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ABSTRACT

This book examines the Eight-Year Study, or "Adventure in American Education," which was a landmark experiment in curriculum reform in 30 American high schools from 1933 to 1939. The study not only investigated the college success of the graduates of the 30 schools that were engaged in revising their curricula, but also attempted to stimulate secondary schools to develop better college preparatory programs. After establishing the context for the study in an introductory chapter, the volume presents a detailed analysis, describing the lessons learned regarding the implementation of change in education. The research methodology and the pioneering work in developing instruments that were used in the study, though frequently overlooked in retrospective works, are examined at length, particularly as they relate to noncognitive components of education. Likewise, the book looks at the graduates of the 30 experimental schools and assesses how they compared in college with their paired control partners. An analysis of the state of secondary education during the 1930s is also provided. The concluding chapter reviews the major findings of the study and puts them into a middle-school perspective. It identifies 12 areas that the Eight-Year Study speaks to and how these relate to the middle-level education-reform effort. (RJM)

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The EIGHT-YEAR STUDY REVISITED

Lessons from the Past for the Present

ADVENTURE IN AMERICAN EDUCATION VOLUME I

THE STORY of the EIGHT-YEAR STUDY

With Conclusions and Recommendations

WILFORD M. AIKIN



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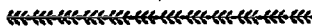


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**The Eight-Year Study Revisited:
Lessons from the Past for the Present**

National Middle School Association is dedicated to improving the educational experiences of young adolescents by providing vision, knowledge, and resources to all who serve them in order to develop healthy, productive, and ethical citizens.

The Eight-Year Study Revisited: Lessons from the Past for the Present



Richard P. Lipka
John H. Lounsbury
Conrad F. Toepfer, Jr.
Gordon F. Vars
Samuel P. Alessi, Jr.
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Special thanks are extended to Dr. William Van Til who prepared the fitting tribute to Ralph Tyler as a foreword. The authors are also grateful for the support of National Middle School Association which made possible the publication of this somewhat unique report. And finally, a word of thanks to Gert Nesin for her helpful critique of the manuscript.



Foreword

A Tribute to Ralph W. Tyler (1902-1994)

The Progressive Education Association's Eight-Year Study, as stated in this book, was "the most comprehensive long-range experimental educational research study ever conducted in school settings." It was not only an inquiry into how the graduates of thirty schools, which were engaged in revising their curricula, compared as to success in college when paired with graduates of schools with conventional programs, but the Eight-Year Study was also an attempt to "stimulate secondary schools to develop new programs that would be better for young people...than the traditional college preparation program." In addition, the study developed, in cooperation with the thirty schools, new approaches to evaluation for appraising and recording student progress.

One of the moving spirits in these aspects of the Eight-Year Study was the versatile Ralph W. Tyler, an evaluation and curriculum specialist. He was a major force in the Eight-Year Study from 1934 to 1943. When this book was initially proposed he was invited to write a foreword. But Dr. Tyler died at 91; and as one who knew him well and had participated in the study, I was asked to write a tribute to him as a foreword to this important volume.

I first met Dr. Tyler in the mid 1930s when I was a core curriculum and social studies teacher of grades seven through twelve in the Ohio State University School, one of the most progressive of the thirty schools that participated in the Eight-Year Study. Tyler was then both an Ohio State University professor and the director of evaluation for the Eight-Year Study. He was a young man who had a characteristic envied by other young men – he looked older than his years.

One of the last times I saw Ralph was in the mid 1970s in the Black Forest when we were speakers at a conference of the 400 principals of the European Region of the Department of Defense depen-

dents' schools. At the closing social event, Ralph, then 74, joined in a wild, whirling, stamping German folk dance. He was an old man who had a characteristic envied by other old men – he looked younger than his years.

In the forty years that intervened between the 1930s and the 1970s Ralph W. Tyler had become an eminent American educator, ranked in the educational pantheon with John Dewey, William Heard Kilpatrick, Boyd H. Bode, and a very few others.

Young Ralph had started fast. At 19 he was a high school teacher in Pierre, North Dakota. At 20 he was an assistant supervisor of science at the University of Nebraska. By 25 he had become an associate professor of education at the University of North Carolina and the holder of a Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. By 29 he was a full professor at Ohio State University. When he was in his thirties he made the contributions to the Eight-Year Study described in the pages which follow this foreword.

They say that Homer was claimed by many ancient Greek communities. Similarly Ralph W. Tyler was claimed by many universities: The Ohio State University for his professorship and Bureau of Educational Research post, 1931-1938; the University of Chicago for his department chairmanship and then deanship of the social sciences, 1938-1953; Stanford University for his direction of the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences, 1953 to his 1966 retirement.

In the field of evaluation Tyler was a true pioneer. Richard Lipka says in his chapter "...the field of education evaluation had its conception and birth during the Eight-Year Study." In Tyler's early years he wrote on achievement tests (1934) prior to his work on appraising and recording progress for the Progressive Education Association's project. During "retirement years" (meaningless words to Tyler), he wrote or edited books on curriculum evaluation (1967), national assessment (1968), accountability (1971), and issues in testing (1974).

In the field of curriculum he wrote less but his influence was as great. His major curriculum book, written in mid-career after the Eight-Year Study, was the classic *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949). His "Tyler Rationale" is still respected by contemporary curriculum workers.

Tyler held several government posts, such as director of the examination staff for the U.S. Armed Forces Institute during World War

II and research adviser to the U.S. Department of Education. He was a longtime leader of the National Society for the Study of Education.

He received many honors. Yet he seemed not to be overly impressed by them; for instance, in 1989 the College of Education of Ohio State University awarded him its highest honor, membership in the Hall of Fame. But we looked in vain for him at the induction ceremony; at 87 he had “a previous speaking engagement.”

Ralph would never forgive me if I wrote a tribute to him that was not simultaneously a tribute to other people related to the Eight-Year Study. They include:

- the 10,000 members of the Progressive Education Association,
- the 28 members of the sponsoring Commission on the Relation of School and College,
- the administrators of the 300 colleges who accepted the graduates of the thirty schools waiving the usual subject requirements,
- the more than 1,000 educators of the thirty schools,
- the many thousands of students from the thirty schools,
- the dozens of staff members of the Eight-Year Study,
- the 1475 students from both innovative and traditional schools who were paired for the college follow-up study.

As a teacher in one of the thirty schools during the time of the Eight-Year Study, I personally owe much to Ralph W. Tyler and the Curriculum Associates, as well as to the OSU school faculty and the Lindquist-Alberty-Gilchrist administrations. In my autobiography (1996) I wrote:

During nearly a decade of teaching in the University School between 1934 and 1943, I learned almost all of what I was ever to learn about the art of teaching....I think the key element in my learning to teach well was the freedom to experiment. University School took seriously its label, ‘the experimental school.’ To us, experiment meant trying approaches, observing and appraising their outcomes, revising and modifying procedures, then trying again. Our experimentation was not the closely controlled testing of the laboratory, and we did not develop definitive empirical proof replete with impressive statistics. Yet in a decade when the old ways of teaching were recognized as inadequate and bet-

ter ways were being sought, we pioneered along new educational trails and worked out different approaches. (p. 171)

The authors of *The Eight-Year Study Revisited* have made a valuable contribution by bringing to their colleagues and other readers many lessons from the past for the present. If insightful modern educators and philanthropic foundations of the early twenty-first century combine forces in a middle school project which draws upon the Eight-Year Study (rather than inadequate “reform reports” lacking in philosophical roots), much of the credit should go to these authors.

To this book John H. Lounsbury has contributed an introductory chapter which provides a context for the book and relates the Eight-Year Study to contemporary curriculum developments. Craig Kridel has pointed out that the Eight-Year Study was more than the report *Did They Succeed in College?* by Chamberlin and others. It encouraged needed experimentation in many schools and contributed to improved programs in the thirty schools as reported by Giles, McCutchen, and Zechiel in *Exploring the Curriculum* and by the staffs in *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*. Richard Lipka has carefully conveyed the study’s structure and design through helpful excerpts from Smith and Tyler’s *Appraising and Recording Student Progress*. Conrad F. Toepfer, Jr. and Samuel J. Alessi, Jr. have skillfully summarized the ideas of Aikin’s *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*. Gordon F. Vars has focused on the specific implications for the middle level and identified twelve areas wherein the study’s results support the middle school advocacy.

The Eight-Year Study Revisited: Lessons from the Past for the Present points a way toward twenty-first century curriculum which will be fostered by progressive-minded educators. Use it and share it with others.

— William Van Til

Coffman Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Education,
Indiana State University

Reference

Van Til, W. (1996). *My way of looking at it: An autobiography*. San Francisco: Caddo Gap Press.

Dr. Tyler was interviewed in January, 1993, by Dr. Lorraine Morgan in conjunction with this project. Although his health was failing and the interview at times rambling, the following excerpts reveal something of both his philosophy and his personality.

Learning takes place better when the plan for it is in harmony with the way children learn.

When we started out (with the Eight-Year Study) we thought there was such a thing as a standard secondary curriculum, but we quickly discovered that what was going on in the schools with good teachers varied greatly; so there could be no such thing as a standard curriculum in a general sense.

Efforts to restructure educational curriculum in general like the *Nation At Risk* are absurd. You can't change a whole system that way; you have to begin with problems and identify particular problems and actually work with them as was the case with the Eight-Year Study.

The problem was the high school curriculum was built on what subjects people thought kids ought to have rather than what kids needed.

Whatever the teacher does determines what the curriculum is.

If you attack things rationally, one problem at a time, they can be solved.



And finally, Dr. Tyler recalled how he got the job as an evaluator for the Eight-Year Study...

What happened was this: the Progressive Education Association got money for the Eight-Year Study from the Carnegie Corporation and were asked to evaluate it. They first proposed to the principals that they would evaluate the project by giving a standardized test. The principals said "We're gonna resign; you are here to provide something appropriate for the kids, not for the tests that are built on the subject matter experts' ideas of what kids ought to know and what they need." So what could be done? A member of the committee Boyd Bode, a professor of Education at Ohio State, said, "There's a young man at Ohio State that has funny ideas about evaluation; why don't you call him for a meeting at the Princeton Inn." So they called me to come there and I went the next morning. They said, "How would you evaluate this new study we are heading up?" And I outlined what I thought should be done (which is what we did). They said, "That sounds very interesting; why don't you have lunch while we have lunch together in a separate room." So I had a nice lunch while they had their own lunch. At the end of the time they asked me if I would accept the position, and I said I would if I could do it on half-time as I don't want to lose my tenure with Ohio State. So that's how it started.



The Eight-Year Study: Connecting Our Past to Our Future

— JOHN H. LOUNSBURY

I

Why would the National Middle School Association revisit and present extensively the findings of a research study initiated sixty years ago, especially when the study dealt with high school students? Given the tremendous changes that have occurred in all facets of society, the nature of our student bodies, and education itself over the last half-century, what relevance could a high school study done in the 1930s and published in 1942 possibly have on the modern middle school and current efforts to reform education K-12?

These are fair questions – and this volume will provide full answers. Anyone who reads even portions of its five chapters will be struck by the continuing importance of this “Adventure in American Education” as the Eight-Year Study was labeled by its originators. It still stands today as the most comprehensive, long-range, experimental educational research study ever conducted in school settings, and its lessons are many and as pertinent today as they ever were. Reading this work should lead educators to secure the original volumes in order to mine the riches that reside therein.

The origins of the Eight-Year Study

A brief overview of the study and how it came about will provide a context for examining its findings in the subsequent chapters. At the start of the nineteenth century that is now poised to pass into history, unrest existed among educators about the state of the public schools. The American high school, called the People’s College in its early days, had attracted increasing numbers of students – students not likely to attend college. In the wake of the Kalamazoo Decision of

1874 that gave validity to the use of tax funds for the support of secondary education, high schools were established in community after community. The existing high school curriculum, however, was exclusively for the college bound. The domination of the college preparatory program and dissatisfaction with the separate subject approach became issues for discussion among educators. A young but vibrant organization, the Progressive Education Association, founded in 1919, brought together leaders in private education and public education. (In those times as in the decades before, much if not most national educational leadership was drawn from the ranks of private schools and higher education.) While the focus of the PEA initially was on elementary education, new questions were raised about the adequacy of the college preparation curriculum and the lack of acceptable alternative programs for the growing number of non-college bound students. These concerns led to the action that launched the Eight-Year Study. Aikin (1942) reported:

In April, 1930, two hundred men and women were assembled in the nation's capital to consider ways by which the secondary schools of the United States might better serve our young people. The Progressive Education Association, which had stimulated great changes in elementary education, was asking in this national convention, How can the high school improve its services to American youth? (p. 1)

In the discussions during that meeting many proposals were offered and were well received. But the problem of college admission requirements put a damper on every idea offered. Just as the meeting was to conclude, with considerable frustration evident among those assembled, someone courageously suggested that the PEA should establish a commission to explore how colleges and schools could cooperate in such a way that the secondary schools could undergo "fundamental reconstruction."

As a result of this suggestion, some six months later the Commission on the Relation of School and College (CRSC) was appointed in the fall of 1930. Its 28 members representing all phases of secondary and higher education tackled the forbidding task of reforming the secondary schools of the United States of America. This page from

Aikin's volume identifies the membership of the commission and the directing committee.

**The Commission on the Relation of School and College
of
The Progressive Education Association**



MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Walter Raymond Agard	John A. Lester
Wilford M. Aikin, Chairman	Max McConnell, Secretary
Willard Beatty	Clyde R. Miller
Bruce Bliven	*Jesse H. Newlon
C. S. Boucher	W. Carson Ryan
*A. J. Burton	Harold Rugg
Flora S. Cooke	*Ann Shumaker
Harold A. Ferguson	Eugene R. Smith
Burton P. Fowler	Perry Dunlap Smith
Josephine Gleason	Katharine Taylor
Thomas Hopkins	Vivian T. Thayer
Leonard V. Koos	Goodwin Watson
W. S. Learned	Raymond Walters
Robert D. Leigh	Ben D. Wood

After originating and organizing the Eight-Year Study, the Commission in 1933 gave full responsibility and authority for the supervision of the Study to the Directing Committee.

DIRECTING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMISSION

Wilford M. Aikin, Chairman, Director of the Study	
Willard Beatty	Robert D. Leigh
Boyd H. Bode	Max McConnell, Secretary
Burton P. Fowler	*Jesse H. Newlon
Carl Brigham	Marion Park
Will French	Eugene R. Smith
Herbert E. Hawkes	J. E. Stonecipher
John A. Lester	¹ John B. Johnson
Elizabeth M. Steel, Secretary to the Director	

* Deceased.

¹ Resigned.

Despite the apparent success the high school was enjoying, commission members were conscious of the clear deficiencies in its program, ones that shortchanged students, both college-bound and non college-bound. This led the commission to analyze the conditions surrounding secondary education and, after a year, release a report that enumerated eighteen areas of clear inadequacy. The following assessments of the status quo in 1930 sound amazingly contemporary.

1. Secondary education in the United States did not have clear-cut, definite, central purpose.
2. Schools failed to give students a sincere appreciation of their heritage as American citizens.
3. Our secondary schools did not prepare students adequately for the responsibilities of community life.
4. The high school seldom challenged the student of first-rate ability to work up to the level of his intellectual powers.
5. Schools neither knew their students well nor guided them wisely.
6. Schools failed to create conditions necessary for effective learning.
7. The commission was conscious also of the fact that the creative energies of students were seldom released and developed.
8. The conventional high school curriculum was far removed from the real concerns.
9. The traditional subjects of the curriculum had lost much of their vitality and significance.
10. Most high school graduates were not competent in the use of the English language.
11. The commission found little evidence of unity in the work of the typical high school.
12. The absence of unity in the work of the secondary school was almost matched by the lack of continuity.
13. Complacency characterized high schools generally ten years ago.
14. Teachers were not well-equipped for their responsibilities.
15. Only here and there did the commission find principals who conceived of their work in terms of democratic leadership of the community, teachers, and students.

16. Principals and teachers labored earnestly, often sacrificially, but usually without any comprehensive evaluation of the results of their work.
17. The high school diploma meant only that the student had done whatever was necessary to accumulate the required number of units.
18. Finally, the relation of school and college was unsatisfactory to both institutions.

The study commences

These shortcomings identified almost sixty years ago for the most part continue as fair descriptors of our contemporary secondary schools – and even many of our middle schools.

In order to correct the identified deficiencies, the commission recognized it would be necessary to bypass the college preparatory program that dominated all high school curricula. The commission thus sought waivers from some 300 colleges and universities. With very few exceptions these institutions of higher education agreed to release graduates of the soon to be selected experimental schools from the usual college admission subject and Carnegie unit requirements for a period of five years. Admission for these students would be on recommendation accompanied by a full, recorded history of the students' activities and performances.

The commission next faced the problem of selecting a number of schools from the many that indicated a willingness to experiment with curriculum and instruction when freed from the restraints of Carnegie units and grades. The thirty schools ultimately chosen included public schools, private schools, and laboratory schools – not all of which would have been labeled “progressive.” (A complete list of the schools is included in Chapter II.)

Beginning in the fall of 1933, each of the experimental schools began to plan the changes it would make in organization, curriculum, and instruction. While schools were given complete freedom, they were offered assistance from commission members and others. The summer teacher workshop, a new concept, was instituted, and this still widely utilized staff development activity played a key role during the summers of 1936, '37, '38, and '39. Meeting together for several weeks, teachers had the opportunity to work through their

concerns, come together philosophically, and plan resource units, all under the guidance of curriculum specialists.

These schools did not all agree on what should be done to correct deficiencies. They were not asked to implement some previously agreed-on plans or test a stated hypothesis. Two major principles, however, did evolve to guide their work. "The first was that the general life of the school and methods of teaching should conform to what is now known about the ways in which human beings learn and grow" (Aikin, 1942). In elaborating on this principle, Aikin noted that much about the nature of learning had been discovered in recent years and followed with these comments that have a ring of the contemporary middle school concept about them:

Holding this view, the participating schools believed that the school should become a place in which young people work together at tasks which are clearly related to their purposes. No longer should teachers, students, or parents think of school simply as a place to do what was laid out to be done. The school should be a living social organism of which each student is a vital part. It should be a place to which one goes gladly because there he can engage in activities which satisfy his desires, work at the solution of problems which he faces in everyday living, and have opened to him new interests and wider horizons. (p. 17)

The second major principle (Aikin, 1942) which guided the work of the participating schools was "that the high school in the United States should re-discover its chief reason for existence" (p. 18). Again some of the sentences following this principle are so representative of the philosophy of the PEA, they bear repeating:

Out of their searching study the thirty schools came to realize that the primary purpose of education is to lead our young people to understand, to appreciate, and to live the kind of life for which we as a people have been striving throughout our history. Other things are important, but only relatively so. It is necessary to teach the three "R's," science, language, history, mathematics, and arts, safety, vocations, and most of the other subjects that now crowd the curriculum of the

schools; but unless our young people catch the vision which has led us on through all generations, we perish.

Year after year the conviction became clearer and deeper that the school itself should become a demonstration of the kind of life in which this nation believes. (pp. 18-19)

The men and women involved in what was soon to be a massive project were courageous individuals. They set out in uncharted waters; but they had a vision, a sense of adventure, a belief in our youth and the democratic way of life. The collective attitude and enthusiasm of these pioneers as well as what appears to be the continuing validity of their judgments is impressive. Their goals went far beyond the all-too-narrow obsession with raising test scores that now seems to hold sway. They had a dream undergirded by a philosophy, and they took up the challenge of fashioning a high school education that would better meet the needs for American youth in the 1930s and thereafter. Of course, the study was flawed. It was underway before provisions were made for many contingencies. Assistance to the faculties was often late and limited. The focus was on the college prep students, although the commission wanted to follow up the non-college-bound youth. But anyone who understands the times and the barriers that had to be confronted cannot help but admire the effort made and recognize the validity of the general findings.

In the period 1933-39 the thirty schools worked at refining and implementing their plans, some much more boldly than others. They developed curriculum materials, often in the form of resource units from which teachers and students together could create a custom-made teaching unit. They struggled with the problems of making major changes in the routines and rituals of established patterns, such as ABC report cards. Chapter II in this volume contains a most meaningful account of one school's struggle to break new ground. The individual stories of all of the schools are told in Volume V, *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story* (1942), while Volume II, *Exploring the Curriculum* (1942), presents the perspectives of the curriculum associates who worked with these thirty schools. Though usually overlooked, the extensive activities associated with curriculum development may be, in the long run, the most beneficial for middle level educators and should be reconsidered seriously in the current curriculum conversations.

The study's major findings were first reported in a series of forums held in the Spring of 1940 – while war raged in Europe and an anxious nation stayed close to its radios. The formal five-volume written report was released by Harper and Brothers in 1942 (see the reproduced page giving titles and authors). By then the United States was actively at war on two far-flung fronts. From an educational standpoint, the timing could not have been worse, for citizens in every walk of life were now coalesced in an all-out war effort, and school reform simply could not hold a place on the public's agenda. Since the number of copies printed was very limited, most high school faculties, even in the post-WWII era, probably never read the reports. Educators interested in reading them today will likely have to rely on interlibrary loans.

The middle school movement emerges

In the meantime, the failure of the junior high school to be what such key founders as Leonard Koos and Thomas Briggs envisioned led to a growing dissatisfaction with this 7-9 unit in the 1940s and 50s. This uniquely American institution had been unable to establish its own identity. Instead it settled down to be what its unfortunately selected name indicated it might be, a junior version of the high school, not a distinctive institution for a distinctive age level. So, when the late William Alexander in the early 1960s proposed a 5-8 or a 6-8 middle school as a better way to meet the needs of early adolescents, the reception was immediate and positive. By the mid-1970s it seemed clear that this middle school idea had struck a chord and would not be a passing fancy as were so many other innovations introduced in the post-WWII era. Middle schools sprung up like mushrooms after a rain; professional literature suddenly was flooded with articles purporting the advantages of the 6-8 middle school over the 7-9 junior high school. A few state groups were organized; then the National Middle School Association was established in 1973 with many more state and regional associations following suit soon after. By the early 80s it was apparent that the middle school movement had real substance. It was not a top-down affair, a response to a governmental directive, or a reflection of some major national report. Rather the middle school movement was and continues to be more of a grass roots movement

ADVENTURE IN AMERICAN EDUCATION



Volume I

The Story of the Eight-Year Study

by

Wilford M. Aikin

Volume II

Exploring the Curriculum

The Work of the Thirty Schools
from the Viewpoint of Curriculum Consultants

by

H. H. Giles, S. P. McCutchen, and A. N. Zechiel

Volume III

Appraising and Recording Student Progress

Evaluation, Records and Reports
in the Thirty Schools

by

Eugene R. Smith, Ralph W. Tyler
and the Evaluation Staff

Volume IV

Did They Succeed in College?

The Follow-up Study of the
Graduates of the Thirty Schools

by

Dean Chamberlin, Enid Straw Chamberlin
Neal E. Drought and William E. Scott
Preface by Max McConn

Volume V

Thirty Schools Tell Their Story

Each School Writes of Its Participation
in the Eight-Year Study

in which successes were gained by risk-taking teachers and administrators and despite entrenched, bureaucratic supports for maintaining the status quo.

The middle school movement is undergirded by a spirit, a philosophy, a belief about kids that has touched the professionalism of teachers and principals and caused many of them to go the extra mile, to be innovators, and to be unapologetically concerned about students as persons. Many have noted the unselfish, enthusiastic spirit so prevalent among middle school educators. Middle level conferences and meetings have been marked by what some have called a religious fervor; such is the commitment among its advocates.

By the mid-1980s the number of 6-8 middle schools exceeded the number of 7-9 junior high schools with the former on the rise and the latter in a sharp decline. From all appearances the middle school was in the saddle and riding with the wind at its back. When assessed honestly in the early 1990s, however, it had to be acknowledged that much if not most of the remarkable success of the middle school had been more organizational than programmatic. The sixth grade had been brought into the middle level institution while the ninth grade was dispatched – usually with delight – to the high school. The name on the building was changed, but all too often reform efforts bogged down when the day-in-day-out life in the classroom was considered.

Yet it was apparent from the beginning to those who seriously studied the movement that the middle school concept called for dramatic changes in curriculum and instruction, ones that would not and could not be instituted merely by organizational or administrative changes. There were those of us fortunate enough to have studied the progressive education movement to see a parallel between the deeper middle school advocacy and the vision of those educational giants of an earlier era led by John Dewey. A sound case can be made for claiming that the middle school movement is simply the rebirth of progressive education. Although ostensibly buried with the demise of the Progressive Education Society in 1955, the ideals have remained very much alive although largely out of the limelight. Van Til's classic article, "Is Progressive Education Obsolete?" (1962) noted that the fundamental questions addressed by the progressives were still begging for answers. He wrote:

One might conclude that progressive education is outmoded save for a stubborn fact. The fact is that the questions raised by the progressive movement in education are not obsolete. They will not die. They cannot be killed. They cannot be exorcised by any voodooism yet known to technology, organization, or the reconstruction of disciplines which remains aloof from these questions.

The basic questions which men like John Dewey, William Heard Kilpatrick, George Counts, and Boyd H. Bode raised are inescapable questions: What are the aims of education? Upon what foundations should the school program be built? Given such aims and foundations, what should the schools teach? To these probing, and fundamental questions, matters of organization and technique, while important, are necessarily subordinate. (p. 56)

A bit awed by rhetoric and technology, educators in the 1960s danced around these tough, philosophical issues and gambled instead on the promises of one particular panacea or another. Organizational issues, of course, were important and perhaps a priori steps. Taking these steps occupied middle level educators so there was little time to get “philosophical” or deal with nagging foundational questions.

Middle schools turn their attention to curriculum

By the 1990s, the rate of organizational growth began to slow down – but certainly not cease. Then when James Beane’s hard-hitting book, *A Middle School Curriculum: From Rhetoric To Reality* (1990; 1993) appeared, it became a catalyst for directing the thinking of middle school educators to the question that was rarely asked let alone answered, “What should be the curriculum of the middle school?” The curriculum conversations that followed dealt with the deeper issues of purpose, curriculum relevance, and varied instructional approaches. Efforts were instituted to design curriculum without utilizing the separate subjects as the basis, to give serious consideration to student involvement and democratic values, and to literally match curriculum with our knowledge of human growth and development.

The Eight-Year Study, therefore, now becomes particularly valuable and relevant as this shift in attention from the largely won arena of organization to the just-beginning-to-be-broached battle of the cur-

riculum begins. The interdisciplinary team, widely accepted as the chief characteristic of the middle school, is, however, a means not an end. And while interdisciplinary instruction is a major step away from the stranglehold of departmentalization it does not, even when well done, satisfy the larger, long-term goals of a democratically oriented, truly integrated curriculum in which students are active participants. In the last decade more and more teams have been moving beyond turn teaching and planned correlation. Some have collaborated on problem-centered units that were planned with student input without reference to particular subjects reminiscent of the core curriculum. Several exciting stories of integrated curriculum experiments have appeared in the literature (Alexander, Carr, & McAvoy, 1995; Brazee & Capelluti, 1995; Pate, Homestead, & McGinnis, 1997; Springer, 1994; Stevenson & Carr, 1993; Sui-Runyan & Faircloth, 1995).

In recent years whenever we discuss curriculum at various meetings, it is likely the Eight-Year Study will be mentioned. Rarely will even one or two educators in an audience know anything about this major study. Aware of its obvious relevance to the burgeoning curriculum integration thrust led us to the idea of reissuing the Eight-Year Study and bringing to light its many lessons for contemporary educators. This began what proved to be a long and circuitous effort to secure copyright clearance. Three publishers, the Library of Congress, and a host of letters and telephone calls were involved. Ultimately it was unclear who did hold the copyright; but the last acknowledged holder, McGraw-Hill, gave approval, however tacit.

When the Publications Committee of NMSA endorsed the proposal to develop a publication about the Eight-Year Study the present authors were invited to develop a document that would present anew the findings of this large-scale research study and place them in a context so that their contemporary nature would be seen by educators instituting fundamental curriculum reform. Its release is timely. With the major effort of the National Association of Secondary School Principals to reform the high school kicked off by the release of *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution* (1996), the many messages of the Eight-Year Study will have a wider and more receptive audience. *Breaking Ranks* applies to the high school most of the principles that comprise the middle school concept as recently stated in *This We Believe: Developmentally Responsive Middle Level Schools*

(NMSA, 1995). However, this very fact may hinder their acceptance, as Frana (1995) found in his study of high school interdisciplinary teaming. He states in his 1998 follow-up report, "The idea of moving a 'middle school' concept to the high school was antithetical to the sub-culture of departments and separate subject areas."

