

A STUDY OF PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS
IN THE PREPARATORY SECTION OF,
INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, AUB.

by

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A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in the
Department of Education
American University of Beirut
Beirut, Lebanon

June, 1954

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely indebted intellectually and personally to Dr. Habib A. Kurani, Professor Leslie W. Leavitt, and Professor Hubert Park Beck, of the Education Department at the American University of Beirut, under whom I am proud to say that I have studied.

To Professor Frederick R. Korf of the Education Department at the American University of Beirut, who has acted as my supervisor in writing this thesis, I wish to express my deep gratitude and thanks.

I have been influenced a great deal by many authors of books and articles. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers sent me a great deal of useful material and valuable suggestions relating to my subject. Specific mention of these is made in the bibliography.

To the Principal of the American Community School Mr. Robert Basset, and to many others who rendered me help, I wish to offer my thanks.

Finally, it is a pleasure to acknowledge the help and cooperation of all the parents of the 8 th Grade students and of all the teachers of the Prep. School, who so carefully and frankly answered questionnaires and committed their experiences to paper.

Philip Najjar

A B S T R A C T

Purpose, Need and Method

The Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this thesis is to assemble and interpret information which may be used to discover feasible courses of action for developing improved parent-school relationships.

The Need for the Study:

In view of the acknowledged fact that cooperation between parents and teachers is almost entirely lacking at the present time, a study of this type needs no justification. Children the world over are everyone's concern. What we enable the child to become, we enable the world to become. We need to strive toward an expansion and strengthening of work dedicated to creating for all children a home, community, national and world environment that will enable them to achieve the fullest measure of human dignity and happiness. One way to help create such an environment is to establish better relations between parents and teachers. With this end in mind, the logical first step is to gather information which may be useful in helping to improve home-school relationships.

Method:

The parents of the eight grade class and all of the teachers in the Prep. School were selected as a convenient and appropriate sample from which to obtain facts and opinions.

Two questionnaires, one for parents and one for teachers, were prepared. The design includes some questions which are identical for both groups. Sixty-four parents of the eighth grade (72 %) were available to respond to the parents' questionnaire, and each of the thirty-six teachers in the Prep. School, A.U.B. responded to the questionnaire for teachers. In most cases the responses of parents were recorded by the investigator, who interviewed them, usually in Arabic.

In each topic under investigation the writer has constructed bar graphs to aid in visualizing the proportions of responses. At the end of each topic listed in the table of contents is section entitled "Conclusions and Suggestions" wherein the writer has suggested possible courses of action in view of the evidence presented.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Amount of Free Time During School Hours

By and large, parents and teachers believe that there is too much free time during school hours. They show a preference for clubs, music, and penmanship (in that order) to fill the free periods.

School Reports to Parents

Parents and teachers strongly favor a written progress re-

port with or without letter grades, numerical grades, and rank of boy in class. It is suggested that this preference should be taken into consideration, with such reports being sent about three times a year.

Participation in School Activities

The majority of parents and teachers enjoy participating in school activities planned by school and would like to participate more in the future than they have done in the past. Such activities as Parents' Night, social parties, and the formation of a P.T.A. were suggested as means to promote such participation.

Activity Program

In general, parents and teachers feel that not enough time is given to the activity program. It is suggested that the school oblige every pupil to participate in at least one activity, and, through contests, prizes, etc. to encourage participation in one or two others.

Punishments for Misbehavior

The main types of punishments listed by parents and teachers were: sending after parents, loss of privileges and special study. The writer disapproves of the special study, and favors the idea of sending after parents before behavior problems become serious.

Homework

Parents in general believe that the homework given to children is valuable, but that not enough is given. The average boy spends 48 minutes daily on all of his homework. Teachers on the other hand expect an average of about 2 hours. This problem should be investigated more fully and some radical changes instituted. Certain tentative recommendations, such as giving more homework, giving homework with a planned purpose, and giving academic credit for homework were suggested.

Ideal Number of Pupils in a Class

On the average, Parents and teachers believe that a teacher should not teach more than about 23 children in one classroom. The present average of about 30 pupils per classroom should be lowered if it is at all possible.

Meetings between Parents and Teachers

The majority of teachers and parents stated a desire to have regular meetings, and teachers advocated Parents' Night and forming a P.T.A. as a structure for such meetings. The school may confidently take action along these lines.

Political Agitations and Strikes

Parents and teachers are almost unanimous in their opposi-

tion to pupil participation in political agitations and strikes. A bare majority of both groups disapprove of the discussion of political matters in classes. The schools' policy should be clearly evident on the issue of participation, and on the issue of classroom discussion, some faculty meetings should be devoted to developing a definite policy.

Religious Instruction

The majority of parents desire the school to give religious instruction to children, while teachers showed a slight tendency to oppose it. All the parents and almost all teachers agreed that a course in ethics is desirable. The writer believes that the school should begin a course in ethics for all students, but that the question of religious instruction requires a great deal of thought, because those parents who desire it, desire that it shall be instruction in their own religion.

Morning Start

About half of the parents and half of the teachers believe that the morning start in school is too early. It would appear to suit the convenience of most persons to start the morning hour a bit later than it is now.

School Visits by Parents

More than three fourths of the parents and 70 % of teachers

approve of parents' visits to classes. The initiative should come from school, and parents should feel free to come to classes even though it is the experience of many schools that very few parents actually do so.

School Trips

The majority of parents indicated that they wish to have their boys go on school trips. The school should organize more low-cost trips, and if necessary set up a fund for this purpose.

Educational Films

Ninety-five percent of the parents favored the idea of having the school show educational films to their children. There are two possible benefits to be derived:

1. Educational films would enrich the courses taught in the school.
2. Films which truly meet the needs and interests of pupils would probably reduce the amount of pupil attendance at commercial cinemas. Most parents appear to hope for this outcome.

Outside Reading

Children are doing a great deal of reading outside school work, but, according to parents, the material read is not desi-

rable. A good library and a trained librarian who is skilled in suggesting appropriate reading would be of great help in this respect. Also, teachers should be aware of the outside reading which is done, and assist in the guidance of such reading.

Contact with School

The frequency of parents' visits to school and their amount of contact with teachers is practically negligible. Since there is a great willingness on the side of parents to visit classes and make contact with teachers, this should be encouraged by the school.

Discipline and Punishment

The majority of parents feel that discipline in the school is quite good, while almost all of the remaining parents indicated that the school is lenient regarding punishment. Parents would like to know about punishments that their boys receive, and would like the school to cooperate with them on disciplinary problems which arise at home. A program involving for more parent information about school matters is strongly indicated.

Teachers' Visits to Pupils' Homes

The number of contacts initiated by teachers is almost as small as the number initiated by parents. Arrangements should be made so that teachers will have more free time which they can

afford to give to such visits, especially to families of boys who seem likely to present problems.

Talking to Parents

The total amount of parent-teacher contact appears to be almost negligible when one considers the number of students taught by one teacher. The school can do a great deal in this respect by inviting parents to the school and by freeing teachers from school duties in order to pay home visits.

Absences and Latenesses

The majority of teachers would like to know the causes of a boy's absence or lateness. This information, including any action taken, should be available to those teachers who desire it.

Individual Contact

All teachers would like individual contacts with parents, but time seems to be one of the greatest hindrances to them. Experienced teachers agreed that knowing the home and parents of a boy is one of the greatest aids in understanding and guidance.

Parents' Suggestions to Teachers

The majority of teachers welcome suggestions and remarks coming from parents. Such suggestions should be encouraged as much as possible, and parents should be told that the school expects this and takes it in the right spirit.

Concluding Statement

This study has brought to light the fact that both parents and teachers are interested in and ready for closer cooperation in the educative process. It has revealed some discrepancies which exist between teachers' expectations and the actual practices of pupils, and, most important, it has shown that there are large areas of close agreement among teachers and parents - areas which offer rich opportunities for increased cooperation and mutual understanding. To the extent that these opportunities are consciously and systematically exploited, I feel confident that the Preparatory School will begin graduating boys who are noticeably better equipped for ultimate positions of responsibility and leadership.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	ii
List of Figures	v
A Note about the Bar Graphs	ix
Introduction	x

Part I

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Amount of Free Time During School Hours	2
School Reports to Parents	4
Participation in Planned School Activities .	6
Activity Program	8
Punishments for Misbehavior	10
Homework	13
Ideal Number of Pupils in a Class	17
Meetings between Parents and Teachers	18
Political Agitations and Strikes	21
Religious Instruction	24
Morning Start of Classes	26
School Visits by Parents	28

Part II

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY PARENTS

School Trips	31
Educational Films	32
Outside Reading	33
Parents' Contact with School	34

Part II - Continued	Page
Discipline and Punishment	36
 Part III	
QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY TEACHERS	
Teachers' Visits to Pupils' Homes	38
Talking to Parents	39
Absences and Latenesses	41
Individual Contact	42
Parents' Suggestions to Teachers	44
 Part IV	
SUMMARY	46
CONCLUDING STATEMENT	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55
APPENDIX	
A. Questions to Parents	58
B. Questions to Teachers	63
C. Unsolicited Comments from Parents	68

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Relations of parents and teachers to the amount of free time during school hours	2
2	Preferred activities for utilizing free hours	3
3	Frequency of reports to parents	4
4	Form of reports to parents	4
5	Teachers' opinions on the desirability of written progress reports to parents	4
6	Teachers' opinions on the frequency of written progress reports to parents	4
7	Opinions about participation in planned school activities	6
8	Amount of participation in future school activities	6
9	Opinions on the amount of time given to activity programs in school	8
10	Types of punishment advocated	10
11	Opinion of parents about the amount of home-work	13
12	Percent of parents believing that the homework is too little in the various subjects	13
13	The number of homework assignments given per week	13
14	Teachers' expectations about the time required per assignment	13
15	Total amount of time children are putting into homework every night as reported by parents, versus the total amount of time expected by teachers	13
16	The number of homework assignments given per week as indicated by 8 th grade teachers only	14
17	Expectations about the time required per assignment as indicated by 8 th Grade teachers only	14

Figure		Page
18	Amount of time children ought to put into all homework every night according to 8 th Grade teachers only	14
19	Outside help given to children as indicated by parents	14
20	Amount of time per day a boy is given help apart from school as indicated by parents	14
21	Teachers' opinions about help given to children in homework	14
22	Teachers' opinions on the desirability of homework help given by parents	14
23	Opinions of parents and teachers as to the value of homework	14
24	Ideal number of pupils in a class	17
25	Desirability of having regular meetings between parents and teachers	18
26	Frequency of regular meetings between parents and teachers	18
27	Amount of time to be given to each parent-teacher meeting as indicated by teachers desiring such meetings	18
28	Opinions of teachers about types of parent- teachers	18
29	Opinions of parents and teachers about pupil participation in political agitations	22
30	Opinions of parents and teachers about classroom discussion of political matters	22
31	Opinions of parents and teachers about giving religious instruction in the school	24
32	Opinions of parents and teachers about giving a course in ethics	25
33	Opinions of parents and teachers about the time at which school begins in the morning	26
34	Opinions of parents and teachers about parents' visits to classes	28

Figure		Page
35	Opinions of teachers who approve of parents' visits to classes	28
36	Parents' opinions about school trips	31
37	Parents' opinions about showing films in the school	32
38	Parents' opinions about their children's outside reading	33
39	Amount of children's outside reading per week as indicated by parents	33
40	Number of times parents have been to school during the academic year	34
41	Number of times parents have talked to teachers during the academic year	34
42	Number of teachers parents talked to during the academic year	34
43	Length of times parents spent in talking with teachers	34
44	Opinions of parents about discipline in classes	36
45	Opinions of parents about punishments in school	36
46	Opinions of parents about school cooperation on serious disciplinary problems arising at home .	36
47	Opinions of parents about being informed of their boys' punishments	36
48	Teachers' visits to children's homes	38
49	The number of visits made by teachers to parents	38
50	Opinions of teachers about visiting pupils' homes	38
51	Opinions of teachers about the optimum frequency of visits to children's homes	38
52	The number of students' parents to whom teachers have talked	39
53	Amount of time spent by teachers in talking to parents (Includes only the 27 teachers who reported having talked to parents)	39

Figures		Page
54	Proportions of teachers believing that knowledge of parents is of help in teaching children	39
55	Opinions of teachers about their desire to know parents better in the future	39
56	Opinions of teachers about parents' willingness to cooperate	39
57	Teachers' attitudes about absences and latenesses	41
58	Desire of teachers to know the cause of a boy's absences and latenesses	41
59	Opinions of teachers as to when individual contacts with parents should be made	42
60	Teachers' opinions about the appropriate place for making individual contacts	42
61	Reaction of teachers to parents' suggestions or remarks	44

A Note about the Bar Graphs

At the bottom of each two-color graph is a key showing that red bars represent percentages of teachers for each type of response and blue bars represent percentages of parents. Each square on the sheet represents 5 %. The numbers in parentheses following the key symbols indicate the actual numbers of parents and teachers who responded to the **item**.

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this thesis is to assemble and interpret information which may be used to discover feasible courses of action for developing improved parent-school relationships.

The Need for the Study:

W. K. Lee
In view of the acknowledged fact that cooperation between parents and teachers is almost entirely lacking at the present time, a study of this type needs no justification. Children the world over are everyone's concern. What we enable the child to become, we enable the world to become. We need to strive toward an expansion and strengthening of work dedicated to creating for all children a home, community, national and world environment that will enable them to achieve the fullest measure of human dignity and happiness. One way to help create such an environment is to establish better relations between parents and teachers. With this end in mind, the logical first step is to gather information which may be useful in helping to improve home-school relationships.

Method:

The parents of the eight grade class and all of the teachers in the Prep. School were selected as a convenient and appropriate sample from which to obtain facts and opinions.

Two questionnaires, one for parents and one for teachers, were prepared.¹ The design includes some questions which are identical for both groups. Sixty-four parents of the eight grade (72 %)² were available to respond to the parents' questionnaire, and each of the thirty-six teachers in the Prep. School, A.U.B. responded to the questionnaire for teachers. In most cases the responses of parents were recorded by the investigator, who interviewed them, usually in Arabic.

In each topic under investigation the writer has constructed bar graphs to aid in visualizing the proportions of responses. At the end of each topic listed in the table of contents is section entitled "Conclusions and Suggestions" wherein the writer has suggested possible courses of action in view of the evidence presented.

-
1. Copies of the two questionnaires are to be found in the appendix.
 2. The 8 th Grade consists of 89 students, 19 of whom are boarders.

PART I

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Amount of Free Time During School Hours

The Prep. School time table makes allowances for certain free hours during the school session. This free time comes at different times of the day for different classes. Students are allowed to do whatever they like during the free hours. They may go to the library, play games or just roam about.

Complaints are sometimes heard to the effect that there is too much free time which could be used more profitably. On the average there are 4.76 hours free time per class per week. A question was asked of parents and teachers regarding their opinions on this matter.

Figure 1 shows that there is close agreement among parents and teachers regarding the amount of free time. About half of the parents and a little more than half of the teachers believe that too much free time is given. Only two parents and five teachers felt that there is less free time than necessary.

Twenty five percent of the teachers however, qualified their answers. They stated that in some classes the amount of free time is a little too much and in others just right. In almost all of the qualified answers they felt that there was too much free time for the lower classes and for the non-Baccalaureate Section.

On the point of filling up the free periods with additional

Reaction of parents and teachers to the amount of free time during school hours

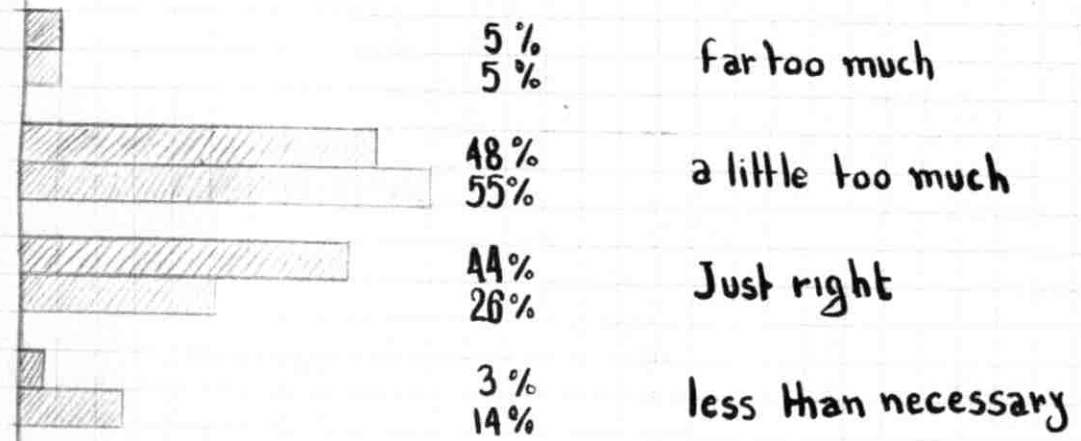


Figure 1

Key: Parents (64)
 Teachers (36)

Preferred activities for utilizing free hours

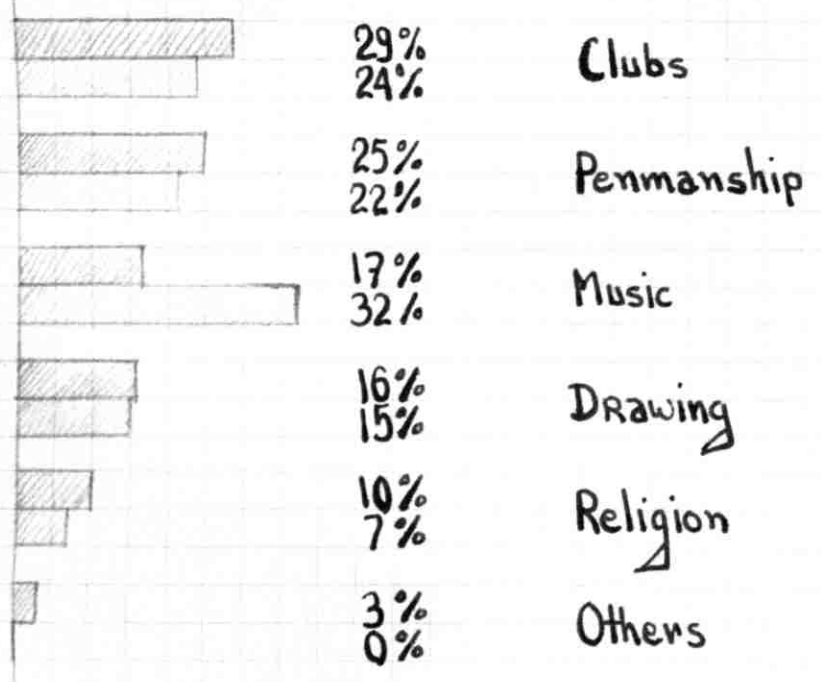


Figure 2

Key: Parents (64)
 Teachers (36)

activities, there is also substantial agreement among parents and teachers as is shown in Figure 2. Teachers placed music at the top of the list, while it ranked 3rd with parents. Clubs were well considered by both groups, parents placing it first and teachers placing it second. Drawing and religion were ranked 4th and 5th by both groups.

Four parents however, made certain qualifications. Two wanted the school to use the time to give their children additional lessons in English, and two who wished the time to be more profitably used left the matter of what to add entirely up to the school.

Conclusions and Suggestions

From the above statistics, a somewhat less free time seems appropriate. What new required activities to add, will depend upon such factors as the talents of the children, the proficiencies of the teachers, equipment, space, etc. The combined parent-teacher percentages show a preference for clubs, music and penmanship in that order.

