R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 018 457 UD 004 221

SCHOOL GOALS, SOCIAL CLASS AND PUPIL CAREERS.

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PUB DATE 23 MAR 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.64 39P.

DESCRIPTORS- *LOW ACHIEVERS, *STUDENT ATTITUDES, *HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, *SOCIAL DIFFERENCES, *SCHOOL POLICY, EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, SOCIAL CLASS, STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS, STUDENT BEHAVIOR, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, QUESTIONNAIRES, INTERVIEWS, SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT, SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND, MICHIGAN

IN A 3-YEAR STUDY OF PUPIL MALPERFORMANCE IN FIVE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN, THE FOLLOWING FACTORS WERE EXAMINED--(1) STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIORS, (SOCIAL CLASS, MOTIVATIONS, ETC.) AND (2) SCHOOL CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES. PERFORMANCE AND MALPERFORMANCE PATTERNS WERE FELT TO BE A RESULT OF THE INTERACTION OF BOTH STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND SCHOOL CONDITIONS. RECORDS OF PAST PERFORMANCE AND TEST SCORES WERE USED TO EVALUATE STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIORS, AND EXTENSIVE INTERVIEWING DETERMINED SCHOOL CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES. RESULTS SHOW THAT STUDENTS WITH A MIDDLE CLASS BACKGROUND HAVE A SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER CHANCE OF BEING PLACED IN A COLLEGE PREPARATORY CURRICULUM IN HIGH SCHOOL, AND THAT THIS ASSIGNMENT POSITIVELY AFFECTS STUDENT PERFORMANCE. THE FINDINGS ALSO INDICATE THAT PUPIL CAREERS ARE SHAPED IN PART BY MOTIVATIONS, CAPABILITIES, AND SKILLS WHICH ARE LINKED TO SOCIAL CLASS. IN GENERAL, WHEN THE SCHOOL PREJUDGES THE STUDENT, IT MAY GENERATE THE VERY MALPERFORMANCE IT SEEKS TO ELIMINATE. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE 44TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ORTHOPSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, WASHINGTON, D.C., MARCH 23, 1967. (DK)

SCHOOL GOALS, SOCIAL CLASS

and

PUPIL CAREERS

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Paper presented at the 44th Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Washington, D.C., March 23, 1967.

The allocation of young members to adult positions in society is generally recognized as one of the major functions of public education. As new members are taught the knowledge, skills and values which enable them to participate in society, they are sorted and selected into different career routes.[1] Pupils are differentiated into categories by curriculum placement, by academic achievement, and by persistence in school, and each of these categories has attached to it a higher or lower probability of later material and social rewards.

Few would disagree that a minimal requirement for a successful occupational career in this society is satisfactory completion of the high school curriculum. Despite the ability of the secondary school to keep larger numbers of young people in school, many youth now depart before graduation. These young people, and those who have marginal educational experiences are, for the most part, seriously handicapped for the remainder of their lives. It is frequently stated that those who "drop out" do so wholly by their own choice, that they are unmotivated and uninterested in education, that they have failed in the past and therefore cannot meet performance requirements in high school and so forth. These statements are typically based on subjective observations and impressions rather than systematic study.

No one disagrees that middle class pupils succeed in school more often than working class pupils, whether one looks at behavior in the classroom, scores on achievement tests, grades, enrollment in courses leading to college entry, amount of schooling, the pattern is clear: a working class background substantially decreases the likelihood of success.[2] The question then is asked: How does social origin come to be such an important deter-

minant of differentiation among pupils in view of the demands of an increasingly specialized and technical economy and of American values which pertain to equality of opportunity for all. And, what are the processes through which this differentiation takes place? To what extent do school practices and patterns affect selections?

This paper is a report of one part of a larger study which was concerned with pupil malperformance in elementary and secondary public schools.* Our attention will be directed to consideration of the relationships between school goals, social class and career experiences of pupils. Included in the latter are academic performance patterns, "dropping out" of school, and attitudes and self-reports of pupils about school goals and practices.

Because the larger study was concerned with malperformance, this inevitably influenced choice of data and methods of study.[3] Therefore, it is necessary to outline our conception of pupil malperformance. First of all, it is known that standards for academic achievement and for desirable conduct vary among schools, and even within the same school. These variations mean that such types of malperformance as "underachievement", "classroom conduct", and "failure to adjust" are not identically defined, since different

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* Principal support was provided by a curriculum development grant from the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in cooperation with the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development; and by a research grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, U.S.P.H.S. The authors gratefully acknowledge the contributions of their faculty colleagues in this project: Maeda Galinsky, Frank Maple and Walter Schafer.

standards and judgments are employed from one school to the next, and to some extent among teachers in the same school. The aspects of pupil personality, performance, or ability presumably at issue in one situation are not the same, therefore, as those relevent in another. Second, there are many differences among schools in terms of their curricula, resources, teacher competencies, student bodies, and school organization. These variations produce wide differences in pupil learning environments, in opportunities for achievement or adjustment, and in conditions which shape the meaning of the school experience. Third, there are significant differences among schools with regard to their procedures for identifying and coping with pupil malperformance. Thus, in one school, youngsters manifesting difficulty may become the targets for a full complement of facilitating services. In another school, however, youngsters exhibiting similar difficulty may encounter relative indifference; when attention is given, it may result in loss of status and privileges for such pupils, perhaps leading eventually to their exclusion from classes and even suspension from the school.

