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Development of a Guidance Public Relations Program for Grades Eight and Nine

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Eastern Illinois University

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DEVELOPMENT OF A GUIDANCE PUBLIC

RELATIONS PROGRAM FOR GRADES EIGHT AND NINE

(TITLE)

BY

Eleanor F. McCabe

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

SPECIALIST IN EDUCATION: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1972

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
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CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

CHAPTER I: STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Introduction

It has become increasingly apparent to the writer, a counselor working in the public schools, that a pressing need exists for improved communication with others. A counselor's day is filled with a variety of activities, some planned, some incidental. It would be easy, even natural, to assume that others are aware of the activities mentioned above and that because of this awareness a free exchange of information takes place between the counselor and those he serves. In addition to the obvious publics whom the counselor serves such as students, teachers, and parents, there are also others with whom good communication is imperative. Included in this group would be other school employees, administrators, school board members, and those living in the community.

School Public Relations

Since the guidance and counseling department is but one of many segments of the public school, it would appear advisable initially to investigate communications and the public relations of the public school as a whole. As emphasized by Mortensen, no program of education can function in isolation from its community. All facets of education are influenced and in turn influence the community. The school is not only in the community, it is an essential part of it.¹ In a community,

¹Donald G. Mortensen and Allen Schmuller, Guidance in Today's Schools, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), p. 46.

either directly or indirectly, the schools touch the lives of every clerk, factory worker, professional person, businessman, and housewife. It is a fact of life that schools live in glass houses. Their business is conducted so publicly that every sidewalk superintendent feels qualified to comment, to judge, and to criticize.

Gordon Sabine, Journalism dean of the University of Oregon, takes the schools to task as he says, "Education is missing the boat when it comes to solving its problems today."¹ First, he believes that education has misjudged the role and the importance of mass communications in adult life today and, secondly, that it has tried to solve its problems by a method that is poorly used, that hurts more than it helps, and that short changes education by making education and its product seem less valuable than they are.²

It becomes apparent that a good public relations program is needed by education. However, one must keep in mind that any good public relations program is founded on a good product. If education has a good product and fails to bring that product to the public, it leaves the public uninformed as to its value. This failure to communicate may lead to conclusions being drawn which do a disservice to education.

Guidance Public Relations

Since this study is concerned with only one aspect of the school public relations, that which concerns guidance and counseling, the

¹No News is Bad News, National School Public Relations Association, (1201 Sixteenth Street N. W., Washington, D. C., 1955), p. 9.

²Ibid.

logical question follows as to whether a lack of communication also exists between this segment of the school and its many publics. The results of a survey recently conducted by the writer revealed that, even in a single school building, teachers lacked a clear understanding and agreement regarding the role of the counselor. Thus, it would appear that to assume that adequate communication takes place, even within a school, is presumptuous.¹

The fact that there is also a lack of agreement within the profession itself concerning the meaning and role of student personnel workers has served only to confuse further the public mind. Litwack, Holmes, and O'Hern found these differences to be apparent in position papers and in articles appearing in the Personnel and Guidance Journal. Concurrently, there has been a definite increase in criticism by the public at large. These authors point out that on the national level there is opposition and doubt concerning both the theory and practice of the student personnel workers. John Hersey in The Child Buyers and Martin Gross in The Brain Watchers, verbalize these contemporary views, which have also been expressed by such public figures as Admiral Hyman Rickover and James B. Conant. On the local level, members of the community make statements denouncing pupil personnel workers as "parasites feeding on the school system." In response to these criticisms, student personnel workers have been forced into a detailed self-examination of their profession and of their services.² The above

¹Eleanor McCabe, "Teachers' Perceptions of the Priorities for Guidance Services," Manuscript prepared for Education 597, Eastern Illinois University, Feb., 1971.

²Lawrence Litwack, June E. Holmes, and Jane S. O'Hern, Critical Issues in Student Personnel Work, (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1967), p. 1.

trauma is perhaps to a certain extent self-induced; we might postulate that this might have been prevented by improved communication between those criticized and their publics. It is logical to assume that if there is to be an adequate exchange of information between the pupil personnel worker and those he serves, this will come about only as the result of a program specifically designed to accomplish this purpose.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the scope of school community relations, and to propose possible application of public relations principles and techniques to a guidance and counseling program, specifically to the program at the Charleston Junior High, Charleston, Illinois.¹ As previously mentioned, the writer is one of two counselors serving approximately 700 students in grades seven, eight, and nine. The writer's responsibilities reside primarily with the eighth and ninth grade students; therefore, this study is delimited to these two groups. Since there are no individuals specifically designated as public relations personnel within this school unit, the inception and conduct of the guidance public relations program becomes a function of the individual members of the counseling staff. This study is undertaken with the purpose of identifying and proposing procedures which might be used in developing a plan to meet the need for an effective guidance public relations program at the Charleston Junior High School.

¹Charleston, county seat of Coles County, is located in east-central Illinois on Highways 130 and 16. The city has a population of 16,200. (From Eastern Illinois University General Catalogue, 1972).

CHAPTER III
DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Public Relations

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of public relations is the wide diversity of opinion concerning its meaning. The French philosopher, Rousseau, developed the term, "public opinion," as it is used today. He perceived, as Abraham Lincoln did later, "whosoever makes it his business to give laws must know how to sway opinions and through them govern the passions of men."¹

Some authorities have touted public relations as a panacea for the ills which beset our society. Others, equally vocal, have condemned public relations as a method of "pulling the wool over the eyes of the public." In any event, businessmen are cautioned to avoid poor public relations lest they antagonize potential customers. Industrialists are counseled to employ good public relations in the promotion of their products. Union leaders are admonished to stress good public relations as a step toward getting more favorable labor legislation. Public figures have demonstrated the same diversity of opinion when describing public relations. Former Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, once described a public relations man as a "pitch man complete with Harvard accent and trick polls." Columnist, Walter Lippman, described a public relations man as a "press agent with a tie who puts on a coat."² Yet

¹Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1952), p. 20.

²Ibid., pp. 3 - 4.

Abraham Lincoln, during one of his debates with Douglas, stated the force of public opinion most vigorously with his now classic quotation, "Public sentiment is everything; with public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. . . He who molds opinion is greater than he who enacts laws."¹

It is clear that one problem faced in discussing public relations is that of semantics. Essentially the term public relations is a neutral one, with neither a positive nor negative inference. Viewed in this context, public relations included principles and practices designed to construct relationships (hopefully good) with the public. Unfortunately, since the term is essentially a neutral one, the opportunity also exists for the creation of a poor relationship with the public. Various attempts have been made to arrive at a single definition of public relations. In 1947, Public Relations News encouraged subscribers to submit their own definitions of this term and received in excess of 2,000 replies, indicating a wide spectrum of public relations concepts. From these replies, Griswold formulated this definition, "Public relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance."² Perhaps the most important factor in the growth of public relations during the 20th century has been the increased power of public opinion. It has become notably apparent that lacking public sufferance or popular support, individuals or the institutions they represent cannot prosper.

¹Ibid., p. 20.

²Ibid., p. 6.

School Public Relations

Thus far, our discussion has examined public relations only in the broadest sense. For the purposes of this study, a more restricted perspective will be employed, dealing with public relations practices in contemporary use in education and more specifically as they apply to the role of the school guidance counselor. School public relations had their beginnings in the late 19th century with the creation of the State Board of Education in Massachusetts, and were given their initial impetus by pioneer educator, Horace Mann. Increased knowledge among the general public concerning the meaning and importance of public education led to an increased interest in the schools. In a general way, public relations in the schools has as its purpose, keeping the public informed in regard to the objectives, accomplishments, conditions and needs of our schools.¹

Interest in studying the problems and issues of school public relations is a relatively recent development. A search of the literature on education published prior to the mid 1920's discloses a paucity of information in this area. The writings of this period also disclose a diversity in the thinking of those who attempted to define the term "school public relations." Carter Good conceives of school public relations as a formal activity for the improvement of school community relations.² The concept of school public relations as a two way process was verbalized by Stearns, who maintained that school public

¹James J. Jones, School Public Relations, (New York: The Center for Applied Research, 1966), p. 104.

²Carter V. Good, Dictionary of Education, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1959), p. 430.

relations represented an avenue of rapport between the citizens of a community who are responsible for supporting the schools and professional personnel whose primary responsibility is conducting them.¹ Reeder subscribes to the same idea, indicating that public relations should have as a primary goal the establishment of a harmonious relationship involving the schools and the public to whom they are responsible.²

Guidance Public Relations

The guidance services, by their very nature, will be intimately involved in the public relations program of the school. Good public relations with the community are undoubtedly an asset; to obtain optimal effectiveness, excellent relationships with another group, the student body, are a sine qua non.³ During the early history of the public school movement in our country, the school occupied an enviable position in the community. It was the place to go for a picnic, to celebrate holidays, and to take part in community activities. As our society has become more complex, a lessening interest in schools and school-related activities has developed. In many communities, the general public has become willing to allow professional educators to run the schools and has become concerned only about such issues as building bond referenda and school budget discussion.⁴

¹Harry L. Stearns, Community Relations and the Public Schools, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 7.