Frequency of reports to parents

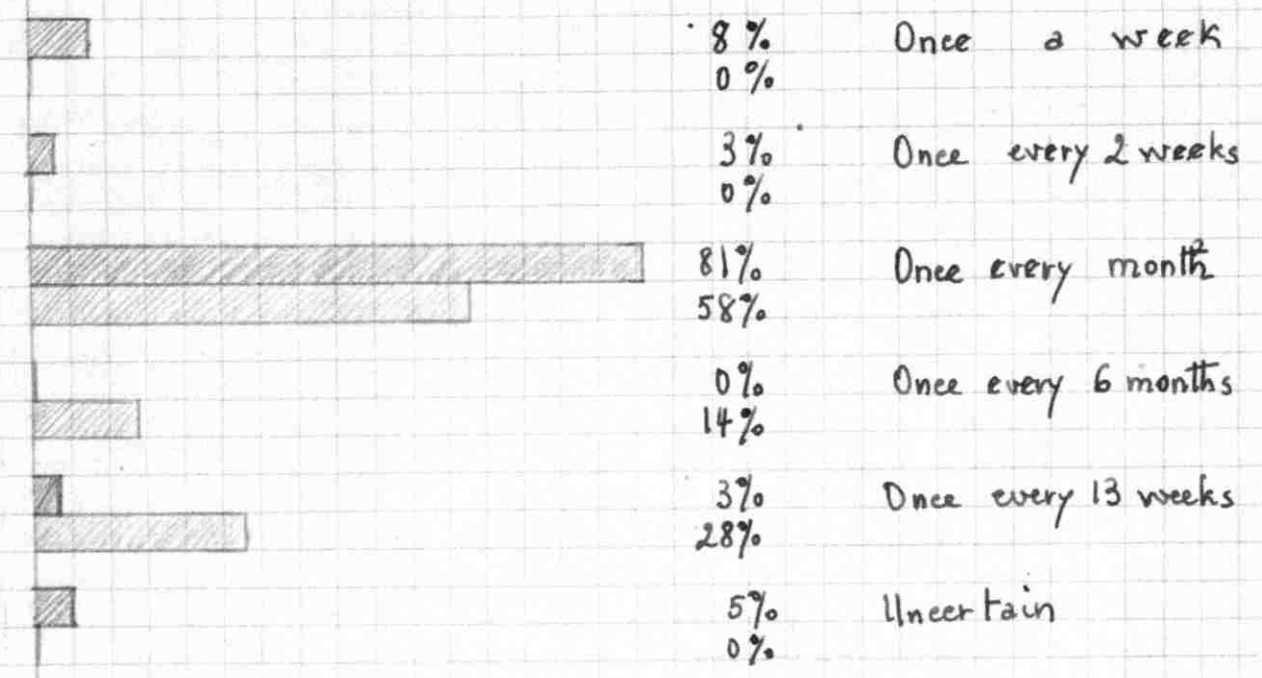
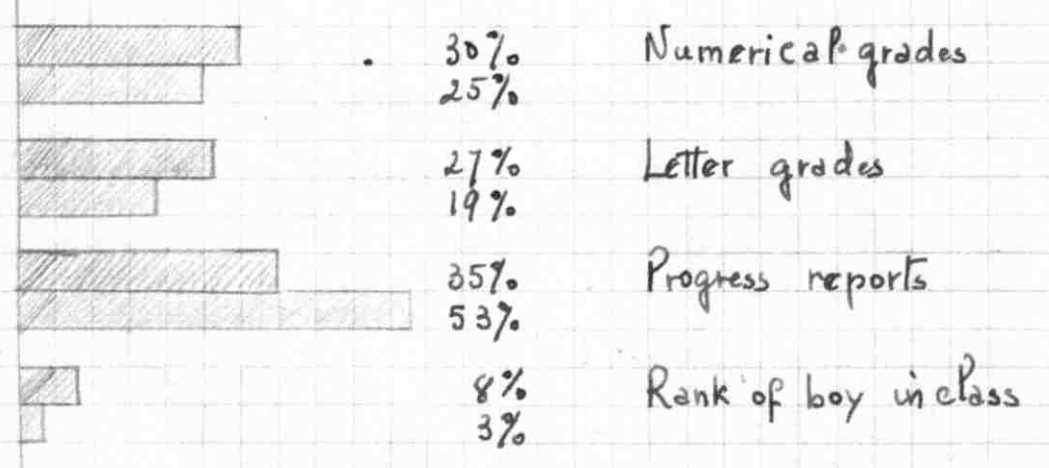


figure (3)

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

Form of reports to parents



Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

figure (4)

School Reports to Parents

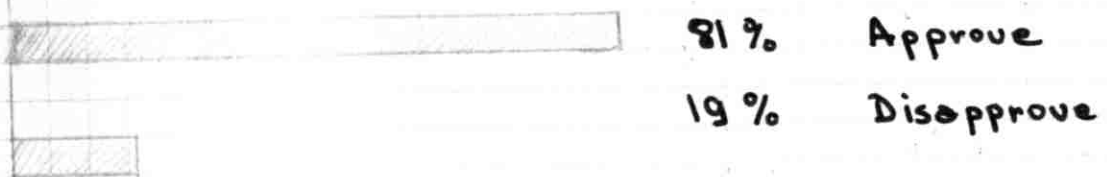
At present, grade reports are sent every six weeks, in letter form (A, B, C, D, E, F) with a few remarks about some children. Parents want to receive such reports more often, while teachers on the average slightly favor extending the interval between one report and another. Parents want to receive the grade reports on an average of 4.2 weeks, but teachers would like to send them on an average of every seven weeks. (See Figure 3)

Both groups give prominence to a written progress report as can be seen from Figure 4. Considering the qualifications made by both groups, there appears to be a strong tendency to favor written progress reports.

Half of the 35% of parents mentioning progress reports stated they also wish to have numerical grades or letter grades. The same qualifications were made by teachers. More than half of the group mentioning progress reports wished to have them combined either with numerical grades or with letter grades.

In a question that was asked of teachers, the overwhelming majority approved of sending written progress reports, as is shown in Figure 5. Figure 6 shows that, among those who approved of sending written progress reports, the average interval desired between reports is about 2.5 months.

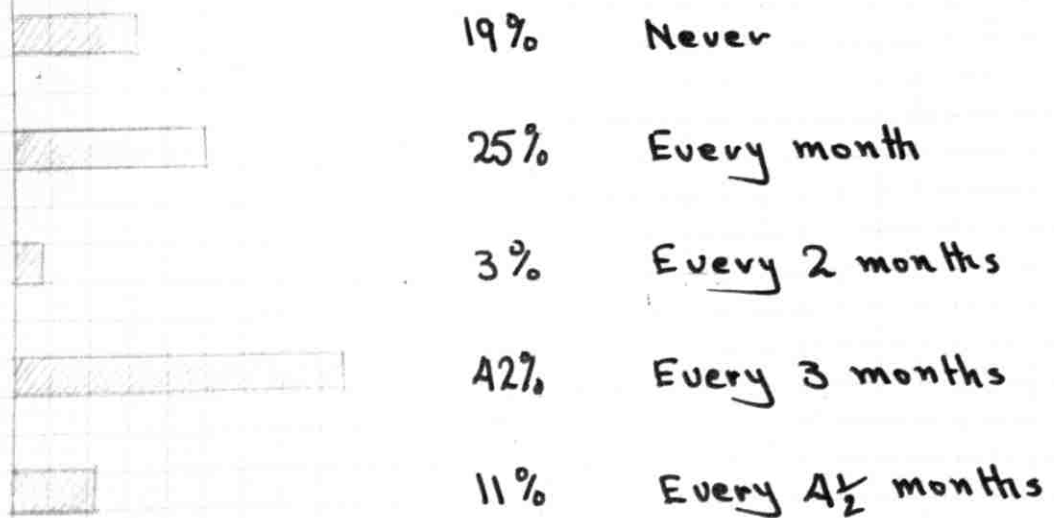
Teachers' Opinions on the desirability of Written progress reports to parents



(36) Teachers

Figure 5

Teachers' Opinions on the frequency of written Progress reports to parents



(36) Teachers

figure 6

Conclusions and Suggestions

Whether to send the grades in letters or numerically, does not seem of much importance. What really matters is that written progress reports should be sent with such grades. Sending grades every month (or as it is done now, every six weeks) appears to be an acceptable frequency. Written progress reports, because they take much time and need careful preparation, should probably be sent only three times a year, after each term.

An innovation which serves to give more meaning to ordinary letter grades is the use of an exponent or subscript to the grade which indicates the effort the pupil has been making. Thus A1 indicates excellent effort and achievement, C3 indicates that much more might be expected of the pupil, while C1 indicates that the pupil is working up to his capacity. Generally such effort grades range from 1 to 5, and are defined on the reverse side of the report card.

Opinions about participation in planned school activities

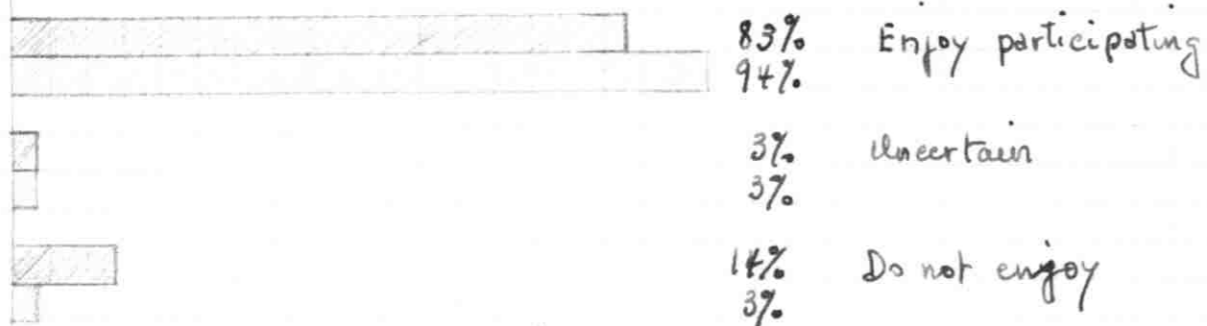


figure (7)

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

Amount of participation in future school activities

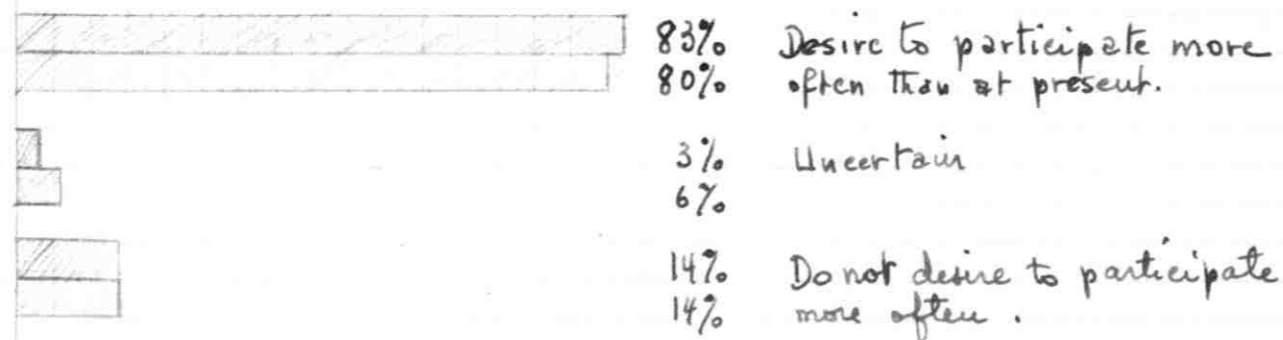


figure (8)

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

Participation in Planned School Activities

Parents and teachers were asked whether they would enjoy participating in planned school activities, and whether they would like to participate more than they have done in the past. Such activities were understood to be of such nature that parents and teachers would come together and share experiences and activities planned by the school, such as a football match, a dramatized play or a school night.

Figures 7 and 8 show that the extent of agreement among parents and teachers is very great. The majority of both groups enjoy participating in school activities planned by school, and both groups would like to participate more than they have done in the past.

Eight parents made the qualification that they enjoy participating if time permits. One enjoys participating if it does not cost money, another if only academic things are discussed. One parent stated that he does not want to participate because he does not know a foreign language.

Only two teachers made qualifications. One indicated that he would like to participate, but there is not enough time and another one would like to do so if such activities do not interfere with work.

Opinions about participation in planned School activity

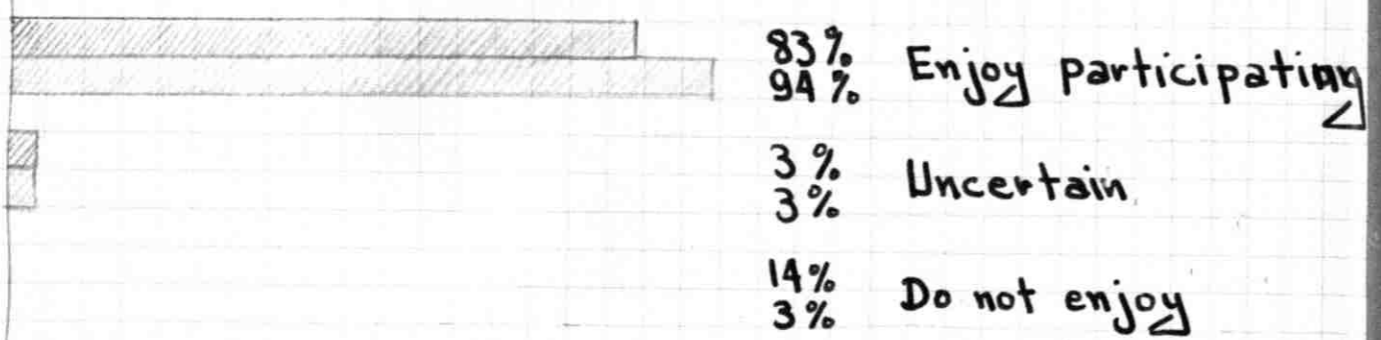


figure 7

Key: Parents (64)
 Teachers (36)

Amount of participation in future school activities

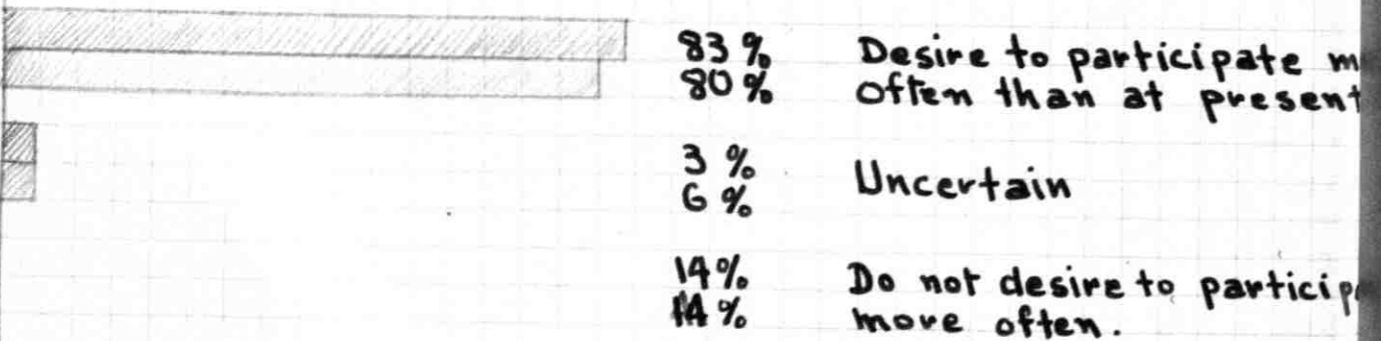


figure 8

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Only two teachers made qualifications. One indicated that he would like to participate, but there is not enough time and another one would like to do so if such activities do not interfere with work.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The school may plan more activities for parents and for teachers, or both, with the full expectation of a favorable response. Such activities as the following might be recommended.

1. Parents' Nights whereby skits, exhibitions, talks, etc. could be given.
2. Pure social parties to get to know each other.
3. Plays, music, story telling, etc.
4. Forming a Parent-teacher Association, which would keep open the lines of communication between parents and the school as to policies and practices, and permit some cooperative planning.

Opinions on the amount of time given to activity programs in school

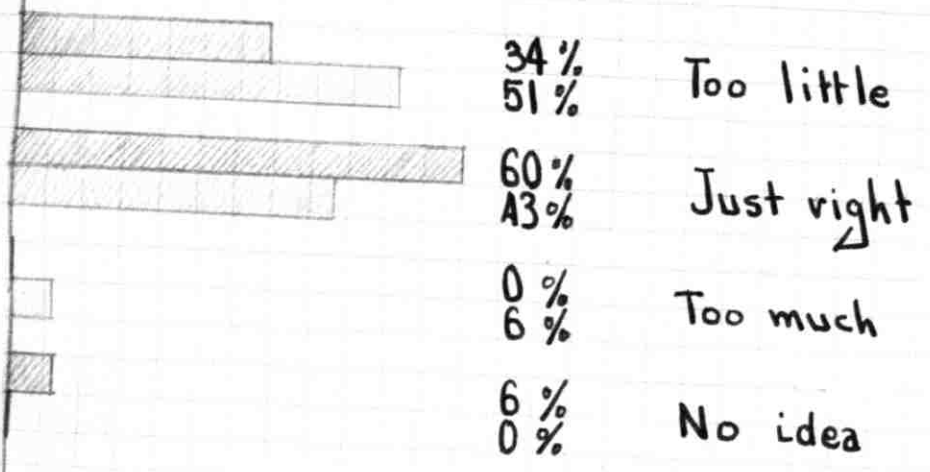




Figure 9

Key: Parents  (64)
 Teachers  (36)

Activity Program

Activities in the Prep. School are many and varied from sports and out door life to stamp collecting and indoor hobbies. All these activities are voluntarily except in case of sports where each boy has to belong to one of the four houses that the school forms every year.

Some of the boys are very active and they are involved in several activities such as debating clubs, literary clubs, scouting etc. Those who are not active participate in what is required of them and no more.

A question was directed to parents and teachers to get the opinions of both groups about the amount of time given to the activity program.

Looking at figure 9 one can notice some discrepancy in the opinion of teachers and parents. It may be that teachers are in a better position to judge. Parents are far from these activities and in many cases children do not speak about these at home. Or, being ignorant about the matter, many parents might have stated that the amount of time given to activity program is just right, rather than admit ignorance.

Four parents stated that they have no idea at all. It is worth while to point out that none of the parents thought that the time given to activity program is too much. On the other

hand two teachers felt that too much time is given, and three others felt that the amount of time is right for some classes, but for others, especially the lower ones, it is too little.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The fact remains that a high percentage of both groups felt that the amount of time given to the activity program is less than they wish it to be, while no parent and only two teachers thought it too much. The school might consider obliging each boy to participate in at least one activity, and encouraging him to take part in one or two others. Contests, prizes, honor rolls, etc. could be used as means to attract children to such activities.

Types of punishments advocated

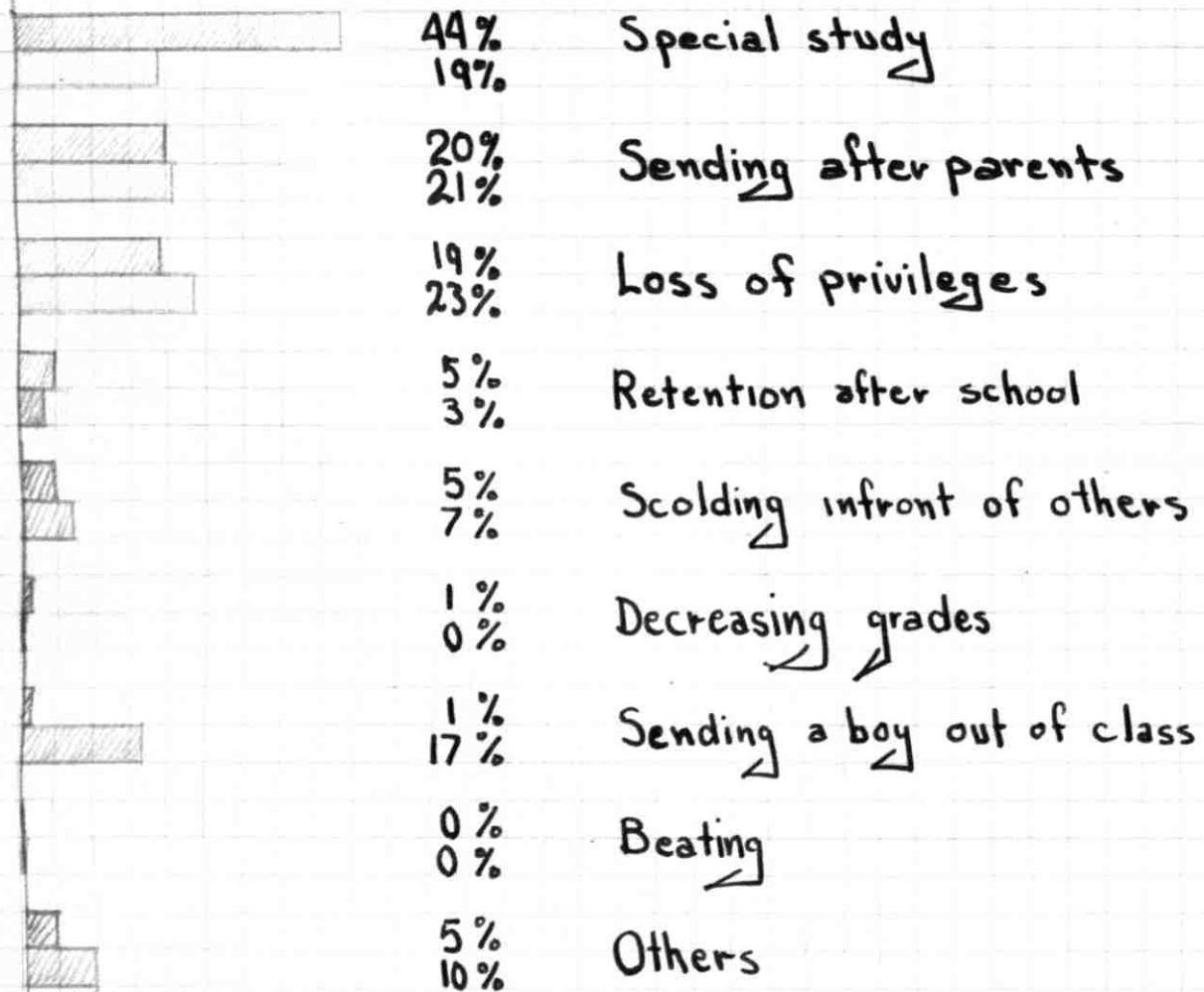


Figure 10

Key: Parents (64)
 Teachers (36)

Punishments for Misbehavior

Parents and teachers largely agree on the main types of punishment which should be used, though they place them in a different order of importance as is shown in Figure 10. Sending after parents comes second in both groups. Special Study ranks first with parents while it ranks third with teachers. Scolding the boy comes 5th in both groups. Sending a boy out of class ranks much higher with teachers than it does with parents. Both groups agreed completely that no beating should be administered. This is in accordance with modern ideas of punishment, and with the school existing policy. Decreasing the grades ranked very low with parents and was not advocated by teachers. Again this is in line with modern trends in education.

Seven parents qualified their answers. Five of them suggested talking to the student individually, one indicated that the offender should write lines, and one left it to school to do whatever it sees fit.