It is proposed here that performance and malperformance patterns should be viewed as resultants of the interaction of both pupil characteristics and school conditions. Specific conditions of the school may interact with attributes of the student population to enhance or to impede educational achievement. Indeed, certain aspects of school organization and practice may contribute, inadvertently and unwittingly, to the very problems they are designed to alleviate. Because of variations among schools, pupils at the same level of ability and performance have quite different experiences, depending on which schools they attend. The import of these variations is

that we must consider any type of malperformance neither as a unitary phenomenon, nor as inhering primarily in the attributes of the pupils, but rather as a resultant of the interaction between school and pupil.

Research Design and Procedure

Five public schools systems were included in all major phases of this research which was conducted over a three-year period. Contrasting southeastern Michigan school systems were selected strategically and because they were concerned about pupil malperformance. Systematic study was directed at three major areas: (1) Pupil characteristics and behaviors; (2) School conditions and practices; (3) Group treatment methods.

Three aspects of this research will be the focus of attention in this paper: 1) Study of performance patterns of pupils over the three-year high school career (tenth through twelfth grades). We were interested in identifying performance patterns, in ascertaining factors associated with curriculum placement and persistence and in analyzing grading and other reward systems. To accomplish this objective, all pupils were identified who began the tenth grade in two high schools, Industrial High and Academic High, in the fall of 1961. Pupil characteristics and performance patterns of this class were examined by reference to official school records until 1964, when the majority of them completed the twelfth grade. 2) A second aspect of the research reported here involved study of school conditions and practices and staff perspectives. These were assessed for the five schools through direct observation; interviewing of school administrators and teaching personnel, review of documentary and file materials, and questionnaires administered to all teaching and other professional staff. These procedures permitted reliable assessment of operational differences among schools with particular reference to the ways in

which school conditions affect pupil malperformance problems. Attention was also given to the development of approaches for modification of such patterns. Periodic conferences were held with school administration and others to permit collective review and study of the understanding gained about school patterns. Opportunities were provided for consideration of the policy and action implications of study findings. Continued observation of the several schools permitted us to gain some knowledge of planned organizational change as attempts were made to implement some of the conclusions from the study findings. 3) A third facet of the study involved study of malperforming pupils and an evaluation of one approach, group work, to the resolution of problems of behavioral misconduct and underachievement.. Pupils were identified and referred in each of the schools through the usual mechanisms established for such referral by the school. Detailed information was collected about each pupil to provide bases both for study of pupil change and for comparisons between schools. The latter comparisons contributed to understanding of the different kinds of pupils and behaviors "produced" by each school's distinctive organization and patterns. An attempt was made to systematize the selection of pupils receiving group service through the use of standardized referral procedures for teachers, examination of school records, and observation of pupil behavior in various school settings. Although variations exist within and among the school systems with respect to the types of students referred for services, certain similarities

emerged. Most students fall within the "average" range with respect to intellectual ability, but the large majority were "underachievers" relative to their capabilities. Most also manifested serious behavioral problems, including disruptive conduct in the classroom or in other school areas, poor interpersonal relations with adults and peers, violation of school conduct norms, or withdrawn or isolative behaviors.

A control group design was employed in the five school systems to assess the effectiveness of the group service strategy. Referred pupils are carefully matched in pairs; one of each pair is then randomly assigned to the service groups, and the other becomes a "control" who receives whatever attention is customary within each school except the group service. Another sample is randomly selected from the total population in appropriate grade levels.

Several sets of before-and-after measures were used. First, school grades, attendance records, and other official school information provided one significant basis for assessment of pupil change. Second, teachers and other school personnel completed behavioral ratings on pupils in all samples early in the school year and again later at the end of the year.[4] Third, pupils completed questionnaires and were interviewed with respect to their attitudes, self-images, identification with educational objectives, school experiences, and so forth. All of the above types of information had additional use in providing greater knowledge of the characteristics of malperforming pupils and of different school modes for identifying and responding to problematic

behavior. Our attention in this paper will be directed primarily to the first two parts of the study and only brief attention will be directed to the latter area.

School Goals and Teachers' Perspectives

The five schools studied in this research were chosen because they represented different community contexts, and it was anticipated that school staff might, therefore, have contrasting educational expectations.

Data from two schools, Academic High and Industrial High, will be used more extensively in this paper. These two schools were studied more extensively and intensively than the other schools in the project. Academic High was located in a medium-size town in which a major university was located. The school district population contained a higher proportion of persons of middle class status than did the town in which Industrial High was located. The latter town was smaller in size and it had a higher proportion of persons with lower class backgrounds. It was an industrial town although it had a smaller college within the city.

Teachers, counselors and administrators of each school were asked to report their perceptions of educational goals. A variety of goals were defined, but for purposes of analysis these were reduced to two major orientations: socialization goals and academic goals. The findings reported in Table 1 indicate that there are substantial areas of agreement about academic goals, but marked variations between the two schools, Academic High and Industrial High, in the relative priority of these goals. Thus, 48% of the teachers at Academic High perceived that "preparing the students for college" was the single most important goal of the principal, while their own

(See Table 1)

first choice was 'teaching basic subject matter". In contrast, teachers at Industrial High perceived that "developing good citizenship" was the most important goal of their principal, and their own first choice was 'building good character". Both of the latter represent socialization emphasis rather than academic goals. When teacher questionnaire responses were combined to produce composite low, medium, or high ratings for each teacher on both goals several of the differences noted above disappeared. Fifty-three per cent of the Academic High teachers rated academic goals highly and 52% of the Industrial High teachers did so also.