²Ward G. Reeder, An Introduction to Public School Relations, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1953), p. 1.

³Geralt T. Kowitz and Norma G. Kowitz, Operating Guidance Services for the Modern School, (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), p. 237.

⁴Robert D. Myrick and Joe Wittmer, School Counseling, Problems and Methods, (Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear Publishing Co., Inc., 1972), p. 192.

Walter F. Johnson believes that the school counselor is in a particularly strategic position to facilitate an understanding of the school program as it touches the life of the individual student. Because of this unique position which the counselor occupies, he is a key public relations person for the school. Such a position offers the enormous challenge; and, hopefully, the opportunity to restore the school to the preeminent position it once occupied. At the present time, our expanded counseling programs place the counselor in a position where he or she has the most vital personal contacts with parents, students, colleagues, and administrators.¹

Although the counselor is, and should be, concerned with the general public relations program for his school system, of equal concern must be public relations in behalf of his own program. Since guidance is, relatively speaking, a neophyte on the public relations scene, it is an area in which only a limited amount of knowledge exists. Nordberg recognizes this fact when he states that a guidance program, to function effectively, needs to gain the acceptance of parents, taxpayers, students, teachers, and members of the Board of Education. One of the best methods is to embark on a public relations program.²

¹ Walter F. Johnson, "The Public Relations Role of the Counselor," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, Vol. 44, Sept. 1960, p. 59.

² Robert B. Nordberg, Guidance, A Systematic Introduction, (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 151.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

CHAPTER III. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

Objectives

The theoretical concepts of a comprehensive guidance program and its practical implementation are still far apart. Among counselors themselves there is diversity of opinion and a continuing discussion as to the role of the counselor. Toldson suggests that, "we (counselors) evaluate our task as being beyond the understanding of the ordinary man. This succeeds in making us conspicuous in the midst of ordinary men and above those we serve."¹ As a comparatively new field in education, there is a greater need for public relations in guidance than for most any other area of the school's activities. The average layman has not made a study of the counselor's job and has had little opportunity for understanding what a counselor does. This lack of understanding on the average citizen's part exists mostly because counselors have failed to communicate effectively what they do do. Toldson believes that, "counselors efforts to progress toward understanding and communication have been slow and futile."² Roeber, Smith and Erickson appear to share Toldson's concern, as they state that complacency, especially with respect to publicity and public relations, can spell disaster for counselors. Ignorance and misunderstanding lead to suspicion and rejection. A continuing plan for publicity and public

¹Ivory Toldson, "Community Guidance Program Services to the Public," The School Counselor, Vol. XVIII, March, 1971, p. 297.

²Ibid.

relations is essential if a guidance program is to have the atmosphere necessary for continued growth and long range success of the guidance services. This does not mean convincing the public, which many public relations workers veer toward, but rather bringing understanding to the public so that the school and the community are drawn into a closer relationship.¹

However, there is evidence that school counselors are becoming consciously aware of "telling" the whole school story as well as for "selling" their guidance programs. "Selling" may seem an inappropriate and unprofessional term to employ but, like the door to door salesman with a product, counselors must bring their product to the customer, and if it is good enough, the customer will begin to come to the counselor. Toldson believes that counselors have been afraid that possibly their product isn't good enough. She feels that it is time to find out whether or not this is true. If the counselors' product is useful, people will need it and use it; if not, it should be removed from the market and evaluated and redesigned.²

A planned public relations program appears to be at least a partial solution to the above problems. It will not solve the ongoing confusions and conflicts within the profession and the schools concerning counselor role, but an active public relations program for the guidance services cannot help but delineate and define the counselor role, not only to the community but also to the other publics with whom

¹E. C. Roeber, G. E. Smith, and C. E. Erickson, Organization and Administration of Guidance Services, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1955), pp. 26 - 28.

²Toldson, loc. cit.

the counselor is concerned. It may also assist even the counselor himself, as clarification of role will be inherent in the process of the planning of such a program.

As mentioned earlier, a counselor must devote part of his time to "telling" the whole school story. A thorough knowledge of the school and the community will be basic to his competency in this role as well as in improving his effectiveness as a counselor in situ. In addition, at times the counselor serves as a "buffer" when conflicts and misunderstandings arise among students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other persons who become involved in school matters. In resolving these situations, it is necessary that the counselor be a person who has a thorough understanding of the total educational program in the school and a broad perspective of its purposes and goals. The counselor will find himself explaining or interpreting many of the numerous facets of the educational program and the system which is designed to implement it.

To accomplish this, the counselor must have an understanding of much more than the guidance and counseling field. He must be prepared to discuss a vast array of topics related to the school, including educational philosophy, finance, why "Johnny can't read," athletics, curriculum, professional qualifications, and school community problems.¹

In any effective public relations program, it is imperative that those persons who are responsible for its origin and implementation comprehend the goals such a program will attempt to achieve. Since many publics, rather than one single group, must be satisfied, the welfare

¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 60.

of the child must always receive primary consideration. Public relations, as a field, is viewed by the writer and will be treated in this study, as being a two-way street, that is, that it is a matter of communication not only to the various publics but also from the various publics. The purposes of the guidance and counseling public relations program, as developed in this study are:

1. To inform the public as to the work and services of the counselor.
2. To establish confidence in the work of the counselor.
3. To gain acceptance that the methods used by the counselor are appropriate and desirable.
4. To gain support for the proper maintenance of the school guidance program.
5. To develop awareness of the importance of a guidance and counseling program in a democracy.
6. To improve the partnership concept by uniting parents and teachers and counselors in meeting the needs of the students.
7. To integrate the home, school, and community in improving guidance services for all students.
8. To evaluate the offerings of the guidance services in meeting the needs of the students.
9. To correct misunderstandings as to the aims and activities of the counselors.
10. To develop students, teachers, parents, and the community as resources for the guidance services.

Organization and Administration

Having established the objectives of this field study, it would appear appropriate to consider the general principles which will be the basis for development before embarking on the program itself. We will consider the art of public relations before the science of public relations, the thinking before the doing, the strategy of public relations before the tactics. The kind of strategy that is essential is one that will minimize school and community friction. This is the overall strategy and planning of a public relations program that should be undertaken prior to take-off, in order to prevent having to use it to salvage crash landings.¹ Public relations in the schools has typically been reaction to events rather than planned efforts to control events. Good public relations programs in schools are affirmative and aggressive, carefully planned, and skillfully carried out.

A prerequisite to all planning is making provision for listening as well as talking. This implies not only seeking to develop public attitudes which are responsive to a program but also assisting the public to develop its own goals and encouraging expression of these goals.

Perhaps the most basic of the strategies of public relations is the strategy of the initiative.² By stressing this particular technique, the counselor finds himself cast as an initiator rather than

¹Leo Demeter, "The Strategy of Communication," Public Relations Gold Mine, (1201 16th St. N. W., Washington, D. C., National School Public Relations Association, 1962), Vol. IV, p. 32.

²Ibid.

a defender. Other things being equal, individuals and publics have a tendency to be influenced by first impressions and, like it or not, these exert great influence in the formation of opinion. It is unfortunately true that people hesitate to admit error in early evaluations. Every one of the activities of the counselor has public relations implications, sometimes out of proportion to the importance of that activity to the entire program. A particularly successful career day, a well received public appearance before a club group, a single newspaper article or an unfortunate incident can enhance or detract from the overall image of the entire program. The foregoing is true in each case even though the event which precipitated the conclusion was relatively miniscule when viewed within the context of the entire program.¹ The importance of seizing the offensive has long been recognized by military leaders. In the sports world, the best defense has been defined as a good offense. Unfortunately, the importance of taking the initiative has been overlooked on many occasions in school public relations. Quite frequently, the public relations program is reactionary and comes about to silence or mollify critics.

The strategy of authority² is another of the basic considerations of public relations. Because of their positions, such individuals as the superintendent of schools, the president of the board of education and other key administrative personnel can and should be the primary spokesmen for education in their communities. This does not mean to imply that the contribution of community leaders to the program should

¹Johnson, op. cit., pp. 60 - 61.

²Demeter, op. cit., p. 33.

be overlooked. They are an important link in the chain of information which connects the school with the community. Properly used, they offer another opportunity to mold public opinion favorably relative to the school program. Equally important with knowing community leaders is the necessity for knowing the community itself. Many public relations programs are doomed to fail at the outset because they neglect to comprehend this basic fact.

Integrity must be one of the building blocks upon which the public relations program rests. To be effective, a school public relations program must be able to "tell it like it is." It must be completely candid. The strategy of honesty,¹ then, must be an important tool in the development of a program of public relations which really informs. Obviously, the most important ingredient in a guidance public relations program is to operate a good guidance program. Nothing will substitute for that.² Improvement will be brought about by recognizing short-comings as they exist and attempting to correct them, rather than by refusing to admit that they exist and ignoring them. Corrective action, when it occurs, will be much more salutary when initiated internally than when undertaken as the result of external pressures.

