

One of the advantages that certainly can't be ignored is the text-book rental program. Books and supplies are rented on the per year basis. Previously this was done each semester. And, by the way, the opportunity for parents to rent books for their children, instead of having to purchase them out-right, was certainly a step forward in the public school program. Sometimes the cost involved for purchasing books for a large family was prohibitive and a real hardship on the average wage earner in this community. To be able to rent books, with the stipulation that lost books or those excessively damaged would have to be replaced, was a welcomed opportunity.

The grading system has undergone many changes. Too many changes, as a matter of fact, for the writer to give a very detailed account of this in the limited time and space allowed. Generally speaking, in the seventy-five years, there were four major grading systems. The first grade reports given at Miner were those generally in use everywhere at that time--percentages. These were the average grades for a grade period percentage-wise - for example: Arithmetic, 85%; History 80% etc. Following this, letter grades were given indicating: A-admirable; E-excellent; VG-very good; G-good; F-fair; P-poor; NP-not passing. These were contemporary with the writer's years at Miner.

Later a simplified letter grading was in effect and with some variations is still in use today. These are: A-excellent (or superior); B-above average; C-average; D-poor(or passing); and F-failure to meet the minimum requirements for the grade. A system of checkmarking social habits and work habits, and the progress made by terms such as outstanding, needs help, improving etc., along with the above grading system is in use today. In the kindergarten and first grade the checkmarking is used alone.

Many school people feel that standardization in grading is not the best system for reporting a child's progress. Progressive views along this line insist that individual growth and development is the important factor--not the competitive or comparative methods that set standards incur.

Lanes, or groups, divided by capacities to learn seems to be the trend now. Lanes are commonly referred to as x-y and z, and are for the above-average, average and slow learners respectively. On occasion a double x, for the exceptionally bright, and a double z, for the exceptionally slow, learners are established. Proponents for this lane-ing feel that better work is accomplished when the range of capabilities is similar throughout the class. Dissenters feel that it makes children class-conscious and prejudiced. Miner has not recently been using the lane system--although at one time the 5th and 6th grades combined and laned groups in reading. This was during the tenure of Mr. Lautenschlager as principal. Junior high and high school programs use the lane system extensively at the present time.

There is a committee from the Fort Wayne Community Schools making another extensive study of grade reports and it is quite likely more revisions in this area are in the offing.