in their treatment as isolated bits of behavior."<sup>2</sup> Many attempts to consider the significance of a child's total behavior are illustrated in the survey of practices in the elementary schools of New York State<sup>3</sup> and the cumulative records developed for the California schools.<sup>4</sup>

A second concept, also expressed by Tyler, "is that the participation of teachers, pupils, and parents in the process of evaluation is essential to derive the maximum values from a pro-

gram of evaluation."<sup>5</sup> An example of such participation in practice is material published by the schools of Glen-coe, Illinois.

A third concept is that evaluation is gradual and continuous. Hamalainen points out after surveying experiences of the New York schools that "the schools which have done most are those that recognize that the process of devising means of evaluating growth is pragmatic and slow. These schools have expanded their records gradually to allow persons who are to keep them to work the new features into their procedures."<sup>6</sup>

Evaluation is having a real influence in our schools. A study of recent courses of study show sections devoted to evaluation.<sup>7</sup> In each case the changes in children which are stressed go far beyond the skills and information stage.

Practices of evaluation are catching up with theory. That these practices are improving the learning experiences of children is clear. The picture viewed nationally looking at the highlights is most encouraging. What, though, is the situation in *your* classroom, school, or schools? What are the values which *your* practices indicate you and your teachers hold? On which side of *your* mythical score board would the numbers increase each day?

<sup>2</sup> Tyler, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Arthur E. Hamalainen, "Evaluating Growth of Individual Children", *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 41, December 1940, pp. 363-64 and "Existing Practice in the Evaluation of Pupil Growth in the Elementary School", *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 42, November 41, p. 182-3.

<sup>4</sup> Alvin E. Rhodes and Harold B. Brooks, "Recording Student Progress", *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 2, April 1945, pp. 299-304.

<sup>5</sup> Tyler, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Hamalainen, *op. cit.*, November 1941.

<sup>7</sup> Such as:

- a. *Living and Learning with the Children of Ohio*, Bulletin No. 6, State Department, Columbus, Ohio: 1944.
- b. *Self-Evaluation in the Elementary School*, No. 11, State Department, Trenton, N. J.: 1946.
- c. Course of Study for Virginia Elementary Schools, State Department, Richmond, Virginia: 1943.

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