Commercial advertisers have demonstrated the importance of keeping their product before the public. They would not conduct a campaign only one week per year and expect it to have any carry over value. The strategy of continuity³ has its applications in this case. You might

¹Ibid.

²Nordberg, op. cit., p. 150.

³Demeter, loc. cit.

ask why, once a product has been advertised and the manufacturer has made his point, the campaign is not discontinued. Certainly a lot of money could be saved by following this practice. Advertisers have found that the public has a relatively short memory and, consequently, they bombard prospective customers with information about their product. In many instances, the school public relations program has been restricted to isolated examples, unfortunately far too few, during the school year. A parents' night, a career day program, a clinic, a meeting, or a newspaper release have, in each case, served as the school's effort to establish good public relations with the community. However, the lack of continuity in the above tends to decrease their effectiveness in much the same way as the spasmodic advertising of any product might do.

Closely allied to the strategy of continuity is the strategy of repetition.¹ This, however, does not imply monotonously repeating things so that they assume a broken record effect. Rather, it consists of apprising the community regularly of the important things that they should know about their school's guidance program.

Dissemination of information is an important consideration in a program of public relations and it involves the utilization of all available means to accomplish this purpose. Individuals must be reached regardless of the manner in which they get their information. This implies using all of the available media. Individuals vary widely in their preferences. Magazines and news papers serve as a major source of information for some; others prefer the radio while still another group watches television; others, primarily due to socio-economic factors,

¹Demeter, op. cit., p. 34.

must be communicated with by mail. To reach these publics requires full utilization of the available media. The efficacy and prestige of a program are enhanced by the variety of media which carry its message.

Being able to point with pride to the achievements of the students and school system involves the strategy of stressing.¹ A good program will be able to credit itself honestly with producing a good product. As previously mentioned, a good program is a prerequisite to a good public relations program. Everyone likes to point to value received for money expended. The taxpayer in the community is no exception. The effective public relations program sustains his belief that this money is being well spent.

Lest any community tend to rest on its laurels in regard to its school system, a balance needs to be arrived at between satisfaction and a desire for improvement. There has been a trend in some communities to compare accomplishments in an educational sense with other communities of comparable size and resources. If the programs are similar, a tendency exists to feel complacent. In determining what type of guidance program a community should have, only a comparison with itself is relevant. The question to be answered in this regard is not what type of program do we have, but rather what type of program are we capable of having.

Getting along with people is a quality that guidance personnel must have or develop. The importance of this ability to the total program cannot be too greatly stressed. As a general rule, communication and friendship have a direct relationship to one another. Hence it is

¹Ibid.

difficult to communicate without being friendly and invariably friendship enhances communication. Although it would be unrealistic to expect everyone to like you, only the most foolhardy will turn a critic into an enemy.

The strategy of involvement represents one of the more effective avenues of communication. First hand experiences are always more meaningful than those we experience vicariously. Apprising parents of what actually goes on in the school and in the guidance and counseling services will assist them to develop a more realistic appraisal of the guidance program. However, only direct involvement will develop empathy. The effective guidance function must be a cooperative enterprise.

A successful public relations program in guidance involves the strategy of personalization.¹ Only by reducing things to a personal level can we involve others in our program. Each individual is interested in knowing not about the program as a whole, but about the program as it affects his child or as it affects himself, the parent. Presentations made by the guidance counselor should demonstrate an awareness of this important fact. For example, often such data as average test scores represent abstractions to the student and parent; only by making a personal application of this information does it become relevant. The counselor should never forget the strategy of personalization.

The remark is frequently made that there is a time and a place for everything. The preceding implies that there is a right time and a wrong time. The perceptive counselor should be concerned with the strategy of timing.² This concept should be a factor in scheduling parent conferences;

¹Demeter, op. cit., p. 35.

²Ibid.

it should be a consideration in publishing news releases, and is an important facet of interpersonal relationships within the school.

To be an effective salesman of his program and of the school program as a whole, the school counselor must employ the strategy of knowledge. In this regard, he should be prepared to interpret the entire school program to those having questions about it. In order to carry out this function effectively, he must be fully conversant with the scope of the program as well as its objectives. Frequently a better personal understanding of the overall school program is developed by the counselor when he prepares himself to inform others.

In order to make the most effective contribution to the community through his program, the wise counselor employs the strategy of sensitivity. The term sensitivity implies knowing and responding to one's public, but even more, it involves the establishment of a desirable rapport with those the counselor serves. Only by making a conscious effort to know his community can the counselor be completely effective.

An attempt has been made to list some of the strategies which are important to the counselor in the conduct of an effective public relations program. Time and space preclude a more comprehensive discussion of all strategies which might be used to enhance communication.

Hamrin's five basic assumptions of a public relations program, as cited in Mortensen, seem appropriate for incorporation into a public relations program for the guidance services. They are:

1. Directed time and attention must be given to the program.
2. Public relations must have some centralization.
3. The public relations program must be continuous.
4. The program must secure participation of all persons who are affected by it.

5. Continuous evaluation of what is being done must be provided.¹

An attempt has been made to limit theorizing and to include those guidelines which might be used by the school counselor in the development of an effective public relations program. Clearly, no preconceived program could be suitable in all communities. However, it is felt that by observing the principles set forth in this chapter, the counselor can construct an effective program which will suit the needs of his particular situation.

Procedures

Preliminary:

Development of a sound, accepted guidance public relations program can best be achieved if those for whom it is intended are brought into the planning at the very outset. The persons who might serve in an advisory capacity are teaching staff members, secretaries, administrators, students, parents, and members of the community. Depending on circumstances, these persons might serve on a single advisory guidance committee or two committees might be formed, one made up of school personnel, the other of community personnel, with students serving as members of one or both groups. The involvement of a citizen's advisory committee can be effective in obtaining community support and understanding. Overall organization of this nature may take longer but the program will be assured of continued support once it is accepted. Groups such as this can serve as a source of

¹Mortensen, op. cit., p. 46, Citing S. A. Hamrin, Initiating and Administrating Guidance Services, (Bloomington, Illinois: McKnight and McKnight Publishing Co., 1953), p. 62.

information for the counselor in determining how the people in the community think and feel, not only about the guidance services but about education as a whole. Before doing anything, it is important to inventory present community thinking so that the counselor knows what he has to start with. In the process of determining what the community wants, one should also determine which public or publics have misconceptions about the program as a whole so that efforts can be keyed to that group. Each public has a definite set of characteristics and interests, and it will benefit the public relations program to determine these in preparation for the planning of a program. In this way, it is possible to capitalize on the special interests of specific publics.^{1,2}

Discussion of recommended procedures for a guidance public relations program will be treated in this study according to the following publics: students, teachers and administrators, and parents and the community. Each of these sections contains a list of activities for use with that particular public. All those activities included are recommended as being implemented in the Charleston Junior High School as the core of a planned public relations program for the guidance department.

Students:

A recent international study has shown that a sense of powerlessness inhibits learning (Seaman, 1971).³ This finding in itself is a strong reason for giving students more voice in their educational decisions and consequently, a voice in guidance activities. Added to

¹Johnson, Op. Cit., pp. 59 - 62.

²Bernard Campbell, "63 Tested Practices in School Community Relations," Metropolitan School Study Council, 525 W. 120th St., New York, 1954, p. 5.

³H. B. Gelatt, "We Can Reach Our Goals," excerpted in Focus on Guidance, Love Publishing Co., (Vol. LV, No. 2, Oct. 1971), pp. 1 - 11.

this is the fact that the decision making process itself is an educational one, having a powerful impact on the learner. Not only does the student receive practice in the reaching of decisions, he gains a sense of personal power and involvement by feeling that he is participating in educational processes and hence is involved in the control of his environment. The concept of involving students may be difficult for some school personnel to accept. Students may be in possession of some of the greatest untapped expertise but to expect those who used to be thought of as "learners" to be accepted as "teachers" is not an easy transition to accomplish within the school.

1. It was suggested earlier that students serve on school and community guidance committees. A student guidance council or committee consisting of an elected representative from each homeroom group cannot only be an excellent resource to the counselor but also will serve as a means of conveying information to students in their class. In a group such as this, students will be less apt to feel stifled, and suggestions, complaints, and ultimately recommendations should be forthcoming from the group. The students who are involved in this kind of planning and implementation will serve as important public relations agents throughout the school as well. The untapped potential of student participation can assist in producing guidance services which are truly responsive to student needs.

