

REASSESSING EDUCATIONAL VALUES

IN NOVA SCOTIA

A Thesis written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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PREFACE

In order to bring together the basic information regarding educational values in the light of marked developments which are taking place at the present time in Nova Scotia, certain topics have been selected for consideration terminating interviews with some Authorities who are directly responsible for recent developments in education within the Province.

I wish to thank Dr. H. M. Nason, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education in Nova Scotia; Dr. Maurice E. Keating, Assistant Superintendent of Halifax City Schools and Professor of Education at St. Mary's University, Halifax; Miss Marjorie Cook, Director of Special Services in the Halifax City Schools, and Sister Marion de Sales, Principal of Oxford Junior High School in Halifax. I wish to express sincere thanks to Reverend Daniel Fogarty, S.J., Dean of Education at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, for his many valuable suggestions and words of encouragement. I am deeply indebted to Miss Eileen Burns, Librarian at St. Patrick's High School, Halifax, for her boundless generosity in procuring books, pamphlets, and other valuable materials which have given ample assistance in the construction of this work.

Additional information was obtained from the Journals of Education. The Annual Reports of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners contained material which was invaluable for the sections pertaining to the Halifax City Schools.

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CHAPTER I

SUPERVISION AND PUPIL PROGRESS IN NOVA SCOTIA

In Nova Scotia, as in most areas of Canada, a major problem in school administration has been to maintain an optimum pupil-teacher ratio. In this Province, as elsewhere, the school population is growing much faster than are the supply of teachers, school accomodation and suitable equipment. This situation has placed upon the Provincial Department of Education a tremendous burden in the field of administration, a burden so demanding that it has not been able to give to supervision the time, energy and money that it rightly deserves.¹

Nova Scotia schools are supervised by school principals, town and city supervisors, county inspectors of schools, and provincial inspectors for specialized subject fields. To increase the adequacy and effectiveness of supervision in the schools of county municipalities, in the past few years, an attempt has been made to provide the larger counties with assistants whose training and experience give them the necessary background to maintain and develop proper

¹Dr. H. M. Nason, Supervision, and Evaluation of Pupils' Progress, a report given at the C.E.A. Convention in Toronto, September, 1952.

supervisory practices. Under the direction of the local inspector, these county supervisors devote their entire time to supervisory activities. Their chief responsibilities are these:

"to visit classrooms; to give helpful criticism; to help teachers plan their work; to do demonstration teaching; to suggest instructional material; to arrange for conferences and teacher study groups, and to discover trends with a view to suggesting remedial and preventitive practices. In Halifax City, assistant superintendents perform the same functions...."¹

Unfortunately, visitation sometimes drifts in the direction of becoming entirely inspectional in nature and purpose. After all, it is much easier to make a friendly visit than to analyze and evaluate carefully instructional activities with a view to suggesting a remedial program for improvement.

Pressure of administrative details on the Superintendent's office in Halifax City, has reduced somewhat the number of visits to the classrooms. Extra supervisory responsibilities have been taken up by the principals, heads of departments and special teachers who spend a large portion of their time in the classrooms helping out with tests and difficult problems that require special attention.

Principals also supervise the teaching schedules to see that each subject receives its proper amount of time and they keep the parents informed of their children's

¹Ibid.

progress. However, supervision of probationary teachers remains the joint responsibility of the principals and the assistant superintendents. The first year the principal and one of the assistants report on the work of the new teacher while at the end of the second probationary period the reports are made by the principal and the other assistant superintendent. This report on the teacher in the City Schools concerns her attitude toward children, preparation, control and management, teaching technique, and results.¹ This means that when recommendations for permanent positions have to be made, the superintendent has before him at least four or possibly six independent reports on which to base his judgment.²

There has been a tendency, especially in the rural high school areas, to adopt a clinical approach to supervision and evaluation. In these areas, as well as in others where the teacher-pupil ratio and administrative conveniences make this approach feasible, an effort is made to co-ordinate the work of supervision and evaluation with the development of a course of study suited to the interests and potentialities of the pupils. Under the guidance of the Director of Curriculum, the

¹Interview with Dr. M. E. Keating, March 20, 1961.

²Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1957, P. 18.

inspectors and supervisors work with teachers' committees to pool experiences and make recommendations regarding the development of an effective school program. An effort is made to determine trends, discover weaknesses, and assist in the development of a program that will not only take care of the weaknesses now existing, but will also help prevent similar difficulties in the future.¹

If the Department of Education is to achieve its purpose successfully in this type of work, an effort should be made to evaluate general intelligence, special aptitudes and interests, attainment in basic subjects, and character traits and initiative. In this type of work, the idea may be reflected that supervision and evaluation are in essence different aspects of the same thing. For evaluation and supervision, the influence of three schools of thought have been adopted: Some schemes reflect the impact of ideas which would base the total school system on absolute freedom of expression; others reflect the idea that tests are invaluable, and other schemes, reflecting the impact of a traditional Scottish background, place much weight on the value of examinations as a means of evaluation of pupil progress.²

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Ibid.

In a Province such as Nova Scotia that has not optimum school populations in the counties to facilitate effective grouping of pupils, often the only possible means of evaluating the pupil's progress on a common basis with City Schools is by the results of examinations at the age of sixteen plus. Pupils of Nova Scotia are examined for secondary school matriculation by the Atlantic Provinces Examining Board, through a system which, although not perfect, seems to work very well.¹

A large number of supervisors who adopt the idea that intelligence tests, standardized tests, as well as the old type of matriculation examinations should be used, realize that all tests have limitations. They base their testing program on recognition of the fact that tests indicate present status only and do have real value if used as a basis for a choice of remedial methods and for educational guidance. How secure supervisors, principals and teachers would feel if they could know exactly what to look for when testing, and exactly when to look for it!²

There is general agreement on certain fundamentals regarding the means of supervision in Nova Scotia. A good supervisor should attempt to create an environment

¹Ibid., p. 5.

²Nova Scotia, Education Office Gazette (Halifax: King's Printer), Vol. 2, November, 1952, pp. 4-5.

in which teachers can feel free to try out new ideas that they think will be advantageous to the students under their control. It must be realized also, that often what seem to be the very best methods which supervisors and principals see used by some teachers, fail, when used by others because of certain school conditions or because of special characteristics of the teacher or the class, characteristics which cannot be measured with any degree of reliability.

In some schools, and it is hoped, in very few, intelligence is regarded as less important than conformity. The amount of knowledge of the subject taught, possessed by the teacher, is considered to be of less importance than the arbitrary preference of the expert who selects the teacher; and the field of sports, in which pupils need merely to be trained, are honored and promoted at the expense of academic subjects, in which pupils must not only be trained, but also educated.

Regarding supervision of teachers, the writer could go on indefinitely, but because the intention was to keep the presentation within limits, the information given is to convey the feeling of the Department of Education, that the teacher is the central figure in any system of evaluation or supervision.¹

¹Ibid., p. 6.

CHAPTER II

PURPOSE, PLAN AND PROGRESS OF THE PROVINCIAL STANDARDS PROJECT

In a situation where educators are witnessing their long accepted constants rapidly becoming variables, it is most difficult for them to secure objective data upon which to refine and to improve their methods in an effort to develop a school program suited both to the needs of the individual pupil and the changing complex Canadian society.

A Provincial Standards Project was launched in the school year 1954-55 in an effort to provide inspectors, supervisors, principals, and teachers with a reliable basis upon which to develop methods, and information from which to choose materials that will enable them not only to transmit what is best in the Canadian way of life but also to help them to assist in improving it. The Canadian Educational Association and other bodies of equal significance who have devoted so much of their time and abilities to the special problem of the training and work of the supervisor, recognize the need to examine objectively existing procedures and accomplishments with a view to adjusting practices in supervision and in service education to

new purposes and fuller services.¹

It was similar thinking that led those who have the statutory responsibility of inspecting and supervising the schools of Nova Scotia to launch a five-year project in supervision - the purpose, plan and progress of which is contained in this thesis.

Increases in school population, in curriculum demands, and in the size of administrative units have been developing a system where inspectors, supervisors, and superintendents have become more and more concerned with school buildings, school buses, local rates, administrative conveniences, group procedures, and community leadership, and have had too little time for their foremost responsibility to help assess and improve the work of the school. The Department of Education realized that these numerous duties placed on the shoulders of inspectors and school superintendents must not be allowed to supercede the more professional aspects of their responsibilities. As professional people, educators realized that priority must be given to directing their energies to the improvement of the learning situation in the classrooms of the schools in the Province.²

In order that their undertakings to this end

¹Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1958, p. 15.

²Ibid.

might be as efficient and as effective as possible, a representative group of inspectors, supervisors, teachers, and departmental officials came together¹ to undertake the healthy process of assessing present practices and launching a province-wide supervisory and in-service education activity that would keep what is going on in the classrooms uppermost in thinking and practice.

An explanation of the project that evolved could have little value without some knowledge of the thinking back of it. An attempt was made to clarify the purpose of supervision and the general principles upon which supervisory practices should be based.

Since the prime purpose of supervision is to try to help teachers create with greater skill and purpose an environment in which it is possible for each and every child to develop according to his interests and potentialities,² unanimity of opinion soon became apparent on some of the bases upon which policies in supervision and in-service education should be decided.

