

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION

BULLETIN, 1922, No. 35

FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY OR  
PLATOON PLAN

By  
ALICE BARROWS



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1922

ADDITIONAL COPIES  
OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE PROCURED FROM  
THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.  
AT  
5 CENTS PER COPY

## CONTENTS.

	Page.
Foreword .....	v
Educational philosophy of the plan .....	1
How the plan works .....	2
Forty-five cities now organized on work-study-play, or platoon, plan .....	3
Reasons for calling a national conference on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan .....	3
Program of the conference .....	4
Features of the plan emphasized by all speakers .....	5
Educating the public .....	5
Problem of organizing a work-study-play school .....	7
Pittsburgh has voted to put all of its elementary schools on the platoon plan .....	7
Housing capacity of buildings increased by work-study-play plan .....	8
Special activities and departmentalization .....	10
Function of the auditorium in the work-study-play, or platoon, school .....	11
Some results obtained in the work-study-play, or platoon, schools, as stated by superintendents in charge of such schools .....	13

## FOREWORD.

In February, 1922, the United States Commissioner of Education, John J. Tigert, called the First National Conference on the Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan at the meeting of the Department of Superintendence in Chicago.

One result of this conference was that the superintendents who attended it asked the United States Bureau of Education to serve as a clearing house of information in regard to the work-study-play plan. Consequently, during the past few months the Bureau of Education has not only been assisting individual superintendents by providing them with information which they desire in regard to this subject, but it has also been collecting from all over the country all available data on the subject. Since cities are adopting the plan almost every month, the data received by the Bureau of Education are constantly being added to, so that what is printed one month will no longer be news by the end of the next month. A point has now been reached, however, where data of a sufficiently comprehensive character to release for publication have been secured.

In preparing this bulletin, attention was given particularly to the two groups who asked that this information be gathered, i. e., superintendents who are now operating their schools on the work-study-play plan and those who wish to find out how to organize their schools on the plan, and consequently it has been the aim to present the data which would be of practical assistance to them. This material, however, should be of use to anyone interested in the subject of the development of the work-study-play, or platoon, plan.

The topics to be covered in these bulletins are as follows:

1. Report of the First National Conference on the Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan.
2. The Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan—What It Is and Why It Developed.

The philosophy and method of the plan are given in the words of school superintendents who are already operating their schools on the plan.

3. The Present Status of the Plan.

A list of cities in which it exists. Table showing the number of schools on the plan in each city, the number of children, saving in cost, etc.

4. Some Results of the Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan.

Reports from school superintendents and principals who are running their schools on the plan, showing the results of the plan upon academic work, the children's health, initiative, etc.

5. How Different Cities are Developing the Auditorium Work in Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Schools.

Excerpts from reports of superintendents operating their schools on the plan, showing the aims and methods of auditorium work, programs, etc.

6. How Play is Developed in the Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Schools.

Excerpts from reports of superintendents operating their schools on the plan, showing in detail the aims and methods of play as developed in work-study-play, or platoon, schools.

7. Types of Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan School Programs.

8. List of Articles, Reports, etc., on Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan now Available at the United States Bureau of Education.

## FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY, OR PLATOON, PLAN.

During the past few years the work-study-play, or platoon, type of school organization has been described by the Bureau of Education both in its biennial reports and in various bulletins. Consequently, it will not be necessary here to explain in detail this type of school organization. It may be desirable, however, to summarize briefly for those who are not acquainted with the plan its general educational philosophy and method of organization.

### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE PLAN.

The educational philosophy of the work-study-play, or platoon, plan can best be expressed in the words of school superintendents who are operating their schools on the plan.

Mr. Charles L. Spain, deputy superintendent of public schools, Detroit,<sup>1</sup> writes:

Before one can become committed to the platoon school idea he must, as a prerequisite, believe in the social aims of education.

One who holds tenaciously to the formal training idea and believes that the end and aim of the elementary school is to give a thorough training in the tools of education may well be satisfied with the traditional form of elementary organization and will naturally look askance at all innovations.

To one who believes that in a democracy the aim of education is to enable each individual to develop to the fullest extent his individual powers by doing those things which are beneficial to society as a whole, the platoon school, with its socialized activities, comes as a satisfactory solution of the elementary school problem. Progressive educational thinkers are becoming daily more convinced that the big impelling motive in education is the social motive. All of our schools must in the future strive to realize more fully the social aims of education. The platoon school does this in a marked degree.