2. Each student with whom one works in counseling also becomes a potential spokesman for the counselor and the counseling program. Most likely the way these students see the counselor will influence the way other students perceive the counselor. It is in this regard that the counselor role becomes critical. Assuming the role of scheduler,

administrator, disciplinarian, teacher, tester, or record keeper will undoubtedly influence how students perceive the counselor. Also, if the guidance program is primarily crisis oriented, students may come to view the counselor as working with only a few problem students. One of the best ways to avoid this restricted perspective is to work with all kinds of students. This discussion returns us to the counselor and public relations, where it is clear that once counselor role is clarified, it is important to let others know what the counselor is doing.^{1,2}

3. There are normally a number of resources within the school which the counselor can use for the purpose of "telling" the counselor's story. The use of the school newspaper is accessible to the counselor and reaches almost every student. A reporter might be assigned to the guidance department who would interview the counselor and write regular articles or the counselor might write a regular article for the paper. Names which have been used for such articles are "Rap Session" and "Guidelines." School magazines and the school yearbook are also sources for articles about the guidance services.

4. A booklet or brochure designed by the counselor can be helpful not only in letting students know who is there to serve them but also in explaining to them the many guidance services available to them. It should describe for the students what the counselor does and how, when, where, and why their services may be used. It is suggested that these booklets be distributed at the beginning of the school year by the

¹Robert D. Myrick and Joe Wittmer, op. cit., p. 196.

²R. S. Dunlop, "Professional Educators, Parents, and Students Assess the Counselor Role," Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 43, No. 10, Jan., 1965, pp. 1024 - 1028.

counselor in classroom size groups and to new students as they enter during the year. In this way, the counselor becomes at least a familiar figure to the students, questions may be answered, and a general atmosphere of the helping relationship may be established. To put it simply, "the ice is broken."¹

5. A conspicuous bulletin board in the vicinity of the guidance offices can be used to publicize current guidance activities or pertinent information which encourages students to see the counselor for more information.

6. The counselor should get to know the presidents of student organizations and their sponsors, with the purpose of talking with them about information or resources which the counselor may have which would be useful to them.

7. After making the necessary arrangements with a classroom or homeroom teacher, the counselor can go into the classroom and discuss with the students areas in which they have common problems. Suggested topics are interpersonal relationships including parent-child, student-student, black-white, and teacher-student conflicts. Discussion should bring out how these problems might be enhanced or depreciated by the responding behavior of the individuals involved. The counselor can invite students to form groups and to continue the discussion on a group basis or to continue on an individual basis with the counselor.

8. A mailbox of some sort can be set up which will facilitate self-referrals and make initial contacts less threatening to the students. When the counselor is working closely with a classroom group, a box for

¹Appendix A, p. 50.

referral slips can be placed on the teacher's desk, with the teacher's approval of course.

9. At the end of each semester, seek student evaluation of the guidance services. With the cooperation of the homeroom teachers, have each student complete an anonymous questionnaire which is returned to the counselor, the results tabulated and incorporated in the development of guidance services. Continuous evaluation should be a part of the regular meetings of the student guidance committee.

Communication with the students is discussed first here because it is the writer's opinion that, of all the counselor's publics, this is the most vital group and success or failure in this area is the most critical to the guidance and counseling program. Counselors need to keep in mind that today's students are tomorrow's parents and the longevity of the field of guidance and counseling may well rest with today's counselors, and their effectiveness in communicating with today's students.

Teachers and Administrators:

Teachers and administrators don't really hate counselors. If it appears that way at times, it may be because the counselor has failed in one of his primary responsibilities, that of keeping open the lines of communication between himself and those with whom he works. Most counselors recognize that cooperation and understanding between the faculty members and themselves are essential for a good guidance program. However, sometimes a counselor becomes so involved in working with students that he fails to take account of his rapport with the rest of the school personnel. In order to prevent problems, the counselor must

assume responsibility for the maintenance of communications. The following items are suggested procedures which could be implemented at the junior high school at which the writer is a counselor.

Gaining Staff Cooperation:

1. One cause of communication breakdown may be the counselor's inability to interpret his role to the staff. The counselor needs to communicate clearly the concept of his counselor role to his fellow workers. If the school does not have a written guidance philosophy, the counselor should expedite the writing of one, in conjunction with help from the school guidance committee.

2. As mentioned earlier, teachers, administrators, and secretaries should be involved in a guidance committee. In this group, the members will (1) share in the development of objectives for the guidance department, (2) share in the planning of the guidance services and activities, and (3) share in the evaluation of the guidance services.

3. The problem of confidentiality can inhibit the counselor in his relationship with his colleagues. Teachers and administrators want information from the counselor which will help them work with the students. Without violating the confidence of a counselee, the counselor should initiate the sharing of information with a teacher or administrator who has made a referral, keeping the focus on the positive, listening to and acknowledging feelings and behaviors which the individual has toward the student, yet refraining from violating the confidence of the student.

4. The counselor needs to look at his position in the school as a member of an education team. By working with the teachers and administrators, the counselor and staff members together can identify problem behaviors, develop ideas for plans of action, and jointly evaluate their

effectiveness, developing alternate plans of action when needed. The relationship of the teacher or administrator with the counselor will be enhanced by this cooperative approach to problem solving.¹ When a referral is made to the counselor, the teacher or administrator should always receive a "thank you" and feedback of some kind from the counselor. It is not an easy task but the counselor will need to accomplish this follow up without violating the confidentiality of the student. If the student has been having difficulty in a particular class, a form can be used which the counselor completes in cooperation with the student and which the student signs before it is forwarded to the teacher.²

5. Counselors often need information from teachers and administrators regarding a student. A form for this can be distributed to each of the student's teachers and to the administrators, requesting information both positive and negative as to that staff member's perceptions of the student academically, socially, and in terms of behavior. This request can be made in receipt form, so that the staff member is assured of a resumé of information or follow-up of some nature from the counselor in return for the time and effort expended for the counselor regarding the student.³ If we expect to get information in professional matters we must give a fellow professional the information he needs in order to be as effective as possible.

6. Teachers are clock watchers. Counselors need to keep this in mind at all times, whether it is talking with a teacher between classes,

¹Guidance Newsletter, "Effective Faculty-Counselor Communication," Guidance Newsletter, Science Research Associates, Sept. - Oct., 1970.

²Appendix B, p. 51.

³Appendix C, p. 52.

during a coffee break or a planning period, or before or after school. Counselors should use caution about making a student late for class or taking him out of class. Counselors can't expect teachers to cooperate with them if they violate the sanctity of the classroom. When discussion is needed, the counselor should go to the teacher rather than expecting the teacher to come to him. Sometimes the counselor's office is just too many extra steps for the teacher's tired feet. Many productive conferences can be held in a private corner of the teachers' lounge while the teacher props his feet up and has a cup of coffee.¹

7. When parents call for a conference with the counselor concerning their youngster, the teacher should be notified and offered the opportunity either to meet with the parent or write a message to be conveyed by the counselor. The counselor can come to the aid of the teacher through facts from the cumulative record such as previous grades, test patterns, and comments from former teachers. Follow-up subsequent to a parent conference at which the teacher is not present will help to reassure the teacher as to the direction the conference took. Teachers are aware that parents are inclined to blame them and it is important for them to feel that the counselor maintains an impartial position and establishes a professional atmosphere in such a conference. Helping a teacher maintain his dignity and integrity in a difficult situation goes a long way in building good faculty public relations between counselors and teachers.²

¹Joyce Lawrence, "Teacher-Counselor Cooperation," The Guidance Clinic, Parker Publishing Co., Inc., West Nyack, New York, Jan., 1972, pp. 7 - 11.

²Ann Truax, "Staff Involvement in Guidance Activities," The Guidance Clinic, Parker Publishing Co., Inc. West Nyack, New York, Feb., 1971, pp. 1 - 3.

Keeping the Teachers and Administrators Informed:

1. A monthly mimeographed report from the counselor can be put in both teachers and administrators mailboxes, although it is prepared primarily for the administrators. It includes the number of conferences the counselor has had with students, parents, teachers, administrators, other counselors, specialized personnel (school nurse, school psychologist, speech therapist, school social worker), personnel from community agencies (social workers, juvenile officers), and workshops and meetings attended, etc.¹

2. The teachers and administrators should receive a monthly in-service bulletin dealing with some subject of concern to educators. Topics covered might be drug abuse, teenage suicide, adolescent psychology, developmental problems, teenage-adult conflicts, and the "different" child.^{2,3}

3. Test scores and study reports can be prepared after the administration and scoring of group tests. Each teacher receives, or has easy access to, his students' scores. The test results and interpretation are provided automatically to all teachers with teachers informed as to precisely what additional interpretation is available from the counselor and encouraged to avail themselves of this. Complete studies, including item analysis, should be made and these findings distributed to teachers and administrators automatically.

¹Lawrence, op. cit., p. 8.

²Ibid.

³Appendix D, p. 53.

Studies of test scores should include class test averages, class I Q averages, percentages of items missed in each test area, and percentages of students working at each grade level. As this is done annually, it will be possible to provide a chronological comparison of results with previous years.¹

4. An offer by the counselor to lead classroom discussions can be made to teachers. The counselor should seek out teachers and offer to present to their classes educational and occupational or personal-social information which may be relevant to current lessons or units being taught.

