DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 558 CE 001 329

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TITLE Can Learning Centers Assist Men with Educational Deficiencies Who Are Incarcerated and Unable to Attend Formal School?
PUB DATE Jun 73
NOTE 56p.; Eight photographs deleted because they were not reproducible

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$3.15 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Correctional Education; *Corrective Institutions; Educational Needs; *Educational Programs; Educational Research; Learning Activities; *Learning Laboratories; Pilot Projects; Practicums; *Prisoners; Student Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS California

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this practicum was to determine whether or not learning centers could help men with educational deficiencies, who were incarcerated and unable to attend formal school. Learning centers were activated and found to be an effective alternative to formal school in meeting inmate educational deficiencies, both at the elementary and secondary levels. Subsequent investigation showed that learning centers, operated on a student voluntary, informal, drop-in basis, could help these men correct or upgrade their educational deficiencies without causing their key prison work assignment to suffer as a consequence. Men with critical educational deficiencies, although referred to the learning centers, neglected to make up their deficiencies. These men for the most part failed to follow through on their own to voluntarily enroll and complete their educational objectives, as outlined by the prison's classification committee. (Author)

ED 091558

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NATIONAL ED.D. PROGRAM FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

CAN LEARNING CENTERS ASSIST MEN WITH EDUCATIONAL DEFICIENCIES WHO ARE INCARCERATED AND UNABLE TO ATTEND FORMAL SCHOOL?

by

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Practicum report, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, Nova University

June 1973

CE001329

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(Practicum report submitted to meet requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, Nova University, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.)

California Department of Corrections, Sacramento, California

State prison inmates with educational deficiencies were unable to attend formal high school classes because of critical manpower shortages in key work areas of the prison. A program was instituted to determine whether learning centers could be effective in meeting the educational needs of the inmates without dislocation of work schedules. Two learning centers in each of two geographic areas of the prison were established, each equipped to accommodate 15 students, and each staffed for day and evening sessions. The curriculum covered required high school subjects and some elective subjects. Enrollment was voluntary, with an agreement by each student to meet the teacher a minimum of once weekly. The centers were found to be a practical alternative to formal school at both elementary and secondary levels for those inmates who participated on a voluntary drop-in basis. Men with critical educational deficiencies, however, for the most part failed to enroll voluntarily and neglected to make up their deficiencies. The author recommends that for maximum effectiveness of prison learning centers, the option for voluntary participation be withheld from inmates with critical deficiencies and that they be regularly assigned to the centers. The project revealed, in addition, that more study is required to develop diagnostic process tests and to determine the number of students one teacher can work with and achieve course objectives.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this practicum was to determine whether or not learning centers could help men with educational deficiencies, who were incarcerated in prison and unable to attend formal school. Learning centers were activated and found to be an effective alternative to formal school in meeting inmate educational deficiencies, both at the elementary and secondary levels. Subsequent investigation showed that learning centers, operated on a student voluntary, informal drop-in basis, could help these men correct or up-grade their educational deficiencies without causing their key prison work assignment to suffer as a consequence. Men with critical educational deficiencies, although referred to the learning centers, neglected to make up their deficiencies. These men for the most part failed to follow through on their own to voluntarily enroll and complete their educational objectives, as outlined by the prison's Classification Committee.

INTRODUCTION

California Institution for Men Complex is located approximately 35 miles east of the city of Los Angeles, and is a minimum-medium security prison for adult felons. It is divided into three operational units, the Reception Guidance Center, Program D and Program A. Felons coming into the prison system from Southern California do so through the Reception Guidance Center. Program D serves as the holding and processing unit for all parole violators and narcotic treatment unit cases. Felons needing closer observation, supervision and security measures (medium security) are housed at the Guidance Center and Program D. Program A houses those felons requiring little supervision and with light or minimum custodial and security needs. The education program consists of academic/vocational training/ library services/and independent study. The program has an enrollment of 330 full-time students and 312 part-time students. Full-time faculty number 26 and part-time 16.

The rapid decline of prison population in California had a serious impact upon most prison educational and vocational training programs. In a prison, many key areas depended entirely upon inmate manpower. These areas suffered critical shortages, as the general population declined in number. Priority of inmate assignments to work in the hospital,

prepare the food, maintain the buildings and grounds, operate the dairy, boiler room, and laundry simply meant many inmates could not go to regular school. School enrollments declined as did the funds for academic education. Men with educational deficiencies, assigned to regular work programs, were not able to attend formal day school and the few educational courses available in the evening were elective or enrichment courses. The major portion of the academic budget was allocated to the four day contractual teachers and could not be redistributed to finance additional evening classes. The number of students assigned to the four day teachers was far below the established quota and these teachers were extremely concerned. The prison was divided into three (3) geographic areas and each area had a separate function, different types of inmates and different operational problems. A major problem too, was the extremely short length of time to serve by the inmates and the subsequent rapid turnover rate of the inmate population.

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF THE PRACTICUM

Statement of the Problem

Inmates were unable to attend formal high school classes because of critical inmate manpower shortages in key areas of the prison.

Purpose of the Practicum

To test whether or not learning centers could help men with educational deficiencies, who were unable to attend formal school.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the literature was made to ascertain why and how major program reconstruction occurs. It was important to consider how curriculum changes could best fit a changing educational program. How would individualized instruction work in the learning centers and what were the elements of its success? The faculty and students would have to operate differently but how? Faculty subject matter deficiencies, instructional resources, teaching methods, and personalized instruction, all would have an impact on the success or failure of the centers and the practicum, hence the review of the literature touched on these areas too.

Re-designing or Reconstructing Programs

Oftentimes the day to day operations of an educational activity do not produce the desired result and the need for modification, re-design, or reconstruction becomes apparent. Serious problems in performance, learning, instruction, enrollments, screening, testing, evaluating, or counseling may generate this need for change. As noted by Houle,[1] the need for program change, modification, or reconstruction may arise from many causes. He also indicated that usually the present program must be kept operational while the new program was being planned, designed, and implemented. Houle

[1] Cyril O. Houle, The Design of Education, San Francisco, Jossey - Bass, Inc., Publishers, 1972, pp. 186-219.

also noted that changes may be gradual or immediate.

Curriculum Development and the Faculty

The decision to change the curriculum traditionally involved the faculty to a great degree. Wiles[2] indicated that since 1957, some people concerned with the overall welfare have advocated directed change. They do not hold change to chance rather with development. Wiles also noted that the pre-prepared or pre-packaged instructional system can be introduced successfully, despite original reluctance or opposition on the part of the faculty. He noted that faculty members began to prefer new methods within four months to a year after introduction. Wiles further explained that successful innovation required the providing of assistance to teachers as they implement the new program. He noted that the most persuasive experience that can be provided to show the faculty the value of a new innovation is to make provisions for them to visit a new program and see it in operation.

