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THE CORRELATED CURRICULUM PROJECT: A NEW EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM FOR THE GENERAL STUDENT.

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The basic goal of the program is to initiate a new course of study which will upgrade the education of the general student and give him a sense of direction and commitment. The program was organized in five schools during the 1966 school year, and four additional high schools will be included in 1967. The Educational Testing Service of Princeton is serving as consultant in formulating plans for project evaluation. The main features of the program are: (1) exploratory courses for grades 9 and 10 in the areas of business, health, and industry, (2) specialization in one broad area in grades 11 and 12, (3) preparation of those who wish to continue their education to the 13th and 14th years in a community college or urban center, (4) special counseling and placement through the services of a full-time guidance counselor assigned to each pilot school, (5) new curriculum materials in each course and "correlation" in other classrooms of projects carried out in one classroom, (6) emphasis on improving basic skills, (7) provision for a daily team teachers meeting to plan work, and (8) training workshops for teachers. Through individualized guidance, a team teaching, interdisciplinary approach to subject matter, and emphasis on the world of work, it is hoped to remotivate the student. (MM)

THE CORRELATED CURRICULUM PROJECT

A New Experimental Program for the General Student

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
in cooperation with THE FORD FOUNDATION

BOARD OF EDUCATION-FORD FOUNDATION CORRELATED CURRICULUM PROJECT
480 Pacific Street, Brooklyn, New York 11217

MORTON H. LEVITTES
Director
858-5410

ABRAHAM M. FINKELSTEIN
Assistant Director
858-5411

THE CORRELATED CURRICULUM PROJECT: A New Experimental Program for the General Student

Purpose of Program

The basic goal of the Correlated Curriculum Project is to initiate a new course of study which will help the "general" or non-academic high school pupil. The general student in the academic high school often develops a rebellious or apathetic attitude to education because he sees no direction or purpose in his studies. Failing to qualify for college entrance, he often drifts aimlessly during his high school years. It is hoped that the new program will upgrade the education of the general student and will succeed in giving him a sense of direction and commitment.

History of Program

The philosophy underlying the Correlated Curriculum stems in part from the Richmond Plan. In 1962, Mr. Marvin Feldman, then vice-president of the Cogswell Polytechnical College, experimented with an interdisciplinary program which was introduced into two schools in Richmond, an industrial community in the San Francisco Bay Area. Pupils who had failed in their academic subjects but who had a mechanical flair were given an opportunity to study a pre-technical course leading to admission to a technical course in a community college. Teachers of science, mathematics, shop and English were programmed for a common preparation period so that they could correlate their teaching from week to week. Thus, students making a model of the Golden Gate Bridge would learn about mechanical advantage in science, would study measurement and the slide rule in mathematics, and would write descriptions of their shop project in English. The experiment succeeded in "motivating those formerly unmotivated."

A similar interdisciplinary experiment called FEAST (Food Education and Service Technology) for pupils interested in hotel management and in food trades proved to be equally successful. With the support, first of the Rosenberg Foundation and later of The Ford Foundation, interdisciplinary projects have been introduced into over 30 secondary schools in the Bay Area. An evaluation conducted by the Center for Technological Education pointed particularly to increased student motivation. "We have fewer push-outs and fewer tune-outs," was the comment of one supervisor.

Impressed by the achievements of the Richmond Plan, the late Deputy Superintendent Joseph O. Loretan initiated a pre-technical course for marginal academic students in New York City high schools. He then formulated a parallel plan for academic and comprehensive high schools, called the Correlated Curriculum, which would aid the general or non-academic student. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, Dr. Loretan proposed that in the ninth and tenth years students be oriented in three career areas: business, health and industry. Shop and laboratory subjects would be correlated with academic subjects. In the 11th and 12th years, pupils would specialize in one broad occupational area in preparation for employment or for admission to a community college or skills center. The proposal was endorsed by Superintendent Bernard E. Donovan and by the Board of Education, and was submitted to The Ford Foundation which granted a generous award to finance the project.

The project is now being administered by Morton H. Lewittes, with the assistance of Abraham M. Finkelstein, under the supervision of Superintendents Helene M. Lloyd and Harry E. Wolfson.

Pilot Schools

Correlated Curriculum classes were organized in the following schools in September 1966:

Canarsie High School, Brooklyn; Carl Cherkis, Principal
Charles Evans Hughes High School, Manhattan; Samuel Namowitz, Principal
James Monroe High School, Bronx;Oscar Dombrow, Principal
Springfield Gardens High School, Queens; Samuel Polatnick, Principal
Tottenville High School, Richmond; Paul J. Driscoll, Principal

The program will be extended to four additional high schools in September 1967. The Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey is serving as a consultant in formulating plans for evaluating the project.

Main Features of Program

1. Exploratory courses in the areas of business, health and industry in the ninth and tenth years.

2. Specialization in one broad occupational area in grades 11 and 12.

3. Preparation of those students who wish to continue their education beyond high school for a careers program during the 13th and 14th years in a community college or in an urban center.

4. Special counseling and placement services. For each pilot school the Board of Education has assigned a guidance counselor who devotes full time to the project.

5. New curriculum materials in each course, written by a team of teacher experts with the aid of consultants and advisory committees from industry. Projects carried out in one classroom are "correlated" or reinforced in other classrooms.

6. An emphasis on the improvement of basic skills. The English teacher cooperates with teachers in other subject areas in helping the student improve in his ability to read and write.

7. Provision of teacher time so that English, mathematics, science and shop or laboratory teachers can meet daily as a team to plan their work cooperatively. A block-of-time arrangement keeps teachers and pupils together for selected subjects.