5. Cooperation on classroom units can be offered by the counselor. The teacher and counselor can cooperate in the planning and in the presentation of a unit in which the counselor has information or expertise which may supplement that of the teacher. By making teachers aware of information received which the teacher might use or from which the students might benefit, the counselor can be a source of assistance to the teacher. Conversely, the counselor should let the teachers know that they can be a resource to the counselor and that their sharing with those in the guidance department is important. Let the counselor step out of the role of expert and admit to his colleagues that theirs is a mutually cooperative relationship.

6. Use the library to set up a guidance information center. The counselor can arrange an abundance of materials which are relevant to students as well as those which will supplement specific classroom activities. This center should be planned in cooperation with the librarian and arranged so that it is attractive, with care taken to keep the material current.

¹Appendix E, p. 54.

7. In-service training and teacher workshops can be arranged by the counselor. It may be necessary to seek the cooperation of community agencies in staffing such activities. Possible topics for discussion are mental health in the classroom, teacher-student relationships, understanding test scores, and techniques of behavior modification.

8. Students with special problems need to be brought to the attention of the staff early in the year. During the first week of school, in cooperation with the school nurse, information can be given to each teacher and administrator as to students with special problems. Each staff member should receive a list of students who have serious problems which are important in the classroom, along with what to do in case of emergency, when appropriate. Included are students with diabetes, severe hearing or visual problems, epilepsy, severe allergies, and severe emotional problems. Though primarily designed to safeguard students, this service will help teachers to feel reassured with students having serious medical problems with which the teacher might have to deal. Follow-up with the teacher by the counselor regarding these students is also recommended. In schools having the services of a nurse, the securing of the medical information will be done by her; in schools where this service is not available, the counselor will need to secure this information by sending a card home on which parents will supply not only information as to medical problems, but also information to be used in case of an emergency.¹

9. There are other special cases in which the teacher can be assisted by the counselor. Busy teachers and administrators cannot always read the newspaper assiduously. A service which the counselor can offer is that of

¹Appendix F, p. 55.

keeping the staff informed when a student loses a parent or a close relative, a divorce occurs, or a father or mother is involved in legal action. A favorite teacher of a student experiencing a traumatic situation can be asked to be a particular friend to the student. This may be especially needed with students from a one-parent family. This service will tend to expand the awareness and understanding of the teacher or administrator and will also perhaps help avoid what could be an unfortunate or awkward situation in school.

10. Administrators may be too busy, but the counselor should invite them to sit in on a routine test interpretation conference, parent-counselor conference, or a group session. The administrator may not come, but communication has nevertheless been established.¹

11. The counselor should volunteer to serve on a curriculum planning committee so as to establish and maintain a focus on mental health in learning.

Evaluation:

1. Evaluation by the teachers and administrators should be sought on a continuous basis as the counselor works with the school staff.

2. At the end of each semester, distribute a questionnaire to each teacher and administrator, to be completed anonymously. After tabulating the results, follow up with a brief resumé of the results to the school staff. Incorporate the findings in future planning.

3. Continuous evaluation should be sought in the guidance committee of which these personnel are members.

4. Following participation in classrooms, the counselor should seek brief, written, anonymous evaluations.

¹Toldson, op. cit., p. 298.

The strongest guidance department is one which keeps a planned public relations program in operation continuously. It was found by Bush, in a study of teacher-pupil relationships, that those teachers who knew the most about their students and were sensitive to their needs and relationships had more influence and effective relationships with a greater number of children than did those teachers whose paramount interest was knowledge of subject matter.¹ By working continuously and cooperatively with teachers and administrators, the best use of staff time and talent is possible, with resulting benefits for students and counselors and the staff members themselves. The counselor's business is people, and counselors need all the help they can get. The counselor should not retreat into the ivory tower of his private office but must get out into the main stream of the school, carrying on a constant campaign aimed at building and maintaining a good working relationship with the entire school staff.

Parents and Community:

As education is attempting to become more relevant, boundaries between school and community are, hopefully, becoming less visible. The guidance department has a responsibility to increase its efforts both to inform and involve parents and the community. It was recommended earlier in this study that parents and community members become involved in a guidance committee which would offer the opportunity for two-way communication between the counselor and those outside the school.

Guidance and counseling services as they function today have not been experienced by the majority of the students' parents; consequently, there is a great need for communication of the guidance services to

¹Myrick, op. cit., p. 3.

parents, for increased parent contact, and a clarification to parents as to what counselors do do and don't do. Misunderstandings are not only present but there are also still parents who believe that the only job of the school is academic. They hold to the conviction that schools should limit themselves to academic instruction, that "what was good enough for me, then, is good enough for them, now."

One of the best forms of public relations with parents and the community is the demonstration. Activities which demonstrate that counselors are concerned, interested, and ready to work for the students and with the parents will help to clarify what counselors do, who they are, and that they care. These activities may take the counselor to the parent or they may bring the parent into the school. The following procedures are presented as means by which rapport with parents and the community can be improved as part of a planned public relations program by the counselor.

1. Orientation to a new school usually presents a problem to students and often to their parents. When students change from one level of schooling to another, the transitional process can be eased by the counselor's implementation of a plan of orientation both for students and parents. Such a plan requires the cooperation of teachers, administrators, and the older students, as well as considerable time and effort on the part of the counselor. Since the writer is not assigned to the incoming class, grade seven, in her school, this program will not be discussed in detail here. However, the interested reader is referred to the September, 1971, issue of The Guidance Clinic and the article, "Demonstrating the Counselor's Role: A Junior High School Orientation Program," by Charles A. King.

2. Group guidance for parents can be initiated by the counselor. Groups of parents can be invited to the school for a meeting with teachers, administrators, and counselors or with just the counselor, depending on the purpose of the meeting. For eighth grade students who will be selecting classes and making far-reaching decisions during that school year, a pre-registration meeting of parents and students is recommended. Teachers, administrators, and counselors should be present at such a meeting to explain course offerings, high school requirements, the nature and scope of the classes offered, etc. Again, such a program requires the cooperation of all involved as well as a considerable amount of time and effort in organization, but it is an effective means of demonstrating to parents that the school will make the effort to involve them and keep them informed.

Group guidance sessions have been successful in many districts, which is an indication that parents want and will use this means for gaining assistance in helping their children get the most out of school. Parents of eighth and ninth grade students can be invited to a group discussion at which time the counselor could discuss suggestions for parents when school first begins (and the problems that arise), possible ways to react when progress reports and failing grades reach home, when to use criticism and praise, setting standards of conduct, handling the student as a learning, a dependent individual, dealing with students with a poor self-image, and ways for the home and school to work together.^{1,2}

¹Myldred F. Hutchins, "Helping Your Child Get the Most Out of School," The Guidance Clinic, Parker Publishing Co., Inc., West Nyack, New York, Jan., 1971, pp. 13 - 15.

²Gelatt, op. cit., pp. 9 - 10.

3. Group counseling is another kind of parent meeting which has recently been introduced in a few schools. The Office of Pupil Personnel Services, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, Illinois, offers assistance to counselors who wish to establish a group counseling program. The purpose of parent-group counseling is to prove that the counselor can be directly helpful to parents of teenage students. A further purpose is to provide an opportunity for parents to discuss openly their role as parents. Since students of junior high age are frequently experiencing their first intense conflicts with their parents, this activity seems especially appropriate for the parents of this age student. Since programs of this nature are new, this State Office offers to provide group facilitators to assist the counselor at the initial meetings. Recommendations for the selection of a group of 8 - 10 parents, news releases, sample letters of invitations to parents, etc. are also provided by the State Office.¹

When the counselor has identified a problem area, group counseling can also be set up with a specific purpose in mind. A pilot group counseling program dealing with parents of students identified as under-achievers, rebels, attendance or adjustment problems was evaluated as helpful and productive. Details of this program are specified in the article, "Counseling Parents for Improved Student Performance," and it would appear that such a group would have application at the Charleston Junior High School.² A program such as this appears to offer opportunities

¹"Parent Group Discussions," Department of Program Innovations and Pupil Personnel Services, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Newsletter, Vol. IV, No. 3, Feb., 1971.

²John R. Smith, "Counseling Parents for Improved Student Performance," The Guidance Clinic, Parker Publishing Co., Inc., West Nyack, New York, Oct., 1971, pp. 7 - 10.

for communication and progress with parents who otherwise have little, if any, positive contact with the school.

4. Home visits are a means for counselors to take the mystique out of their jobs and sell their services to the community. This kind of activity is again a demonstration to parents that the school cares about the student and the parent. Lines of communication can be established during a summer visitation program which will reap benefits all during the school year for all concerned. It is recommended that a summer program of this nature be undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To aid in updating records.
2. To uncover previously unknown physical and mental health problems.
3. To aid the counselor in gaining understanding of his students through greater knowledge of their home environment.
4. To establish lines of communication between the home and school through the guidance department.

Summer home visitation, in districts which have undertaken it, has proved to be highly beneficial in the eyes of both the community and the school.^{1,2,3}

5. A monthly newsletter to parents can serve as a vital link between the school and the home. This newsletter might include articles on topics other than guidance, but should always include a regular section on some aspect of guidance. Guidance articles might cover areas such as

¹Jacobsen, op. cit., p. 13.