Curriculum Issues

Producing a new curriculum would not necessarily mean that the new one was better then the old. The new learning center curriculum would have to attain a sequencing within the balance of the composite curriculum. Wiles observed that the administration should not make the curriculum

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[2] Kimball Wiles, Supervision for Better Schools, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1967, Third Edition, pp.93-116.

decision without thorough consideration by those who would be involved in its implementation.

Individualized Instruction

The vast variety of individual student needs at the Complex and the limited number of teachers available precluded traditional classroom instruction. Individualized or personalized instruction was the only practical instructional technology feasible. Frazier[3] noted seven elements of success in utilizing individualized instruction. Mastery is the goal and the teacher needs to know what is to be learned. We need to identify readily what is learnable. Materials that are studyable are necessary and we now know how to provide a one-to-one relationship between teacher and pupil. We now know also, how to keep track of independent learning better than before. We are now able to organize students according to successive levels of progress. Frazier rightfully asks if we are ready to assume responsibility for re-designing our program to provide more adequately for this larger aspect of learning that sequencing and careful organization of facts and skill segments is going to provide? Frazier concluded by noting that individual differences among people are a precious asset and that resistance to easy change is man's insurance of stability.

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[3] Alexander Frazier, "Individualized Instruction," Curricular Concerns In a Revolutionary Era, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1971, pp. 28-65.

The Changing Role of the Teacher

The concentrated focus in America education today, is upon the cultivation of intellectual power. Lee[4] observed it is widely believed that if this is to come about skill and understanding in the basic subject matter disciplines stand as primary concerns of the school. The idea that education has a set place to begin or an ending point is rejected today, according to Lee and the fixed grade level, over-concern with grade placement level has faded somewhat, being replaced with a stress upon continuity from grade to grade. Lee also reported the growing committment of education is to try to help people learn how to learn. Teacher specialization and increased use of specialists has concentrated the approach to teaching and Lee noted the teacher must now function as a catalyst in the stimulation of the desire and urge to inquire and the oversight of individual, independent study. In summary, Lee saw the teacher's role as less didactic and more tutorial, and becoming less the source than a resource for assistance, guidance and information.

Instructional Resources and Developing the Independent Learner

It is an accepted fact that instructional resources in the schools today, have increased significantly over the years.

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[4] Gordon C. Lee, "The Changing Role of the Teacher", The Changing American School, The sixty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, University of Chicago Press, 1966, pp. 9-31.

Dale[5] noted however, that despite such increase, schools have in fact under-emphasized the use of media (other than reading) which could bring rich rewarding experiences to all learners. The use of the same textbook, reading, reciting, have been assumed to be the best method for teaching in spite of the problems of drop-outs, failures, lack of interest or application. Dale contended the school has failed these students and that the vast curriculum changes, brought about by the School Mathematics Study Group and others, have caused a change in the character and quality of instructional materials. Dale noted a possible weakness in the use of programmed materials in that superficial learning might well result unless provision is made for learning by doing. Dale saw the use of programmed instruction as a part of a unit of instruction and as playing an important role in the method of instruction.

Learning has as its goal the development of the individual - the individual learner. Dale contended the use of instructional materials and methods will be used to decrease dependent learning and increase independent learning. In summary, Dale concluded that the explosion in communication and technology has produced ideas faster than we can use

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5 Edgar Dale, "Instructional Resources," The Changing American School, I.B.I.D., pp. 84-109.

them and we know more about changing tools than we know about changing the workman. We lack the competence in selecting, using and evaluating machine and systems technologies. The big problem will not be with teacher rejection of a proposed change over. It will be the complexity involved in taking individual differences seriously and to develop a systematic, coordinated plan for servicing these differences.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUALIZING A SOLUTION

In conceptualizing a solution the problem was analyzed, resources examined, and an objective formalized.

Re-assessment of the Problem

The basic problem was failure to meet educational needs of inmates assigned to key work areas of the prison due to a critical inmate manpower shortage. The present school program failed to meet these needs in its present form. Lack of funds precluded additional evening classes. Low enrollments existed in the day school and some inmates had official stipulations to complete certain educational objectives prior to their parole and were not able to do so.

Resources Examined

Faculty members with broad backgrounds and experience were available and were concerned and willing to help these men in any way they could. Classrooms, instructional supplies, operating expenses, supervision, and institutional support were all available. Inmates were asking to study independently in their housing units evenings and weekends. The excellent experiences of the external school established at California State Prison, San Quentin, provided important data on independent study. These data were readily available to the staff and faculty. Certain times of the day most of the inmates could get away from their job assignments for periods of thirty (30) minutes up to two hours. In general,

the foreman, officers, and staff were supportive of education and willing, in most cases, to assist the inmate, but the institutional work had to be done on schedule.

Objective Formalized

The objective was to meet the educational needs of inmates assigned to key work areas of the prison and could not attend formal school. Some method of instruction had to be formalized that would be flexible enough to lend itself to informal, volunteer, drop-in-type inmate participation and broad enough in scope and content to meet the varied subject matter needs of many inmates functioning at many levels of competency.

The objective could be best realized by establishing an informal, open-door type educational setting as a center of learning available to inmates day and night on a drop-in basis, yet with the guidance, understanding, and assistance of a credentialed, qualified and interested teacher, available at all times.

CHAPTER IV

DESIGN AND METHOD

Activation and Operational Plan

Establish two Learning Centers (23' X 29') in each of two geographic areas of the prison. Each Center to be staffed by one full-time teacher (days) and one part-time teacher (evenings). The Centers would operate from 8:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M., and from 12:30 P.M. through 4:00 P.M., daily, on Mondays through Fridays. The Centers would operate evenings from 6:30 P.M. through 9:30 P.M., Mondays through Thursdays. Each Learning Center is equipped to accommodate fifteen students at any one time A maximum of fifty (50) students per teacher was estabi shed.

Enrollment would be voluntary, with ar greement by the student to meet the teacher a minimum of ıce weekly for instruction, guidance, and evaluation. Student contracts would be used to provide an instrument for evaluation of current progress and longer range goals and objectives.

The Center would receive referrals from our Initial Classification Committee, on all new arrivals, requesting or in need of academic up-grading at the high school level. These men would be interviewed by the Learning Center teachers and encouraged to enroll and work toward their educational goal. Enrollment is open to all inmates and each inmate

may pursue two courses simultaneously.