Percentagewise, more qualifications were made by teachers than by parents, and this is natural as teachers are much closer to the problem, and can see the effects of their decisions. Six teachers suggested talking to the individual student privately, two indicated that the type of punishment depends upon the case, one wanted principal's action, one suggested a private talk in the

presence of the principal and parents, and one suggested trying one punishment after another until something can be found which will be of effect on the boy.

In testing the degree of agreement among parents and teachers on the kinds of punishments to administer, a Spearman Rank Order Coefficient of Correlation of .80 obtained. This is significantly different from zero at the .02 level of significance.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Sending after parents is endorsed by about one-fifth of parents and teachers, and seems to this writer to be an effective measure. Instead of administering a punishment after an offence takes place, it would be advisable to get in touch with parents before a problem becomes serious.

Even this might not be necessary if there are several meetings each year at which parents may discuss their boys with the teachers. One way that this has been done is to assign each teacher to a classroom for part of the parent-teacher meeting, with the understanding that parents are free to drop in and talk with each teacher of their boy.

Parents think that as the name "Special Study" implies, the boy will go and study, and that this will be of some benefit. In most cases, however, the boy is not benefited at all, as very little real work is given to him. A boy brings in a newspaper or

a cheap book to the study room, or just sits there doing nothing.

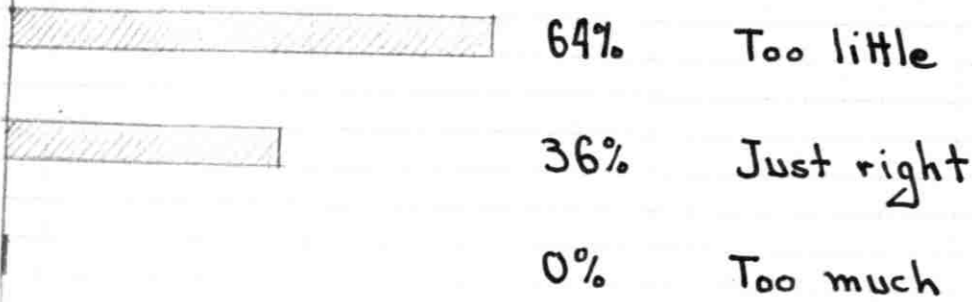
Teachers, on the other hand, feel that special study is not very effective in decreasing the number of offences. The boys who are given the special study appear to be the same boys all through the year.¹ In any event, it seems a highly questionable procedure to encourage the idea that study and punishment are substantially the same thing.

It seems strange that 17 % of teachers believe in sending a boy who misbehaves out of the classroom. This is contrary to most accepted modern educational theories, and to the existing policy in the Prep. School which states that a boy should not be sent out of the classroom except in rare cases, at which time he is sent directly to the administration office with an explanatory note.

It is true that no single punishment can be cited as unique and very effective by itself. Since special study is the only existing punishment in the Prep. School, it has become mechanical and of little value. Every offence and every child presents a unique problem and opportunity. A good teacher will use his judgement and his knowledge of psychology to administer what appears to be the most appropriate measure in any given case.

1. Conclusions drawn from a talk with advisers in Prep. School.

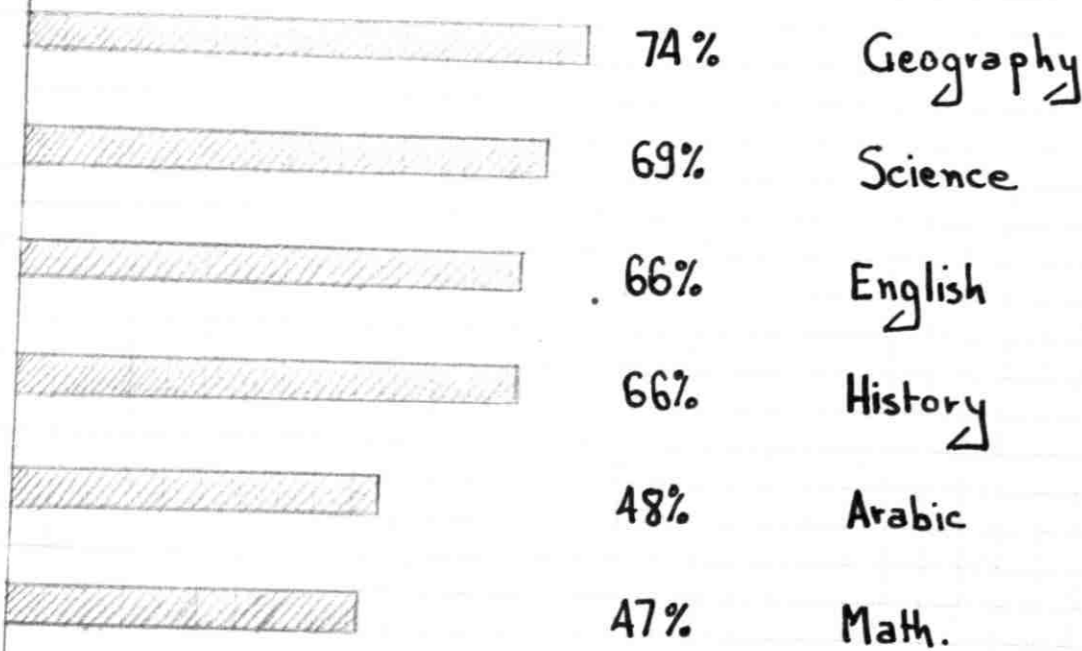
Opinions of parents about the amount of homework



(64) Parents

figure 11

Percent of parents believing that the homework is too little in the various subjects



(64) Parents

figure 12

Homework

Figure 11 shows that parents in general believe that the amount of homework given to their children is too little. When asked about each subject separately (see Figure 12), parents' responses were consistent with their responses to the question on homework in general.

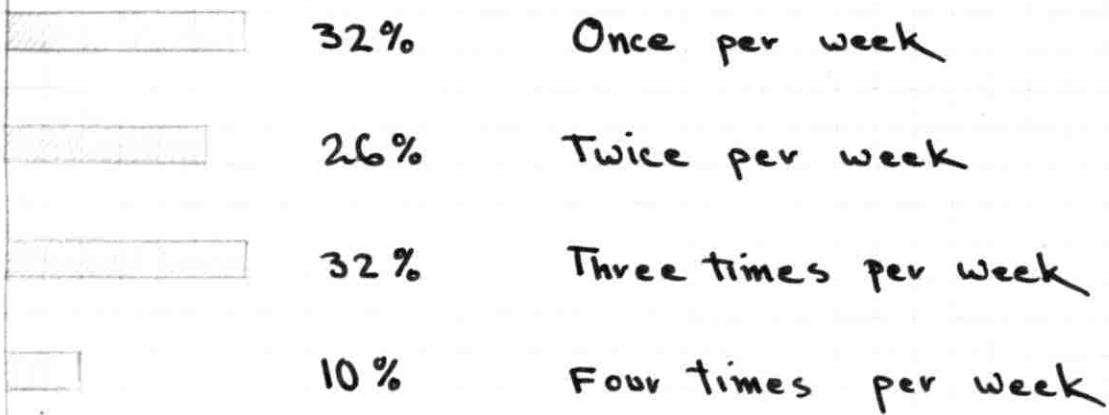
In the extreme minority were 3 parents who indicated that the amount of homework in Arabic is too much, one parent who felt so about English, five who had this feeling about Math. and one who felt the same about History.

The amount of homework given per week as indicated by teachers is illustrated in Figure 13. Some teachers give one homework per week, some give two, some give three and a few give four. Of the five teachers who do not give any homework at all, two teach athletics, one teaches workshop and two give notes in class. The average per teacher is 2.1 homeworks per week.

Regarding the amount of time to be spent per assignment, the teachers, on the average, said that it should be 52.8 minutes (see Figure 14).

The amount of time that children are actually putting into their homework each day as indicated by parents is compared with the amount of time they are expected to put by their teachers in Figure 15. The graph shows an almost perfect inverse relationship between expectation and practice. On the average parents report

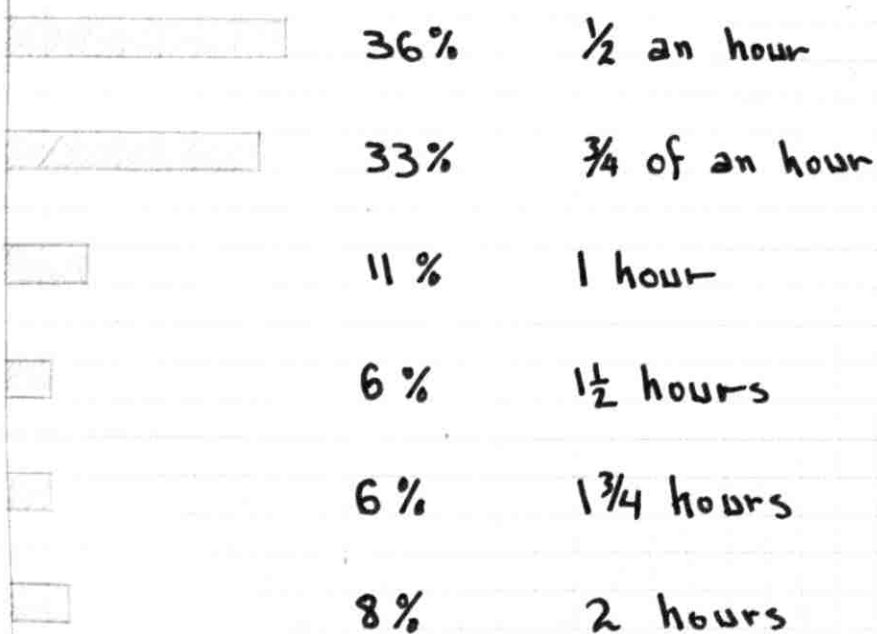
The number of homework assignments given
Per week



(31) Teachers

figure 13

Teachers' expectations about the time required
per assignment



(31) Teachers

figure 14

Total amount of time children are putting into homework every night as reported by parents versus the total amount of time expected by teachers

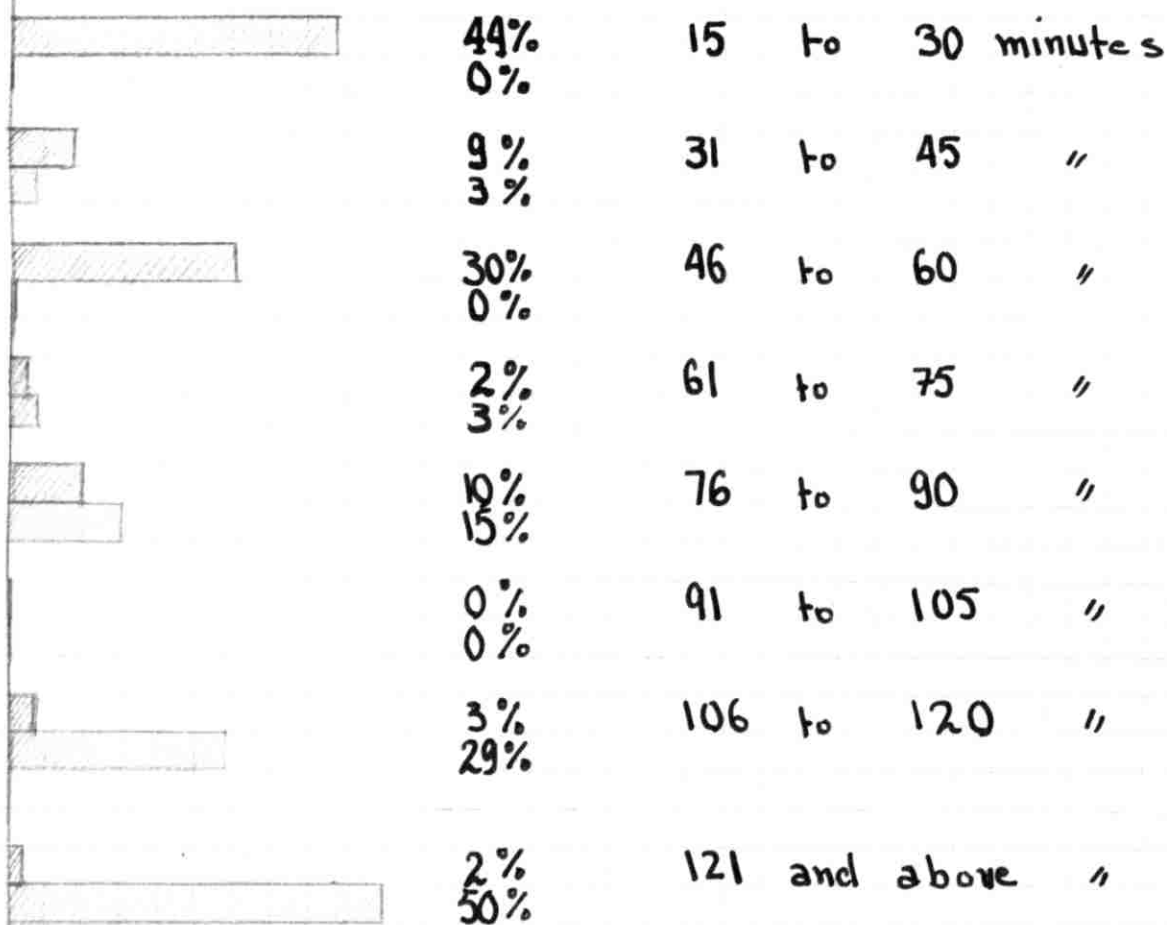


Figure 15

Key: Parents (64)

Teachers (31)

The number of homework assignments given per week as indicated by 8th. grade Teachers only

30%	Once per week
30%	Twice per week
40%	Three times per week

(10) Teachers

Figure 16

Expectations about the time required per assignment as indicated by 8th. grade Teachers only.

10%	25 minutes
40%	30 "
30%	45 "
20%	60 "

(10) Teachers

Figure (17)

48 minutes of homework being done, while teachers, on the average, expect two hours.

When the responses of 8 th grade teachers are taken separately, they do not deviate appreciably from the pattern of responses of all the teachers. Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18 show this quite clearly.

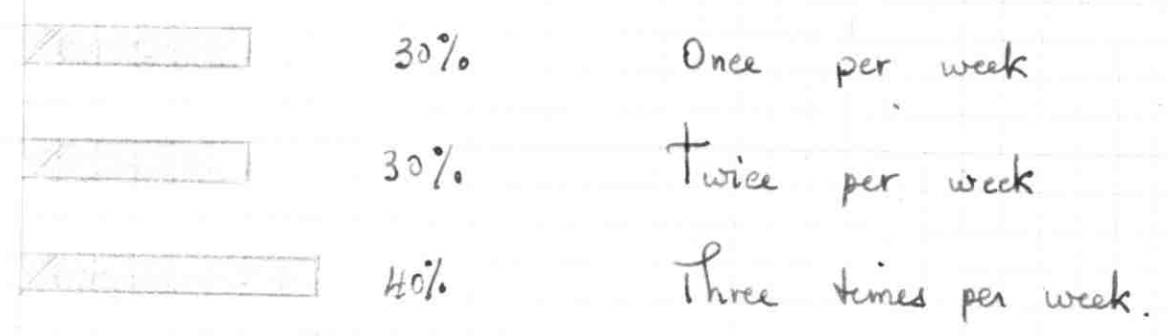
On the question of giving children outside help in their homework, parents were divided almost half and half. (Figure 19) Such help as is given, however, averages only 18.3 minutes per night as can be seen from Figure 20. On the other hand, most teachers believe that children receive some help, and 69 % believe this to be desirable. (See Figures 21 and 22)

As to the value of the homework given to children, the overwhelming majority of both groups, parents and teachers, believed that it is valuable or very valuable. Only one parent indicated that it is useless and one could not tell whether it is of value or not. (See Figure 23)

There is a wide discrepancy between what the teachers expect and what is actual. Parents indicated on the average that a boy is spending 48 minutes on homework each day, while teachers think that they should spend more than two hours.

Opinions were different too on the question of help given to children in their homework. According to parent boys do not get

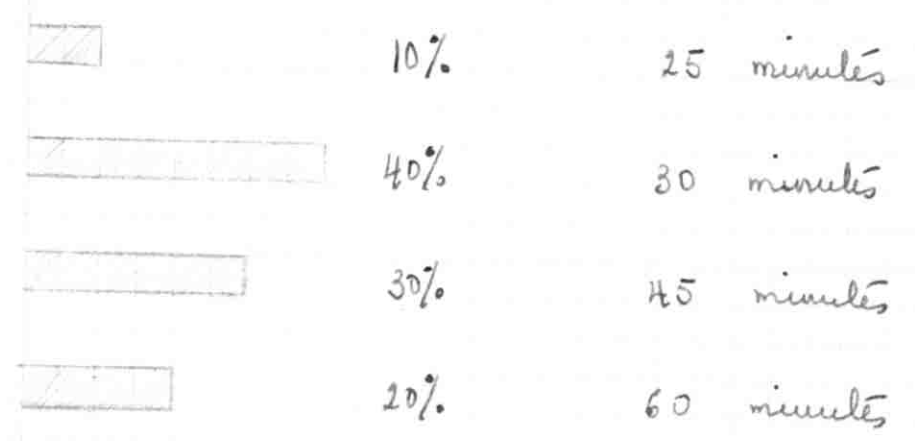
The number of Homework Assignments given per week as indicated by 8th Grade Teachers only.



(10 Teachers)

figure (16)

Expectations about the Time required per Assignment as indicated by 8th Grade Teachers only.



(10 Teachers)

figure (17)

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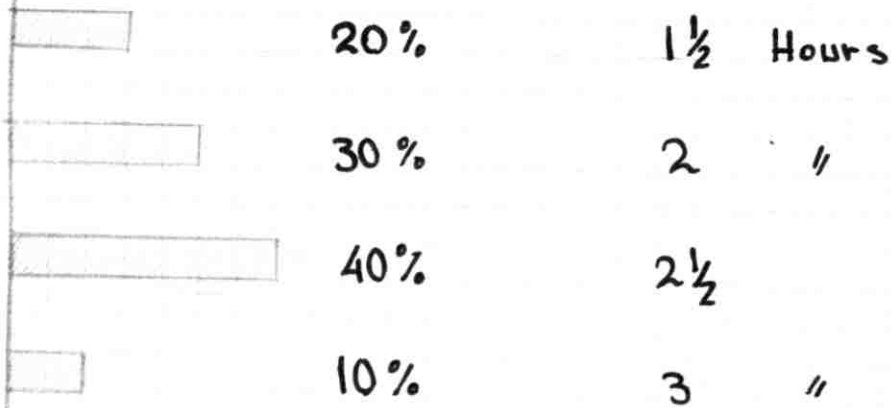
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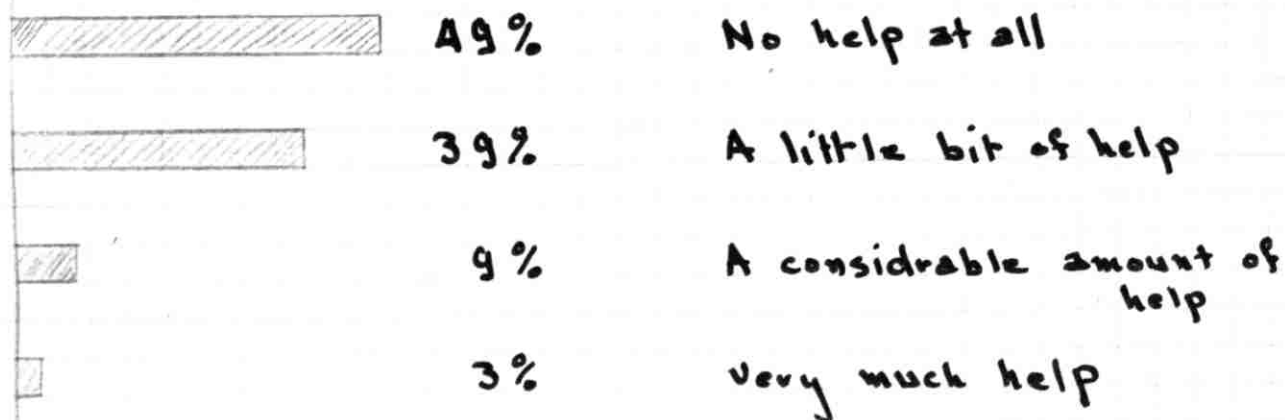
Amount of time children ought to put
into all homework every night according
to 8th. grade teachers only