Again, Supt. William Wirt, of Gary, Ind., in explaining the work-study-play plan, writes:

It is absolutely necessary for the perpetuity of our race that the relative population of the city be reduced or that the cities be made fit places for the rearing of children. The city home is no longer able profitably to occupy all the time of the child out of school. The city school does not have sufficient time for the general education of the child. On the other hand it is the city streets

<sup>1</sup> "The Platoon School in Detroit," by Charles L. Spain, deputy superintendent, of schools, Detroit, Educ. Bul., No. 2, 1920, pp. 16-17.

and alleys, amusement halls and gambling dens, which provide activities on the average for all the children of the cities for over five hours of the day for the 365 days of the year.

It is this life of the child during the five hours of the day in the streets and alleys that molds his character and educates him in the wrong direction. These five hours a day on the streets must be eliminated from the life of the city child before the cities can be made fit places for the rearing of children.

The cities must have an institution that will provide constructive activities at work and play as a substitute for the present five hours a day of destructive activities. These wholesome activities for work and play should be provided in connection with the child's study school, where he may spend the day in study, work, and play. Not only will the wholesome work and play be a substitute for the demoralizing activities of the streets and alleys, but planned in connection with the study school will motivate and give new vitality to the child's study hours.\*

#### HOW THE PLAN WORKS.

"If we would keep abreast of the times, we must make new educational adjustments to meet the changed conditions, adjustments of curriculum, of school organization, and of school buildings," writes Mr. Spain, in the bulletin referred to above.

The superintendents who have organized their schools on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan, state that the educational philosophy just quoted is that which is held by a large number of American educators, but that so long as children have to spend the major part of their school day in school seats in the study of the three R's, it is impossible to make the enrichment of the curriculum which all school people want—i. e., playgrounds, auditoriums, shops, and science laboratories, cooking and sewing rooms—really function in the lives of the children. They contend that it is necessary to bring about a fundamental change in the organization of the school, that is, in the programs which determine what children shall be doing during the day.

Consequently, the program of the work-study-play, or platoon, school differs fundamentally from that of the traditional school. In order to give all children in the school an opportunity for work and play, as well as the regular amount of time for study, the superintendents who are operating their schools on the plan apply to the public school the principle on which all other public-service institutions attempt to run, i. e., the principle of the multiple use of facilities, or what is known among engineers as the balanced-load plan.

Briefly, under this plan half the children are in classrooms while the other half are at work and play. For example, a school is divided into two parts, each having the same number of classes and each containing all the eight or nine grades. The first part, which

\* From an unpublished article entitled, "Making the City a Fit Place for the Rearing of Children." By William Wirt, superintendent of schools, Gary, Ind., pp. 2-3.

we will call the "A school," comes to school in the morning, say, at 8.30, and goes to classrooms for academic work. While this school is in the classrooms, it obviously can not use any of the special facilities; therefore the other school—the B school—goes to the special activities, one-third to the auditorium, one-third to the playground, and one-third divided among such activities as the shops, laboratories, drawing, and music studios. At the end of one or two periods—that is, when the first group of children has remained, according to the judgment of the school authorities, in school seats as long as is good for them at one time—the A school goes to the playground, auditorium, and other special facilities, while the B school goes to the classrooms.

#### FORTY-FIVE CITIES NOW ORGANIZED ON THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY, OR PLATOON, PLAN.

Starting 22 years ago in Bluffton, Ind., the work-study-play, or platoon, plan has developed in the past 10 years until now it is in operation in one or more schools in 45 cities in 19 States. These cities are of all types, from our largest industrial centers to small towns and wealthy suburban communities. Their combined population is 8,335,467, or about one-twelfth of the entire population of the country. The list of cities is as follows: Akron, Ohio; Baltimore, Md.; Birmingham, Ala.; Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio; Dallas, Tex.; Denver, Colo.; Detroit, Mich.; Dormont, Pa.; Duluth, Minn.; East Chicago, Ind.; Elizabeth, N. J.; Ellsworth, Pa.; Flourtown, Pa.; Fort Smith, Ark.; Franklin, N. J.; Gary, Ind.; Greenwich, Conn.; Hazleton, Pa.; Ithaca, N. Y.; Kalamazoo, Mich.; Kansas City, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; Monessen, Pa.; Montclair, N. J.; Mount Vernon, N. Y.; New Castle, Pa.; Newark, N. J.; Oakmont, Pa.; Passaic, N. J.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Rochester, N. Y.; Rockford, Ill.; Sacramento, Calif.; Saginaw, W. S., Mich.; Seattle, Wash.; Sewickley, Pa.; St. Paul, Minn.; Stuttgart, Ark.; Troy, N. Y.; Warren, Ohio; Washington, D. C.; Wilmington, Del.; Winnetka, Ill.; Youngstown, Ohio.