²Wesley Helberg, "New Berlin Inaugurates Summer Visitation Program," School Counselor, Vol. XV, No. 1, Sept., 1967, p. 50.

³Wendell Duncan and Harry A. Danielson, "Counseling Incoming Parents," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, Vol. LIII, Oct., 1969, p. 37.

how parents can help students make wise vocational choices, planning for high school and later, the meaning of test scores, goals for children, etc.

6. Stuffing the grade report envelope is not new. Enclosure of a mimeographed page containing information which the counselor feels it is important for the parent to receive is quite effective. This can be a report of noticeable improvement in the student's progress or test results, indication of a pattern or trend in test scores, information about an approaching series on educational television of particular interest to parents, announcement of a speaker on drug abuse, etc.

7. Evening office hours can make the guidance services available to many parents who otherwise cannot seek the help of the counselor or be available to the counselor for consultation. The guidance office can close the following morning to facilitate such a schedule. This demonstrates to parents the sincere desire of the counselor to serve the parent and his child. Counselors who have offered evening hours have found to their surprise that a number of students who have never before indicated an interest in counseling prefer the privacy and absence of peer pressure during the evening hours, and utilize the counselor's services at this time.¹

8. Get invited to PTA functions, coffee hours, block club meetings, etc., where the counselor can show parents through multi-media approaches how their children might be benefiting from guidance services.

9. Contact editors of local newspapers, neighborhood papers, cultural newspapers, and county papers to see if a series of articles could be printed explaining the guidance services and how students are

¹Jacobsen, op. cit., pp. 13 - 14.

helped by them. It will probably be necessary for the counselor to offer to prepare the articles rather than to expect the publication to send a reporter to interview him.^{1,2}

10. See that parents and laymen are encouraged to observe the guidance services in action. Personally invite these people to the school to observe particular activities, such as guidance assemblies or the functioning of the guidance committee.³

11. Cooperate with the administration in a "Go to School Night for Parents." Early in the year, in cooperation with administrators and teachers, participate in an evening during which parents follow the daily program of the child in a shortened schedule and meet the homeroom and class teacher in turn. The major aim is curriculum information, but a guidance orientation presentation should be included in the evening's activities.⁴

12. Periodically develop and distribute bulletins and brochures not only to parents, teachers, students, and administrators, but also to community agencies and groups. Included in such a flyer should be current functions and proposed services offered by the guidance program. The counselor should become acquainted with the directors of all youth affiliated agencies. Brochures such as this which are used to inform

¹Toldson, op. cit., pp. 297 - 299.

²Richard Boggio, "Who Should Determine Counselor Role?" The Guidance Clinic, Parker Publishing Co., Inc., West Nyack, New York, March, 1971, pp. 3 - 5.

³Howard L. Blanchard and Lawrence Flaum, Guidance--A Longitudinal Approach, (Minneapolis, Minn., Burgess Publishing Co., 1968), p. 328.

⁴Edwin C. Mustard, "A Case Study of a Junior High School Public Relations Program," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, Vol. XLIV, Sept., 1960, pp. 118 - 121.

them of the school services and programs will encourage them to utilize this program in any way which will help to serve youth better. Progress could then be made toward the development of a reciprocal referral service with these community agencies.¹

13. Suggest or encourage personnel in administrative positions to distribute periodical reports of the school district to every resident. The reports can be used to highlight key points and are devoted to some definite part of the school program. Reports prepared by the counselors publicizing guidance activities should be very much a part of such a publication.²

14. Cooperate with the school board in contributing a presentation to the local Citizens Consulting Committee, which is a group of interested laymen organized for the purpose of informing this committee, and the community in turn, as to all the facets of the school program. Depending on the time allotted to guidance, the counselor will hopefully have the opportunity to interpret the role and the activities of the guidance department to the council. The questions asked by the citizens should be a clue to the counselor as to those areas in which greater communication is needed.

15. As a person who will be expected to interpret the entire school program to the public when asked, the counselor will need to make a conscious effort to become particularly well informed as to school philosophy, school objectives, new programs, school personnel, curriculum, and even athletic events.

¹Toldson, op. cit., p. 298.

²Mustard, loc. cit.

16. Contact the local radio station manager regarding establishing a regular radio program which will deal with some aspect of the guidance services.

17. Submit a proposal to the local or nearby television station manager regarding outstanding guidance programs which would have popular appeal and which would dramatize the guidance services.

18. Evaluation of guidance services should be sought continuously in the guidance committee of which parents and those in the community are members. A brief, written questionnaire should be completed in this group anonymously, with the results shared and plans made for incorporating the results into future plans.

19. Following group guidance and group counseling meetings, brief evaluations should be completed by participating parents.

20. At the end of the school year, send brief questionnaires home with students for anonymous evaluation of guidance services.

21. Seek evaluation by the community of guidance services. This could be part of an evaluation of an all school services survey, could be conducted by the school unit counselors if funds could be made available by the unit for expenses, or could be conducted by a graduate student at Eastern Illinois University in the Educational Guidance Department.

Activities for a planned public relations program by the counselor with the primary objective of improved communication have been suggested. These activities may involve students, school staff, or members of the community. Inherent in these activities will be the need for "know how." Next, the techniques of public relations which will be considered would apply to these activities and with which it would be imperative that the counselor undertaking a public relations program be conversant.

Media of Public Relations

The field of public relations is a comprehensive and complex one. Public relations specialists are highly trained individuals who have acquired a wealth of knowledge regarding the interdependence of public groups and the most effective means for improving communication between these groups. Government, industries, and labor, to mention only a few, have recognized the power of public opinion and as a result have incorporated public relations personnel into their organizations. The need for public relations programs in education is recognized and many of the larger school districts employ a specialist for this purpose. It is obvious that this is the ideal means for meeting this need for communication with the public. However, in smaller school districts such as that of Charleston, Illinois, this ideal is not possible and consequently, responsibility for public relations resides with the superintendent and school principals. A specialized area such as guidance has a great need for communication with the public and it would appear unrealistic to expect a school principal to accept the responsibility for guidance public relations activities such as the majority of those discussed. Therefore, responsibility for implementation of these activities rests with the counselor.

It is not the purpose of this study to investigate the complexities of public relations in depth but it appears that the counselor undertaking a public relations program will need a working knowledge of some of the basic techniques of public relations.

Personal contact is of supreme importance. An organization expresses itself daily in personal contacts and conversations.¹ The counselor must

¹Cutlip and Center, op. cit., p. 192.

be cognizant of this fact at all times, recognizing that any other methods of transmission are supplemental aids. This means that, to be most effective, the counselor needs to develop expertise in interpersonal relationships. Skill in public speaking and the ability to lead group discussions will prove most valuable.

Many of the activities recommended for a guidance public relations program involve the use of printed material developed by the counselor. The National School Public Relations Association provides a publication which is recommended as a resource in the preparation of printed releases such as newsletters, bulletins, and brochures. This is the seven volume periodical, "Public Relations Gold Mine."¹ Another volume, Print it Right, is recommended for practical information concerning the techniques of publications. It is published by the same organization.²

Perhaps foremost among the media in terms of accessibility to the counselor is the local newspaper. The counselor should make an attempt to get to know the editor. Although he is not commonly thought of in this context, the editor is also an educator. He performs an important community function in terms of molding public opinion and, because of this, his importance to the schools is apparent. His attitude, of necessity, will depend upon how well he is informed. The counselor's role, in this regard, then becomes clear. Since few counselors are skilled in writing newspaper copy, the counselor will, in most instances, have to depend on a reporter. It would be very desirable to have a reporter

¹"Public Relations Gold Mine," National School Public Relations Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., Vol. 1 - VII, 1963.

²Print it Right, National School Public Relations Association, 1201 Sixteenth St. N. W., Washington, D. C., 1953.

assigned to the school unit. In this way, he would become familiar with the schools, their programs, and their problems. Much can be learned from working with a reporter. Initially, the counselor will need to determine what is news. The reporter can be invaluable in this regard by indicating what material he wants, when he would like to have it, and the section of the paper in which it will appear. Involvement is the secret of objective coverage. Consequently, the reporter should be encouraged to attend meetings of all kinds, including meetings of the school board.

Up to this point, the discussion has concerned what the newspaper might expect from the counselor. It is also important to note what the counselor can expect from the news media. Objective coverage should be the minimum expectation which the counselor might have. Not only printed copy but also photo coverage can do much to enhance the image of the guidance program. Perhaps the option of discussing with the reporter any copy prior to its release would be a desirable one. It should be clearly understood, however, that this is not an attempt on the counselor's part to "gag" the reporter or to slant the thrust of an article. After a few such meetings, the reporter should be able to determine how the counselor would like to have material presented. Eventually perhaps the counselor may feel competent to prepare his own material. Excellent sources are available for this purpose.¹

It has been estimated that over 98 per cent of the homes in this country have at least one radio.² The use of automobile radios supplements

¹The Schools and The Press, National School Public Relations Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., 1965.