The Centers would operate on an informal drop-in basis. Instructional materials would include regular textbooks, workbooks, reference materials, programmed materials, tapes, records, and tape cassettes.

Student progress would be reviewed weekly by the teacher and formal evaluation of student progress would include two small examinations, a final examination, an oral examination and review of project assignments completed.

The curriculum would cover required high school subjects and some elective subjects. Courses would have two sections, an A and a B. Each section may be completed in a minimum length of six weeks and a student may earn up to five units per section. Study guides would be developed as time permits. Cassette units of instruction would be utilized as would special tapes prepared by the teacher.

Counselors support this type of effort and have already made student referrals to the Learning Center teachers.

Selection of Staff

The teachers were selected upon the criteria of demonstrated interest in, and ability to supervise, independent study. Two of our faculty were working with inmates assigned to various jobs in the prison. They had a working arrangement with each man's supervisor, providing for a regular time daily or weekly for academic instruction and

guidance. These teachers had demonstrated their ability to supervise independent study and have earned the confidence of the inmates and staff.

Measurement Data

A list of all inmate referrals to the Learning Center would be maintained. Copies of each student contract would be retained and these would note drops, transfers, completions, and credits earned. A list of each inmate interviewed by the Learning Center teachers would be maintained.

Evaluation

The main evaluation would consist of cross-checking the student referrals received against the actual enrollments. This would give the number or percent of referrals that actually enrolled. Comparing the referral list against the student contracts completed would give the number or percent actually completing one or more courses.

A similar cross-check against terminations due to lack of interest, transfer, parole, or other reasons would give us the number or percent of referrals that failed to complete their contracts.

Important would be the number of inmates participating, either by Classification referral or by counselor or self-referral. In the evaluation, we would consider carefully the reasons why an inmate was unable to complete his contract.

Human Efforts

The human efforts would include select cooperating school district staff, the school principal, contractual faculty, supervisors of instruction, administration counselors, and librarians.

Facilities

Facilities for this proposal were available in the academic school/library area. Fifteen hundred dollars of operating monies were available for instructional materials. Some equipment would be needed. Carrels, chairs, desks, etc., are available. Interested and qualified teachers are available.

Approval

The Administration of the school district and prison had given prior approval of this proposal.

CHAPTER V

IMPLEMENTATION

Preliminary Planning

The faculty, principal, supervisors and administration met to consider the problem October 18, 1972. The learning center concept was suggested and a faculty/supervisory committee was appointed to consider the learning center idea, other alternatives and to develop a proposal. On October 24, 1972, the learning center idea was reviewed with the Deputy Superintendent, Programs. He approved of the general idea but requested we give it more thought. On October 30, 1972, a preliminary plan for the learning center concept was completed by the committee and was reviewed and approved the following day by the Deputy Superintendent. The plan was also reviewed by the cooperating School District Superintendent and approved. He offered to help in any way he could and made the resources of the district's adult learning center available. On this same date curriculum planning assignments were given to the faculty. On November 2, 1972, standards for independent study were set and from November 6, 1972, through November 13, 1972, the design and methodology of the learning center were developed and all prison staff and inmates were given general information on the learning centers and how they were going to operate within the policies of the prison.

Implementation of Learning Centers

The Centers officially opened on November 20, 1972. A plan for long-range curriculum formulation was implemented. A special meeting was held November 22, 1972, to share information and discussion with the five (5) Program Administrators, Associate Superintendent, Principal, Faculty representative, and the Deputy Superintendent. On November 23, 1972, a meeting was held with key counselors to gain their support of the effort. Standards were set for General Educational Development testing and high school graduation. A major informational meeting was held in the learning center area of the prison on November 28, 1972. All counselors, faculty, supervisors of instruction, principal, program administrators, associate and deputy superintendents were in attendance. The operations and procedures for the Centers was carefully discussed, questions answered and concerns alleviated where possible. The Chief of Education, Department of Corrections reviewed and approved the Center concept November 30, 1972. A policy statement was issued (11-30-72) establishing standards regarding the student contracts. The Chief of Education returned 12-1-72 and asked that we consider bringing our elementary program into the learning center design. Faculty assignments to develop study guides were made 12-4-72 and our first progress report meeting with the learning center faculty was held 12-5-72.

Curriculum Development

The general outline of the Center's courses of study

was completed and approved 12-6-72 at a major curriculum meeting. The general mathematics course was completed (12-12-72) and the first segments of the cassette tapes on mathematics, California and United States Government and Constitution arrived and were tested and implemented on a trial basis. The need for study guides became imperative and mini study guides were prepared on the above tapes. The first major instructional materials order was finalized for all areas of the curriculum.

Initial Operational Problems Defined and Resolved

After Christmas holiday operational problems regarding counselor referrals, procedures for handling growing numbers of student contracts, delay of instructional material orders, delay in curriculum development, student anxiety as to having enough time to complete were analyzed by faculty and staff 1-10-73. Many of these problems were improving slowly and referrals and procedures for contracts were resolved at that date. On February 10, 1973, the first shipment of equipment, tapes, recorders, players, furniture, and carrels arrived and morale improved markedly.

First Evaluation Period

On February 16, 1973, data were gathered from both Center operations, analyzed and the first report prepared and disseminated to all staff and inmates.[6] The need for more accurate record keeping was ascertained and weekly faculty/

[6] Please see Appendix A for First Report.

supervisory meetings were scheduled to improve information and communications and to pin-point problems. On March 3, 1973, more carrels arrived as did thirty-six (36) complete courses on cassette tapes. The learning centers were audited by the Chief of Education on March 13, 1973. At this time the learning center concept as designed at California Institution for Men became pilot programs for all California state prisons.

Further Curriculum Development and Demonstration of Center Capability

Complete tapes on the Spanish language were completed (3-15-73), as well as, mini tapes on Government and the Constitution. The learning center capability was demonstrated to the Superintendent's executive staff at a meeting held in San Diego (3-27-73).

