

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION

BULLETIN, 1924, No. 25

A PLATOON SCHOOL IN
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

By

G. W. DIEMER

DIRECTOR OF PLATOON SCHOOLS AND DIRECTOR OF
TEACHERS' COLLEGE, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1924

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

AT

5 CENTS PER COPY

17

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction.....	1
I. The platoon school defined.....	2
II. Growth of platoon school movement.....	3
III. Reasons for platoon organization.....	5
1. Socialized curriculum.....	5
2. A 50-50 program.....	5
3. Departmentalization.....	6
4. Individual differences cared for.....	6
5. Safely conservative.....	6
6. Insures modern buildings.....	6
7. More economical.....	6
IV. Organization and administration illustrated by the Henry C. Kumpf School, Kansas City, Mo.....	7
1. The platoon school building.....	8
2. Adequate equipment.....	8
3. The curriculum.....	9
Home room.....	9
Special activities.....	9
(a) Auditorium.....	9
(b) Library and literature.....	11
(c) Social science and nature study.....	11
(d) Music and art.....	12
4. Supervision and administration.....	12
5. The teaching corps.....	13
V. The platoon school program.....	13
1. General organization of program.....	14
2. Program of special activities.....	15
3. Teacher's daily or desk program.....	17
4. Assignment of teachers.....	17
5. The teacher's day.....	18
6. Adapting the platoon program to the local situation.....	18
VI. Advantages and disadvantages as expressed by teachers.....	18
1. Advantages.....	19
2. Disadvantages and problems.....	20
Conclusion.....	21
Appendix.....	28
References.....	25

A PLATOON SCHOOL IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

INTRODUCTION

During the 64 years since the organization of the first graded school in Boston the conception of the function of education, both in the minds of educators and of the general public, has undergone a tremendous change. From the narrow, individualistic, knowledge concept of education of 1818 to the broad, socialized, functional concept of to-day is a long step in the space of one lifetime. Through the influence of the new pedagogy, gradually evolved through three centuries, but put into twentieth-century language by Spencer and Dewey, and through public demand for a more highly efficient form of education, we have come to the transition from the traditional form of organization to a modern type of organization that will meet social needs. With the introduction of the content studies following the Civil War and the more recent introduction of the expression subjects, the curriculum has tripled in 75 years. Notwithstanding this greatly expanded curriculum, we are still using, in an administrative sense, the same old machine which Philbrick used in the Quincy School in 1848. The building has undergone some changes, and yet, in a large per cent of American cities, many of the buildings are without auditoriums, gymnasiums, and playgrounds.¹ Very few have libraries. Organization of the elementary school is still characterized by "one seat to every child" and one teacher in charge of each group of children throughout the day.

We, as school people, must recognize the continuing and increasingly insistent demand for better schools. Mere patchwork, adding here a little and there a little, taking away a little here and a little there, will not meet the situation. Mere changes in methods and the introduction of project curricula will not satisfy. Finer buildings and better trained teachers, procured at greater cost to the taxpayer, only increase the demand for greater efficiency.

What is the method by which the elementary school can be brought up to twentieth-century standards? The answer is "a complete

¹ See Engelhardt. School Building Program, p. 87. New York Teachers' College, Bureau of Publication.

administrative and curriculum reorganization of the elementary school." ² The efforts of John Dewey in his highly socialized experimental school in Chicago, of Merriam at Missouri University, and of William Wirt at Gary have been efforts to solve the problem. In the minds of many educators the demand for a more highly functional elementary school without excessive cost has been found in some adaptation of the duplicate, work-study-play, or platoon school idea. This idea, first demonstrated at Gary, is worthy of careful and thoughtful study by every progressive educator.

I. THE PLATOON SCHOOL DEFINED

What is the duplicate, work-study-play, or platoon school? As these terms are used synonymously in all discussions of the idea, it may be helpful to study them briefly.

"Work-study-play." This term, originated by Superintendent Wirt at Gary, was applied to the type of organization because it expressed in these three words the chief arguments for the plan: Opportunity to every child for purposeful work, opportunity for supervised study along the lines of the child's interests and needs, and opportunity for wholesome play under supervised conditions.

"Duplicate and platoon." These terms have synonymous meanings in an educational sense, both expressing the idea of two major divisions into which such an organization is divided.

Which of these terms we as educators use makes little difference—all are perhaps unscientific and fail to carry a correct conception of the particular type of organization. "Work-study-play" has perhaps been the most popular term and has been preferred by some of the chief advocates of the idea, but, as the public sometimes gets a wrong conception of the proportionate amount of emphasis placed on play under the plan and further uses the term "work" as applied to manual or vocational activity, it seems best not to use it. Between "duplicate" and "platoon" there is little choice, both suggesting the two parts into which the school is divided. As "platoon" seems to catch public fancy, however, this term is arbitrarily chosen.

Inasmuch as no two cities having platoon organization include the same details or work out details in the same manner, any definition can only set forth the general principles of the plan. These general principles are twofold. Platoon organization means, *first*, that administrative plan by which the school is grouped into two major divisions, and the program of work so arranged that while division A is doing work in the tool subjects, division B is doing work in the special subjects, and vice versa; *second*, that diversification and

² See Strayer and Bachman. Gary Survey—Organization and Administration. New York General Education Board, 1918.

enrichment of the curriculum which permits more time and attention to the highly socialized, or expression, subjects. Diagrammatically represented, the platoon organization divides the school day into two equal parts as follows:

*The school day—6 hours**

One-half day to—

Reading, arithmetic, spelling,
language, and writing.

One-half day to—

Citizenship (auditorium, social science), literature and library, music, art, nature study, manual arts, home economics, physical training, and extra curricular subjects.