#### REASONS FOR CALLING A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY, OR PLATOON, PLAN.

Because of the large number of requests for information as to how to organize schools on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan, which have come to the Bureau of Education during the past two years, the Commissioner of Education called the first national conference on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan in February, 1922, at the meeting of the Department of Superintendence in Chicago. The following statement was made in the commissioner's letter of invitation:



During the past year the annual reports of many school superintendents have described the successful operation of the plan in their school systems, and at the same time the Bureau of Education has received an increasing number of requests from other city school superintendents for information in regard to how to organize their schools on the plan. These requests show a desire for accurate, specific information in regard to practical details of organization which only school officials who have had experience with this type of school organization are equipped to answer.

One of the functions of the Bureau of Education is to give information in regard to different methods of school organization and practice, or to refer applicants for such information to the proper sources, but the requests in regard to the work-study-play type of organization are coming to the bureau in such numbers that we feel that the time has come to economize the efforts of all concerned by a conference of those interested in the subject. By calling such a conference we shall at least have started the machinery for making the information on this subject more readily available, and shall thus have helped to save needless duplication of effort. Of course, the essence of the work-study-play plan is that it can be adapted to the conditions of each community. Nevertheless, there are certain common errors, unnecessary mistakes, and waste movements that could be eliminated in starting the organization if those who are about to start it in their schools could have the benefit of the experience of those who are already running their schools on this new type of organization. Furthermore, the members of the latter group could doubtless gain much by a discussion of their common problems.

The object of the conference is to give practical assistance to those school superintendents who have decided to organize their schools on the work-study-play plan, and to those who have already organized their schools on the plan. The object of the conference would not be to discuss whether or not the work-study-play plan is a desirable form of school organization. This does not mean that there is not a place for such a discussion, but in the conference which the bureau is considering there would be neither the time nor necessity for it.

With a view to making the conference strictly technical, so that there would be opportunity for real discussion of concrete problems, only those who were actually operating their schools on the plan, or planning to do so, were invited. There were delegates from 46 cities in 19 States, including 40 school superintendents, specialists in different phases of work-study-play work, and deans of colleges. Furthermore, in order to provide a chance for discussion, the conference was organized on rather different lines from those usually followed. That is, instead of having set speeches, different leaders in this type of school organization were asked to serve as topic chairmen, their task being not to prepare a speech but to organize and direct discussion on their given topic.

#### PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE.

The conference was held during the morning and afternoon of February 27, and the topics discussed were as follows: Morning session topics—"Methods of Educating Parents and Teachers and the Public Generally in Regard to the Plan," Topic chairman, Charles

L. Spain, deputy superintendent of schools, Detroit, Mich.; "Organizing a Work-Study-Play School—Program-Making." Topic chairman, William Wirt, superintendent of schools, Gary, Ind.; "Adapting the School Building to the Plan—Erecting New Buildings, Adapting Old Buildings, Value of the Large v. the Small Building, Saving in Cost." Topic chairman, William M. Davidson, superintendent of schools, Pittsburgh, Pa. Afternoon session topics—"Departmentalization—Making Shopwork, Science, etc., Function in the Life of the School." Topic chairman, Charles C. Hughes, superintendent of schools, Sacramento, Calif.; "The Value of the Auditorium—Working out Auditorium Programs." Topic chairman, Miss Rose Phillips, supervisor of platoon schools, Detroit, Mich.

#### FEATURES OF THE PLAN EMPHASIZED BY ALL SPEAKERS.

There were certain features of the work-study-play, or platoon, plan which practically all speakers at the conference emphasized, for example, that "once one school in a community has been started on the plan it 'sells itself,'" that the plan is adaptable to any type of community, that "it enables each school system to have an individuality of its own," that it not only increases the capacity of the school but "greatly enriches the school life of the children," that "it is not necessary that a city be industrial or crowded in order to have the plan—the plan lends itself to any kind of community," that the academic work does not suffer but, on the contrary, improves under this plan; and that "education seems to be catching in these schools."

#### EDUCATING THE PUBLIC.

The importance of educating the public in regard to the plan before it is started in any city was emphasized by all the speakers. Because Detroit has put the plan into operation in more schools than has any other city, particular interest was manifested in what Mr. Charles L. Spain had to say as to how Detroit educated the public in regard to the plan.

Mr. Spain started his talk by saying that "Detroit is a good place for experimentation, because no one there objects to experiments." The plan was first started in 1918 in two schools, each of which had an auditorium and gymnasium. Two principals who were enthusiastic over the plan and a special corps of teachers were selected. Said Mr. Spain:

The organization made headway more rapidly than we anticipated. At the end of the first year there were 6 schools, and by 1920, 14 or 15 schools were running on the plan. By the end of 1922 we shall have 51 on the plan. The

\* Mr. David B. Corson, superintendent of schools of Newark, N. J., was to have been the topic chairman of this topic, but was unable to be present, as another conference of which he was chairman met at the same hour.

school itself will do more than anything else to convince the public. This type of school brings parents into the school through the auditoriums, and therefore has an effect upon the community. There also seems to be something innate in the psychological effect of the organization itself in making the school a success.