Paul Spies (1998a), a high school teacher familiar with the Eight-Year Study, also advocates interdisciplinary teaming. He speaks from personal experience when he says:

Seeking inspiration and empowerment through models of the past is important because reforming high schools is a daunting task. High schools of today continue to isolate, alienate, differentiate, and subjugate people and knowledge in too many ways as they had earlier this century. Even though high schools have remained largely unchanged, much could change if we brought the Eight-Year Study out of hiding in our collective conscious. Doing so would help us discuss important questions, such as: What is the purpose of high school? What is and should be the relationship between high school and college? If we were to create new high schools from scratch for the purposes of equitably meeting students' and society's needs in our democracy, what would the structures, practices, and curriculum be like?

(Spies, 1998b, p. 31)

In our view, the time needed by high school personnel to address the aforementioned questions leaves us with the perception that the insights from the Eight-Year Study probably will continue to find their most immediate acceptance and implementation at the middle school level.

In the remaining chapters of this book the flavor and the findings of the Eight-Year Study will be presented in some detail. Extensive quotes and passages from the final reports will be included. Chapter II provides a particularly rich and informative perspective on this "adventure." It gives fascinating details and sets forth the valuable lessons learned about implementing change in education. This chapter makes it clear that there was much, much more about this extensive research project than a report on the success in college of graduates of the thirty schools. In Chapter III the assessment and evalua-

tion aspects of the study are presented – with liberal use of direct quotes from Vol. III, *Appraising and Recording Student Progress* (Smith, & Tyler, 1942). Although usually overlooked, the research methodology and the pioneering work in developing instruments to measure the non-cognitive aspects of an education are among the most important contributions of the study. The significant lessons learned in these arenas are enumerated and discussed. In Chapter IV, the most frequently cited findings of the study are set forth with substantial direct quotes from Vol. 1, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study* (Aikin, 1942). How the graduates of the thirty experimental schools compared in college with their paired control partners is detailed along with the analysis of the state of secondary education at that time. Interpretive comments and related citations by the authors provide both specific information and real understandings.

The concluding chapter reviews the major findings of the study and puts them into a middle school perspective. It identifies twelve specific areas where the Eight-Year Study speaks to and relates to the middle level education reform effort.

Many educators reading the title of this last chapter may turn to it first. While this is understandable, every reader should peruse all the chapters to capture the full value of this extensive research study. The significant lessons from the past found in them are applicable to the present. As we enter a new millennium, efforts directed toward making fundamental changes in the traditional ways of conducting schooling need to be guided by all available research findings as well as by the cumulative experiences that have evolved from the middle school movement.

The Eight-Year Study speaks directly and positively to the kinds of curriculum changes we are beginning to make in our middle level schools. We know too much about human growth and development, about societal needs, and about the limitations of schools as they are to ignore these lessons. While we have to acknowledge the reality of today, we do not have to let it determine tomorrow. As Garrison Keillor has said, “Sometimes you have to look reality in the eye and deny it.” Armed with these lessons from the past, supported by the growing number of successful efforts to integrate curriculum and involve students fully in their education, and cognizant of the recent research which confirms the academic and developmental advantage of fully

implementing the middle school concept (See Felner and associates, 1997; Irvin [Ed.], 1997), we are in a position to aggressively alter reality. Educators at all levels would do well to revisit the Eight-Year Study through this publication, become acquainted anew, or for the first time, with what a comprehensive, long-term research study demonstrated about the educational effectiveness of classrooms freed from the constraints of bells, single subject coverage, and passive learning. While the thirty schools varied in how they utilized the freedom from the Carnegie unit curriculum and departmentalization, most employed some form of a democratically run problem-centered block of time in which students were actively engaged.

Now half a century later we are again moving to implement just such practices. But to make the changes needed in schools that long ago institutionalized passive learning, have focused on the acquisition of pre-selected knowledge, and assessed an education primarily on the degree to which those bits of knowledge are acquired (however temporarily) is a mammoth task. Leaders of uncommon courage and commitment are needed as teachers and administrators, the kind that worked in those experimental schools in the 1930s, the kind present in many of today's middle level schools. The disarming but honest remark made by one of the thirty schools' principals should give us pause. When the principals came together to discuss their early progress, she admitted: "My teachers and I do not know what to do with this freedom. It challenges and frightens us. I fear that we have come to love our chains" (Aikin, 1942, p. 16).

At this time in our history we must not let the comfort and security of old ways – our chains – lull us into inaction. America's youth is at risk, indeed, our very society is at risk, discontented, lacking noble purposes. Conditions call for our best efforts, and those efforts should capitalize on the timeless findings of the Eight-Year Study. ▲

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II

Implications for Initiating Educational Change

CRAIG KRIDEL

The mere reading of this chapter's title creates, for anyone familiar with the Eight-Year Study (also known as the 30 School Study), a nagging, persistent cry – “why didn't the Eight-Year Study have more impact?” The questions of impact and the nature of initiating curricular change will always disturb those educators who see some good in the recommendations and, I dare say, the positive outcomes of the 30 School Study. Such a cry will comfort others who view progressivism as a passing, pre-World War II heresy and who see our current educational system weakened by such change and experimentation. For yet others, that cry will elicit a poignant pause of reflection of wondering “what if” American education had actually followed the recommendations of the Eight-Year Study.

To attend to this topic I shall examine the 30 School Study in its larger context. While there seems to be a resurgence of interest in the Eight-Year Study, the current perspective as well as the image of the study over the past years has been largely myopic – myopic because we have so narrowly examined a study of eight years duration as it “affected” a select group of students as opposed to seeing its possible impact on schools in general. As I make this accusation of the narrowness of perspective, I maintain that we have overlooked the spirit of the project and of the five collected volumes, subtitled an “Adventure in American Education.” It was, indeed, an *adventure*. As I discuss the implications for initiating educational change, I underscore this very dramatic fact – namely, those involved in the 30 School Study did not already know all the answers nor did they foresee all the questions. They were not seeking to establish a theory of change in order to predict what might occur. Instead, they were venturing into the midst of change. If there is one aspect of the Eight-Year Study that

should not be forgotten as we read this volume, it is that the individuals were actually involved in the *adventure* of educational experimentation and the *drama* (and difficulties) of educational change. As I discuss the Eight-Year Study I will attend first to three basic points that must be underscored to fully understand the efforts of the Progressive Education Association. This will be followed by three lessons to be learned from the Eight-Year Study concerning the initiating of educational change.

Point 1: The Progressive Educational Association was not a unified front with a commonly held set of beliefs.

The Eight-Year Study constituted the activities of the Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association. The PEA was far from being a focused organization in the late 1920s when the study was in the early stages of conception. Perhaps it might be fairer to say that the PEA was as focused as it could be within a tradition of thoughtful self-criticism and critique. At the organization's first meeting in 1919 through its first ten years, the PEA was guided by a group of headmasters from small, private schools serving upper and upper-middle socioeconomic classes. The orientation was primarily toward elementary education, and the first six presidents (through the conception of the Eight-Year Study) were all headmasters from private schools. The first honorary president of the PEA was not John Dewey as commonly thought but was former Harvard president and Committee of Ten chair, Charles W. Eliot. In fact, membership in the PEA during these early years was oriented as much toward ensuring that secondary school students would enter the Ivy League colleges as it was to attending to the interests and needs of students. While this orientation would change, a number of the schools who later participated in the Eight-Year Study were these same private schools who led the organization during its first ten years.

"Freedom" and "creative opportunity" best represented conference topics and discussions during the first decade. The Project Method and the child-centered school were emphasized by the organization, yet this began to change in the late 1920s. John Dewey's 1928 conference speech, "Progressive Education and the Science of Education," Harold Rugg's involvement with the PEA in 1929 via his assistance in

helping the organization obtain substantial Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation funding, Robert S. Lynd's highly critical 1930 conference address, "Education and Some Realities of American Life," and George Counts' dramatic 1932 PEA convention speech, "Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?" display in striking contrast the PEA ideology before and during the existence of the Commission on the Relation of School and College.

Patricia Graham (1967) discussed the "problem of control" and highlighted the shift of leadership from private-school PEA presidents to public-school administrators and professors of education and an accompanying reorientation of political and social focus. Quoting Stanwood Cobb, the founder of the PEA, she stated:

When asked about the changes in the late twenties, he lamented, "The Association was an enthusiastic well-coordinated working organization during the first decade, but then something happened." When asked what happened, Cobb replied, "Well, they took it away from us." Cobb identified "they" as the group from Teachers College. (p. 57)

The late 1920s was also a turning point for the PEA as its membership increased over fourfold between 1924 and 1930 (to 7600 members). By the late 1930s, membership was at 10,000, and the actual number of "individuals in contact with progressive education through the activities of the PEA in conferences and in membership" exceeded 23,000 (Rugg, 1936, p. 256). My point is not to trace any ideological lineage from the "old school" PEA to the Eight-Year Study but, instead, to underscore the fact that the PEA was in a state of transition as it began discussing the need to re-examine the high school curriculum in 1930. In effect, there would not have been, nor was there ever, a clear-cut curriculum, theory, or approved course of study to be endorsed by the commission's proposed research.

Demographic and economic changes in the late 1920s caused public school educators and members of the PEA to question the purpose of secondary education. During the first three decades of the 20th century, high school attendance had grown from less than one million to approximately 10 million. Of those students beginning secondary school in the late 1920s, 50% would remain in school, and of

those students only 17% would go on to college. Since the high school curriculum was predominately college preparatory and since the economic depression was causing students to stay in school, the PEA began to question the central purpose of a high school education. Quite clearly, the overwhelming majority of high school students were within their terminal educational experience. Yet, the high school course of study remained a predominately college preparatory curriculum. With this the PEA could agree. What could not be agreed upon was a single well-delineated philosophy or approved course of study.

The impetus of the Eight-Year Study stems from the changing composition of the American secondary school student body and the PEA's dissatisfaction with the separate subjects curriculum (college-oriented Carnegie units) of the secondary school. Aikin (1935) reported:

At the Progressive Education Association Conference in 1929 and 1930, I was asked to lead discussion groups on the problem of progressive secondary education. The progressive elementary school had found its place and was doing its work. The influence of the elementary school was making itself felt in the secondary school. At the same time rapid changes were going on in the colleges. The time seemed ripe for advancement in the field of secondary education. But the secondary school was not at liberty to study its own work experimentally and freely without the consent and cooperation of the colleges. Some of us believed that the colleges were ready to join in an attempt to create conditions which would make possible the development of a new and better type of secondary education. (p. 350)

Aikin (1942) later noted that while educators wished to develop new conceptions of secondary education, administrators were reluctant to jeopardize students' chances for admission to college.

Under these conditions not many schools were willing to depart very far from the conventional high school curriculum. They could not take chances on having their candidates rejected by the colleges. (p. 1)

This stance is especially noteworthy when, in 1927, ninety-four percent of students would be accepted solely by their school record and

teacher recommendations. From this initial meeting the Commission on the Relation of School and College was formed and proceeded to establish various committees to coordinate the administration of a proposed, yet-to-be-fully-conceived project. The commission first issued a report on the shortcomings of the secondary school in 1931. Most of the findings revolved around the relations between school and college that made curricular experimentation at the secondary level very risky or impossible. The commission formulated two basic purposes:

1. To establish a relationship between school and college that would permit and encourage reconstruction in the secondary school.
2. To find, through *exploration* and *experimentation*, how the high school in the United States can serve youth more effectively. (Aikin, 1942, p. 116) {italics added}

The commission's "Proposal for Better Coordination of School and College Work," released in May 1932, in many respects is the genesis of the study. A directing committee selected high schools who stated that they were interested in totally revising their curricula. The commission received agreements from accredited colleges and universities that the graduates from these secondary schools would be released from the usual subject and unit requirements for college admission. Institutions ranged from Ivy League colleges to large public universities to small liberal arts colleges. The 27 original participating schools listed in June 1933 included:

- Altoona Senior High School, Altoona, Pennsylvania;
- Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia metropolitan area);
- Beaver Country Day School, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts (Boston metropolitan area);
- Bronxville Senior High School, Bronxville, New York (New York City metropolitan area);
- Cheltenham Township High School, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia metropolitan area);
- Dalton Schools, New York, New York;
- Denver High Schools, Denver, Colorado;

Fieldston School, New York, New York;
Francis W. Parker School, Chicago, Illinois;
George School, George School, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia metropolitan area);
Germantown Friends School, Germantown, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia metropolitan area);
Horace Mann School for Girls, New York, New York;
John Burroughs School, Clayton, Missouri (St. Louis metropolitan area);
Lincoln School, New York, New York;
Milton Academy, Milton, Massachusetts (Boston metropolitan area);
New Trier Township High School, Winnetka, Illinois (Chicago metropolitan area);
North Shore Country Day School, Winnetka, Illinois (Chicago metropolitan area);
Ohio State University Laboratory School, Columbus, Ohio;
Pelham Manor Day School, Pelham Manor, New York (New York City metropolitan area);
Radnor High School, Wayne, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia metropolitan area);
Shaker High School, Shaker Heights, Ohio (Cleveland metropolitan area);
Theodore Roosevelt High School, Des Moines, Iowa;
Tower High School, Wilmington, Delaware;
University High School, Chicago, Illinois;
Winsor School, Boston, Massachusetts;
Wisconsin High School, Madison, Wisconsin;
Central High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

By 1934, three schools were added:

Eagle Rock High School, Los Angeles, California;
Friend's Central School, Overbrook, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia metropolitan area);
University High School, Oakland, California.

In 1936, Pelham Manor Day School withdrew. The final list represented ten public schools (districts), six university laboratory schools,

and thirteen private schools. Schools were selected with the hope of providing a balance among private/public, urban/rural, large/small; this diversity brought with it more schools than the original intent of selecting 20 schools. Yet, of the participating schools, over half were within the Washington to Boston corridor.

Most of the participating schools entered the project not fully anticipating the difficulties of curriculum reform nor the degree to which their secondary school program could be changed. Some schools were well beyond where others could only hope to end. The openness of the project permitted certain schools to participate who may not have been selected under more controlled conditions. In fact, Paul Diederich in Volume 5, *The Thirty Schools Tell Their Story* (1942), actually states:

...it should be kept in mind that the participating schools did not all bear the label Progressive. Such a selection would not have given a true picture of what most secondary schools would do if college entrance requirements and examinations were abandoned. The Thirty Schools were selected as a representative cross-section of American secondary schools in which preparation for college was a major problem. They ranged in educational policy from conservative to radical.

(p. xviii)

Such comments dispel the notion that a certain number of schools – all embodying commonly held beliefs and practices – would engage in an experiment to see if their students achieve more in college than students prepared by more traditional means.

Lastly, while the PEA was in a constant state of stress with its membership and the need to become involved with a more diverse student population, yet another tension within the ranks was growing. This involved differences between two “movements” as identified by Harold Rugg – the scientific study of education and the child-centered education. In essence, Rugg (1936) discusses these differences in his chapter entitled the “Beginnings of Child-Centered Education” in *American Life and the School Curriculum*.

Coming from Mr. Judd’s ultrascientific measuring group at the University of Chicago School of Education in 1920, I was for nine years director of research at the Lincoln School

of Teachers College, writer of new materials in the social sciences, and experimenter with children in the school. Two groups were represented on that dynamic faculty – the “scientific methodists” and the “project methodists.” For nine years I participated in their struggle to understand one another. In hundreds of conferences, small and large, we fought and argued, presented evidence pro and con. With statistical charts and dramatic pictures of child growth and deficiencies, of content and of method, each group sought to get inside the minds of the other. Slowly, step by step, each group came to see more truth in the other’s position. The scientific methodists grew more and more to understand the concepts of growth and active and integrated response in terms of actual child behavior and to demand their application in a curriculum of “activities.” The child-centered group came to plan their activities more carefully, to base remedy on objective diagnosis, to respect certain types of measured evaluation....

But it was the Progressive Education Association that acted in recent years as the most effective instrument for the fusion of the two movements into one, for the integration of the ideas and techniques of the “scientists” and the “activists.” The second decade of its work witnessed the coming into the association of many persons imbued with the spirit of scientific study....

The most objective evidence that the new integrated point of view is at work on the educational scene is in the program of the Progressive Education Association’s “Commissions.”
(pp. 257-258)

This tension would ultimately create different expectations for the Eight-Year Study and, of course, markedly different ways of determining program effectiveness and of initiating curricular change.

Point 2: There was much more of significance in the Eight-Year Study than the follow-up study, reported in *Did They Succeed in College?*

Ironically, while we often see the Eight-Year Study exclusively as an experiment to determine college entrance requirements by assess-

ing the college success of the 1475 pairs of students in the Follow-up Study, the authors of that very volume *Did They Succeed in College?* indicate just the opposite. "It is a little difficult now to remember or believe, but it remains true, that initially the major specific concern of the Commission on the Relation of School and College was with college entrance requirements...." (Chamberlin, Chamberlin, Drought, & Scott, 1942 p, xvii). I cite this to underscore that there were so many aspects of this project that, in 1942, such a comment would be made in jest to remind the reader of the narrower perspective at the outset of the commission's work. The follow-up study was merely one aspect of the overall project. Indeed, Ralph Tyler, chair of the Evaluation Staff, was heavily involved in the development of curricular materials for which he collaborated with the Curriculum Associates, reported in Volume 2. Yet another and separate group consisted of the "College Follow-Up Staff" who served as the authors of the fourth volume. In essence, Tyler's involvement in the Eight-Year Study was with *programmatic changes* at the secondary school level. However, we so often think of Tyler and the Eight-Year Study largely in terms of the college success of 1475 students. Moreover, it is ironic if not outright ludicrous to place emphasis, as we do today, on this follow-up study when a member of the evaluation staff (Diederich, 1951) stated that the 30 schools were selected as a cross-section and their educational policy ranged from conservative to radical. Were not, then, these the same schools whose 1475 students were grouped together and compared to 1475 students from "non-progressive" schools? Why do we determine the fate and effectiveness of progressive education based upon the post-secondary outcomes of students, many of whom as acknowledged by a staff member, did not come from progressive schools? Clearly, there was much more of significance in the Eight-Year Study than the Follow-up Study and, indeed, we may be doing a disservice to the efforts of so many by continuing to discuss this one aspect.

The commission engaged in "free experimentation" and did not set out originally to compare pairs of students. Aikin was well aware of the difficulties of school reform, and he approached the task with the then current conception of experimentation and laboratory research. His expectations were modest and outcomes were far from being pre-defined when, in 1932, he described the project: "I wish to make clear

at this point that the Committee is not yet prepared to make definite proposals in regard to curriculum changes. We are simply seeking to answer the question of colleges as to what changes are likely to come" (p. 293). A specified follow-up study was not originally conceived at the outset. Staffs were formed as the study evolved. An Evaluation Staff, for which Tyler was the Research Director, was formed in 1934 stemming primarily from the requests for assistance in determining secondary school success and, in 1936, the Curriculum Staff (referred to as Curriculum Associates) began visiting and working with the schools' staffs in curriculum development.

And then something happened which not all, at least, of the framers of the project had fully foreseen: the problem of mastering and using this new freedom straightway turned out to be so difficult, complex, and engrossing that the *original problem of college entrance requirements was almost lost sight of and forgotten*. The new problems included the crystallization of somewhat vague general aims (not to say aspirations) into definite objectives for particular programs and specific work units; the assembly and organization of masses of new materials; necessary adaptations in administration and method; and the invention of new instruments for measuring and recording. It is with these concrete and fundamental educational realities that the Thirty Schools and the Curriculum Assistants and the Evaluation Staff and the commission itself have been chiefly preoccupied and struggling throughout the past eight or nine years. (Chamberlin, Chamberlin, Drought, & Scott, 1942, p. xviii) [emphasis added]

In order to provide opportunities for teachers from the participating schools to redesign their programs as well as to develop the greatly needed sets of resource units, workshops were scheduled for the staff. Teacher workshops – an innovative concept at the time – were held at Ohio State University in the summer of 1936 and at Sarah Lawrence College in the summer of 1937, and four workshops were staged in 1938 and 10 workshops in 1939. Workshops for students were also held in the latter years of the study (Diederich & Van Til, 1945).

After three years of curricular planning by the high schools the project staff began to examine the educational experiences of its par-

icipating students who were admitted to college beginning in 1936 through the academic year of 1940-41. While over 2000 students, as identified by teachers, headmasters, principals, and directors, were followed into college, 1475 students were actually included in the follow-up study (approximately 30-40 from each school). It is a misconception to think, however, that these were the only students in “the study.” The PEA formed a committee (albeit, short-lived) to study the needs of non-college preparatory students. The Denver staff directed their activities more towards their non-college bound students and, in general, the curricular planning of the school staff was directed toward the high school students themselves and not necessarily the college or non-college bound.

While the project could have ended years earlier, funding extended the study so that the work proceeded through most of 1941, with the reports released in 1942. Each of the five volumes served as final reports, yet the information that is most often used to summarize the study is from the fourth report, *Did They Succeed in College?* No doubt progressives were disappointed as they certainly hoped for greater differences within the pairs. Yet, this was the *first* major hypothesis of the 30 School Study – namely, whether progressive or traditional entrance requirements made any difference for college success. However, there was a *second major hypothesis* of the Eight-Year Study, one that has been overlooked. Paul Diederich states in his introduction to *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story* (1942):

The second major hypothesis of the Eight-Year Study was that the abandonment of these requirements and examination would stimulate secondary schools to develop new programs which would be better for young people, for success in college, for success in life, and for the future of our society than the traditional college preparatory program. Volume II, *Exploring the Curriculum*, reports the developments in this direction which the staff of curriculum consultants regarded as most significant. (p. xvii-xviii)

As we reconsider the reports with 1990s sensibilities of qualitative research, case study, and ethnography, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study* leads us immediately to volumes 2 and 5 – the rich narrative, curriculum-oriented reports. This is when we begin to realize

that there was more to the Eight-Year Study than the Follow-up Study. When one fully understands that there was a second major hypothesis, these two volumes, *Exploring the Curriculum* and *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, offer a very different perspective of the 30 School Study and the idea of curricular change. In fact, the conventional description of the Eight-Year Study does a disservice to the spirit of the Commission on the Relation of School and College and the underlying philosophical support of the Progressive Education Association.

Moreover, not only was there more to the Eight-Year Study than Volume 4, *Did They Succeed in College*, the PEA was involved in other projects, closely related yet distinct from the Commission on the Relation of School and College. The commission was indeed doing much more than following a group of students through four years of high school and four years of college. The PEA Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum (V.T. Thayer, Chair; 1933-1940) grew out of the 30 School Study and released a series of publications that displayed ways in which curriculum could attend to the ideals of democracy and needs of students. Five general texts were published under the commission; these included *Language in General Education* (1940); *Mathematics in General Education* (1940); *Science in General Education* (1938); *The Social Studies in General Education* (1940); *The Visual Arts in General Education* (1940). Six individually authored works included Peter Blos, *The Adolescent Personality* (1941); Lawrence H. Conrad, *Teaching Creative Writing* (1937); Elbert Lenrow, *Reader's Guide to Prose Fiction* (1940); Lois H. Meek, *The Personal-Social Development of Boys and Girls with Implications for Secondary Education* (1940); V. T. Thayer, C.B. Zachry, and R. Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education* (1939); C.B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence* (1940).

Furthermore, the PEA Commission on Human Relations (Alice V. Keliher, Chair; 1935-1942) released a six volume report that attended to the development of teaching materials oriented towards the psychological needs of youth. Six texts were published under this commission; these included Alice V. Keliher, *Life and Growth* (1938); W.C. Langer, *Psychology and Human Living* (1943); L.M. Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration* (1938); B.J. Stern, *The Family, Past and Present* (1938); K.W. Taylor, *Do Adolescents Need Parents?* (1938);

W. Robert Wunsch and E. Albers, Eds., *Thicker Than Water* (1939). Along with PEA-sponsored commissions, various committees were formed – most notably, the Committee on Experimental Schools (John French, Chair; 1936-1939), the Committee on the Education of Teachers of Progressive Schools (Laura Zirbes, Chair; 1939-1941), and the short-lived Committee on Non-College Bound Youth.

Point 3: The impact of the Eight-Year Study is difficult (if not impossible) to determine in terms of any linear, cause and effect concept of change.

Why didn't the Eight-Year Study change our conception of the secondary curriculum? Was it lack of impact because of the modest results or because of World War II. As Harold Alberty (1953) states:

Unfortunately the reports of the study came at a time when the entire nation was involved in a death struggle against totalitarianism. Consequently it did not receive the attention it deserved. The impact upon the rank and file of secondary schools was very slight indeed. Teachers, by and large, went on assigning daily lessons from textbooks. (p. 287)

Impact, in Alberty's view, may have been "very slight indeed" due, in part, to the fact that the *Story of the Eight-Year Study* was released two months after United States' involvement in World War II.

No doubt, the staff members were disappointed that the ultimate results of the pairs of 1475 students, whose academic records were noted for *only one year*, were not more dramatic. As McConn stated in his preface to *Did They Succeed in College?* (1942):

I am afraid it makes a bit of an anticlimax for everybody concerned, hopeful progressives and distrustful conservatives, alike....These graduates of progressive schools have not set the college on fire, as some progressives may have hoped they would. On the other hand, they unmistakably made good – and then some. (p. xx)

Yet, what could one really expect. And to try to determine the impact of a secondary school education – through whatever means – is a questionable activity. We see Margaret Willis' admirable efforts – draw-

ing upon 1950s psychological concepts of “inner” and “other” directness reported in *The Guinea Pigs After Twenty Years* (Willis, 1961). However, her assessment of impact is spurious at best. What does come through is Willis’ story, one as wonderful as originally told by the group of students, *Were We Guinea Pigs?* (Class of 1938, 1938).

How does one determine impact upon an individual – students or teachers – or on a field of study? James A. Michener (1986) talks of his role as a teacher in the 30 School Study at the George School and the “effects” of progressive education:

...I watched with delight as my graduates earned highly successful places for themselves in both later college life and adult performance. I have always viewed with mild amusement the loose charges that Progressive Education was a failure or that it promoted laxity in either study or morals. My classes, if I say so myself, were among the best being taught in America at that time, all with a far above average model of deportment and learning. And through the years my former students constantly write to tell me that they evaluated those years in the same way. A failure? One of the greatest successes I’ve known.

As to the effect on me: it made me a liberal, a producer, a student of my world, a man with a point of view and the courage to exemplify it. I wish all students could have the experiences mine did. I wish all teachers could know the joy I found in teaching under such conditions. (p. 10)

Such a determination of impact upon the student is satisfying to Michener but certainly not convincing to an empirical researcher.

However, when we really begin to consider the nature of change, we must stop and confront what we expect and what would be necessary to document impact and change. When contacted in 1946 by a former educator from one of the participating schools shortly after World War II, Ralph Tyler (with no reason not to be truthful) states:

The effect of the Eight-Year Study seems to be to influence a considerable number of curriculum revision programs in the secondary schools in various parts of the country. This is most evident in the Middle West and in the South. (Tyler, 1946)

And while Tyler is referring specifically to secondary schools, his work at the post-secondary level with the Cooperative Study in General Education of the American Council on Education in the 1940s suggests many direct links and extensions. Too, the Progressive Education Association and the commission influenced, and were influenced by, the research studies of North Central Association Study, Ohio Study, Pennsylvania Study, California Study; however, direct links of impact, as Tyler noted, can be established throughout an entire region, namely, the South.

The Southern Study was a curriculum development project of the Commission on Curricular Problems and Research of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and, to a certain degree, modeled itself on the Eight-Year Study since no Southern schools were among those thirty participating schools. From 1938-1943, thirty-three high schools from each of the eleven Southern Association states revamped their curriculum among progressive school beliefs of the time (Jenkins, Kent, Sims, & Waters, 1947; Konkle, 1996). The Secondary School Study for Negroes was a project of the Commission on Secondary Schools of the Association of Colleges and Secondary School for Negroes and was very much within the experimental tradition of the Eight-Year Study and the Southern Study. The Secondary School Study, conducted from 1940-1947, involved the participation of sixteen high school schools from each of the eleven Southern Association states. The participating school staffs of the Secondary School Study were free to explore ways to develop school policy, curriculum, data-gathering methods, and pupil-community involvement (Kridel, 1995).