II. GROWTH OF PLATOON SCHOOL MOVEMENT

Platoon organization is attracting nation-wide attention and, in principle, is being quite widely accepted. The number of platoon organizations in the United States is growing so rapidly that any list of such schools would be incomplete by the time it could be published. In a study recently made by Miss Alice Barrows, specialist in industrial and economic relations in education, United States Bureau of Education, it was found that 61 cities in 23 States have some form of platoon organization in one or more schools.

*List of 61 cities in 23 States in which the work-study-play, or platoon, plan of school organization is in operation in one or more schools**

Akron, Ohio.	Fort Smith, Ark.
Asbury Park, N. J.	Franklin, N. J.
Baltimore, Md.	Gary, Ind.
Birmingham, Ala.	Greeley, Colo.
Braddock, Pa.	Greenwich, Conn.
Calais, Me.	Hazleton, Pa.
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.	Huntington, W. Va.
Dallas, Tex.	Ithaca, N. Y.
Dayton, Ohio.	Kalamazoo, Mich.
Denver, Colo.	Kansas City, Mo.
Detroit, Mich.	Lutrobe, Pa.
Dormont, Pa.	Long Beach, Calif.
Duluth, Minn.	Memphis, Tenn.
Durham, N. C.	Meriden, Conn.
East Chicago, Ind.	Monessen, Pa.
Elizabeth, N. J.	Montclair, N. J.
Ellsworth, Pa.	Mount Vernon, N. Y.
Carson College, Flourtown, Montgomery County, Pa.	Newark, N. J.
	New Britain, Conn.

* It is not to be understood that the exact division of the day here given is essential or is used in all platoon schools. In general the time division is on such a 50-50 basis. This will be better understood in the discussion of the curriculum and program.

* From the United State Bureau of Education information service on work-study-play, or platoon, plan.

New Castle, Pa.
 Oakmont, Pa.
 Parnassus, Pa.
 Passaic, N. J.
 Philadelphia, Pa.
 Pittsburgh, Pa.
 Portage, Pa.
 Port Arthur, Tex.
 Rochester, N. Y.
 Rockford, Ill.
 Sacramento, Calif.
 Saginaw, W. S., Mich.

Seattle, Wash.
 Sewickley, Pa.
 South Bend, Ind.
 Spokane, Wash.
 St. Paul, Minn.
 Stuttgart, Ark.
 Troy, N. Y.
 Warren, Ohio.
 Washington, D. C.
 Wilmington, Del.
 Winnetka, Ill.
 Youngstown, Ohio.

Detroit leads the list in the number of platoon schools. In 1923 it had 54 of these schools, with an enrollment of 45,000 children. The platoon movement in Detroit began in 1918 when the board of education decided to experiment with the new type of organization and put it into operation in six schools.⁵ The experiment proving successful, nine additional platoon schools were opened the following September. So thoroughly convinced were the members of the administrative staff and the board of education of the feasibility of the plan that, in a formal resolution passed September 25, 1919, the Detroit schools were committed to its continued extension. This resolution, which is noteworthy because Detroit was the first big city in the United States officially to adopt any plan of elementary organization other than the traditional Quincy School type, is as follows:

That the educational needs of the kindergarten and first six grades be met by building large elementary schools, with auditoriums and gymnasiums, planned definitely to satisfy the requirements of the platoon form of organization.

From the time this resolution was adopted the platoon plan in Detroit has been rapidly extended. New buildings are being constructed and equipped especially for this form of organization. Teachers are being trained to meet the particular problems of the platoon school, and the public is thoroughly "sold" to the idea. The schools are being enthusiastically supported, and a fine spirit prevails among teachers and pupils. That the plan has been so highly successful is due not only to the soundness of its underlying principles, but also to the efficient manner in which it has been worked out; seemingly no necessary detail has been omitted by the superintendent's office and the board of education. Platoon organization in Detroit is no longer considered an experiment.

⁵ Spain, Charles L. The Platoon School in Detroit.

III. REASONS FOR PLATOON ORGANIZATION

If platoon organization is having such a rapid spread in the United States, it must be because of certain fundamental principles and arguments which have made an appeal to educators and boards of education. What are these arguments that have led to the extension of the platoon school idea?

1. SOCIALIZED CURRICULUM

First, and most important of consideration, the platoon school provides a highly socialized curriculum. Dr. W. P. Burris, professor of education, University of Cincinnati, has said that "the platoon school is a device for giving to the child a greater variety of experiences." The platoon program gives one-half of the school day to the social subjects and special activities, whereas the usual program of the traditionally organized school gives not more than one-fourth of the time to such work, and even then the special subjects and activities are often poorly handled and are looked upon by principals and home-room teachers as "interruptions" of the "regular" program. At the present time, in one of the large cities of the United States, a study is being made of the whole problem of "interruptions." "Interruptions" were listed by a representative committee of teachers, principals, and supervisors, and an investigation was conducted throughout the system to ascertain how much time they consume during a given week. The list is as follows:

"Interruptions" to regular program

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Banking. | 9. Milk serving. | 16. Playground. |
| 2. Bible school. | 10. Music appreciation. | 17. Private music lessons. |
| 3. Corrective gymnastics. | 11. Nurse. | 18. Short Friday. |
| 4. Domestic science. | 12. Orchestra. | 19. Symphony concert. |
| 5. Gymnasium. | 13. Other causes. | 20. Tests. |
| 6. Home causes. | 14. Parents. | 21. Visual instruction. |
| 7. Interruptions from school office. | 15. Parent-teacher association. | 22. Weighing. |
| 8. Manual training | | |

Under platoon organization almost all of these so-called interruptions have their definite places in a "balanced" program. Only numbers 6, 7, 14, 15, and 20 would continue to occur in home rooms. The elementary school activities listed are not "interruptions" or "extra-curricular," but belong to the regular school work and have assigned places on the program.