²Jones, op. cit., p. 72.

the home listening by several million. Even though television is much younger than radio, it is experiencing a rapid growth. Recent estimates indicate that 80% of American homes have at least one television set. Thus radio and television provide a wide listening and viewing audience for telling not only the school story but also the guidance services story. As a general rule, interviews and panel discussions are considerably more appealing to the audience than a direct talk. There are some drawbacks to the use of the radio and television. No program can hold an audience if it doesn't warrant attention. Any program must compete with others being offered on other stations at the same time.

Most of the working relationships discussed with regard to newspaper editors would also apply to radio station managers and to television. If maximum benefit is to be derived from these media, the guidance counselor should have program proposals available to submit to station managers when requesting broadcast or television time. Paramount in such planning is the importance of having each broadcast or telecast serve a specific function or purpose. Although the potential of television for classroom instruction is not fully known at present, the significance of television on public relations is much greater than that of radio.

We have dealt superficially in this section with the techniques of public relations as they apply to the planned guidance public relations program of this field study. A more exhaustive study is beyond the scope of this paper. Numerous selected references have been provided for those who would pursue this concept in more detail. Material presented in this section indicates that the various media possess both obvious advantages and distinct drawbacks in terms of communicating with the public. Radio, whose influence is inescapable and which permeates all sections of our

society, is facing a somewhat unpredictable future. One of the selling points in television's favor is the fact that the programs become more personal as sight is added to sound. The paucity of quality programming, however, is a marked drawback in this regard. Although the use of newspapers, bulletins, and other printed material provide a less expensive and more accessible means of communicating with the public than do either radio or television, all printed material must be read, allowing for individual interpretation on the part of the reader. Dissemination of the printed word also rests upon the willingness of the public to read it. There is no one best method, then, for establishing this communication with the public which is so important to the success of the guidance program. A judicious use of the media which are available cannot help but augment the effectiveness of a program of public relations.

CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The status of school public relations, generally, and guidance public relations, specifically, has indicated a need for the procedures proposed in this study. Guidance and counseling services are relative newcomers on the educational scene. As such, they find themselves divided from within concerning the role of pupil personnel workers. External criticism is also engaged in by public figures as well as local community members. The need for public support and the power of public opinion have long been recognized by educators in general, and more specifically by guidance workers. However, even though the need has been apparent, little has been accomplished in terms of implementation of planned public relations programs for the guidance services.

A gleaning of the literature reveals activities designed for the improvement of guidance public relations. For the most part, however, these are presented with extreme dispersion. It remains for someone to unify the disparate activities into a cohesive and definitive guide, based on proven public relations principles.

Poor public relations techniques have been a cause of many of the misunderstandings which have occurred between the schools and the public they serve. Guidance services, because of their relatively late emergence, are, as a general rule, less well understood and accepted than other school programs. The opinion persists among educational authorities that much needs to be done in the area of public relations. It would appear

that the guidance services have even a greater need for communication with the public. Unfortunately, few counselors possess the training or experience necessary to formulate and implement an effective program of this type.

Recommendations

It is recommended that guidance counselors need to familiarize themselves with the principles and techniques of effective public relations. Provision must be made in the formulation of any public relations program for the adequate allotment of time and attention needed for the maintenance of a continuous program.

Centralization of public relation functions is desirable if the program is to have continuity. Since any program of public relations represents a two-way process, the participation of everyone affected by the program should be secured. During the conduct of the program, continuous evaluation will serve to identify shortcomings so that they can be eliminated or harmonized with the current program.

The writer believes that a comparable study would be valuable in regard to a guidance public relations program at the high school level in this community. Although both the junior high school and the high school counselors would share some common problems, there are others which are indigenous to specific grade levels.

This study has revealed the need for a source which would, in one volume, discuss in greater depth the areas investigated in this study. Provision should be made in the major curriculum in guidance for the inclusion of a specific course, or courses, which would prepare the counselor to deal effectively with this critical aspect of the guidance program.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Examples of materials distributed to students, teachers, and/or parents.

How do counselors help
students at Charleston Junior
High



COUNSELORS ARE HERE TO

H E L P

STUDENTS

TEACHERS

PARENTS

These are services the counselors offer

Y O U . . .

SOLVING PROBLEMS and improving relationships. The counselor helps you to deal with difficult situations, to understand other people better, and to progress in your own personal and social growth.

INFORMATION about high school courses, colleges, occupational opportunities and training. There will be assemblies about

high school -- college -- jobs -- careers

With the help of parents, counselors assist you in making suitable educational and occupational choices.

REGISTRATION for 9th and 10th grade classes.

Junior High counselors help you register for 9th grade; Senior High counselors help you register for 10th grade. Your parents are encouraged to come help you register for 9th grade.

TESTS are given by the counselors.

7th (fall) Mental Ability

*8th (fall) Achievement
(winter) Aptitude

*9th (fall) Achievement

You and your parents are encouraged to use your * test scores in making decisions about high school classes, college, and careers.

GETTING TO KNOW YOURSELF BETTER Counselors will use test scores, along with results from other tests which you may choose to take, to help you understand yourself better. You may ask for this kind of assistance at any time.

ORIENTATION is conducted by the counselors. They are responsible for helping you become familiar with your new school. All new students other than those entering from Charleston's sixth grades, are seen for individual conferences within the first few weeks they are in school.

ACADEMIC PROBLEMS can make life miserable. Students who are making poor grades may meet with the counselor to discuss the trouble they are having. Counselors may help individual students or groups with improving study skills.

CLASS PLACEMENT is sometimes wrong. Students who believe a change in classes is needed should contact a counselor as soon as possible. Don't delay. It is much easier to get a class changed early in the year. The counselor will see your teacher and if a change is decided on, you will need to bring a note from home giving parent approval. The recommendation will then go to the assistant principal for a schedule change, if possible.

LEAVING SCHOOL requires some planning. If you find you are going to be moving away or are considering dropping out, SEE A COUNSELOR.

PARENTS AND COUNSELORS work together on certain matters. The counselor will usually discuss this with you before contacting your parents. Parents should feel free to contact the counselors.

TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS are both interested in helping you get the most out of school. Sometimes a teacher may ask a counselor to meet with a student.

ABSENSES can't be helped when you're sick but frequent absences may indicate that something else is bothering you. A counselor will ask to talk with you if you miss a great deal of school.

BEHAVIOR that gets you in continual trouble is hard on everybody concerned, YOU, especially. However, students with repeated problems in behavior will be referred to a counselor for counseling.

REFERRALS may be made to the school psychologist. Counselors arrange for students to talk with the school psychologist when they feel these services are needed. The school psychologist has different training than the counselor and can sometimes help where the counselor cannot.

E. I. U. PROGRAMS are planned for junior high students. The counselors work with E. I. U. students in getting these programs organized. You will be informed when these are planned so that you may take part if you wish.

HOW do you see a counselor? Just stop by the guidance office anytime. You'll find one of the counselors will be glad to meet with you at a time which will not conflict with your classes. One of the counselors may see you right away or will give you a hall pass for another time. If both counselors are busy, fill out a slip, "Request to See a Counselor" and place it in the box provided for it. You will receive a hall pass for an appointment from your homeroom teacher.

WHICH counselor should you see? Counselor assignments are posted on the wall in the guidance waiting room. This will tell you which counselor has your cumulative folder. However, you should feel free to see either counselor.

WILL the counselor keep your confidence?

YES You may give the counselor permission to discuss things with teachers or parents.

APPENDIX B

To _____ (teacher) Subject _____

From _____ (counselor) Date _____

I have just had an opportunity to chat with _____ (student's signature) regarding (his) (her) difficulties in your class. I hope some improvement will now be forthcoming. Please retain this slip, if you wish, for a reasonable period of time and then notify me as follows:

I have observed some improvement in attitude and/or achievement since your conference.

I have not observed any significant improvement in attitude and/or achievement since the conference.

Additional comments: _____

Signed _____

Date _____

APPENDIX C

Teacher Comment Form

To _____ Subject _____ Date _____

_____ has come to the attention of the counselor. Your assistance would be appreciated in helping gather information about this student. Please complete the following form and return it to _____ by _____.

Academic Behavior:

Positive

Negative

Social Behavior:

Positive

Negative

Other Comments or Information:

Positive

Negative

(Signature)

Resume of Information:

To _____
(Teacher)

From _____
(Counselor)

APPENDIX D

Figure 2: GUIDANCE BULLETIN FOR TEACHERS

"DIFFERENT" CHILD LAUDED

Every family's got at least one. The child who will not conform, the rebel...the loner...the one who is different.

As a pre-schooler, he's the wry one with the active thyroid...the one who gets locked in rest rooms because he stayed behind to find where the water went when you pushed down the handle. He's the one who wanders away from home and gets his arm stuck in a piece of construction pipe. He's the one who rejects store-bought toys in favor of taking the registers out and making tunnels out of old oatmeal boxes. He gets more lickings than all the other kids put together.