Other suggested links to the Eight-Year Study can be found in the work of Hilda Taba and the Committee on Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools (Taba, 1950; Brady & Taba, 1996). Analogies and direct links have been drawn between the Eight-Year Study and the work of the ASCD Core Commission (Klohr, 1994). The determination of impact becomes increasingly difficult; influence is so problematic that evaluations become speculative. My point is not to criticize further or to uncover confusion in the commission's work. Instead, I underscore the fact that any project of this magnitude contains such irregularities. Do we expect more from the past? Today's Holmes Group and the Coalition of Essential Schools both have fo-

cused conceptions of education; however, examine the programs of the participating schools – the diversity is staggering. This is not a criticism of Holmes or the coalition but rather an acknowledgment that such diversity is normal. Does anyone really dispute how difficult it is to determine impact even in projects which tend to have well-articulated goals? Clearly, the Eight-Year Study did not eliminate the use of the Carnegie unit and traditional college entrance requirements for the secondary schools. However, if one suggests that is a legitimate way to determine the effectiveness of a program, I sense we all would be hard pressed to cite any program with that degree of impact.

An adventure in experimentation

Most common impressions of the Eight-Year Study suggest that there was a master plan and that the idea of an Eight-Year study with the examination of sets of students from progressive and traditional schools was decided at the outset of the project. I wish to underscore the fact that the initial curriculum planning was followed by the establishment of the Evaluation Staff. This *was followed* by the hiring of Curriculum Associates. In fact, the Curriculum Associates speculate in their volume, *Exploring the Curriculum*, about what the schools may have looked like if they had been part of the project from the very beginning.

The Curriculum Staff has indulged at times in off-the-record air-castle talking about what it would have accomplished had it been working with the schools in the Eight-Year Study in 1932 and 1933 – a period when the original plans for deviation from conventional patterns were being made. No one will ever know whether that additional time would have made a difference in the curricular status achieved by the schools. The important thing to report here is that in 1936 each of the schools had a curricular pattern in effect; some of them were dissatisfied with that pattern, and, in the following four years, made efforts to improve it. (Giles, McCutchen, & Zechiel, 1942, p. 69)

This is not the writing of a group of evaluators preparing to examine the college achievement of students. Nor is it the description of a study following a scientific method. Rather, it is more of a “reflection” on curriculum development in the thirty schools. In essence, a

group of educators attempted to work with the complexities and difficulties faced in various school settings and, in so doing, they generated often creative curriculum designs to cope with the practical problems of reform. From the perspective of such activities as these, we come to reconsider *The Story of the Eight-Year Study* not with the anticipation of what happened to the 1475 students in their first year of college but, instead, with a sense of wonderment of what were the reconciliations and inner workings of the thirty schools to the many problems of curriculum design and development.

Aikin noted that the commission embarked upon twelve years of work – taken a few years at a time – with few preconceived ideas and no blueprint for the study. Similarly, the participating secondary schools proceeded upon eight years of work with no “pre-approved” design for their secondary school curriculum. It was a true adventure in American education. In fact, Baum in his dissertation research suggested that the commission’s committee chairs were in so much “confusion” about the conceptions of the Eight-Year Study that he had to prepare a chart to show year by year who viewed the study as experimental, who viewed it as a pilot demonstration, or who was unsure it was either (Baum, 1969). Moreover, the focus of the study did not end at the secondary level in 1936. An examination of *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story* suggests that examples of more productive curriculum development efforts at the secondary school level occurred well into the late 1930s. In posing their need to examine the college entrance requirements, the authors state that they needed more than a demonstration:

...not a demonstration: an experiment, a study. Because perhaps, of course, the progressives were wrong. Perhaps it was true that no boy or girl could succeed in college who had not had either four units of one foreign language or three of one and two of another and mastered certain specified topics of algebra and plane geometry. But it did seem as if the time had arrived when the question should be settled by the method of actual trial. (Chamberlin, et al. 1942, p. xviii)

Such was the public consideration of progressive education – yes, perhaps this organization did have it wrong! What must not be forgotten about the PEA is that at times they were their own worst critics and served to raise the most difficult questions within their ranks.

Furthermore, their questioning was quite public and at no time withheld from their own scrutiny.

Aikin (1942) sensed the many “loose ends” that emerged as curriculum change came about in the various schools. He described the 1933 meeting of the various staff members, directors, and principals from the participating schools:

Everyone had a strong sense of sharing in a great adventure; few anticipated fully the hard work, the problems, the discouragements, and the eventual satisfactions which were to come. No one present at that first conference (in 1933) will ever forget the honest confession of one principal (from F.W. Parker High School) when she said, ‘My teachers and I do not know what to do with this freedom. It challenges and frightens us. I fear that we have come to love our chains.’ Most of us were just beginning to realize that we were facing the severest possible test of our initiative, imagination, courage, and wisdom. No one of the group could possibly foresee all the developments ahead, nor were we all of one mind as to what should be done. (p 16)

This is what we miss as we discuss the Eight-Year Study – that they could not foresee all the problems ahead, nor could they agree upon a common way. What did occur were the typical trials, errors, adaptations, and corrections that are normal in any sweeping study involving numerous schools and hundreds of teachers and thousands of students. The Curriculum Associates sought to examine the difficulties and problems; yet, no one solution was assumed. And, whatever resolution developed, the decision was taken with open, self-critical, “objective” perspective. In short, the commission was not attempting to establish doctrine, nor was it seeking to prove an “accepted” way. Years later when Aikin (1953) considered whether the Commission should have prescribed a secondary school curriculum for all schools, his response was quite clear:

If the answer is yes, the commission should then have selected schools willing to accept its control. The meeting at which the commission considered and answered this question was one of the most vital it ever held. The decision then

made, and made unanimously, shaped the whole course of the study. The commission's answer to the question was, NO. The commission would not tell the schools what to do.
(p. 13)

The school staffs were involved in an adventure, and their final reports display this sense of exploration. Many examples could be cited; however, I have selected the brief discussions of curriculum development in Des Moines and Tulsa, described in the second volume *Exploring the Curriculum*, as an example of the openness of the commission's public discourse. In keeping with the intent of this volume, I include a full excerpt of such an open discussion – particularly relevant for teachers who are attempting to integrate the curriculum.

Scope and sequence problems in Des Moines

The specific problem faced in the tenth and eleventh grades at Roosevelt High School in Des Moines may be examined. By 1936 the school had established a special group of students, had assigned certain teachers to work with those boys and girls, and had planned a curriculum for them which might be termed an English-social studies fusion, or more loosely, a cultural-epoch approach. The plan called for a study of world civilizations in the tenth grade, and the American heritage in the eleventh. The courses followed an historical or chronological organization, and included the literature related to the history studied, (with some attempts to bring in art and music). They also provided opportunities to develop skill in oral and written expression. The history covered was not drawn from a single text, but from classroom sets of several texts. Nevertheless, it followed rather closely conventional materials, and the literature moved through classical writings in pace with the history. Thus, in the last analysis, the subject content of the courses was largely pre-determined by someone other than the teachers involved, and the various inclusions were justified on the grounds that cultured people (meaning adults) needed to know these things.

At the same time, the teachers were becoming more and more aware of the needs and concerns of their pupils because they associated with them for longer than the usual one semester, and came to know them better as persons.

From the beginning, the teachers had regarded as their fundamental task the development in pupils of such desirable traits as cooperation, tolerance, and self-assurance. This is evident in the fact that from the beginning, instead of conventional marks, there were descriptive reports of the status of the individual student with reference to certain desirable abilities, attitudes, and skills, and his later progress toward these goals. The need for data on which to base these reports had led to new types of classroom procedures, and these, in turn, had suggested the desirability of changing the content. As more pupil planning and initiative were sought, more frequently were questions raised concerning matters being studied, and more frequently were suggestions volunteered for changes. From the beginning, there was a struggle between the ideas of pupil development, and of subject- and skill-mastery. The statement of objectives, the nature of the reports issued to students and parents, the attempt through classroom procedures to bring about the pupil's recognition of his responsibility for his education and to develop in him a vital concern about making that education valuable to him personally, all tended to emphasize the idea of pupil development. . . .

On the other hand, there was a strong feeling upon the part of teachers and students alike that subject matter was intrinsically important, and that skills should be developed willy-nilly in or out of relation to their (the students') immediate needs. Parents also felt that these conflicting purposes were equally important, and this intensified the difficulty. They were very sympathetic to the idea of consideration of the individual child. At the same time, they were politely insistent upon coverage of subject matter and the acquisition of skills.

The most significant difficulty lay in the criteria for the selection of content. As long as the criteria continued to be something other than their value in promoting pupil growth, there was conflict.

In the summer of 1937, most of the Des Moines personnel concerned with this new work attended the Bronxville Workshop. There they studied carefully the approach to curricular reconstruction set forth in *Science in General Education*. This helped them to see more clearly one phase of

their problem: the need for direct attention to the needs of adolescents living in a democratic society. But when they attempted to use the basic aspects of living, suggested by that book, as the determinants of content for their courses, they were confronted with all the old difficulties and many new ones.

During that summer, and for most of the following year – sometimes on school time but much more frequently after school hours – they tried to develop satisfactory units of work based on student needs. There always arose the double-barreled conflict between predetermined units and pupil participation in planning, on the one hand, and on the other, the immediate nature of student needs and the deferred values of content based on the social demands of adult society.

The conflicts illustrated

These conflicts are so fundamentally important in curriculum reconstruction that they warrant more specific examination. Teachers accustomed to teaching content for its intrinsic importance have always sought to present this content to the learners by some orderly pattern, and that pattern has usually been derived from the internal logic of the subject field. Instruction, therefore, has moved from the past to the present, as in history, or from the fundamental structure to the application, as in grammar. Furthermore, teachers have abhorred complete dependence on daily inspiration for suggestions concerning the day's work. They have wanted to look ahead, to know what is expected of them, to see what is coming next month. Thus has developed the course of study which is planned for the year or for three years, in which the units of work have been blocked out, plans for their development set down, and a clear indication given of the order in which they will be taken up.

In such an orderly scheme there is no need for pupil planning; and not many teachers relish the sense of hypocrisy which would be theirs if they permitted pupils to discuss possible units of work, or ways of studying them, when the discussion could have only one outcome: an acceptance of the plan which the teacher had already worked out.

But adolescents need training and practice in reaching intelligent decisions and in effective social participation. How

can such training better be given than by group consideration of matters of as vital concern to them as what they what study and how they will study it?

The other conflict arose because, to adults, adolescent needs and concerns often seem impermanent and, as topics for direct study, trivial and flimsy when compared to such solid meat as the causes of the Civil War, or the theory of valence, or one of Shakespeare's tragedies. Thus the problem of how to behave on a "date" competes with *Hamlet* as a possible subject of study. (If the play were *Romeo and Juliet* instead of *Hamlet*, the two subjects might not be too far apart) Stated succinctly, education for today must be mainly concerned with the contemporary. As Beard remarks, the contemporary is always the superficial. On the other hand, education for tomorrow inevitably involves prediction that the knowledge or skill being learned will be useful tomorrow. This assumes that teachers can lead pupils to learn today, something for which they see no immediate use, and that if it is learned today it will be remembered until there is occasion to use it.

Des Moines' solutions

The Des Moines teachers found solutions for these conflicts that were at least partially satisfactory to them. The first solution agreed upon was a decision concerning the latter conflict discussed above. The list of basic aspects of living emphasized in *Science in General Education* – personal living, personal-social relationships, social-civic relationships, and economic relations – had not been helpful to them as determinants of content or as the scope of their curriculum. After much study and discussion, they adopted a modified list of areas of living based on a study of the Mississippi State Curriculum Committee. These were:

1. Protecting Life and Health
2. Getting a Living
3. Making a Home
4. Expressing Religious Impulses
5. Satisfying Desires for Beauty and Recreation
6. Securing Education
7. Cooperating in Social and Civic Action
8. Improving Material Conditions

This list served as convenient categories for grouping adolescent needs; it also indicated important leads by which those immediate needs could be linked with "respectable" subject matter, so that the latter could be used to help to meet the needs. For example: historical, literary, artistic, and scientific materials dealing with the family, past and present, could furnish leads that would help to meet the need expressed as "how to get along with one's family."

The conflict between predetermined content and pupil teacher planning was resolved by the development and use of source units. The eight areas listed above served as a guide to suggest areas in which source units should be constructed. Since a source unit is an inventory of resources for teaching (materials, procedures, activities, generalizations, bibliographies, etc.) and not a specific, sequential plan, it permitted the teachers to be prepared ahead of time, and yet preserved real opportunities of choice for pupils. Teachers could retain their sense of professional security, and pupils would obtain practice in group planning.

During the summer Workshop at Denver, 1938, fifteen Des Moines teachers worked on two major problems. The first was the determination of the scope of work for each of the three years; the second, the development of source units. From this summer's work, an agreement was reached: while all eight areas of living would be considered in all three grades, the tenth year should give especial attention to expressing the religious impulses, the eleventh year should give particular attention to satisfying the desire for beauty, securing education, cooperating in social and civic action, and improving material conditions. All of these were to be treated from the contemporary problem viewpoint. The American history necessary to understand the background of the problems in each area was to be taught. Suitable reading valuable for an understanding of a problem was to be selected by the English class from past and contemporary writing. Free reading time was also to be provided. Technical English training was to be based on the needs of the particular student or class as the work of the unit developed and brought to light their shortcomings.

At least half of the time at the Workshop was spent on making source units which the teachers hoped would help solve their difficulties. When they returned to their own schools, however, they found that units made for general use in many localities were only of slight use in a particular situation. The underlying principles used in developing these units were, nevertheless, of great value and afforded the basis for the next step.

This next step had four phases: 1.) much more attention was paid to orientation than formerly; 2.) real pupil-teacher planning within the general scope of the chosen areas was carried on; 3.) the contemporary-problems approach was used; 4.) a greater emphasis was put on activities other than assigned readings, recitation, and writing as means for gaining and expressing ideas. Such means as guest speakers, interviews, construction of graphs, and art projects were more frequently used.

Hence, the most significant change that came about during the entire course of the experiment was the shift from subject matter to pupil needs as the criteria for the selection of content.

As was true in Des Moines, so it has been elsewhere. Curriculum reconstruction has to face two basic problems: first, the determination of what shall be taught, and second, the order in which it shall be taught. Des Moines' decision concerning scope has been to ascertain the needs of the pupils, and to use the eight categories as the means of classifying these needs. The teachers have gained enough classroom security to use pupil-teacher planning in determining sequence.

Education for tomorrow or for today?

Revolutionary thinking has been quietly going on concerning this problem of what to teach in the high school, and what to leave out. At one time it was a question to be answered only by national commissions made up of research scholars known for their mastery of specific content fields. Then, state courses of study were formulated in the same pious hope that uniformity would produce excellence. The classroom teachers, barred from such profound considerations, meekly took the textbook handed them and marked

off the doses by which the text was to be sequentially absorbed. Now, more and more teachers are coming to believe that three factors, must be considered in deciding what should be studied: the uniqueness of the local community, the needs and interests of the pupils, and the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher. The classroom teacher is the only one qualified to know all of these, and hence should make the final decision regarding what should be taught. (Each pupil, of course, makes the decision as to what will be learned.)

When the teachers concerned with the education of a group of pupils face the question of scope, they have three choices. They may teach that which always has been taught. They may decide on the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes which adults find necessary in order to cope with the world, and teach those to their pupils. Or they may ascertain the present needs of their adolescent charges and teach the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to meet those needs. In effect, the decision is between education for yesterday, tomorrow, or today.

No space will be devoted here to education for yesterday persons interested can look about them. The other two bases for determining scope will, however, be analyzed. Education for tomorrow will be labeled the "social-demands approach," meaning the demands which society makes on adults, while education for today will be referred to as the "adolescent-needs approach," or simply, the "needs approach."

The social-demands approach

Various analyses, variously achieved, have been used to determine social demands. Bobbitt and his staff made a "job analysis" back around 1920 in order to provide the basis for the Los Angeles curriculum on which he was working. He and his assistants listed thousands of specific activities which adults are called upon to perform, and by placing them in categories, arrived at the scope of the curriculum. Leon C. Marshall, on the basis of individual reading, research, and "arm-chair philosophizing," has set up a list of basic social processes that operate in any society, and at any time, and he has urged that these be made the determinants of what

should be included in, and excluded from, the curriculum. A Mississippi curriculum committee, under the leadership of O.I. Frederick, collected nearly forty analyses of social activities and, by putting the items together, ruled out duplications and made some adjustments. This produced a list of nine major areas of human activities on which the Mississippi curriculum was planned. Whatever the method used, the result of a social-demands analysis has usually been a list of from four to fifteen items that serve as the basis of the curriculum.

Once determined, the list of social demands has been used in several different ways. An analysis of the common elements of culture has been made the basis for revising a history program at the Tower Hill School. The teachers of various grade levels there agreed to accept the responsibility for curriculum making for their students and, although each grade level studied a different culture, continuity in the program was sought through agreed-on emphasis upon the elements common to all cultures.

The Fieldstone School has set up six pre-professional fields of interest: euthenics, economics and business, art, literature, music, and science. Each student's choice from the six serves as the focal point around which his study in his various classes is oriented.

In the Lincoln School, an analysis of the major areas of human activity was made the basis for selecting topics of study for correlated work. The procedures were interesting enough to warrant some elaboration. The teachers started their tenth-grade pupils on a study of the life and literature of the ancient Near East. After the students had studied the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Hebrews, and Persians, the teachers helped them make a list of the elements of living important to all these peoples. Then the class turned abruptly to a study of various Utopias, using Plato's, More's, Bacon's, and Bellamy's among others, looking for the ways in which the basic problems of living were solved in ideal societies. After revising their scope in the light of contributions made by the Utopias, they turned to contemporary metropolitan New York in order to see how their own society was meeting these problems. This concluded the year's course.

These illustrations have demonstrated ways in which agreement on scope – a scope based on adult society’s demands has influenced curricular planning. It has also influenced decisions as to the sequence in which units of work would be taught. No school in the Eight-Year Study has based its sequence on a social-demands scope, but several of the newer state curricula have done so. Since this process represents the logical fruition of the social-demands approach, it may be desirable here to look at its possibilities and limitations.

The curriculum chart

After a curriculum committee has developed its list of items that comprise the common elements of culture, or the major areas of human activity, each item is analyzed to determine the logical development of that particular element or area, or to discover its functions or its impact on the individual. These analyses are then apportioned to the various grade levels. Quite frequently the student is led through expanding horizons or concentric circles to a full understanding of each function of living. Thus the area “Protecting Life and Health” suggests that safety in the home should be taught in the seventh grade; safety in school and community in the eighth; municipal health programs in the ninth; the state’s responsibility in the tenth; and health as national and world problems in the eleventh and twelfth grades, respectively. A similar analysis would be made for each item included in the agreed-on scope. So, if the elements of culture or areas of living are made the headings of horizontal columns, and the grade levels head the vertical columns, a chart can be constructed that will tell at a glance the whole curriculum of any specific grade level.

Once the *material* of the curriculum has been determined, the school faces the problem of deciding whether the content placed in each grade level should be taught in separate subject fields, by correlation or fusion, or in one of the various core-curriculum organizations.

Advantages of predetermined scope and sequence

This approach to a scope and sequence determined in advance of teaching has certain obvious advantages, the most

important of which is that it contributes mightily to teacher security. Whether we approve of it or deplore it, most secondary teachers have been trained to a mastery of certain fields of content. This constitutes their professional *raison d'être*, the difference between them and the average layman. There is a vast amount of comfort in knowing the predictable demands of one's job, in having a reasonable idea as to what one's work will involve tomorrow and next month, and in feeling competent to meet those requirements. Here is one of the basic factors contributing to the reluctance of teachers and schools to abandon the old, logically organized subject fields. In many cases it encourages teachers to oppose a change toward a social-demands curriculum. In other instances teachers come to see the futility of the conventional curriculum and are willing to consider basic change; but they still shrink from the unpredictability of the adolescent-needs approach and favor the social-demands plan because the latter affords the security of more certainty concerning the content they will be required to teach. This conservative factor in educational reconstruction will probably continue to operate until teachers come to see that the fundamental purpose of education is not to be measured primarily in terms of mastery of content but in changes in behavior; therefore, the constant and predictable and important factor is not the content but the learning situation.

A second advantage of the curriculum based on the social-demands approach over the curriculum based on adolescent needs is that it is easier to demonstrate the importance of the content to parents, other laymen, and to conservative teachers. When the needs approach is used, the validity of the content depends on the immediate learning situation; lifted from that context, it may appear trivial and open to the label of educational "boondoggling." When the content is based on the demands of adult society, questioning adults are much more likely to approve of it. Obviously this advantage is one of expediency. The intelligent corps of teachers realizes the impossibility of avoiding all criticism, and therefore faces courageously the necessity of distinguishing between those who have a right to criticize and those who do not. If these teachers take the next logical step, they will agree that persons who have the right to criticize the

curriculum have a share in the responsibility for planning it. The use of parents' councils and parents' meetings, in which parents share in the planning and are acquainted with procedures, has almost invariably brought approval for either approach – adolescent-needs or social-demands.

A third advantage of a predictable sequence is that it permits the preparation and mobilization of materials for teaching. In fact, more teaching materials are available on the various phases of adult society than can be found on adolescent concerns. Predicting the sequence permits time for securing these materials and planning their effective use. If the teacher using the needs approach were forced to sheer opportunism, he would have to abandon it. With the trend that has developed in Workshops, however, teachers using either approach can build source units that serve to mobilize available materials on any or all of the topics in the agreed-on scope.

Disadvantages of predetermined scope and sequence

Certain disadvantages inherent in the social-demands plan should be presented.

Once the areas to be studied at each grade level have been determined and set forth in the curriculum chart, they tend to become frozen there. When the scope is fixed by adult social demands, and the order of studying them has been determined by a logical, "expanding horizon" analysis, the repetition that is needed for good teaching has difficulty finding a place. The social-demands approach assumes that, once an area or topic has been treated at a specific grade level, students will have no need to study that topic again.

Another disadvantage develops because most sequence charts assume a logical and orderly pattern of living and experiencing; when pupils are studying the circle of the community, they should have no contacts with or desire to know about the state, the nation, or the world, if they are to be satisfied with such an approach. If questions about these other horizons arise, they must be deferred – students must be told that they can't study things that interest or concern them now while interest is keen; such study must be postponed until those topics are reached in the logical prearranged order of things. The alternative is for timely prob-

lems to be taken up independent of the scheduled curriculum and the result is a two or three ring circus. Thus, in stressing the "fundamental," there is no natural place for the "timely." The ideal curriculum makes functional use of the immediate and the contemporary, mobilizing the historical and the 'fundamental' to help the student reach intelligent decisions about those things that concern him now.

Finally, a curriculum based on adult social demands, taught in a fixed sequence, rests on certain assumptions concerning predictability, motivation, and retention, which ought to be examined. The major reason for attempting to teach adolescents certain facts or skills which are useful only to adults is the expectation that when these young people have become adults, they will use the facts and skills they learned three to ten years before. This sort of curriculum, therefore, must assume that it can predict correctly the knowledge and skills which will be functional for the next generation. Even though there are few of us who would claim this competence in forecasting (and the lack of agreement varies directly in ratio to the size of the planning group), let us assume for the moment that this prediction has been made and a curriculum so established. The next difficulty to be faced is that of motivating all the pupils to learn these knowledge and skills, the necessity for which is likely to arise in the future. In the high schools of twenty five years ago this was no serious problem. Secondary school populations then were a selected group, made up of those students to whom bookish learning was quite satisfactory; those who demanded proof of utility before they could learn were ejected into industry and agriculture. During these twenty-five years, however, the educational picture has changed and the great majority of the youth of high school age is enrolled in classes. Hence we must now deal with large numbers of pupils who either tacitly or explicitly raise the question: why should I do this? whenever an assignment is made. If the answer is that the present assignment is to be done because it will be of possible helpfulness to the pupil ten years from now, large numbers will go to the movies that evening.

Even if the curriculum-planning group has predicted accurately, and the classroom teacher has succeeded in motivating the pupils to learn now that which will be useful later,

it should be recognized that an assumption concerning retention is involved. Knowledge usually persists to the extent that it is used. When no immediate use is possible, rapid loss is to be expected. Students tested on the factual content of a course a year after its completion have shown as high as an 80 per cent loss of the mastery which they had demonstrated by a comparable test the year before.

Indeed, there is some basis for an even more serious indictment of the sort of curriculum that anticipates needs and attempts to meet them before they arise. If the assignment of these materials simply drove pupils to the movies, or resulted in their being learned and quickly forgotten, it would be bad enough. But a strong case can be made for the charge that anticipating needs may cause psychological scars which will hinder learning in the future when the need actually exists. For example, a student's inability to read may be the result of a standardized reading curriculum which exposed him to reading before he was ready for it, and thus convinced him that reading was a tool which he could never master. The pupil who dislikes history, the girl who hates science, the student who becomes physically ill over his mathematics problems – all may have been thus turned against fields of learning which they might otherwise have found exciting and valuable. (Giles, et al., 1942, pp. 70-85)

This section continues with a discussion of the Needs Approach to curriculum reconstruction (the determination of adolescent needs with recognition of personal potentialities and participation in a democratic society). As with predetermined scope and sequence, the difficulties and strengths of the needs approach were discussed and then followed by a section that describes the scope and sequence problems in the Tulsa school system. The tenor of the discussion suggests that the commission was certainly not proving or supporting one method over another. Once again, the idea of "adventure," "experimentation," and "exploration" emerge as constructs in the dialogue.

The Tulsa compromise on sequence

Up to this point, the thinking of the Tulsa Committee had been dominated by the adolescent-needs approach. At its next step, however, it turned back to a middle ground as it

faced the question of sequence. The implication of the adolescent-needs approach, and of the three statements above, would be for Tulsa to organize source units on the areas and subdivisions of scope listed; make all of the source units available to the seventh-grade teachers; permit them and their pupils to work out the seventh-grade curriculum in terms of their needs; and pass on to succeeding teachers of upper-grade levels an informational log of what had transpired in the seventh grade so that eight- and ninth-grade groups could similarly work out their curricula.

The Tulsa Curriculum Committee, however, concluded that: 'Theoretically, at least, this means that problems of this type cannot be selected until teachers and pupils have done considerable work together. In actual practice, however, experienced teachers are usually able to predict with reasonable accuracy the needs of a given group of pupils in a specific situation. Furthermore, planning in advance by the teacher on the basis of his predictions is necessary if materials are to be at hand when needed, possibilities for the development of problems are to be appraised, and effective teaching is to be done with a minimum lost of time and effort. The selection and development of curriculum problems of this type involves, then, two distinct phases: first, teacher selection and development of tentative problems of rather broad scope; second, teacher-pupil selection and development of the actual problem or sub-problems to be used as units of learning experience.'

As one of the members of the Tulsa committee said in a discussion, "We don't know any scientific way of arriving at grade placement of materials or units of work, but we can never put a new program into effect unless our teachers know ahead of time what they are expected to teach." Therefore, Tulsa set up a jury of more than 500 members in order to pool subjective judgments concerning the proper grade-level placement of units of learning. Selected teachers, parents, and pupils were asked to serve and each was asked to think in terms of a specific grade level. Each member of the jury was given the list of more than 100 "Suggested Centers for Grouping Pupil Problems in the Core Curriculum" and was asked to mark each item on the list *plus* if it should surely be taught at that grade level, or *minus* if it should surely be

avoided at the grade level with which the juror had identified himself.

As a result of this process, certain over-arching themes were set up for the core program in the secondary schools – a core program which would receive a diminishing amount of time as it moved to the upper grades.

While the sequence in regard to grade levels was fixed, the order within each grade level remained elastic. In the seventh grade, for example, the curriculum was to center around home and family life, but the topics listed under that heading were suggestive, not mandatory, and no sequence of topics was established. The problems of materials and the organization of units have been attacked, in the main successfully. By developing source units on various topics drawn from the over-arching themes, decisions as to what to teach, and when and how to teach it, have been reached by teachers planning together in daily conference periods, and by teacher-pupil planning.