(10) Teachers

figure 18

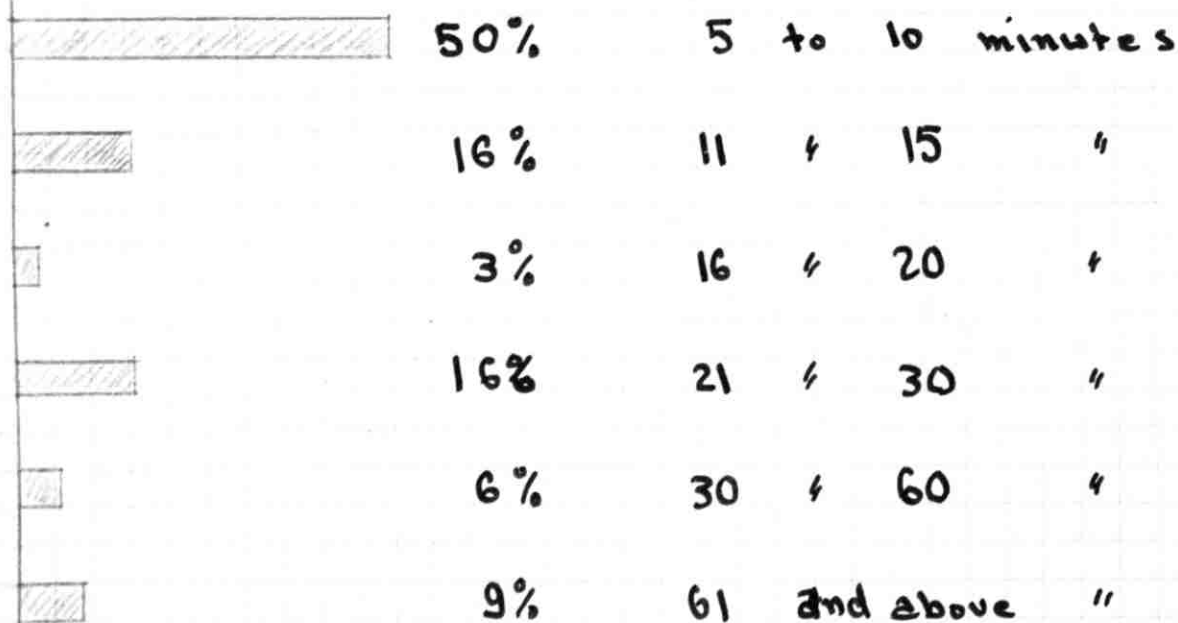
Outside help given to children as
Indicated by parents



(64) Parents

figure 19

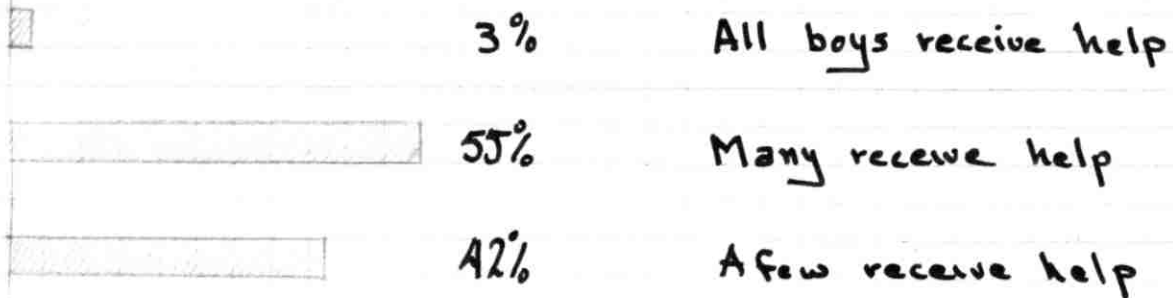
Amount of time per day a boy is given
help apart from school as indicated by
Parents



(64) Parents

figure 20

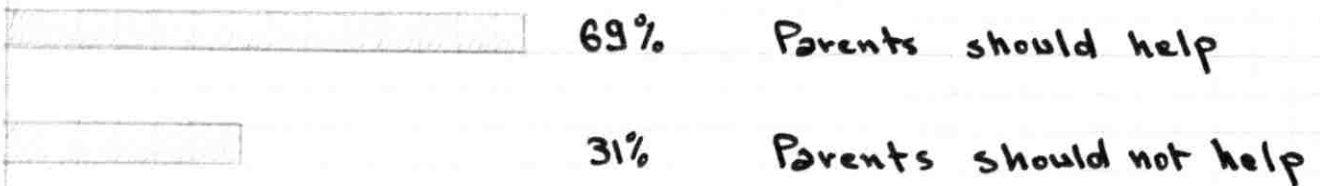
Teachers' opinions about help given to children in homework



(36) Teachers

figure 21

Teachers' opinions on the desirability of homework help given by parents



(36) Teachers

figure 22

Opinions of parents and teachers as to the value of homework

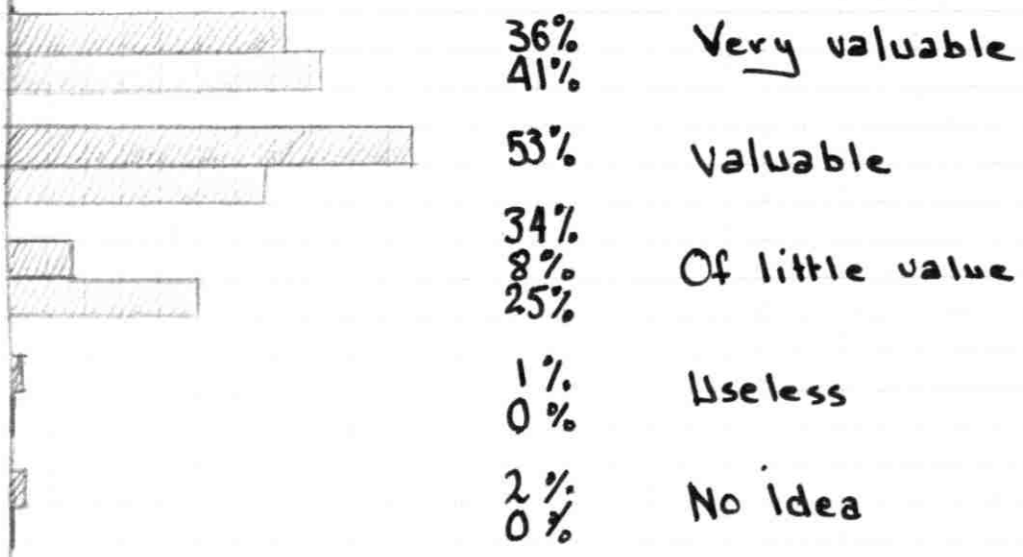




figure 23

Key: Parents  (64)
 Teachers  (32)

much help (An average of 17 minutes per night) and yet most teachers (69 %) believe that they should get help and in fact believe that the majority of children are getting some or much of it.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Parents are probably quite right in saying that the amount of homework given to their children is too little. On the other hand teachers perhaps are demanding too much. Since, on the average, a teacher is giving 2.1 homework assignments per week it means that an 8 th grade boy averages 13.3 homework assignments per week or 2.66 per night. If he is going to spend 40 minutes on each (As indicated by 8 th Grade teachers) then he needs one hour and 45 minutes. This appears to be too much, while the figure indicated by parents (48 minutes) is probably too little.

This problem should be investigated more fully before any radical changes are made. Checking the homework done, and giving credit to such homework might appreciably change the situation, and the present lackadaisical attitude about homework which is shown by both students and teachers.

The following are tentative recommendations:

1. To give more homework than is given at present.
2. To give larger assignments of homework.
3. To assign outside reading such as book reports, summary of lessons, etc.

4. To have the homework of a challenging nature and with purpose in mind rather than following a sort of routine by giving it mechanically once or twice a week.
5. Have teachers cooperate so that a reasonable amount of homework be given every night.
6. Homework should be graded by teachers and returned to the pupil with any necessary comments. The grades for homework should enter into the grades for the course.

Ideal number of pupils in a class

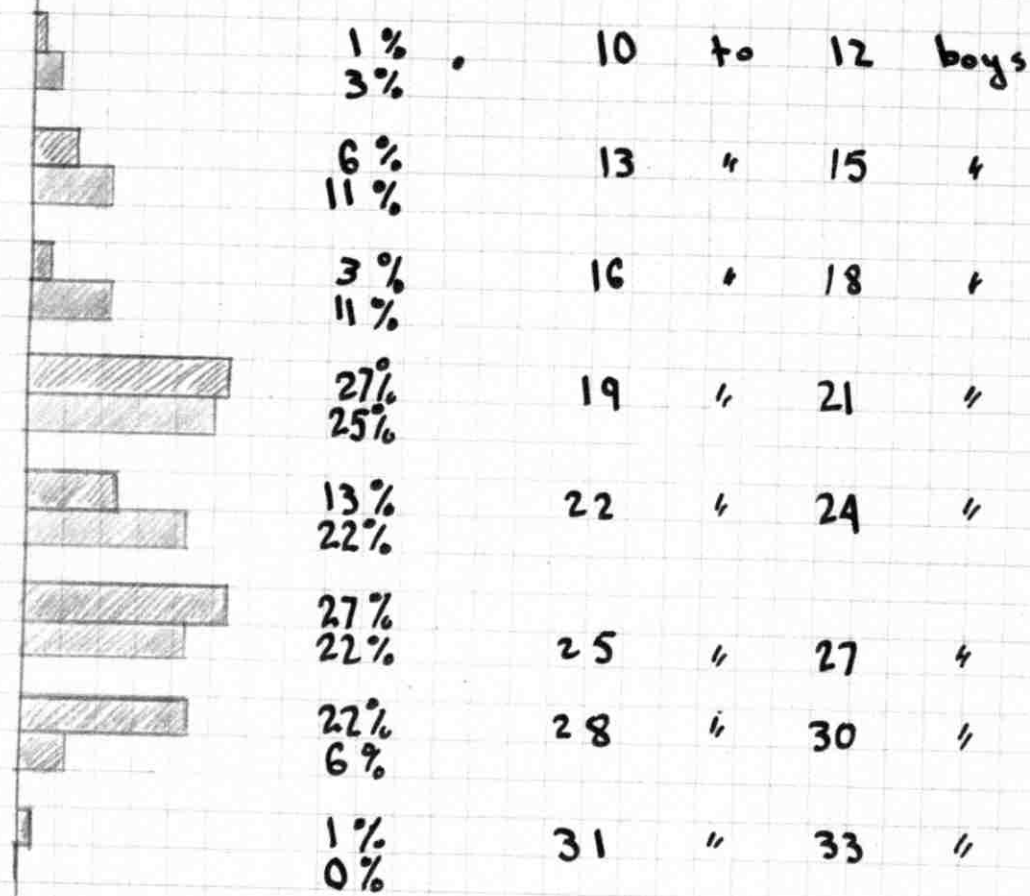




figure 24

Key: Parents  (64)
 Teachers  (36)

Ideal Number of Pupils in a Class

A question was asked to parents and teachers about the ideal number of pupils to be taught by one teacher in one classroom. With parents the range was from 12 to 32 and with teachers it was from 12 to 30. The average according to parents is 23.5 boys in one class, and according to teachers it is 21.3 boys (See Figure 24). This close agreement is rather surprising on an issue where the experience of the two groups is so radically different.

Conclusions and Suggestions

It seems that about 22 boys per classroom is the most satisfactory goal for both groups.¹ In the Prep. School every class is thirty and above. This is a bit too many, especially in lower grades and where rooms are small.

1. 15 is upper limit in many U.S.A. Prep. Schools; Korf, Professor of Education, A.U.B.

Desirability of having regular meetings between Parents and Teachers

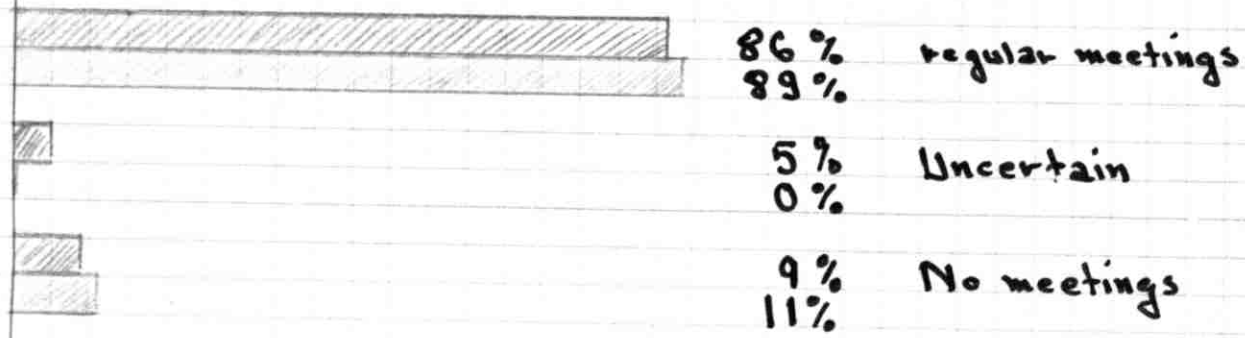


figure 25

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

Frequency of regular meetings between teachers and parents

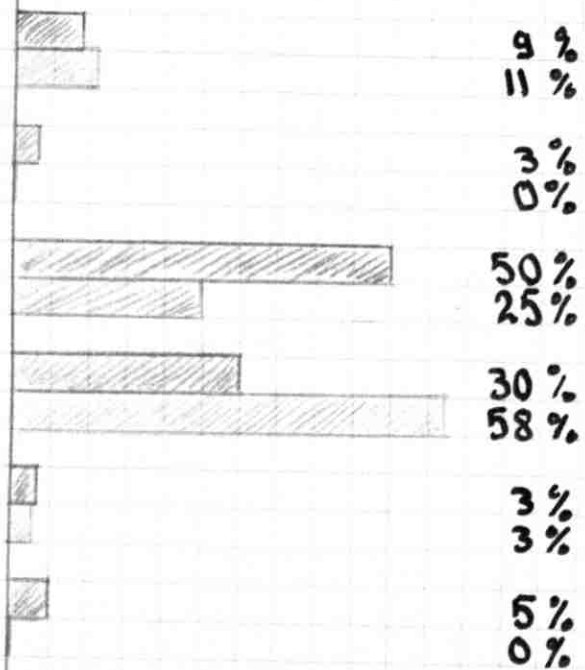


figure 26

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

Meeting between Parents and Teachers

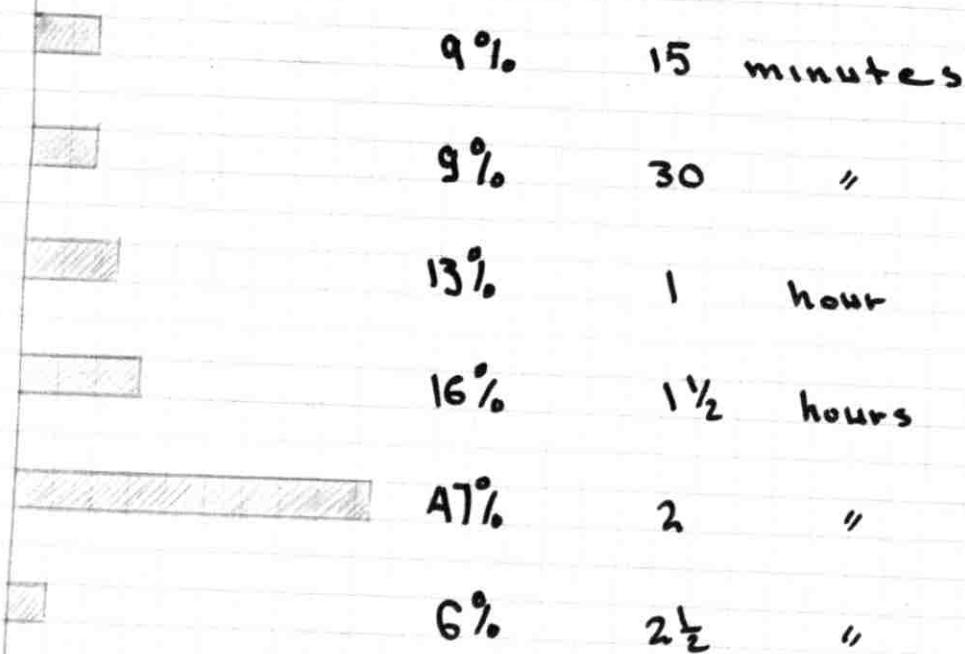
There is a great desire on the part of both groups to have regular meetings between parents and teachers as Figure 25 shows. They differed a bit about the frequency of such meetings. As shown in Figure 26, the median of the parents for such meetings is once per month, while in the case of the teachers the median is once every 3 months.

A few of the parents made the qualification that they would approve of such regular meetings if time permits. One teacher made a qualification that he would like such meetings if they were not regular, but appointed for special cases. Another teacher made the qualification that he would appreciate such meetings if English would not be a barrier to him.

When asked about the time which should be given to each parent-teacher meeting, the range was from 15 minutes to two and a half hours, distributed as shown in Figure 27. The average time desired for such meetings is 1.5 hours.

As to the kinds of meetings that teachers advocate, Figure 28 shows the distribution. The largest percentage favored parents' night and the next in order was the formation of a P.T.A. Parents coming to assemblies and parents attending classes ranked low with teachers. It might be due to the fact that such activities take place during hours of work when parents could not come.

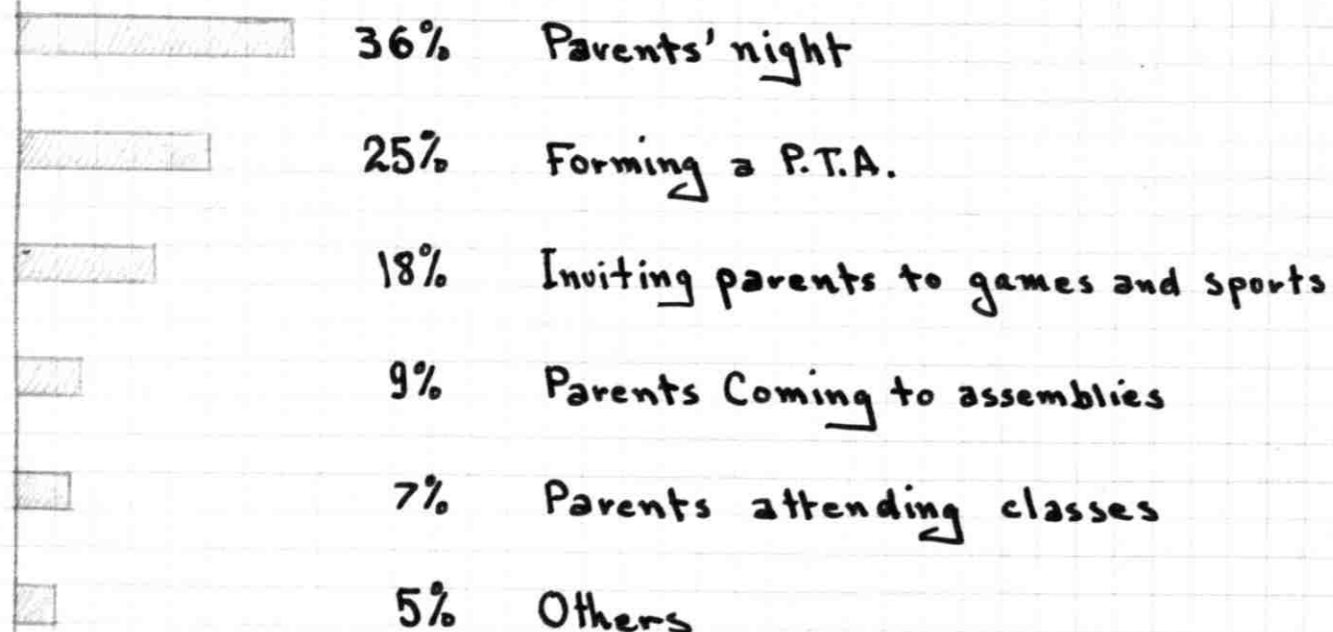
Amount of time to be given to each
parent-teacher meeting as indicated
by teachers, desiring such meetings



(32) Teachers

figure 27

Opinions of teachers about types of Parent-Teacher meetings



(36) Teachers

figure 28

Conclusions and Suggestions

Since a desire for closer contact is manifested by teachers as well as by parents, the school may confidently take action along this line. Early in the year a committee of teachers might make definite plans for such meetings so that parents and teachers will know about them ahead of time. Two or three meetings a year would seem appropriate at first. Since the school enrollment large, it may be difficult to have all parents at one time, in which case they might be invited by classes.

As to the amount of time to be given to each meeting, the responses suggest a program of about an hour and a half. In meeting together parents and teachers could agree on the hour for subsequent meetings and the length of time needed for each meeting.

The important thing is not the meetings as such or the time set for each meeting, but what actually takes place in them. A program has to be worked jointly by teachers and parents where interests of both groups will be represented. It may be possible to form a small committee from both groups, or through questionnaires get a suitable agenda for such meetings.

Referring to Figure 28 again, one sees that having a Parents' Night and the formation of a P.T.A. are activities favored by many teachers. These two activities should be encouraged as much as possible.

Forming a P.T.A. seems to many perhaps, to be extremely difficult, if not impossible. The writer firmly believes that something can & should be done along this line. It may be true that conditions in this country are different from those in the United States for example, but something of a much simpler nature serve as a start. Since one fourth of the teachers expressed their desire to form a P.T.A. and since many of the parents also expressed this desire orally, it is well worth considering. It should be approached gradually, and evaluated at every step of the way. The writer would be very willing to accept the full responsibility for initiating the activities of an experimental parent-teacher association.

Parent-teacher contacts can also be made through sports and assemblies. Field Days, football matches, swimming, etc. offer great opportunities for inviting parents to the school, and for mutually helpful exchanges between parents and teachers. No matter what the activity is, the opportunities for parents and teachers to talk with one another about school matters should, in one way or another, be definitely a part of the plan.

Political Agitations and Strikes

The Near East and particularly the Arab World is undergoing great changes in all respects, and this is particularly noticeable in political matters. There is a tremendous political consciousness on the part of these people for liberation, freedom and rights. Students comprise one of the most conscious groups, and they are among the most sensitive to political matters. Though the University in all its branches is very clear on this matter, and students know their rights and their duties, yet problems arise from time to time.

