

several specialized curricula one of which each pupil must select. Without a counseling program such a procedure may appear to be necessary, but with a properly organized guidance department in a secondary school, there is no excuse for such a clumsy administrative scheme. Each subject should stand upon its own feet and be elective under guidance. No pupil should be expected to study a subject that does not fit in with his needs, his abilities, and his prospects. The scrapping of specialized curricula and the substitution of a program of individual electives under guidance is a first step in individualizing education.

In the Providence schools this program has been in effect for more than five years during which time no insuperable difficulties have appeared. In fact, it has simplified administrative problems, decreased the cost of instruction, decreased the percentage of failures, and resulted in a constantly evolving curriculum based upon the interests and needs of the pupils.

Richard D. Allen.

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GROUP III

Mr. L. N. Morrisett, Principal of Classen High School of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, presided over Group three in the Theatre of Wardman Park Hotel. In the absence of Dr. Elbert K. Fretwell, Mr. Edgar G. Johnston, Professor of Secondary Education, and Principal of University High School, University of Michigan presented his paper.

TESTS FOR A CLUB SPONSOR

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It is probably a rare high school in the United States today which does not have at least one active club with a group

of enthusiastic pupils and a program which represents an appeal to vital interests. The high school is probably equally rare, however, which does not support several "paper clubs" which exist in name only and have no constructive accomplishment to justify their existence. A study of the rise and decline of clubs in the history of any school will reveal some abortive club ventures which never really got under way and other organizations which were once vital influences in the life of the school but which have faded into insignificance.

Clubs, like any other phase of school organization, are to be judged by their contribution to valid educational aims. The only possible educational results from the existence of inactive clubs would seem to be negative—the encouragement of a facile tendency on the part of pupils to "belong", without a corresponding development of responsibility, initiative, and social-mindedness. While a variety of circumstances accounts for the variable histories of high-school clubs, an analysis of the reasons for failure of those club programs which were not successful would indicate that in most cases the decisive factor is to be found in the effectiveness of the club sponsor.

In teaching a course in the Administration of Extra-Curriculum Activities, it has been the practice of the writer to ask students to recall instances of clubs which failed to function effectively and to indicate as accurately as they could what seemed to be the essential reasons for the failure. The following list contributed by the members of a class in the summer session of 1931 at the University of Michigan is typical. After eliminating duplications, thirty-one different causes for failure appeared. There is undoubtedly some over-lapping but each of the reasons suggested seems to contribute something to the total picture.

SOME REASONS FOR CLUB FAILURES

1. The practice of requiring students to become club members.
2. The failure to provide school time for meeting.
3. Overloading of the sponsor with other duties.
4. Allowing a pupil to belong to too many clubs at one time.
5. A lack of

administrative encouragement. 6. Lack by the sponsor of the ability to arouse pupil interest in the work of the club. 7. The lack of a definite program. 8. Tendency of sponsors to dictate to the club. 9. Tendency of sponsors to abdicate their functions. 10. Tendency of sponsors to overemphasize the importance of the club in proportion to that of other activities, resulting in a desire for special privileges and lack of interest when such privileges are refused. 11. Lack of appeal of the club program to the interest of students. 12. Insufficient student participation. 13. Lack of preparation on the part of the sponsor. 14. Appeal based on the attractive personality of the sponsor rather than upon the merits of the club program. 15. Failure to adapt the program to the needs of the school, the pupils, and the community. 16. A lack of interest on the part of the sponsor. 17. Inability on the part of the sponsor to meet pupils on their own level. 18. Lack of appreciation of the value of clubs on the part of the sponsor; he is not "sold" on the idea of clubs. 19. The making of clubs "just another class." 20. An undemocratic basis of selection for membership. 21. Careless selection of members. 22. Too great expense involved. 23. A too pretentious beginning. 24. Lack of coordination with other activities in school and community, resulting in a conflict of schedules and interests. 25. Too many (or too few) meetings. 26. Allowing pupils to be merely nominal members; they belong but do not work. 27. Too large a membership. 28. The presence of cliques. 29. Origin of the club in a fad which soon passes. 30. The fact that the club has outlived its usefulness. 31. Opposition by parents or others in the community.