In all probability, some such broad decision as to grade placement of units was required in Tulsa, if for no other reason than to bolster teacher security. It is interesting to note, however, that after a year or two of actually operating the General Education program, many Tulsa teachers began to urge the abandonment of the over-arching themes as crutches which they no longer needed. They had discovered that problem of “home and family life” may reach into “living in the community,” and that it serves no educational purpose to delay consideration of the community aspects of the home for two years merely because the established sequence so prescribes. (Giles, et al., 1942, pp. 97-99)

What we are left with, then, is the essence of the “Adventure in Education” as it permeates the five commissions’ reports. Aikin reminds us: “The reader should keep in mind always that the principals and teachers of the Thirty Schools were striving, groping, searching constantly in their attempts to decide what to teach and how to teach. The schools did not all start from the same place or go in the same direction” (Aikin, 1942, p. 16). Ironically, this excerpt of curriculum development at Des Moines and Tulsa is similar to the rich ethnographic narratives that are commonplace today – rich narratives that

do not serve to prove one method as being better than another but that provide opportunities for reflection and the thoughtful re-examination of curriculum development. Differences of the commission can be traced back to the perspectives mentioned early by Harold Rugg – the “scientific methodists and the project methodists” – for as one group sought to establish a scientific design to determine the effectiveness of progressive or traditional secondary school curriculum for college success, the other group examined, discussed, and considered the complexities of curriculum redesign as their secondary schools developed new programs for not only success in college but also success in “life and for the future of our society.”

Assessments of the impact of the Eight-Year Study vary dramatically, of course, between these two groups. To some, only a follow-up study could determine the effectiveness of secondary school reform. To others, the study was a continuation of the struggle for curricular change where educators compliment and compete with forces – society, family, church – that have such overwhelming “effects” upon the behavior of students. The commission reports reflect both perspectives; in effect, they did not permit a clear-cut conclusion to be presented to the educational community. These are the *difficulties of an adventure*. Perhaps what can be stated with great assurance is that adventures should not be seen as ways to change traditional educational practices. More importantly, adventures have significant stories to tell and new metaphors to be understood in any examination of the curriculum change process.

Lessons From the Eight-Year Study for Initiating Education Change

In this chapter I proposed that the Eight-Year Study can still be “regarded as the most important education research project in the first half of the twentieth century. Despite its infrequent mention today, it is surely the most extensive curriculum research project that occurred between 1900 and 1950” (Schubert, 1986, p. 263). Specifically, I present a larger context for understanding the commission’s reports and, when one does not focus solely upon the outcomes of the Follow-up Study, a different mix of “lessons-to-be-learned” emerges. From my re-reading of the five commission reports (as well as the publications from

the other commissions and related materials) and extensive conversations with Eight-Year Study administrators, teachers, and students, three lessons emerge from the historical narratives:

Lesson 1: The commission sought to change the curriculum, but they did not bother to discuss the “nature of change.”

While the entire point of the commission’s work was to change the curriculum, their focus was on emerging curricula designs rather than on the generation of a change theory. Those individuals who work with the various schools saw themselves as assisting in curriculum reform – they were not bound by nor was their work defined by clear-cut theories of change. Even in the directly-related 1936 publication, *The Changing Curriculum* (chaired by Henry Harap) no statements or theories of change are cited. Pre-defined outcomes are more nearly an aspect of a “demonstration” and not representative of the “adventure” that the commission staff so eagerly sought. Theories of curriculum change did evolve later, most notably, the Tyler Rationale (1949), the Taba Inverted Model (1962) and Alice Miel’s work in curriculum cooperation (1946). However, the staff was not consciously aware of or bound by any elusive (and currently popular) notion of change. The natural extension of such thinking is the acceptance that curriculum change and experimentation is *situational* and “site specific” – what is initiated in one setting neither suggests or ensures success in another setting. Grand metatheory and pronouncements of what such decisions would mean in other settings (and the resulting speculations and concerns) are solely hypothetical. In short, commission staff were involved in initiating change, but they were not self-consciously examining their pre-defined notions of change. There was too much work to be done for what would have been viewed (in the 1930s) as a superfluous, self-indulgent activity. In effect, they were demonstrating a philosophical principle endorsed by Dewey – namely, in a meaningful activity, new purposes and goals *emerge* as the process unfolds. Curriculum reform is not a linear process where pre-defined purposes lead to clearly related final outcomes.

Lesson 2: The commission, by seeing the complexities in changing the curriculum and by realizing that curriculum

development is situational, attempted not to replicate one model of curriculum design in the various school settings.

The Eight-Year Study task forces sought not to “franchise” one best way to prepare students for college or, more importantly from their perspective, to prepare youth for their future. *Diversity* of curricula design was the outcome.

... the Thirty Schools never agreed to try out any single new program to replace the old one, and members of the Directing Committee and of the curriculum and evaluation staffs scrupulously refrained from exerting any pressure to promote experimentation in line with their views. Their sole function was to help each school to develop its own program. As individuals they might offer opinions, but the school was under no obligation to accept them. Each program was evaluated by its own staff in terms of its own objectives.

(Thirty Schools, 1942, p. xix)

So much of today’s curricular change involves replicating programs, “buying into packages,” or establishing the commercial equivalent of “franchises” for educational programs. The commission was convinced at the onset of the Eight-Year Study and even more convinced at the conclusion that *schools must raise their own questions and find their own answers*. Such activity does not proceed in an orderly, efficient manner; the Eight-Year Study participants realized this and did not seek to describe simple solutions or simple-minded procedures based on a linear, technological concept of change. They demonstrated, among other things, the empowerment of teachers in the change process as widely diverse patterns of curriculum design were created.

The most important result of this happy situation, if and as it is realized, will be, of course, the freeing of the teachers and administrators, not in thirty schools only, but in all our secondary schools, to work away at the improvement of their programs, in whatever ways their combined thinking, experience, and experimentation may suggest, untrammled by artificial restrictions from “above.” They will still be handicapped, as the Thirty Schools were, by school and commu-

nity mores, by budgetary limitations, and by their own inertia and disagreements; they will make their grievous mistakes, as the Thirty Schools did; but they will in the end, like the Thirty Schools, make highly significant gains – to be realized in the fuller and happier living of oncoming generations of American boys and girls. (Chamberlin, et al., 1942, p. xxii)

Lesson 3: The commission realized that its work was for a future that it had not seen; thus, schools should always be reconsidering their reason for being.

The progressives were dealing with a new age. They were not looking back and attempting to replicate an earlier age – they were seeking to deal with a new era where there were no clear cut answers to time old questions. Aikin went on to say that two principles guided the reconstruction: “The first was that the general life of the school and methods of teaching should conform to what is now known about the ways in which human beings learn and grow.” (Aikin, 1942, p. 17) and “...the high school in the United States should re-discover its chief reason for existence.” (Aikin, 1942, p. 18) Wouldn’t these guidelines be a solid beginning for restructuring today? If there is ever a time to turn back to the commission reports and documents and examine them with the carefulness and patience that we examine contemporary qualitative research, now is the time. As we temper expectations from case study research, perhaps now we can read *The Story of the Eight-Year Study* and find the general italicized caveats and pronouncements as part of an open-ended adventure and not the foreshadowing of a “failed experiment” that did not change the course of educational history.

Epilogue

I encourage readers after they have read and reflected on this book, *The Eight-Year Study Revisited*, to turn to volumes 2 and 5, *Exploring the Curriculum* and *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*. Indeed, a gripping story is there to be told and heard. What is most disarming, however, is the noticeable tendency in recent years for the Eight-Year Study to be cited but not read. The preponderance of misspellings of the name Aikin suggest a glibness when referring to this

legendary study (Kridel, 1997). Yet, when taken seriously, The Eight-Year Study continues to provide the reader with an “adventure in American education.” These descriptions of curriculum change permit one to wonder and to speculate what might have transpired in American education if the results of the study had become part of our public consciousness. Moreover, the descriptions permit one to begin the timeless adventure that I believe was at the center of the commission’s efforts. It is to experience the story of these schools, a story that will say something wonderfully different to each reader, and a story that will defy summary to all. This is when the Eight-Year Study becomes mythic in nature and when it demands a reconsideration by those who wish to alter and truly restructure the public schools. Perhaps it is now, over fifty years later, that we may accept the spirit of the Eight-Year Study and the freedom for experimentation that was of such importance to the staff. ▲

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III

Implications for Educational Research and Evaluation

— RICHARD P. LIPKA

Could secondary schools be freed from the curriculum restrictions of college entrance requirements without endangering the success of their students? This question served as the major hypothesis for undertaking the Eight-Year Study. University and secondary educators across the nation were encouraged to suggest the names of schools that could contribute to the improvement of secondary education by participating in a research study. The initial list contained about two hundred schools. The selection committee utilized three criteria to select the thirty schools ultimately included in the study. First, the autonomy and independence of each school must be carefully guarded. Second, the schools had to be competent schools that were dissatisfied with the work they were doing and eager to initiate exploratory studies. Third, there needed to be reasonable diversity in the schools selected: public and private, large and small, located in various geographical regions of the nation.

The first four years of the project (1932-1936) were spent in site specific curriculum development activities and the development of evaluation instruments to be utilized within and between the project schools. Involvement of the colleges in the research component of the project was initiated in 1936.

Panel studies of four groups (Borg and Gall, 1983) were conducted within the framework of the overall project utilizing 1475 matched pairs of students. The groups were as follows – the students entering college in 1936 were studied for four years; those entering in 1937, for three; those entering in 1938, for two; and those entering in

Note: Quoted materials in this chapter, unless attributed to another source, are from Smith & Tyler, *Appraising and Recording Student Progress*, 1942.

1939, for one year. Put another way, those students who graduated from high school in 1936 generated four years of data to be analyzed, while those students entering college in 1939 generated one year of data for the various analyses.

A brief discussion of matching pairs is in order. Prior to the development and use of analysis of covariance, matching groups or matching pairs were principal ways of selecting a control/comparison group to compare with the experimental group. Aikin (1942) describes the matching procedure utilized.

...a basis of comparison was established by matching, with utmost care, each graduate from the Thirty Schools with another student in the same college who had taken the prescribed courses, had graduated from some school not participating in the study, and had met the usual entrance requirements. They were matched on the basis of sex, age, race, scholastic aptitude scores, home and community background, interests, and probable future. For example, here is a boy – the son of a lawyer and a graduate of one of the large, public schools in the study – eighteen years of age, from a home and community which afford cultural and economic advantages, unusually able in mathematics and planning to become an engineer. As his “matchee,” the Follow-up Staff selected in the same college a boy, eighteen years of age, who had a similar background, the same vocational interest and scholastic aptitude, but who had met the customary entrance requirements. (p. 109)

While the students from the thirty experimental schools did as well or surpassed the control school students, there was a continuum effect to the findings – that is, the more experimental/innovative was the high school the more dramatic the contrast between experimental and control school students. In fact the graduates of the two most experimental/innovative schools surpassed their comparison groups by wide margins in:

1. academic achievement
2. intellectual curiosity
3. scientific approach to findings
4. interest in contemporary affairs

5. general resourcefulness
6. enjoyment of reading
7. participation in the arts
8. winning non-academic honors

PART I: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

If one were to only consider the aforementioned immediate findings, important lessons would be learned from the Eight-Year Study. However, a number of additional lessons of real importance relative to research can be learned from this study. They too deserve our attention.

Lesson #1: The study of formal education requires the use of the scientific method.

The bulk of the language used in the project was scientific; the metaphors employed by classroom teachers and project staff were those of the scientific method and critical thinking. Statements like *defining the problem*, *elaborating the hypothesis*, and *testing the hypothesis* permeate all of the written materials associated with the Eight-Year Study. This is a most powerful idea when we realize that our language and metaphors define our views of education and schooling as was so elegantly stated by Eisner in 1985.

All of us, through the process of acculturation and professional socialization, acquire a language and a set of images that define our views of education and schooling. These images do not enter our cortex announcing their priorities. They do not herald a position or proclaim a set of virtues. Rather, they are a part of the atmosphere. When we talk about learners rather than children, competencies rather than understanding, behavior rather than experience, entry skills rather than development, instruction rather than teaching, responses rather than action, we make salient certain images: our language promotes a view, a way of looking at things, as well as a content to be observed. This language, I am arguing, derives from a set of images, of what schools

should be, of how children should be taught, and of how the consequences of schooling should be identified. Language serves to reinforce and legitimize those images. Because differences between, say, terms such as *instruction* and *teaching* are subtle, we often use a new word without recognizing that the new word is capable of creating a new world. (pp. 354- 355)

Eight-Year Study teachers and project personnel communicated with one another about what worked and did not work in empirically verifiable ways. The project yielded a coherent, additive body of knowledge to assist educators as they nurtured, guided, and assisted the young people entrusted to their schools. At present we find our profession riddled with industrial and military metaphors e.g. mission statement, quality control, target behaviors, strategic goals, strategic planning, job targets, exit outcomes, and other such terms. Will we find our answers to the education of young people in industrial and military models? I think not!

Lesson #2: The study of education requires time, considerable time.

As Fullan and Miles (1992) have so aptly stated, the study of education with an eye to change is “resource-hungry,” and the primary resource hungered for is time. The Eight-Year Study by definition provided eight years to conceive, initiate, and empirically validate the impact of the underlying purposes of the study. Teachers were afforded time to share their concerns with project staff and have these concerns turned into project-wide workshops as well as engage in a variety of site-specific consultations. Project staff members had time to work with teachers in developing the instrumentation necessary to undertake both formative and summative evaluation. In short, the time frame existed for the development and maturing of effective partnerships between secondary school personnel and the project staff who resided in numerous universities across the United States. Finally, the length of the experiment sent the message that educators, like pupils are capable of continuous development.

Lesson #3: The study of formal education requires large-scale experiments undergirded by a well-understood philosophy.

Numerous short-term experiments today abound with emphasis upon presage, context, process, and product variables. Most involve a few classrooms and rather brief treatment/intervention phases. Meta-analysis and other "weight of the evidence" techniques are helping us aggregate the findings/themes/trends within very discrete theoretical frameworks. Yet, what is lacking is a broad-based study involving numerous middle schools unified by a well-articulated philosophy. The philosophy of the project staff was evident in the two guiding principles the staff had identified.

The first principle stated that the entire fabric of the school, including teaching methods, should conform to what is known about the ways in which human beings learn and grow. Utilization of our knowledge of the emerging adolescent has been a bedrock in the middle school movement, and this clearly should continue to be one of the beacons guiding our decisions about middle level education.

The second principle stated that schools needed to re-discover their reasons for existence within the way of life we call democracy. Clearly, our period in history is one that requires a genuine remaking of the schools so that they are self-enhancing places where democracy, human dignity, and personal and social efficacy are central themes in every nook and cranny of our educational institutions (Beane, 1994).

In my view these two principles retain their validity and should be reaffirmed as guides to our large-scale research efforts in the middle level educational community.

These are important lessons for us to learn anew and actively incorporate into our future endeavors. As important as these lessons are, we must not lose sight of what we also learned about the process of education evaluation from the Eight-Year Study. In fact, it would be fair to state that the field of education evaluation had its conception and birth during the Eight-Year Study. It is to that significant event that I now turn.

PART II: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

A member of the study's evaluation staff (Hartung, 1964) provided these assessments of the pioneering nature of their work:

It seems to me that the concept of evaluation we developed is commonplace today, firmly rooted in the educational scene. But when we started the very word was unknown. We had tests and measurements, and we had the same disillusionment with tests and measurements that exists today. We had the wonderful opportunity to move through the schools of the country talking about a new concept, to speak of it at education conventions, to write articles for the journals, and through these various means, to spread the word. That the word about evaluation got spread seems to be one of the chief outcomes of the study. (pp. 52-53)

Clearly, one of the most important and enduring features of the Eight-Year Study was the attention paid to evaluation. What follows are the timely (and timeless) suggestions by Eugene Smith, Ralph Tyler, and the other members of the evaluation staff with large sections of their work quoted directly.

Section I: Purposes of evaluation

With the heavy emphasis upon pupil-teacher planning and the utilization of curriculum integration, it was necessary to conceive of evaluation in terms much broader than course grades. Given a comprehensive approach to the curriculum, it was equally important to give a comprehensive approach to the purposes of the evaluation program. The evaluation staff believed that the evaluation should serve five purposes.

(1) One important purpose of evaluation is to make a periodic check on the effectiveness of the educational institution, and thus to indicate the points at which improvements in the program are necessary. In a business enterprise the monthly balance sheet serves to identify those departments in which profits have been low and those products which have not sold well. This serves as a stimulus to a re-examination and a revision of practices in the retail establishment. In a similar fashion, a periodic evaluation of the school or college, if comprehensively undertaken should reveal points of strength which ought to be continued and points where practices need modification. This is helpful to all schools, not just to schools which are experimenting.

Commission on the Relation of School and College



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(2) A very important purpose of evaluation which is frequently not recognized is to validate the hypotheses upon which the educational institution operates. A school, whether called "traditional" or "progressive," organizes its curriculum on the basis of a plan which seems to the staff to be satisfactory, but in reality not enough is yet known about curriculum construction to be sure that a given plan will work satisfactorily in a particular community. On that account, the curriculum of every school is based upon hypotheses, that is, the best judgments the staff can make on the basis of available information. In some cases these hypotheses are not valid, and the educational institution may continue for years utilizing a poorly organized curriculum because no careful evaluation has been made to check the validity of its hypotheses. For example, many high schools and colleges have constructed the curriculum on the hypothesis that students would develop writing habits and skills appropriate to all their needs if this responsibility were left entirely to the English classes. Careful appraisal has shown that this hypothesis is rarely, if ever, valid. Similarly, in a program of guidance, the effort to care for personal and social maladjustments among students in a large school is sometimes based on the hypothesis that the provision of a well-trained guidance officer for the school will eliminate maladjustments. Systematic evaluation has generally shown that one officer has little effect unless a great deal of supplementary effort is devoted to educating teachers in child development and to revising the curriculum at those points where it promotes maladjustments. In the same way, many of our administrative policies and practices are based upon judgments which in a particular case may not be sound. Every educational institution has the responsibility of testing the major hypotheses upon which it operates and of adding to the fund of tested principles upon which schools may better operate in the future.

(3) A third important purpose of evaluation is to provide information basic to effective guidance of individual students. Only as we appraise the student's achievement and as we get a comprehensive description of his growth and

development are we in a position to give him sound guidance. This implies evaluation sufficiently comprehensive to appraise all significant aspects of the student's accomplishments. Merely the judgment that he is doing average work in a particular course is not enough. We need to find out more accurately where he is progressing and where he is having difficulties.

(4) A fourth purpose of evaluation is to provide a certain psychological security to the school staff, to the students, and to the parents. The responsibilities of an educational institution are broad and involve aspects which seem quite intangible to the casual observer. Frequently the staff becomes a bit worried and is in doubt as to whether it is really accomplishing its major objectives. This uncertainty may be a good thing if it leads to a careful appraisal and constructive measures for improvement of the program; but without systematic evaluation the tendency is for the staff to become less secure and sometimes to retract to activities which give tangible results although they may be less important. Often we seek security through emphasizing procedures which are extraneous and sometimes harmful to the best educational work of the school. Thus, high school teachers may devote an undue amount of energy to coaching for scholarship tests for college entrance examinations because the success of students on these examinations serves as a tangible evidence that something has been accomplished. However, since these examinations may be appropriate for only a portion of the high school student body, concentration of attention upon them may actually hinder the total educational program of the high school. For such teachers a comprehensive evaluation which gives a careful check on all aspects of the program would provide the kind of security that is necessary for their continued growth and self-confidence. This need is particularly true in the case of teachers who are developing and conducting a new educational program. The uncertainty of their pioneering efforts breeds insecurity. They view with dismay or resentment efforts to appraise their work in terms of devices appropriate only to the older, previously established curriculum. They recognize

that the effectiveness of the new work can be fairly appraised only in terms of its objectives, which in certain respects differ from the purposes of the older program. Students and parents are also subject to this feeling of insecurity and in many cases desire some kind of tangible evidence that the educational program is effective. If this is not provided by a comprehensive plan of evaluation, then students and parents are likely to turn to tangible but extraneous factors for their security.

(5) A fifth purpose of evaluation which should be emphasized is to provide a sound basis for public relations. No factor is as important in establishing constructive and cooperative relations with the community as an understanding on the part of the community of the effectiveness of its educational institutions. A careful and comprehensive evaluation should provide evidence that can be widely publicized and used to inform the community about the value of the school or college program. Many of the criticisms expressed by patrons and parents can be met and turned to constructive cooperation if concrete evidence is available regarding the accomplishments of the school.

Evaluation can contribute to these five purposes. It can provide a periodic check which gives direction to the continued improvement of the program of the school; it can help to validate some of the important hypotheses upon which the program operates; it can furnish data about individual students essential to wise guidance; it can give a more satisfactory foundation for the psychological security of the staff, of parents, and of students; and it can supply a sound basis for public relations. These purposes were basic to the Thirty Schools but they are also important to all schools. For these purposes to be achieved, however, they must be kept continually in mind in planning and in developing the program of evaluation. The Evaluation Staff realized that the decision as to what is to be evaluated, the techniques for appraisal, and the summary and interpretation of results should all be worked out in terms of these important purposes. (pp. 7-11).

Eight underlying assumptions:

In developing these five purposes certain basic assumptions had to be accepted about the nature of education. When the evaluation staff generated and sifted through common assumptions, eight appeared to be of particular importance to a successful evaluation program.

Basic assumptions:

In the first place, it was assumed that education is a process which seeks to change the behavior patterns of human beings. Generally, as a result of education we expect students to recall and to use ideas which they did not have before, to develop various skills, as in reading and writing, which they did not previously possess, to improve their ways of thinking, to modify their reactions to esthetic experiences as in the arts, and so on.

A second basic assumption was that the kinds of changes in behavior patterns in human beings which the school seeks to bring about are its educational objectives. The fundamental purpose of an education is to effect changes in the behavior of the student, that is, in the way he thinks, and feels, and acts. The aims of any educational program cannot well be stated in terms of the content of the program or in terms of the methods and procedures followed by the teachers, for these are only means to other ends. Basically, the goals of education represent these changes in human beings which we hope to bring about through education. The kinds of ideas which we expect students to get and to use, the kinds of skills which we hope they will develop, the techniques of thinking which we hope they will acquire, the ways in which we hope they will learn to react to esthetic experiences – these are illustrations of educational objectives.

Third, an educational program is appraised by finding out how far the objectives of the program are actually being realized. Since the program seeks to bring about certain changes in the behavior of students, and since these are the fundamental educational objectives, then it follows that an evaluation of the educational program is a process for find-

ing out to what degree these changes in the students are actually taking place.

A fourth basic assumption was that human behavior is ordinarily so complex that it cannot be adequately described or measured by a single term or a single dimension. Several aspects or dimensions are usually necessary to describe or measure a particular phase of human behavior. Hence, we did not conceive that a single score, a single category, or a single grade would serve to summarize the evaluation of any phase of the student's achievement. Rather, it was anticipated that multiple scores, categories, or descriptions would need to be developed.

The fifth assumption was a companion to the fourth. It was assumed that the way in which the student organizes his behavior patterns is an important aspect to be appraised. There is always the danger that the identification of these various types of objectives will result in their treatment as isolated bits of behavior. Thus, the recognition that an educational program seeks to change the student's information, skills, ways of thinking, attitudes, and interests, may result in an evaluation program which appraises the development of each of these aspects of behavior separately, and makes no effort to relate them. We must not forget that the human being reacts in a fairly unified fashion; hence, in any given situation information is not usually separated from skills, from ways of thinking, or from attitudes, interests, and appreciations. For example, a student who encounters an important social-civic problem is expected to draw upon his information, to use such skill as he has in locating additional facts, to think through the problem critically, to make choices of courses of action in terms of fundamental values and attitudes, and to be continually interested in better solutions to such problems. This clearly involves the relationship of various behavior patterns and their better integration. The way the student grows in his ability to relate his various reactions is an important aspect of his development and an important part of any evaluation of his educational achievement.

A sixth basic assumption was that the methods of evaluation are not limited to the giving of paper and pencil tests; any device which provides valid evidence regarding the progress of students toward educational objectives is appropriate. As a matter of practice, most programs of appraisal have been limited to written examinations or paper and pencil tests of some type. Perhaps this has been due to the long tradition associated with written examinations or perhaps to the greater ease with which written examinations may be given and the results summarized. However, a consideration of the kinds of objectives formulated for general education makes clear that written examinations are not likely to provide an adequate appraisal for all these objectives. This assumption emphasizes the wider range of techniques which may be used in evaluation, such as observational records, anecdotal records, questionnaires, interviews, check lists, records of activities, products made, and the like. The selection of evaluation techniques would be made in terms of the appropriateness of these techniques for the kind of behavior to be appraised.

A seventh basic assumption was that the nature of the appraisal influences teaching and learning. If students are periodically examined on certain content, the tendency will be for them to concentrate their study on this material, even though this content is given little or no emphasis in the course of study. Teachers, too, are frequently influenced by their conception of the achievement tests used. If these tests are thought to emphasize certain points, these points will be emphasized in teaching even though they are not included in the plan of the course. This influence of appraisal upon teaching and learning led the Evaluation Staff to try to develop evaluation instruments and methods in harmony with the new curricula and, as far as possible, of a non-restrictive nature. That is, major attention was given to appraisal devices appropriate to a wide range of curriculum content and to varied organizations of courses. Much less effort was devoted to the development of subject-matter tests since these assumed certain informational material in the curriculum.

The eighth basic assumption was that the responsibility for evaluating the school program belonged to the staff and clientele of the school. It was not the duty of the Evaluation Staff to appraise the school but rather to help develop the means of appraisal and the methods of interpretation. Hence, this volume does not contain an appraisal of the work of the Thirty Schools or the results obtained by the use of the evaluation instruments in the schools. (pp. 11-14)

Seven steps in developing the evaluation program

Given these purposes and basic assumptions, seven steps were conceived for developing the evaluation program.

1. Formulating objectives

As the first step, each school faculty was asked to formulate a statement of its educational objectives. Since the schools were in the process of curriculum revision, several of them had already taken this step. This is not just an evaluation activity, for it is usually considered one of the important steps in curriculum construction. It is not necessary here to point out that the selection of the educational objectives of a school and their validation require studies of several sorts. Valid educational objectives are not arrived at as a compromise among the various whims or preferences of individual faculty members but are reached on the basis of considered judgment utilizing evidence regarding the demands of society, the characteristics of students, the potential contributions which various fields of learning may make, the social and educational philosophy of the school or college, and what we know from the psychology of learning as to the attainability of various types of objectives. Hence, many of the schools spent a great deal of time on this step and arranged to re-examine their objectives periodically. (pp. 15-16)

2. Classification of objectives

Since curriculum development was site-specific, developing a project-wide classification system for objectives proved to very difficult. Eventually agreement was reached on the following classification scheme:

—Major Types of Objectives—

1. The development of effective methods of thinking
 2. The cultivation of useful work habits and study skills
 3. The inculcation of social attitudes
 4. The acquisition of a wide range of significant interests
 5. The development of increased appreciation of music, art, literature, and other esthetic experiences
 6. The development of social sensitivity
 7. The development of better personal-social adjustment
 8. The acquisition of important information
 9. The development of physical health
 10. The development of a consistent philosophy of life.
- (p. 18)

3. Defining objectives in terms of behavior

The third step was to define each of these types of objectives in terms of behavior. This step is always necessary because in any list some objectives are stated in terms so vague and nebulous that the kind of behavior they imply is not clear. Thus, a type of objective such as the development of effective methods of thinking may mean different things to different people. Only as “effective methods of thinking” is defined in terms of the range of reactions expected of students can we be sure what is to be evaluated under this classification. In similar fashion, such a classification as “useful work habits and study skills” needs to be defined by listing the work habits the student is expected to develop and the study skills which he may be expected to acquire. (p. 18)

4. Suggesting situations in which the achievement of objectives will be shown.

The next problem was for each committee to identify situations in which students could be expected to display these types of behavior so that we could know where to go to obtain evidence regarding this objective. When each objective has been clearly defined, this fourth step is not difficult. For example, one aspect of thinking defined in the third step was the ability to draw reasonable generalizations from specific data. An opportunity to exhibit such behavior would be provided when typical sets of data were presented to stu-

dents and they were asked to formulate the generalizations which seemed reasonable to them.