2. A 50-50 PROGRAM

The platoon school, by providing a 50-50 program—giving half the time to the fundamental or tool subjects and half the time to special subjects—insures thorough and uninterrupted work in those

subjects which the educational world accepts as fundamental in the social development of the individual.

3. DEPARTMENTALIZATION

Platoon organization, by departmentalizing the work in special subjects, makes it possible to have a specially trained teacher for each special subject, thus assuring a maximum of socialization so far as the teacher is concerned.

4. INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES CARED FOR

Platoon organization makes it possible to take care of individual differences. The child who needs additional time on the tool subjects may put in less time on the expression subjects. Likewise, the child who should be allowed to develop a special talent in music, art, or dramatics, can be given additional work of this nature with groups other than his own.

5. SAFELY CONSERVATIVE

Platoon organization is neither ultra-radical nor ultra-conservative. It is a long step toward the ideal, but is sufficiently conservative to appeal to the public. When properly organized, directed, and supervised, its success is assured.

6. INSURES MODERN BUILDINGS

Platoon organization requires specially built or adapted buildings, supplied with good equipment. Provision for the most essential socializing agencies of the school are omitted in the large per cent of American school buildings: platoon organization demands for every building playgrounds, a gymnasium, an auditorium, and the various special rooms.

7. MORE ECONOMICAL

Platoon organization is economical as to buildings and grounds. The traditional school is of the "peak-load" type, requiring one seat for every pupil, whereas the platoon plan is of the "balanced-load" type.⁶ Under the traditional organization, when children are in the auditorium, gymnasium, manual training shop, or any special room, the corresponding home room is idle. Also, under traditional organization, if the building is provided with modern facilities, such as gymnasium, auditorium, and playgrounds, the building is in use probably 80 per cent of the school day, and the grounds are in use probably 20 per cent of a 5-hour day. Under platoon organization every spe-

⁶ Barrows, Alice. A school building program for Athens, Ga. U. S. Bu. of Educ. Bul., 1921, No. 25.

cial facility and classroom is in use 100 per cent of the time. In other words, platoon organization spells 100 per cent efficiency in the use of the school plant.

Since every room and department is in use all the time, the load is balanced in such a way that the building will accommodate more pupils. In Detroit, for example, the superintendent's office claims an increase of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent on the average in capacity of school buildings over the traditional plan. This of course means a tremendous saving in building costs.

At Newark, N. J., a saving of 62 rooms, which at \$12,000 per room amounts to \$744,000, is claimed for the 10 buildings having "alternating" or platoon organizations in 1920. The following table from the annual report shows the figures:

Financial saving effected by platoon-school organization, Newark, N. J.¹

School	Number class units above kindergarten	Number classes, June, 1920	Difference	Saving
Abington Avenue.....	22	81	9	\$108,000
Central Avenue.....	27	35	8	96,000
Cleveland.....	35	48	13	156,000
John Catlin.....	37	43	6	72,000
Lafayette.....	40	48	8	96,000
McKinley.....	13	20	7	84,000
Madison.....	38	39	1	12,000
Montooth.....	31	35	4	48,000
Robert Treat.....	53	60	7	84,000
West Side.....	296	359	63	756,000
	35	34	-1	12,000
Total.....	331	893	62	744,000

¹ Combined 63d and 64th An. Rep. Bd. of Educ., Newark, N. J., 1918-19 and 1919-20, pp. 126-129.

As will be seen from the above table, the capacity of buildings in Newark is increased by about 19 per cent.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Illustrated by the Henry C. Kumpf Platoon School, Kansas City, Mo.

Discussion of the platoon school thus far has been more or less general in character, dealing with the growth of the movement in the United States and some of the major arguments that have led to so wide an acceptance of the plan. Problems of organization and administration, the curriculum, and the program, are more specific in their nature and must be thought of in terms of a given situation. Hence, from this point on in consideration of the platoon school the author will use his experiences in the Henry C. Kumpf School, of Kansas City, as a basis for discussion. Given a different.

location of community and building, the details of the organization would be carried out in a very different manner, although the fundamental principles as herein set forth would apply in any situation.

A theory, no matter how sound it may be, can be successfully demonstrated only when carefully worked out plans have been equally carefully executed. Nowhere is this more true than in the matter of school organization. Platoon organization, like the junior high school, has been uniformly successful and has met with popular favor wherever tried, provided the following vitally important elements have been considered and adequate provision made for each:

1. A building adapted to the particular type of organization.
2. Adequate equipment.
3. A reorganized curriculum.
4. Adequate supervision.
5. A professionally trained, cooperative group of teachers.

1. THE PLATOON-SCHOOL BUILDING

The platoon-school building may be either a remodeled or a new building. It should have a gymnasium, an auditorium, and various special rooms. These special rooms may be for library work, science, music, art, home economics, manual arts, or for such other special subjects as may be desirable and essential in a given community. Some or all of these special features are necessary in any school that has a really socialized program. In the platoon school facilities for carrying on various special activities become administrative necessities as well as socializing influences.

2. ADEQUATE EQUIPMENT

Adequate equipment must be provided for the special departments. The "must" is used advisedly. Adequate equipment in the platoon school becomes of equal importance with adequate equipment in the junior or senior high school. As it is a necessity that the high school auditorium, library, laboratories, and studios be properly equipped if the high school is to do standard work, so must the various special rooms of the platoon school be properly equipped if the organization is to be successful.