¹Inspectors of Schools for Lunenburg, Antigonish, Queens-Shelburne, and Richmond Counties; Supervisors of Schools for Halifax and Kings Counties; Director of Curriculum and Research; Assistant Director of Guidance; a Representative of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, and the Chief Inspector of Schools met in February, 1954, in Halifax.

²Interview with Dr. Maurice E. Keating, February 28, 1961.

There was general acceptance of the principle that the key person in the system of education is the teacher, considered in his relationship with the pupils and the total environment in which he teaches, and that his own ideas and opinions, based on a sound background of professional and academic experience, together with a complete knowledge of the pupils, are of far more value than any ready-made plan to supervise or evaluate the work of the teacher or of the pupil.¹

In the light of the newly established purpose in supervision, it was agreed that the old style of inspectoral visit familiar to many teachers was not sufficient to discharge proper responsibility by inspectors and superintendents, and that there was recognized need for an effort to use in a concerted enterprise the abilities of all the members of the many divisions found in a complex modern educational set-up.²

Further, since the costs of education are beginning to rise, along with the costs of everything else, people have come to question the value they get for the dollar expended in education. It was agreed

¹Report of the Provincial Standards Project Committee regarding preliminary plans for a project in experimental research designed to establish Provincial norms at certain grade levels in selected subjects, (unpublished, 1954), p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

that inspectors and supervisors, having been given the statutory responsibility of acting as advisors to the educational authorities in the province, should have objective information which would make it possible to give the authorities a reliable picture of what is being achieved in the schools of Nova Scotia. They should be in a position to indicate to these authorities, who are responsible to the people, trends to be encouraged and those to be discouraged.

It followed, therefore, that an effort must be made to develop a skilled and clinical approach in the assessing and prescribing undertaken in the interests of pupils, and that this scientific approach must be sufficiently philosophical to recognize those things in a child's make-up which are beyond objective measurement.

Out of this thinking came the decision to embark upon a long-range project which has as its specific aims: to discover objectively the achievement of pupils in Grades 3, 6, 8, and 11 in English, Reading and Arithmetic in the schools of Nova Scotia, so that on a sound basis, supervisory practices might be improved.¹

In the development of this undertaking, it was the hope of the Committee concerned that they would demonstrate the principles from which it grew:

¹Ibid.

1. that they might engage and co-ordinate the services of various divisions in the Department of Education and of supervisory levels in an effort to determine and then to raise standards of achievement;

2. that they would secure a body of reliable data on the attainments of pupils in the basic skills that could be used in assessing and explaining the work of the schools to themselves and the general public;

3. that they would use this factual data in establishing a sound basis upon which to decide supervisory processes and to recommend instructional methods, materials and procedures;

4. and that there would be a resultant influence toward a professional approach to education that would help them plan a school program suited to the interests, abilities and needs of Nova Scotian pupils.¹

The central committee charged with developing the project included representatives of the guidance, curriculum and research divisions and of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union.² This committee was given the responsibility of choosing the tests, determining how they were to be administered and processed, preparing the final reports, and determining how to make best use of the results.

Problems which arose in planning were submitted to educational authorities in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, soliciting their opinions regarding such matters as the type of tests available, how they should be administered, and other significant details.³ As a result, many suggestions were received

¹Ibid., p. 3.

²Interview with Miss Marjorie Cook, Director of Special Services in the Halifax City Schools, February 22, 1961.

³Report of the Provincial Standards Project Committee, p. 4.

which led to prolonged and valuable discussions. For example, it was Dr. Jackson of the University of Toronto who advised that a random sample systematically selected but without stratification, would give the most reliable results.¹ Even replies which the Committee was unable to accept gave them matter for constructive thought; for instance, when Professor Vernon of the University of London made the suggestion that it would be more satisfactory for Nova Scotia to make its own tests. He felt that it was not a problem of determining how the pupils of this Province compared with pupils in another country in certain fields, but rather the standards they have reached in certain subjects or in certain information which is considered necessary for them in Nova Scotia with its own problems and culture. As technical experience was lacking, as well as the money and time to develop tests for the Province, it was suggested that the Committee secure available standardized tests and try them in the schools.

The tests selected to be used were a partial battery of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests published by the World Book Company, New York, covering the subject areas of reading comprehension and vocabulary, arithmetic fundamentals and problems, and language usage and spelling.

It was decided to test an approximate ten percent random sample of the Grade 3 pupils of all schools of the Province in May, 1955; of Grade 6 pupils in May, 1956; of Grade 8 in 1957; and Grade 11 in 1958.

¹Ibid.

Administration of the tests was to be carried out by the Inspector assisted by qualified supervisors and teachers, but the processing and statistical analysis were to be carried out by the Guidance Division assisted by capable teachers.¹

Reports of each year's testing programs were to be prepared by the central committee and reviewed in conferences by supervisory personnel who would be responsible for assuring that they be translated into inspired classroom practices and achievement.

After each testing program, careful reports have indicated what the tests measured regarding such matters as the degree to which pupils have mastered the essentials of English-usage, punctuation and capitalization; the reading age of the pupils according to degree of mastery of reading skills; the ability of the pupils in the grades tested in the fundamental skills and in the ability to solve problems in Arithmetic; and Arithmetic norms for the Province.²

As each year's report became available, its contents served as the central theme for area conferences involving all inspectors and supervisors of the Province's schools. Here careful analysis of the results revealed the areas in which in-service training for teachers was most urgent and the phases of classroom methods and management for which the

¹Ibid., p. 5.

²Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1955, p. 12.

Committee themselves most needed to re-evaluate supervisory procedures.¹

Following these supervisors' Conferences each year, inspectors and supervisors have organized conferences of all teachers and staffs of their districts in order to provide a confidential report and discussion of the significant test data, and to launch an in-service training program designed to assist them in working out methods to overcome the weakness revealed by the tests, and to strengthen further the areas found to be well developed. Here again the services of outstanding leaders from other provinces and other countries have been called in to help toward this goal. Throughout each year, teachers, supervisors and inspectors have continued in regular staff meetings and study groups to analyse needs and seek solutions, and there has been evidence in the classrooms of the schools of the Province that the children, in whose interests the project is being developed, are beginning to profit from improvement in the present method of supervision and teaching.²

Although the project is not sufficiently developed to provide the conclusive evidence of the achievements of Nova Scotia Schools which is needed

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1957, p. 19.

²Report of the Provincial Standards Project Committee, p. 5.

to answer all the questions the public are asking, it has provided objective information helpful in interpreting the program to the people on a basis much sounder than personal opinions, sometimes biased both ways.

Less tangible but equally as important, it is believed by the Committee that the project has helped to develop an improved approach and attitude towards supervision and in-service education, and the opportunity provided to enable all those who are concerned with the education of boys and girls to work together with a common purpose has helped to unify and co-ordinate the energies and abilities of the Committee.¹

Experience has indicated that teachers can be of greater service if they realize the value of the clinical approach² to the solution of their problems; and also, if they realize the real worth of a body of objective information upon which to base their procedures and report to those to whom they are directly responsible.

¹Ibid., p. 6.

²Education Office Gazette, Supervision and Evaluation of Pupil Progress, Vol. 2, No. 2, November, 1952, p. 6.

CHAPTER III

REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL STANDARDS PROJECT COMMITTEE FOR A PROJECT IN EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH¹

I

1. Introduction

Considerable experimental research has been conducted in Nova Scotia through the Guidance Division of the Department of Education, by the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, and by guidance personnel in individual schools. There is need for similar developments at the supervisory level.

There has been a growing awareness of the fact that those entrusted with the task of classroom supervision will be better prepared to carry out their task if a more positive approach can be developed with recommendations based upon the result of objective appraisal and careful diagnosis of the problems involved.

The general problem of improving supervision was submitted to the Department of Education in 1953 in the context of a long-range evaluation program, the purposes of which are as follows:

¹Summary of the Final Report to the Department of Education by the Committee Appointed to Undertake a Project in Experimental Research, 1953, (in the files of the Department of Education, Halifax, Nova Scotia).

- A. **Specific Aim:** to determine objectively present standards of achievement in English, Arithmetic and Reading at the Grade 3, 6, 8, and 11 levels in the Province of Nova Scotia.
- B. **General Aim:**
- (1) to develop a professional approach to education that will help to plan educational programs suited to the interests, abilities and needs of pupils;
 - (2) to secure a body of reliable data on the attainments of pupils in the basic skills with a view to establishing a sound basis upon which to recommend methods, materials and procedures as a part of the general supervisory program;
 - (3) to engage and co-ordinate the services of various divisions in the Department of Education and of supervisory personnel in an effort to determine and then to raise standards of attainment;
 - (4) to secure factual data that can be used in assessing and in explaining the work of the schools. There is evidence that opinions regarding the work of the schools today are the result, not of reasoning which has been tested by true experience, but rather of subjective inference fixed by habit.¹

2. The Provincial Standards Project Committee

Departmental approval of the project resulted in the appointment of a committee to work out further details and to proceed with the plan. The Committee is made up as follows:

Mr. H. J. Uhlman, Inspector of Schools for Lunenburg Co., Chairman
Mr. H. K. MacKay, Supervisor of Schools for Halifax Co., Secretary

¹Ibid., p. 2.