We centered the whole administrative organization of the system on the effort to put this work through. We held evening schools to train teachers for it. We have a department which does nothing but reorganize schools, planning everything before the school starts. We have a system of school bulletins sent to the parents once a month in which the plan is explained. We sent out special bulletins, spoke at clubs, churches, etc. Whenever we put a new school into a community we held a meeting of parents beforehand and told them what it was all about. It is, of course, difficult to swing a whole organization over to a radically new type of organization, but we all believe in it, and are checking it from every point of view.

Mr. S. O. Hartwell, who is now superintendent of schools of St. Paul, Minn., but who started the plan first in Kalamazoo, Mich., said that a visit to Gary had convinced him that the plan was applicable to other cities.

We were in favor of physical training, and I pointed out that we could introduce it without extra cost under this plan. There was no other way of introducing it without extra cost. We tried one school for 1½ years before putting it into all the schools of the city. Selling what it was accomplished more than anything else in establishing it. The main thing is to get principals interested in trying the experiment. And the important thing with the public is to point out how much it gives in greater service with no increase in cost. The school will sell itself if you are patient and do not promise too much in the beginning.

Mr. John G. Rossman, formerly superintendent of schools of Stuttgart, Ark., explained how they had educated the public in regard to the work-study-play plan when it was first started there. He said there was great overcrowding in the schools, and that the teachers wanted an enriched curriculum for the children. The school authorities sent out a general circular letter to all voters, submitting to them the following alternatives as a means of relieving school congestion, and asking them to vote as to which method they wished to have put into effect—(1) schools could be put on a half-day basis, (2) temporary buildings could be erected, (3) schools could be organized on the work-study-play plan. The reasons and advantages of the work-study-play plan were explained. When the vote was taken, the returns showed support for the work-study-play plan by 6 to 1.

Said Mr. Rossman:

One week before opening school we held an open meeting in which the program was explained. After the plan had been in operation six weeks a letter was sent out to the whole community asking them to vote on whether or not they favored the plan. The returns showed that 10 to 1 were in favor of the plan. At the end of the first year we published a pamphlet on the subject. The plan sold itself.

**PROBLEM OF ORGANIZING THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY SCHOOL.**

In leading the discussion on "organizing a work-study-play school," Superintendent Wirt, of Gary, Ind., emphasized the importance of variety and flexibility in working out work-study-play programs. "The outstanding value of the work-study-play plan," he said, "is that it makes it possible for each school system and each school to have an individuality of its own." He felt that it was desirable that each city which developed the plan should have its own distinctive name for it, since "there is nothing about the plan that can be known as a particular system." In this connection he drew the attention of the conference to the number of names for the plan which had already developed, such as work-study-play, platoon, duplicate school, alternating plan, divided group system, extended day plan, companion class plan, etc.

Superintendent Wirt said there were only two essential points about the plan: First, that it definitely abandons the reserved seat idea, and, second, that it makes it possible for each school system to work out a program to suit its own individual needs. He pointed out that it made no difference in the plan whether there were two lunch periods or one, whether there was an auditorium or not, whether the periods were 50, 60, or 90 minutes in length, and that it was not necessary to have any given type of special activities. There could be many special activities or few, according to the judgment of the school authorities.

The main point is that we are all agreed that children need opportunities for work and play as well as study. The problem, then, is to work out a systematic way of distributing these activities so that all children shall have the opportunity to take part in them. For this reason program-making is an important part of the work of the school, and as far as possible it is desirable to have a special department for working on programs so that they may be made as flexible and as completely adjusted to the children's needs as possible. It seems to me important that we keep the emphasis constantly not upon developing any one system but upon making it possible for city children to have the opportunity in school for wholesome work and play as well as study.

Various types of programs were exhibited at the conference, no two of which were exactly alike. Copies of these programs are being made at the Bureau of Education for distribution.

**PITTSBURGH HAS VOTED TO PUT ALL ITS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ON THE PLATOON PLAN.**

Supt. William M. Davidson, of Pittsburgh, led the discussion on the question of adapting the school building to the plan. Superintendent Davidson said that great warmth and appreciation of the plan had been shown wherever it was introduced in Pittsburgh, and that they could not go back to the old plan without inviting un-

favorable comment. The board of education of Pittsburgh has recently voted to put all the elementary schools in the city on the plan. Superintendent Davidson said:

The platoon program undoubtedly creates an opportunity to introduce a health program of the right kind and sort in the public schools; special subjects are much better handled and taught, and at the same time in the regular subjects teachers have a higher degree of efficiency. The plan has developed a spirit of cooperation, and the teachers will not turn their backs on something that has given them real vision and inspiration. My observation is that a principal, no matter how good under the old plan, is immeasurably better under the platoon, since the plan creates an opportunity to professionally administer a school better. The platoon plan solves the real problems of the elementary school. In this plan we have a distinct advance over the old type, thanks to William Wirt, who brought over the horizon the biggest and finest advance of the century in elementary education.