8. Special training workshops for those who teach the classes.

Organization of Classes

Pupils selected for the ninth grade are about three years retarded in reading; usually, pupils have volunteered for the program and have shown some vocational interest or aptitude.

Students are given an opportunity to pursue an introductory course in each occupational area over a period of one and one-half years, as follows:

	Group A	Group B	Group C
9th Year (Fall)	Business	Health	Industrial
9th Year (Spring)	Health	Industrial	Business
10th Year (Fall)	Industrial	Business	Health

Classes are blocked as a unit for the study of English, mathematics, science and an occupational area. Pupils are programmed individually for social studies, health education, and minor subjects.

In the second half of the tenth year, pupils are given an opportunity to choose one of the career areas for a second tryout period. (One school, lacking enough ninth-grade pupils to choose from, has started the program in the tenth year. Pupils follow a trimester plan, with 13 weeks devoted to each occupational area.)

Course of Study in Occupational Areas

The introductory courses in the ninth and tenth years emphasize basic knowledge and skills in each area as well as a knowledge of occupational opportunities. Thus, pupils in Business Careers study typewriting and business practices and learn about careers in the business world. Pupils in Health Careers acquire elementary laboratory skills and learn about the human body, nutrition, and the prevention of diseases; they also gather information about health careers, a vocation which with the advent of Medicare promises to become the second largest occupational area in the country. Students in Industrial Careers, using Industrial Arts shops, study woods, metals and electricity and learn about vocational opportunities in the field of industry.

In the 11th and 12th years, students will concentrate on one broad occupational area. Courses may vary in each school depending on facilities and student interests. In Business Careers, students may study typing, office machines, small business operations and distributive occupations, in preparation for employment in private enterprise or in civil service. In Health Careers, pupils may prepare for jobs as practical nurses or nurses' aides, physicians' assistants or therapists' assistants. In the field of Industrial Careers, elective courses may be offered in areas such as buildings and equipment, graphics, plastics fabrication and transportation. Through the formation of advisory committees, a close liaison will be established in each occupational area with labor, management and the community.

Work orientation is a strong factor in creating a desire to learn. A senior in the California FEAST program is quoted as saying, "Before this, I had no plan. I was tired of school, and was just taking useless courses. Now I know the job I am heading for, my marks have gone way up."

Hopefully we will succeed in raising aspirational levels and many of our graduates, instead of terminating their education at the end of the 12th year, will continue their education by pursuing a careers program in a community college or urban center.

What Is Correlation?

The Correlated Curriculum uses an interdisciplinary and team teaching approach. The laboratory or shop teacher and the English, mathematics and science teachers constitute a team, and meet daily during a common conference period to correlate projects and pedagogic units.

Correlation is a method of instruction which emphasizes interrelationships between two or more subject disciplines. It requires a continuing dialogue, as in team teaching, to provide for the planning by teachers and pupils of meaningful correlated activities. The correlation proceeds on one of three levels: a) factual content b) expression c) thematic or conceptual development. Thus, a student who makes a continuity tester in the Industrial Careers shop will study a unit on electricity in the science room. A pupil learning about red blood cells in Health Careers may study the metric system of measurement in mathematics. Students of Business Careers may write a business letter in the English classroom or prepare for an interview. Themes such as "Form and Function," "Communication," or "Precision" offer many rich teaching opportunities for all subjects.

One student caught the spirit of correlation when he wrote in his English class:

> I enjoy going from class to class in the program, learning how closely connected each of the subjects are and how a knowledge of each is important. Sometimes I have to laugh when each of my teachers knows what we do in each other subject.

Such correlation should not be artificial and should not be allowed to become a strait jacket. Literature, for example, is usually not correlated with technology. Similarly, many units in algebra and in general science will be taught without undue regard to correlation.

Guidance

An educational and vocational guidance counselor who devotes full time to the project has been assigned by the Board of Education to each school. The counselor selects students for the project in keeping with established criteria. He helps the pupil in his adjustment to school and in his choice of specialization and course of study. He arranges parent interviews and conferences. He is always on the lookout for "late bloomers" who should be transferred into an academic course, or for students who can qualify for a special course in a unit-trade vocational high school. He directs measurement and evaluation. He establishes close contacts with industry, with health agencies and with places of business. He will also assist the student in finding employment or in gaining admission to a community college or to an urban center.

The Role of the Teacher

The creative role of the teacher in this project cannot be too strongly emphasized. He must be resourceful in finding new ways of correlating the disciplines. He must adapt the experimental curriculum materials prepared by the project staff to meet the needs of his students. The daily conference period, fortunately, provides an opportunity for a continuing dialogue among team members.

Above all, the teacher must approach the student with understanding, with patience, and with faith in his potential. As Featherstone remarked concerning the slow learner:

> Instead of tolerating him as a necessary nuisance--as a cross to be borne--the teacher must be able to accept him for what he is and believe that he has a right to the best and most conscientious guidance and instruction that can be devised.

The team teaching approach offers a splendid opportunity for teachers to watch student progress and to encourage pupils who are lagging behind. In the words of

a supervisor: "One of the best things about the team approach is that it gives the student the feeling that there are teachers who care."

To help in teacher orientation, workshop sessions were held during the spring and summer for the discussion of basic objectives and for reviewing curriculum materials. Subject chairmen have been actively involved in adaptation of curriculum materials and in assisting teachers in this pilot project.

Summary

The clue to the success of any program for the general student is strong pupil motivation. Only too often the student is listening to a different drummer. Horace Mann's warning is still true today: "The teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron."

In this program we hope to remotivate the student through individualized guidance, through a team teaching and interdisciplinary approach to subject matter, and through emphasis on the world of work.