- Mr. H. M. MacDonald, Inspector of Schools for
Antigonish Co.
Mr. C. B. LeGrow, Inspector of Schools for Queens-
Shelburne
Mr. R. J. Chiasson, Inspector of Schools for Rich-
mond Co.
Mr. J. A. Hendry, Supervisor of Schools for Kings Co.
Dr. A. B. Morrison, Director of Curriculum and Research
Mr. J. A. Ross, Assistant Director of Guidance
Mr. W. M. Hall, Representative of the Nova Scotia
Teachers' Union
Dr. H. M. Nason, Chief Inspector of Schools

This Committee held the first of several meetings early in February, 1954, and after much concentrated effort eventually formulated a plan¹ for a specific project in experimental research.¹

II

The Program in General Terms

- A. Aims: (1) to discover the achievement of pupils in Grades 3, 6, 8, and 11, in English, Arithmetic, and Reading in the Nova Scotia schools;
- (2) to lay a sound basis for the improvement of supervisory practices.
- B. The Testing Program in General Terms
- (1) Steps in the Program
- (a) the selection of tests covering three areas: Reading, Arithmetic and English;
- (b) the administration of tests to a representative sampling of pupils in each of the selected grades;
- (c) the processing of test results;

¹Ibid.

- (d) the preparation of a report following a tabulation of the results of the tests;
 - (e) the framing of recommendations based on survey results;
 - (f) the practical application of findings.
- (2) Personnel to Carry Out the Program
- (a) inspectors and rural and urban supervisors in Nova Scotia,
 - (b) the teachers and
 - (c) members of the Guidance, Curriculum and Research Departments.
- (3) The Contents of Report of Program
- (a) General

The report should give an evaluation of the work now being done by pupils in Grades 3, 6, 8, and 11 in English, Arithmetic and Reading.
 - (b) Area Content:

In English and Reading, the report should show:

 - (i) the degree to which pupils have mastered the essentials of English-usage, punctuation and capitalization;
 - (ii) the reading age of pupils in various grades;
 - (iii) the distribution of pupils according to degree of mastery of skills in language arts.

In Arithmetic, the report should show:

- (1) the ability of the pupils in the four grades mentioned in the fundamental skills and in the ability to solve problems;

(ii) Arithmetic norms for the Province.

C. Use of Results:

- (1) The results of the survey could be used by members of the Department and teachers' study groups as a basis for determining most pressing needs and most appropriate methods.
- (2) Results could be used to stimulate discussions of ways of improving programs or instructional practices in subject fields of English, Reading, and Arithmetic.

III

1. The Initial Project in Particular Terms

A. Introduction:

After very careful consideration of all aspects of the proposed study, it is the unanimous opinion of committee members:

- (1) that the complete survey must be considered a long term plan, only a part of which can be undertaken in the initial project:
- (2) that the plan as a whole is worthy of completion and that the whole approach to the project be directed toward ultimate completion in all grade

areas and in all subject matter fields indicated in the general outline:

- (3) that for the present the project be organized and carried out at the Grade 3 level.

B. Object:

To secure Nova Scotian norms in Reading, English, and Arithmetic for Grade 3 pupils.

C. Population:

The population for the study will be the approximate 14,000 pupils enrolled in Grade 3 classes during 1954-55 in the Province of Nova Scotia.

D. Sample:

An 8% random sample, without stratification, selected from the above population as indicated hereunder.

Method of Selecting Sample:

- (1) All school sections, both rural and urban, in each Municipality are to be listed in their numerical order, with the number of pupils in Grade 3 opposite each.
- (2) Starting with the first school every twelfth pupil, in the order in which they appear on the school register, will be selected for testing.

e.g. Schools: #1 - 8 pupils
 #2 - 6 pupils
 #3 - 20 pupils
 #4 - 35 pupils
 #5 - 4 pupils

Pupils tested will be:

1. Pupils No. 4 from School #2.
2. Pupils No. 8 and 20 from School #3.
3. Pupils No. 12 and 24 from School #5.
4. Pupils No. 1 from School #5.

- (3) The following information will be obtained for each pupil: Name, Date of Birth, Sex, School, Years in School, and Occupation of Parent.
- (4) A list of the pupils to be tested will be prepared by each inspector for his division in April just prior to the actual testing.

E. Testing Instrument:

Metropolitan Achievement Test Battery - Elementary Form.

F. Administration of Tests:

- (1) Personnel: The administration of tests in each county is to be arranged by the Inspector or Supervisor, using persons from the teaching staffs, or other persons qualified to undertake the work.
- (2) Persons selected to administer tests should be brought together prior to the actual testing in order to co-ordinate the program throughout an area and to receive specific instructions.
- (3) Pupils may be tested in individual schools or may be brought to one or more centres at the discretion of the local Inspector or Supervisor.
- (4) Testing will take place between May 25 and June 7 (both dates inclusive), with completed tests being forwarded to the Inspector of Schools immediately.

G. Scoring and Statistical Analysis:

Each Inspector or Supervisor will forward completed tests to the Guidance Division, Department of Education. The tests will be scored and the required statistical analysis will be completed, resulting in the establishment of norms for pupils of Grade 3 in Nova Scotia in Reading, English and Arithmetic.

H. Limitations of the Project:

The findings of this study cannot be considered as end results, but rather as means to an end - that of improving classroom instruction through appraisal and follow-up activities.

I. Relation of the Project to Other Research:

(1) To Previous Research:

It is not the intention of the Standard Projects Committee to overlook any projects that have been completed in the past and which are relevant to the present subject. Test results and other statistical data available will be placed in their proper perspective in the long term development of the project.

(2) To Future Research:

- (a) The establishment of Norms at the Grade 3 level is the first step in the much broader pattern of experimental research at the Provincial level, which will be conducted, as soon as possible at the grade 6, 8, and 11 levels as well.

- (b) The project will result in greater familiarity on the part of Inspectors, Supervisors, and Teachers with testing procedures and will afford opportunities for fuller participation in educational research at the local level.

2. General Observations:

A. Costs of Testing Program

- (1) The cost of the test materials for the Grade 3 population included in the sample is to be borne by the Province.
- (2) Costs involved in the administration of the tests and in transportation are the responsibility of local authorities.
- (3) Some local authorities may wish to test all Grade 3 pupils within their area (or a certain percentage comprising a representative sampling). The costs of additional testing materials involved will be their responsibility.

B. Ordering of Tests

- (1) All orders for tests within an inspectorate are to be sent to the Inspector of Schools, who will compile the complete order.
- (2) Each Inspector should place his order for tests with J. A. Ross, Assistant Director of Guidance on or before April 1, 1955.
- (3) Local authorities wishing to test other than pupils included in the sample may order required

testing materials as indicated in the above information but should make arrangements for payment and scoring of the same.

- (4) Orders must be for complete packages (25 tests) and must indicate the number of manuals required. Local authorities may arrange for the breaking of packages at the local level.
- (5) Costs of tests - 13¢ each.

C. The Testing Program

It is the responsibility of each Inspector or Supervisor:

- (1) to complete the selection of the sample in accordance with the instructions contained in the outline of the project;

Note: If after selecting each 12th pupil in a given municipality, there is a balance of less than six, disregard the balance; if the balance is six or more, include the last pupil with the sample for the municipality.

- (2) to assume responsibility for assembling and informing personnel charged with the administration of the tests;
- (3) to inform teachers of the proposed study and to solicit their support;
- (4) to arrange with supervisors and teachers a testing time-table as well as testing centres;
- (5) to receive completed tests and forward tests for sample personnel to the Director of Guidance.

D. Implications for the Local School

- (1) The results of the testing program will be regarded as confidential and cannot and should not be used as a measure of the efficiency of any school or pupil.
- (2) The Provincial norms established as a result of the project will become more revealing in the local situation when each school initiates its own testing program.
- (3) The final report at the conclusion of the project will be made available to teachers through inspectors and supervisors, to be used as a basis for future planning, and later as a means of assessing particular methods in imparting instruction.

While much meaningful and valuable information is being gathered, the gathering of information is not an end in itself and should not be considered as such. However, it should lead to further research and application. In the next phase of the Standards Project, considerable thought should be given to including a test of scholastic aptitude.¹

¹Report of the Director of Guidance, G. E. Perry, M.A., July, 1958.