Teachers were asked to indicate the proportions of pupils whom they regarded as needing individual attention because of academic difficulties, personality problems, or misbehavior. The data in Tables 2 and 3 indicate the mean proportion of pupils who apparently needed help in three categories in the five schools studied. Teachers' views of the reasons underlying such problems are presented in Table 2 . Large proportions of teachers reported the source of difficulty for most or all malperformers was their lack of motivation or incentive. In interviews, staff frequently commented that the primary source of difficulty was the lack of motivation among selected categories of pupils. This was considered to be an attribute the student brought to the school and few indicated awareness of the ways in which educational practices in school experience contribute to the situation.

(See Tables 2 and 3)

The types of sanctions used by teachers were also investigated. It can be seen in Table 4 that teachers tend to use few positive inducements as controls, although many employ methods such as "appealing to reason" and "persuasion". Teachers often reported use of these cognitive sanctions first, and then if these were unsuccessful, more stringent methods were employed. Many teachers reported that they would "frequently" or "very frequently" lower

(See Table 4)

the grade of a pupil as one type of sanction. The use of sanctions such as "additional school work" and "remaining after school" varied among schools as a reflection of different policies and procedures.

Curriculum Placement

To meet society's demand for diversity of talent and its mandate to educate everyone, the public school has developed the so-called comprehensive curriculum.[5] As many as five distinct curricula may be developed in a school, but these usually can be combined into two tracks. One track usually consists of courses for pupils who are preparing to enter college and the other track includes "general", vocational, or commercial courses which prepare pupils directly for the occupational market or for trade schools and apprentice programs.

Enrollment in a non-college preparatory curriculum is likely to have short-run and long-run adverse consequences for pupils. Many observers have noted that pupils on non-college preparatory tracks experience low prestige or even stigma from peers and teachers.[6] Occupational possibilities are often drastically limited for those enrolled on non-college preparatory curricula. Clark has argued that long-run and short-run consequences are linked in that the lower prestige of the non-college preparatory curricula reflects the relative prestige of the occupations for which individuals are being prepared.[7]

Cicourel and Kitsuse observed the behavior of a sample of high school teachers and counselors. They concluded, "the distribution of students in such categories as college qualified and non-college qualified is to a large extent characteristic of the administrative organization of the high school

and, therefore, can be explained in terms of that organization".[8] They argued that middle class students benefit from a subtle form of "sponsorship" because higher levels of ability, potential, and ambition may be attributed to them even when non-existent.[9] Thus, counselors' and teachers' perceptions and interpretations of individual attributes may become as important or even more important than objective evaluation of ability, performance, and so forth.

In two of the schools observed in this research, Industrial High and Academic High , personnel reported in interviews that quality of daily performance in school was the major basis for recommending that students take one or the other high school curriculum. It was reported that ability and achievement test scores were also used in making the decision. The assumption on which these procedures presumably rested is that those students who have shown patterns of high achievement in the past or who show promise of success according to their test scores, should enter the college preparatory track. Curriculum placement decisions were made in the eighth or ninth grade in the schools studied. Choices were initially made by pupils and their parents and then reviewed by counselors and selected teachers at Industrial High. The procedure was initiated by the school at Academic High, and pupils and parents were then to accept or reject the recommended curriculm. Teachers' recommendations assumed great importance. When students were moved downward to non-college preparatory curricula, counselors reported that resistance came particularly from middle class parents as did pressure to move their students upward if they were initially assigned to a non-college preparatory curricula. Judgments of several school personnel

were added to and might supersede pupils' or parents preferences in making choices.

The findings reported in Table 5 indicate that nearly three out of four students at Academic High were initially assigned to the college preparatory curriculum whereas slightly more than half (58%) were so assigned at Industrial High. Girls took college preparatory work in greater proportions than boys, despite the fact that, nationally, smaller proportions actually enter and complete college.

(See Table 5)

Analysis of records indicates that both reading score and I.Q. scores were in fact linked with curriculum placement; the higher the score, the greater the likelihood of taking college preparatory work. However, a "waste" of talent occurred because a considerable number of pupils with above-average scores actually entered the lower track. Because white and middle class pupils had higher scores (and probably had received higher grades in junior high school), they were placed in the college preparatory curriculum in greater proportions than were Negro or working-class pupils.

(See Table 6)

Table 6 shows that a middle class background substantially enhances a pupil's chances for placement in a college preparatory curricula, with the pattern slightly more pronounced at Academic High, but equally distinct at Industrial High. Confronted with these figures, there is an immediate temptation to assume that social class differences reflect real differences in innate talent, and that the schools merely select according to inborn potential. It could also be argued that there is no significant difference

in innate talent across social classes, and that a sequence of related events in the home and in school works in favor of middle class youngsters and against working class youngsters. There are compelling reasons to believe that whatever innate differences do exist, these are shaped by environmental influences and that school as well as family conditions shape innate talent to the advantage of middle class pupils. Burton Clark, for instance, comments, "Bright children from culturally deprived families... go unrecognized by school personnel, partly because intelligence tests reflect learning that comes through exposure to books and informed adult conversation, as well as the natural endowment of the child." [10]

Even I.Q. differences are not sufficient to "explain away" the relationship between social class and curriculum placements. In both schools, working class students had less chance of entering the college preparatory curricula within the same I.Q. levels. Once a pupil enrolls on a given "track" or curriculum, his chances of changing his formal status appear to be slim. Only seventeen (8%) at Academic High moved from the general to college preparatory curriculum and twenty-one (4%) moved from the college preparatory to the non-college preparatory curriculum, or a total of 5% moved between the two tracks. At Industrial High, twenty-two students (9%) moved downward and only five (3%) moved from the general to the college preparatory curriculum. Thus, the choice made in the eighth or ninth grade is a critical one. The "waste" of talent becomes even more problematic when one considers Ramsoy's findings. In an analysis of a national sample she observed that about 25% of graduating seniors go on to college even though they took non-college preparatory courses.[11] Thus, high schools tend to under-produce rather than over-produce future college students in terms

of members educated in college preparatory curricula.