A place must be provided for keeping wraps and other property belonging to the children of the two platoons; lockers or hooks may be put in the corridors, or existing cloakrooms may be used. Such provision is essential for one platoon at least, and because of play periods out of doors when wraps are needed it is a convenience if provided for all children in both platoons.

3. THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the platoon school is divided into two major parts—(a) Home-room studies and (b) Special activities.

The problem of the organizer and supervisor is to see that this "50-50" division is properly maintained, and, at the same time, to secure that degree of correlation and unification necessary for *oneness of effort in the whole curriculum.*

HOME ROOM

The home room in the platoon school has the following purposes:

1. Provision of a "school home" for the child. This school home is presided over by a teacher who is adviser, counselor, and friend; in short, the child's school "mother."
2. Provision of adequate time for uninterrupted instruction in the fundamentals or tools of knowledge.
3. Provision, by close correlation and coordination with the other departments of the school, for the inculcation of citizenship ideals, attitudes, and habits.
4. Provision for keeping attendance, deportment, scholarship, and other records of the pupils.

The content of the home-room subjects (reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, and language) is not essentially different from that of the traditional school. With a competent teacher devoting all of her teaching efforts to these subjects, methods should be greatly improved, and the subject matter should be vitalized and enriched through correlation with the special departments of the school.

Results in tool studies in the Henry C. Kumpf School, as indicated by standard tests have been much superior under platoon organization to those under traditional organization.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

(a) AUDITORIUM

Of first importance to the success of platoon organization stands the work in the auditorium. The auditorium should become the citizenship and unifying center of the school. Failure on the part of the organizer and supervisor to properly plan the auditorium program spells failure to the whole organization, unless the peculiar work which the auditorium should do is cared for elsewhere. The breakdown in departmental organization in the elementary school, and the few instances of failure of the junior high school, have been at the very point which the auditorium work seeks to correct. In attempting to outline this work, first of all consider what should *not* be done.

The auditorium must not become a place for formal instruction in music, civics, or health. It must not become a dumping ground, where anything that has no other place in the school can be assigned, and where as a result, the program becomes crowded with work of doubtful value; it must not become a show place, where the brightest pupils are constantly put forward for the entertainment of visitors. The auditorium is not primarily a place to train children to take part in public entertainment. It is not an advertising medium through which various and sundry announcements can be made, often to the exclusion of all else. The auditorium period is not one during which the teacher entertains by interesting or funny stories.

Many of these things may be included, in part but not to the exclusion of more valuable activities.

No effort will be made here to state in detail the program of the auditorium work in the Henry C. Kumpf School. The following bulletin, placed in the hands of each teacher in that school, gives a general conception of the principles underlying the work and of the means used in working out these principles.

Major aims of work in auditorium

1. Training in practical citizenship through the opportunity afforded for self-expression.
2. Inculcation of those habits, attitudes, and ideals essential to good citizenship.
3. Unification and coordination of all the school's efforts for socialization.

Means

1. A definite program of activities scheduled for the auditorium; such parts of this program as may be valuable in connection with studies in other departments, to be so used.
2. Regular work of home and special rooms, valuable as self-expression and citizenship material, to be taken to the auditorium.
3. Special cooperative projects between the auditorium and home and special rooms to be worked out as occasion may arise.
4. Appreciation work in literature, language, art, and music to be given in the auditorium.

A working plan

1. The auditorium teacher is expected to keep in touch with the home-room and special teachers in the following manner:
 - (a) Through conferences with individual teachers. The chief question in these conferences should be: "What correlation of effort in our work with work now being done or planned is possible and worth while?"
 - (b) Through visitation in home and special rooms.
 - (c) Through pupil "reporters" whose business it is to make concise oral or written reports of any work being done in any of their classes that in their opinion might prove valuable for use in the auditorium.

2. The home room and special teachers are expected to keep the auditorium teacher informed as to:

- (a) Stories used in reading or language suitable for dramatization in the auditorium.
- (b) Memory selections.
- (c) Compositions—oral and written—valuable for citizenship purposes.

(b) LIBRARY AND LITERATURE

The library is one of the most valuable and essential departments of the Henry C. Kumpf School. The library room was originally a regular schoolroom. It has been inexpensively but attractively fitted up as a reading and reference room. Tables and chairs, book-cases, a bulletin board, magazine rack, an assortment of the best books in children's literature, a few sets of children's reference books, some supplementary readers and other texts, and a few of the best magazines have been provided. Reference books include such works as the World Book, Book of Knowledge, Pictured Knowledge, and Journeys Through Book Land. Magazines include the National Geographic, Popular Mechanics, Youth's Companion, American Boy, St. Nicholas, and the American. Copies of the Kansas City papers and of Current Events are provided.

The major aims of the library are, first, to build up a love for and an appreciation of the best in children's literature; and, second, to teach the pupil how to use books and magazines in the solution of worth-while problems which he encounters in daily life.

The library is open before school and at noon for any child desiring to come in to read or do reference work. Books for home reading may be checked out after school or at stated times. The schedule for each grade, indicating the nature of its library work, is as follows:

Library schedule

Grades 7 and 6—		Grades 5 and 4—	
Reference	Tues. and Thu.	Reference	Tues.
Literature	Mon. and Wed.	Literature	Mon., Wed., Thu.
Free reading	----- Fri.	Free Reading	----- Fri.

Teachers are privileged to send in children for reference work at any time. One table is set aside for that purpose.

(c) SOCIAL SCIENCE AND NATURE STUDY

Under science is included nature study, geography, history, and civics. A formal textbook treatment of these subjects is not used. Supplementary reading material in the intermediate and upper grades is taken from books, magazines, and papers other than the texts. Material is gathered from nature and observation for much of

* Such reporting to the auditorium teacher should be done largely through the pupil "reporters."

the geography work. Attention is given to the making of herbariums, the collecting of commercial exhibits, and the accumulating of loan collections by contributions from pupils of curios and materials of historic and geographic interest.