Second Evaluation Period and Subsequent Operational Problems

All data gathered since the inception of the practicum were analyzed (3-27-73). Information was compiled and disseminated to all staff and inmates.[7] The faculty and supervisors of instruction noted some serious operational problems developing (3-30-73). Low attendance in evening learning centers was a key issue. We needed a method to

[7] Please see Appendix B for Second Report.

ascertain if a student referral came from a counselor or was a self-referral. Some men were auditing courses and now wanted to enroll. Spelling cassette tapes were completed for grade 7 and 8 and three (3) blind students came to the Center to learn to read and write Braille. (4-2-73)

Third Evaluation Period (4-12-73)

A plan was developed and implemented to evaluate elementary students. Procedures were designed and effected to handle cancellation of student contracts for failure to meet with the teachers. It was decided that short, one hour weekly evaluation sessions were necessary to coordinate the work of the night and day faculty and of the two Centers. The educational couseling function was found inadequate and a system of warning chronological reports sent to the students by way of their counselors was devised. Large shipments of instructional supplies now were on-hand, and it was necessary to set a maximum student enrollment number for each Center, both day and night.

Final Meeting and Conclusion of Practicum (4-26-73)

Although the learning centers were to continue as an integral part of the educational program, a final meeting was necessary to bring all records up-to-date and extract the final data for measuring the practicum effort. Again, minor operational problems were discussed and handled. A more flexible policy was developed to handle attendance problems and failures to complete contracts.

CHAPTER VI

RESULTS

Enrollment

Four hundred and twenty-seven (427) men enrolled in the learning centers from November 20, 1972, through March 23, 1973. This participation represented thirty-four (34) percent of the total average prison population during these months and clearly demonstrated the acceptance of the learning center concept by the men.[8] With the exception of about eighty-six (86) elementary students, who were actually assigned to day school, but were included in the learning centers, the balance of the men, three hundred and forty-one (341) would not have had the opportunity to work on or complete their educational deficiencies. At the close of the midi (April 23, 1973) two hundred and twenty (220) men were still currently enrolled and working on their student contracts.[9] Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 depict enrollments in the learning centers.

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[8] Average prison population for months of November through April was 1256 men. This excluded the Southern Reception Guidance Center population.

[9] In as much as the learning centers were an integral on-going part of our educational effort, enrollments were being processed even on the last day of the midi operation. Of the 220 men enrolled, 43 were at the elementary level and 177 were at the high school level.

ENROLLMENTS IN LEARNING CENTERS

ENROLLMENTS

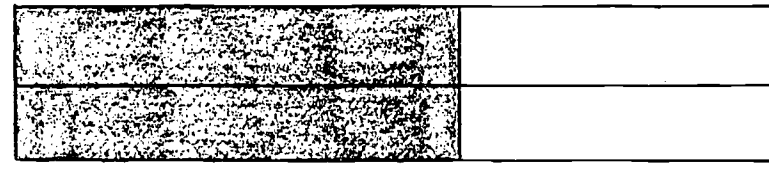

Figure 1. Percent of total institution population enrolling in Learning Centers.

ENROLLMENTS

ELEMENTARY

HIGH SCHOOL

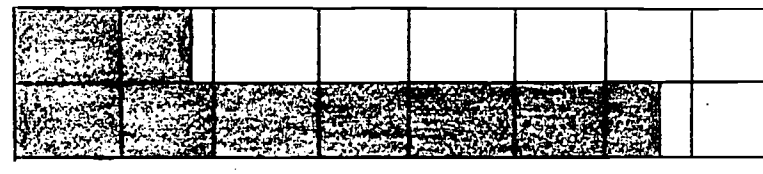

Figure 2. Total enrollments in percents at the elementary and high school levels.

ENROLLMENTS

DAY

NIGHT

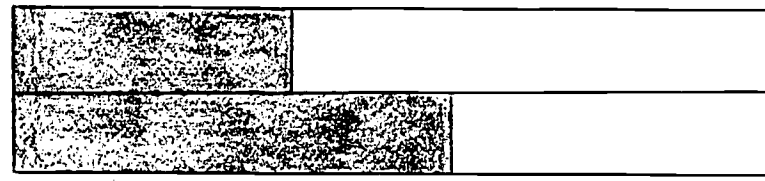

Figure 3. Total enrollments in percents according to day or night participation.

ENROLLMENTS

PROGRAM D

PROGRAM A

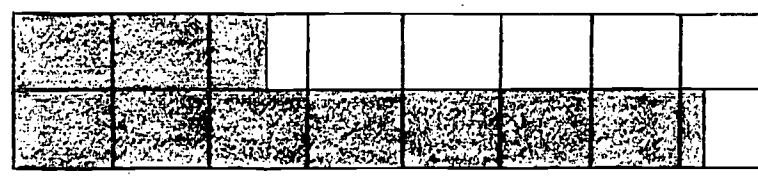

Figure 4. Total enrollments in percents according to geographic areas of the prison.

ENROLLMENTS

ELEMENTARY

HIGH SCHOOL

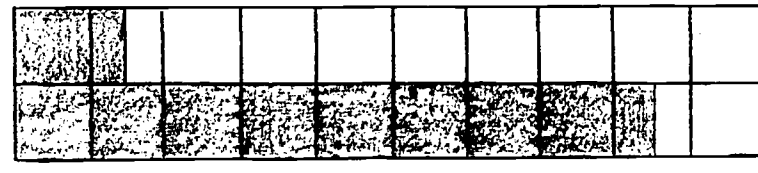

Figure 5. Enrollments in percents of the numbers of students at the elementary and high school level as of March 23, 1973.

Achievement

One hundred and thirty-nine (139) men completed student contracts successfully. Excluding the two hundred and twenty (220) men presently enrolled, this one hundred and thirty-nine (139) was a sixty-seven (67) percent successful completion rate. Eleven (11) men earned high school diplomas, twenty-five (25) earned General Educational Development Equivalency Certificates, thirteen (13) earned eighth grade certificates, fifteen (15) completed literacy training, and twenty-six (26) completed one elementary grade level. Ten (10) men completed grade 5, nine (9) men completed grade 6 and seven (7) men completed grade 7. Fifty-one (51) men completed a total of four hundred and ninety-five (495) units of high school work. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate student achievements made in the learning centers.

Failures to Complete Student Contracts

Sixty-eight (68) men failed to complete their student contracts. This was a sixteen (16) percent failure rate. Six of the men (1.4 percent) were paroled before they completed their contracts while twenty-nine (29) men (7 percent) were transferred to other prisons prior to completion. Thirty-three (33) men (7.6 percent) received failing grades on their contracts. Figure 8 expresses these contract failures in percents and by reason.