Our data clearly indicate that social class influences curriculum placement of pupils, and although ability and past performance exert an independent effect, they account only partially for the original association between social class and curriculum placement. As Cicourel and Kitsuse concluded, these data also suggest that perceptions and judgement of school personnel may be an important mediating factor.[12]

Placement Consequences and Pupil Careers

One of the advantages of viewing pupil's school experiences as interactions between themselves and others is that attention is directed both to individual pupil attributes and to definitions, perceptions and judgements of teachers, counselors, and other staff. Implicit in this conception is that exchanges or interactions occur over time. Thus, we are directed to the notion of career -- the sequence of interactions experienced by youngsters in programming through school. It was noted above that events in pupils' school careers increase or decrease the likelihood of entering college preparatory courses. The outcomes observed were produced by both school and pupil characteristics.

Let us now examine additional factors which may mediate between social origin and pupil achievement and careers. Such factors include curriculum location, grade point average, I.Q., reading score and so forth. Curriculum location is a mediating factor within the school itself and is largely independent of the ability or skill of particular pupils. Many years ago Hollingshead reported that at Elmstown High working class pupils were at an initial disadvantage in the competition for high grades, in that they were

assigned more often to the lower curriculum and in that the availability of high grades was less on the lower track.[13] Cicourel and Kitsuse have reported similar findings in their recent study of Lakeshore High.

Differences between major curriculum tracks become clear when all grades are examined for the three-year period. Thus, the findings in Table 7 show that in both Industrial High and Academic High the distribution of course marks differed notably between the non-college preparatory and college preparatory tracks. At Industrial High, 47% of all course marks in courses that are stratified by curriculum were A's and B's for the college preparatory sections, as contrasted with only 19% in the non-college preparatory sections. The pattern is the same at Academic High: 52% of all course marks given in the college preparatory sections were A's and B's, compared with 22% in the non-college preparatory sections. The reverse pattern appears at the D and E levels in both schools.

(See Table 7)

Two alternative arguments present themselves in interpreting these differential grade distributions. First, it may be that objective performance is lower in non-college preparatory courses and that the application of universal standards of achievement quite naturally results in lower rewards accruing more frequently to students on the lower tracks. Second, it may be that there is little or no difference in objective performance (independent of teacher assessment) between the two tracks, but that because of a lower "ceiling" on rewards at the non-college preparatory level, the latter pupils have greater difficulty receiving as high course marks for the same quality work. In other words, differences between curricula in proportions of high and low grades may simply reflect differences in availability of high course

marks. The latter interpretation receives considerable support when the findings in Table 8 are examined. Grade differences persist for both schools when pupils are divided according to their I.Q. levels. Although we could not measure the objective performance of pupils apart from the grading practices of teachers, the data clearly suggest that differences in course marks are to some degree a result of different grading standards. In other words, if two pupils performed at the same level when measured objectively, their chances of receiving good grades would be different between the two tracks. Some of the differences in scholastic rewards might reflect the outcome of differences in reading skill. If that were the case, curriculum differences in achievement should decline within reading skill levels and within social classes if reading skill is highly correlated with objective performance and if a universal standard of performance is applied. In fact, however, every comparison reveals that pupils in the lower track fared less well. For example, at Industrial High, 85% of working class pupils who had high reading scores and who were on the college preparatory track were in the top half of their class in overall grade point average, while only 53% of those at the same reading score and social class levels but who were on the non-college preparatory curriculum achieved that high. Similar curriculum differences appeared at both schools within each reading score and social class level. These findings further support the notion that lower reward ceilings confronted pupils enrolled in the non-college preparatory curricula.

It appears that there may be an absolute or universal grading scale in the high schools with an arbitrary devaluation of performance within the

(See Table 8)

general curricula. Some teachers stated that it was widely accepted that grade average could be used to rank the entire student body on a single continuum according to an absolute criterion of performance. One teacher explained that, "If such a system did not exist, it might be possible for the top ranking students of the class to be someone in the general curriculum." It is interesting to note that no such notion prevails in post-secondary schools and colleges. Instead, students in each class are typically graded by the instructor with reference only to performance criteria appropriate to that course and at that level of study.

The overall grade point averages for the cohort of pupils studied rose as they progressed from semester to semester. Substantial increases were observed in the proportion of pupils attaining a 3.0 overall average or higher, and a substantial decrease in the proportion receiving a 1.4 average or lower. It is possible that both performance and grading criteria shift upward from semester to semester, but not necessarily at the same rate. Even when dropouts were excluded, average grades increase over time; therefore, it appears that grading standards tended to become relatively more lenient between the tenth and twelfth grades at all achievement levels.

Information presented in Table 9 points to an important difference between the tracks in grading practices that seem to be less open to question than the differences which were observed in the distribution of course grades. When grade point averages (G.P.A.) over time were analyzed by curriculum, it was observed that grading practices become more lenient for pupils in the college-preparatory curriculum than for those in the non-college preparatory curriculum. The findings in Table 9 compare increases in overall G.P.A.

(See Table 9)

between semesters 10A and 12B for all pupils according to their 10A G.P.A.. Fifty-seven per cent at Industrial High and 63 per cent of the pupils in the general curriculum at Academic High with G.P.A.'s of 1.4 or below in 10A moved up, compared to 80 per cent and 94 per cent respectively of those in the college preparatory curriculum in the two schools. Differences between the curricula were particularly large for those pupils with a G.P. A. of 2.5 or higher. At Industrial High, 67 per cent of the college preparatory pupils who began with a G.P.A. between 2.5 and 2.9 moved into the next highest category, while only 9 per cent did so of those who began at the same G.P.A. level but took non-college preparatory courses. The comparable proportions at Academic High are 48 per cent and 31 per cent.