TOTAL REGISTRATION OF PUPILS IN THE HALIFAX
CITY SCHOOLS FOR 1955 TO 1959¹

	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Acadian	113	130	122	115	102
Alexander McKay	440	401	412	428	431
Alexandra	924	920	1000	971	1013
Ardmore Park	653	656	336	352	329
Bloomfield	852	760	791	737	726
Chebucto	887	810	762	719	750
Cronwallis Junior High	379	396	394	377	381
Edgewood Park	77	208	••••	••••	••••
Gorsebrook	455	451	498	464	458
St. Euphrasia	28	28	32	36	46
Joseph Howe	295	306	325	311	308
LeMarchant	418	410	398	388	371
Morris Street	198	182	163	166	159
Mulgrave Park	259	495	511	487	470
St. Joseph's Orphanage	26	••••	••••	••••	••••
Oxford	882	859	851	849	871
Queen Elizabeth, I-XII	843	855	905	967	1018
Richmond	739	596	565	585	564
St. Agnes	954	870	816	819	884
St. Andrew's	••••	533	495	659	726
St. Catherine's	••••	••••	707	758	749
St. Francis	540	535	499	469	487
St. Joseph's	503	469	500	447	427
St. Mary's Boys	323	348	346	323	348
St. Mary's Girls	332	328	336	295	303
St. Patrick's Boys	534	565	531	506	508
St. Patrick's Girls	534	551	578	543	564
St. Patrick's High, IX-XII	1158	1158	1159	1155	1198
St. Patrick's Junior High	237	239	222	225	233
St. Patrick's Home	88	••••	••••	••••	••••
St. Stephen's	853	733	907	910	934
St. Stephen's Annex	••••	••••	••••	••••	••••
St. Thomas Aquinas	362	398	418	410	441
Sir John Thompson	160	141	148	139	137
Sir Charles Tupper	299	384	402	381	383
Tower Road	401	433	454	458	420
Westmount	1154	738	815	638	621
Auxiliaries	258	286	252	246	255
Total Number of Pupils	17145	17354	17650	17871	18168

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 36.

NEW PUPILS IN THE HALIFAX CITY SCHOOLS¹

	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
From Halifax City	1785	1828	1772	1783	1778
From Province (not Halifax)	693	724	845	648	652
From beyond Nova Scotia	334	388	372	428	408
TOTALS	2812	2940	2989	2859	2838

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1955, p. 18; 1956, p. 26; 1957, p. 28; 1958, p. 30; 1959, p. 29.

CHAPTER IV

PROMOTION POLICY IN THE HALIFAX CITY SCHOOLS

The pupils of the elementary and junior high school grades are promoted on the recommendation of the principals and teachers in the Halifax City Schools, except where Grade 8 or Grade 9 is the highest grade in the school. The promotion policy advocated by principals and teachers is a compromise, which takes into account definite grade standards and at the same time provides for flexibility in terms of each pupil's personality and circumstances. Factors included in the final decision regarding a pupil's grade placement are: age, ability, physical and emotional maturity, health, social environment, educational background, and effort.¹

Under a flexible policy the use of promotion and non-promotion becomes, in the final analysis, an administrative device for placing a pupil where he will have the best opportunity to progress. This point of view obviously does not mean that all pupils will automatically be moved to a higher grade each year. Some will be retained in a grade for a second year,

¹Interview with Dr. M.E. Keating, February 22, 1961.

and others who may be less proficient in certain skills will move on. In other words, promotion cannot be regarded as advancement or reward any more than non-promotion necessarily connotes failure.

A promotion policy that allows for flexibility obviously makes it impossible to attain a high degree of homogeneity in any class. Teachers and principals must recognize that in each class there will be a wide range both in the ability and in the achievement of pupils, therefore, grouping for teaching purposes and other techniques of individualizing instruction are essential under such circumstances.¹ In other words, Halifax City School teachers are prepared to have in their classes pupils whose academic development is ahead or behind that of the average child for the group and these teachers are expected to be willing, without prejudice to the child's status in the group, to adapt the instructional program to the needs of all the children, insofar as class-size, time and materials allow.

In evaluating a child's academic progress as a factor in his grade placement, more importance is attached to some subjects than to others. Those skills which are basic and cumulative and in which proficiency depends upon continuity of instruction and systematic progression from one stage of learning to the next

¹Ibid.

must be given greater consideration than other subjects when promotions are being decided. The cumulative skills are: Reading, Language, Arithmetic, and Spelling in the elementary grades, and English, Social Studies and Science in the junior high grades.¹

From the foregoing observations it is evident that making promotions is essentially a matter of exercising judgment. For teachers and principals to depend solely upon the results of tests, examinations, or group methods of measurement in determining a child's grade placement is obviously inconsistent with the acceptance of a flexible promotion policy.

"Judgment can only be exercised intelligently in this matter if adequate opportunity is given to teachers to supplement their own opinions with the most complete and accurate information possible about each child's ability, health, social and emotional adjustment, previous achievement and present performance. Record cards are filed in the office of each principal and the maintenance and use of these records constitute one of the teacher's important responsibilities."²

Decisions regarding promotions cannot be made hastily; they require the maximum amount of time and

¹Ibid.

²Interview with Sister Marion de Sales, Principal of Oxford Junior High School, Halifax, February 10, 1961.

thought possible; therefore, decisions affecting the grade placement of pupils constitute a responsibility which is extremely significant to the point that it is assumed jointly by teacher and principal.

Report card forms and interim reports and the use made of them must be consistent with the promotion policy being followed at the present time, and the reporting of pupils' progress is the most significant regular and official contact that exists between the City Schools and the families that they serve.

The pupils of Grade 10, in the senior high schools, are promoted on the basis of their school examinations, and the pupils of Grades 11 and 12, where they qualify, write the examinations conducted by the Atlantic Provinces Examining Board.¹

Candidates who fail to make a "pass" in five subjects receive a "partial" certificate provided a pass has been made in four subjects. These candidates are then entitled to write an examination in one or more subjects of the course and if successful, receive a "pass" certificate for the grade.²

So much has been said thus far about the individual differences of pupils that there is a danger of overlooking the fact that teachers also differ.

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 37.

²Ibid.

Principals sometimes endeavor to place a pupil in the class that offers the best opportunity for a happy and profitable adjustment, and teachers concerned are expected to recognize their obligation to accept a child who needs the particular kind of experience that they are especially capable of providing. This aspect of pupil placement, however, does not usually become a factor in making promotions until there are two or more classes in a grade and a choice among them is possible. Moreover, the pupils for whom this special consideration is necessary are relatively few, and seen in proper perspective, the proposal made does not complicate promotion practices as much as might seem probable at first sight. The greatest difficulty arises when placement in terms of differences between classes conflicts with the desire to distribute pupils equally among the classes that comprise a grade. Even that problem can be normally solved without prejudice to the needs of the pupils in the City Schools. As long as the individual child's welfare remains a basic consideration, differences that characterize teachers and their classes must be given due attention in the placement of that child. Only by so doing can the City Schools utilize to the full professional resources for the benefit of the students attending them.¹

¹Dr. M. E. Keating, February 22, 1961.

As it has already been mentioned, the major factor in the process is the individual himself and particularly, his active intellect; there, it is a process of self-development. Both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas regard the teacher as only the instrument in the process of mental growth and development. Both look upon teaching as a bilateral function, summoning interior and exterior factors, cooperatively in both teacher and pupil to produce effective learning.¹

Due to the increase in the administrative burden of a modern school system, the trend is towards increased responsibility of principals for efficient instruction and organization within City Schools. However, in accepting added responsibility, principals have added dignity to their positions, and they have been brought into close contact with pupils, parents and teachers. It is significant that in the year 1959, principals in the Halifax City Schools have formed a Principals' Association with a view to professional study and growth in their field.²

The annual two-day conference of Inspectors, Supervisors, and Supervision Principals was held in Kentville in November, 1959. This particular conference is mentioned because in addition to the attendance

¹Sister Mary Dorothea, "Adjusting the Lesson Plan to Meet Today's Needs", The Catholic Educator, XXVI, No. 4 (December, 1955), p. 242.

²Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 13.

of the Superintendent and the two Assistant Superintendents, along with six principals delegated by the Board, the conference dealt with true professional aspects of teaching and with an evaluation of promotion policies. Outstanding Canadian and American authorities were the featured speakers together with a panel representing the medical, legal, engineering, and teaching professions in Nova Scotia. Measurement of ability and achievement in both average and exceptional children were related closely to promotion policies suited to their respective needs. Halifax delegates were well distributed among the various discussion groups and were able to make substantial contributions to the debates. Of special significance was their experience in providing for exceptional children in crippled children, severely retarded children, auxiliary and gifted children classes. As far as it is known, Halifax is the only place in Canada where the whole cost of providing for exceptional children is borne by school authorities, with the exception of transportation which is provided free of charge for crippled children by the Kinsmen Club of Halifax.¹

In 1959, the Halifax School Board decided to establish, on an experimental basis, three classes for gifted children at the Grade 7 level. It is planned to operate these classes, to be known as Major Work

¹Ibid., p. 15.

Classes, for a three-year period, during which time every effort will be made to examine and decide upon the value of the project.¹ However, the two classes for retarded children which have been conducted by the Board for the past two years are now an integral part of the system, thirty-eight pupils being in attendance in 1959. The results have fully justified the action of the Board in providing these classes.²

¹Ibid., p. 9.

²Ibid.

CHAPTER V

TESTING, MARKING, REPORTING, AND STANDARDS

Careful observation of daily work is the chief and most valid source of information as to pupil progress in the Halifax City Schools. A valuable supplement is provided by tests. Wisely used, they increase the teacher's knowledge of each pupil in addition to such other useful purposes as they may serve.