ACHIEVEMENT IN THE LEARNING CENTER

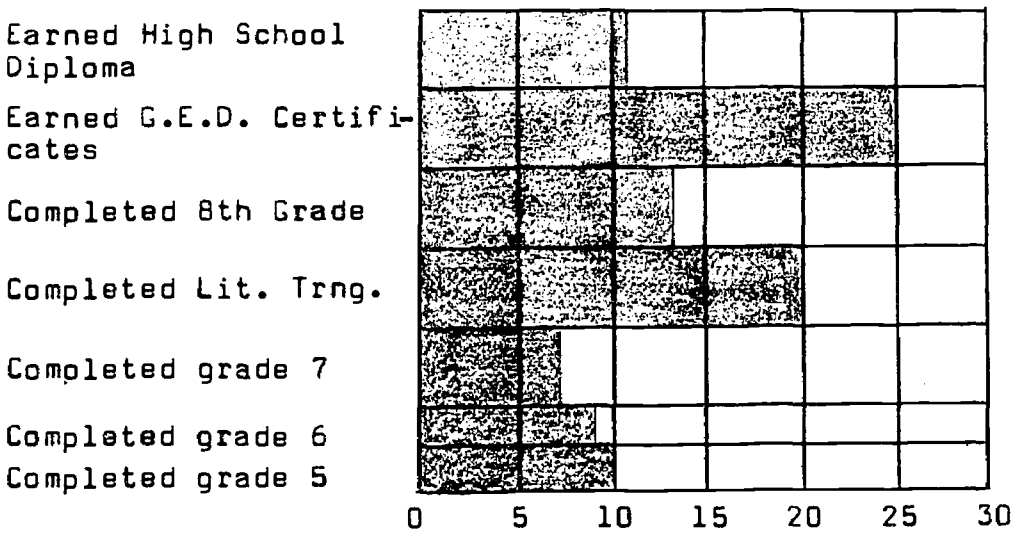

Figure 6. Students earning diplomas, certificates or completing a grade level, expressed in numbers of students.

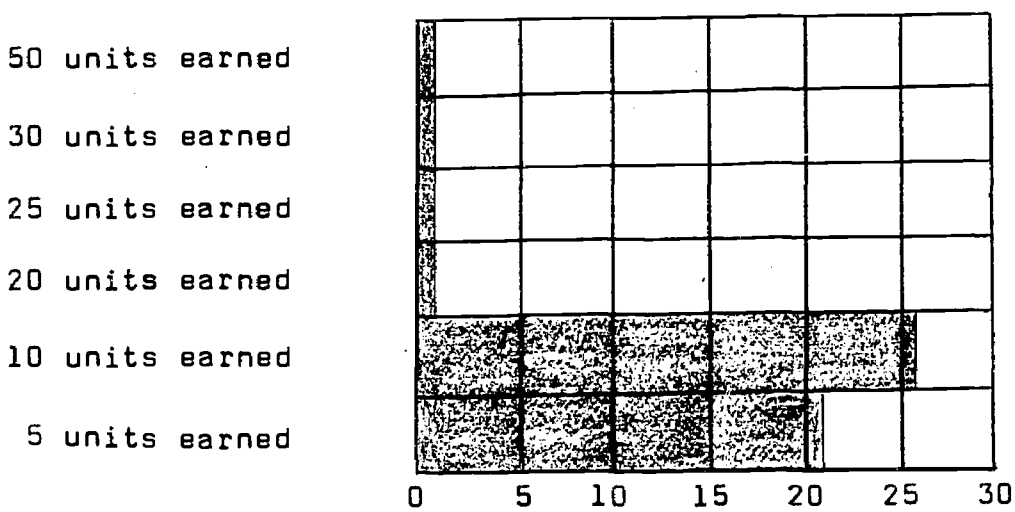

Figure 7. Students earning high school units, expressed in numbers of students.

Student Referrals Received From Classification Committee

Fifty-one (51) men or twelve (12) percent of the cohort were men in special need of educational up-grading and were direct referrals from the prison's Classification Committee.[10] Of these fifty-one (51) referrals sixteen (16) were Adult Authority referrals and thirty-five (35) were Classification Committee referrals. Completely overshadowing these referrals were the two hundred and eighty-six (286) counselor or self-referrals. Of the fifty-one (51) men referred to the Centers and interviewed by the center faculty, thirty (30) men actually enrolled. Figures 9 and 10 illustrate referrals as to source, type and geographic location. It was not possible to separate the number of student referrals made to the Centers by Counselors from the student self-referrals. This was a significant weakness in attempting to ascertain the support given the Centers (and the students) by the Counselors. Twenty-nine (29) men were referred for general up-grading four (4) refresher work, one (1) for testing, eight (8) for high school completions and nine (9) for completing G.E.D. high school equivalency programs. Figure 11 shows these referrals by categories.

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10 A referral to the learning centers was based upon a significant need for academic up-grading as expressed by either the California Adult Authority (this Authority has the responsibility for establishing parole dates or denying same for the prisoners) or the prison's Classification Committee.

FAILURES IN AND REFERRALS TO THE LEARNING CENTERS

Failure to Complete

Failed to Complete Contracts

Transferred Prior to Completion

Paroled prior to Completion

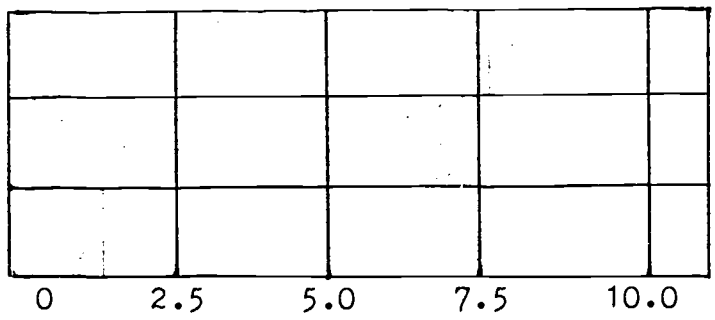

Figure 8 Students referred by Classification Committee failing to complete contracts expressed in percents and reasons why.