It is apparent that grading standards became relatively more lenient through time, particularly on the college preparatory track. This is not to say that standards became more lenient in an absolute sense, but only relative to pupil performance. This increasing relative leniency is viewed as a part of an organizational pattern. That is, the patterns partly involve the performance of pupils, and also involve changes in judgments of such performance.

Social class also had an effect on grading over time. Somewhat greater proportions of middle class pupils who had G.P.A.'s below "C", in semester 10A moved upward during the following semesters, than was true for working class pupils. It is possible that teachers expect middle class pupils to show greater improvement in their performance over time. Thus, teachers may encourage and present differential expectations to m i ddle class as compared

with working class pupils. These views may, in turn, lead to different evaluations of actual performance.

These findings on changes in gradepoint averages over time strongly suggest that once pupils are assigned to the general curriculum, their chances of attaining better grades are reduced, and their chances are also less of moving upward in G.P.A. during subsequent semesters. This "mechanism" may work to the detriment of non-college preparatory pupils in two ways. First, the likelihood of receiving high grades is less on the general track because of the lower progressive relative leniency among teachers at that level. This is especially so if objective performance goes up at the same rate in the two curricula, but objective performance standards go up at a more rapid rate on the general curricula. Second, as general curriculum pupils become aware of these differential opportunity patterns, they are likely to reduce their motivation to perform at the level of which they are actually capable.

If pupils are to continue to perform satisfactorily in school over extended periods of time, rewards for achievement must be available to all. This study indicates that rewards were not equally available to pupils in the non-college preparatory curriculum. In addition, rewards in the form of participation in extra-curricular activity were often denied to these pupils as their grades declined or remained low; therefore, double and even triple penalties were associated with decline in grade point average. The linking of secondary rewards and sanctions to grades may result in far

more than reinforcement of academic criteria since it denies the poor performer legitimate alternative opportunities for recognition and success. His motivation to continue trying and his commitment to educational objectives is thereby jeopardized at the very time when additional support may be needed to stimulate effort. Pupils were observed and interviewed to ascertain their attitudes toward the non-college preparatory curricula. With few exceptions, it was viewed to be of low status by teachers and pupils alike. At Academic High this was particularly the case, and pupils reported that they often hid their books so that others would not know that they were in the general curriculum. Status differences were less marked at Industrial High, but pupils were still aware of differences and disadvantages for a pupil on the general curriculum.

Perhaps of greatest consequence for adult role placement is whether or not a person graduates from high school because occupational and income ceilings are much lower for persons who lack the high school diploma.[15] Successful completion of high school educations is increasingly demanded because of technological and bureaucratic demands in this society.[16] Unfortunately many youth still leave school before they have completed the twelfth grade.

The findings presented in Table 10 show the frequencies and percentages of pupils in both schools who remained in school over the three-year period, dropped out, or transferred to another school. Twenty-one per cent of the cohort at Industrial High and 13 per cent at Academic High dropped out of school before the end of the twelfth grade. The greater number of pupils dropped out during or immediately after semester 11B at Industrial High. The larger number dropped out an entire year earlier at

(See Table 10)

Academic High during or immediately after 10B.

Dropouts tended to be disproportionately represented in the following categories in both schools: boys, Negroes, those from working-class families, pupils with lower I.Q.'s, those lower on reading test scores and in overall achievement, those with lower G.P.A.'s, and those in the general curriculum. The data in Table 11 report the percentage of pupils who were dropouts in each of these categores. Grade-point average was the single factor most important in predicting who would drop out and who would not. Forty-one per cent of the drop outs at Academic High within the fourth quartile G.P.A. and 63% at Industrial High were in the same quartile. Dropouts also tended to show greater decline and less improvement in grades than did graduates. It was stated earlier that the longer one remains in school, the better his chances become of receiving a higher G.P.A., but unfortunately most drop-outs leave school before they can reap the benefits of later and relatively more lenient grading practices.

(See Table 11)

Several studies have also shown achievement to be positively associated with remaining in school until graduation. As one writer suggests, this is not difficult to interpret, "it seems entirely reasonable that any normal person would seek to escape as soon as possible from any situation in which he persistently found himself branded as incompetent." [17]

In examining interrelationship among pupil characteristics and dropping out of school, it became apparent that curriculum placement was strongly associated with leaving school before graduation. The findings in Tables 12 and 13 indicate that pupils placed in the non-college preparatory or

general curriculum were far more likely to drop out of school than those on the college preparatory curriculum. Overall 4 per cent at Academic High and 5 per cent at Industrial High of the dropouts were in the college preparatory curriculum while 35 per cent and 47 per cent, respectively, were in the general curriculum. These differences hold for both high and low I.Q. scores and for middle-class and working-class youth. Differences were slightly more pronounced at Industrial High than at Academic High, and furthermore, a higher proportion of pupils in the former school dropped out at each social class level. This suggests that different school responses to low achievement may produce differing tendencies of such pupils to drop out of school.

It is frequently asserted that malperforming pupils are not committed to educational goals and are not interested in school. These attitudes, then, are believed to be a significant factor in their school behavior. In each of the schools studied school staff identified a sample of pupils who needed additional attention because of behavioral misconduct and/or underachievement, relative to their ability. A second sample of male pupils was randomly selected from the total population of the school, with the malperformers excluded in this selection. These pupils are identified in Tables 14 and 15 as "randoms", while the other pupils are referred to as "malperformers".