Another aspect of thinking defined in the third step was the ability to apply specified principles, such as principles of nutrition, to specified types of problems, such as those relating to diet. Hence, it seemed obvious that at least two kinds of situations would give evidence of such abilities. One would be a situation in which the student was presented with these problems, for example, dietary problems, and asked to work out solutions utilizing appropriate principles of nutrition. Another kind of situation would be one in which the students were given descriptions of certain nutritional conditions together with a statement regarding the diet of the people involved, and the students were asked to explain how these nutritional conditions could have come about, using appropriate nutritional principles in their explanations. (pp. 20-21)

5. Selecting and trying promising evaluation methods

The fifth step in the evaluation procedure involved the selection and trial of promising methods for obtaining evidence regarding each type of objective. Before attempting to construct new evaluation instruments, each committee examined tests and other instruments already developed to see whether they would serve as satisfactory means for appraising the objective. Only limited test bibliographies were then available. In addition to examining bibliographies, the committees obtained copies of those instruments which seemed to have some relation to their objectives. In examining an instrument the committee members tried to judge whether the student taking the test could be expected to carry out the kind of behavior indicated in the committee's definition of this objective.

At this point most of the committees found that no tests were available to measure certain major aspects of the important objectives. In such cases, it was necessary to construct additional new instruments in order to make a really comprehensive appraisal of the educational program in the Thirty Schools. The nature of the instruments to be built varied with the types of objectives for which no available instruments were found. Every committee, however, found

it helpful in constructing these instruments to set up some of the situations suggested in step four and actually to try them out with students to see how far they could be used as test situations. By the time the fifth step had been carried through, certain available tests were selected and tried out and certain new appraisal instruments were constructed and given tentative trial. (pp. 21-23)

6. Developing and improving appraisal methods.

The sixth major step was to select on the basis of this preliminary trial the more promising appraisal methods for further development and improvement. This further development and improvement was largely the responsibility of the Evaluation Staff. The committees met from time to time to review the work of the Staff, and many teachers were asked to criticize and make suggestions for improvement. Obviously, however, the detailed work had to be done by the Staff.

The basis for selecting devices for further development included the degree to which the appraisal method was found to give results consistent with other evidences regarding the student's attainment of this objective and the extent to which the appraisal method could be practicably used under the conditions prevailing in the Schools. (p. 23)

7. Interpreting results

The seventh and final step in the procedure of evaluation was to devise means for interpreting and using the results of the various instruments of evaluation. The previous steps resulted in the selection or the development of a range of procedures which could be used periodically in appraising the degree to which students were acquiring the objectives considered important in a given school. These instruments provided a series of scores and descriptions which served to measure various aspects of the behavior patterns of the students. As these instruments were used, a great number of scores or verbal summaries became available at each appraisal period. Each of these scores or verbal summaries measured an aspect of behavior considered important and represented a phase of the objectives of the school. The Staff then conducted comparability studies for certain of the instruments so that the scores or verbal summaries could be compared

with scores or verbal summaries previously obtained; by this comparison some estimate of the degree of change or growth of students could be made. However, the meaning of these scores became fuller through various additional studies.

One type of study involved the identification of scores typically made by students in similar classes, in similar institutions, or with other similar characteristics. Another helpful study involved a summary and analysis of the typical growth or changes made in these scores from year to year. A third type involved studies of the interrelationship of several scores to identify patterns. These patterns are not only useful when obtained among several scores dealing with the behavior relating to one objective, but are also useful in seeing more clearly the relation among the objectives. It was pointed out in the introductory section of this chapter that human behavior is to a large degree unified and that efforts to analyze behavior into different types of objectives are useful but may do some harm if the essential interrelationships of various aspects of behavior are forgotten. It was found important in this seventh step to examine the progress students were making toward each of the several objectives in order to get more clearly the pattern of development of each student and of the group as a whole and also to obtain hypotheses helpful in explaining the types of development taking place. Thus, for example, the evaluation results in one school showed that students were making marked progress in the acquisition of specific information and were also shifting markedly in their attitudes toward specific social issues, but at the same time they showed a high degree of inconsistency among their various social attitudes, and were making little progress in applying the facts and principles learned. These results suggested the hypothesis for further study that the students were being exposed to too large an amount of new material and were not being given adequate opportunity to apply these materials, to interpret them thoroughly, and to build them into their previous ideas and beliefs. (pp. 25-28)

Division of labor in the evaluation program

The previous description of the development of the evaluation program explained that it involved the cooperation of

the school personnel and the Evaluation Staff. This does not imply that teachers, school officers, and Evaluation Staff members were all performing the same functions. Although there was some overlapping of functions, there was also a general plan for division of labor. One major division of labor was based on the principle that the school's duty is to evaluate its program, while the technician's function is to help develop means of evaluation. Furthermore, in following through the steps of evaluation, there was some division of duties. Every faculty member and school officer bore some responsibility for the formulation of the objectives of his school. The classification of objectives into major types of behavior was largely a function of the Evaluation Staff because the primary purpose of this classification was to place in the same group those objectives which involved similar types of student reactions, and which might conceivably involve somewhat similar techniques of appraisal.

The further definition and clarification of each class of objectives was the task of an interschool committee composed of teachers, school officers, and members of the Evaluation Staff. The staff members raised questions and suggested directions for discussion which would help to define or clarify the given type of objective, but most of the defining was done by the representatives of the schools which had emphasized this type of objective. (p. 28-29)

Section postscript

While the evaluation staff did not use the terms *formative* and *summative* evaluation, the differences in these evaluation purposes were clearly foremost in their thinking. In the summary section of Chapter 1, Smith and Tyler noted:

...the process of evaluation was conceived as an integral part of the educational process. It was not thought of as simply the giving of a few ready-made tests and the tabulations for resulting scores. It was believed to be a recurring process involving the formulation of objectives, their clearer definition, plans to study students' reactions in the light of these objectives, and continued efforts to interpret the results of such appraisals in terms which throw helpful light on the

educational program and on the individual student. This sort of procedure goes on as a continuing cycle. Studying the results of evaluation often leads to a reformulation and improvement in the conception of the objectives to be obtained. The results of evaluation and any reformulation of objectives will suggest desirable modifications in teaching and in the educational program itself. Modifications in the objectives and in the educational program will result in corresponding modifications in the program of evaluation. So the cycle goes on.

As the evaluation committees carried on their work, it became clear that an evaluation program is also a potent method of continued teacher education. The recurring demand for the formulation and clarification of objectives, the continuing study of the reactions of students in terms of these objectives, and the persistent attempt to relate the results obtained from various sorts of measurement are all means for focusing the interests and efforts of teachers upon the most vital parts of the educational process. The results in several schools indicate that evaluation provides a means for the continued improvement of the educational program, for an ever deepening understanding of students with a consequent increase in the effectiveness of the school. (p. 29-30)

Section II: Development of evaluation instruments for the major types of objectives.

While it is clear that the evaluation staff worked as a team, certain members assumed major responsibility for individual objectives found within the ten part classification agreed upon by the project staff. The reader of this volume is encouraged to secure a copy of the Smith and Tyler volume and peruse the appropriate chapters. In addition to formal test items, teachers were encouraged to keep anecdotal records as a way of recording direct observation. Strong emphasis was also placed upon analysis of student writing not only to unearth critical thinking skills, but also to examine the values and social sensitivities held by the students.

Records of free choice activities were also a key data source. For example:

Records of free reading may give clues regarding students' social interests, level of social awareness, and maturity, and direction of social outlook. Records of activities of all sorts, in-school and out-of-school, such as participation in school government, vacation activities, attendance at motion pictures, lectures, and concerts and other leisure-time activities are also useful, particularly when the nature of the activity is recorded in addition to its frequency. (p. 166)

Section III: Interpretation and uses of evaluation data

A. Interpretation

Since the main purpose of evaluation was to help teachers improve their curriculum and guidance, the first function of interpretation was to *translate* the evidence from columns of figures into descriptions of behavior which were intelligible and useful to teachers for this purpose. Such translation occurred on three levels: single scores or bits of evidence, whole instruments, and batteries of instruments.

These levels of translation made possible the second function of interpretation: to suggest hypotheses regarding the possible causes of the strengths or weaknesses of individuals and groups. To locate such causes, it was necessary to consider not only all available evidence of present status but also the history of development up to this point, and the relevant factors in experience in and out of school. This was entirely possible when the data accumulated gradually, and when teachers had known their students for a long time.

Finally, it was the function of interpretation to suggest hypotheses regarding constructive measures to remedy the situation. This was a step requiring thoughtful judgment, not a decision that could be made automatically. Usually it was necessary to consider the objectives of the school, the pattern of goals of the individual, as well as the demands made on him by life or school activities in order to decide which shortcomings needed to be remedied. A wise judgment regarding the methods of remedy required, in addition, insight into human behavior and the methods by which that behavior could be controlled and changed. (pp. 403-405)

B. Using evaluation data

1. For guidance of individual students

Interpreting a comprehensive set of data from a battery of tests and other instruments presented a still more complex task of relating variables and revising the meaning of each aspect of behavior in terms of the larger pattern. Thus, since interests and social attitudes were known to influence thinking, data on thinking needed to be examined in the light of evidence on interests and attitudes. Formulation of tentative hypotheses of explanation usually helped sharpen the examination of evidence that might be thus related. In formulating these hypotheses the interpreter was first assisted by the structure of the instruments presented in this report, for they were designed to reveal relationships between different types of behavior as well as possible causes of deviant behavior. Thus the tests of clear thinking provided some neutral, scientific problems and other problems in areas involving personal values and beliefs. If errors in reasoning were concentrated in the latter, the tests of attitudes and interests might show that the difficulty lay in lack of interest or in prejudice rather than in techniques of thinking. (pp. 431-432)

2. For checking the effectiveness of curriculum in achieving major objectives

The most convenient method of comparing these scores with scores made by comparable groups in other schools might have been with reference to national norms. Thus, while progress might be shown from grade to grade on the test of interpretation of data, the median of each grade might stand in the lowest quarter of scores made by all other pupils of this grade who took the test. Unless some special factor was at work, such as very low reading test scores for the school population, this might indicate at once that still further progress must be made before the school's record could be considered satisfactory.

This method, however, was avoided as much as possible in the Eight-Year Study for several reasons. In the first place, it was recognized that as long as there were important differences in objectives and curriculum practices among

schools, it would be inappropriate to measure progress by the same standards, particularly if these standards represented nothing more than an average of the performance of different groups under varying circumstances. The pattern of interests in a school for foreign students in New York City could not necessarily be considered appropriate as a "norm" or desirable pattern of interests for a suburban school in the Middle West, and the average of the two patterns might not be desirable for either school. Similarly, one would not expect students in a school which was barely beginning to explore the methods of developing critical thinking to be judged by the same criteria as were students who have had long and careful training. (pp. 434-435)

3. For checking hypotheses underlying the program

A third important purpose of evaluation was to check the hypotheses underlying the school program. Often new practices were introduced in the hope of producing certain desirable changes in students. These changes might not come about, or they might be accompanied by other changes which were less desirable. (p. 436)

For example: One public school introduced a core program with several purposes in mind, one of which was to develop better social attitudes. A comprehensive testing program revealed that while the social attitudes developed were clearer, more consistent, and more liberal than in most schools in the study, the students had serious difficulties with techniques of precise thinking. In drawing inferences from data, they exhibited little caution and showed a tendency to go beyond the data. In applying facts and principles they failed to discriminate those which were valid and relevant from their opposites. Apparently in emphasizing social values the school relied too much on generalizations and too little upon the careful analysis of factual data. (p. 436)

Possibility of interpretation

The foregoing discussion may have left the impression that interpretation of evaluation data required very unusual insight and patience, and too extensive knowledge of evalua-

tion for the classroom teacher to master. There is no getting around the fact that a thoughtful interpretation of the evidence on students' progress and the effectiveness of curriculum practices is complex, and that it can be learned only by long practice supplemented by careful explanation. Yet there is no reason to believe that further progress in getting a more adequate picture of pupil growth will ever return to the primitive simplicity of school marks. Reducing the amount of data secured is no solution, for a few scattered data can only raise questions, not answer them. A rich and full program of evaluation can suggest answers to a great many questions, but only by thoughtful interpretation and not by chance. Teachers must learn to get meaning from the extensive and well-integrated sets of data now available. Unless somebody knows what the scores mean and takes them into account in his teaching, it is obvious that there is no point in getting them. (p. 437-438)

Section IV: Planning and administering the evaluation program

A. Planning the scope and emphasis of the program

Early in the study it was found that a comprehensive evaluation program required careful, cooperative planning by the staff of the school. The data necessary for a well rounded picture of individual development, of the progress of the group, and of the effectiveness of the curriculum would not be secured if the task was left to individuals. It was quite evident that the staff as a whole must decide what to evaluate, what kinds of evidence to secure, and how to go about securing evidence and using it. As the first step in evaluation involves the formulation of the school's objectives, this cooperative planning of evaluation began with this step. In order to secure a statement of objectives which was representative of the work done in the school and thus to make sure that no phase of growth really emphasized in the school was neglected, the whole staff participated in the process of formulating the basic platform of objectives. Each teacher or departmental group of teachers submitted a list of objectives. These lists were then considered by committees and by the whole faculty in order to clarify them further and to

discover where there were common emphases and where unique types of development were indicated.

If there was any conflict between the appraisal of the school-wide objectives and those held by individual teachers, it was rather commonly assumed that the first responsibility of the school was to its general objectives. While the principle was never abandoned that the school as well as individual teachers should do all they could to study growth toward the objectives unique to the specific courses, the larger principle usually prevailed that the study of the most important aspects of human development as expressed in the general objectives should be the major concern of a school. (pp. 439-441)

A second major principle governing the planning was that appraisal was to be continuous. The adoption of this policy meant that the schools had to consider the time and effort needed for a continuous check before decisions were made regarding what range of objectives would be appraised, or how detailed the check was to be.

It was also clearly understood that it was the program of the school and its effects on student growth and not the individual teacher or pupil that was being appraised. The effectiveness of evaluation is likely to be impaired if the evaluation program is conceived by the teachers either as an extension of the usual examinations and marks in courses or as a means of judging their competence. With the first misconception, teachers may try to find the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils with the idea of rewarding the strengths and penalizing the weaknesses, accompanied by some exhortation to do better, but without making any significant change in their courses, or still less in the whole school program. With the second misconception, teachers may try to justify the present situation rather than to seek fully and frankly for points needing improvement. For these reasons the schools favored instruments and devices which yielded descriptive diagnoses of students and which, because of this characteristic, could not be easily converted into grades and marks. Most of the evaluation instruments used also diagnosed the kinds of behavior capable of development only through concerted and cooperative efforts of many teachers

over a period of time, and not by the work of one teacher in one course or unit of work.

Finally, it was understood that the evaluation program was to serve the local needs and purposes of each school. The particular emphasis as well as the extent of the program was largely determined by what each school needed data for. Thus many schools had set up an experimental program on some central hypothesis. Checking that particular hypothesis often required a detailed appraisal of certain specified types of growth, such as in critical thinking, in range and maturity of interests, in social sensitivity. In these cases the evaluation program was planned to give most detailed evidence on these points. Local conditions also influenced the plans. For example, some schools drawing students from widely scattered places had to concentrate the evaluation in the earlier grades on the diagnosis of interests, abilities, and basic skills. Still other schools had differentiated sequences of programs, calling for evidence necessary for the placement of the students in these sequences as well as for determining the relative effectiveness of these programs. Often special effort was needed to appraise the acquisition of common skills in order to answer the questions of parents and the community who feared that the new curriculum might neglect these outcomes. (pp. 442-443)

B. Collecting data

Once the staff agreed on the general scope of the program it considered the methods for securing the needed evidence. This required a preliminary survey of the data already available in the school. Only when the faculty had explored the possible relationships to school objectives of the data which was already collected was it in a position to decide what further data were needed. (pp. 444-445)

This examination of the data already available usually indicated certain gaps, that is, objectives on which little evidence was being obtained. Hence, the next step was to plan the ways and means of securing the additional data needed. Usually at this point there was a tendency to consider only paper-and-pencil tests. However, a careful analysis of the methods of securing evidence most appropriate to each ob-

jective revealed that the classroom situations provided a far greater source for securing data on students than had usually been assumed. For the appraisal of some objectives, such as the ability to plan the attack on research problems, or to use laboratory techniques and tools, the observation and recording of student behavior in normal classroom situations was the best if not the only adequate source. (pp. 445-447)

C. Drawing up a schedule for testing

In setting a calendar for the testing program, it was necessary to consider several factors. In the first place, the total time devoted to testing could not be so great that students and faculty thought themselves overburdened with tests. ... In the second place, the schedule had to be drawn so that there was no undue concentration of formal tests toward the end of the year, and particularly toward the end of the twelfth grade, since such a congestion of schedule subjected students to unnecessary tension, and did not provide evidence at times when the results could most effectively be used. (p. 447)

The methods of organizing for this cooperative job varied greatly from school to school, depending on the size of the school and the makeup of their faculties. In some cases, particularly in smaller schools, the school psychologist or counselor took the major responsibility for drafting the tentative plans and for arranging the practical details. In such cases much of the participation of the faculty was achieved through informal contacts and personal conferences.

In other schools evaluation committees were established, whose responsibility it was to get the necessary information and advice from the rest of the faculty, to draw up a plan, and to care for the routines. Often members of such committees took special responsibility for giving certain instruments or series of instruments as well as for collecting certain materials from other teachers.

In still other schools the responsibilities were divided among the staff according to the types of evidence to be collected. Thus a psychologist became responsible for giving the psychological tests and reading tests. An evaluation representative supervised the use of the special tests devel-

oped by the Evaluation Staff, while individual teachers were responsible for information and skill tests in their respective areas. Whatever the particular scheme, it was found necessary to make careful, coordinated plans for the entire program of evaluation. (p. 448)

D. Summarizing and circulating the results

It seemed clear that the basic data had to be made available in at least two senses. The information in the record itself needed to be made accessible to the teachers concerned with the students. But since the process of getting the pertinent facts and ideas from a bulky record was too time consuming a task to be done by all teachers who needed the information over and over again, some kind of summary of that record was needed, so that people using these data for different purposes could without difficulty locate what they needed.

The teachers most concerned with a given objective or most immediately involved in securing the evidence usually were responsible for analyzing and summarizing these results. For example, the English teachers usually secured data on language skills and collected the records of free reading. It was their first responsibility to use these data in their planning of the English program, in their teaching, and in their work with individual pupils. Hence, it was logical for them to assume the task of summarizing this evidence and of passing these summaries along. Forevermore, they were expected to be most familiar with the tests relating to their objectives, hence they were usually expected to give these tests and to summarize the most pertinent points revealed in the test scores. If some other members of the staff, such as the psychologist, the counselor, or the evaluation representative, were responsible for parts of the testing, they assumed the responsibility for summarizing the results of the tests they gave. (pp. 451-453)

This brief report on the planning and administration of an evaluation program provides a further illustration of the ways in which the evaluation project was an integral part of the processes of teaching, of curriculum making, of guidance, and of teacher education in many of the Thirty Schools. As a result of its work with the schools, the Evaluation Staff

is convinced that a **program of evaluation can achieve its maximum usefulness only when it is an integral part of the major tasks of the school.** Deriving its direction from the major objectives of the school, the evaluation program helps to clarify these objectives into clearly apprehended goals and purposes which are more effective guides to teaching and counseling. Exploring each major objective to identify types of behavior manifestations which will serve to reveal the progress of students toward this objective helps to focus attention upon the learner and the meaning of the educative process to him. Studying the results of evaluation serves to identify strengths and weaknesses of teaching and inadequacies in the school program. Effective participation in these several phases of evaluation serves as a stimulating experience for teachers in their own continuing education. (p. 459) (emphasis added)

Section V: Recording for guidance and transfer

A. Philosophy and objectives

The original Committee on Reports and Records considered with great care former methods of recording facts about personal characteristics or traits, and the words used in describing and reporting about them.

Out of this study and the discussion of the problems facing the committee came the philosophy and objectives that governed the later work. The list of objectives in explicit or implicit form was reexamined by the other committees, and was generally accepted as a guide, though it was realized that some of it applied most completely to the study of personal characteristics.

General purposes and philosophy of recording

1. (a) The purpose of recording is not primarily that of book-keeping. Instead the fundamental reason for records is their value as a basis for more intelligent dealing with human beings.

The first purpose of records is therefore that of forming a basis for *understanding individuals* so that effective guidance can be given.

(b) Since the educational process is a continuous one that should not be set back at certain transfer points, it be-

comes necessary that guidance shall continue across such points in such a way as to increase the probability of continuity in dealing with the person.

An extended purpose of records hence becomes that of furnishing *transferable information* for guidance.

(c) Because of the need of cooperative and consistent dealing with a boy or girl by home and school, as well as the right of the home to information as complete and reliable as possible about progress and development, records should furnish the material on which reports can be founded, and reports should be considered an essential and consistent part of the recording system.

A third purpose of record keeping is therefore to provide the information needed for *reports to the home*, and to add effective ways of giving such information.

(d) Information is needed at all stages of education, and particularly at points of transfer from one institution to another, or from an institution to employment, in order that qualifications of the individual for the new experience can be fairly judged.

A fourth purpose of record keeping is therefore to provide information, and methods of transferring it to others, that will give evidence regarding a pupil's *readiness for succeeding experiences*. This would apply to fitness for a particular college or other institution.

2. What might be considered an indirect but nevertheless important purpose of records is that of stimulating teachers to consider and decide upon their objectives, judge something of the relative importance of their aims, estimate their own work and the progress of their pupils in relation to the objectives chosen.

Many teachers think almost entirely in terms of the most obvious objectives concerned with the learning of subject matter and evaluate their results only in terms of such aims. They give little or no consideration to the changes in their pupils that should come about as a result of the experiences undergone, and so they fail to bring about the development that is possible. Through well planned records they can be helped to a wider vision and a more constructive influence. (pp. 464- 466)

B. Working objectives for records and reports

1. Any form devised should be based on the objectives of teachers and schools so that a continuing study of a pupil by its use will throw light on his successive stages of development in powers or characteristics believed to be important.
2. The forms dealing with personal characteristics should be descriptive rather than of the nature of a scale. Therefore "marks" of any kind, or placement, as on a straight line representing a scale from highest to lowest, should not be used.
3. Every effort should be made to reach agreement about the meaning of trait names used, and to make their significance in terms of the behavior of a pupil understood by those reading the record.
4. Where possible a characterization of a person should be by description of typical behavior rather than by a word or phrase that could have widely different meanings to different people.
5. The forms should be flexible enough to allow choice of headings under which studies of pupils can be made, thus allowing a school, department, or teacher to use the objectives considered important in the particular situation, or for the particular pupil.
6. Characteristics studied should be such that teachers will be likely to have opportunities to observe behavior that gives evidence about them. It is not expected, however, that all teachers will have evidence about all characteristics.
7. Forms should be so devised and related that any school will be likely to be able to use them without an overwhelming addition to the work of teachers or secretaries.
8. Characteristics studied should be regarded not as independent entities but rather as facets of behavior shown by a living human being in his relations with his environment.

This last objective is a fundamental one. It has been observed in the work on both evaluation and recording, and must be kept in mind in considering whatever has been produced. The one great danger in the use of any forms that offer opportunity for recording facts about people is that those who use them may revert to the idea of "marking," using the material on the forms as a scale for rating, instead of as

an abbreviated basis for description of the person's behavior in some area or under some conditions. The various record forms too should be considered as supplementing each other so as to give a more complete description of the individual than a single form could present. (pp. 467-468)

Section VI: Teachers' reports and reports to the home

Many schools were convinced that the single mark in a subject hid the facts instead of showing them clearly. The mark was, in effect, an average of judgments about various elements in a pupil's progress that lost their meaning and their value when thus combined. The schools believed that the value of a judgment concerning the work done by a pupil in any school course or activity depended on the degree to which that judgment was expressed in a form that showed his strengths and his weaknesses and therefore presented an analyzed picture of his achievement that would be a safe basis for guidance.

There was also a feeling that marks had become competitive to a degree that was harmful to both the less able and the more able, and that they were increasingly directing the attention of pupils, parents, and even teachers, away from the real purposes of education toward the symbols that represented success but did not emphasize its elements or its meaning.

The commonest method of replacing marks proved to be that of writing paragraphs analyzing a pupil's growth as seen by each teacher. This method is an excellent one, since good descriptions by a number of teachers combine to give a reasonable complete picture of development in relation to the objectives discussed. On the other hand, a report in this form is very time-consuming for teachers and the office, as well as difficult to summarize in form for use in transfer and guidance. The committee decided on a compromise that would make place for giving definite information about important objectives in an abbreviated form and would allow for supplementing this with written material needed to modify or complete the information. (pp. 488-489)

It was discovered that there were five objectives that were common to all fields and experiences, and about which

knowledge would be particularly valuable to parents as well as to pupils. These five objectives were therefore chosen as headings to be reported on by all teachers and to be used in reports to the home. The wording adopted for them is not however, identical with the wordings on the forms used in subject fields. The reason is that this committee had to draw from the large amount of information asked for on the subject forms that which could be condensed into simple phrases that would have meaning and importance on a report to the home. The headings follow:

- Success in achieving the specific purposes of the course
- Progress in learning how to think
- Effectiveness in communicating ideas
- Oral, written, active concern for the welfare of the group
- General habits of work.

In addition to the section that tells the degree of success a pupil is achieving in the five objectives listed, there are three other sections of the report. The first gives opportunity for the teachers to point out weaknesses a pupil should particularly try to eradicate. There are eight of these listed, and the subjects in which the weaknesses are evident are shown on the home report:

- Accuracy in following directions
- Efficient use of time and energy
- Neatness and orderliness
- Self-reliance
- Persistence in completing work
- Thoughtful participation in discussion
- Conscientiousness of effort
- Reading.

There is also opportunity for the teachers to report on the pupils' likelihood of success in continuing to work in their fields, both in later years in school and in advanced institutions.

A section for "General Comment" appears on the teacher's report, and on the report to the home. Some schools copy the most valuable of the teachers' comments upon the home report form. Others summarize criticisms and suggestions

in this space. Occasionally so much of value should be sent that an attached sheet must be used, but in general the space for comment seems to be sufficient.

In all the details that have been mentioned the teachers' report and the home report are identical, although they differ in arrangement, since the home report is designed to combine the reports of all the teachers into a single form that can be read easily. (pp. 489-493)

A final note

No teacher or school is fully ready for constructive change until plans for appraising results are carefully formulated. The school should find out whether changes in curriculum and methods of teaching achieve purposes more effectively. The Thirty Schools emphasize the necessity of taking time to secure all possible evidence of student progress and to study that evidence searchingly for clues to further action. Equally important are adequate means for recording and reporting all significant aspects of pupil development. Evaluating, recording and reporting are inextricably interwoven in the whole fabric of education. Therefore, they cannot be ignored in any sound preparation for educational reconstruction. (p. 129)

In reflecting back upon this task of reviewing this important volume in the Eight-Year Study, what lessons have I learned and/or had reinforced?

1. Educational reform requires effective partnerships.

Partnerships must be formed that include the educators responsible for administration and conduct of the project and social scientists who can deal with the metrical or technical aspects of conducting research and/or evaluation.

Educators involved in the project at the building/district level assume responsibility for incorporating refinements into the project; and they will bear ultimate responsibility for judgments of value concerning the realization of the goals of the project. However, their effectiveness in undertaking these tasks will largely depend upon the quality and quantity of the information they have available to them. It is this issue of utility of information that requires the involvement of

social scientists. Using the goals of the project, the social scientist will bring his/her expertise to bear upon the question: to what degree are the goals and objectives of the project being achieved? The major question yields numerous sub-questions relating to such issues as how and when to collect usable data.

2. Educational reform places evaluation on a continuum throughout the life of the project.

Evaluation has numerous costs (time, personnel, money) and care must be exercised to have evaluation perceived as an integral part of the overall project. The evaluation process should be initiated at the inception of the educational event. By doing this, there is a greater likelihood that evaluation will be viewed as proactive rather than reactive. Including evaluation at the point of inception has the potential to identify individuals or groups of persons who by attitude or skill have the capability to be supporters of or detractors from the project; and to present this information in ways that will have utility for the persons developing and/or administering the project. Another plus is the increased potential for the collection of systematic, continuous data which are useful for both formative and summative judgments about the effectiveness of the project. Suggestions about wording of intentions and objectives may go a long way in securing usable data for informed judgments. Additionally, individuals in the evaluation role may become the personification of a conscience by asking "Why?" "What if?" and "How come?" questions during the development and implementation of the project.

3. Educational reform recognizes that diversity characterizes the human condition.

Paper and pencil tests represent one evaluation format and not the evaluation format. Optical scanners and other technological advances make paper and pencil tests fast and efficient. However, we can ill afford the cult of efficiency during our development of goals and objectives. Learning involves trial and error, it involves learning from our mistakes, it can be ambiguous, it can be messy – not the qualities we associate with efficiency.