#### HOUSING CAPACITY OF BUILDINGS INCREASED BY WORK-STUDY-PLAY PLAN.

In leading the discussion on the housing of school children under the work-study-play, or platoon, plan, Superintendent Davidson expressed what was evidently the general feeling of the superintendents present when he said that "the important thing in organizing a school on this plan is to get the rich educational value which comes from this type of organization rather than to emphasize the economic saving, but the fact remains that there is a decided economic saving under this plan of organization." Practically all the speakers brought out the fact that since only half as many classrooms were needed under this plan as under the traditional, it was possible to put the money usually invested in classrooms into auditoriums, playgrounds, shops, laboratories, etc., thus enriching the school life of the children and at the same time increasing the capacity of the school.

In reporting upon the increase in housing capacity made possible by organizing their schools on the work-study-play plan, superintendents made the following reports: Housing capacity in the Akron, Ohio, schools was increased by the platoon plan 25 per cent; in Birmingham, Ala., 33 per cent; in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, from 10 to 40 per cent, varying in the different schools according to the number of special activities provided; in Dallas, Tex., 30 per cent; in Detroit, Mich., 33 per cent; in East Chicago, Ind., 50 per cent; in Gary, Ind., 40 per cent; in Montclair, N. J., 15 to 20 per cent; in Newark, N. J., 30 per cent; in New Castle, Pa., 25 to 33 per cent; in Passaic, N. J., 33 per cent; in Philadelphia, Pa., 20 per cent; in Pittsburgh, Pa., from 10 to 70 per cent, varying in the different schools according to the number of special activities provided; in Rockford, Ill., from 20 to 25 per cent; in Sewickley, Pa., 25 to 33 per cent; in St. Paul,

Minn., 20 per cent; in Stuttgart, Ark., 40 per cent; in Warren, Ohio, "highest increase in any building 40 per cent, average 19 per cent;" in Youngstown, Ohio, from 20 to 30 per cent.

In describing the organization of a school on the platoon plan practically all the superintendents stated that they had started the organization in one of their existing buildings. After the plan had been in operation in an old building for a year or less it was possible, by showing the saving in cost under this organization and the enriched activities, to secure funds for new buildings really adapted to the plan. For example, Mr. O. L. Reid, superintendent of Youngstown, Ohio, schools, said that their problem was that of "taking care of a flood of children. We found that under this plan it was possible to accommodate more children in the same building and yet with smaller classes. We could use rooms in the basement for shops where children would stay only one period of a day when we would have been entirely unwilling to use them as classrooms where children would spend the whole day." He said they had four platoon schools which had been running for about a year in existing buildings.

Supt. Fred S. Shepherd, of Passaic, N. J., said that they started the plan in an existing building, taking certain classrooms and making them into a domestic-science room, machine shop, a printing room, nature-study room, etc. Under the old plan they had 14 classes on part time, but, after the school was organized on the work-study-play plan, part-time was entirely eliminated and the whole school put on a 6-hour-and-20-minute day. The total cost for taking the 14 classes off part time and providing special activities in special rooms, as well as work in the auditorium, was \$16,000. The following year they erected a new building better adapted to this form of organization, and this year they have drawn up plans for another work-study-play school for 1,800 children, including the kindergarten through the ninth grade. He said there has been very little opposition to the plan, and whenever there was any the parents and teachers were told that the children and the teachers could be transferred, on request, to a traditional school if they so desired. At first some transfers were made, "but now the current has set in the other direction and requests are coming to be transferred to the work-study-play schools."

Mr. Kennedy, principal of the McKelvy School, in Pittsburgh, said that in starting the plan no building had been built especially for it. "We used the means we had. Now all new buildings are being planned on the basis of the platoon type of organization." He said that in starting the plan in the McKelvy School he had found that it was possible to increase the capacity by about 70 per cent and at the same time to enrich the school life of the children by giving them not only academic work but special activities in the following subjects in special rooms with equipment adapted to the

subject—art, music, oral expression (dramatization, poems, etc.), literature, nature study and application, elementary science and application, manual training, domestic science, physical training, expressional activities in the primary grades, community activities in the primary grades.

Mr. F. E. Williams, principal of the McKinley School, East Chicago, Ind., said that they started the plan in East Chicago in a sixth-grade school; they now also have an intermediate and high school in the same building.

