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## A Study Of The Curriculum Of The Douglass Elementary School, Mexia, Texas

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A STUDY OF THE CURRICULUM OF THE DOUGLASS  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MEXIA, TEXAS



JACKSON

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A STUDY OF THE CURRICULUM OF THE DOUGLASS  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MEXIA, TEXAS

APPROVED BY:

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science

In The

Graduate Division

of

Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College  
Prairie View, Texas

August, 1957

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Much emphasis has been placed on planning the elementary curriculum to meet the child's interests and needs. The curriculum should provide the child with a variety of experiences that will enable him to succeed in the society of which he is a member.

In order that pupils of the Douglass Elementary School will live more effectively in the complex contemporary society, the curriculum should include various wholesome activities and educative experiences. Through these activities the child should be able to explore and discover his interests and abilities. Experiences should be provided in the Douglass Elementary School which will equip the pupils with the foundation they will need to participate fully in the high school programs. The school programs should also prepare the pupils to meet the demands of the society.

The curriculum of the Douglass Elementary School of east Mexia, Texas, fails to provide some of the experiences which should be available in the elementary school. Most of the pupils of this school will enter the high school department of the Dunbar High School of Mexia, Texas. In the Dunbar High School there will be activities in which

some of these pupils will want to participate. With a limited background in some of the areas of study these students will be at a disadvantage. These limitations will prevent the full development of the child and cause the child to have a feeling of insecurity.

One of the basic needs of the child is the feeling of security and a sense of belonging to his society.<sup>1</sup> This need should be filled in order to contribute to the full development of the child. It can be fulfilled only if adequate experiences have been provided from which a background can be obtained. A good foundation in the elementary school will enable the child to establish his status in his society and to share effectively in the high school activities.

The purpose of this study is to determine the adequacy of the curriculum of the Douglass Elementary School. An attempt will be made also to find answers to the following questions: (1) In what ways does the curriculum meet the needs of the pupils? (2) How should the curriculum be revised to meet the pupil's needs? (3) Are the pupils capable of participating effectively in the high school programs? (4) Are the pupils prepared to take part in community programs? (5) Do pupils receive adequate training in common essentials of learning? (6) What should be done to

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<sup>1</sup> William B. Ragan, Modern Elementary Curriculum (New York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1953), p. 60.



improve the curriculum?

Method of Procedure.-- The following procedure was used in making this study: Information was secured through observation of the school program, from teacher's reports, principal's reports and questionnaire. A study of recent books, periodicals and journals was made in order to obtain knowledge of desirable standards for an elementary school curriculum.

A survey was used to make inquiry regarding former students' viewpoints of the Douglass Elementary School. The data were analyzed to seek answers to the six questions listed above.<sup>2</sup>

School Background.-- The Douglass Elementary School has a faculty composed of five persons; four teachers and one teaching principal. The eight grades are taught on the departmental plan.

No attempt is made to discredit the policies of the school nor the methods of teaching. This study is concerned with determining whether the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils and the extent to which it contributes effectively to the full development of the child.

The enrollment for the 1956-'57 school year was one hundred and eleven. The enrollment for the past eight years has averaged one hundred and fifteen pupils per

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<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 2-3.

school year. There were fourteen eighth grade graduates in the class of 1956\*57. This class began school in the first grade with twenty-two pupils. Over a period of eight years, eight pupils or thirty-six per cent of the first grade pupils had dropped out of the eighth grade class. Most of these pupils moved to other cities.

There were seventeen eighth grade graduates in 1953. This class would have finished senior high school in the class of 1957. Of this class of seventeen pupils, only four graduated from high school. Seven of the seventeen did not enter any high school. Ten entered high school and six of the ten entrants dropped out before reaching the senior class.

At the time this survey was made, there were thirty-seven students from the Douglass Elementary School who attended Dunbar High School. From 1952-1957 there was a loss of forty-six students of school age who had attended Douglass Elementary School. Sixteen of them moved to other cities to attend school, six married and thirteen secured jobs. Two other individuals have entered the armed forces and nine persons are idle.

The data used in the study include responses from the former Douglass Elementary pupils.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Considerable research has been done in regard to the elementary school curriculum. The elementary school teacher should understand clearly the meaning of the word curriculum. Spears states that, "the term curriculum has been somewhat elusive for the teacher."<sup>3</sup> A very concise definition of the term curriculum is given by Ragan: "All of the experiences of children for which the school accepts the responsibility."<sup>4</sup>

A study of the curriculum should be guided by clearly defined objectives of the elementary school. It is necessary to know what the school curriculum is designed to do for students in order to know whether or not the objectives have or are being accomplished. A study of the elementary curriculum should be made continually to determine whether it meets the needs of the pupils, whether it should be revised and to what extent the curriculum should be revised.

The ultimate purpose of the elementary school curriculum is to develop appropriate behavior patterns in

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<sup>3</sup>Harold Spears, The Teacher and Curriculum Planning (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Ragan, op. cit., p. 3.

children, to guide children in making satisfactory social adjustment and economic efficiency. Mehl, Mills and Douglass state:

. . . it is the purpose of education so to stimulate and guide the growth of the individual that he will function effectively in certain areas and activities of life upon the importance of which there is fairly general agreement among careful students of education--vocation, home, citizenship, and enjoyment of leisure--and will also possess in high degree mental and physical health and vigor and the skills and interests appropriate to most effective learning in the future.<sup>5</sup>

It has been stated in the objectives of education that one purpose is to establish appropriate behavior patterns. The curriculum should provide the opportunity for the expression of behavior. The experiences which are provided in the curriculum should be based on the pupil's needs and interests. Spears states further:

So closely must the curriculum be tied into the needs and the natures of the children at hand that it is impossible to conceive a curriculum without doing so in connection with the particular children to be served by it.<sup>6</sup>

The methods used to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum include: the observation of behavior changes, interviews, the use of questionnaires and teacher's and principal's reports.