Testing forms an important part of the teaching process in classrooms and for the most part, tests are constructed by each teacher for the needs of his or her own particular class. Frequent short tests help to give information as to what has been mastered and what needs to be re-taught. This diagnostic function provides a basis for remedial work. An example of this may be found in the widespread practice of having pupils correct daily tests, note errors and benefit from discussion of their own and other pupils' mistakes. Pupils are also afforded a similar opportunity to correct and discuss following the return of tests and exercises scored by the class teacher.¹

Variety is essential in good testing. In the

¹Interview with Dr. M.E. Keating, February 24, 1961.

assessment of factual knowledge, the familiar forms of the new type test - completion, multiple choice and matching - are preferred. Nevertheless, questions which call upon the pupil to select and express his own thoughts should be included in increasing prominence as he progresses through the grades. These questions require answers in the form of a sentence or two and occasionally a paragraph.¹

Time and thought are devoted to the preparation of tests. For example, in making a test in silent reading, it is considered beforehand what aspects of reading ability are to be tested, the suitability of the stories or paragraphs in relation to the purposes of the test is judged, and the test questions are arranged in such a way as to ensure easy analysis of results afterwards. Remedial work stems naturally from this study.²

The promotion policy used in the Halifax City Schools which takes into account definite grade standards and at the same time provides for flexibility in terms of each pupil's personality and circumstances is in effect an attempt to find a middle-ground between two extreme points of view and, as such, it must be recognized that the reconciliation will in some cases

¹Ibid.

²Journal of Education, The Place of Reading in the Elementary School Curriculum, October, 1953, p. 22.

be difficult and perhaps, as far as reporting progress goes, never in such cases entirely satisfactory. For, in an attempt to encourage a pupil's continued efforts, accuracy may be sacrificed and the child misled, along with his parents and others. In an attempt to report accurately a certain child's achievement by grade standards, the school may consistently fail him and discourage his development. In the final analysis, what the City Schools do, in the exceptional cases presenting this dilemma depends upon the individual and his particular personality and circumstances, and a policy can only indicate in a general way the direction to be followed.

Nevertheless, a consistent policy of reporting progress is desirable for the generality of cases and, as has been said, even offers a kind of sign-post to keep schools from going too far off the middle-road with exceptional problems.

This, then, is the background against which the following statements on reporting are set forth.

The successful application of a promotion policy depends to a considerable degree upon the basis of report card marks. These marks represent the teacher's considered judgment of the pupil's achievement in relation to grade standards. Effort in relation to ability is marked only under those headings which are provided for that purpose and

progress report cards are constructed as to make it possible to do this adequately and fairly. Thus, in the City Schools, an attempt is made to show accurately the child's achievement on progress report cards according to an accepted grade level, while he is credited or discredited for his effort to meet the standard on his report card. It is intended that this procedure should apply to the generality of pupils.¹

The procedure outlined above should be followed by all teachers because the temptation to modify a pupil's proficiency rating due to his attitude and effort is always present and it is at times very compelling. A sense of fair-play inclines most teachers to want to raise marks of pupils who are trying hard and to lower marks of lazy or indifferent students, but, understandable as this desire may be, teachers are cautioned that it can only lead to confusion if it becomes a marking policy.

In arriving at an opinion with respect to a subject mark, the teacher may rely largely on observation of daily work and general contribution. Reference may also be made by the teacher to the recorded results of tests but it is not desirable that these results be regarded as the primary or only source of marks for progress reports or report cards. In some subjects, such as Arithmetic, the relationship

¹Information received from Dr. M.E. Keating, March 1, 1961.

between test results and the teacher's final judgment (mark) may be fairly close. In the subject fields exemplified by History and Geography, it is important to take into account participation in such activities as map making, library research, making scrap books, outlining chapters, and participation in group discussion.¹

Many teachers in the City Schools keep mark books which contain an organized record of all marks appearing on progress reports and report cards. Many of these mark books contain records of test scores and pupil evaluations grouped together by subjects. This information is invaluable when teachers meet parents at interviews either before or after home and school meetings which usually take place every two months. This latter record is more important in the case of pupils whose standing is in doubt or in process of change.

At the request of the Department of Education in 1954-55, a project, which has already been mentioned, was undertaken throughout the Province to determine objectively standards of achievement in English, Arithmetic and Reading for Grade 3 pupils, and the Halifax City Schools participated in this project. While only a limited number of Grade 3 pupils in the City Schools were required for the provincial project,

¹Ibid.

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ELEMENTARY PUPILS IN THE
 HALIFAX CITY SCHOOLS WHO COMPLETED EACH
 YEAR FROM 1955 TO 1959 AND WHO WERE¹
 PROMOTED IN THE JUNE OF EACH YEAR¹
 (Pupils of Auxiliary Classes are not included.)

		Number Enrolled	Number Promoted	Percentage Promoted
<u>1955</u>	Primary to Grade 1	1471	1422	96.7
	Grade 1 to Grade 2	1761	1610	91.4
	Grade 2 to Grade 3	1834	1669	91.1
	Grade 3 to Grade 4	1608	1452	90.3
	Grade 4 to Grade 5	1410	1291	91.6
	Grade 5 to Grade 6	1436	1280	89.1
	Grade 6 to Grade 7	1380	1204	87.2
<u>1956</u>	Primary to Grade 1	1553	1503	96.8
	Grade 1 to Grade 2	1611	1467	91.1
	Grade 2 to Grade 3	1764	1599	90.1
	Grade 3 to Grade 4	1793	1639	91.4
	Grade 4 to Grade 5	1543	1401	90.8
	Grade 5 to Grade 6	1393	1249	89.6
	Grade 6 to Grade 7	1370	1208	88.2
<u>1957</u>	Primary to Grade 1	1589	1543	97.1
	Grade 1 to Grade 2	1662	1507	90.7
	Grade 2 to Grade 3	1594	1476	92.6
	Grade 3 to Grade 4	1736	1559	89.8
	Grade 4 to Grade 5	1746	1602	91.8
	Grade 5 to Grade 6	1537	1379	89.7
	Grade 6 to Grade 7	1334	1154	86.5
<u>1958</u>	Primary to Grade 1	1609	1562	97.0
	Grade 1 to Grade 2	1697	1561	91.9
	Grade 2 to Grade 3	1658	1510	91.0
	Grade 3 to Grade 4	1610	1469	91.3
	Grade 4 to Grade 5	1667	1536	92.1
	Grade 5 to Grade 6	1715	1565	91.2
	Grade 6 to Grade 7	1487	1327	89.2
<u>1959</u>	Primary to Grade 1	1640	1586	96.7
	Grade 1 to Grade 2	1746	1606	92.0
	Grade 2 to Grade 3	1630	1504	92.3
	Grade 3 to Grade 4	1617	1483	91.7
	Grade 4 to Grade 5	1559	1435	92.0
	Grade 5 to Grade 6	1636	1499	91.6
	Grade 6 to Grade 7	1637	1488	90.9

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1955, p. 28; 1956, p. 38; 1957, p. 36; 1958, p. 37; 1959, p. 37.

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS IN GRADES
7 TO 11 WHO COMPLETED EACH YEAR FROM
1955 to 1959 AND WHO WERE PROMOTED
IN JUNE¹

		Number Enrolled	Number Promoted	Percentage Promoted
<u>1955</u>	Grade 7 to Grade 8	1354	1088	80.4
	Grade 8 to Grade 9	1070	845	79.0
	Grade 9 to Grade 10	834	630	75.5
	Grade 10 to Grade 11	657	496	75.5
<u>1956</u>	Grade 7 to Grade 8	1358	1165	85.8
	Grade 8 to Grade 9	1158	928	80.1
	Grade 9 to Grade 10	865	715	82.7
	Grade 10 to Grade 11	678	499	73.6
<u>1957</u>	Grade 7 to Grade 8	1317	1034	78.5
	Grade 8 to Grade 9	1242	918	73.9
	Grade 9 to Grade 10	923	726	78.7
	Grade 10 to Grade 11	727	481	66.2
<u>1958</u>	Grade 7 to Grade 8	1323	1072	81.0
	Grade 8 to Grade 9	1216	960	78.9
	Grade 9 to Grade 10	970	801	82.5
	Grade 10 to Grade 11	795	599	75.3
<u>1959</u>	Grade 7 to Grade 8	1473	1194	81.0
	Grade 8 to Grade 9	1218	1018	83.6
	Grade 9 to Grade 10	943	791	83.9
	Grade 10 to Grade 11	834	585	70.0

¹Ibid.

it was felt to be desirable by the School Board to have all Grade 3 pupils in the schools throughout the City tested in order that objective standards might be established for Halifax. Median marks for the City were compiled as follows:

Reading	3.7
Vocabulary	3.8
Arith. Fundamentals ...	4.4
Arith. Problems	4.1
Language Usage	4.1
Spelling	4.5 ¹
Ave. Achievement	4.1

At the same time that the test was administered, the grade norm was 3.9. It may be seen from the above table that Halifax City is above the norm in all except Reading and Vocabulary.

When the Metropolitan Achievement Test was administered for the second time in 1959, the results were as follows:

Reading	4.0
Vocabulary	4.2
Arith. Fundamentals ...	4.4
Arith. Problems	4.3
Language Usage	4.6
Spelling	4.8
Ave. Achievement	4.4 ²

It is gratifying to note the improvement in all areas except Arithmetic Fundamentals and in this, the Grade 3's in the City Schools are well above the expected norm of 3.9.

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 41.

²Ibid.

The 1959 record indicates substantial overall improvement over the same grade in 1955. It is particularly interesting to note that attention to Reading weakness shown in 1955 has been instrumental in boosting the achievement in this field well above the United States norms.