There are three domains of learning – cognitive, affective, and psychomotor; and we need to examine our goals in all three domains.

Cognitive learning is hard won by someone whose life is in affective disarray. Recently, our profession has tried to ignore this fact and we are paying a heavy toll of public criticism about the effectiveness of our schools. The affective and psychomotor domains are as conceptually rich as the cognitive domain and we need to acknowledge this as we plan within our reform projects. It may sound trite, but Johnny's heart and hands as well as his central nervous system will greet us at the school house door.

4. Educational reform requires us to learn from the past as we look to the future.

American education has a rich history of successes with most all of the issues before us today – let us not ignore our legacy as we undertake our journey of improving the schools. On February 18, 1994 we lost one of our major map makers for our journey – Ralph W. Tyler. We did not, however, lose our maps. The Eight-Year Study is one such map that can guide our efforts to create more responsive middle schools. △

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IV Major Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

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In April, 1930, the Progressive Education Society met in Washington, D.C., to consider ways of improving secondary schools in the United States so that they would better serve all young people. The meeting concluded with a motion to establish the Commission on the Relation of School and College (hereafter referred to as CRSC). This group was to: "explore possibilities of better coordination of school and college; work and to seek an agreement which would provide freedom for secondary schools to attempt fundamental reconstruction" (p. 2).

The CRSC was convened on October 30, 1930. It sought to: (1) establish a relationship between school and college that would permit and encourage reconstruction of the secondary school; and, (2) find, through exploration and experimentation, how the high school in the United States can serve youth more effectively. The central concern was to define a clear focus and purpose for secondary education in our democratic society. The CRSC agreed on the persisting need for secondary education to prepare students to learn and develop skills that would enable them to deal successfully with the problems in their lives and communities, meet their own evolving interests and needs, and succeed in their present and adult lives.

The commission decided to conduct a study of thirty schools with programs organized upon those concerns, and to trace their efforts to develop curriculum, program, and educational practice that would enable students to extend the quality of democratic life in our society. The term "Eight-Year Study" came about because the study

Note: Quoted materials in this chapter, unless attributed to another source, are from Aikin, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*, 1942.

would also follow those high school graduates through their college undergraduate years. Schools participating in the study had several shared concerns as it got under way.

- 1) The thirty schools hoped that more satisfactory relations with colleges and universities would be developed. Some schools were sending almost all graduates to college; from others only one in five or six continued his formal education. All the schools were eager to improve their service to both groups.
- 2) They doubted that success in college depends upon the study of certain subjects or a certain length of time.
- 3) The schools believed that there are many venues of study and experience by which young people could develop the skill, understanding, and intellectual maturity necessary for satisfactory achievement at the college level.
- 4) Everyone involved in the study was convinced that some means should be found by which teachers in the schools and professors in the colleges should work together in mutual respect, confidence, and understanding. (pp. 22-23)

Since the study did not specify its use of the descriptor "secondary education," the following background may be helpful. Between 1895 and 1910 the majority of American schools shifted from a grade 1-8 elementary and grade 9-12 high school pattern to a balance of six elementary and six secondary grades. The Committee on the Equal Division of the Twelve Years in the Public Schools Between the District and the High School (National Education Association, 1907) also recommended subdividing the six year high school into two equal school units, thus establishing the junior high school as the "junior edition" of senior high schools.

Change should be made in the present six-year high school. That is particularly important for students able to pursue their general education beyond the primary school. The high school ought to be subdivided into two administrative sections: (1) a junior high school of three years extending from the twelfth to the fifteenth year; and, (2) a senior high school

also of three years, covering the period from the fifteenth year to the eighteenth year. (p. 27)

The committee was concerned about the need to hold students in school longer since in 1900, eighty-one percent of students did not complete high school. That was a major factor in the committee's recommendation to create a junior high school.

Such a subdivision and point of articulation is necessary upon social as well as individual grounds. A three-year junior high school will assure a larger number of citizens possessing some cultural training of a secondary grade. A point of articulation in the middle of such a high-school system would afford an appropriate position for the establishment of vocational schools. (p. 27)

Thus the initial junior high school lacked an educational identity separate from the high school. This severely hindered early efforts to identify and focus upon unique junior high student learning needs (Toepfer, 1962, pp. 21-23). Later recognition of this shortcoming, however, eventually led to the United States' becoming the first western nation to develop a three-level system of elementary, middle level and high schools.

The Eight-Year Study began as that movement was developing. In 1930, six of every twelve students entering high school still did not graduate. Only one of three went on to college. High school graduation was the end of formal education for five out of every six students.

We turn now to identify, review, and comment on the findings and the conclusions reported in each of the six chapters in Volume I of the Eight-Year Study.

Chapter I - The Eight-Year Study Is Launched

An underlying assumption of the CRSC was the belief that "the high school diploma was the magic key to doors of social and economic preferment" (p. 3). "While American society held that high school education was good for everybody, neither society nor education knew certainly what the major purpose of the high school should be" (p. 4).

Secondary education purposes

The CRSC agreed that “secondary education in the United States did not have a clear-cut, definite, central purpose” (p. 4). Vocational education had emerged by the time the commission had been convened, and secondary school programs tended to focus on either post-secondary/academic or vocational/trade preparation. The Commission on Reorganizing Secondary Education (1918) had identified *Health, Command of Fundamental Processes, Worthy Home Membership, Vocation, Citizenship, Worthy Use of Leisure Time, and Ethical Character* as the Seven Cardinal Principles or goal areas for secondary education. However, by 1930, high school programs had yet to reflect a “clear-cut, definite central purpose.”

The CRSC also concurred that “schools failed to give students a sincere appreciation of their heritage as American citizens” (p. 4). During the time of the Eight-Year Study, the highly influential Educational Policies Commission published a report, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy* (1938). Under the four areas of *Self-Realization, Human Relationships, Economic Efficiency, and Civic Responsibility* the report detailed the characteristics of “the educated person.” The long list reflected a broad view of the school’s responsibilities, ones rooted in our democratic way of life. In many ways it parallels the concerns of the CRSC critique and remains today a valid and thoughtful look at educational objectives.

Socially responsive curriculum

The CRSC expressed major concern that “our secondary schools did not prepare adequately for the responsibilities of community life” (p.4). The CRSC also noted “the traditional subjects of the curriculum had lost much of their vitality and significance” (p. 7).

The “social functions procedure” developed in response to that concern (Alberty, 1947, pp. 237-251). Stratemeyer, Forkner, McKim, & Passow (1957) created an elaborate matrix of persisting life situations focused on community life concerns. Both evolved into the “social problems curriculum approach” (Beane, Toepfer, & Alessi, 1986, pp. 269-271). This persisting need for secondary schools to prepare youth for community life responsibilities has been periodically raised but has yet to become a central secondary educational goal.

Today, service learning initiatives (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Fertman, White, & White, 1996; Shine, 1997; Totten & Pedersen, 1997) are addressing those concerns raised by the CRSC. Service learning programs seek to interface student learning in school with community activities. This reinforces concepts, information, processes, and skills taught in the classroom as students apply them in working on community needs and problems. Service learning also attempts to address concerns similar to the following ones the CRSC had about secondary education during the time of the Eight-Year Study.

Schools failed to create conditions necessary for effective learning. . . . The creative energies of students were seldom released and developed. . . . The conventional high school curriculum was far removed from the real concerns of youth. . . . The curriculum seldom touched upon the genuine problems of living. (pp. 5-7, 17)

The CRSC identified three more concerns for developing more responsive secondary curriculum. First, "there was little evidence of unity in the work of the typical high school" (p. 8). Second, "the absence of unity of the work in the secondary school was almost matched by the lack of continuity" (p. 9). Third, "the curriculum of the secondary school should deal with the present concerns of young people as well as with the knowledge, skills, understandings, and appreciations which constitute our cultural heritage" (p. 20).

While all three concerns persist, the third is becoming more critical as cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity in our nation increases. Several other CRSC's concerns remain legitimate criticisms of secondary schools today.

High school seldom challenged students of first-rate ability to work up to the level of their intellectual abilities . . . Schools neither knew their students well nor guided them . . . Most high school graduates were not competent in the English language. . . . Teachers were not well equipped for their full responsibilities. . . . Only here and there did principals conceive of their work in terms of democratic leadership of the community, teachers, and students. . . . teachers labored

earnestly, often sacrificially, but usually without any comprehensive evaluation of the results of their work. (pp. 5, 8-10)

The continued failure to deal with these concerns within the changing context over the past six decades is perplexing. Is it possible that the role of education in our society can really be that low? The final persisting, unaddressed concern raised by the CRSC was also a central purpose for undertaking the Eight-Year Study. "The relation of school and college was unsatisfactory to both institutions" (p. 10).

In 1933, as reported in Chapter I, the CRSC Directing Committee agreed that two major principles would guide their reconstructing the secondary school curriculum. First, "the general life of the school should conform to what is now known about the ways in which human beings learn and grow. Second, the high school should re-discover its central reason for existence" (pp. 17- 18). The CRSC identified several other premises that were to shape the work of the thirty schools in the study.

1. The most important service school can render youth is to give them understanding and appreciation of the way of life we call democracy, and that the best way to understand and appreciate it is to live that kind of life at school every day.
2. The spirit and practice of experimentation and exploration should characterize secondary schools in a democracy.
3. Fundamental revision should be undertaken only after thoughtful, cooperative consideration of the high school's function in the community it serves.
4. Every school in the study sought from the start to develop greater unity and continuity in the curriculum.
5. Because of their concern for the individual as well as for the whole group, the schools realized they must know each student well and guide him wisely. (pp. 19-20)

Chapter II - Schools Choose The Democratic Way

The thirty schools in the study started in many different directions in pursuing their common goals. Some of those individual directions included:

- 1) eliminating the motive of individual competition,
- 2) distributing time for each student as follows:
 - 40% major field of interest or ability
 - 15% minor field of interest,
 - 20% physical recreation and health,
 - 15% social studies
 - 10% maintenance of basic skills. (p. 26)

As the study noted “out of uncertainty comes sure sense of direction” (p. 29). All the schools recognized the need of a sound philosophy for reconstruction of American secondary education.

After struggling to identify the central purpose they found what they sought in the democratic ideal, in the American way of life. The high school in the United States should be a demonstration, in all phases of its activity of the kind of life in which we as a people believe. (p. 30)

The Denver schools in the study defined six objectives to pursue that direction.

The Denver Public Schools maintain that they can best undertake such a responsibility by:

1. making the life concerns of pupils the central theme of the curriculum;
2. recognizing that individual concerns and social concerns are interdependent;
3. making functional guidance an integral part of all educational activities;
4. evaluating the school program in terms of the personal and social growth of pupils;
5. organizing the school program to reveal the relationships of learning;

6. providing a close, direct, working relationship with the community. (pp. 32-33)

General changes in school life

Aikin reported these developments in general school life in the Eight-Year Study:

The chief developments in the general school life in the Eight-Year Study grew out of this emerging concept of democratic life in school. It gave direction to changes in school administration, in home-school relations, in the teacher's role in the school, and in the life of the school-society. (p. 33)

A major concern among schools in the study was for school administration to become democratic in leadership. The role of the democratic leader was more difficult than that of the benevolent leader and teachers in most of the schools realized that "they were in no danger of disapproval or criticism if they tried new ways, even if they did not always succeed" (p. 35).

From the beginning of the study, school leaders found the provision of adequate time for teachers to study and plan together a major administrative problem. Convinced of the importance of finding time for such deliberation, the thirty schools developed means to best facilitate that need locally. This sometimes involved a two-hour weekly evening meeting or an early morning meeting.

Instructional organization changes

The thirty schools also saw that teachers needed time to identify how best to assist individual students and groups in their classes.

The counselor or home room teacher became also the teacher of his homeroom group in one or more subjects. The counselor continued with the same group of students, not just for a semester or year, but for two or three years. (p. 37)

Some of the larger high schools in the study developed what has subsequently become known as a "school-within-a-school." In the study, those schools scheduled six teachers with approximately two-

hundred-ten students for the greater part of the school day. Each teacher served as counselor for thirty-five of the students. Schedules were organized to provide the teachers an hour to plan and work together at some point during each school day, an arrangement that closely parallels today's interdisciplinary team.

Some of the schools also pursued the evolving core curriculum concept. Faunce & Bossing (1951) identified four characteristics of core courses that distinguish them from conventional subject-matter courses: (1) their freedom from subject-matter patterns and their emphasis upon vital problem situations; (2) their emphasis upon group problem-solving; (3) their use of a long block of time; and, (4) their emphasis on guidance by the classroom teacher. (p. 7)

Faunce and Bossing (1951) further specified the following characteristics of a core course:

1. It seeks to establish relationships among areas of living by the study of problems that challenge the pupil to explore and utilize the knowledge and skills of more than one subject.
2. It aims at larger objectives than would characterize any single subject area.
3. It involves the joint planning of those objectives, and of the means for achieving them, by both teachers and pupils. It is directly geared to the goal of increased skill in the processes of cooperative planning.
4. It requires a block of time longer than the traditional period.
5. It involves either a single teacher for two or more periods or teams of teachers who work together.
6. It is dedicated to improved guidance of individuals and groups of pupils.
7. Its basic emphasis in instructional planning is the present psycho-biological and social needs of the pupils themselves. (pp. 8-9)

In the Eight-Year Study it was stated that perhaps the most effective way of knowing and counseling individuals was in those schools which developed core programs. In those programs, it was noted:

The counselor is also the "core" teacher. Two hours each day are usually devoted to the units which comprise the core curriculum. Thus the counselor inevitably becomes aware of the students' concerns, for they are the subjects of study and investigation. And as he enters into their lives, he becomes truly their counselor, guide, and friend. (p. 38-39)

To make schools more democratic required greater participation among all stakeholders. Schools in the study came to realize that parent participation and understanding was necessary for changing school programs. Greatest success was realized in those schools in which parents effectively participated with teachers and students to study the function of the school and the life of the community.

Democratic educational concerns

In like manner, improved and greater teacher involvement was also needed. The schools in the study found that democratic education requires that teachers be involved in the whole program of the school. Teacher isolation diminishes through participation in determining school purposes, formulating and implementing policy, and curriculum planning and development. The thirty schools in the study brought in and extended teacher participation in the general life of the school.

Application of democratic principles also extended and amplified student participation in general school life. Emphasis in the study was to move beyond student government and allow students to work more cooperatively with their teachers. It was agreed that young people develop strength by learning how to take on greater responsibility and discharge it effectively. As students became more successful in those activities, the thirty schools increased their involvement in school management and curriculum planning. Most important was the increasing skill of students to participate in decisions about teaching and learning in their classrooms. At the conclusion of the eight years of the study, Aikin noted the following.

No one of the thirty schools has yet achieved democracy in every phase of its life. They are not complacent. They are still striving for clearer understanding and better ways, but

they know more surely where they are going than they did eight years ago. They have progressed in making the general life of the school consistent with the democratic ideal. In administration, in home and school relations, in the roles of teachers and students, the American dream is finding greater realization. (pp. 44- 45)

Chapter III - The Curriculum Heeds The Concerns Of Youth

In reviewing Chapter I of the Eight-Year Study it was noted how specific concerns of the CRSC remain as persisting needs of American secondary education today. One should not infer, however, that the thirty schools did not fashion any improvements and changes. To the contrary, the significance of those changes is reflected in how well students in the thirty schools succeeded in completing high school and in their subsequent collegiate education. The changes in school atmosphere were readily noted in "the friendly, informal, cooperation and changes in ways of teaching" (p. 46). Despite the success of students in the thirty schools and in their subsequent college experiences, American secondary education failed to incorporate and refine the advances pioneered in the Eight-Year Study.

Curriculum and learning correlation

Traditional subjects gained new vitality in the thirty schools. There was substantial departure from traditional content. In addition, courses were taught by more exploratory and investigative approaches. For example:

The class in Spanish might be investigating the influence of geography upon the life and character of South American peoples. . . .The English class might be analyzing newspapers and magazines to discover ways and means by which propaganda molds public opinion. (pp. 46-47)

The example that "the groups in mathematics might be applying principles of logic to an analysis of a local problem of housing or conservation" (p. 46) is interdisciplinary and an approach now being used in service learning initiatives.

Worthwhile content of traditional courses was retained but the teachers “re-examined their work in the light of clearer purposes and much new subject matter supplanted that which had ceased to be of interest or value to students” (p. 47). Curriculum changes in the thirty schools that responded to these CRSC concerns including the following.

- Schools failed to create conditions necessary for effective learning.
- The creative energies of students were seldom released and developed.
- The conventional high school curriculum was far removed from the real concerns of youth.
- The curriculum seldom touched upon the genuine problems of living.

Instruction moved toward extended investigations by students in which elaborate reports were encouraged to “emphasize their value as experience in methods of elementary research and in seeing a long, hard task through to completion” (p. 48). Learning was substantially enriched and invigorated from participation in classroom experimentation around curriculum problems and activities. Volume V of the Eight-Year Study, *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, included reports of these practices in each of the thirty schools. Subject matter barriers were broken down by informal and even formal correlation among individual disciplines.

Almost all of the schools were trying from the beginning of the study to find ways of breaking down the artificial barriers which unfortunately separated teacher from teacher, subject from subject.

The curriculum came to be organized around broad fields of science, mathematics, language, and literature, the arts, social studies, health and physical education, instead of the numerous “subjects” of the usual high school curriculum. (p. 52)

Some of the experimental schools merged broad fields with English and social studies fusions being the most common. Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky (1939) discussed those various approaches.

These approaches in the thirty schools made a significant contribution to the development of core curriculum approaches for delivering common learnings. Increasing numbers of the thirty schools moved from correlation to fusing specific curriculum areas into new, broad courses. Wright (1958) identified fused courses as Type B Core:

Type B – Subjects included in the block-time class are unified or fused around a central theme or units of work or problems stemming from one or more of the subject fields in the block-time class. (p. 9)

She also defined a Type D Core in which teachers and pupils were free to select problems to pursue without reference to any predetermined scope (p. 10).

Core had been both a junior and senior high school practice. However, core programs continued primarily as a junior high school feature. Even the core programs developed in many of the thirty schools did not significantly influence general high school practice.

Career focus

Some of the thirty schools devoted more interest to careers as a unifying center for student learning. Educators in those schools believed that predominant career interest provided a sound basis for integration of the individual's learning for each student. Each student was encouraged to find:

...some field of human activity in which he takes a special interest, for which he has a special aptitude and in which he sees adults earning their living in the real world outside school. These fields may be concrete – fine arts, business administration, pre-engineering, euthenics – and they could be conventionally intellectual as mathematics, French, Greek, or history. For the student whose vocational interest is art, science obviously becomes significant in relation to his career. Other subjects take on new meaning as he sees their implications for his work. This desirable result is obtained only when the program of studies is arranged so that adaptation of work to each individual's predominant interest is made possible. (pp. 55-56)

The Fieldston School focused on this approach more than the other schools in the study (see Fieldston School in Volume V). The concern for career exploration was for all students but seen as particularly important for students who were not going on to college. Contemporary school-to-work initiatives would do well to review those programs to provide similar opportunities for non-college bound youth seeking to become economically self-sufficient in today's world of diminishing non- and semi-skilled employment opportunities.

Other curriculum developments

1) Common problems of American youth

The common problems of American youth became the heart of the curriculum in all thirty schools. They defined the general education focus of the thirty schools which was variously called general education, the basic course, the stem course, core curriculum. Although specific youth problems varied from school to school, central categories under which they were organized included Personal Living, Immediate Personal-Social Relationships, Social-Civic Relationships and Economic Relationships. The "problems of youth emphasis" in the study was developed into the adolescent problems concept (Alberty, 1947). This emphasis also led to Robert Havighurst's concept of "developmental task," and he acknowledged his debt to the leaders of the 1930s and 40s in his book *Developmental Tasks and Education* (1972).

2) Youth study and share the life of the community

As the thirty schools drew closer to their communities, more time was devoted to exploring the physical and human resources of the localities in which students lived. The Eagle Rock High School (see Volume V) spoke of the importance of "the value of the community as a vast resource of social, cultural, vocational, economic, industrial and recreational resources" (p. 64). The thirty schools recognized the need of youth to do something useful in the adult world and focused on making students more effective participants in their communities. Emphasis on participation in community projects and studying community problems and needs helped students in identifying, suggesting, and participating in community actions. Today,

service learning initiatives are rediscovering the importance of building responsible student involvement and participation in community life.

3) The arts belong to all the people

In the thirty schools the arts were not restricted to those with talents in those areas. The goal was for all students to experience the arts and to identify and develop their individual interests and abilities in the arts. Increased emphasis on the arts in their various forms resulted in students gaining a clearer understanding of their importance in their own lives. The arts areas were brought into the core classes wherever applicable.

In one core course, the three weeks spent in exploring special interest fields such as crafts, games, dancing, painting, drawing, and clay modeling produced such enthusiasm for creative manual activities that during the next year, new semester courses were offered to meet the demand. (p. 71)

In other schools, an open laboratory in the arts was set up to meet the needs of pupils who were not necessarily "talented" or who had no time to take a semester course in them. This exposure to and participation in the arts increased students' self expression. More individuals satisfied their need to be active instead of passive and their self-expression offered them positive, creative ways to satisfy the needs of their imagination.

4) Youth search for life's meaning

Their study of adolescent problems and community participation helped students find areas of meaning in their lives. Some of the thirty schools included religious and philosophic studies in the core curriculum. The purpose was not to impose a set of beliefs upon students but to help them reflect on the moral and ethical issues faced in life and society. The schools saw this as a powerful means to help young people in their search for a design for living and for personally satisfying meaning in their lives.

The thirty schools found that both present needs of youth and adult societal demands should be used as sources of the curriculum. This focused on the role of responsible citizenship in society.

5) New materials were essential for improved teaching and learning

Cooperative teaching and investigative, exploratory learning required expanded collections of instructional materials. Teachers in the thirty schools commented that the resources needed were not so much financial as creative.

School libraries constantly added to their stores of useful reading materials. They not only provided books, bulletins, reports, charts, and the like but added new kinds of resources. Laboratory materials and specimens, reproductions of pictures, drawings, sculptures, models, manipulative materials, radio recordings and transcriptions, and motion pictures, augmented traditional curriculum materials collections.

The school librarian was

... no longer the forbidding guardian of the sacred books; she has become just about the most useful person on the school staff. She shares with teachers as new units are planned and brings to the classroom, as well as to the library, a wealth of materials garnered from the four corners of the earth. (p. 81)

The thirty schools initiated the forerunner of the instructional materials center and the transformation of school libraries to what we know today as school library/media centers and services.

6) Changes in ways of teaching and learning

In addition to what was learned by students, the thirty schools also focused on the ways in which the "what" was taught and learned. While it was possible to find some traditional practices in the thirty schools, in many instances fundamentally different teacher and student relationships became the norm.

The emergence and growth of democratic processes in the classroom was very visible. Student participation with teachers in selecting learning activities undergirded the change from authoritarianism to democracy in classroom practices. Increased ownership in what students learned and why they were learning it dramatically increased purposeful involvement.

Correlated approaches caused teachers to become more collaborative with colleagues. Broad fields approaches required their working with each other in correlating and even fusing content areas. Study of adolescent and community problems bridged teacher understanding and student needs and concerns, as well as expanding interaction between teachers and community members.

The conviction that young people in a democracy should develop the habit of reflective thinking in solving problems strongly influenced methods of teaching developed in the thirty schools.

Critical or reflective thinking originates with the sensing of a problem. It is a quality of thought operating in an effort to solve the problem and to reach a tentative conclusion which is supported by all available data. It is really a process of problem solving requiring the use of creative insight, intellectual honesty, and sound judgment. It is the basis of the method of scientific inquiry. The success of democracy depends to a large extent on the disposition and ability of citizens to think critically and reflectively about the problems which must of necessity confront them. (p. 82)

This is the problem-solving approach. Rather than lessons to be learned, students came to consider their school work as problems to be solved. As the curriculum reflected student problems of living and community realities, the need to solve problems fostered reflective thinking.

7) Becoming effective core teachers

Teachers worked hard to become competent in working with a core curriculum group. Hundreds became competent in their larger and more significant responsibilities.

In all the schools many teachers have had a new birth of freedom. Their lives, professionally and personally, have been immeasurably enriched. Teaching has become a thrilling, absorbing experience. This new life has not been won without cost. They have spent long hours in hard study and in almost endless conference with other teachers, with students, and parents. But they all testify that their present joy in their work, their deep sense of satisfaction in knowing they are

serving youth more vitally are worth all the cost and more.
(p. 85)

Chapter IV - The Schools Study Their Pupils

The commission and participating schools recognized their responsibility to thoroughly appraise the study. The abundant data concerning the development of programs in the thirty schools and student development during the high school experience had to be secured, recorded, and reported. This was essential so that "the students themselves, their teachers and parents, colleges, and prospective employers might be fully informed" (p. 87).

Purposes of assessment and reporting

The most fruitful experience of the thirty schools during the early stages of the study was that of thinking through and stating plainly the results they hoped to achieve. They wanted:

- to help young people understand themselves,
- to learn how to work satisfactorily with others,
- to read intelligently and express themselves well in speech and writing,
- to learn how to investigate a topic and follow its leadings, and,
- to broaden and deepen their interests. (p. 88)

The evaluation service of the study was established in 1934. The director and members of the evaluation staff began their work by analyzing the purposes that the schools had listed when they entered the study. The ten major types of objectives the schools had identified were:

1. The development of effective methods of thinking
2. The cultivation of useful work habits and study skills
3. The inculcation of social attitudes
4. The acquisition of a wide range of significant interests
5. The development of increased appreciation of music, art, literature and other aesthetic experiences
6. The development of social sensitivity
7. The development of better personal-social adjustment.

8. The acquisition of important information
9. The development of physical health
10. The development of a consistent philosophy of life.
(pp. 89-90)

Reporting instruments

Over the seven years of its work, the evaluation staff devised about two hundred tests that were used experimentally and continually refined. Those which proved effective were used with thousands of students and their validity and reliability clearly established. The evaluation staff also taught the hundreds of teachers in the thirty schools how to devise their own tests.

Teachers were assisted in workshops, at evaluation headquarters, and in their own schools in the techniques of test construction, in the use of instruments of evaluation, and in the interpretation of results. (p. 93)

To meet a major obligation of the study, data secured, recorded, and reported provided the colleges with more significant information than the student's records of units and grades. The purpose was to so completely describe each applicant that the college would have a better basis for selection and guidance than ever before.

Procedures to identify that information were developed by the Committee on Records and Reports when the thirty schools began their work in 1933. The Committee aided the schools in determining:

1. what information the college needs for wise selection and guidance of students;
2. how that information can best be secured;
3. in what form it should be recorded and presented to the colleges. (pp. 95-96)

The general purposes of recording were as follows.

1. Adequate records provide a sound basis for understanding and counseling individuals.
2. Records furnish the material for intelligent home and school cooperation.
3. Records reveal whether the individual is ready for new experiences. They are essential at points of transition,

such as from to school to college or from school to employment.

4. Records that grow out of the major purposes of education serve to stimulate teachers and to keep important goals readily in view. (p. 96-97)

Describing individual student qualities

The thoroughness of planning what information was needed and how it needed to be gathered is something unparalleled in American education. It required not only developing means to secure that information but the professional development of faculty and staff in the thirty schools to understand their tasks and responsibilities in that longitudinal effort.

The information to be gathered would go far beyond records of grades, units, and progress of students in school studies. It created the need for a delicate balance between: (1) the necessity for a considerable measure of uniformity in reporting; and, (2) the equally important need for anecdotal reporting of the individuality of each student's qualities and characteristics. To accommodate that, the following "Working Objectives for Records and Reports" was developed.

1. Any form devised should be based on the objectives of teachers and schools so that a continuing study of a pupil by its use would throw light on his successive stages of development in powers or characteristics believed to be important.
2. The forms dealing with personal characteristics should be descriptive. Therefore "marks" of any kind, or placement, as on a straight line representing a scale from the highest to lowest, should not be used.
3. Every effort should be made to reach agreement about the meaning of trait names used, and to make their significance in terms of the behavior of a pupil understood by those reading the record.
4. Wherever possible a characterization of a person should be by description of a typical behavior rather than by a word or phrase that could have widely different meanings to different people.