Referrals

Classification Committee

Adult Authority

Counselor or Self-Referral

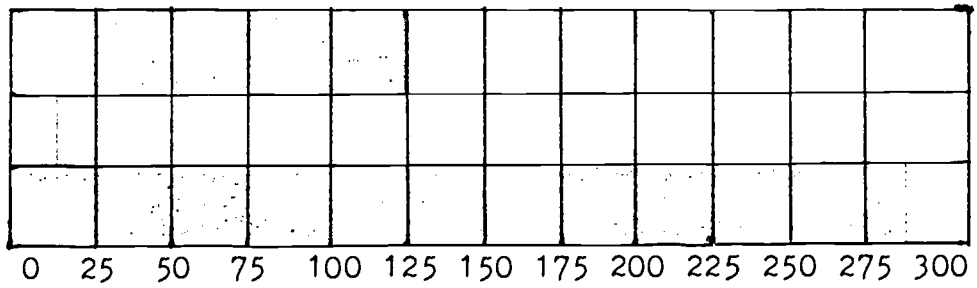

Figure 9 Referrals to the Learning Center expressed by numbers and by source

Referrals

Program D

Program A

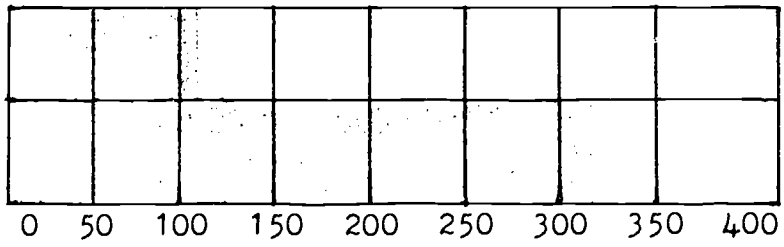

Figure 10 Referrals to Learning Center expressed in numbers by geographic location within the prison.

TYPES OF STUDENT REFERRALS MADE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OF REFERRALS

Referrals

General Educational Development Equivalency

High School Diploma Completion

General Testing to Ascertain Level

Refresher Work

General Up-Grading in Preparation for Parole

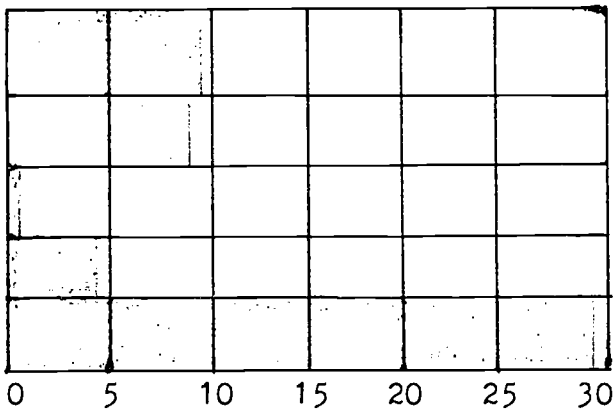

Figure 11 Types of referrals made to the Learning Centers expressed in numbers.

Achievement

General Educational Development Equivalencies Earned

High School Diplomas Earned

Testing Completed

Refresher Work Completed

General Up-Grading Completed

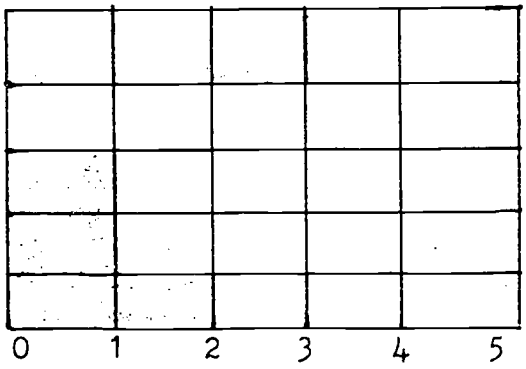

Figure 12 Men referred to the Centers achieving their educational goal, expressed in numbers.

Students Referred to the Centers by Classification Committee and Completing Their Objectives

Of the fifty-one (51) students referred to the Centers, only seven (7) or fourteen (14) percent followed through and completed their objectives. Figure 12 depicts these referral/completions by category and number.

Special Problems that Affected Practicum Results

Students: Student orientation to independent or individualized instruction was not available for the student. Many lost time trying to establish a study routine and in learning how to utilize all the resources of the learning centers. Student anxiety was fairly high during the early months of the practicum. They felt they could not complete their requirements in the short length of time they would be at the Complex.

Faculty: Faculty members found individualized instruction more time-consuming than traditional classroom instruction and they found this instruction to require more extensive knowledge of learning problems. Faculty in the two learning centers became critical of what the other was doing and how they were doing it. Faculty failed to keep accurate attendance records and little coordination existed between day and night learning center operations. This was critical as attendance

was an integral part of the student contract and with over 200 students on a drop-in basis, some faculty members could only guess regarding their attendance.

Time: Faculty lacked enough time for adequate preparation of elementary and high school curriculum materials. They lacked time for proper record keeping and time to counsel students.

Enrollment/Attendance: Enrollments far exceeded the original number planned for the centers. Many students failed to keep their contract agreements and it was necessary to close enrollments for a period of time for the faculty to evaluate each student's file, his attendance record and determine if he should be retained and counseled or dropped. Adequate attendance records were not maintained nor were accurate enrollment records maintained. Low attendance was noted during the evening school. Athletic events, outside entertainment, and television certainly affected the attendance. When attendance records were checked with community adult high schools in the area it was found that over-concern was given this element. In order to improve attendance and maintain active student enrollments, a policy was established limiting a student to 90 days time to complete a five (5) unit contract. If a student failed to attend at least once a week for three (3) weeks he was terminated.

Curriculum/Instruction: Designing a broad comprehensive curriculum and developing the necessary individualized instructional system for the centers along with the machine technology necessary for this individualized instruction was a serious problem and an almost impossible task within the time limits of the practicum. The lack of elementary curriculum materials in science and language handicapped elementary students and caused faculty concern. The lack of high school curriculum materials in English 1, 2, and 3, as well as physical and natural science weakened the high school curriculum and caused faculty concern.

Counseling: The counseling function involving teacher student and counselor was not well planned, executed, or followed-through. Counselors were somewhat critical of the learning centers as they failed to realize academic achievement and progress takes time, even in a learning center.

Facilities/Equipment/Instructional Materials: The learning centers (23' x 29') were found too small for the large influx of students. The learning center at Program A was moved to a large multi-purpose room. This proved to be a positive move. With the larger area, libraries, reading areas, study carrels were set up and ample room for cassette tapes, recorder,

and players made available. Men cannot function well in the centers using small tablet arm chairs for study. These were discarded and regular library size study tables were installed. A lack of equipment for the elementary level learning centers existed and cannot be resolved until July of 1973.

Testing and Evaluation: Many informal referrals[11] were made for student re-testing, when the centers opened. Only those students who had participated in an education program since their last official test would be eligible for a re-test. Some complaints were received from the various work programs indicating the General Educational Development test was taking men off their jobs for too many days. The schedule was revised to alleviate this complaint.

The weekly student progress review by the faculty was not accomplished as planned. The student contract was to be used for evaluating student progress and this form did not lend itself to this purpose. Cumulative student files were substituted for repository of student progress and achievement information. No plan was developed and implemented to remove students for failure or non-attendance.