In 1955-56, the Provincial Department of Education, through the co-operation of the Special Services Department in the City Schools, administered the Metropolitan Achievement Test at the Grade 6 level; in the following year, the same type test was administered at the Grade 8 level, and in 1957-58, California Achievement Tests were administered at the Grade 11 level.

As this long-range program is still being carried on, a table, compiled from the results of tests given and scored to date, makes an unfinished picture, giving only the first round results of all grades concerned and the second round of Grade 3 results. However, the table, which is on the following page, does show how far above or below the United States norms, the Halifax City pupils have achieved. The figures used in this table represent tenths of a year.

One can readily see the value of standardized records, not only in evaluating achievements in terms of established norms but particularly in pointing out areas of comparative weakness. In the table following,

it can be seen that the results in Arithmetic, Language Usage and Spelling have shown consistently well above the United States norms, except in Grade 11 Spelling.¹

	Reading		Arithmetic	Eng.	Spell.	Ave.	
	Comp.	Vocab.	Fund.	Prob.	Usage	Ach't.	
<hr/>							
First Round							
1955-Grade 3	-.2	-.1	+.5	+.2	+.2	+.6	+.2
1956-Grade 6	-.1	...	+.6	+.2	+.1	+.1	+.2
1957-Grade 8	-.1	+.4	+1.3	+1.3	+1.1	+.9	+.9
1958-Grade 11	+.7	+1.4	+3.1	+1.7	+1.7	+.3	+1.2
 Second Round							
1959-Grade 3	+.1	+.3	+.4	+.5	+.7	+.9	+.5

Many principals and teachers requested additional tests for students in other grades. They were supplied with these and they were also given help with the interpretation of the tests by the Special Services Department.²

When it was discovered that the Grade 3 and Grade 6 pupils in the City Schools were below American standards in Reading, special projects were undertaken by City Teachers to correct this weakness.

Miss Anderson, Primary Supervisor in the City Schools, in conjunction with all of the teachers from

¹Ibid., p. 16.

²Ibid., p. 41.

Primary to Grade 4 inclusive, conducted a thorough investigation of teaching methods in the lower grades with special emphasis on methods of teaching Reading. This study was carried out on an intensive scale during a period of six weeks and resulted in a report which has been received with a great deal of interest in Halifax and in other Canadian cities. It was the considered opinion of Miss Anderson and her Committee that the group method of instruction produced better results than were obtained under the old plan of instructing the class as a unit. Miss Anderson recommends the use of the group method by all City teachers up to and including Grade 4, and suggests that experiments, using this plan, should be made in Grades 5 and 6.¹

In June of 1957, at a Provincial Conference called to consider forming branches of the International Reading Association, the Principal of St. Patrick's Girls' School, Sister Ligouri, explained how she and her staff were overcoming poor reading habits by encouraging creative compositions. Children were led to express their ideas in their own words, even young children who had not learned to read or write. Sister Ligouri displayed some of the work of Grades 1 and 2 and the audience was amazed by the multiplicity of

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1956, p. 17.

ideas that these young children express and the natural logic displayed in their narrations. It was evident that children have lively imaginations and can learn to say things naturally and well. Sister has received many invitations to visit other centers and to explain her methods. It is the belief of the Halifax School Board that this method of teaching language will have a far-reaching influence, as it becomes better known and more commonly used.¹

In September, 1959, a Reading Institute was held in Halifax for all Grade 3 teachers under Miss Frances Poleschuk, a special consultant for Ginn and Company. In October, a similar Institute for all Grade 4, 5 and 6 teachers was conducted by Miss Barbara Sibbald, special consultant for Copp, Clark Company, Limited. The Halifax Board of School Commissioners is indebted to their publishers and to the Nova Scotia Department of Education for making available such experts in the teaching of Reading.²

A branch of the International Reading Association³ formed by Halifax teachers is dedicated to the promotion of reading skills and of sound reading habits.

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1958, p. 20.

²Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 14.

³Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1958, pp. 20-21.

The splendid program of 1958-59 has been expanded into a professional effort which has evoked substantially increased financial support from the Halifax City School Board. The Board has already assisted two Halifax City teachers to attend the Annual Conference of the International Reading Association in Toronto and the Department of Education has sponsored a third member as one of its representatives.¹

During the school year, 1958-59, the Primary Supervisor did personal reading testing with children in forty-six classrooms in the City Schools to enable teachers to group children for more sound teaching of Reading. Full diagnostic testing with forty-three children was also done, and after school hours, at the request of principals, teachers and parents, informal testing was carried out with sixty children and diagnostic testing was done with twelve children by Miss Anderson.²

In a recent newspaper article, Miss Anderson, who was guest speaker at a meeting organized by the Nova Scotia Education Association, stated that:

"A primary teacher should have a university education, should have special training in primary work, should be imaginative, should have some musical ability, and

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 15.

²Ibid., p. 39.

should really enjoy working with small children.¹
It may be added that any teacher should have these
qualifications plus a sense of humor.

¹The Halifax Mail Star, February 23, 1961, p. 18.

CHAPTER VI

HIGH SCHOOL TESTING PROJECT¹

For a third of a century, the universities and the departments of education in the Maritimes have been meeting annually to discuss problems, to share viewpoints and to offer constructive criticism of each other's efforts, through an association called the Central Advisory Committee for Education in the Atlantic Provinces. This Committee was originally established in the early 1920's as a local advisory committee to the Learned-Sills Study which was examining the educational situation for the Carnegie Corporation in the area at that time.

Since 1956, the C.A.C. has been discussing admission standards, required subjects, content of academic subjects and related matters. As an outgrowth of these discussions, the High School Testing Project was conceived, planned, financed and is now in process of execution.

The purposes of the project are: to compare.

¹Journal of Education, High School Achievement in the Atlantic Provinces, November, 1958, p. 3. This is the source of all that has been said and will be said about high school testing in this chapter.

in selected academic areas the achievement of high school students in the Atlantic Provinces with the achievement of high school students in the United States; to find out whether there is another and better way than the present provincial examinations of identifying those who will profit from university offerings, and to find out how many students do not go to university but have ability similar to those who do.¹

The plan of the project called for the testing of all Grade 11 and 12 students in each of the four provinces in all schools, public and private.

The tests which were administered to the students in the project were: (a) School and College Ability Test (SCAT) College Ability Level, Form 1A; (b) Co-operative English Test; (c) College Entrance Examination Board's Intermediate Mathematics Test.²

The organization of the project called for the appointment of a Director; and the four departments of education appointed provincial directors to assist in the administration of the tests. The official appointed for Nova Scotia was Mr. G.W. MacKenzie,³ Associate Director of Curriculum and Research, and Chief Inspector of Schools, (1957). The dates

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Ibid., p. 5.

³Ibid.

set for the administration of the tests were April 23 and 24, 1958.

In the four provinces, each classroom test administrator was required to submit a written report on the administration of the tests. While no claim can be made that the tests were administered to all the students under ideal conditions, these reports indicate that time limits were observed rigorously, that the students were keenly interested in taking the tests, and that no untoward circumstances existed to invalidate the results.

The tests in the School and College Ability series were designed and developed principally for the purpose of helping educators to estimate the capacity of each individual student to undertake the work of the next higher level of schooling. The advisory committee¹ responsible for planning this series recommended the tests for measuring school learned abilities directly rather than psychological traits or characteristics which afford indirect measurement of capacity for school learning. This recommendation was based on the following general observations: (1) the best single predictor of how well a student is likely to succeed in his school

¹The Advisory Board is made up of six representatives from universities, four representatives of the departments of education, two representatives from the school board associations, and three representatives of teacher organizations.

work next year is "how well is he succeeding this year"; (2) a certain few school-learned abilities appear to be critical prerequisites to next steps in learning throughout the range of general education - among them are skills in Reading and in handling quantitative information; (3) school-learned abilities usually can be discussed in a more objective way than can such characteristics as intelligence or mental ability.

The SCAT tests used in the C.A.C. Testing Project¹ contain four sub-tests, two of which measure skills in verbal kinds of school learning, and the other two measure quantitative skills in number manipulation and problem solving. The test yields three scores, Verbal, Quantitative and Total. (Time limit for test is 70 minutes.)

C.A.C. students had the same SCAT Verbal mean score as the United States norming population, but on the SCAT Quantitative and SCAT Total, the C.A.C. group scored significantly higher than did the United States students. One might generalize by stating that our

¹C.A.C. High School Testing Project, Report No. 1: "High School Achievement in the Atlantic Provinces" by John A. Ross: published July, 1959, by the Central Advisory Committee for Education in the Atlantic Provinces, Room 3, Arts and Administration Building, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N. S., V.2⁴; the report provides information, particularly concerning the other Atlantic Provinces; and there are eleven pages of tables summarizing the statistics upon which the findings of the report are based. Inquiries, comments and requests for copies of the report can be sent to the author at the address given in this footnote.

high school students are equal to or superior to the norming population on this test.

The Co-operative English Test may be divided into two sub-groups: (1) Expression Tests and (2) Reading Tests.

The Expression Tests in turn consist of (a) Mechanics of Expression and (b) Effectiveness of Expression.

The Mechanics of Expression test concerns matters of correct usage, syntax, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. This test yields one score and there is only one form of this test.

