

*Teacher* in 1848, but even this solution had flaws. Few parents, it seemed, were taking teachers up on the offer to visit the school.<sup>1</sup>

**Commented [SEZ1]:** Comma before conjunction. But here, I actually think a separate sentence would be better to add further emphasis.

The most effective, most efficient, and longest lasting solution to the war with parents came with the idea to send home a steady stream of written communications in which each student was compared and ranked against their classmates. We now call this means of communication the report card. Willson's 1835 explanation of his "weekly reports" shows that teachers were experimenting with the idea just as common schools spread in the Northeast. The second reference to report cards (that I found) came in 1840. An anonymous teacher writing in the *Common School Journal* from "Washington City" promoted the use of "weekly reports" as a method of "exercising moral influence" over parents.<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that the author was indeed a classroom teacher, which fit a pattern. The educational innovation was born out of a grassroots experimentation to solve a common problem that transcended region. For the next twenty years, the idea of the report card spread through meetings of teacher associations, passing references in journals, and (through) word of mouth among peers. At least, in 1849 *The Massachusetts Teacher* claimed that this (is) how the report card spread. The author explained that to solve the issue of parental disengagement, "Some teachers are in the habit of issuing weekly reports, showing the standing and progress of their pupils, for the inspection of their parents." The article added, however, that it was essential that teachers be honest on the merits and shortcomings of their students, so as not to give any false hope to misguided parents.<sup>3</sup>

**Commented [SEZ2]:** The sudden appearance of the first person here is very jarring. You have not used it elsewhere in the chapter, and it seems inelegant to me.

**Commented [SEZ3]:** Start a new paragraph here, perhaps?

**Commented [SEZ4]:** Either use "through" all three times or remove it here. Using it makes your sentence non-parallel.

**Commented [SEZ5]:** I know it seems wrong, but your sentence is in past tense, so you need the past tense verb here: claimed that this WAS how the report card spread.

Several early report cards have survived in the University of Alabama's special collections. The earliest dates from December 10, 1847. The Greene Springs School, located in

<sup>1</sup> "Parental Cooperation," *The Massachusetts Teacher* I, no. 4 (February 4, 1848): 58–59.

<sup>2</sup> "Weekly Reports in Schools," *The Common School Journal* III, no. 12 (1840): 185–87.

<sup>3</sup> D.P. Galloup, "One of the Humbugs," *The Massachusetts Teacher* II, no. 4 (April 1849): 97–98.