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[11] An unofficial referral either originated by a counselor, officer, foreman or student.

Faculty Observations Related to Practicum Results

General Observations: The learning centers provided needed instructional flexibility not found in traditional classroom settings. Many students studied many subject areas at their own speed with the option of re-doing and re-doing until satisfied with their results. The variety of course offerings, and the availability of different approaches to subjects, through use of tapes, film strips, study guides, work books, records, reference books, magazines, newspapers, and books, increased student interest, motivation, and achievement. Higher student interest levels and initiative levels were reported. Listening skills improved, but what long-range effect might the tapes have on reading skills? Learning centers provided an economical education for a large number of students, as well as, a positive setting for students to attain a "readiness" level. The faculty reported that students became more responsible in the Centers as the burden was upon the student. Important in learning centers was the availability or accessibility of the instructor. The instructor must be available when the student is ready and needs assistance. The faculty noted the pupil-teacher ratio needed careful control. One faculty member reported he observed the student becoming more honest and truthful in deciding which course was best

for him as he was not relating to a peer group but rather was pursuing his own inclination and intuitive path of learning. Learning centers reduced or eliminated tension and boredom. Much of the traditional student's classroom time is wasted listening to other students solving problems or discussing events that he has already explored. The learning centers eliminated this problem. The learning centers also eliminated most of the disciplinary problems. The centers provided a means for a more personal teacher relationship with the student.

Faculty reported the curriculum was limited and that the learning center utilization of programmed materials and tapes excluded classroom interpretation and embellishment by the student. Faculty reported extreme difficulty in keeping instructional materials up-to-date in the centers.

Specific Observations: Most students were interested in psychology -- any kind of psychology. Students sat in the same general location or in the same place and liked the informality of the centers. The students who made the most achievement did less wandering around the room. Students liked the informal school situation with no lectures and authoritarian teachers. Students readily helped each other. Some students still chose regular textbooks and workbooks rather than tapes,

records or programmed materials. Students were considerate of others - there was little loud talking or noise making. They seemed to know the centers were their centers. The few students who professed to be there to up-grade or refresh themselves were usually the first ones dropped for failure to attend and participate. Refresher students seldom seemed to find exactly what subject areas they wanted to pursue and usually failed to accomplish anything. Students liked the privilege of progressing at their own speed or ability. Fewer students were concerned with how long it might take them to complete their contracts. Faculty found it difficult to properly evaluate student progress with so many systems of instruction. Completions of student contracts were more frequent with fewer students enrolled. Faculty found it extremely difficult to develop or secure tests and other measuring devices to adequately gather the information they felt necessary to design the individualized instructional programs needed in the centers. Faculty and supervisors felt they lacked adequate knowledge of/and skill in the learning process and learning problems. Some faculty had difficulty in assuming the role of consultant and remedial tudor and had trouble in disgarding their old role as traditional teachers.

Summary of Findings

Learning centers were found to be a help to men with educational deficiencies who were unable to attend formal school because of critical manpower shortages in key areas of the prison. Enrollment and achievement data clearly substantiated this. Thirty-four (34) percent of the entire prison population enrolled and participated in the learning centers and excluding those eighty-six (86) elementary students already assigned to school, an additional three hundred and forty-one (341) students participated who would not have had the opportunity. Achievement rate was high with sixty-seven (67) percent successful completion of contract work. Actually, one hundred thirty-nine (139) men completed their contracts and all within the four short months of the practicum. Achievement ranged from completion of five (5) units of high school work, completion of one or more elementary grade levels, completion of the General Educational Development test, completion of literacy training and completion of the high school diploma. Failures were minimal with 7.6 percent receiving failing grades. Only 1.4 percent of the students were paroled before they completed their contracts and 7 percent were transferred to other institutions prior to completion.

The main evaluation of the practicum was to determine whether or not inmates referred to the learning centers by the institution Classification Committee actually enrolled

and completed work toward up-grading their educational deficiencies. The results showed that this procedure of referring inmates to learning centers by the Classification Committee was not effective in meeting educational needs of men. Of the fifty-one (51) men so referred only seven (7) men or fourteen (14) percent actually followed through and completed work in the centers.

CHAPTER VII

SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFORT

Learning Centers as One Solution to Inmate Manpower Shortages and Inmate Educational Deficiencies

The practicum effort provided the prison administrators and inmates with a simple, practical solution to the critical problem of meeting inmate manpower needs in key areas of the prison and meeting inmate educational needs. It would seem that most California prisons, including county and city jails, honor camps and other institutional settings, might well utilize this concept. If the concept worked (as it did in this instance) in a declining inmate population, certainly it might well function effectively in a setting of an over-crowding population -- as example, our city and county jails. The Chief of Education for California Department of Corrections indicated his approval of the learning center concept and results and of his intentions of implementing such centers in all of California's fourteen (14) state prisons.

One Serious Limitation of the Learning Center

The practicum also revealed that those men with critical educational deficiencies should be assigned to school as a regular assignment rather than being referred to the centers, and assuming these men would enroll, attend, and achieve their educational objectives on a voluntary basis.

Educational Setting

The educational setting[12] established and maintained in the learning centers by the faculty and administration was of primary significance in the success of the practicum and suggests that educators in prisons should give more careful attention to the establishment of informal classroom settings than is the usual case.

Rapid Student Turnover and Special Educational Implications

Learning centers were adaptable to the problem of rapid student turnover, short-term students, and students in need of short refresher courses. The centers also were one practical way to do some basic work with those students suffering partial or total sight or hearing loss. The centers provided a learning setting for those inmates who usually could not tolerate a traditional close classroom situation. Although no effort was made to actually develop case histories, no disciplinary problems were reported in the centers and students who appeared to be high-strung, anxious, nervous, insecure and over-dependent seemed to do much better than in regular classrooms. This aspect of the practicum should be carefully considered by administrators and educators in the field of special education.

Methodology and Instruction

Individualized instruction was more difficult to im-

[12] Educational setting included all learning center rules, policies, and operational procedures, as well as, floor plan, lay-out and design.

plement than anticipated and required teacher ability to analyze the learning process and problems. It also demanded a more broader knowledge of subject matter area. The need for study guides based upon course objectives suggested that educators considering implementing learning centers, need to carefully develop their intended course objectives first. Faculty in-service-training regarding development of instructional objectives, the learning process and learning problems was found to be essential to improvement and instruction and should be carefully planned with the help of the faculty.