Of these thirty-one reasons suggested for club failure, it is obvious that the first five are a responsibility of the administration of the school and are largely outside the control of the individual club sponsor. Of the other twenty-six, fourteen seemed very definitely dependent upon the sponsor's personality and interest. In the cases for which the other twelve reasons are given, the club may have failed because of a failure on the part of the sponsor. Certainly the situations are ones upon which he could have exerted a considerable amount of in-

fluence. It seems fair to state that in an overwhelming majority of the cases a club has failed because the sponsor has not lived up to his opportunities.

In a recent issue of the *Junior-Senior Clearing House*, Professor Fretwell presented "Ten Tests for a School Club." The last—and certainly not the least—of these tests had to do with the club sponsor. The place of this adviser is so significant in the work of the club that it seems worth while to expand the consideration of his function. A number of tentative "Tests for a Club Sponsor" are presented below. While it is hoped that the list may be of interest to all those bearing a functional relationship to the extra-curriculum activities of the school, the tests are addressed primarily to the teacher who is actively sponsoring a club or who contemplates assuming such responsibility. On the assumption that he is eager to make the club a success and in particular to insure his own maximum contribution to pupil growth, these tests are presented as a means of "checking up on himself."

1. *Does he really like to associate with boys and girls of high school age?* A sympathetic interest in boys and girls ought to be expected of every teacher. It is absolutely indispensable to success in the informal relationships of club work.
2. *Does he enlist the confidence of boys and girls?* A teacher may sincerely like boys and girls and yet be so out of touch with the points of view, the interests, and the prejudices of modern youth as to make impossible the free, natural, and unconstrained relationship which is essential to club success. Fortunately this is pretty well within the power of the sponsor to develop. Youth is usually quite responsive to sincere interest in its problems and an attempt to see its point of view.
3. *Is he keenly interested in the world around him?* The "satiableness of curiosity" which drove the elephant child through numerous difficulties to ultimate success is a quality essential to the make-up of any successful

teacher. If the club is to develop a constructive program of expanding interest and increasingly educational activities, the sponsor must be keenly alive to the significant events happening around him every day.

4. *Has he contagious enthusiasm?* Enthusiasm is likely to be a corollary of intelligent curiosity. The sponsor who is not the least bit "excited" about the things the club is doing is not likely to prove a stimulating companion and leader to the group. Enthusiasm is a flame which kindles from contact with a glowing interest. A word of warning seems necessary. Flames must always be kept under control. An unbalanced and unintelligent enthusiasm may do a great deal of damage.
5. *Does he seek to become expert in some of the fields of activity in which the club is engaged?* Obviously a sponsor with keen interest and enthusiasm and a desire to render service to boys and girls can offer much to them as he learns with the group. At the same time, a fund of knowledge and sound experience commands the respect of members and constitutes a distinct asset to the club sponsor.
6. *Is he able to give constructive suggestions for activities of the club?* Of a certain camp counsellor, it was said by one of the boys, "He seems to radiate ideas." The difference between a lukewarm attitude and an enthusiastic interest on the part of club members may be simply the difference of a club sponsor who thinks of "something new" when interest flags or who can suggest a constructive outlet for super-abundant energy.
7. *Is he able to guide without dictation?* This is a corollary of the previous test. A sponsor who has many good ideas but is too insistent upon seeing them carried out *in his way* may hinder rather than encourage

pupil growth. The sponsor must be able to keep hands off to the extent that pupils may learn by organizing, planning, and executing. If the sponsor isn't able with perfect good humor to see his suggestions modified or disregarded, he had better not make them.