When it came to a question of the saving of cost of instruction there was a difference of opinion. Superintendent Kimball, of Dallas, Tex., said that it was possible to operate the system with a saving of teachers; while Superintendent Shepherd, of Passaic, contended that it was a mistake to try to get along with fewer teachers. On a student-hour basis he had found that on the traditional plan the per capita cost was \$40.13 and on the work-study-play \$33.67.

In answer to questions from superintendents who were not operating their schools on the plan but wished to do so, it was explained that the "wrap situation" was taken care of by providing individual steel lockers for the children in most cases, although in old buildings it was possible to use wardrobe hooks distributed in different parts of the building according to the way the traffic for the building was worked out. In answer to questions as to what they did with the children during play hours when the weather was stormy, it was explained that inside play space always had to be provided, although not as many square feet of indoor play space was needed as for outdoor play space.

Reports from the superintendents showed that there was great variety as to the number of children and the number of grades housed in a single building. It was generally agreed that the larger the school, within limits, the greater the opportunity for flexibility and an enriched curriculum at less cost. Some superintendents housed in one building grades from the kindergarten through the ninth, as in Passaic, N. J. On the other hand, Detroit had only six grades in one building, while in Gary and Stuttgart grades from the kindergarten through the high school were housed in one building.

#### SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND DEPARTMENTALIZATION.

Supt. Charles C. Hughes, of Sacramento, in starting the discussion on special activities, said that "under the old system one teacher has been trying to do everything in the little old red schoolhouse room which still exists, even if inclosed in marble and brick. What we school people have to do is to see that the subject is given the proper importance in the curriculum, which means well-equipped rooms for the different subjects." He said that the "companion class" plan

had been a success in Sacramento, that 95 per cent of the teachers would not go back to the old system, and that "the teachers look better and feel better because they no longer sit in a vitiated atmosphere of chalk. The people have recently voted \$2,404,000 for school buildings, and they knew the buildings were for the companion class system."

There was evidently great variety as to methods of departmentalizing the work. Mr. Kennedy, of the McKelvy School, believed in departmentalizing the work from the first grade:

Why shouldn't we begin with the youngest children? Do not these children need a variety of activities even more than older children? If you are sending your child to a music teacher, do you say *any* teacher will do? I want my 6-year-old child taught music by a music teacher who cares about it.

On the other hand Mr. Williams, principal of the McKinley School, East Chicago, said they did not departmentalize at all in the first three grades. Superintendent Reed, of Akron, Ohio, said:

The question, in my opinion, is just how much of the special activity work we can advocate and keep going economically. What we have to do is to sell to the taxpayer the proposition of putting the *whole child to school*, not just the part of the child that studies. That means we want increased play space, shop space, etc. The problem right now for us school people is to either curtail expenses or to justify everything we do on the basis of efficiency and economy. We can do this on the platoon plan.

Superintendent Shepherd, of Passaic, said they started special activities in the third grade. Miss Rose Phillips, supervisor of platoon schools in Detroit, said that in the beginning they did not start departmentalization below the third grade, but that they had come to feel from experience that the youngest children liked and needed the special work in music and drawing, etc., as much as the older children.

The chief point brought out by the above discussion, as well as that on the auditorium, was that it was evidently true that under this plan of organization each school could develop a system fitted to its own particular needs.

#### FUNCTION OF THE AUDITORIUM IN THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY, OR PLATOON, SCHOOL.

The subject in which the delegates to the conference were more interested than possibly any other, with the exception of building programs and education of the public on the plan, was the development of auditorium work in the platoon school. It was evident that the auditorium was not *necessary* in a school organized on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan, since systems like Kalamazoo, Mich., did not use the auditorium at all in its work-study-play schools,



while in Pittsburgh some schools used it and some did not, and in Passaic it was used some days in the week, while in Gary and Detroit it was used every day. It was clear, however, that those who did use the auditorium considered it one of the most important and valuable parts of school work.

Miss Rose Phillips, supervisor of platoon schools, described in detail the purpose and method of the auditorium work in the Detroit schools. She said that the average size of the auditorium in Detroit was such as to accommodate from 250 to 350 people. Apparently, all the superintendents agreed that under the platoon plan it was necessary to have an auditorium large enough to accommodate only one-sixth of the school at one time, and that it was neither economical nor desirable to have an auditorium large enough to accommodate the whole school at one time, since this would be necessary only a very few times in any one year. In the platoon schools in Detroit the auditorium teachers are supposed to have "a greater socialized personality, a greater cultural background." Said Miss Phillips:

We insist that auditorium teachers must have definite preparation for platoon work. They must take a platoon course, study the evolution of platoon organization, the philosophy back of it, and the method of administration. The auditorium teachers are paid \$200 a year more than other teachers, since their work is considered such an important part of the platoon work.