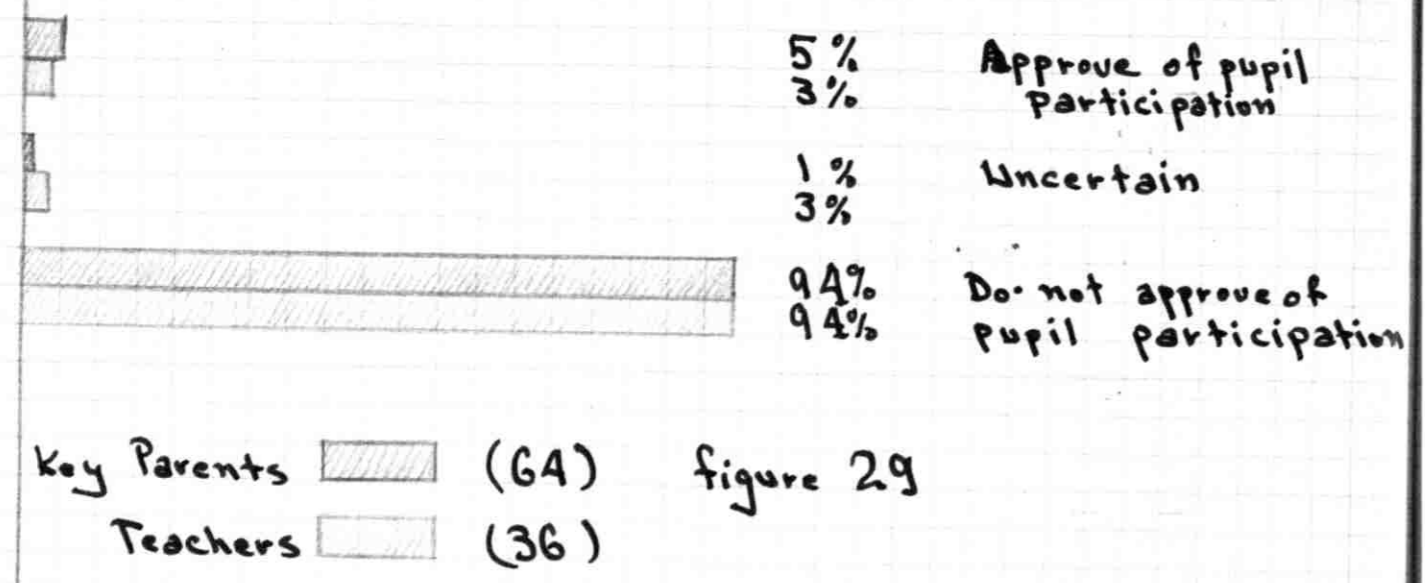
There is no bar on the freedom of political thought in the Prep School. At the same time participation in political activity such as strikes, demonstrations, petitions, etc. renders a pupil liable to discipline by the school authorities as well as by the Government.¹

In this period of strong national feeling, boys are interested and active in political matters. In the many strikes that have happened in the past, and in the one that happened at the end of March, 1954, many small boys were involved in the battle between the police and the students.² Parents and teachers were asked for their opinion on this issue of pupil participation in agitations and strikes.

1. See Prep. student handbook page 12.

2. Some of the 8 th Grade boys participated in battle and one was badly hit.

Opinions of parents and teachers about pupil Participation in political adgitations and strikes



Opinions of parents and teachers about classroom discussion of political matters

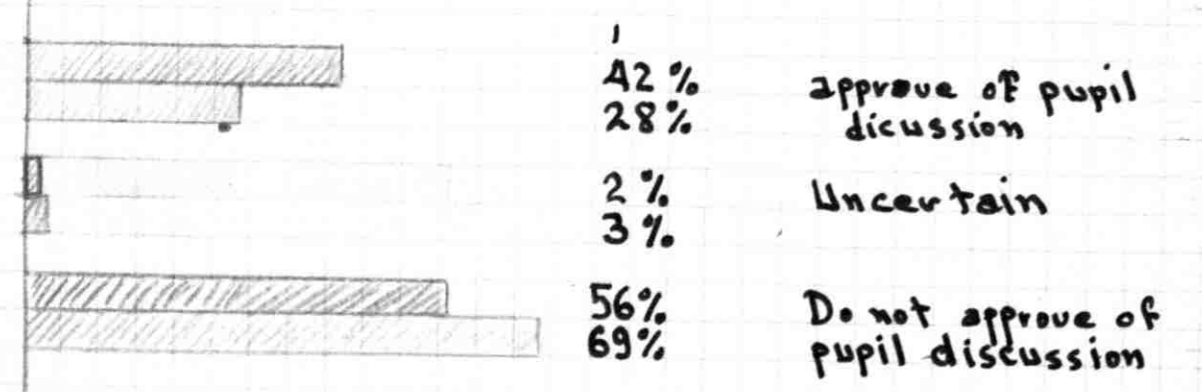


figure 30

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

A very close agreement is found among teachers and parents on this issue as Figure 29 shows. An overwhelming majority of both groups showed their opposition to having the pupils participate in political agitations and strikes.

In regard to whether children should discuss political matters in classes, both parents and teachers leaned somewhat on the negative side, with teachers being more strongly negative than parents, ^(see fig. 30) Qualifications were many. With the exception of one parent who wanted to leave the matter to school, all other qualifications (20% of all parents) stated that they would like their boys to discuss political matters in classes if such discussions are connected with the subject under study, or are guided by the teacher. Three teachers qualified their answers in saying that boys should participate in political discussions in classes when there is good cause or good guidance throughout the class period.

Conclusions and Suggestions

How much do young boys understand what they are doing when they actively engage in political agitations? How far should they participate in such matters? Small boys and even those of the upper classes of the High School are easily swayed by strong political currents which they may barely understand. It is very easy to arouse their emotions and incite them to uncritical action.

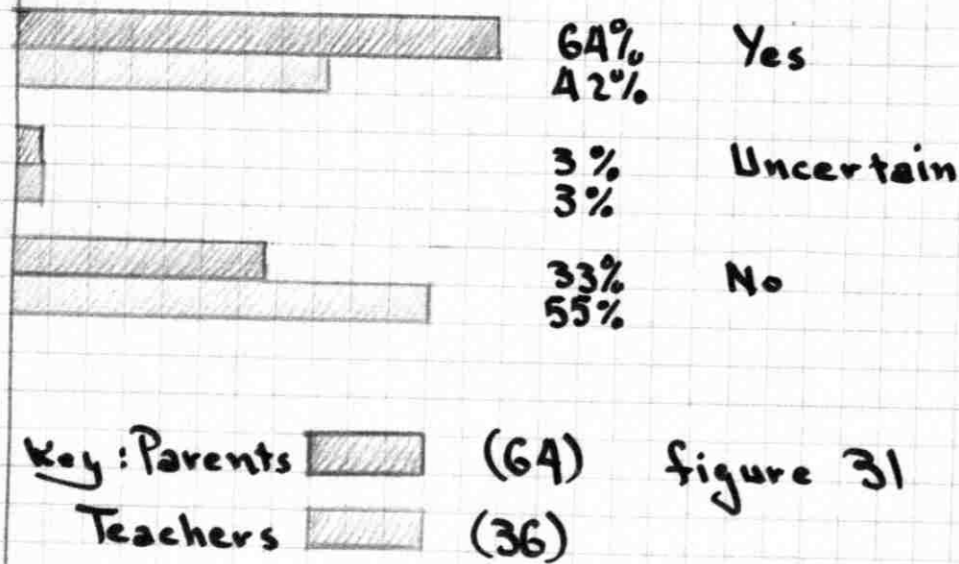
Apparently parents and teachers believe that at the age when

a child is in the High School he ought not participate physically in political matters, nor side with any party until he is experienced enough to have seen all sides of the issues involved.

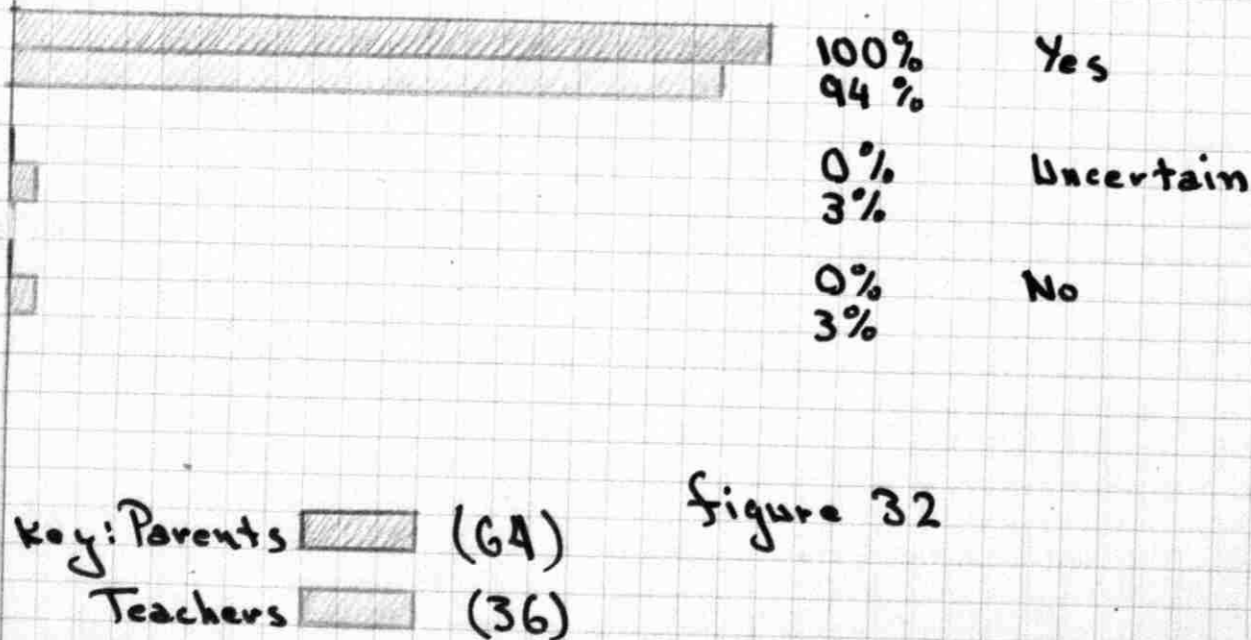
The responsibility of the school and teachers for the safety of these boys is great. If parents and teachers feel that children should not take active part in political matters, it seems that the school should take their side and make it a law by which children should abide. Students should accept this law at the time they register, with the full understanding that infraction means automatic dismissal.

As to the second aspect of the question it seems to this writer that there is no danger in discussing political matters in classes, provided they are well guided. Sometimes students go astray and conflicts arise because of strong emotional attachments to one or another of the political parties. Propaganda must be explained and analyzed. A great deal can be done in the teaching of history, civics, geography, and English. Questions on politics are as urgent and vivid in the minds of students as any others. There should be no fear of discussing politics provided it can be handled properly under the guidance of an experienced teacher. Small boys are growing and it is the duty of the school to prepare leaders from among these boys. It is a part of the school's responsibility to equip these youngsters with a critical, level-headed and reasoned point of view on this very real part of their environment. To avoid this responsibility now will only encourage political irresponsibility in the years to come.

Opinions of parents and teachers about giving Religious instructions in the school



Opinions of parents and teachers about giving a course in Ethics



Religious Instruction

Except for the short evening Sunday Service which is held in the principal's house for the boarders of the top classes, no religious instruction of any sort is given in the Prep. School. As the school has boys of different religious sects, the problem is quite complicated. Yet the writer along with the majority of parents, believes that something should be done along this line, especially in the lower grades.

Figure 31 shows that a majority of parents wished the school would give religious instruction to children, while teachers showed a slight tendency to oppose it.

All parents with the exception of one wished to have their children take instruction only in their own religion; that is Moslem parents wanted Moslem religion, Christians the Christian religion. Only one parent indicated that he wishes his child to know something of all the religions. One parent who opposed religious instruction offered the opinion that religion is an old fashioned thing.

About 65 % of the teachers who favored religious instruction stressed the idea that this course in religion should be a sort of synthesis of common morals and principles taken from all religions. The rest of the teachers stated divergent ideas such as encouragement of boys to go to church or mosque, talks in assemblies, the teaching of religions by pastors or sheikhs and as school see fit.

When asked about having the school give a course in ethics, one hundred percent of the parents expressed their acceptance of the idea, and ninety four percent of the teachers agreed with them. (See Figure 32)

Parents and teachers fully agree on giving a course in ethics. In regard to a course in religion the teachers are not as keen about it as parents. Some of the teachers mentioned to the writer that conditions as they are now, seem unfavorable for a course in religion. Those teachers who wished to introduce a course in religion wanted it to be general, based more or less on morals and ethics, while parents definitely wanted the children to be taught their own religion.

Conclusions and Suggestions

According to the above results, it seems that the school might take the following into consideration:

1. Introduce a course in ethics to all classes of the Prep. School. Such a course as human conduct including manners, customs, etiquette, etc. appears to be very much desired.
2. Increase assemblies for inspirational talks.
3. Have small circles whereby morals could be drawn from all religions.
4. Encourage going to church or mosque.

Opinions of parents and teachers about the time at which school begins in the morning

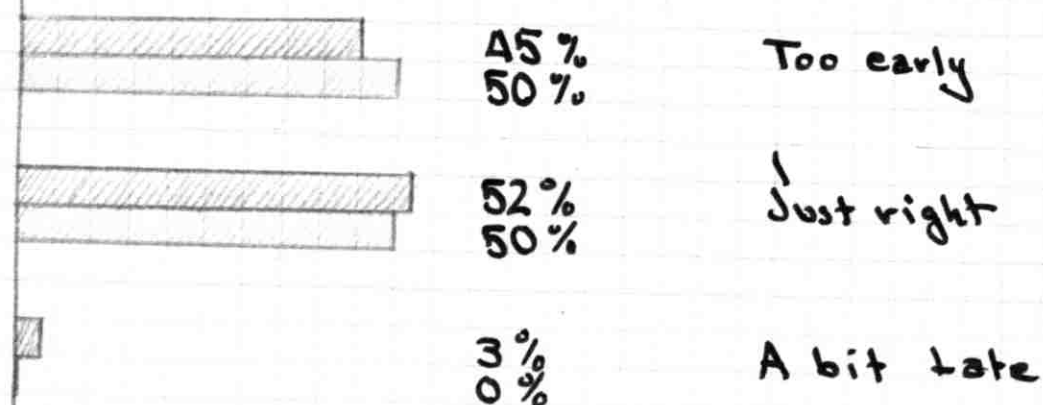


figure 33

Key: Parents (64)
Teachers (36)

Morning Start of Classes¹

Looking at Figure 33 one can notice that half of the teachers think that the morning start in school is too early, and half believe it to be just right. Parents on the other hand are inclined to believe that it is too early, if we consider the qualifications made by them. 27% of parents made the qualification that in winter it is too early, but in other seasons it is quite all right. Four of these parents indicated that their homes are very far from school. One parent and two teachers mentioned that because of the advancement of the clock, the time is too early in winter.

The degree of agreement between parents and teachers seems reasonably great, especially since the winter season is the longest one in the school year.

Conclusions and Suggestions

It would appear to suit the convenience of most persons to start the morning hour a bit later than it is now. During this year (1953-1954) the school changed the starting morning hour from 7:40 to 8:00.² Though it was a good step, apparently it was not enough. The clock was advanced one hour, and in winter it is somewhat difficult to get up during the hours of darkness.

1. The starting time in the Prep. School is 7:40 in the morning.
2. After the second term the school went back to the 7:40 start.

If we consider that between 50 % and 70 % of the latenesses occur the first hour in the morning,¹ then we are justified in starting at a later time than it is at present. Periods might be shortened from one hour to forty five minutes in order to facilitate scheduling, and, especially for the lower grades, this length of period has widespread support in practice.

1. According to statistics gathered from Prep. Office for the months Jan. Feb. March and May 1954, 70 % of the 8 th grade latenesses and 50 % of 2 nd year latenesses took place the first hour in the morning.

Opinions of parents and teachers about parents' visit to classes

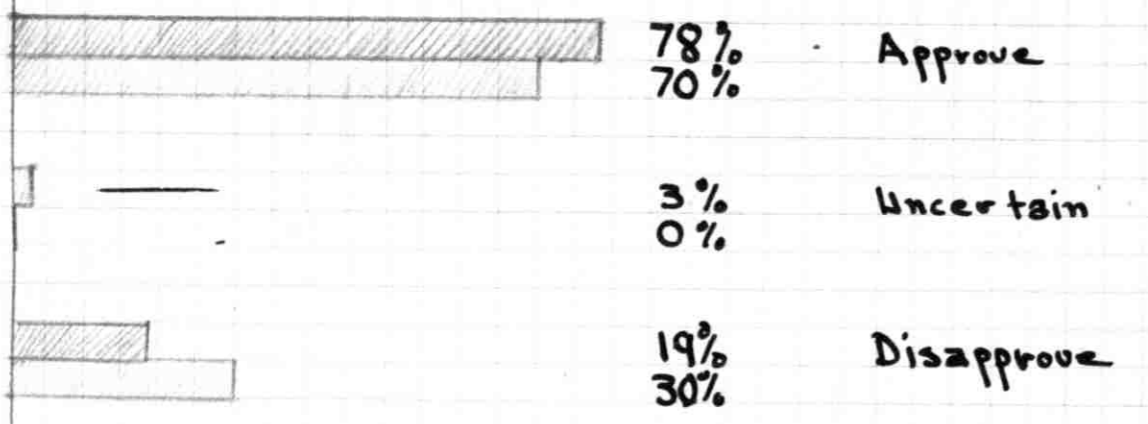
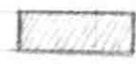

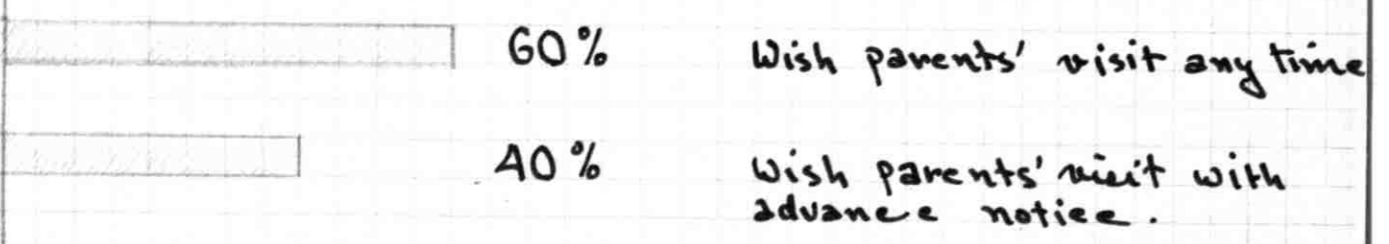


figure 34

Key: Parents  (64)
 Teachers  (36)

Opinions of teachers who approve of parents' visits to classes



25 Teachers

figure 35

School Visits by Parents

A large majority of parents and teachers approve of parents' visits to classes. A larger percentage of teachers than that of parents disapprove of such visits. (See Figure 34) Of those teachers who favor such visits the majority would like to have parents come at any time and the rest would like to have them, but with advance notice. (See Figure 35)

None of the parents had visited his boy's classes since October of this year according to results obtained when they were asked this question in May. Yet a majority would like to do so.

There were seven qualifications made in connection with this point. Four said that they would like to visit their boys' classes provided they have time. One said that he would go if Arabic is the language. Another one said that if other parents go, he would go too. The seventh one indicated that the initiative should come from the school.

Conclusions and Suggestions

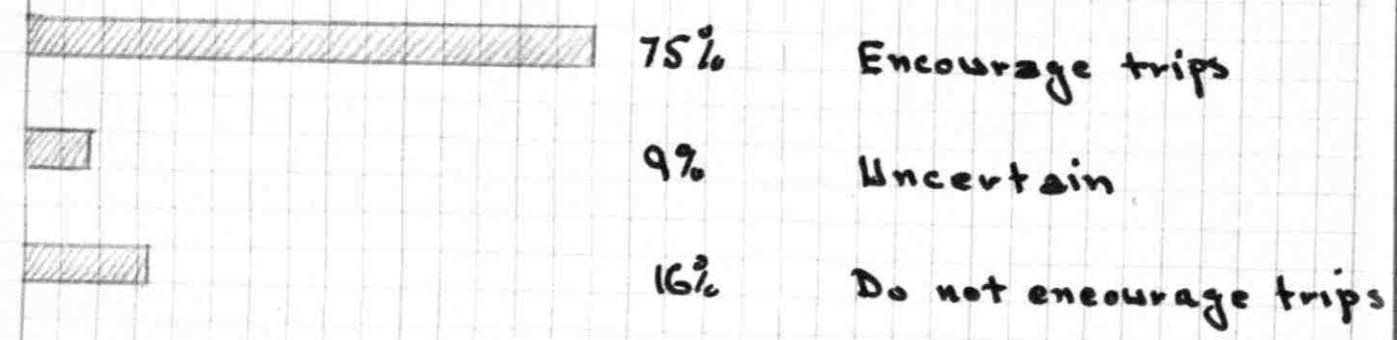
This last qualification that the initiative should come from school is very important indeed. Many parents, when asked the question "Have you visited any of your boy's classes since October of this year"? asked in surprise, "But is it allowed?" The school is not clear about this point. Parents should feel free to come

to classes even though it is the experience of many schools that very few do so even when they have been clearly encouraged. The feeling of good will which is engendered is more important than the small number of actual visits which are likely to be made.