8. *Has he the ability to plan systematically?* Organization is important if learning is to be assured in classroom situations. It is much more important for the adviser in the informal club group. He will, of course, not deprive officers and committees of the growth and experience which come from planning for the work of the club. As guide and adviser he must see the need of planning and understand how to do it if he is to be of help to officers and committees in this important function of theirs. If a club is to be successful, it is necessary that many members be working with enthusiasm and initiative; it is quite as necessary that their various efforts be coordinated and directed toward some common goal if the club's program is to be constructive and not to be frittered away in a variety of unrelated or conflicting activities.
9. *Is he willing to give time and thought to making the club work a success?* A sponsor cannot make a success of club work if his attitude is one of "punching the time clock." A club hike may crowd out an afternoon of golf, or an evening meeting with club leaders may replace a trip to the movies. If the club sponsor does not feel that the time invested with his club is paying rich dividends, he is not likely to make a success of his sponsorship.
10. *Is he democratic in spirit?* Is he as keenly interested in the inconspicuous pupil or the one from a poor family as he is in the school leader or the socially prominent? One of the rare opportunities which the sponsorship presents is that of developing the powers

which lie latent in every individual. The club should afford *every* pupil an opportunity for growth.

11. *Has he a sense of humor?* No single characteristic will be a greater asset to the club sponsor than the ability to see a joke even when it is on himself. He must be able to endure the exuberance of youth and its occasional silliness without becoming annoyed. With a group of lively adolescents, there are times when both the furniture and the sponsor's nerves must be of the solid oak variety, built to stand wear and tear.
12. *Is he able to find his chief satisfaction in pupil growth and not in expressed appreciation of his efforts?* There will be many occasions when pupils and parents may recognize with sincere gratitude the development club activity has fostered, but the real reward of club work will come in seeing the retiring pupil develop confidence; the awkward, cleverness; and the individualist, cooperation.

Mrs. Lucy L. W. Wilson, Principal of South Philadelphia High School for Girls led the discussion.

Preceding the discussion of education through freedom in learning *vs.* through indoctrination, it is imperatively necessary, not merely to discuss education through experience, but to provide worth-while experiences *galore* to all groups from those in nursery schools to adult learners.

At the high-school level the most important experiences, doubtless, are those that provide opportunities to develop and exercise the civic virtues.

Those who educated us in school, at least failed utterly to provide such experiences. That they were formerly in some places more or less a part of home life, perhaps partly explains why Canada has had no bank failures, no racketeering.

In our large over-crowded municipal high schools, with the majority of the teachers still believing that subject matter *per se* will save souls, it is necessary that extra-curriculum ac-

tivities shall have for their guiding principle what Fretwell calls "student *participation*."

Of the nine usual manifestations of extra-curriculum activities, home room, class organization, student association, councils, assembly, clubs, athletics, newspaper, and other publications, and commencement—no single one is more important than the home room. Also it is the most difficult efficiently to organize, to keep functioning and growing. It demands understanding, initiative, courage, and enthusiasm from at least seven-eighths of the faculty.

After struggling along for fifteen years, more or less ineffectively, finally with the aid of our social engineers, a group of our honor students, we in South Philadelphia, have at least reached a bed-rock on which we hope eventually to erect a worth-while structure—not a great Babylon which we have built alone, but a Babylon builded for us across the years, with cooperation for the keystone.

Briefly, this means a home room that is a political and social unit. We begin by submitting to the electorate the contribution, modified naturally, of the Lincoln School, asking each to rate some of her fellows privately, in regard to the qualities there listed. Later, from the highest on these lists, nominations are made for each of the numerous officers later to be elected.

In addition to this and other business transacted in the home room, guide sheets have been compiled by a few of the abler, more social minded members of the faculty, including a department head, as well as a junior appointee. These guide sheets help the children and even the teachers to conduct yearly some fifteen discussion groups, across the years, on manners, thrift, health, avocations, vocations and personality.

Mr. Eli C. Foster, Principal of Central High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma followed:

What I shall say may sound too idealistic, but I believe there are hopeful signs of a movement in the direction which this paper suggests. I wish to raise two questions and then

discuss each briefly: (1) Should extra-curriculum activities be used as a hammer to drive students to achieve in subject matter studies? (2) Can the academic teacher develop methods and materials of instruction which will cause students to achieve in their work without the outside stimuli now used?