The auditorium has two distinct functions: First, as a socializing unit; and, second, as an integrating and correlating unit. All auditorium activities have behind them the social motive. The activities which have to do particularly with the auditorium as a socializing unit are found in programs relating to health, civic ideals, worthy use of leisure time, vocational guidance. On the other hand, the auditorium is an integrating and correlating unit. For example, to many people departmentalization means disintegration, but in the platoon school the auditorium is the happy medium for departmentalization because it integrates and correlates all the work of the school. The auditorium is the point upon which all the activities of the whole school may focus. For example, it is important that the work in the classrooms, gymnasium, playground, the music room, literature room, etc., should be presented again in the auditorium where the children may reinterpret the work in terms of its social value. The children then come to see the relation between physical exercises in the gymnasium and health talks in the auditorium. Geography in the classroom is made vivid for them in the auditorium, through stereopticon and motion pictures. At one time last year in Detroit the children were studying about Japan in their geography class, studying Japanese prints in the art room, doing Japanese dances in the gymnasium, and reading Japanese folk stories in literature. Later on all these things were brought together in an auditorium program.

Miss Phillips said that in Detroit they never under any circumstances used the auditorium for study, since they did not consider that that was the place for individual study, but rather for socialized activities.

**SOME RESULTS OBTAINED IN THE WORK-STUDY-PLAY, OR PLATOON, SCHOOLS AS STATED BY SUPERINTENDENTS IN CHARGE OF SUCH SCHOOLS.**

In response to the request of the Bureau of Education, the school superintendents who are operating their schools on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan sent to the conference exhibits illustrating the work of these schools. The exhibits included drawings of buildings designed for the plan, statements of cost, results obtained in academic work, copies of programs, and statements of the experiences of the superintendents as to the advantages of the plan. In the limited space available it is impossible to present all this material; consequently the statements as to the advantages as given by school officials in different cities will be quoted here.

**VALUES OF PLATOON ORGANIZATION IN PITTSBURGH, PA.**

In an article on this subject by Mr. William Kennedy, principal of the McKelvy School, Pittsburgh, Pa., the following values of the system are enumerated:

1. An enriched curriculum.
2. An economy of increased health.
  - a. Increased health due to greater health-giving activities.
  - b. Increased health due to frequent passing from room to room.
  - c. Physical exercise develops greater body resistance to disease.
  - d. Physical exercise creates healthful stimulation.
3. Stimulates initiative on part of pupils.
  - a. Initiative a natural product of freedom granted to pupils.
  - b. The nature of the plan constantly presents problems and difficulties for the pupils' own solution.
4. An economy resulting from interest and incentive.
  - a. School life is pleasant to children.
  - b. The activities appeal to the native interests of children.
  - c. Children love to work and achieve.
5. Socializing and democratizing values.
  - a. The varying activities and movements compel a natural means of contributing to group interests and values.
6. Wider use of the school plant.
7. Reduced cost per pupil in the administration of plant and equipment.

**ADVANTAGES CLAIMED FOR THE DUPLICATE PLAN IN PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

At the present time, 1922, there are 20 duplicate or work-study-play schools in Philadelphia, Pa. In an article on the operation of the plan in the James G. Blaine School, written by the principal, Mr. Edward Y. Montanye, the following statement is made of the advantages of the operation of the plan in that school:

1. Concentrates preparation, effort, and instruction, resulting in better teaching and improved results in regular and special subjects.
2. Develops self-reliance on the part of pupils and makes change from grade to grade and transition to high school less difficult.

3. Insures frequent change of activity in passing from academic study and special departments. Conserves the energy of the pupils and maintains interest throughout the day.
4. Makes a more constant use of the whole school plant, particularly those facilities used only at special periods, such as auditorium, playroom, shops, etc.
5. Permits a larger enrollment within the same building.
6. Minimizes traditional lock-step methods in passing of pupils, forming yard lines and autocratic discipline. Socializes the school.

#### ADVANTAGES OF THE PLATOON ORGANIZATION IN AKRON, OHIO.

In an article written by Prof. W. J. Bankes, De~~an~~ of Teachers College, Municipal University of Akron, and published in "School and Society," December 10, 1921, a long and very complete list of the advantages derived from the platoon type of organization is given. A few of the advantages enumerated are as follows:

#### ADVANTAGES TO PUPILS.

1. A modern curriculum was made possible.
2. It provided some activity in work or play for each child all the time.
3. It made sure that enough time and attention were given to English, arithmetic, spelling, reading, and writing.
4. It socialized the work by the constant use of the auditorium.
5. Because of definite time limits for each subject with different teachers, pupils learned better the art of doing things at definite times.
6. The combined efforts of several teachers with whom each pupil came in contact made for better understanding of the pupils.
7. Self-control was necessarily brought about by the passing of lines, change of rooms, etc.
8. Best of all was the happy attitude of the pupils toward the organization. Pupils were decidedly for it.