Evaluation

More careful planning, and preparation was found necessary in order to evaluate the student rather than the process. As noted above, course objectives were not carefully developed, hence evaluation was more difficult to attain. Objective tests were not as practical as desired in giving the information needed to improve individualized instruction. These tests were difficult to use as diagnostic tools. Possibly educators working with individualized instruction should consider their course objectives first, design the test second, and then design the course of instruction necessary to achieve the test items and course objectives.

Student Effective Use of Time

The practicum provided a plan for more effective use

of inmate time. The learning centers serviced inmates assigned to work experience programs, vocational and industrial training and regular work programs. Aside from solving the inmate manpower/educational deficiency problem, the practicum instilled the value of time to the student and to many, the more effective use of time.

Student Initiative, Independence, Conduct and Cooperation

The practicum allowed the students to experience and understand what initiative (self-initiative) really consisted of and to practice self-discipline. Traditional prison classrooms and procedures provide few experiences in these areas. The practicum also enhanced independent study and work, and provided opportunities for certain students to work completely independent of the teacher. Classroom discipline usurps much of the teacher's time in a traditional prison classroom setting. The practicum proved that informal educational settings generate few disciplinary problems and enhance acceptable conduct and student cooperation.

In summary, the practicum provided an acceptable, practical solution to the critical inmate manpower problem and to the inmate educational deficiencies problem. The practicum was highly acceptable to the inmates as an alternative to formal school. Certainly it will take many

months for the learning centers to be adequately tried and tested, yet this short experience was rewarding both for staff and students and provided a significant alternative for the statewide prison inmate manpower problem.

CHAPTER VIII

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation is made to all correctional administrators and correctional educators facing declining inmate populations and subsequent institutional inmate manpower shortages, that they implement the volunteer drop-in-type open learning center as one means of meeting the educational needs of inmates unable to attend formal school.

Recommendation is made to educational administrators of other state prisons, that learning centers be established as a regular on-going function of the day/night education program and that the informal, volunteer, drop-in-type settings be utilized whenever possible. Educators in city and county jails, camps, and other institutional settings should consider the possibilities of the learning centers. A study should be made, especially in the over-crowded city and county jails to ascertain if the learning centers can assist these men. Consideration should be given to the development of a per capita student instructional cost of learning centers in prisons as opposed to traditional classroom instructional costs.

Recommendation is made to all ecucational administrators in the jail, and prison system, who find themselves with reduced educational funds, that they implement the learning center concept as a method of assisting more

students in a more individualized way.

More careful study and staff training needs to be given to the design and construction of instructional objectives and the development of diagnostic progress tests. Also needed is training to assist traditional classroom teachers in changing their role and function to that of consultant and/or remedial teacher in an individualized instructional program.

Recommendation is made to correctional administrators, counselors, and educators that inmates with critical educational deficiencies be assigned to the learning centers as a regular assignment, rather than referring them to the center to participate on a volunteer basis.

More study and consideration needs to be given to determining the number of students one teacher can work with and achieve course base line objectives. Consideration should also be given to providing some means of informal group discussion between students taking like courses and to the design of practice problems.

8 photographs of students working at carrels and using audio equipment have been deleted because they would not reproduce.

Deletion done at the Clearinghouse in Career Education.

APPENDIX A

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN COMPLEX

EDUCATION/TRAINING/LIBRARIES

First Report: 2-16-73

TO: All Concerned

SUBJECT: Progress Report on Learning Centers in Programs A & D activated November 20, 1972.

PART I	PROG. A	PROG. D
40 Active Students (Day)	24	16
40 Active Students (Evenings)	29	11
11 Completions (Day)	9	2
0 Completions (Evenings)	0	0
7 Non-completions (Day)	-	-
Failed	1	1
Transferred prior to completion	0	5
Paroled prior to completion	0	0
11 Non-completions (Evenings)	-	-
Failed	1	4
Transferred prior to completion	0	4
Paroled prior to completion	0	2

PART II Summary of Referrals from Initial, Re-class, Main Committee and Other Staff

23 Total referrals made to Learning Center	16	7
Number referrals from Classification	16	7
Number referrals from Other Staff	-	-
2 Number of referrals enrolled	2	0
0 Number of referrals completing		
One contract	-	-
Two contracts	-	-
Three contracts	-	-
Four contracts	-	-

PART III (CONTINUED)

	PROG. A	PROG. D
Three contracts	0	0
Four contracts	0	0
Five contracts	0	0
Six or more	0	0

7 Number of referrals not completing contracts

Failed	1	1
Transferred prior to completion	0	3
Paroled prior to completion	1	1

K. Hayball

Keith W. Hayball, Supervisor
Correctional Education Programs

CC:

Correctional Counselors
Academic Faculty
Deputy Superintendent, Programs
Associate Superintendent
Program Administrator
Supervisor, Vocational Instruction (2)
Vocational Faculty
Principal
Head Teacher Program D
Night School Supervisor
Supervisor Correctional Education Programs
File

APPENDIX B

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN COMPLEX

EDUCATION/TRAINING/LIBRARIES

Second Report: 3-27-73

TO: All Concerned

SUBJECT: Progress Report on Learning Centers in Programs A & D activated November 20, 1972.

PART I	PROG. A	PROGRAM D
31 Active Students (Day)	14	17
70 Active Students (Evenings)	62	8
16 Completions (Day)	11	5
8 Completions (Evenings)	7	1
16 Non-completions (Day)	-	-
Failed	5	4
Transferred prior to completion	1	5
Paroled prior to completion	0	1
28 Non-completions (Evenings)	-	-
Failed	17	4
Transferred prior to completion	0	4
Paroled prior to completion	0	3
PART II (Elementary)	(29)	(8)

PART III Summary of Referrals from Initial, Re-class, Main Committee and Other Staff

47 Total referrals made to Learning Center	0	0
Number referrals from Classification	26	21
Number referrals from Other Staff	?	?
27 Number of referrals enrolled	14	13
2 Number of referrals completing		
One contract	1	1
Two contracts	0	0

PART II (CONTINUED)

	PROG. A	PROG. D
Five contracts	-	-
Six or more	-	-
2 Number of referrals not completing contracts	0	2
Failed	0	1
Transferred prior to completion	0	1
Paroled prior to completion	0	0

K. W. Hayball

Keith W. Hayball, Supervisor
Correctional Education Programs

cc:

Correctional Counselors
Academic Faculty
Deputy Superintendent, Programs
Associate Superintendent
Program Administrator
Supervisor, Vocational Instruction (2)
Vocational Faculty
Principal
Head Teacher, Program D
Night School Supervisor
Supervisor, Correctional Education Programs
File

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