In discussing the first question, should extra-curriculum activities be used as a hammer,—I want to say that I hope the time will come when this will not be necessary as a first aid to academic work. In a majority of our high schools a high percentage of our students are barred from extra-curriculum activities participation because of academic requirements. Clubs and home rooms are in most cases open to all, but even here the officers must qualify academically.

If we accept the principle that in training for citizenship it is our duty to provide a favorable opportunity for boys and girls to practice these duties, then how can we justify a program which makes it impossible for a large percentage of our student body to take advantage of such opportunities? Are not these academic regulations more suited to the high-school enrollment of a quarter of a century ago, before the large increase in enrollment brought a much higher percentage from the lower mental levels? Do we not now need to revise our requirements for student participation to fit our present student population?

We argue that E. C. A. offer a means of training for citizenship. Most of us believe that they do. Then why eliminate these opportunities for many by academic requirements?

I hold that extra-curriculum activities have values in themselves far more important than their contribution—through requirements—to academic achievement. I recognize that you may receive the impression that I am arguing for lowering academic standards. That is farthest from my mind. I should raise the standard but I should place the responsibility on the academic teacher where it belongs.

Did this kind of a case ever occur in your school?

Sponsor: We must elect another president for organization.

Principal: Why?

Sponsor: He has failed in an academic subject.

Principal: Is he a good president?

Sponsor: Oh, yes! One of the best we ever had.

But because he has a failing grade he cannot serve and do the one thing perhaps which he can do well. Why not take students out of academic classes because they fail in extra-curriculum activity responsibilities? This may sound revolutionary but it seems to me that it is as fair to use academic work as a hammer for extra-curriculum activities participation as it is to revise the order as we are now doing.

There must of course be close cooperation between the extra-curriculum activity teacher and the subject matter teacher. But why require the extra-curriculum activities teacher to do all of the co-operating. It is like the husband who said he and his wife never had any arguments because he always agreed with *her*.

What right do we have to hold a student out of dramatics or musical production, an athletic event, or an organization because he has failed in a subject matter field?

The second question: Can the subject matter teacher develop methods and materials of instruction which will of and by themselves cause pupils to achieve? There are some evidences that this is possible. We have some master teachers even now who are able to sell their subject to the extent that it stands upon its own feet without the aid of the crutch of outside stimuli—such as marks, credit, and qualifying requirements for organizations, and curriculum requirements. One of the curses of secondary education, all education, to-day, is the emphasis placed upon marks and credit. Some day, perhaps, we shall know enough about teaching and the selection of subject matter to suit the needs of the individual, to abolish marks and credits. When teachers learn enough about how to

teach and we have as, Dr. Briggs suggests, provided appropriate subject matter material there will be less and less need for marks and credits to stimulate work.

I am not suggesting here a separation of extra-curriculum activities from the subject matter field. I am urging quite the contrary. I hope to see the day when the distinguishing terms will be eliminated and all things worth giving time to in school will be so thoroughly integrated that the term extra-curriculum will pass from use and the term activities will be common to all educational procedure.

This integration will not come until we have learned that we cannot teach character; that we cannot teach citizenship; that we cannot teach worthy use of leisure; that we cannot teach worthy home membership; that we cannot teach international good will; that we cannot teach good health. We must learn that all of these are "outcomes" of the whole of the educational experiences of the individual.

We are far behind our theory and philosophy with our practices. We have been working at generalizing too long. We need to get down to specifics. We have delayed of course because that is more difficult.

The 1932 year book of the Department of Superintendents on Character Education is filled with the philosophy of integration. Quoting from a statement of this commission, "The goal of character education is the discovery or creation of a way of living which conserves and produces as many values as possible for as many people as possible for as long a time as possible." This statement may be applied to any of the other seven cardinal principles.

If extra-curriculum activities have values they must be made to function. If subject-matter has values they must be made to function. Each contributing to the usefulness of the other and each defensible as a worthy activity clearly contributing to useful and successful living.