It is not possible here to report in detail the information obtained through interviews and written questionnaires administered to pupils, but the results in Table 14 clearly indicate that malperformers continue to maintain a basic commitment to succeeding in school, and that they value

(See Table 14)

educational goals even when experiencing personal failure. Since none of the differences in this table were statistically significant at the .02 level, it can be inferred that the two groups of pupils were not dissimilar in their basic attitudes. Although malperformers were interested in and committed to educational goals, they reported that they did not put forth the same amount of effort in their school work and frequently engaged in a number of unacceptable activities. They reported having poor reputations with teachers and did not perceive teachers to be helpful to them. They reported that they did not try as hard, lacked study skills, found it difficult to ask teachers for help and failed to complete school assignments.

How does one account for the differences between malperformers' general or long-term commitments and their immediate efforts? It is our view that these disjunctures represent a "turning away" from goals that are largely unattainable because of deficiencies in necessary academic and interpersonal skills. Their goals and underlying attitudes were positive, and they possessed adequate intellectual capabilities. But they had not acquired the competencies needed to succeed in school. They were caught in a spiralling situation of diminishing rewards and encouragement, and of increasing frustrations and sanctions.

The findings reported in Table 15 show that malperformers, when compared to randoms, are generally pessimistic about their chances for success in school and about their future.

(See Table 15)

Summary and Conclusion.

The findings reported in this paper provide substantial support for the assumption that pupil malperformance is most usefully viewed as a consequence

of school-pupil interactions. Both within-school and between-school variations were noted in teachers' perceptions of educational goals, in curriculum placement patterns and outcomes, and in pupil careers. The findings indicate that pupil careers are shaped in part by motivations, capabilities, and skills which are social class-linked, and in part by opportunities and responses of the organization through which cohorts and particular individuals pass. The conception of careers as on-going interactions has aided in the identification of some of the ways in which the school itself shapes pupils' careers. The school itself may maintain or even generate the very malperformance it seeks to eliminate by offering limited opportunity for educational attainment for some pupils, by judging pupils adversely because of attributes which are independent of their actions, by undermining existing motivation through unwise use of control practices, and by making it exceedingly difficult for the pupil to "find his way back" once he has been defined as a malperformer.

In none of the schools studied were the outcomes which we observed those which were deliberately sought or desired by the staff, teachers or administrators. The public schools, like many other organizations which deal mainly with people, lacked information needed to monitor operations and to evaluate results. Much time was spent in retaining individual pupil files which contained a partial chronology of each youngster's experience through the public school. These files were often poorly maintained, and furthermore, they were likely to contain highly selective information. Schools did not record or retain systematically information about phases of school operations. Such information could enhance rational decision-making

by making available data about the variable effects of different school programs and structural arrangements.

An adequate information system would entail the full exploitation and use of basic information already being collected. At the same time, that information is recorded for file entry, it would be routinely processed for organizational monitoring and evaluation purposes. Analysis procedures are currently available to permit utilization of infomation in a variety of ways. Of particular importance is the feedback of appropriate types of information to teaching personnel, to school administrators, and to policy-makers so that rational decision-making can be enhanced.

TABLE 1

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF EDUCATIONAL GOAL PRIORITIES

Goal Priorities For:		School: Academic Heights	School: Industrial Heights
		(d) (e)	
(a) Self	1	B 33%	A 26%
	2	A 16%	B 20%
	3	F 16%	F 20%
Principal			
(b) As seen by teachers -	1	D 48%	G 24%
	2	B 17%	A 16%
	3	I 17%	B 13%
Parents			
(c) As seen by teachers -	1	D 41%	B 41%
	2	B 31%	D 13%
	3	A 9%	F 13%

(a) "Which goal do you yourself stress most?"
(b) "Which goal does the principal stress most?"
(c) "Which goal do you think the majority of parents from this school would say is the most important for your school to stress?"
(d) A = Building good character -- like honesty, dependability, etc.
B = Teaching basic subject matter and skills (arithmetic, reading, science, etc.)
C = Providing vocational training
D = Preparing the students for college
E = Maintaining classroom order and discipline
F = Developing the students' interest in learning
G = Developing good citizenship
H = Developing emotional maturity
I = Developing intellectual ability
J = Other (write out)_____
(e) Figures are the percentages of teachers in each school who stress each listed goal the most. Only the three most frequently chosen items were selected for each response category listed above. Thus, in no case does the total add up to 100%.

TABLE 2

Teachers' Reports of Proportions of Students Needing Individual Attention[a]

Type of Problem	School				
	A	B	C	D	E
1. "Academic Difficulties"	14%[b]	18%	17%	22%	25%
2. "Personality Problems"	9%	12%	12%	18%	13%
3. "Misbehavior"	8%	9%	8%	22%	14%

(a) "Approximately what percent of your students need you individual attention

because of academic difficulties?
because of personality problems?
because of misbehavior?"

(b) The figures in the table are the mean proportions for each type of problem in each school.

TABLE 3

Teachers Beliefs about "Sources" of Difficulties of Students Who Misbehave and Underachieve[a]

Source	School				
	A	B	C	D	E
1. "Limited Intelligence	15%[b]	16%	15%	12%	21%
2. "Don't have enough incentive, don't care enough"	66%	57%	37%	74%	61%
3. "Don't have reading and other necessary academic skills"	28%	43%	41%	68%	52%
4. "Don't have necessary social or 'human relations' skills"	35%	38%	24%	65%	49%
5. "Psychological or emotional problems"	35%	23%	15%	41%	21%

(a) "Thinking generally about the students in this school with academic difficulties and who misbehave, how many, in your opinion, have the following characteristics?"