PART II

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY PARENTS

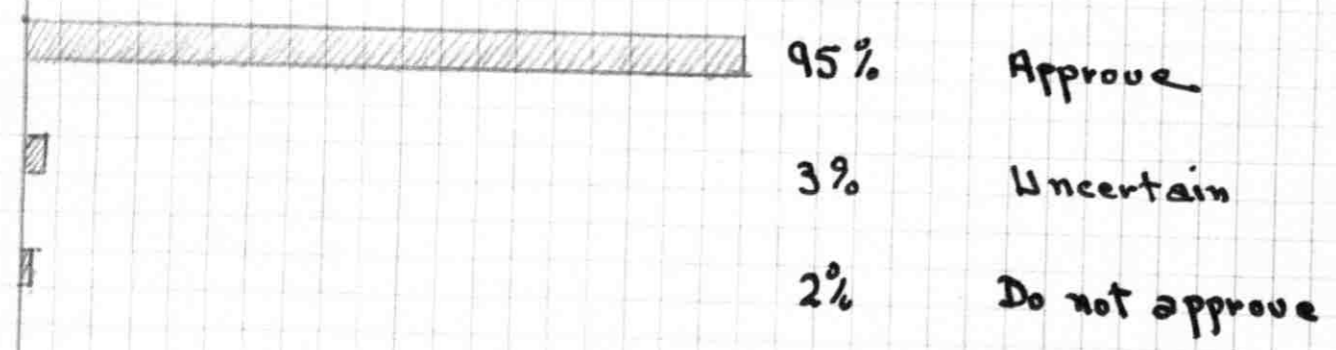
Parents' opinions about school trips



(64) Parents

figure 36

Parents' Opinions about showing films in School



(64) Parents

figure 37

School Trips

A large percentage of parents indicated that they wish to have their boys go on school trips as is shown in Figure 36. Two parents made the qualification that they encourage their boys to go on school trips provided they do not cost money.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Trips ought to be regular and organized so that every student will go on at least three trips during the school year. In classes, especially history, geography, science and civics courses, great opportunities are presented. Visits to museums, castles, rivers, and mountains can be arranged as a part of the course. Here the school can help a great deal by having the I.C. bus used for this purpose so that very little expense will be involved for students. Possibly the school could set up a fund for this purpose.

Educational Films

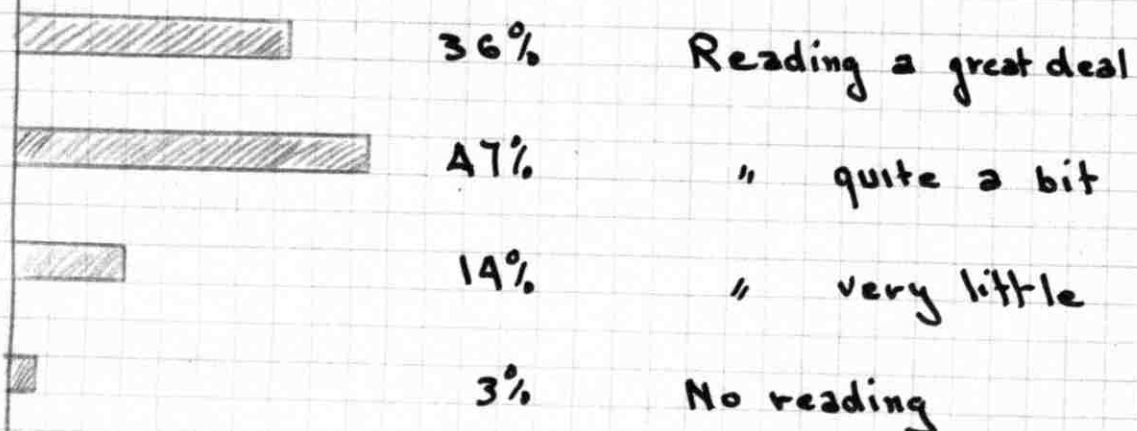
Figure 37 shows that 95 % of parents favored the idea of having the school show films to their children. Naturally they all wanted the films to be of an educational type. Some parents believe that if the school shows films the children will not go to the regular cinemas so often.¹

Conclusions and Suggestions

Educational films, are available to the school from many agencies. The U.S.I.S., Point IV, British Council and some others are anxious to offer their services in lending films, projectors and even operators. They are also ready to accomodate students in their own places. A school committee to sponser film showings would be of great value. Also, individual teachers should be encouraged to discover what educational films are available to help enrich the courses they teach.

1. Parents stated that, on the average, children go to movies twice per week, which in their opinion is far too often. They all hoped that the school could do something to correct this.

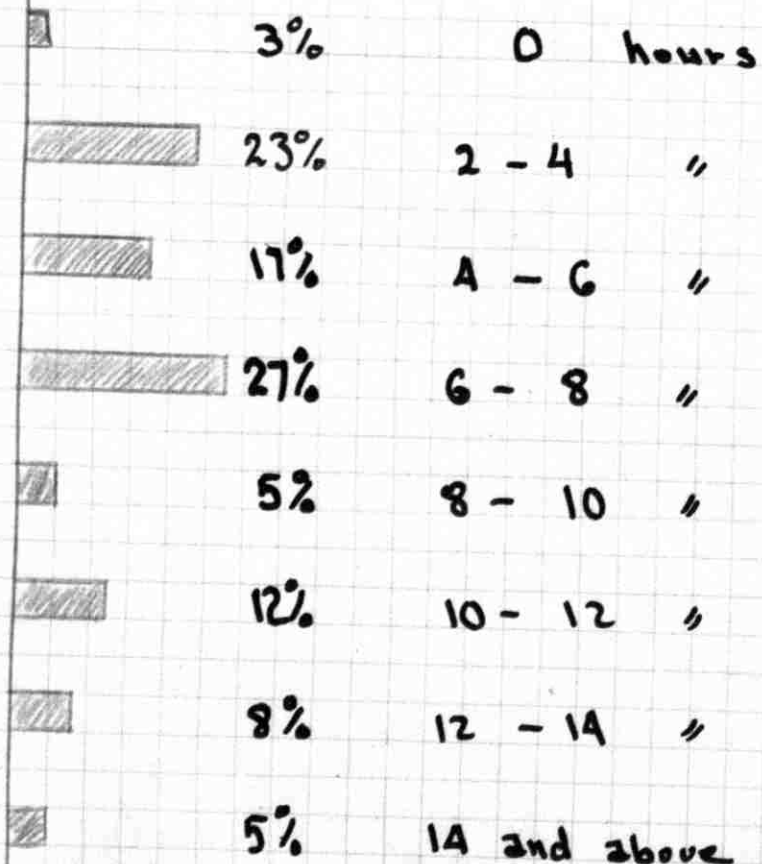
Parents' opinions about their children's outside Reading



(64) Parents

figure 38

Amount of children's outside reading per week as indicated by parents



(64) Parents

figure 39

Outside Reading

The largest percentage of parents believe that their children read "quite a bit" and a good percentage stated that they read "a great deal". Only two parents said that their children do not read at all. (See Figure 38)

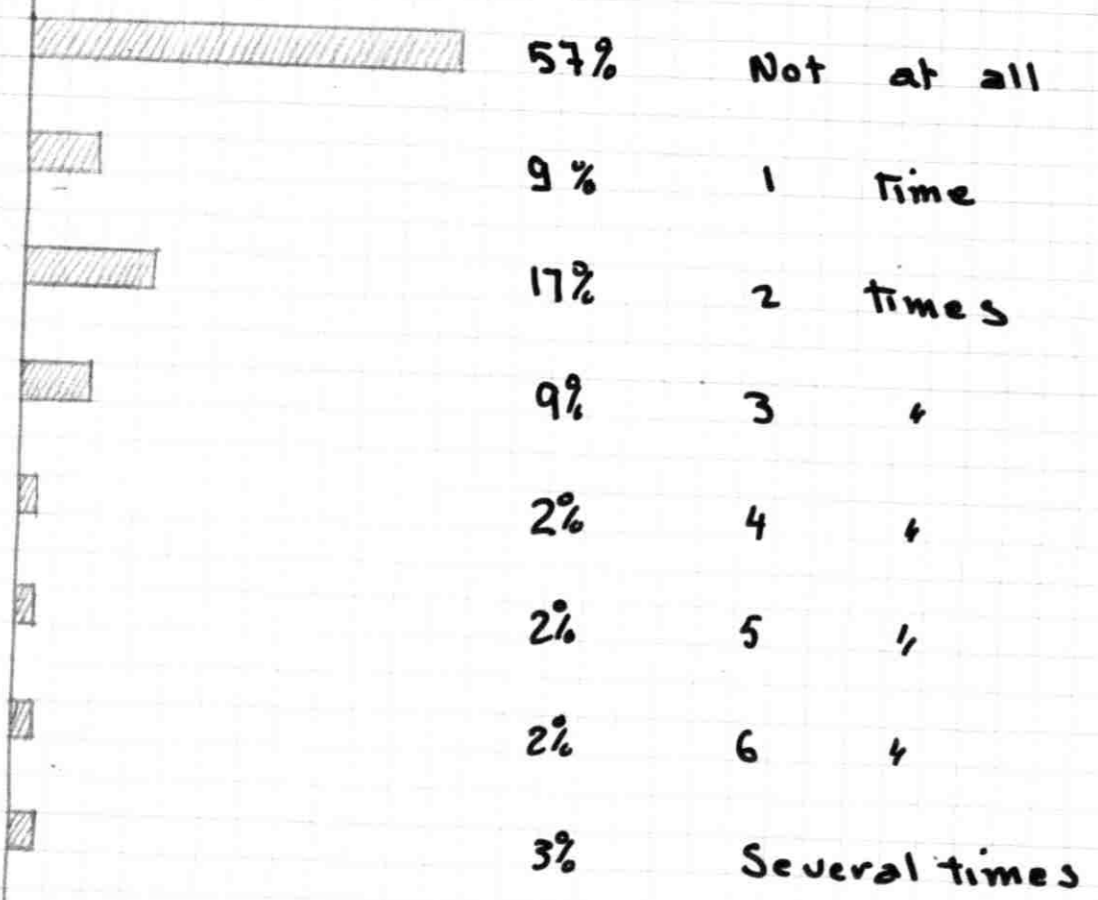
The amount of time per week each boy spends on reading outside of school work as indicated by parents ranged from one and a half hours to twenty two hours as is shown in Figure 39.

It is interesting to note that parents differed a great deal in their interpretations of the terms "a great deal" or "very little". To some 10 hours was "quite a bit" while it was "a great deal" to others. Six hours was "a great deal" to some while it was "quite a bit" to others. In the case of one parent, twenty two hours was "quite a bit."

Conclusions and Suggestions

No doubt, students are doing much reading outside their school work. If this is the case then they should be supplied with the proper books. Many of the parents complained that most of their children's outside reading is in magazines or daily papers or cheap books. They suggested that their boys should take books from the school library after consulting with teachers. This may be a very good suggestion to follow. Students should be provided with lists of available books. Perhaps book reports should be asked from them too. Exhibitions of good books will attract a good many to the school library.

Number of times Parents have been to school during the academic year



(64) Parents

figure 40

Parents' Contact with School

When parents were asked how many times they have been to school during this academic year, the range was from 0 times to six times as can be shown from Figure 40, with the majority of parents having made no visits at all.

In regard to the number of times they have talked to teachers, the pattern is very similar, as is shown in Figure 41. The majority have not talked to teachers at all.

As to how many different teachers parents have talked to, Figure 42 shows that only 2% of parents have talked to as many as six teachers.

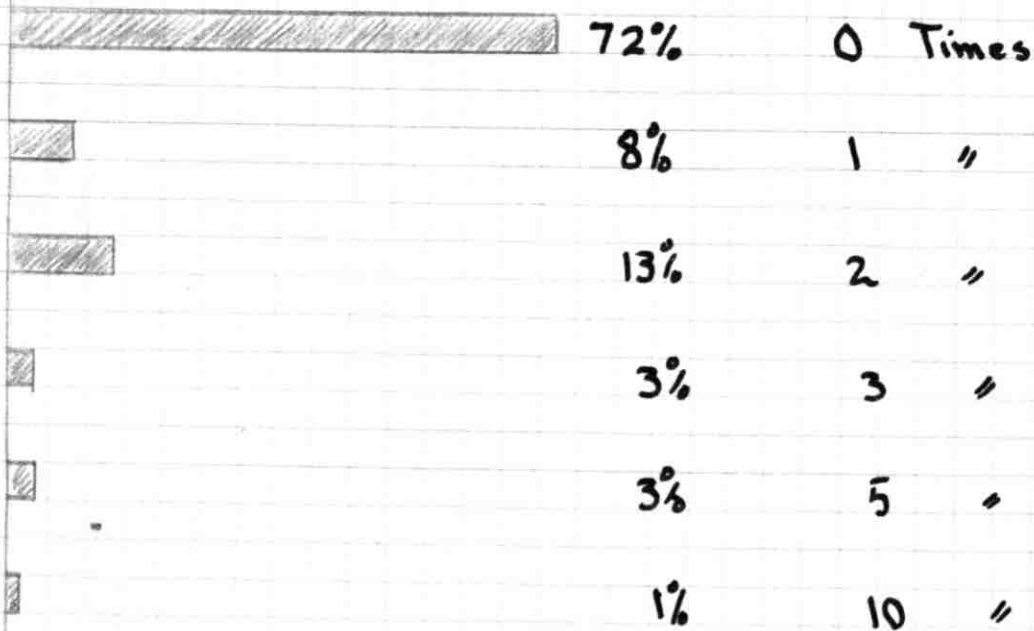
The length of time parents spent in talking with teachers about their boys ranged from no time at all to five hours as is shown in Figure 43, with 72% of parents reporting no time spent in talking to teachers.

Conclusions and Suggestions

It is obvious that the frequency of parents' visits to school and their amount of contact with teachers is practically negligible. Some reasons for this may be the following:

1. Time is one important factor.
2. Many parents do not know that school visits are permitted.
3. Some parents think it is not necessary to have any contact as long as no troubles arise concerning their children.

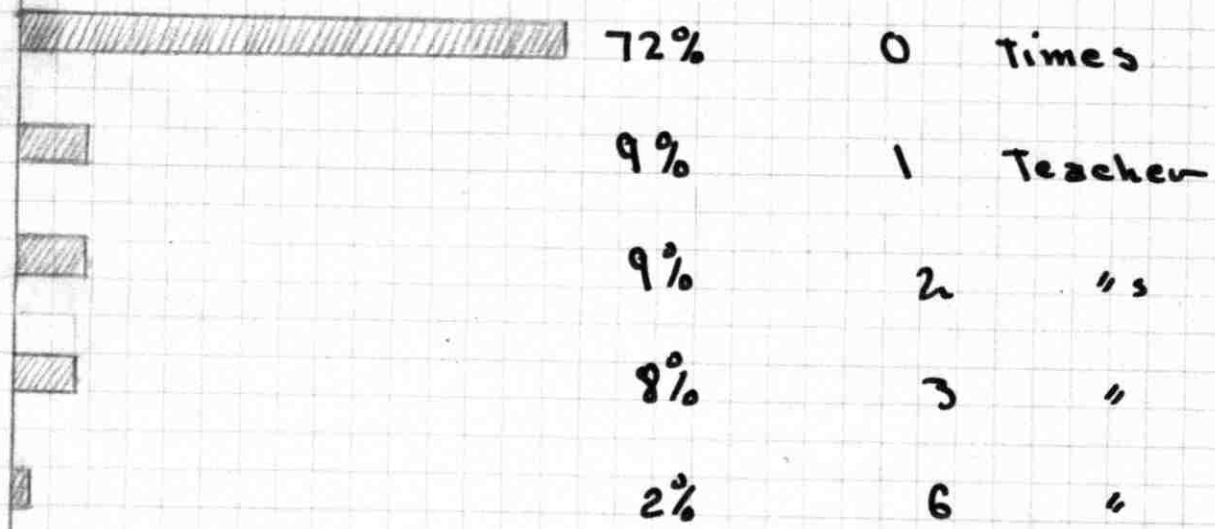
Number of times parents have talked
to teachers during the academic year



(64) Parents

Figure 41

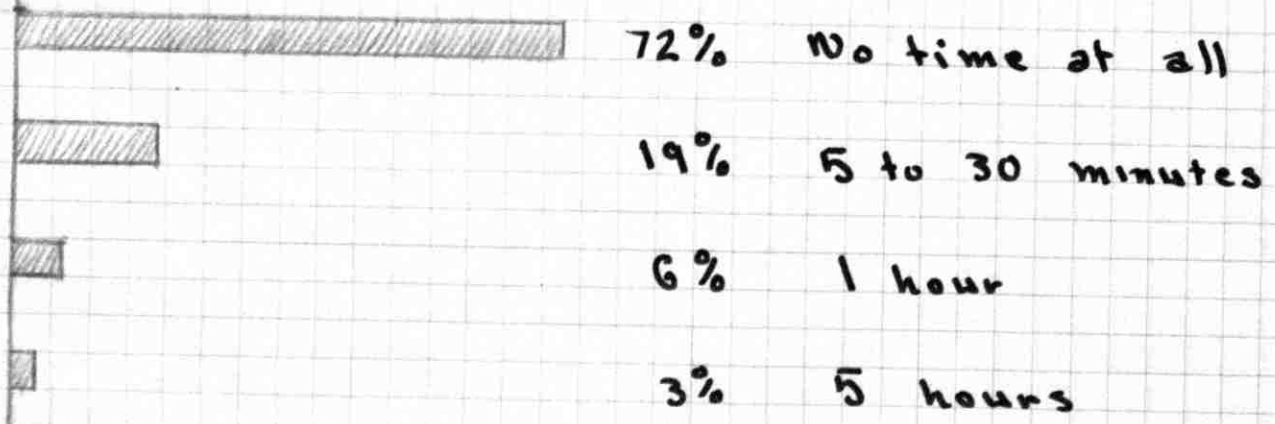
Number of teacher parents talked to during the academic year



(64) Parents

figure 42

Length of time parents spent Talking with teachers



(64) Parents

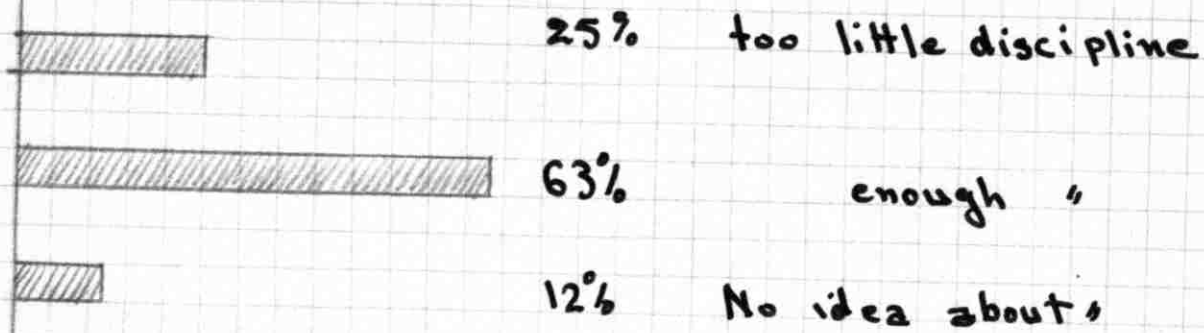
figure 43

4. Some do not know where to go and to whom to talk.

Since there is a great willingness on the side of parents to visit classes and make contact with teachers, this should be encouraged by the school. Parents expect the initiative to come from the school. In almost all cases parents do not come to school except when there is a problem, such as a boy failing in his lessons or misbehaving. Thus parents come either after grades are sent to them or after their boy receives a punishment.

It seems that the school could attract more parents by inviting them in occasionally during the year so that a feeling of cooperation and good will becomes established. Even games and contests offer opportunities for parents and teachers to talk things over together.

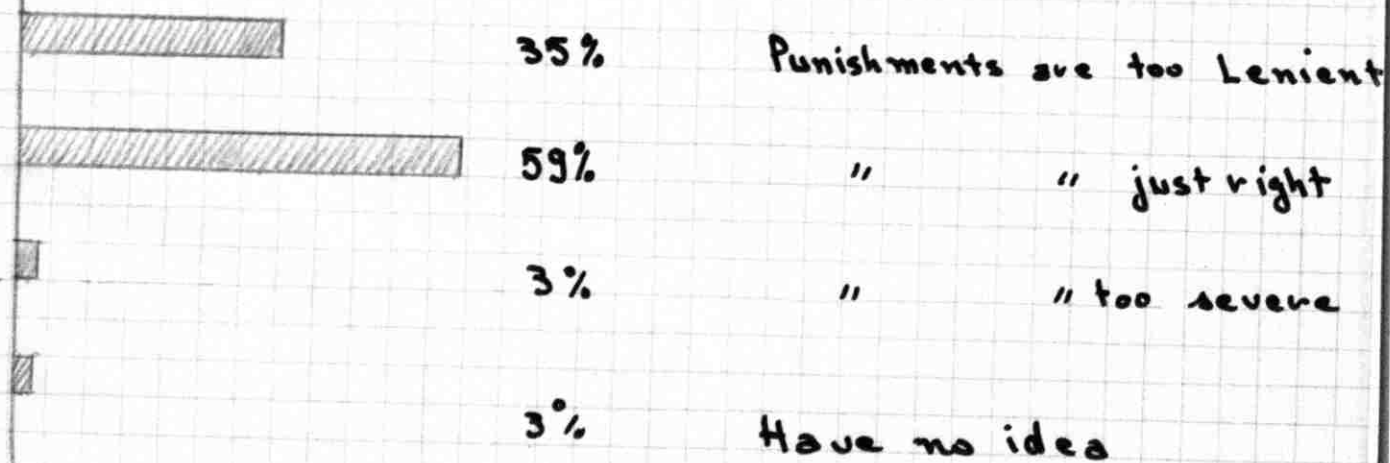
Opinions of parents about discipline in class



(64) Parents

figure 44

Opinions of parents about punishment in school



(64) Parents

figure 45

Discipline and Punishment

With regard to discipline in the Prep. the majority of parents felt that it is quite good as Figure 44 indicates.