The Effectiveness of Expression test attempts to measure those factors in the ability to express oneself effectively which lend themselves to the objective testing technique. These include development of good judgment with regard to the construction of strong and effective sentences, a certain feeling for style, diction, and the ability to organize materials effectively. This test yields one score. The higher level form was the one administered in the Atlantic Provinces.

The Reading Comprehension Test yields four sub-scores - Vocabulary, Speed of Comprehension, Level of Comprehension, and Total Reading score. The contents include: (a) vocabulary; (b) reading to determine the meaning of words from contextual clues; (c) organizing meanings; (d) construing the writer's meaning; (e) drawing conclusions from context.

The higher form of this test was used in the Atlantic Provinces.

All test scores in the Co-operative English Test are combined to yield a Total English score.

In contrast to the mean scores on SCAT, Atlantic Provinces on almost all phases of the English Test are significantly below United States norms, the sole exception among seven scores being Level of Comprehension. This holds true even when the mean scores of the students who listed English as their native language are compared with the norming group. Thus, students tested in the Atlantic Provinces, according to SCAT mean scores, appear more capable of pursuing the next higher level of schooling than United States students, but they have not mastered those aspects of English measured by the Co-operative English Test as well as United States students. However, these two tests have not been standardized on the same population.

The Intermediate Mathematics Test, prepared by the College Entrance Examination Board, contains items based on: (a) algebra to the end of quadratics and systems of equations; (b) rectangular co-ordinates of graphs; (c) geometry (largely plane and including some elementary trigonometry).

Test items measure manipulative skills and abilities, knowledge and understanding of formulas, theorems and mathematical terms, the ability to

translate sentences into algebraic or graphic form and conversely the ability to draw conclusions from data given. Norms are based on a number of self-selected United States students who made application to take the Intermediate Mathematics Test of the College Entrance Board. The best comparison that can be made is to compare the average score of the group of Atlantic Provinces with the average score of those students in the United States who were contemplating entering university.

Atlantic Provinces students in this group are significantly below the average of the United States group.¹ (Some high school mathematics teachers have pointed out that C.A.C. students might have done better if the tests were administered later in the school year when Grade 11 students would have covered some of the topics included in the test.²)

Percentages of C.A.C. students on the basis of classification of father's occupation were calculated, as well as the percentages of married males, 35 years of age and over, in those same classifications in the Male Labour Force according to the 1951 census.

One of the purposes of the project being to compare the achievement of high school students in the Atlantic Provinces with the achievement of high

¹Ibid., p. 9.

²Ibid.

school students in the United States, the first report makes this comparison on the basis of eleven test scores on the school and college ability test, the Co-operative English Test and the College Entrance Board's Intermediate Mathematics Test.¹

Briefly the chief findings are:

(1) In the first-mentioned test, which partakes somewhat of the flavour of an intelligence test, Atlantic Provinces Grades 11 and 12 students lumped together (including bilingual pupils doing a test not specifically created for bilingual use) equalled the average mark of Grade 12 students in the United States. One could say that the group from the Atlantic Provinces is an academically more select group.

(2) On the Co-operative English Test, Atlantic Provinces students scored significantly lower than United States high school students on the total score and on the Mechanics, Effectiveness and Total Reading sections. One bright spot appears in that the Atlantic Provinces students scored higher on the level of comprehension section of the Reading Test than their American counterparts. This score provides a measure of the ability of the student to comprehend materials of increasing difficulty at the rate at which he chooses to work.

(3) In Mathematics, the Atlantic Provinces students tested who have gone on to university compare unfavorably with the United States group contemplating entering university. (Since there were no norms for a typical high school student in the United States, it was felt that this comparison would be more meaningful and more fair.)²

Other findings include: (1) wide differences between the mean ages of students in the junior matriculation grades in the various Atlantic Provinces;

¹Ibid., p. 9.

²Ibid., p. 10.

(2) wide differences in the number of Grade 3 pupils who continue in school and enroll in the junior matriculation grade; (3) a relationship between the occupational status of the father and the student's persistence in school.¹

¹Ibid.

BACKGROUND DATA ON NOVA SCOTIA STUDENTS¹

TABLE 1

Mean Age by Grade, by Province, by Total Group
with Standard Deviation in Months as of April 24.

	Mean	S.D.
All students in C.A.C. Project..	17 yrs. 4 mos...	16.8
All 11's	17 yrs. 1 mo....	11.4
All 12's	18 yrs. 0 mos...	7.9
Nova Scotia 11's	17 yrs. 1 mo....	11.5
Nova Scotia 12's	17 yrs. 10 mos...	10.1

TABLE 2

Number of Pupils Tested by Grade, Province,
Language Group and Sex

Test	Prov.	Gr.	Nat. Lang.		Nat. Lang.		B.&G. Combined	Total by Prov.
			English B.	G.	French B.	G.		
SCAT-T	N.S.	11	1869	2421	67	92	4449	6242
	N.S.	12	735	1019	13	26	1793	
Eng.C.T.	N.S.	11	1862	2415	67	91	4435	6233
	N.S.	12	738	1021	13	26	1798	
Inter. Math.	N.S.	11	1674	1912	60	76	3722	4745
	N.S.	12	565	444	5	9	1023	

TABLE 3

Number Enrolled, Number Tested by Province and Percentage
Number Tested of Number Enrolled

Province	Enrolled	Tested	% of Enroll- ed Tested
N.S. 11 and 12	6846		
Less Vocational Pupils	270		
	6576	6242	95%

¹Ibid., pp. 5-6

WITHDRAWALS AND REASONS FOR WITHDRAWALS OF PUPILS FROM
 HALIFAX CITY SCHOOLS OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, 1955-1959¹

Withdrawals	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Primary Grade	148	163	130	141	135
Grade 1	160	131	117	113	110
Grade 2	145	123	129	111	103
Grade 3	102	114	129	86	95
Grade 4	63	94	123	108	80
Grade 5	100	85	88	87	83
Grade 6	75	87	80	84	105
Grade 7	105	109	104	94	104
Grade 8	114	105	108	106	114
Grade 9	94	72	87	52	68
Grade 10	78	62	75	48	64
Grade 11	94	51	47	45	32
Grade 12	21	14	20	36	11
Auxiliary	22	21	36	28	36
Total Withdrawals	1321	1229	1273	1139	1140
<hr/>					
Reasons					
<hr/>					
Entered Private Schools	24	20	26	24	40
Left the City	886	883	903	837	791
Took Employment	327	266	277	225	230
Needed at Home	33	25	19	14	29
Illness	27	21	25	22	29
Deceased	3	6	2	7	4
Other Reasons	21	8	21	10	1
Total	1321	1229	1273	1139	1140
Under Compulsory Age	975	969	991	891	861
Over Compulsory Age	346	260	282	248	279
Total	1321	1229	1273	1139	1140

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1955, p. 18; 1956, p. 27; 1957, p. 29; 1958, p. 3; 1959, p. 30.

CHAPTER VII

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN IN THE HALIFAX CITY SCHOOLS

The results of recent studies on drop-outs from school have been a severe shock to those people who have been taking for granted the idea that all of the most intelligent children complete high school and automatically go on to university. It has been most disturbing to learn that many highly gifted students do not develop to the full their potentialities for leadership, and that in fact, some of them do not even attain a satisfactory standard education. The realization that such a situation exists has stimulated interest in the problem of the gifted child and has directed attention to the fact that particular attention must be given to the needs of the gifted. They are special cases and they require special treatment.¹

It has long been recognized that children who are mentally handicapped should be given special consideration and should be taught what they can learn by methods which are designed for their particular capabilities. In the City of Halifax for over thirty

¹Dr. M. E. Keating, February 24, 1961.

years, there have been Auxiliary Classes meeting the needs of mentally-handicapped children, and at the present time, there are fifteen such classes operating under the direction of Miss Enid Johnson. These are organized into two groups: junior classes with pupils ranging from six to twelve years of age; and senior groups with pupils from thirteen to sixteen years of age. The I.Q.'s of these students range generally from 50 to 75, although this year, there is in addition a special but small group of children who are severely retarded.¹

Before a child is placed in an Auxiliary Class, he or she is very carefully tested, checked for physical disabilities, and studied from the point of view of needs and abilities. When a decision is finally reached that a child should be placed in an Auxiliary Class, the parents are interviewed and the situation is clearly explained. In short, an attempt is made to identify and develop the abilities of these children so that they may use their limited abilities in some productive way for their own good and for the good of society.²

This need for special consideration being given to the mentally-handicapped has not been matched

¹Department of Special Services, Halifax Board of School Commissioners' Building, Halifax, Nova Scotia, (unpublished, 1961).

²Ibid.

by an equal appreciation of the need for considering the problem of the specially-gifted. It has been agreed that each child is entitled to receive the type of education which will develop his abilities to the full; and therefore, should not the gifted have their particular needs and abilities recognized in the organization of the school? With the general realization that the educational system does not seem to be developing gifted children to the limit of their abilities and in fact does not seem to hold some of them for even an average amount of schooling, there has come a demand to have this phase of education examined critically.

Aware of this increasing interest, Dr. R. E. Marshall, Superintendent of Halifax City Schools, in October 1957, appointed a Committee¹ under the Chairmanship of Miss Enid Johnson to study the problem of gifted children.² The Committee met once a week from October to March and carefully studied this problem of the gifted child.