5. The forms should be flexible enough to allow choice of headings under which studies of pupils would be made, thus allowing a school, department, or teacher to use the objectives considered important in the particular situation, or for the particular pupil.
6. Characteristics studied should be such that teachers would be likely to have opportunities to observe behavior that gives best evidence about them. It is not expected, however, that all teachers will have evidence about all characteristics.
7. Forms should be so devised and related that any school should be likely to be able to use them without an overwhelming addition to the work of teachers or secretaries.
8. Characteristics studied should be regarded not as independent entities, but rather as facets of behavior shown by a living human being in his relation with his environment. (p. 97-98)

Other forms developed included Reports to Parents, Transfer from School to College, Development of Pupils in Subject Fields, and Behavior Description. The latter was the result of extensive work by many school and college representatives. Their efforts provided a "word sketch" profile of the student.

They did not consider the words they used for captions as designations of disparate traits. With great care, the committee members chose words that indicate characteristics, qualities of mind or character that schools generally try to develop in their students. (p. 99-100)

The Behavior Description form provided for description of the student under these ten headings.

1. Responsibility-Dependability
2. Creativeness and Imagination
3. Influence,
4. Inquiring Mind
5. Open-mindedness
6. Power and Habit of Analysis
7. Social Concern

8. Emotional Responsiveness
9. Serious Purpose
10. Social Adjustability and Work Habits. (p. 98-99)

Because these terms can have various meanings in different situations, the Behavior Description form indicated the meaning of each heading which attempted to provide for reporting the degree or extent to which the term is descriptive for that individual student. The following is an example of how that approach provided examples of meaning for the descriptors under (5) Open-mindedness. (The student is)

Discriminating: Welcomes new ideas but habitually suspends judgment until all the available evidence is obtained.

Tolerant: Does not readily appreciate or respond to opposing points of view and new ideas, although he is tolerant of them and consciously tries to suspend judgment regarding them.

Passive: Tolerance of the new or different is passive, arising from lack of interest or conviction. Welcomes, or is indifferent to change, because of lack of understanding or appreciation of the new, or of that which it replaces.

Rigid: Preconceived ideas and prejudices so govern his thinking that he usually ends a discussion or investigation without change of opinion.

Intolerant: Is actively intolerant; represents any interference with his habitual beliefs, ideas, and procedures. (p. 99)

Such descriptors under each heading on the Behavior Description form helped those reporting to provide specific evidence of the individual student's behaviors and characteristics in that category. The Committee on Records and Reports also provided space on all reporting forms for additional data not called for by the topics and headings to allow for reporting additional appropriate information.

Chapter V - What Happened In College?

The thirty schools set upon their tasks with the consent and approval of virtually all colleges and universities. The schools were freed from

subject and credit prescription and, in most cases, from entrance examinations. Thus, hundreds of young men and women entered college from the thirty schools without having studied all of the usual required subjects. Some had taken such subjects, but for shorter time than is usually required. (p. 104)

Challenging traditional assumptions

Practice at the time assumed that the skill, knowledge, discipline, habit of mind, and understanding essential for success in college depended upon study of certain subjects for certain periods of time in high school. The CRSC noted:

If the graduates of the thirty schools were not ready for college work, it would indicate that the assumption is sound; if they did well, it would indicate that the assumption is untenable and that a sounder and more realistic assumption of school and college relations should be established. (p. 104)

Other questions included the following:

1. If these thirty schools prove that they can be trusted to use freedom sanely and creatively will it be safe for colleges to extend such freedom to other schools?
2. Is it possible to give more attention to present concerns of all high school pupils without sacrificing adequate preparation for those going on to college?
3. Can practicable ways be found for colleges and schools to work together more effectively for common purposes?
(p. 104)

The investigation was to begin with students from the thirty schools that entered college in September, 1936. To perform the investigation of those students who went to college, responsible, impartial members of college faculties were selected who knew how to work with college students. The first questions they dealt with were:

1. What does success in college mean?
2. Upon what basis shall judgment be rendered?
3. What are the significant aspects of the student's life at college?

4. How can we discover and record the important evidences of his growth and development? (p. 105)

CRSC members, teachers and principals in the thirty schools, college deans, professors, and graduates came together to define criteria for this dimension of the study. During the summer of 1936 they agreed upon the following set of criteria for studying students from the thirty schools in college.

1. Intellectual competence.
2. Cultural development; use of leisure time, appreciative and creative aspects.
3. Practical competence; common sense and judgment; ordinary manual skills, environmental adaptability.
4. Philosophy of life (pattern of goals)
5. Character traits (patterns of behavior).
6. Emotional balance (including mental health).
7. Social fitness.
8. Sensitivity to social problems.
9. Physical fitness (knowledge and practice of health habits). (p. 106)

Detailed subdivisions were developed on forms to record the progress and success in each of these areas. The task was to then gather that information. Two thousand graduates of the thirty schools entered 179 colleges in the fall of 1936. In addition to this information a basis for comparison was also established.

A basis of comparison was established by matching, with utmost care, each graduate from the thirty schools with another student in the same college from some school not participating in the study, who had met the usual entrance requirements. They were matched on the basis of sex, age, race, scholastic aptitude, scores, home, and community background, interests, and probable future. (p. 109)

Ultimately, 1,475 pairs of students were studied. Those entering college in 1936 were studied for four years. Those entering college in 1937 were studied for three years. Those entering college in 1938 were studied for two years. Those entering college in 1939 were studied for one year.

The graduates of the thirty schools succeed

In the comparison of the 1,475 pairs, the college follow-up staff found that the graduates of the thirty schools:

1. earned a slightly higher total grade average;
2. earned higher grade averages in all subject fields except foreign language;
3. specialized in the same academic fields as did the comparison students;
4. did not differ from the comparison group in the number of times they were placed on probation;
5. received slightly more academic honors in each year;
6. were more often judged to possess a high degree of intellectual curiosity and drive;
7. were more often judged to be precise, systematic, and objective in their thinking;
8. were more often judged to have developed clear or well-formulated ideas concerning the meaning of education – especially in the first two years of college;
9. more often demonstrated a high degree of resourcefulness in meeting new situations;
10. did not differ from the comparison group in ability to plan their time effectively;
11. had about the same problems of adjustment as the comparison group, but approached their solution with greater effectiveness;
12. participated somewhat more frequently, and more often enjoyed appreciative experiences in the arts;
13. participated more in all organized college student groups except religious and “service” activities;
14. earned in each college year a higher percentage of non-academic honors (officership in organizations, election to managerial societies, athletic insignia, leading roles in dramatic and musical productions);
15. did not differ from the comparison group in the quality of adjustment to their contemporaries;
16. differed only slightly from the comparison group in the kinds of judgments about their schooling;
17. had a somewhat better orientation toward their choice of a vocation;

18. demonstrated a more active concern for what was going on in the world. (p. 111-112)

Clearly the graduates of the thirty schools were "ready for college work." Their success supported the need to rethink assumptions regarding the superiority of traditional college entrance requirements. The college follow-up staff also reported the following regarding the eighteen findings.

Some of these differences were not large, but wherever reported, they were consistent for each class. It is apparent that when one finds even small margins of difference for a number of large groups, the probability greatly increases that the differences cannot be due to chance alone. . . . It is quite obvious from these data that the thirty schools' graduates, as a group, have done a somewhat better job than the comparison group whether success is judged by college standards, by the students' contemporaries, or by individual students....**The graduates of the most experimental schools were strikingly more successful than their matches. Differences in their favor were much greater than the differences between the total thirty schools and their comparison group.** Conversely, there were no large or consistent differences between the least experimental graduates and their comparison group. For these students the differences were smaller and less consistent than for the total thirty schools and their comparison group....If the proof of the pudding lies in these groups, and a good part of it does, then it follows that the colleges got from these most experimental schools a higher proportion of sound, effective college material than they did from the more conventional schools in similar environments. If colleges want students of sound scholarship with vital interests, students who have developed effective and objective habits of thinking, and who yet maintain a healthy orientation toward their fellows, then they will encourage the already obvious trend away from restrictions which tend to inhibit departures or deviations from the conventional curriculum patterns. (pp. 112-113) (emphasis added)

Chapter VI - This We Have Learned

Careful examination of the findings of the Eight-Year Study led to the following conclusions by the CRSC.

First, the graduates of the thirty schools were not handicapped in their college work.

Second, departures from the prescribed pattern of subjects and units did not lessen the student's readiness for the responsibilities of college.

Third, students from the participating schools which made most fundamental curriculum revision achieved in college distinctly higher standing than that of students of equal ability with whom they were compared. (p. 117)

Implications of the findings for high schools and colleges

The results of the Eight-Year Study were conclusive and confirmed the following,

The assumption that preparation for the liberal arts college does not depend upon the study of certain prescribed subjects in the secondary school is no longer tenable....The conclusion must be drawn, therefore, that the assumption upon which school and college relations have been based in the past must be abandoned. (p. 118)

Colleges, teachers, pupils, and parents need to know what constitutes the foundation for satisfactory achievement in college. While colleges waived the customary entrance requirements and regulations for graduates of the thirty schools, they were given extensive, significant information that provided evidence of students' readiness for college work. A second major implication of the results of the Eight-Year Study was:

Secondary schools can be trusted with a greater measure of freedom than college requirements now permit. (p. 124)

In that regard the study clearly proved that colleges can gain all the information they need for selection of students for admission through means that neither restrict high schools nor prescribe their

curricula. Then and now, high schools require the freedom to reorganize curriculum appropriately and identify readiness of students for post-secondary education. That would allow high schools throughout the nation to serve the educational needs of adolescents more effectively.

Conditions for improving high school curricula

Time and effort similar to that taken by the thirty schools are essential prerequisites in planning and improving curriculum. "Effective secondary school construction requires thorough preparation" and "effective secondary school construction takes time" (p. 127).

Curriculum improvement cannot be achieved through quick, surface changes by small groups. The reconstruction of curriculum and programs in the Eight-Year Study required the participation of all constituents and stakeholders. That was necessary to develop their ownership in the initiative. Understanding the changes that would be made was foundational to reorganize programs and develop the skills required to deliver them effectively.

The CRSC reprised the steps taken in the Eight-Year Study which contributed to the success of students in the thirty schools.

Administrators, teachers, parents, and students should unite in the thinking and planning which should precede any revision of the school's work... *All* teachers should participate... Parents, too must share in preparation for high school changes. The schools which did not draw patrons into the planning which preceded revision encountered parental misunderstanding... Adequate preparation involves research. Before any school revises its work, the faculty should study the community the school serves and the needs of youth in that community... No teacher or school is fully ready for constructive change until plans for appraising results are carefully formulated. The school should find out whether changes in curriculum and methods of teaching achieve purposes more effectively... Without strong conviction on the part of teachers that youth must be better served, no important changes will be made. (pp. 128-129, 131)

The achievements of the Eight-Year Study still hold potential for revitalizing high school education and improving school-to-college

transition. The purpose of such an initiative today will entail careful identification of changes which need to be made as we approach and enter the third millennium. The following rhetorical questions must still be posed. "What part of the school's curriculum should be retained? That part which promotes the kind of life we seek. What changes in young people are desirable? Those which lead in the direction of democratic living" (p 133).

Again, the thirty schools found that "effective, democratic leadership is essential" (p. 134) in pursuing curriculum reform and compelling reasons for pupil participation in such initiatives.

The schools have taken the position that the source of the curriculum is to be found in the concerns of youth and in the nature of the society which the school serves. Therefore, youth should have opportunity to ask that the schools heed their needs and to tell what some of those needs are. An even more vital reason for their sharing is that the kind of life we seek in America can be achieved only by full participation in planning for the common welfare and meeting common responsibilities. School is the place for youth to develop the habit of cooperative thought and skill in group action. (pp. 135-136)

With regard to curriculum, the CRSC saw it was imperative that program improvement be linked with expanded teacher perspective for them to see the need for improved methodology.

Whatever the form of curriculum organization, teachers should work together for common purposes, clearly understood and constantly kept in mind. The thirty schools agree, therefore, that narrow subject specialization by teachers which stands in the way of their cooperation with others and blinds them to youth's needs, should disappear from secondary education. With the best possible preparation, the teacher will still have to learn through experience how to know, understand, and guide young people. As he works with them day after day in the classroom, his relationship with his students becomes, more and more, that of friendly counselor. To have that relationship, the work of the classroom must be vital to students. Therefore the content of the curriculum becomes extremely important. (p. 137)

Implications for curriculum process and coherence

The success of students in the thirty schools over their matched pair counterparts in high school and college was quite dramatic. Ironically, high schools have yet to broadly attempt curriculum reorganization on the bases of the results the thirty schools achieved. The curriculum principles and processes which led to that success still merit attention in current efforts to improve high school programs.

Curriculum planning is a process in which participants at many levels make decisions about what the purposes of learning ought to be, how those purposes might be carried out through teaching-learning situations, and whether the purposes and means are both appropriate and effective (Beane, Toepfer, & Alessi, 1986). The thirty schools utilized the Curriculum as Experiences of the Learner approach (Beane, Toepfer, & Alessi 1986, pp. 33-34) to reorganize curriculum around adolescent and community concerns.

Curriculum as experiences of the learner is rooted in the idea that what is planned is not always what happens and that the course of actual events or the "curriculum" can only be found in the learnings which students take away from various experiences. **The curriculum becomes what the participants learn, rather than the plan.** Consequently, the actual course of events often becomes different from what was intended. Curriculum as experiences of the learner focuses on learning and the learner rather than independently planned teaching activities. It includes all of the experiences of learners, both planned and unplanned.

Attempting such curriculum reorganization requires staff agreement on the purposes of the experiences that relate content to student identified adolescent and community concerns. Dewey's (1916) thoughts on experience describe the notion the thirty schools used in reorganizing curriculum and learning experiences.

The nature of experience can be understood only by noting that it includes an active and passive element peculiarly combined. On the active hand, experience is trying, a meaning which is explicit in the connected term experiment. On the passive, it is undergoing. When we experience something we act on it; we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing

and then it does something to us in return; such is the peculiar combination. The connection between these two phases of experience measures the fruitfulness or value of the experience. Mere activity does not constitute experience. It is dispersive, centrifugal, dissipating. Experience as trying involves change but change is meaningless transition unless it is consciously connected with the return wave of consequences which flow from it. When an activity is continued into the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflected back into a change made within us, the mere flux is loaded with significance. We learn something. It is not an experience when a child merely sticks his finger into a flame; it is experience when the movement is connected with the pain he undergoes in consequence. Henceforth, sticking the finger into the flame means a burn. Being burned is a mere physical change, like the burning of a stick of wood, if it is not perceived as the consequence of some other action. (p. 163)

Kelley (1947) later noted the relationship of content to student and community realities which characterized curriculum reorganization in the thirty schools.

Since we know that the student learns in accordance with his own purposes and experiences which he cannot, in fact, truly perceive in any other way, we must necessarily look for a modification of the role and usefulness of subject matter. We now know that the subject matter will be perceived as the student can perceive it, no matter what we do, and that no two students will perceive a given fact in the same way. This does not mean that subject matter will not be used, or that it becomes unimportant. We cannot teach without teaching something or students learn without learning something. No piece of subject matter, no fact of human knowledge, is bad in itself. It is good or bad only in relation to the person learning it, and to the possibility of his learning it. The question becomes one of asking who the subject matter is for, whether or not he has the purpose and experience to acquire it, what its acquisition will do to and for the learner and why it should be learned. (p. 99)

Earlier sections of this chapter focused on the study's movement beyond single subject organization to broad fields and other integrated curriculum approaches. Such efforts still need to focus on articulating learning across the school. Staff must collaboratively identify learning skills students need to integrate and use data more effectively.

Staff in the thirty schools made effective use of pupil-teacher or student-teacher procedures to identify adolescent concerns as unifying centers to organize curricula and learning experiences. This developed student ownership in the adolescent and community problems and the concerns their curricular experiences pursued. Their involvement in that planning also helped students identify specific content and skills they needed to learn in order to pursue the problems and concerns they identified with their teachers. Krug (1950) noted:

The everyday details of living together make the real curriculum, and it is on these matters that youth participation becomes vital and important. At its most significant level, the participation of children and youth in curriculum planning becomes one and the same thing with student-teacher planning in classroom instruction, in the total life of the school, and in school-community relations. (p. 20)

Parrish and Waskin (1967, pp. 90-92) identified the importance of student investment in what is taught. It is essential in integrating student learning tasks with adolescent and community concerns. However, contemporary curriculum reorganization efforts have, instead, largely focused on interdisciplinary correlation among the subjects in teaching teams. By neglecting to identify and use adolescent and community issues, those attempts have preserved subject-centered learning emphases. Beane (1993) noted that such an interdisciplinary approach is not a first step toward developing integrated curriculum options.

Interdisciplinary teaming does not necessarily lead to interdisciplinary curriculum organization. . . .What interdisciplinary teaching does take place is simple correlation of subject areas. (pp. 33-34)

School programs need to help students deal successfully with the problems they face in growing up and prepare them for the challenges they will face in their adult futures. That clearly requires integrating content and skills around meaningful problems and needs of learners. Jacobs (1989, pp. 13-24) developed a basic integrated curriculum format that bridged earlier interdisciplinary efforts. Beane (1992) pursued planning integrated learnings around learners' needs, interests, and concerns.

Curriculum planning in an integrative context begins with collaborative discussion about young people's questions and concerns and identification of the themes they suggest. Once a theme and the related questions they suggest are clear, curriculum planning turns to identifying activities the group might use to answer the questions. It is after these "what" and "how" concerns are addressed that questions of knowledge, skill, and resources are appropriate. (p. 39)

The goal is for schools to develop an integrated curricular context in which students can apply learned skills and information as they study and work on locally defined needs and problems. Beane (1995) stated "curriculum integration, in theory and practice, transcends subject-area and interdisciplinary identifications" (p. 618). He tied that to the Eight-Year Study noting:

Since the Eight-Year Study of the late 1930s, we have been getting signals that the separate subject matter approach is an inappropriate route even for those purposes that its advocates claim for themselves. As that study and others after it have indicated, young people tend to do at least as well, and often better, on traditional measures of school achievement when the curriculum moves further in the direction of integration. (p. 618)

The coherence between curriculum and learning activities in the success of students in the Thirty Schools Study clearly recommends that secondary curriculum reorganization pursue integrated curriculum options. Beane (1995) suggested "coherent" curriculum as a broader frame for developing more integrated curriculum options.

A “coherent” curriculum is one that holds together, that makes sense as a whole; and its parts, whatever they are, are unified and connected by that sense of the whole. The idea of coherence begins with a view of the curriculum as a broadly conceived concept – as *the* curriculum – that is about “something.” It is not simply a collection of disparate parts or pieces that accumulate in student experiences and on transcripts. A coherent curriculum has a sense of the forest as well as the trees, a sense of unity and connectedness, of relevance and pertinence. Parts or pieces are connected or integrated in ways that are visible and explicit. There is a sense of a larger, compelling purpose, and actions are tied to that purpose. (p. 3)

Obviously the teachers in the thirty schools succeeded in creating that coherence by interfacing learning skills and information with adolescent and community concerns. They achieved what Beane later saw as two conditions schools need to achieve to develop such curriculum coherence.

Coherence in the curriculum involves creating and maintaining visible connections between purposes and everyday learning experiences. . . . Moving toward a coherent curriculum involves creating contexts that organize and connect learning experiences. (p. 7)

Conclusion: A Look to the Past and Toward the Future

The Eight-Year Study remains the most thorough, longitudinal, curriculum revision project in our nation’s educational history. The study’s success provided compelling evidence of the need to reorganize high school curriculum and college admission procedures and requirements. It still seems incredulous that the nation’s high schools and colleges failed to alter traditional practices in light of the results of the study.

The study focused on fostering qualitative growth of students in dimensions that would facilitate greater success in learning then and in their subsequent post-secondary experiences. Time was a variable rather than an inflexible timetable in which learning had to occur at a

fixed rate. In subsequent secondary education reform efforts that paradigm has been inverted. The pace of progress through what is to be taught and learned has become more important than completion at rates possible for individuals.

Toepfer (1989) noted the need for greater student learning completion over meeting fixed timetables in the middle level school grades.

The ultimate challenge to education lies in the job of preparing today's youth to solve tomorrow's lingering and emerging problems. Instead of trying to force the masses of early adolescents to higher-level thinking skills, ready or not, perhaps we should help each student become the best thinker she or he can at the rate and pace that her or his capabilities and developmental readiness will allow. Such an approach will help to ensure a better attitude toward learning and prepare youth for the long-term learning effort that extends far beyond the middle grades. (p. 42)

Accessing skills for lifelong learning still needs to supersede myopic efforts to move students through school on fixed, singular schedules. Forty years ago the notion of nongraded or continuous progress education (Goodlad & Anderson, 1956) identified ways to overcome the debilitating impact of lock-step graded school approaches. Yet, prior to that, the Eight-Year Study was grounded on the understanding that completion goals for individual students had to be defined within the range of their abilities.

The CRSC Directing Committee agreed on two major principles that guided their reconstructing the secondary school curriculum: (1) "The general life of the school should conform to what is now known about the ways in which human beings learn and grow; (2) "the high school should re-discover its central reason for existence" (pp. 17-18). Both concerns remain central in framing efforts to bring about significant changes in today's secondary schools. Yet, the succeeding waves of high school reform have broken on the shores of secondary education with remarkably little impact.

The current high school reform initiative, *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution*, (NASSP and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1996) is making another

reform assault on the secondary education bastion. Will it succeed where its predecessors have not? Its nine purposes are interesting.

- I. High school is, above all else, a learning community and each school must commit itself to expecting demonstrated academic achievement for every student in accord with standards that can stand up to national scrutiny.
- II. High school must function as a transitional experience, getting each student ready for the next stage of life, whatever it may be for that individual, with the understanding that, ultimately, each person needs to earn a living.
- III. High school must be a gateway to multiple options.
- IV. High school must prepare each student to be a lifelong learner.
- V. High school must provide an underpinning for good citizenship and for full participation in the life of a democracy.
- VI. High school must play a role in the personal development of young people as social beings who have needs beyond those that are strictly academic.
- VII. High school must lay a foundation for students to be able to participate comfortably in an increasingly technological world.
- VIII. High school must equip young people for life in a country and world in which interdependency will link their destiny to that of others, however different those others may be from them.
- IX. High school must be an institution that unabashedly advocates in behalf of young people (p. 2).

Well intentioned though those purposes are, their statement in imperative mode (must) is ambitious, at best. Only after the completion of the study and the results of the reorganized programs in the thirty schools did the CRSC state (1942) conclusions in the imperative mode (should).

First, every student should achieve competence in the essential skills of communication – reading, writing, oral expression – and in the use of quantitative concepts and symbol.

Second, inert subject-matter should give way to content that is alive and pertinent to the problems of youth and modern civilization.

Third, the common, recurring concerns of American youth should give content and form to the curriculum.

Fourth, the life and work of the school should contribute, in every possible way, to the physical, mental, and emotional health of every student.

Fifth, the curriculum in its every part should have one clear, major purpose. That purpose is to bring every young American his great heritage of freedom, to develop understanding of the kind of life we seek, and to inspire devotion to human welfare. (p. 138)

There has been a common lack in the failure of reform initiatives to change high school programs during the past half-century. Unlike the Eight-Year Study, subsequent reform efforts did not first reorganize a population of high school programs in light of agreed upon directions. They could not measure results with comparison groups. For high schools across the nation to consider making particular changes will require proof of the success of those recommended changes.

In the next millennium the questions and issues needed to drive a reform effort may differ from those of the Eight-Year Study. However, the study's longitudinal approach and the results it achieved stand as a model for such initiatives. All high school reform efforts since 1940, including *Breaking Ranks*, have asked high schools to change as an exercise of faith. Continued failure to redefine American secondary education has prompted the cynical comment that if Rip Van Winkle were to awaken from his fabled long sleep today, the only thing he would recognize in American education would be the high school. The findings and conclusions of the Eight-Year Study stand as remarkable for their time. As we approach a new century, they still provide an important base for rethinking directions for improving secondary education. The chapters in this volume specify dimensions of the study that educators should consider in their efforts to improve the preparation of youth for the demands of our rapidly changing society and world. △

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V

Implications for Middle Level Education

GORDON F. VARS

Both the Eight-Year Study and the middle school that evolved thirty years later arose in response to the perceived inadequacies of current educational practices. Middle schools were designed to correct the deficiencies of the junior high school; the Eight-Year Study was expected to improve "secondary education," with special emphasis on the high school. Current efforts to reform the schools provide ample evidence that neither goal has yet been achieved.

In fact, most of the inadequacies that drove the Eight-Year Study can be found in many, if not most, of the institutions that call themselves middle schools today. Consider these charges against the secondary schools of the early 1900s, already cited in Chapter I and discussed in Chapter IV, but worth repeating here:

1. Do not have a clear-cut, definite, central focus.
2. Fail to give students a sincere appreciation of their heritage as American citizens.
3. Do not prepare students adequately for the responsibilities of community life.
4. Seldom challenge students of first-rate ability to work up to the level of their intelligence.
5. Neither know their students well nor guide them wisely.
6. Fail to create conditions necessary for effective learning.
7. Seldom release and develop the creative energies of students.
8. The curriculum is far removed from the real concerns of youth.
9. Traditional subjects of the curriculum lack vitality and significance.
10. Students are not competent in the use of the English language.
11. There is little evidence of unity in the work of the typical school.
12. There is a similar lack of continuity in the curriculum.

13. Teachers are not well-equipped for their responsibilities.
14. Few principals conceive their work in terms of democratic leadership
15. Principals and teachers labor earnestly, often sacrificially, but usually without any comprehensive evaluation of the results of their work. (Adapted from Aikin, 1942, 4-10)

In all honesty we must admit that many of these charges would apply to any educational institution, elementary through the university level. Indeed, the current emphasis on state-mandated and tested “proficiencies” seems to be making the situation worse, driving out of the classroom what few vestiges of student-centered progressive education remain in the face of what Apple (1993) calls the “conservative restoration.”

These deficiencies are especially ironic in middle schools, since the vision held up by leaders of the movement since the 1960s reflects a strong commitment to meeting the needs of middle level students (Alexander, 1984; Eichhorn, 1966; NMSA, 1982; NMSA, 1995). But even educators who are most conscientiously striving toward “the middle school concept” must wince at the recognition that at least some of the above charges apply to them. By revisiting both the process and the results of the Eight-Year Study, this book can serve as both inspiration and instruction in how to bring about genuine systemic improvement in an institution that too often appears resistant to change.

One caution is in order when deriving lessons for today by reviewing the Eight-Year Study and the progressive education movement of which it was a part. Progressive education arose at a time when the United States was living through the trauma of the Great Depression. This country was desperately seeking solutions to huge social problems and therefore was open to many innovations in its basic institutions. Consider, for example, the numerous reforms of the New Deal. Society today is much less open to change. Moreover, there is little confidence in both the good intentions and the competence of those who operate social institutions; hence schools’ freedom to innovate is much more restricted. Discouraging as this may be, educators inspired by the vision set forth in this book can still

make significant improvements, but they need to proceed cautiously and be sure to take their various constituencies along.

Twelve Areas of Implications

1. Focus on personal-social needs of students

As noted above, both the Eight-Year Study and the middle school movement promoted curriculum and instruction based on the characteristics and needs of students. One of the first acts of the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum, established in 1932 by the Progressive Education Association, was to launch a "Study of Adolescents." This reflected the commission's "conviction that educational processes and goals must be relevant to the needs of the learner as he interacts with his social medium" (*Science in General Education*, 1938, p. v). The resulting conception of the "personal-social needs of youth" was the touchstone of most publications of the commission (Thayer, Zachry, & Kotinsky, 1939), even though its application in the experimental schools of the Eight-Year Study varied widely.

The middle school movement, and to some extent the junior high school movement from which it evolved, also is rooted in concern for students going through a distinctive period in life. This long-standing focus has been reinforced through the years by writers in the field and by pronouncements of professional associations such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (1961, 1975), the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1985), The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989, 1992, 1995), and the National Middle School Association (1982, 1995). Indeed, the latest NMSA position paper echoes much of the philosophy that shaped the Eight-Year Study.

2. Cooperative teacher-student planning

Chapter 3 of the Aikin report is entitled "The Curriculum Heeds the Concerns of Youth." In order to do this, "principals and teachers must have an abiding faith in the possibilities of youth" (Aikin, 1942, p. 130). This faith was to be demonstrated both in the selection of content to be studied and through extensive use of teacher-student planning (Giles, 1941). As Aikin put it, "Teacher and students together plan the work, carry it through, and test results" (p. 94).