Regarding punishment, there is a good percentage of parents who believed that the school is lenient, ^(See fig. 45) Two parents mentioned that the school is severe in its punishments and two others could not tell anything.

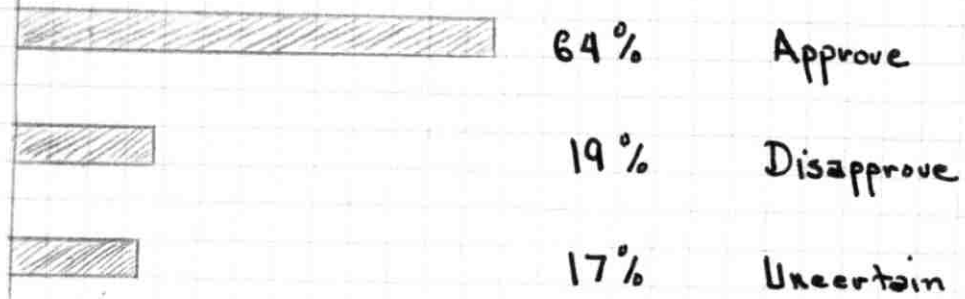
An overwhelming majority of parents would like to know about their boys if they are to be punished as figure 47 shows. Two parents preferred not to know about that and one parent was indifferent about this matter.

In case any serious disciplinary problem regarding a boy arises at home, a large percentage of parents wished to have the school cooperate with them. Some disapprove and others were uncertain. (See Figure 46)

Conclusions and Suggestions

Parents should be more informed about the behaviour of their children. This could be made known by means of reports, or at special meetings whereby parents and teachers come to discuss mutual problems. Any device that helps parents and teachers to get together for discussion of boys' behaviour will be very much helpful in the direction of right discipline.

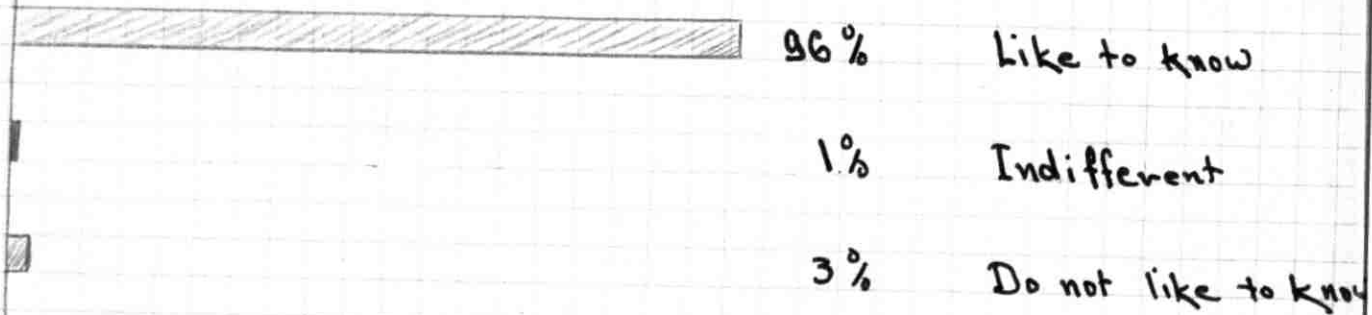
Opinions of parents about school
cooperation on serious disciplinary
Problems arising at home



(64) Parents

figure 46

Opinions of parents about being informed
of their boy's Punishments



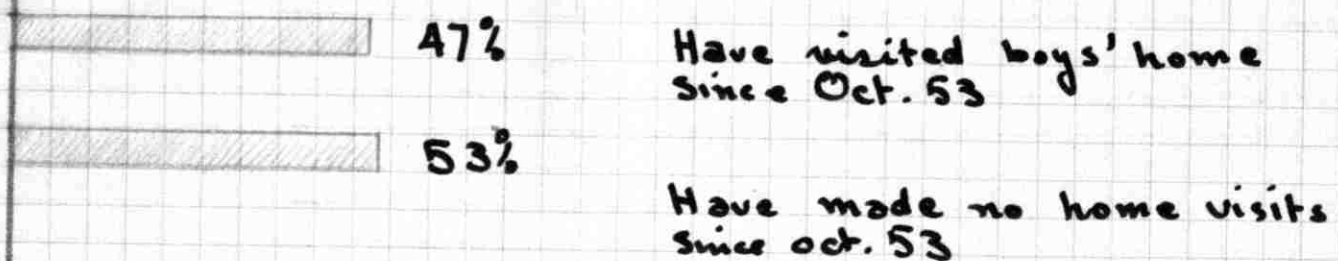
(64) Parents

figure A7

PART III

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY TEACHERS

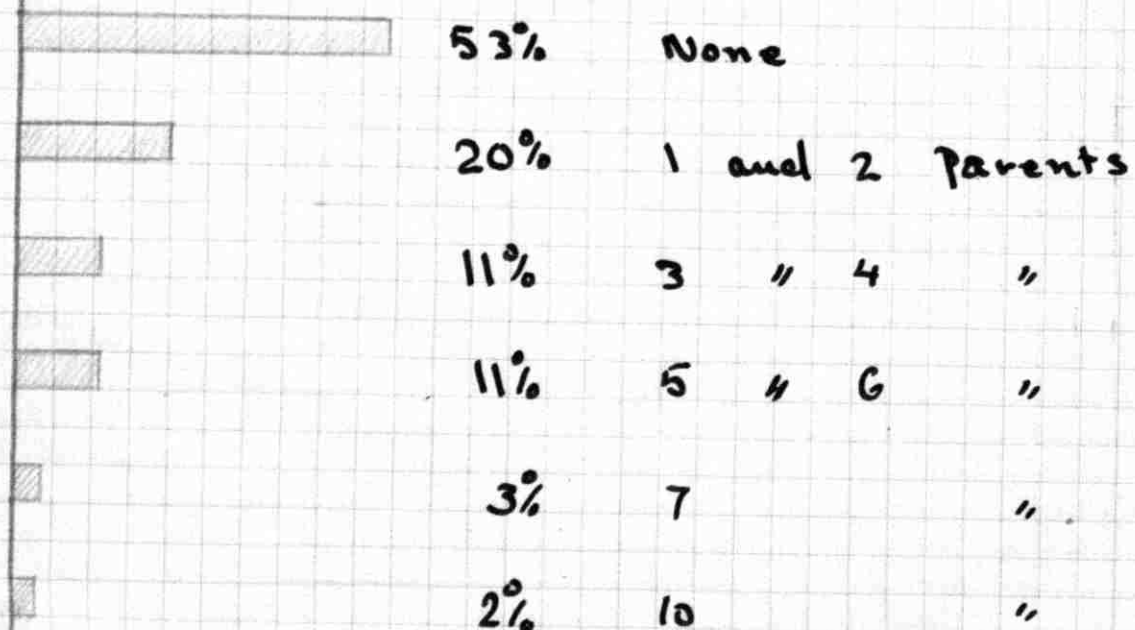
Teachers' visits to children's homes



(36) Teachers

Figure 48

The number of visits made by teachers to parents



(36) Teacher

Figure 49

Teachers' Visits to Pupils' Homes

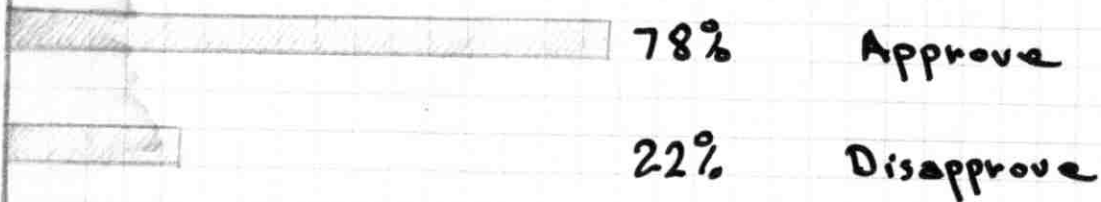
When teachers were asked whether they have visited their pupils' homes since October of this year their reports show that about half of them have done so. (See Figure 48) The number of visits made by those who did visit ranged from 1 to 10 as indicated in Figure 49.

More than three fourths of the teachers indicated their desire to visit the homes of their pupils as is shown in Figure 50. Of those who stated their willingness to make such visits, the largest percentage would like to do so once a term. The median is once every term. (See Figure 51)

Conclusions and Suggestions

The number of contacts initiated by teachers is almost as small as the number initiated by parents. Arrangements should be made so that teachers will have more free time which they can afford to give to such visits. As each teacher has numerous students, it would be advisable to start such visits early in the year, and, if necessary, to concentrate on visits to families of boys who seem likely to present problems.

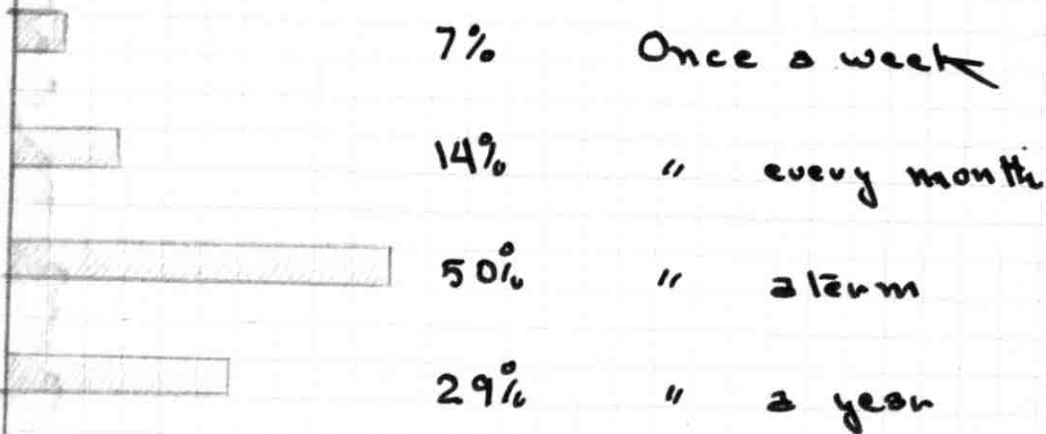
Opinions of teachers about pupils' homes



(36) Teacher

figure 50

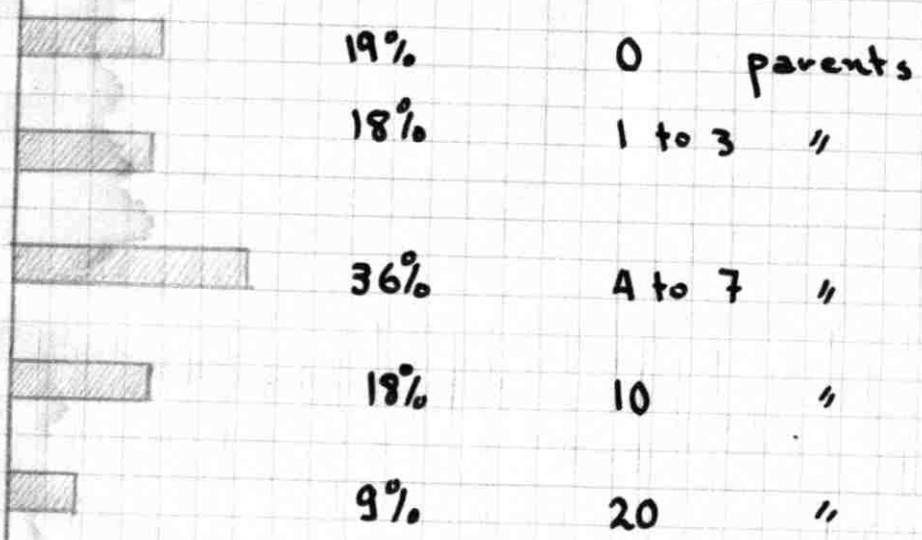
Opinions of teachers about optimum frequency of visits to children's homes



(28) Teacher

figure 51

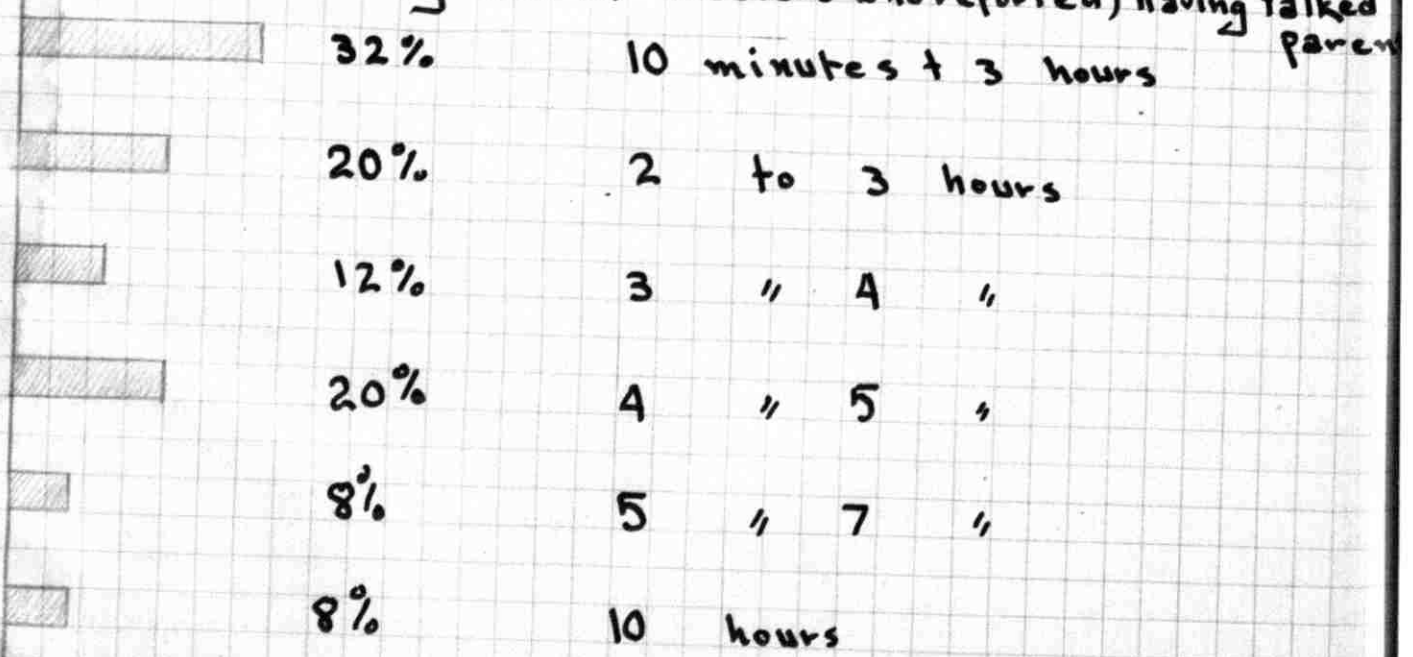
The number of students' parents to whom teachers have talked



(33) Teachers figure 52

Amount of time spent by Teachers in talking to parents

(Includes only the 27 teachers who reported) having talked to parents



(27) Teachers figure 53

Talking to Parents

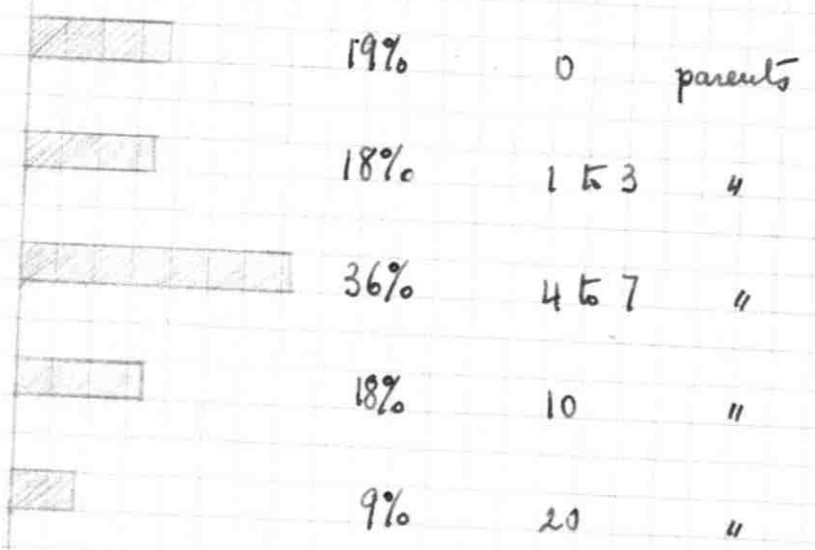
When teachers were asked about the number of students' parents to whom they have talked, the range was from none to 20. (See Figure 52) The average is 5.83 parents per teacher which is a very small figure compared to the number of students who are taught by one teacher.

Among teachers who did talk to parents, the time for such talks ranged from ten minutes to ten hours as shown in Figure 53.

The opinions of teachers as to whether their knowledge of the parents is of help to them in teaching, are shown in Figure 54. All but one teacher considers such knowledge helpful. And when they were asked whether they would like to know the parents of the children they teach better than they know them now, the majority answered positively as is shown in Figure 55.

Again teachers differed in response to the question about whether they find parents willing to cooperate with them. A little more than half feel that parents are very willing to cooperate, thirty percent find them half and half and as the rest of the teachers had no contact with parents, they could not give their idea. (See Figure 56)

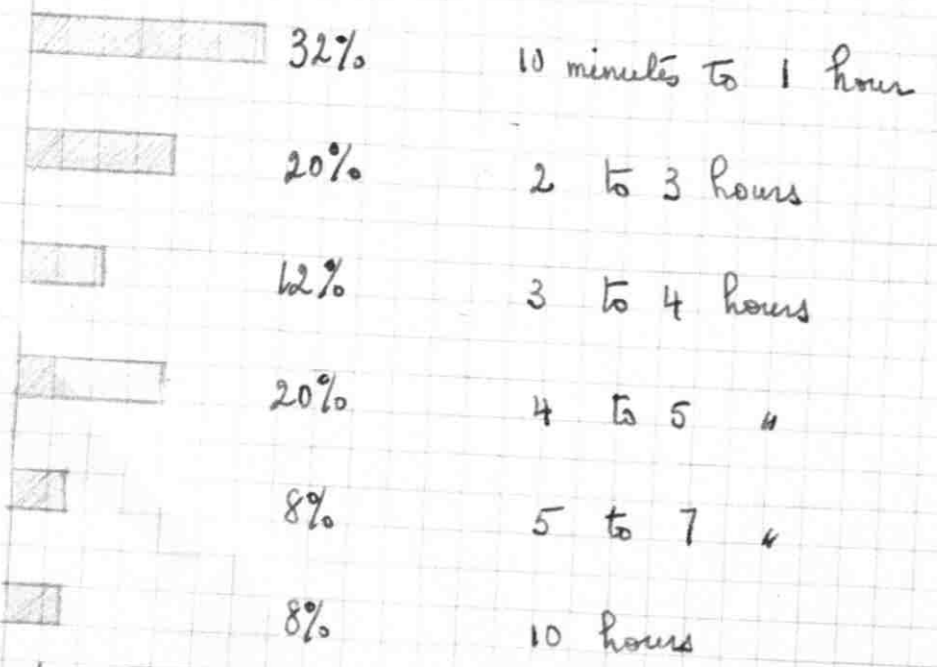
The Number of Students' Parents to Whom Teachers have Talked



(33 Teachers) Figure (52)

Amount of time Spent by Teachers in talking to Parents

(Includes only the 27 Teachers who reported having talked to Parents.)