The work of the science department is closely correlated with much of the work in the auditorium. Especially are the social studies in the science room closely connected with the citizenship phases of the work of the auditorium.

(d) MUSIC AND ART

The music and art rooms are real studios, in which the child gains an appreciation and love of good music and art. To this end both music and art departments utilize the auditorium, and often the appreciation work from either is taken into the auditorium for the instruction and entertainment of other groups and of the parents. One auditorium period each week is devoted to music appreciation. The music and art departments have attempted to build up a greater appreciation among both pupils and parents for the beautiful in art, in nature, in people, and in music. Through picture studies, including copies from the world's great masterpieces, unusual interest has been aroused. These studies have been carried on cooperatively throughout the school. The music department, through its attention to the symphony concerts and other musical events and through its efforts in the city-wide music memory contest, has been able to build up a fine spirit of appreciation of good music as opposed to "jazz."

Appreciation has not been stressed to the exclusion of the practical. The art department has been able to show work that not only "looks pretty," but work that has grown out of the activities of the pupils. Much of the work in art has been work for other departments or in connection with cooperative projects.

The same can be said of music. Skill in note reading and singing has not been neglected. Splendid choruses and a good orchestra have done work both profitable and pleasurable. Pupils of unusual talent in music or art have been given abundant opportunity for development and expression of the talent, not only through the music and art departments, but in connection with the various activities of the school.

4. SUPERVISION AND ADMINISTRATION

In order that there may be sufficient supervision in the platoon school to insure the unification and coordination of plans and purposes necessary to the highest success of the organization, the principal should be as free as possible from clerical and routine work,

so that his major problem may be supervision and organization. To this end the principal should have a competent office clerk. In the larger schools he should also have an assistant who puts in part of his time as assistant to the principal in supervisory and administrative duties.

5. THE TEACHING CORPS

The teaching and supervisory corps of the platoon school, from the principal on down, must not only be competent and capable, but must be in full accord with modern trends in education. They must believe in the social ideals of the school; they must believe that platoon organization offers one means toward a greater realization of these aims; and, believing in the school and its purposes, each teacher must be alert, professional, high-minded, and cooperative in order that these ideals may be accomplished to the highest possible degree in the life of each individual child.

The individual teacher should be a specialist in her line. The teacher in each special room should be there because of special aptitude, training, and interest in the particular work. This opportunity for specialization is one of the strong arguments for platoon organization. On the other hand, it is one of the points of attack by the opponents of platoon organization. The danger is that the special teacher will have a narrow and exaggerated view of the importance of her field. In the platoon school she must have the broad view; she must see her work as a part of the whole work of the school. She must see and use the points of contact between her work and other departments. She must be willing and anxious to contribute her part to other departments or to worth-while projects being carried forward by the school. In short, she must look upon her work as one of the closely coordinated phases of the big project which the school is attempting in the life of the child, i. e., to make of him an informed, right-thinking, right-acting, efficient citizen of his community, State, and Nation—to do this through the opportunity which the platoon school affords for whole-hearted activity and normal growth.

V. THE PLATOON SCHOOL PROGRAM

Of equal importance to the success of the platoon plan through its building, equipment, and trained teachers, is the making of a workable program for carrying out the plan. In the making of such a program the pupil must be the primary consideration. Therefore the program should be so arranged that each group of children fares equally with every other group in time allotment and position upon

the program. For example, in making a program the easiest thing would be to assign groups to special activities as long as the spaces hold out; then send all unassigned groups to the playground for one or two hours each day, or permit them to observe other classes. To carry out such a scheme is rank injustice and spells failure to the whole organization. The program maker must devote hours, and days if necessary, to an equitable time allotment and to the assignment of each group in the school. In the second place, the program must be complete, plain, and thoroughly understood by each teacher in the organization.

1. GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF PROGRAM

The platoon program divides the day equally between the tool subjects and social studies. The next question concerns the whole matter of time allotment and the arrangement of a working program. If there are six hours in the school day, as is traditionally the case, three hours are devoted to the tool studies and three hours to the social studies and special activities. The three hours of work in the tool studies are spent in the home rooms under the home-room teachers, and the three hours of work in the social subjects are spent in special departments under special teachers. The first step, then, is the separation of the school into the two major divisions and each major division into sections. Suppose that the school contains 720 children to be placed in the platoon organization, and that a section consists of approximately 40 children. This would be the result:

Division I (360 pupils).....	9 sections
Division II (360 pupils).....	9 sections
Total.....	18 sections

Number the sections from 1 to 18, inclusive, giving the sections in Division I the odd numbers; those in Division II the even numbers. Division I would form Platoon X in the program; Division II would form Platoon Y. The 18 sections, under the plan being used in Kansas City, require the rooms and departments as listed below.

Assignment of rooms in a platoon school of 18 sections

H. C. Kumpf School, Kansas City, Mo.

Home rooms.....	9	Art.....	1
Library and literature.....	1	Gymnasiums.....	2
Science.....	1	Auditorium.....	1
Nature study and literature.....	1	Home economics, manual arts, playgrounds, lunch room, clinic.	
Music.....	1		

The general daily program of each platoon

Time	Platoon X	Platoon Y
9-10.30	Home rooms	Special rooms
10.30-12	Special rooms	Home rooms
1-2.30	Home rooms	Special rooms
2.30-4	Special rooms	Home rooms

2. PROGRAM OF SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

For platoon school of 18 sections

The program of special activities is a complicated piece of administrative organization and must be worked out with extreme care. A program in detail appears on a following page.