In recent years, sparked primarily by James Beane (1990, 1993, 1995, 1997), there has been a renewal of forthright commitment to involving the students directly in designing their own curriculum. This student-centered approach was a key feature of core curriculum programs developed in the most innovative schools of the Eight-Year Study. Not to be confused with the “core of the curriculum,” (learnings required of all students), the core curriculum spawned by the progressive education movement found ready acceptance in the evolving junior high schools (Wright, 1950, 1952, 1958; Wright and Greer, 1963).

Too often this student-centered approach was lost when junior high schools converted to middle schools and adopted the interdisciplinary team organization. This writer warned as long ago as 1966 that this might be one of the consequences of middle school reorganization (Vars, 1966). A continuing challenge for middle level educators is to reap the benefits of interdisciplinary team organization and at the same time stimulate student engagement in learning through teacher-student planning. Block-time and partner teaming are two of the promising ways to accomplish this that are discussed later in this chapter.

3. Balancing student concerns and societal demands

But simply deriving curriculum from the personal and social concerns of students is not sufficient to generate a sound middle level curriculum. The definition of “personal-social needs” formulated by the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum went beyond the immediate concerns of young people. The “social” part of the term was a reminder that young people are growing up in a society that imposes on them certain demands and expectations, some of which they may at first neither recognize nor accept. Likewise, the “teacher” part of the concept of teacher-student planning emphasizes the professional role of the teacher, both to guide the cooperative planning and also to make sure that the demands and expectations of the larger society are taken into account in designing curriculum and instruction.

Beane makes this aspect explicit in the 1993 edition of his seminal work. He states that the themes on which the curriculum should be built should meet seven criteria. The first two reaffirm that themes

should “explicitly involve questions and concerns from the young people who will actually carry out the unit” and also “involve questions and concerns that are widely shared among early adolescents” (p. 75). Criterion three states that the theme should “involve widely shared, larger world concerns that are of clear and compelling social significance” (p. 75).

Middle school rhetoric that deals only with “meeting the needs of young adolescents” misses the point made emphatically by the curriculum theorists who shaped the Eight-Year Study: Schools serve both young people and also the larger society. *Both* must be taken into consideration in designing school programs. Aikin (1942) puts it bluntly: “The Thirty Schools were convinced that both present needs of youth and adult social demands should be used as sources of the curriculum” (p. 76).

If schools ignore this dual obligation, society may impose even further restrictions on their freedom to make education developmentally appropriate. The current trend toward national standards and state-mandated proficiency testing arises, in part, from the perception that schools have neglected their obligation to serve society. Indeed, the demise of child-centered progressive education is attributable in part to the public’s perception that progressive schools let students do anything they wanted to do.

4. Using areas of concern to structure scope and sequence

The more innovative schools in the Eight-Year Study structured curriculum by identifying “problem areas” around which student concerns and societal expectations tended to cluster. Many of the units taught in junior high school core programs appeared to be based on this concept (Van Til, Vars, Lounsbury, 1961). James Beane (1997) reports that “areas of concern” derived from teacher-student planning tend to be quite similar, regardless of the age of the students or the nature of the community in which they live. He proposes that these areas be used to structure a “national curriculum” appropriate for all students.

Once identified, these “problem areas” or “areas of concern” must then be arranged in some kind of scope and sequence, a perennial problem in curriculum design. Chapter II of this book describes how

teachers in Des Moines and Tulsa wrestled with this problem, and the faculty of the Ohio State University School reported similar deliberations (Faculty of the University School, 1946, 1952, 1956). The solutions these educators arrived at merit serious consideration by curriculum designers today.

In contrast with the rigidity and specificity of much curriculum today, problem areas were kept broad and open-ended. Each group of teachers and students was expected to employ teacher-student planning to develop learning units within a given area. That way they could address the questions and concerns of that specific class, and take advantage of resources available locally. Hence no two classes dealing with a particular problem area would do exactly the same things, although they all would deal with similar key concepts and issues.

Some core programs were structured around “aspects of living” identified by the Study of Adolescence, and classes were encouraged to select at least one unit from each of these. The Faculty of the Ohio State University School (1956) explained:

From its participation in the Eight-Year Study, University School developed a concept of structure for its core based on three large focal points of adolescent concern:

1. Personal Living – problems related to growing up.
2. Personal-Social Living – problems related to living with and understanding others.
3. Social-Civic-Economic Living – problems related to living in and understanding the immediate and wider community. (p. 17)

The OSU faculty further identified “Continuous Curriculum Experiences,” based on democratic values, that were intended to unify student experiences. These were to be emphasized throughout the entire school by all faculty (Faculty of the University School, 1956).

To help teachers work within such a semi-structured curriculum, faculty of the experimental schools developed “source” or “resource” units filled with a great variety of ideas. A typical resource unit described the ramifications of that problem area and listed pertinent student questions and social issues. Mandated content and skills were specified, along with suggestions on how student learning might

be evaluated. All kinds of teaching resources were listed, ranging from books to films to possible field trips and community resources. But the heart of the resource unit was an extensive list of possible learning activities for individual students, small groups, or an entire class. Activities often were sub-categorized as "initiatory," "developmental," and "culminating." A notebook or file of such resources helped reduce teacher anxiety as they entered into teacher-student planning, as reported by the Des Moines and Tulsa teachers.

Grade placement and sequence of problem areas might either be pre-determined by the staff or left in the hands of individual teachers or teams. Some problem areas placed themselves naturally. For example, "How to Survive in Middle School" would be most appropriate for students who had just moved up from elementary school, whereas "Planning My Career" would be most meaningful to older students looking forward to high school. Ohio State University School faculty "pegged" by grade level only a few of the problem areas developed for their grade 7-12 core program. Teachers and students jointly selected from others on the list, or designed their own after getting permission from the grade-level staff.

Curriculum scope and sequence also were monitored by asking teachers to keep detailed records of what a class had studied that year and forward these at the end of the year. This reduced the likelihood of unwarranted repetition or significant gaps in student experiences.

In these various ways, the experimental schools provided a degree of structure to curriculum scope and sequence. But by organizing the curriculum around open-ended problem areas, they preserved a great deal of freedom for teachers and students to jointly plan meaningful learning experiences. Resource units helped both teachers and students make most efficient use of their cooperative planning time.

Teachers who worked long and hard to develop resource units in the experimental schools would no doubt be envious of middle level teachers today. A number of publishers have released series of attractive interdisciplinary units on a great variety of themes and topics, and how-to-do-it books on interdisciplinary teaching abound. Teachers today may tap the power and flexibility of computers and laser disks to organize information and teaching tools. Yet, too often both commercial and teacher-made materials lack the crucial element of

direct student input. The challenge for teachers and curriculum developers is to combine problem areas or areas of concern jointly identified by teachers and students with the marvelous array of teaching-learning resources made available by modern technology.

5. Teacher-guidance

The thirty schools in the Eight-Year Study also anticipated the teacher-advisory or teacher-guidance programs considered essential for middle level schools. Teachers in the thirty schools who fulfilled this function were referred to as “counselors,” not to be confused with the school’s certified guidance counselor. Aikin (1942) explains the process this way:

The Thirty Schools recognized that some way must be found by which each pupil should be well-known by at least one teacher. . . Such arrangements as these were devised in various schools.

The counselor or home-room teacher became also the teacher of his home-room group in one or more subjects.

The counselor continued with the same group of students, not just for a semester or year, but for two and often three years.

Instead of a formal report of grades sent to the student’s home without his previous knowledge, a carefully written statement was prepared jointly by adviser and student. This often led to a conference attended by counselor, parents, and pupil, resulting almost always in greater knowledge and understanding.

The counselor visited each student’s home, at least once each year, more frequently if necessary. (pp. 37-38)

Middle school teachers who today are hard-pressed to carry out relatively modest advisory functions would no doubt be aghast at such responsibilities. Yet the crucial importance of providing “an adult advocate for every student” (NMSA, 1995) is widely accepted. Unfortunately, middle school advisory programs are in trouble in many schools today. A major factor is the requirement that all teachers must have an advisory group, whether or not they are willing and able to conduct one effectively (Vars, 1989, 1997a).

Perhaps it is time to reconsider assigning time and responsibility for student guidance or advocacy to a limited number of core teachers or teams who work with students in an extended block of time. Here is Aikin's (1942) evaluation of the one-teacher "block-time" approach to providing guidance:

Perhaps the most effective way of knowing and counseling individuals has been found by those schools which have developed core programs dealing with the common concerns and problems of their students. The counselor is also the "core" teacher. Two hours each day are usually devoted to the units which comprise the core curriculum. Thus the counselor inevitably becomes aware of the students' concerns, for they are the subjects of study and investigation. And as he enters into their lives through helping them with their problems of living, he becomes truly their counselor, guide, and friend. (pp. 38-39).

But guidance was not the responsibility of only the "counselor" or core teacher. As Aikin puts it, "Guidance cannot be divorced from the everyday work of the classroom. All teachers share this responsibility" (p. 136). In middle schools today, teacher guidance too often is relegated to the "official" advisory period, instead of permeating the curriculum and the entire gamut of teacher-student relationships. Hence the NMSA's (1995) advocacy of "comprehensive guidance and support services" in addition to "an adult advocate for every student."

6. Interdisciplinary teaming

Although not labeled as such, some of the thirty schools in the Eight-Year Study pioneered the interdisciplinary team organization (Giles, 1941, pp. 309-315). Aikin (1942) explains:

Organization of teachers around groups of students with whom they all were working supplanted, to a considerable extent, the traditional departmental organization around subjects. In some of the large high schools a smaller school within the larger one was organized. Thus 6 teachers became responsible for 210 students for the greater part of the school day. Each teacher was counselor of 35 students, and the 6 teachers and the 210 boys and girls worked together as

a unit. The schedule was arranged so that the six teachers had an hour together for conference every day. (p. 38)

Some middle schools today still lack that essential daily planning period. On the other hand, few middle schools today would ask a team of six teachers to be responsible for 210 students. Even 180, or 30 students per teacher, is considered too large in many schools. But the idea of breaking up large impersonal schools into smaller clusters of teachers and students is as sound today as it was fifty years ago.

The curriculum implications of interdisciplinary teaming also were explored by schools in the Eight-Year Study. After a few years of carrying out interdisciplinary units as part of a team, some teachers chose to keep one group of students for an extended block of time and conduct all aspects of a unit themselves. They discovered that integrating various subjects and skills was easier when they did not have to negotiate with other teachers. This was especially true in core curriculum classes, where teacher-student planning inevitably ranged beyond any one teacher's subject specialty. The guidance advantages of the one-teacher block-time approach have been mentioned above.

The benefits of the longer time block itself have often been cited (Vars, 1969). The current interest in block scheduling represents a rediscovery of this scheduling device, regardless of how the curriculum is organized (Canady & Rettig, 1995). "Partner-teaming" as advocated by Arnold and Stevenson (1998) represents an intermediate position between one-teacher block time and the typical four- or five-member interdisciplinary team. Scheduling, staffing, and grouping are essentially ways of delivering the curriculum (Vars, 1993). Since they may have either positive or negative effects on curriculum and instruction, such decisions should be made *after* the general outlines of the curriculum are determined.

7. Integrative curriculum

Integrative or interdisciplinary curriculum designs were one of the major contributions of the Eight-Year Study (Vars, 1972). In fact, the study often is cited as a major justification for integrative curriculum, since students in schools that went furthest in that direction did better in college. These words from Aikin's volume (1942) are often quoted to justify core and other integrative curricula: "Students from

the participating schools which made most fundamental curriculum revision achieved in college distinctly higher standing than that of students of equal ability with whom they were compared" (p. 117).

Although interdisciplinary teams were used in some of the experimental schools, innovative curriculum most often was delivered by one teacher who met the same students two or more hours every day, and who sometimes had the same students for two or three years. This scheduling arrangement came to be known as "block-time" (Wright, 1958), and block-time classes that focused directly on student personal-social needs were labeled "core curriculum."

The NMSA (1995) position paper asserts that "developmentally responsive middle level schools provide curriculum that is challenging, integrative, and exploratory" (p. 20). Integrative curriculum is explained as follows:

Curriculum is integrative when it helps students make sense out of their life experiences. This requires curriculum that is itself coherent, that helps students connect experiences to their daily lives outside school, and that encourages them to reflect on the totality of their experiences. (p.22)

The position paper then describes several ways that either teams or individual teachers may implement integrative curriculum. It further suggests that "integration in all . . . dimensions is enhanced when the curriculum is focused on issues significant both to students and adults" (p. 23).

The curriculum integration advocated by James A. Beane, its leading advocate today, is virtually identical to the core curriculum developed by the most innovative schools in the Eight-Year Study. Consider these excerpts from Beane's 1997 book:

Curriculum integration is a curriculum design that is concerned with enhancing the possibilities for personal and social integration through the organization of curriculum around significant problems and issues, collaboratively identified by educators and young people, without regard for subject-area boundaries.

In curriculum integration, organizing themes are drawn from life as it is being lived and experienced. By using such themes, the way is opened for young people to inquire criti-

cally into real issues and pursue social action where they see the need. That inquiry and action add depth to the meaning of democracy in schools, which curriculum integration further emphasizes through its emphasis on collaborative teacher-student curriculum planning. Such collaboration also opens the way to redefining power relations in the classroom and to challenging the idea that important knowledge is only that named and endorsed by academicians and bureaucrats outside the classroom.

Curriculum integration also involves applying knowledge to questions and concerns that have personal and social significance. . . . Because knowledge is actually put to use, young people are pressed toward higher standards as they confront more challenging skills and forms of content. . . . Finally, with its emphasis on participatory planning, contextual knowledge, real-life issues, and unified organization, curriculum integration provides broad access to knowledge for diverse young people and thus opens the way for more success for more of them. For those same reasons, it offers a curriculum that most young people see as worth their time, effort, and attention. (pp. x-xi)

Arguments for integrative curriculum thus span the decades from the 1930s to the present. Throughout that time period the rationale for this approach has been kept alive by the National Association for Core Curriculum through its publications and its position paper *Core Today: Rationale and Implications* (NACC, 1973, 1980, 1985). A continuing challenge for middle level educators is to select effective ways to “deliver” integrative curriculum. While interdisciplinary team organization is an excellent way to develop closer bonds among a group of teachers and the students they teach, an alternative block-time arrangement may bring better results in curriculum integration. The pro’s and con’s of these approaches have been explained in some detail elsewhere (Vars, 1993). A second challenge is to implement integrative curriculum and still meet curriculum mandates imposed by states and school districts. That issue is addressed in the following section on assessment and evaluation.

8. Comprehensive evaluation

The Eight-Year Study remains a landmark in education in large part because of the comprehensiveness of its evaluation. Not content with mere test scores or college grades, the evaluation staff developed measures of ten types of objectives:

1. The development of effective methods of thinking
2. The cultivation of useful work habits and study skills
3. The inculcation of social attitudes
4. The acquisition of a wide range of significant interests
5. The development of increased appreciation of music, art, literature, and other aesthetic experiences
6. The development of social sensitivity
7. The development of better personal-social adjustment
8. The acquisition of important information
9. The development of physical health
10. The development of a consistent philosophy of life
(Aikin, 1942, pp. 89-90)

The instruments developed to assess these objectives may seem crude by today's standards, but the point is that an attempt was made to go beyond conventional testing. Educators experimenting with modern-day "authentic" assessment procedures, "exhibitions," portfolio assessment, and the like could well reexamine the approaches used in the Eight-Year Study. Especially noteworthy were their attempts to assess intangible outcomes (Smith & Tyler, 1942).

The Eight-Year Study also evidenced a philosophy of assessment that is too often ignored today: teaching and evaluation "belong together. They react upon each other continuously" (Aikin, 1942, p. 94). Moreover, students were involved at every step. Aikin makes the case very well:

Step by step in the process of learning, the teacher and student measure the distance traveled, learn just where the student is and how far he has to go to reach the desired goal. If, as in many of the Thirty Schools, the student has shared with the teacher in determining objectives and planning how to attain them, he is just as eager as the teacher to learn what progress he has made.

Teacher and students together plan the work, carry it through, and test results (p. 94).

The NMSA (1995) position paper similarly advocates “assessment and evaluation that promote learning” (p.26). Maintaining such a broad perspective in the face of the current preoccupation with proficiency testing is indeed difficult. It has been argued elsewhere (Vars, 1997b) that these externally-imposed mandates should be shared with students from the very first day of class and revisited from time to time. Students and teachers then can then incorporate them in the teacher-student planning process, ensuring that societal expectations as well as student personal and social concerns are addressed. Of course this process will take time, and teachers are already hard-pressed to accomplish everything expected of them. The Eight-Year Study and pioneering teachers throughout the years have demonstrated that time spent engaging students in meaningful planning results in more and better learning because it is learning in depth, rather than superficial coverage.

9. Research before and after changes

Not only did the Eight-Year Study undertake assessment of a broad range of objectives, it also established a data base *before* experimentation got under way. Too often schools make changes or establish new programs without first carefully assessing the effectiveness of current practices. Of course, this “benchmark” assessment also needs to be on a broad range of factors, not just grades and test scores. Inventories, parent surveys, follow-up studies of graduates – all these and more should be used. Then, after the new program is firmly established, the same assessment procedures should be carried out again. Occasionally there is an “implementation dip” in some measures as teachers, students, and the community get used to new programs. Only after a program has been in place three or four years can anyone say with confidence that it at least did not make matters worse.

Since the recommendations coming out of the Eight-Year Study stress student involvement and democratic processes, their implementation virtually guarantees improvement in measures such as student satisfaction, attendance, and reduction in disciplinary referrals. A recent review of research on interdisciplinary curriculum and instruc-

tion reaffirmed this common-sense expectation. It also confirmed earlier research summaries that found student achievement under such programs to equal or exceed that of students in conventional programs in virtually all cases (Vars, 1996, 1997c). Middle level educators, like those who guided the Eight-Year Study, are concerned with much more than student achievement on tests. Demonstrating the benefits of good middle level education requires continuous assessment of the many factors that contribute to a quality learning environment.

10. Involving parents and other “stakeholders”

The Eight-Year Study underscored the importance of involving parents and other concerned parties in guiding the educational process. Indeed, progressive innovations in one of the early progressive schools, the “New School” of the Evanston Township High School in Illinois, were initiated by parents (MacConnell, Melby, Arndt, & Bishop, 1953).

Two of the recommendations made by the Carnegie Commission on Adolescent Development in the volume *Turning Points* (1989) addressed this issue. They call for “reengaging families in the education of young adolescents” and “connecting schools with communities.” The NMSA 1995 position paper also stresses “family and community partnerships” (p. 17) and advocates development of a mission statement “supported by all stakeholders – students, teachers, administrators, families, board of education members, and others in the community” (p. 14).

Finding appropriate and efficient ways to involve all these individuals and groups is no mean feat. Even more troubling is the issue of undue commercialism in the schools (Consumers Union, 1995; Molnar, 1996). Skillful leadership and open lines of communication will minimize, but not eliminate, potential disagreements whenever stakeholders have their “say.” When conflicts do arise, they can best be resolved by following the lead of the schools of the Eight-Year Study – focusing on the needs of young people and the task of building a democratic society.

11. Democratic values

Commitment to democratic values permeated the progressive education movement and was very explicit in the Eight-Year Study. Chapter 3 of Aikin's book is entitled "The Schools Choose the Democratic Way." Democratic values underlie the involvement of students in teacher-student planning of all aspects of the learning process – goal-setting, content selection, methods, and evaluation. This was especially evident in the innovative programs that came to be called core curriculum. Indeed, this value commitment went even further. To quote Aikin (1942) again:

The chief developments in general school life in the Eight-Year Study grew out of this emerging concept of democratic life and education. It gave direction to changes in school administration, in home-school relations, in the teacher's role in the school, and in the student's part in the life of the school-society. (p. 33)

Democratic values are implied in the NMSA 1995 position paper and directly applied in such books as George Wood's *Schools That Work* (1993) and *Democratic Schools*, edited by Michael W. Apple and James A. Beane (1995). **It is a sad commentary on the state of both education and society today that we must continue to explain, justify, and even defend the values on which our society is presumed to operate.**

12. The change process

Before attempting to implement any of the recommendations made in this chapter, middle level educators should re-examine the lessons on how to bring about educational change that are described by Craig Kridel in Chapter II of this book.

One additional point merits consideration here. Educational reformers today sometimes overlook the way all aspects of education are interconnected. Schools participating in the Eight-Year Study soon discovered the consequences of piecemeal change. Making the curriculum more integrative inevitably impacts classroom instruction, assessment, evaluation, and student progress reporting. These, in turn, affect and are affected by the way administrators, teachers, other staff

and students treat one another – a major component of the “positive school climate” advocated by NMSA (1995). And changes within a school inevitably reflect what is going on in society – neighborhood, community, state, nation, and world. No wonder making educational improvements is so demanding!

Modern-day verification of the value of comprehensive school reform is found in the work of Felner and others (1997) in Illinois, a state that had made a major effort to reform secondary education shortly after the conclusion of the Eight-Year Study (Illinois Department of Public Instruction, 1948). Felner and colleagues measured the effects in middle level schools of applying the *Turning Points* recommendations of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989). They found that schools attempting to implement all or most of the recommendations were the ones that demonstrated greatest improvement in a variety of outcomes, including student achievement. One wonders if Felner and his colleagues reviewed the Eight-Year Study before they began!

The schools of the Eight-Year Study demonstrated that comprehensive educational improvement is possible, and we ignore their lessons at our peril. The following points made by Aikin in 1942 are a most fitting summary of the lessons for educational change today that may be drawn from the Eight-Year Study:

1. School reconstruction requires thorough preparation. This takes time.
2. Thorough preparation demands cooperative deliberation . . . [A]ny important change in any part of the school's work should be made only as one move in a comprehensive plan. Administrators, teachers, parents, and students should unite in the thinking and planning which should precede any revision of the school's work.
3. Adequate preparation involves research. Before any school revises its work the faculty should study the community the school serves and the needs of youth in that community.
4. No teacher or school is fully ready for constructive change until plans for appraising results are carefully formulated.

5. Thorough preparation for revision requires honest belief in exploration and experimentation as a method of educational progress.
6. Constructive thinking requires the capacity to break up one's customary patterns of thought and to create new ones.
7. No school is ready to advance until teachers have a sure sense of security in adventure.
8. Effective democratic leadership is essential.
9. The participating schools advise taking students into partnership in changing the general life of the school and in revising the curriculum. (pp. 127-135)

Conclusion

It should be evident by now that middle level educators have much to learn from both the processes and the results of the Eight-Year Study, even though it was carried out primarily in high schools. Some middle level educators may be tempted to dismiss the strong recommendations for teacher-student planning, for example, thinking that only older adolescents could be expected to enter into cooperative planning and assessment. On the contrary, teacher-student planning has proved effective at all levels, even in the lower elementary grades (Gamberg, Kwak, Hutchins, & Altheim, 1988; Alexander, 1995). It is a bitter irony that educators continue to be amazed at how mature and responsible students can be when sincerely invited to participate in planning their own education. **When will we learn that people of all ages tend to rise to the level of performance expected of them!**

Nor should educators be misled by the fact that the Eight-Year Study focused primarily on college performance as a measure of student success. Designers of the study regretted that they were unable to carry out similar assessments on high school graduates who did not go to college, but limitations of time and finances prevailed. In other words, they recognized that a thorough follow-up study of *all* graduates would have been most desirable.

Similarly, it is inappropriate to judge the success of the middle level school solely on the basis of how well students do in high school. Success in further education *is* important, of course, but a good middle

level experience is its own reward. School effectiveness at any level should be measured in terms of how well students deal with current life tasks. At the middle level these include negotiating puberty with a minimum of stress, acquiring a lifelong love of learning, developing interpersonal skills, establishing values as a guide for living, and the like. The breadth of objectives set for the Eight-Year Study and reflected in the NMSA (1995) position paper should be the model for middle level education. The well-being of young people at this critical age demands nothing less from all of us who care about them. △

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“As a sixth grade teacher I possessed a surface knowledge of the Eight-Year Study as it related to teacher-pupil planning. Then, in 1977, I had dinner with Ralph Tyler and Louis Rath, the Director and Associate Director of the Eight-Year Study evaluation staff. The issues they raised and insights they possessed turned me into a serious student of the study. The ideas and colleagues I have been able to embrace related to the study made me truly appreciate the fact that Ralph and Louis chose to lead their professional lives as mentors.”

John H. Lounsbury is Senior Editor, Professional Publications, National Middle School Association and Professor and Dean Emeritus, School of Education, Georgia College & State University, Milledgeville, Georgia. He was introduced to the Eight-Year Study by his major professor at George Peabody College for Teachers, William Van Til, former core teacher at the Ohio State University School. He served as Van Til's graduate assistant and had an association with Henry Harap, a member of the commission that directed the Eight-Year Study. While developing his dissertation on the junior high he contacted one of the founders of the junior high, Leonard Koos, also a member of CRSC, and subsequently had several visits with him.

Conrad F. Toepfer, Jr., is Professor, Department of Learning and Instruction, the Graduate School of Education, State University of New York at Buffalo. With a lifelong interest in curriculum, particularly middle level curriculum, Dr. Toepfer has filled many major professional leadership roles in ASCD, NASSP, and NMSA throughout his long career, a career marked by an unremitting commitment to humane values and democratic principles. He was Jim Beane's major professor. Connie also knew and worked with the late Ralph Tyler and the late Louis Rath who designed the evaluative component of the Eight-Year Study.

Gordon F. Vars, Professor Emeritus, Kent State University, was introduced to progressive education in 1946 at Antioch College. He even spent a semester hitchhiking around the Midwest visiting several schools that had been part of the Eight-Year Study. The progressive philosophy also was strong at Ohio State University, where he earned his master's degree with Harold Alberty, one of the curriculum consultants for the study and spent considerable time visiting the University School, one of the most progressive of the thirty schools. Gordon's mentor at George Peabody College for Teachers, where he obtained his Ed.D., was William Van Til, who had been a core teacher at the OSU School. You might say that he was "born and bred" in progressive education, as least professionally.

Samuel J. Alessi, Jr. is Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Development, Research, and Evaluation in the public school district of Buffalo, New York. His ties with the Eight-Year Study include several unforgettable days spent in discussing, learning, and eating with Ralph Tyler and Louis Rath. Professor Rath's last formal presentation was at one of Western New York ASCD's Curriculum Seminars. The association established a major award in his honor, and both Connie Toepfer and Sam are recipients. Sam hopes that the spirit of the study – and, in particular, the spirit of those two members of its evaluation staff – is being at least partially reflected in the work we do with all of our students, the truest and most valuable resources of every democratic community.

Craig Kridel is Professor of Educational Foundations and Curator of the Museum of Education at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, where many of the original Eight-Year Study materials are housed. He serves as a columnist for the *JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* and Coordinator of the AERA Archival and Biographical Research SIG (Special Interest Group). His publications include *Writing Educational Biography, Teachers and Mentors, The American Curriculum*, and *Curriculum History*. He has had a long-standing interest in the Eight-Year Study and is currently writing a comprehensive history of this landmark study.

NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

National Middle School Association was established in 1973 to serve as a voice for professionals and others interested in the education of young adolescents. The Association has grown rapidly and now enrolls members in all fifty states, the Canadian provinces, and forty-two other nations. In addition, fifty-six state, regional, and provincial middle school associations are official affiliates of NMSA.

NMSA is the only association dedicated exclusively to the education, development, and growth of young adolescents. Membership is open to all. While middle level teachers and administrators make up the bulk of the membership, central office personnel, college and university faculty, state department officials, other professionals, parents, and lay citizens are members and active in supporting our single mission – improving the educational experiences of 10-15 year olds. This open and diverse membership is a particular strength of NMSA.

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For information about NMSA and its many services contact the Headquarters at 2600 Corporate Exchange Drive, Suite 370, Columbus, Ohio 43231, TELEPHONE: 800-528-NMSA; FAX: 614-895-4750; WWW. NMSA.ORG.

What kind of curriculum would be best for our students? If we change the curriculum, how will our students fare in later schooling? How do we encourage and support efforts at curriculum improvement? The search for answers to questions like these is the subject of many of our middle level curriculum conversations today. Rich as those conversations usually are, they could be even more so if we remembered that we are not the first to have them.

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—James Beane
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