(27 Teachers) Figure (53)

Talking to Parents

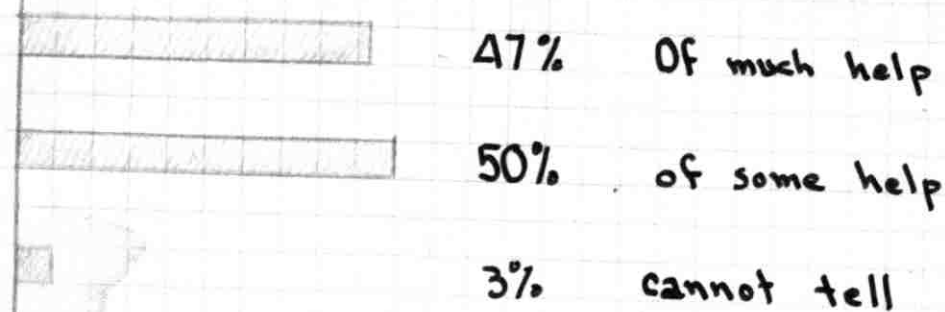
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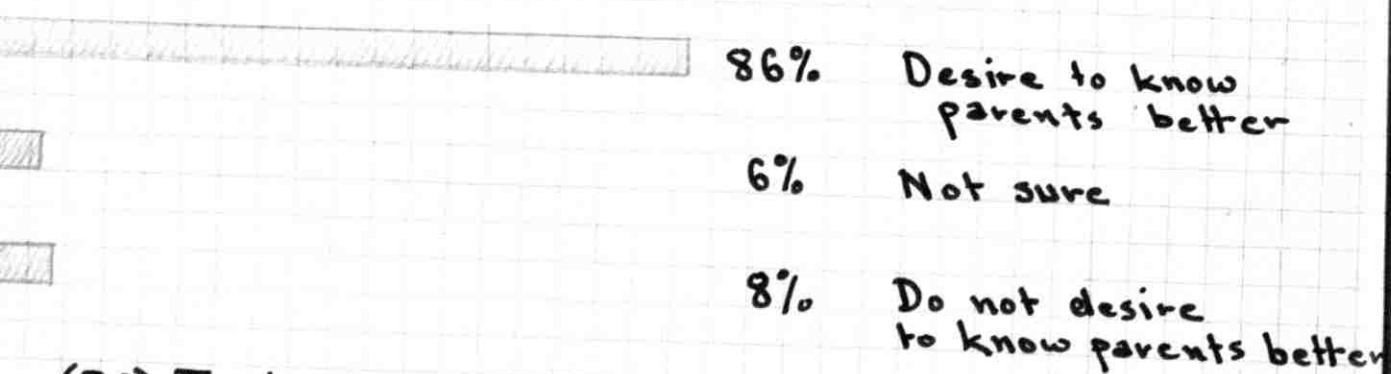
Proportions of teachers believing that knowledge of parents is of help in teaching children



(36) Teachers

figure 54

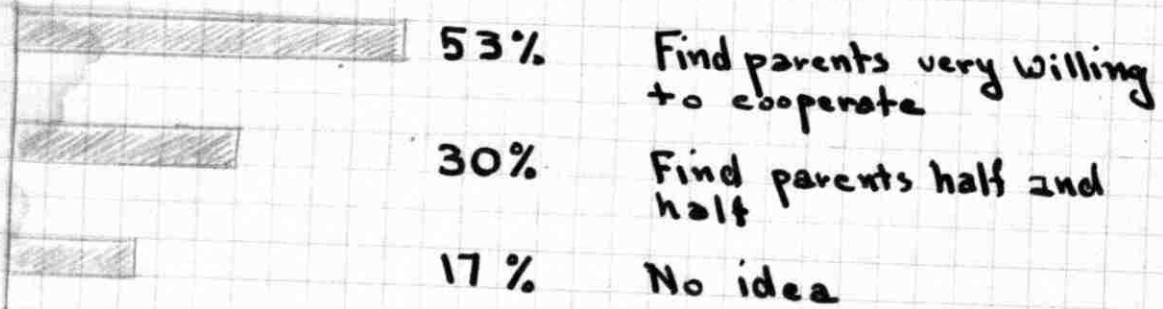
Opinions of teachers about their desire to know parents better in the future



(36) Teachers

figure 55

Opinions of teachers about parents' willingness to cooperate



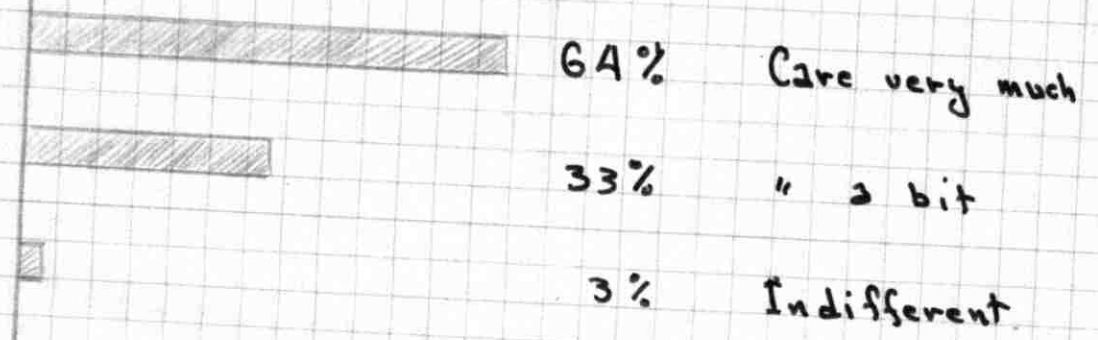
(36) Teachers

Figure 56

Conclusions and Suggestions

The total amount of parent-teacher contact appears to be slight. Knowing that the number of students taught by the average teacher is over one hundred, the reported amount of contact is almost negligible. Teachers as well as parents expressed the desire for such contacts, and yet very little is done about it. This may be due to lack of time or to ignorance about how to initiate contacts. The school can do a great deal in this respect by inviting parents to school and by occasionally freeing teachers from school duties in order to pay such visits.

Teachers attitudes about absences and latenesses



(36) Teachers

figure 57

Desire of teachers to know the cause of a boys' absences and Latenesses



(36) Teacher

figure 58

Absences and Latenesses

From Figure 57 and 58, it can be seen that the majority of teachers care about a boy's absence or lateness and would like to know the causes. Only one teacher is indifferent to a boy's absence or lateness, and only two did not care to know the cause.

Conclusions and Suggestions

At present teachers do not know the causes of latenesses or absences. Since an overwhelming majority of teachers indicated their interest in following up a boy's absence or lateness, this information, including any action taken etc., should be made available to those who desire it.

Individual Contact

Figure 59 shows that teachers were divided up on the question of when to make individual contacts. The largest percentage, a little more than one third, wished to have such contacts occasionally such as once during the term.

Seven teachers qualified their answers by saying that they wish to make such contacts whenever they are free and parents wish it, or when a problem arises and parents wish it.

In being asked about the place they prefer to make such individual contact, the majority wished to have them in school. (See Figure 60)

Conclusions and Suggestions

It seems that all teachers would like individual contacts, but time seems to be one of the greatest hindrances to them. All those who said that they desire to make individual contacts with parents occasionally, once during the term, have in mind the element of time. Again, the majority (67 %) would prefer talking to individual parents in school, and this is another indication that teachers do not have the time to go to parents' homes or to meet them at other places. Meeting them in school is economical from the point of view of a teacher's time.

Though the largest percentage indicated that they would like to see parents in the school, yet if time is available teach-

ers might choose going to parents' homes. A good percentage (17 %) expressed this desire. This has the advantage of becoming acquainted with the home of the child, his environment and background, and thus understanding him more fully.

Parents' Suggestions to Teachers

Figure 61 shows that the majority of teachers welcome suggestions and remarks coming from parent. Only one teacher said that he would think little about it and only one said that he would forget about it.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Since teachers welcome any suggestions from parents, such suggestions should be encouraged as much as possible. Parents are often afraid to criticize or give their candid opinions. They should be aware that the school expects this and takes it in the right spirit. Therefore, if parents were asked to send in their remarks, say once a term, regarding anything in the school, a great deal might be accomplished. Parents could be told that they need not sign the remarks form if they do not desire to do so. Later, perhaps in a meeting of parents and teachers, the suggestions of parents could be discussed.

PART IV

SUMMARY

In the light of what has been written, the following is a summary of points arrived at regarding the different topics.

Amount of Free Time During School Hours

By and large, parents and teachers believe that there is too much free time during school hours. They show a preference for clubs, music, and penmanship (in that order) to fill the free periods.

School Reports to Parents

Parents and teachers strongly favor a written progress report with or without letter grades, numerical grades, and rank of boy in class. It is suggested that this preference should be taken into consideration, with such reports being sent about three times a year.

Participation in School Activities

The majority of parents and teachers enjoy participating in school activities planned by school and would like to participate more in the future than they have done in the past. Such activities as Parents' Night, social parties, and the formation of a P.T.A. were suggested as means to promote such participation.

Activity Program

In general, parents and teachers feel that not enough time

is given to the activity program. It is suggested that the school oblige every pupil to participate in at least one activity, and, through contests, prizes, etc. to encourage participation in one or two others.

Punishments for Misbehavior

The main types of punishments listed by parents and teachers were: sending after parents, loss of privileges and special study. The writer disapproves of the special study, and favors the idea of sending after parents before behavior problems become serious.

Homework

Parents in general believe that the homework given to children is valuable, but that not enough is given. The average boy spends 48 minutes daily on all of his homework. Teachers on the other hand expect an average of about 2 hours. This problem should be investigated more fully and some radical changes instituted. Certain tentative recommendations, such as giving more homework, giving homework with a planned purpose, and giving academic credit for homework were suggested.

Ideal Number of Pupils in a Class

On the average, Parents and teachers believe that a teacher should not teach more than about 23 children in one classroom. The present average of about 30 pupils per classroom should be

lowered if it is at all possible.

Meetings between Parents and Teachers

The majority of teachers and parents stated a desire to have regular meetings, and teachers advocated Parents' Night and forming a P.T.A. as a structure for such meetings. The school may confidently take action along these lines.

Political Agitations and Strikes

Parents and teachers are almost unanimous in their opposition to pupil participation in political agitations and strikes. A bare majority of both groups disapprove of the discussion of political matters in classes. The schools' policy should be clearly evident on the issue of participation, and on the issue of classroom discussion, some faculty meetings should be devoted to developing a definite policy.

Religious Instruction

The majority of parents desire the school to give religious instruction to children, while teachers showed a slight tendency to oppose it. All the parents and almost all teachers agreed that a course in ethics is desirable. The writer believes that the school should begin a course in ethics for all students, but that the question of religious instruction requires a great deal of thought, because those parents who desire it, desire that it

shall be instruction in their own religion.

Morning Start

About half of the parents and half of the teachers believe that the morning start in school is too early. It would appear to suit the convenience of most persons to start the morning hour a bit later than it is now.

School Visits by Parents

More than three fourths of the parents and 70 % of teachers approve of parents' visits to classes. The initiative should come from school, and parents should feel free to come to classes even though it is the experience of many schools that very few parents actually do so.

School Trips

The majority of parents indicated that they wish to have their boys go on school trips. The school should organize more low-cost trips, and if necessary set up a fund for this purpose.

Educational Films

Ninety-five percent of the parents favored the idea of having the school show educational films to their children. There are two possible benefits to be derived:

1. Educational films would enrich the courses taught in the school.

2. Films which truly meet the needs and interests of pupils would probably reduce the amount of pupil attendance at commercial cinemas. Most parents appear to hope for this outcome.

Outside Reading

Children are doing a great deal of reading outside school work, but, according to parents, the material read is not desirable. A good library and a trained librarian who is skilled in suggesting appropriate reading would be of great help in this respect. Also, teachers should be aware of the outside reading which is done, and assist in the guidance of such reading.

Contact with School

The frequency of parents' visits to school and their amount of contact with teachers is practically negligible. Since there is a great willingness on the side of parents to visit classes and make contact with teachers, this should be encouraged by the school.

Discipline and Punishment

The majority of parents feel that discipline in the school is quite good, while almost all of the remaining parents indicated that the school is lenient regarding punishment. Parents would like to know about punishments that their boys receive, and

would like the school to cooperate with them on disciplinary problems which arise at home. A program involving for more parent information about school matters is strongly indicated.

Teachers' Visits to Pupils' Homes

The number of contacts initiated by teachers is almost as small as the number initiated by parents. Arrangements should be made so that teachers will have more free time which they can afford to give to such visits, especially to families of boys who seem likely to present problems.

Talking to Parents

The total amount of parent-teacher contact appears to be almost negligible when one considers the number of students taught by one teacher. The school can do a great deal in this respect by inviting parents to the school and by freeing teachers from school duties in order to pay home visits.

Absences and Latenesses

The majority of teachers would like to know the causes of a boy's absence or lateness. This information, including any action taken, should be available to those teachers who desire it.

Individual Contact

All teachers would like individual contacts with parents,

but time seems to be one of the greatest hindrances to them. Experienced teachers agreed that knowing the home and parents of a boy is one of the greatest aids in understanding and guidance.

Parents' Suggestions to Teachers

The majority of teachers welcome suggestions and remarks coming from parents. Such suggestions should be encouraged as much as possible, and parents should be told that the school expects this and takes it in the right spirit.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This study has brought to light the fact that both parents and teachers are interested in and ready for closer cooperation in the educative process. It has revealed some discrepancies which exist between teachers' expectations and the actual practices of pupils, and, most important, it has shown that there are large areas of close agreement among teachers and parents - areas which offer rich opportunities for increased cooperation and mutual understanding. To the extent that these opportunities are consciously and systematically exploited, I feel confident that the Preparatory School will begin graduating boys who are noticeably better equipped for ultimate positions of responsibility and leadership.

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APPENDIX

A

Questions to Parents:

Student N°- _____

1. Your boy has a certain amount of free time while he is at school. Do you think the amount of free time is:
 - a. far too much
 - b. a little too much
 - c. just right
 - d. less than necessary
 - e. far too little

2. If additional or new courses are given to fill up the free periods, check two of the following which you would like your boy to join:
 - a. penmanship
 - b. drawing
 - c. music
 - d. religion
 - e. clubs

3. How often would you like to receive grade reports ?
 - a. once a week
 - b. once a month
 - c. once every three months
 - d. once a year
 - e. not at all

4. In what form would you like the grade report to be sent to you ?
 - a. numerical grades
 - b. letter grades
 - c. rank of boy in class
 - d. progress report

5. Do you enjoy participating in school activities which are planned for parents ?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

6. Would you like to participate in school activities more in future than you have done previously ?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. What do you think about the amount of time given to activity programs in school ? (e.g. assembly, clubs, manual work)
- far too much
 - a little too much
 - just right
 - less than necessary
 - far too little
8. If your boy misbehaves in classes which two of the following punishments are best for a school to administer ?
- Special Study
 - Loss of privileges
 - Retention after school
 - Beating
 - Sending boy out of class
 - Sending after parents
 - Decreasing his grades
 - Scolding him in front of others
 - Others
9. What is your idea about the amount of home-work given to your boy ?
- far too much
 - a little too much
 - just right
 - less than necessary
 - far too little
10. In which subjects do you think your boy has too much or too little home-work ?
- | | | |
|----------|----------|------------|
| Arabic: | too much | too little |
| English: | too much | too little |
| Math: | too much | too little |
| Science: | too much | too little |
| History: | too much | too little |
| Geog.: | too much | too little |
11. On the average, about how much time is your boy putting into his home-work each day ?
12. How much help is your boy given in his studies apart from school ?
- very much
 - a considerable amount
 - a little bit
 - none at all

13. Estimate the amount of time per day your boy is given help in his studies apart from school.
14. What do you think of the home-work given to your boy ?
- a. very valuable
 - b. valuable
 - c. of little value
 - d. useless
15. What is an ideal number of boys to be taught by one teacher in one classroom ?
16. Would you like to have regular meetings between parents and teachers ?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
17. If meetings between parents and teachers are desirable, how often could you come to such meetings ?
- a. once a week
 - b. once a month
 - c. once a term
 - d. once a year
 - e. not at all
18. If political agitations or strikes take place do you think your boy should take part in them ?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
19. Do you approve of having your boy discuss political matters in classes ?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
20. Do you think the school should give your boy religious instruction ?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
21. Do you think the school should give your boy a course in ethics and good conduct ?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

22. What do you think about the time when your boy leaves home for school in the morning ?
- far too early
 - a little too early
 - just right
 - a little bit late
 - far too late
23. Have you visited any of your boy's classes since October of this year ?
- Yes
 - No
24. Would you like to visit your boy's classes more often ?
- Yes
 - No
25. Would you encourage your boy to go on school trips ?
- Yes
 - Uncertain
 - No
26. Do you approve of having the school show films to the boys ?
- Yes
 - Uncertain
 - No
27. How much reading does your boy do outside of school work ?
- a great deal
 - quite a bit
 - very little
 - none at all
28. Estimate about how much time per week your boy spends on reading outside of school work.
29. How many times have you been to the school during this academic year ?
30. How many times have you talked with teachers about your boy during this academic year ?
31. How many different teachers have you talked to about your boy during this academic year ?

32. Estimate the length of time spent in talking with teachers about your boy during this academic year.
33. With regard to discipline do you think classes in the Prep.
- a. lack discipline
 - b. have too little discipline
 - c. have just enough
 - d. have more discipline than necessary
 - e. have far too severe discipline
34. Regarding punishment the school is:
- a. too severe
 - b. very severe
 - c. just about right
 - d. lenient
 - e. very lenient
35. If your boy is to be punished at school you would:
- a. very much care to know about it
 - b. like to know about it
 - c. be indifferent
 - d. prefer not to know about it
36. In general if any serious disciplinary problem regarding your boy arises at home would you care to have the school cooperate with you about it ?
- a. Yes
 - b. Not certain
 - c. No

B

Questions to Teachers:

Teacher's N°- _____

1. The boys of the Prep have a certain amount of free time while they are at school. Do you think the amount of free time is:
 - a. far too much
 - b. a little too much
 - c. just right
 - d. less than necessary
 - e. far too little

2. If additional or new courses are given to fill up the free periods, check two of the following which you would like the boys to join:
 - a. penmanship
 - b. drawing
 - c. music
 - d. religion
 - e. clubs

3. How often would you like the school to send grade reports to parents ?
 - a. once a week
 - b. once a month
 - c. once every three months
 - d. once a year
 - e. not at all

4. In what form would you like the grade report to be sent to parents ?
 - a. numerical grades
 - b. letter grades
 - c. rank of boy in class
 - d. progress report

5. Do you think it is desirable for parents to receive occasional progress letters from teachers ?
 - a. Yes (How often ?)
 - b. No

6. Do you enjoy participating in school activities which are planned for teachers ?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. Would you like to participate in school activities more in future than you have done **previously** ?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. What do you think about the amount of time given to activity programs in school ? (assembly, clubs, manual work, etc.)
 - a. far too much
 - b. a little too much
 - c. just right
 - d. less than necessary
 - e. far too little

9. If a boy misbehaves in classes which two of the following punishments are best for the Prep to administer ?
 - a. Special Study
 - b. loss of privileges
 - c. retention after school
 - d. beating
 - e. sending the boy out of class
 - f. sending after parents
 - g. decreasing his grades
 - h. scolding him in front of others
 - i. others

10. How often do you give home-work ?

11. How much time per assignment would you like each boy to spend on home-work given by you ?

12. How much time per night do you think a boy should spend on all home-work given to him by all his teachers ?

13. Regarding the home-work you give to your boys do you believe that:
 - a. all boys are helped
 - b. many are helped
 - c. a few are helped
 - d. none is helped

14. Do you think it is desirable for parents to help their children in their home-work ?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

15. Do you believe that the home-work you give to children is:
- very valuable
 - valuable
 - of some value
 - of little value
 - useless
16. What is an ideal number of boys to be taught by one teacher in one classroom ?
17. Would you like to have regular meetings between parents and teachers ?
- Yes
 - No
18. If meetings between parents and teachers are desirable, how often would you like to participate ?
- once a week
 - once a month
 - once a term
 - once a year
19. How much time should be given to each parent-teacher meeting ?
20. Regarding meetings between parents and teachers, check the two which you think would be most desirable for Prep.
- Parents' Night
 - Parents coming to assemblies
 - inviting parents to games and sports
 - asking parents to attend classes
 - forming a P.T.A. (Parents' Teachers' Association)
 - Others
21. If political agitations or strikes take place do you think the boys should take part in them ?
- Yes
 - No
22. Do you approve of having your boys discuss political matters in classes ?
- Yes
 - No
23. Do you think the school should give the boys religious instruction ?
- Yes (Describe briefly)
 - No

24. Do you think the school should give the boys a course in ethics and good conduct ?
- Yes
 - No
25. What do you think about the time when boys leave home for school in the morning ?
- far too early
 - a little too early
 - just right
 - a little bit late
 - far too late
26. Would you like parents to feel free to visit your classes ?
- Yes, at any time
 - Yes, but with advance notice
 - No
27. Have you visited any of your boy's homes since October of this year ?
- Yes (How many ?)
 - No
28. If you had the time, would you like to visit the homes of your pupils ?
- Yes
 - No
29. If answer N°- 28 is yes, how often would you like to visit parents ?
- once a week
 - once a month
 - once a term
 - once a year
30. About how many of your students' parents have you talked to during this academic year ?
31. Have you talked to any of these more than once ? If so, estimate the number of talks.
32. Estimate the total amount of time you spent talking with parents of your students during this academic year.
33. Is your knowledge of the parents of help to you regarding the teaching of the children ?
- of great help
 - of much help
 - of some help
 - of no help at all

34. Would you like to know the parents of the children you teach better than you know them now ?
- Yes
 - No
35. In general do you find parents willing to cooperate with you ?
- very willing
 - willing
 - half and half
 - unwilling
 - very unwilling
36. Regarding a boy's absence or lateness from your class you:
- care very much about it
 - care a bit
 - feel indifferent
37. In case a boy is absent from or late to your class, would you like to know the cause of it ?
- Yes
 - No
38. If you desire to make individual contacts with parents you prefer to do it:
- when you have a lot of free time
 - when a problem arises
 - occasionally; once during the term
 - when parents wish it
39. Where would you prefer talking to individual parents ?
- in school
 - at your home
 - at parents' home
 - other. Specify
40. If a suggestion or a remark comes to you from parents you:
- very much welcome it
 - take it into your consideration
 - think little about it
 - forget about it

C

Unsolicited Comments from Parents

A good number of parents expressed each of the following ideas which the writer believes to be worthy of consideration, although they were not specifically dealt with in the questionnaire.

1. Pupils in general are weak in the English language as compared to boys in French Schools speaking the French language. Practice in actually speaking English should be emphasized.
2. As long as the government does not censor films to which students go, and as long as many of those films are not desirable, then schools and teachers should be the leaders in this matter. They should publicize what is desirable and undesirable, thus deliberately directing public opinion.
3. The Prep. School should have some professional courses to be given to those who do not continue their education in the University. Some students are not recommended to the University, and occasionally some do not wish to go on with further studies. Therefore, such vocational courses as typing, book-keeping, accounting and the like would be a valuable addition to the curriculum.
4. Many parents feel that the school should be concerned with matters such as the manners and etiquette of their boys.

The school and the teachers should know and care what students read, whom they accompany, what activities they are involved in, etc.. This is in line with the unanimous request for a course in ethics.