#### ADVANTAGES TO TEACHERS.

1. Teachers could be more efficient because they have fewer subjects to teach.
2. The work was better correlated because certain types of work were done by teachers specially fitted for it.
3. There was a chance in the organization to have teachers teach the subjects which they liked best, which must of necessity make for happiness in the work.

#### ADVANTAGES TO THE PRINCIPAL.

1. The supervision of instruction was made easier.
2. Because of the happy condition among pupils and the self-control developed, discipline was much easier.
3. Responsibility for results in various types of school work could be definitely placed upon the individual teachers. No teacher was held responsible for results in all branches.

#### ADVANTAGES EXPRESSED BY PARENTS.

1. Children come home not so tired as they used to.
2. Children are much more interested in their work.
3. Going from room to room rests the children.
4. The new plan develops self-confidence.
5. It makes children more interested to learn for themselves.

## ADVANTAGES OF THE PLATOON SCHOOL IN OAKMONT, PA.

It is often thought by those not acquainted with the platoon plan that it is applicable only to large industrial cities with greatly overcrowded schools. That this is not the case was emphasized by many speakers at the conference, and the following quotations from a small city in Pennsylvania are therefore particularly interesting. In a speech delivered by Prof. W. Lee Gillmore, supervising principal of Oakmont, Pa.,<sup>4</sup> the following advantages are claimed for the plan:

Now, what are the advantages of such a program? 1. An equitable time distribution between work and play. 2. Subjects taught by specialists who have had specific training and preparation for their work. 3. The right kind of apparatus for presenting required work and rooms for special subjects where this apparatus and material may be kept properly. 4. Physical training and health education taught by those with the right kind of preparation and with the right attitude toward their work. 5. The opportunity for a longer school day by giving the pupils sufficient activity so that the regular academic studies do not become fatiguing.

I claim for the platoon school product a higher degree of mental efficiency, a superior physical development, and a moral outlook and attitude which will provide for a cleaner citizenship based on democratic principles and ethical conduct. The specializing agencies giving contact with nature, music, and art are replete in lessons which result in character building and a cleanly viewpoint toward life. The physical training work inculcates a spirit of fair play, an attitude of unselfishness, and a practical working of the golden rule.

I am not before you to-day advocating the platoon school as a cheap type in education. I do claim a superior product at no greater cost than in what we call the old type of school.

## CONSIDERATIONS JUSTIFYING THE PLATOON ORGANIZATION IN DETROIT.

Mr. Charles L. Spain, deputy superintendent of schools in Detroit, in his bulletin on "The Platoon School in Detroit," gives the following points as justifying the extension of the plan to the whole system after four years' experimentation with it in 14 schools:

The platoon organization makes ample provision for the health of its pupils through its gymnasium, playground activities, school clinic, lunch room, and its auditorium lessons in hygiene and physiology.

It teaches the fundamentals, the three R's, as effectively as the conventional school has ever done.

It trains its pupils in the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, and develops in them an enlightened social consciousness.

It prepares its pupils for worthy home membership through its vocational activities, its provision for play and physical education, through its library, and through its auditorium. All of these afford opportunities for self-activity, self-control, and self-direction on the part of the pupils.

<sup>4</sup> From a paper by Prof. W. Lee Gillmore, supervising principal of Oakmont, Pa., at a meeting of the Department of Supervising Principals at Harrisburg, Pa. From "The Pennsylvania School Journal," Lancaster, Pa., April, 1921, p. 451.

It arouses in its pupils vocational interests and tests their aptitudes and tastes through the medium of its shops, its kitchens, its domestic art classes, and its mechanical drawing.

The platoon school with its studio, its music room, its literature room, its auditorium, and its library, appeals to the cultural side of child nature, stimulates the child's imagination, and prepares him to spend his leisure hours worthily and happily.

Finally, it may be conceded that all education should ultimate in the development of ethical character. This particular type of school, because it appeals to so many sides of the pupil's nature, because it arouses a many-sided interest, because it offers such a variety of experiences, because it provides so many avenues for self-expression, and above all, because it demands and requires so much from pupils in the way of self-control and self-direction, is the best type of school yet devised to develop ethical character.

The foregoing represents only a brief summary from the reports of a few superintendents in regard to the advantages of the work-study-play plan.

During the past few months the Bureau of Education has found that a great deal of material has been published on the development of this new type of school, but it is in the form of articles or speeches or parts of annual reports, typewritten and mimeographed material, etc. The bureau has now collected over 200 articles and reports on this subject and will publish its findings in separate bulletins as rapidly as possible.

○