Following are some of the conclusions and

¹Miss Enid Johnson, Mrs. S. S. Jacobson, Dr. R. E. Marshall, Mr. Fred Butler, Mr. C. V. Harris, Mr. P. V. Shaw, Miss M. L. Davidson, Miss Estelle Anderson, Mr. Robert MacKnight, Mr. Stanley MacKenzie, Mr. Tom Parker, Mrs. Donald Dodds, Prof. A. S. Mowat, Dr. F. A. Dunsworth, Miss Marjorie Cook, Miss Geraldine Thompson, and Mrs. J. M. C. Duckworth.

²Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1958, pp. 21-22.

recommendations prepared in a report¹ on gifted children by the Committee and presented to the Halifax Board of School Commissioners:

Several leading Canadian cities have established special classes for gifted pupils and are enthusiastic about the results that are being obtained.

During the year 1957-58, teachers and administrators in Halifax have spent many hours of research regarding gifted children and have prepared a report on it.

While several ways of giving special training to gifted children are mentioned, the one most favored in Halifax combines acceleration with enrichment. Acceleration should not be used beyond a maximum of two years and should not be employed at all at the senior high level.

Gifted children should associate freely with other students in games, clubs and school parties, but they should be grouped together for classroom instruction.

That along with her other duties, Miss Enid Johnson be requested to act as director of training for gifted children until classes are in operation and the appointment of a full time director has been made.

That during the year, 1958-59, the Board shall give attention to the preparation of a Course of Study and the selection and training of teachers for gifted children.

That classes for gifted children be opened in September, 1959, the number to depend upon demand, but not to exceed four.

That in establishing classes for gifted children, care shall be exercised to see that equal opportunities are offered to all qualified students and that none be registered who have not the written consent of the parents.²

¹The Report of the Group for Gifted Children, March 21, 1958, may be found in the files of the Assistant Superintendent of Halifax City Schools, from which most of the material in this chapter has been chosen.

²Ibid.

These recommendations were accepted; but, it was stressed during the meeting of the Board, that before Halifax moved into the field of helping the specially-gifted, it should be made certain by close attention to grouping and enrichment in all regular grades so that the average and better than average pupils were being taught to the limit of their abilities. This need was impressed upon principals and teachers, and they were instructed to follow very carefully during the year, 1958-59, a program of grouping and enrichment.¹

The situation at the present time is this: During the year mentioned above, an attempt was made to make certain that teaching in the Halifax City Schools was being done effectively on all levels of mental ability, but in addition, ways were planned in which to meet the needs of gifted children. To the Board of School Commissioners, the solution seems to be the establishment of special classes in which perhaps both acceleration and enrichment will be combined. In a smaller area where there might not be enough to form a special class, the answer may be chiefly in enrichment. What is now being done is experimental, but recognizing that a problem exists, it is an attempt to take positive action toward finding a solution.

¹Annual Report of the Halifax Board of School Commissioners, 1959, p. 9.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POSITION OF THE TEACHER IN REASSESSING EDUCATIONAL VALUES

Most conscious of their responsibilities, educational authorities in Nova Scotia are attempting to provide adequate and enlightened supervision to their rapidly expanding school population and the purpose of the opening chapter of this thesis has been an attempt to show how the Department of Education proposes to keep pace with this important phase in reassessing educational values.

In an effort to provide conclusive evidence of the achievement of the Halifax City Schools, the purpose, plan and progress of the Provincial Standards Project was presented in a second chapter, followed by a chapter on testing, marking, reporting, and standards of progress in relationship with the promotion policy in the Halifax City Schools.

Since the universities in the Atlantic Provinces are concerned over the failure rate among first and second-year students, it seemed practicable to report on achievement in the Atlantic Provinces for the year 1958-59, and at the same time, to give some background data on Nova Scotia students.

The approach made by the Halifax City School Board in the field of helping gifted children is considered in an effort to demonstrate that help is now being given so that average and better than average pupils may be taught to the limit of their abilities in the future.

What is the position of the teacher in re-assessing educational values? It is the feeling of the Department of Education that the teacher is the central figure in any system of supervision or evaluation.¹

A casual investigation of the position of teachers in the schools at the present time, by those concerned with the real nature of education, should prepare them to admit the need of some fundamental reforms in remedying this situation.

Will teachers ever be free from the tyranny of provincial examinations? It is true that a step was taken in that direction about ten years ago, when Grades 9 and 10 were exempted, but Grades 11 and 12 are still writing the examinations prepared each year by the Atlantic Examining Board. As a result of this, to a large extent, the whole process of teaching in these grades is to get pupils ready to pass provincial examinations. As a matter of fact, it has been admitted

¹Nova Scotia, Education Office Gazette, November, 1952, p. 6.

by students that some teachers, fearing that their ratio of success will be cut down, have counselled weak students to drop out and to go to work. Teachers are possibly driven to these desperate procedures by the force of public opinion. When provincial examination results are scandalously spread across the pages of the daily newspaper each year, parents do not judge the school and teachers by the development that goes on in the minds and hearts of the pupils that may be really being prepared for successful living but rather, by what they (and their neighbors) read in the Halifax Herald or Mail Star.

Teachers should have the right to demand well-disciplined pupils to teach and when the home falls down on its job and fails to provide the well-disciplined child, and refuses to co-operate in helping teachers to discipline such a child, teachers should have the right to reject him. How many pupils fail at the end of a school year because of the bad conduct of fellow-pupils? This is an injustice to the individual as well as to the community. If the public were aware of even the financial loss it suffers through the presence in City Schools of a comparatively small proportion of badly brought up girls and boys, it would react violently against the condition. Is it up to teachers to bring these facts before the public?

One suspects that a large proportion of the

public in some places would unhesitatingly insist that a surgeon should be free to exclude distracting personnel from the operating-room, but that the teacher should not enjoy similar freedom. It seems only reasonable to demand that teachers should have as much right as surgeons to exclude from their workrooms anyone whose conduct is defeating the purpose for which the work is being done.

Undoubtedly, many a principal would rush in at this point to object that teachers do enjoy the right to send from the classroom any student who misbehaves. This is about as true as the statement that the pedestrian has the right-of-way when crossing a street. The penalty for exercising the right may make the privilege little better than useless. Sending a pupil from class is considered an irregularity in the City Schools. True, it is tolerated in most schools up to a point, but it tends to be interpreted as an admission of weakness on the part of the teacher, since it is a conventional rather than a legal right; even as a convention, it is a temporary expedient, and it must be followed in a comparatively short time either by readmission to the classroom or by an appeal from the teacher to the principal. If the teacher had the right to expel the pupil permanently from school, temporary expulsion from class would be a powerful weapon, and its use in most instances would correct

the fault being dealt with. But the teacher in the City Schools at least has no such right, and the pupil knows it, and expulsion from the classroom accordingly holds little terror for the delinquent.

In the past, the teacher and the administrator were one and the same man. The college official gave lectures and tutorials, the headmaster taught in the upper forms, and administration was reduced to bare essentials. This seldom happens in schools today because the chiefs are too busy with administration duties to teach, or even to know their teachers and pupils. On the school level is the teacher, better paid than formerly but without prestige, coping with the age-old job of teaching the young. But the teacher today does this teaching in a system in which he or she has little or no authority whatever, in which the teacher's wishes and experience are little more considered than those of a private in an army. Above this teacher is the successful educator, who is usually a teacher graduated to the desk of administrator, a man somewhat privileged, and in his office as executive, he gives directions to teachers he barely knows, while at the same time he depends on outside boards as his final courts of appeal. It is on these boards of external business men that he depends for his success, his advancement and indeed, his professional existence. People being as they are, he is generally

compelled to deal with them on their terms and not on his own, and their terms are miles apart from those of the teachers who do the actual work of teaching within the school system.

The vast majority of teachers are a devoted body of men and women deeply concerned about things educational and if they are to retrieve the situation, they must obtain a greater control over their own activities and destinies. They should have the right to demand well-disciplined pupils to teach, and if the home does not consider the conduct of their children a major responsibility, such pupils should be rejected by way of improving the quality of educational services provided for pupils in the City Schools.

Teachers must pledge themselves to keep high, and raise still higher, the standards of the teaching profession. A profession indifferent toward its own standards can not long survive as a profession. Any and all attempts to lower certification requirements must be vigorously and vehemently resisted; a society which will accept other than the very best qualified teachers with high standards of scholarship and professional training must be informed, very forcibly, of the tragic effect such a practice has and will continue to have upon its children.

Other great social professions have grown simply by taking precautions to close their doors

upon the undesirable and the unfit. Teaching, the mother of all professions, must do likewise, and at once, if members of the teaching profession are to be worthy of emulation, and if they are to be fit to supply mankind's greatest need - the need to learn.

It is suggested therefore, that the remedy for present problems found in reassessing educational values is not to be brought to light in new pedagogical discoveries, nor in the over-refining of method and curricula. The idea that a system of education can be found that will automatically produce highly efficient young men and women may be dismissed also. It is the belief of the writer that educational values center around the teacher. Develop a teaching staff with the knowledge, the vision and true philosophy to build first, a spiritual people, then a democratic people, and all other values will take care of themselves.

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