Explanations and key to program

(a) The numbers used refer to grades and classes as follows:

1-2B	7-4B	13-6B
2-2B	8-4B	14-6B
3-3B	9-4A	15-6A
4-3B	10-5B	16-7B
5-3A	11-5B	17-7B
6-3A	12-5A	18-7A

(b) *Abbreviations.*—Lit.—Literature; N. S.—Nature study; M. W. F.—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; T. T.—Tuesday and Thursday.

(c) All odd-numbered sections are in the X platoon; all even-numbered sections in the Y platoon.

(d) *Periods are 30 minutes in length.*—Classes must be ready to change from one room to another during the three-minute warning periods and to pass out promptly on the ringing of the final bell.

(e) *Assemblies.*—The fourth period is reserved for assemblies; lower grades on Tuesday; upper grades on Wednesday. Held once in two weeks—on the week alternate to the showing of motion pictures.

(f) *Visualization.*—Pictures will be shown to the Y groups during second and third periods once in two weeks; to X groups during fourth and fifth periods.

PROGRAM OF SPECIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE H. C. KUMPF SCHOOL

	Y platoon			X platoon			Noon			Y platoon			X platoon			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Anditorium.....	Banking	2	16-18		1	15-17	12-14	4-6	8-10	7-9	11-13	10	3-5	11	12	
Gym. and P. G.	2-12-14	8-10	4-6	1-11-13	7-9	3-5	8-10-13	10-13	2 each day 4 M.W.F. 6 T.T.	1-3-6	15-17	1-3-6	7-9	7-9	11-13	
Science.....	10	12	14	9	11	13	16	8	14	15	7	17	15	17	7	
Library.....	8	14	12	7	13	11	18	10	15	14	9	18	17	17	9	
Musio.....	T.T. M.W.F.	4 6 M.W.F.	8 10 M.W.F.	17 15 M.W.F.	3 5 M.W.F.	7 9 M.W.F.	4 6 M.W.F.	2 M.W.F.	12 14 M.W.F.	11 13 M.W.F.	1 3 M.W.F.	11 13 M.W.F.	1 3 M.W.F.	1 3 M.W.F.	6 3 M.W.F.	
Art.....	4 6 M.W.F.	18 16 M.W.F.	10 8 M.W.F.	3 5 M.W.F.	17 15 M.W.F.	9 7 M.W.F.	2 4 M.W.F.	12 14 M.W.F.	12 14 M.W.F.	11 13 M.W.F.	1 3 M.W.F.	11 13 M.W.F.	11 13 M.W.F.	11 13 M.W.F.	1 3 M.W.F.	1 3 M.W.F.
M. T. and Home Ec.	18 16 T.T.	18 16 T.T.		17 15 T.T.	17 15 T.T.		10 M.W.F.	12 14 T.T.	12 14 T.T.	12 14 T.T.		11 13 T.T.	11 13 T.T.	11 13 T.T.		
Lit. and N. S.	4 N.S. M.W.F. 6 N.S. T.T.	4 Lit. M.W.F. 6 N.S. T.T.	2 Lit.	3 N.S. M.W.F. 5 N.S. T.T.	3 Lit. M.W.F. 6 Lit. T.T.	1 Lit.			4 Lit. T.T. 6 Lit. M.W.F.							6 Lit. M.W.F. 3 Lit. T.T.

12.30-1.00—Orchestra, M. W.; Chorus, T. T.

3. TEACHER'S DAILY OR DESK PROGRAM

It is very necessary that each teacher have a complete detailed program for her two sections of pupils throughout the day. The home-room program is arranged by the teacher with the advice and approval of the principal. The special-activity program is copied from the building program of special activities. A copy of the teacher's program should be filed in the principal's office. An illustration is here given of the form in which the teacher's desk program is made out in Kansas City.

HOME-ROOM TEACHER'S DESK PROGRAM

Class	Day	9.00-10.30			10.30-12.00			1.00-2.30			2.30-4.00		
		Read	Study and Arith.		M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	Aud.	Penm. and Spel.	Study and Gram.		Sci.	Libr.	Gym.
X 17	M				M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	Aud.	Penm. and Spel.	Study and Gram.		Sci.	Libr.	Gym.
X 17	T	"	"	"	Mus.	Art.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
X 17	W	"	"	"	M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
X 17	T	"	"	"	Mus.	Art.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
X 17	F	"	"	"	M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Y 18	M	M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	Aud.	Study and Arith.		Penm. and Spel.	Libr.	Gym.	Sci.	Study and Gram		Read.
Y 18	T	Mus.	Art.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Y 18	W	M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Y 18	T	Mus.	Art.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Y 18	F	M. T. H. E.	M. T. H. E.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

Grade, *Seventh*; Room, *Home Room*.
Anna B. Shouse, Teacher.

4. ASSIGNMENT OF TEACHERS

In the operation of the programs as outlined for the Henry C. Kumpf School no teacher is assigned more than 5 hours, or ten 30-minute periods of actual teaching per day. The carrying out of the program therefore requires the following assignment of teachers:

Home rooms.....	9	Library.....	1
Relief.....	8	Music.....	1
Auditorium.....	2	Art.....	1
Gymnasium and playground.....	2	Manual arts.....	1
Science.....	1	Home economics.....	1

5. THE TEACHER'S DAY

Under the program as here outlined, the teacher is expected to be in her room by 8.40 in the morning and remain about the building until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Out of this 7 hours and 20 minutes, however, each teacher has 1 hour and 45 minutes to use as she chooses. This means that each home-room or special teacher is on duty for 5 hours and 35 minutes of the school day. Any teacher unassigned for any part of this time is detailed to special duties on records and reports, playground, or elsewhere, as needed.