(b) Percent of teachers responding "most" or "all"

Percentage of Teachers Reporting "Frequent" or "Very Frequent" Uses of Certain Classroom Sanctions, by School and Sanction[a]

Sanction	School				
	A	B	C	D	E
A. Cognitive					
Using persuasion rather than coersion	83%	86%	67%	82%	73%
Appealing to reason	89%	82%	70%	59%	91%
B. Psychological Isolation					
Sarcasm	17%	13%	18%	35%	18%
Ignoring	25%	18%	10%	35%	27%
C. Physical Isolation					
Moving Seat	57%	59%	48%	71%	64%
Threat of Dismissal from Class	38%	63%	39%	59%	64%
Sending to Hall	6%	11%	10%	15%	21%
D. Social Pressure					
Peer Pressure	46%	34%	41%	59%	39%
Calling Parents	15%	2%	21%	38%	42%
E. Positive Indictments					
Giving certain priviledges	38%	38%	41%	71%	45%
F. Other Negative Sanctions					
Additional Schoolwork	4%	19%	3%	15%	15%
After School	1%	7%	28%	38%	55%
Taking Away Priviledges	18%	27%	5%	27%	24%
Lowering Grade	26%	32%	15%	32%	15%

[a] "Here are specific methods which are sometimes used to prevent classroom misbehavior from recurring. Please indicate the frequency with which each method is used in your classroom." Response alternatives were: "Very Frequently," "Frequently," "Infrequently," and "Very Infrequently." The figures given are the combined percentages of teachers responding "Frequently" or "Very Infrequently."

TABLE 5

ORIGINAL CURRICULUM PLACEMENT BY SCHOOL (in percentages)

School	Original Curriculum Placement		Total	Total N
	College Preparatory	Non-College Preparatory		
Industrial Heights	58	42	100	(404)
Academic Heights	71	29	100	(753)

TABLE 6

Original Curriculum Placement by School and Social Class (in percentages)

School and Social Class	Original Curriculum Placement: College Preparatory	Non-College Preparatory	Total	Total N[a]
Industrial Heights				
Upper Middle	79	21	100	(72)
Lower Middle	77	23	100	(40)
Upper Working	60	40	100	(90)
Lower Working	48	52	100	(149)
Academic Heights				
Upper Middle	89	11	100	(370)
Lower Middle	67	33	100	(101)
Upper Working	49	51	100	(144)
Lower Working	48	52	100	(115)

[a] The term "Original Curriculum", rather than "Curriculum" is used to indicate that the figures refer to 9B curricula, rather than to the curricula on which students graduate.

TABLE 7

Course Mark Distributions by School and Curriculum (in percentages)

School and Curriculum[a]	Course Mark: A	B	C	D	E	Total	Total N
Industrial Heights							
College Preparatory	16	31	32	15	5	99	(2722)
Non-College Preparatory	3	16	35	36	10	100	(1524)
Academic Heights							
College Preparatory	20	32	34	12	3	101	(5499)
Non-College Preparatory	2	20	41	27	10	100	(1818)

[a] In each school certain courses are divided into sections by curriculum. The figures here are based only on such courses. At Industrial Heights, these are English, mathematics, and science; at Academic Heights, foreign language, English, mathematics, science, and social studies. This table consists of marginals of Table , in which I.Q. is controlled. Therefore, course marks distributed to students whose I.Q. score is unknown are not included here.

TABLE 8

Course Mark Distributions by School, I.Q., and Curriculum (in percentages)

School, I.Q.[a] and Curriculum	Course Marks A	B	C	D	E	Total	Total N
Industrial Heights							
High							
College Preparatory	20	35	30	11	3	99	(2102)
Non-College Preparatory	5	25	37	23	9	99	(363)
Low							
College Preparatory	3	19	39	29	10	100	(65)
Non-College Preparatory	2	13	34	40	10	99	(119)
Academic Heights							
High							
College Preparatory	27	35	28	8	2	100	(3553)
Non-College Preparatory	4	44	40	11	2	101	(166)
Low							
College Preparatory	7	25	43	19	5	99	(1946)
Non-College Preparatory	2	18	41	28	10	99	(1652)

[a] I.Q. cutting points are as follows:

	Industrial Heights	Academic Heights
High	109 and above	109 and above
Low	108 and below	108 and below

TABLE 9

Movement into Higher Grade Average Categories Between Semesters 10A and 12B, by Curriculum Location and 10A Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average in 10A[1]	CURRICULUM			
	College Prep.		General	
	Academic Heights	Industrial Heights	Academic Heights	Industrial Heights
3.0 and above	--	--	--	--
2.5 - 2.9	48%	67%	31%	9%
2.0 - 2.4	70%	33%	61%	23%
1.5 - 1.9	80%	71%	61%	37%
1.4 and above	94%	80%	63%	57%

[1] Where 4.0 = A, 3.0 = B, etc.

TABLE 10

Cumulative Percentages and Frequencies of High School Students Who Dropped, Transferred and Remained in School , By Semester

	Semester							
	10A[1]	10B	11A	11B	12A	12B	12B (end)	N (end of 12B)
INDUSTRIAL HEIGHTS								
Per Cent of Students Who Had Dropped	0	3	8	12	19	21	21	
Number of students who dropped each semester	(0)	(13)	(20)	(15)	(29)	(8)	(0)	(85)
Per Cent of Students Who Had Transferred	0	2	5	6	8	9	9	
Number of students who transferred each semester	(0)	(9)	(12)	(5)	(7)	(3)	(0)	(36)
Per Cent of Students Still in School	100	95	87	82	73	70	70	(283)
ACADEMIC HEIGHTS								
Per Cent of Students Who Had Dropped	0	2	5	7	10	12	13	
Number of Students who dropped each semester	(14)	(26)	(16)	(18)	(12)	(7)		(93)
Per Cent of Students Who Had Transferred	0	1	5	6	9	9	9	
Number of students who transferred each semester	(7)	(29)	(8)	(22)	(2)	(1)		(69)
Per Cent of Students Still in School	100	97	90	87	81	79	78	(591)

[1] Percentages refer to beginning of semester, exc ept for the second 12B figures.