In school, he gets check-marks for not being neat, for not working to capacity. In his preoccupation with other things, he is unaware that he drives his family crazy, arriving late for dinner every night...wearing his socks and underwear to bed to save time in the mornings...cutting the grass only when he needs the money.

The older he gets, the less aware he becomes of his odds with the world. There aren't enough weekends for his interests and his projects. In the garage is his "pumping heart," which he devised out of plastic bags, tubing and cake coloring. Cluttering the bedroom is the remains of his puppet show with the blanket

(curtain tucked in the top bunk bed. On the table is his latest book (it takes an entire afternoon to read it) entitled "Hoyd: The Story of the Insecure Snake with Bad Breath."

Parents are awed by genius. The child who stands apart only puzzles, confuses, and tries their patience.

They confess to each other their fears for his future, this child who is unpredictable, but whose feet rarely touch the ground. "What's to become of him?" Some of them, with their insatiable curiosity and hard-headed drive, will beat paths of greatness and discovery, the likes of Winston Churchill and Michelangelo.

Others won't be great at all, but with their enthusiasm, imagination, creativity, and penchant for living life to its fullest, who is to say they are not the first to touch the stars? Look at him closely.

He's something special to remind us all that life is a precious gift to be lived to its fullest.

And as Henry David Thoreau said, "IF A MAN DOES NOT KEEP PACE WITH HIS COMPANIONS, PERHAPS IT IS BECAUSE HE HEARS A DIFFERENT DRUMMER. LET HIM STEP TO THE MUSIC HE HEARS."

By: Erma Bombeck

Figure 3: GUIDANCE BULLETIN FOR TEACHERS

Guidance counselors and educators often assume that a poor person is just a rich person without money. However, by taking a moment to reflect on the implications of the following as they relate to developing personalities and the self-concept, it is clear that being economically disadvantaged means much more than having no money.

POVERTY is loneliness and no one cares.

POVERTY is never getting the suit or dress you really want.

POVERTY is Mom doing spaghetti in every way known to man so you won't guess you're getting it for the tenth time this week.

POVERTY is being sick, waiting all day to see the doctor, and then being told he is out.

POVERTY is seeing other kids with Dads and wishing that you had one.

POVERTY is being a "bad boy" at four years old.

POVERTY is never being completely filled up.

POVERTY is wearing badly fitting shoes so that your feet always hurt.

POVERTY is being a school dropout at six.

POVERTY is having babies and not wanting them.

POVERTY is being old, alone and frightened, with only \$32 a month left after you pay your rent.

POVERTY is applying for a job and being turned down over and over because you have no skills or don't know how to apply.

POVERTY is never owning anything you can call yours, not even a corner which is your own.

POVERTY is also anger, fear, irresponsibility, lack of motivation, alcoholism, prostitution, despair, hopelessness.

POVERTY is falling down, and no one comes to kiss the hurt away.

-From Pennsylvania's GUIDANCE KEYNOTES

Figure 4: GUIDANCE BULLETIN FOR TEACHERS

THIRTEEN STEPS TO PREPARE A CHILD FOR VISITS TO A PSYCHIATRIST

1. Ignore a child completely; never listen.
2. Deny his feelings of fear and anger (all negative feelings) consistently.
3. Complete activities developed spontaneously by the child, i.e., "Finish" things for him.
4. Threaten him with withdrawal of your affection if he will not do what you say.
5. Rush him; train him to really get things done fast.
6. Never set limits.
7. If you do set limits, vacillate, so he really doesn't have a chance to develop a defense.
8. Don't deal directly with situations. Divert the child's thinking and attention so he forgets for the moment what he was doing, thinking, or feeling.
9. Never be quite satisfied with his behavior and efforts.
10. Always compare his behavior with more desirable forms of behavior as evidenced by his peers, older siblings, or the baby.
11. Correct him consistently even in inconsequential matters lest the child have erroneous ideas and misinformation.
12. Be an extremist on such things as keeping clean, eating lots, sleeping now, being quiet, and talking right.
13. And finally, don't be affectionate. Do you want him to grow up to be a sentimentalist? Maybe he would even love the psychiatrist!

APPENDIX E

Figure 5: TEST STUDY REPORT

**CALIFORNIA READING TEST, FORM W, JR. HIGH LEVEL
GRADE 7**

ACTUAL GRADE PLACEMENT: 7.2

AVERAGE FOR GRADE 7

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Reading Vocabulary | 7.6 |
| Reading Comprehension | 7.6 |
| TOTAL READING | 7.6 |
| AVERAGE I.Q. FOR CLASS | 101 |

PERCENTAGE OF ITEMS MISSED ON TEST AS A WHOLE:
Example: 9% of the errors made on the test were made in the Math Vocabulary, 9% of the errors made on the test were made in the Science Vocabulary, etc.

VOCABULARY

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Math | 9% |
| Science | 9% |
| Social Science | 10% |
| General | 9% |
| TOTAL | 37% |

COMPREHENSION

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Following Directions | 9% |
| Reference Skills | 18% |
| Interpretation | 36% |
| TOTAL | 63% |

The average I.Q. for the class last year was 103. The average grade placements for the 7th grade last year were:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Vocabulary | 7.4 |
| Comprehension | 7.5 |
| TOTAL READING | 7.4 |

| NUMBER | GRADE LEVEL | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|--------|--|------------|----|--|-----------|
| 0 | Students reading on the 12th grade level | 0% | 29 | Students reading on the 6th grade level | 14% |
| 4 | Students reading on the 11th grade level | 2% | 21 | Students reading on the 5th grade level | 9% |
| 25 | Students reading on the 10th grade level | 12% | 15 | Students reading on the 4th grade level | 7% |
| 24 | Students reading on the 9th grade level | 11% | 3 | Students reading on the 3rd grade level | 1% |
| 44 | Students reading on the 8th grade level | 21% | 97 | Students reading above the 7th grade level | 46% (40%) |
| 48 | Students reading on the 7th grade level | 23% | 48 | Students reading on the 7th grade level | 23% (21%) |
| | | | 68 | Students reading below the 7th grade level | 31% (39%) |

(Percentages in parentheses represent last year)

COMPARISON OF READING SCORES - GRADE 7
Tests were administered in September 1957-68. In October, 1969.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS READING ON EACH GRADE LEVEL.

| | '57 | '58 | '59 | '60 | '61 | '62 | '63 | '64 | '65 | '66 | '67 | '68 | '69 |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|
| 12th grade level | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | .8 | 2 | .4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 11th grade level | 0 | 0 | 0 | .4 | .4 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 10th grade level | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3.6 | 8 | 6 | 8 | .4 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 12 |
| 9th grade level | 11 | 10 | 20 | 17 | 18 | 14.2 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 19 | 16 | 13 | 11 |
| 8th grade level | 24 | 19 | 22 | 23 | 20 | 21 | 20 | 21 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 19 | 21 |
| 7th grade level | 27 | 29 | 27 | 30 | 31 | 24 | 21 | 21.2 | 20 | 22 | 20 | 21 | 23 |
| 6th grade level | 19 | 25 | 16 | 18 | 27 | 19 | 21 | 18 | 17 | 15 | 16.5 | 17 | 14 |
| 5th grade level | 13 | 10 | 10 | 8.6 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 10 | 11 | 8.5 | 12 | 9 |
| 4th grade level | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | .4 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| 3rd grade level | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Percentage reading above 7th grade level | 38 | 32 | 46 | 42 | 42 | 46 | 48 | 53 | 49 | 46 | 46 | 40 | 46 |
| Percentage reading on 7th grade level | 27 | 29 | 27 | 30 | 31 | 24 | 21 | 21.2 | 20 | 22 | 20 | 21 | 23 |
| Percentage reading under 7th grade level | 35 | 39 | 27 | 28 | 27 | 30 | 21 | 25.8 | 31 | 32 | 34 | 39 | 31 |
| AVERAGE TESTED GRADE PLACEMENT | 7.5 | 7.3 | 7.7 | 7.6 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.9 | 8.0 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.4 | 7.6 |
| AVERAGE I.Q. FOR CLASS | 102 | 105 | 103 | XXX | XXX | 107 | 105 | 107 | 105 | 103 | 104 | 103 | 101 |

APPENDIX F

Figure 6: EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Date _____ Grade _____
Student's last name _____ First _____ Middle _____
Place of birth _____ Date of birth _____
Father's last name _____ First _____ Middle _____
Mother's last name _____ First _____ Middle _____
Father living _____ If not, please give cause of death _____
Mother living _____ If not, please give cause of death _____
Name and ages of brothers and sisters. Please give name of school.

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>AGE</u> | <u>SCHOOL</u> |
|-------------|------------|---------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Father's Business Address _____ Phone _____
Mother's Business Address _____ Phone _____
If parents cannot be reached call: _____ Phone _____
Doctor _____ Phone _____

Please list any physical disabilities, diseases, or handicaps which your child has:

In the event of an emergency, are there any special instructions for us to follow before you or the doctor arrives:

Is there any other information we should have in order to safeguard your child:

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