The question arises as to what the regular teacher is doing during the two 30-minute periods that the relief teacher is in charge of her pupils. Part of the time is used for recreation and relaxation out of doors. The teacher's rest room may be used for rest and reading, but not for a workroom. The library or office provides a place for study, planning, grading papers, or other work.

6. ADAPTING PLATOON PROGRAM TO LOCAL SITUATION

The question is often raised as to the size of school to which the platoon program is best adapted. The question may as well be asked, To what sized school is traditional elementary school organization best adapted? Platoon organization is possible in a graded school of any size provided the building is adapted to the organization. A program may be worked out under the same plan of procedure as is used in Kansas City. In a smaller school of from 6 to 12 teachers, the high degree of specialization in the assignment of teachers is not possible. The home-room teacher must teach more than one grade; the special teacher must teach more than one subject.

In adapting the program to a given situation, various changes may be made in the time allotment. The day may be lengthened, periods may be made longer or shorter, and the amount of time devoted to a particular subject may be changed to fit the local purpose. Part of the school may run on the platoon plan and part on the traditional plan. Science may be taught by the home-room teacher. Auditorium and music may be combined, provided the dangers previously mentioned are avoided. In short, the platoon plan, because it is so very flexible, may be made to fit any situation if proper skill is employed in working out and executing the program.

VI. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

As Expressed by Teachers

Each of the teachers in the Henry C. Kumpf School was recently given a blank on which to record a frank statement of advantages, disadvantages, and problems which she had found in her work in platoon organization. Special emphasis was placed

on the importance of listing disadvantages and unsolved problems in order that an effort might be made, through special study and conferences, to eradicate weaknesses in the organization for another year. Every teacher showed enthusiasm for the organization, and no teacher in the school prefers traditional organization to platoon organization.

1. ADVANTAGES

Advantages of platoon organization, as recorded by the teachers on the blank forms, are here given. Each list is in the teacher's own words and over her name.

- (1) More time for careful preparation of each subject taught.
- (2) More time for regular or special work--because of lack of interruptions.
- (3) This type of organization prevents teacher from spending extra time on subjects especially liked--to the detriment of those not especially liked.

—Anna B. Shouse, Home Room, Seventh Grade.

- (1) With fewer subjects to teach, I have more time to prepare my work.
- (2) I can and do manifest greater interest in the subjects I teach.
- (3) Affords greater opportunity to arouse more enthusiasm in the pupils.
- (4) Fewer interruptions.
- (5) I am far happier in my work.

—Kathryn Walther, Home Room, Sixth Grade.

- (1) It extends horizon and broadens viewpoint of child.

—Margaret Lewis, Home Room, Fifth Grade.

- (1) I have more time to devote to each subject.
- (2) I find that my work is more thoroughly prepared when I have fewer subjects to prepare.
- (3) The children seem to have a keener interest in their work when they have special teachers and special rooms for the different studies.

—Hildred Honan, Home Room, Third Grade.

- (1) More time and opportunity for the development of self-expression among the pupils.
- (2) More opportunity for special work with the individual pupil.
- (3) Better chance to reach all types of pupils through greater variety of work offered.
- (4) More opportunities to place children on their own responsibility.
- (5) Better opportunity for children to display initiative.

—Ola Wickham, Auditorium.

- (1) A richer, more varied curriculum.
- (2) Economy of pupils' time on account of specializations.
- (3) A better opportunity for teaching citizenship.
- (4) A better opportunity to develop the individual child.
- (5) A better opportunity for socialization.
- (6) A better opportunity for self-expression.
- (7) Pupils are more interested.
- (8) Pupils are more responsive.
- (9) Pupils are more self-reliant.
- (10) Pupils cooperate willingly.
- (11) Develops a keener school spirit.
- (12) Programs for special days made easier when the strain of interfering with regular school work is taken away.

—Beulah B. Tatman, Auditorium.

The opportunity to devote all my time to one line of work, resulting in:

- (1) Better preparation and more efficient work.
- (2) A better understanding of the relationship of the work of each grade to that of the preceding and following grades.
- (3) More definite knowledge of the attainments of each group of children.
- (4) A better chance to assist children who are especially talented in music.
- (5) More effective use of music as a socializer, in large groups and in the assembly.

—Margaret McKemp, Music.

- (1) Teaching the subject matter of certain subjects to various grades, the special teacher has opportunity to know what is included in the course of study in each grade and can build upon that which has gone before to a much greater advantage.
- (2) A finer school spirit is brought about among both pupils and teachers, since the teachers in the organization meet, not one class, but many groups, daily.
- (3) One of our modern educational writers has said, "The message of the modern school to Democracy is self-government with due regard for others." I believe that platoon organization is the ideal organization for the instilling of this ideal into the minds of our children, and furnishes most excellent opportunities for the practical application of it.

—Mildred E. Long, Social Science.

I am thoroughly "sold" to the platoon organization as an educative system, and think any child who has had this opportunity will be a better citizen. Its advantages are:

- (1) A more definite plan.
- (2) A closer correlation with the other departments of the school.
- (3) Quickens the spirit of success and consideration among the corresponding sections.
- (4) It links the manual training department more closely to the other departments of the school, thereby strengthening the educative value of the manual training department.
- (5) Gives the child a broader constructive vision of his place in life by coming in contact daily with more correlative activities.
- (6) It helps solve the problem of interruption.
- (7) A special (happy in his work) teacher for each activity.

—Emil T. Hinkel, Manual Arts.

- (1) Gymnasium, playground, and corrective work no longer interruptions.
- Janet Funke, Physical Education. (Girls.)