TABLE 11

Percentages of Drop-Outs Among Various Categories of Students

	Per Cent Who Dropped Out	
	Academic Heights	Industrial Heights
Sex		
Boys	17%	24%
Girls	9%	22%
Race		
Whites	13%	19%
Negroes	38%	27%
Social Class (based on father's occupation)		
"Upper Middle"	5%	7%
"Lower Middle"	11%	11%
"Upper Working"	20%	15%
"Lower Working"	32%	31%
I.Q. (Quartiles)		
1 (High)	3%	5%
2	3%	10%
3	13%	21%
4 (Low)	26%	43%
Reading Score (Quartiles)		
1, 2 (High	3%	13%
3	8%	26%
4 (Low)	25%	24%
Overall Grade Point Average (Quartiles)		
1 (High)	0%	5%
2	3%	6%
3	5%	24%
4 (Low)	41%	63%
Curriculum		
College Preparatory	4%	5%
General	35%	47%

TABLE 12

Percentages of Drop-Outs among "College Preparatory" and "General" Students with "High" and "Low" I.Q. Scores

I.Q.	Curriculum	Per Cent Who Dropped Out	
		Academic Heights	Industrial Heights
High	(109 and above)[1]		
	College Preparatory	2%	3%
	General	14%	35%
Low	(108 and below)		
	College Preparatory	4%	6%
	General	30%	40%

[1] The cutting point was the median score on the California Test of Mental Maturity

TABLE 13

Percentages of Drop-Outs among "College Preparatory" and "General" Students from "Middle Class" and "Working Class" Homes

Social Class	Curriculum	Per Cent Who Dropped Out	
		Academic Heights	Industrial Heights
"Middle Class"			
	College Preparatory	1%	1%
	General	25%	33%
"Working Class"			
	College Preparatory	9%	6%
	General	38%	41%

TABLE 14

Pupils' Attitudes toward Educational Goals and Community Norms[a]

	Malperformers	Randoms
A. Passing courses	76%	89%
B. Getting the most from school	57%	68%
C. Getting along with teachers	40%	47%
D. Going to college	67%	70%
E. Having a well-paying job when you are an adult	76%	70%
F. Having a steady job when you are an adult	92%	94%

[a]"How important to you are the following things?"
None of these differences are significant at the .02 level.

TABLE 15

Pupils' Attitudes toward Future

Proportion of Pupils Who:	Malperformers	Randoms	S
Expect to pass courses.	24%	62%	.001
Expect to finish high school.	51%	70%	.05
Expect friends to finish high school.	42%	64%	.05
Expect to have a good record when leaving school.	16%	53%	.001
Expect to have a steady job as an adult.	28%	60%	.01

FOOTNOTES

1. Talcott Parsons, "The School Class as a Social System: Some of Its Functions in American Society", Harvard Educational Review, XXIX (Fall, 1959), 297-318; Robert J. Havigurst and Bernice L. Neugarten, Society and Education, (second edition), Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1962, 227-248; Ronald G. Corwin, A Sociology of Education , New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965, 191-214; Burton R. Clark, Educating the Expert Society, San Francisco: Chandler, 1962, 44; Aaron V. Cicourel and John I. Kitsuse, The Educational Decision Makers, Indianapolis: 1963,3.

2. A.B. Hollingshead, Elmtown's Youth. New York: Wiley, 1949; Cicourel, and Kitsuse, op.cit.; and W.E. Schafer, Student Careers in Two Public Schools: A Comparative Cohort Analysis. (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, 1965).

3. Robert D. Vinter and Rosemary C. Sarri, "Malperformance in the Public School: A Group Work Approach", Social Work, 10, (Jan. 1965), 3-13.

4. For a description of this rating instrument, see R.D. Vinter, R.C. Sarri, D. Vorwaller, and W.E. Schafer, The Pupil Behavior Inventory: A Manual for Administration and Scoring. Ann Arbor: Campus Publishers, 1966.

5. James B. Conant, The American High School Today, New York: McGraw Hill, 1959.

6. A.B. Hollingshead, op.cit., 169-172; Clark, op. cit., 82; W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, Martin B. Loeb, Who Shall Be Educated? New York, Harper and Brothers, 1944.

7. Clark, op. cit. 82.

8. Cicourel and Kitsuse, op. cit. 6.

9. Ibid., 135.

10. Clark, op. cit. 95

11. N.R. Ramsoy, See, "College Recruitment and High School Curricula", Sociology of Education, 38, (Summer, 1965), 297-309.

12. Cicourel and Kitsuse, op. cit. 137.

13. Hollingshead, op. cit., 169-172.

14. Cicourel and Kitsuse, op. cit.

...Footnotes

15. Clark, op. cit., 69-74; Herman P. Miller, "Annual Income and Life-time Income in Relation to Education: 1939-1959", American Economic Review, 50:5 (December, 1960), 962-986; J. K. Folger and C.B. Nam, "Trends in Education to the Occupational Structure", Sociology of Education 38 (Fall, 1964), 19-33.

16. Clark, op. cit. , 77.

17. H. H. Hond, "Who Drops Out of School", in W. O. Stanley, et. al. (Eds.), Social Foundations of Education. New York: Dryden Press, 1956, 236.