2. DISADVANTAGES AND PROBLEMS

Practically no arguments were offered against the platoon plan. Those listed were really in the nature of problems in organization and supervision rather than inherent weaknesses of the plan. Following is the list:

- (1) Record work. Some of the home-room teachers find this record work burdensome. This problem is being met by the use of assistant record teachers: Special teachers appointed to assist the home-room teacher in record work.
- (2) Discipline. One teacher stated that "each teacher handles discipline in her own way," thus failing to fix in the child definite habits of behavior.

- (3) Due to large numbers of pupils handled by special teachers, there is lack of intimate contact with individual child.
- (4) More difficult to carry on comprehensive projects.
- (5) Correlation. One teacher suggested that a "clearing house" for coordination and correlation of effort should be maintained.
- (6) Loss of materials a problem to several teachers.
- (7) Because of the greater variety of activities and demands on the individual child by a larger number of teachers, check-up work after school becomes more difficult.

CONCLUSION

Enthusiasm for platoon organization, as expressed in this bulletin, does not mean that it is a panacea for all the ills to which the public school is heir. It has its weaknesses, but is a safe departure from the traditional toward the ideal. The platoon plan is the one form of elementary school reorganization which has met generally with hearty public approval when given a fair trial; and it will continue to meet with public approval in any community where the superintendent and principal have a real vision as to its possibilities and at the same time will recognize and solve its problems.

APPENDIX

Henry C. Kumpf School, Weekly Bulletin, No. XI

(This bulletin is inserted not only to stress the ideas which it suggests but to call attention to a method being used in the training of teachers in the principles and spirit of platoon organization. This particular bulletin was used as the basis for discussion in teachers' meetings and in conferences which followed.)

Has the new organization succeeded? Partially so; yes. Has it proved superior to the traditional type of organization? Your enthusiasm, the interest and spirit of the children, and the attitude of the parents all answer "Yes." But has it measured up to its possibilities or the ideals we have set for it? It has not, and of course never will. But can we not profit by our experiences and realize a little more nearly the potential possibilities of platoon organization? With 100 per cent enthusiasm and cooperation we *can* and *we will*.

Read carefully these suggestions and then "come back" with your own.

1. A "50-50" plan.—Three hours per day to home-room work; 3 hours per day to special activities. In part we have carried out this fundamental conception of the organization. We must do better the second half of the year.

2. *Special activities* include not only those subjects appearing on the program but such extracurricular activities as banking, athletics, entertainments and picture shows, the citizen's association, etc. Every activity authorized by the school, whether curricular or extracurricular, is of proportionate importance as a socializing factor in the life of the child. The activities must not encroach on time allotted to tool mastery—i. e., the home-room time—unless some phase of the activity functions in reading, language, writing, spelling, or arithmetic.

3. So-called *interruptions* for activity work must, therefore, come during activity periods or be taken care of before or after school hours.

4. *The tool subjects* we know to be fundamental as a means to socialization in process—the tools gained in home rooms being applied in the practice of self-expression and citizenship. The value

of the tool subjects is unquestioned; the relative value of the various activities (curricular or extracurricular) can not be fixed, varying in the case of each individual child.

5. The child, therefore, who misses a curricular activity because of some civic responsibility (such as banking, safety, and conduct) is, without doubt, receiving a training of equal value in the socialization process to the regular scheduled activity.

6. In the giving of grades, therefore, in special activity subjects, the child should not be graded on a time basis, provided the time lost is for an authorized extracurricular activity.

7. As a group of teachers we have not yet reached that point in the correlation and interlocking of efforts which the organization makes easily possible. Here are a few suggestions:

(a) The auditorium work is oral language work almost entirely. Home-room and special teachers should call to the attention of auditorium teachers errors or bad habits in self-expression.

(b) The library can be made a most valuable auxiliary to any department. How many times during the five months past have you made use of the library as an aid in your work? As a home-room teacher, do you realize that your children are getting each day an additional reading, literature, and study period that can be made invaluable in oral and written language, reading, and spelling?

(c) Is my work receiving the type of assistance which some other department can give as an integral part of the regular work of that department?

REFERENCES *

- Bankes, W. J. Experiment with platoon school in Akron, Ohio. *School and Society*. December 10, 1921.
- . Model platoon school developed by Akron Teachers College. *School Life*. February, 1923.
- Barrows, Alice. A school-building program for Athens, Ga. U. S. Bureau of Education. *Bulletin*, 1921, No. 25.
- . First national conference on the work-study-play, or platoon, plan. U. S. Bureau of Education. *Bulletin*, 1922, No. 35.
- Cubberly, Ellwood P. The principal and his school. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1923.
- English. Distribution of time in platoon schools. *Detroit Educational Bulletin*, October, 1922.
- Flexner and Bachman. A general survey of Gary schools. New York, General Education Board, 1918.
- Kennedy, William F. Economic values of platoon types of school organization. Pittsburgh, Pa., McKelvey School.
- Programs for Detroit, Gary, Cuyahoga, Pittsburgh, and elsewhere. Miscellaneous literature in the form of circular letters and typewritten reports secured through the Bureau of Education.
- Spain, Charles L. The platoon school in Detroit. *Detroit Educational Bulletin*. No. 2, 1923.
- Strayer and Bachman. Organization and administration of Gary schools. New York, General Education Board, 1918.
- Wilmington and the platoon plan. *School and Society*. December 2, 1922.

* For a complete bibliography of the work-study-play, or platoon, plan, see *City School Leaflet*, No. 10, July, 1923. "Bibliography of the Work-Study-Play, or Platoon, Plan," by Alice Barrows, published by the United States Bureau of Education.