To this effect Spears also states:

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<sup>5</sup>Marie A. Mehl, Hubert H. Mills and Harl R. Douglass, Teaching in Elementary School (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950), p. 45.

<sup>6</sup>Spears, op. cit., p. 75.

Curriculum study does not imply that the existing curriculum is a failure or that teachers are doing a poor job. The greater the enthusiasm of teachers in studying the job, the greater the possibility that the job is not a poor one.<sup>7</sup>

In the attempt to discover the desirable standards for the modern curriculum the writer consulted books and articles by educators. There are different types of curricula according to Spears, "The subject curriculum, broad-fields curriculum and experience curriculum."<sup>8</sup> Stratemeyer says, "A curriculum that helps the learner cope with situations of everyday living emphasizes the use and interrelationships among various bodies of subject matter."<sup>9</sup> The teacher then, with the aid of the pupils must decide on the one which will challenge the learner and bring forth active participation in growth experiences.

In support of the broad-fields curriculum Caswell and Foshay believe:

The principal advantages of the broad fields over the specific subject plan or organization are two. In the first place, extreme fragmentation of the curriculum is avoided. Instead of having twelve or fourteen subjects, five or six are sufficient. This makes possible longer time assignments and larger units of study, both of which are important. In

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>8</sup> Harold Spears, The Emerging High School Curriculum (New York: The American Book Company, 1948), pp. 51-52.

<sup>9</sup> Florence B. Stratemeyer and Margaret McKim, Guides to a Curriculum for Modern Living (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952), p. 59.

the second place, the topics of study in broad fields tend to be more general in nature.<sup>10</sup>

Beck, Cook and Kearney outlined a good curriculum in action as one in which there are:

Teacher-pupil planning  
Organizing and planning  
Dramatic play  
Constructive activities  
Field trips  
The use of audio-visual teaching materials  
The use of the library.<sup>11</sup>

In answer to the question, what kind of curriculums are needed? Rosenberger says:

An effective curriculum is developed around the needs of those who are to be taught and around the over-all needs of the community or nation in which they live. An effective curriculum contains whatever is necessary to prepare the learner to live in the world in which he finds himself. An effective curriculum in a system of compulsory education also takes into consideration the interests and abilities of the student.<sup>12</sup>

Johnson and Legg<sup>13</sup> made a study to obtain information on youth employment problems. The questions asked the

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<sup>10</sup>Hollis Caswell and Wellesley A. Foshay, Education in the Elementary School (New York: The American Book Company, 1950), p. 71.

<sup>11</sup>Robert H. Beck, Walter W. Cook and Noland C. Kearney, Curriculum in the Modern Elementary School (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953), pp. 270-271.

<sup>12</sup>Homer T. Rosenberger, "What kinds of Curriculums are Needed?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Vol. XI (February, 1956), p. 55.

<sup>13</sup>Elizabeth S. Johnson and Caroline Legg, "Why Young People Say They Leave School," Psychological Studies of Human Development (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952), pp. 423-428.

people were focused on their educational background, their work experiences. The findings are based on interviews, in Louisville, Kentucky, with 440 boys and girls fourteen through nineteen years of age who had quit school while still in the grades or in high school. Johnson and Legg found that:

Contrary to belief, this survey showed that dissatisfaction with school, as the occasion for leaving, loomed considerably larger than economic reasons. Motives were often a mixture of some dissatisfaction with school and of pressure of economic forces which weighed on parents because of the burden of family support or on the pupil at school because he could not have and do the things other students could.<sup>14</sup>

In view of these findings it is the opinion of the writer that the schools have a great responsibility. Causes of early elimination, such as lack of interest, desire to work, and poor study habits may often be traced to a curriculum which is not meeting the needs of the pupils.

Young children have an abundance of energy, a natural curiosity and they are a challenge to the schools of today. They may become a problem if they are not guided properly and if this energy is not directed into the right channels. Gillin states:

. . . the principal problem of child rearing in any society is essentially a matter of harnessing, motivating, and directing that energy into channels that will be of most benefit to the child and to other members of the society in which he lives. . . .

In each society this task is accomplished--well or badly, as the case may be--by participation of children in the cultural patterns of the group.<sup>15</sup>

Otto explains several important issues which require consideration as curriculum revision proceeds in the elementary school. Among them is departmentalization of instruction. Otto explains that:

It is becoming increasingly apparent that commonly accepted goals of education cannot be realized satisfactorily in highly departmentalized programs. We might as well face the issue frankly that departmentalization is inimical to good curriculum design and good teaching. If some departmentalization is inescapable, it should be kept at a minimum so that all children spend three-fourths, or more of the school day with the same teachers.<sup>16</sup>

Jensen points out another issue which should not be overlooked in the problem of curriculum revision. He asserts:

In these localities where education is facing a crisis, where a shortage of personnel and facilities exists, where an apparent lack of funds forces school administrators to provide a sub-standard program, and where unwarranted criticisms have arisen, it has been found generally true that in these communities the people have not been made fully aware of the needs and problems of the schools nor have they identified themselves in any way with these problems.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>John Gillin, "The Child in Today's Culture," Educational Leadership, Vol. VII (October, 1949), 17-21.

<sup>16</sup>Henry J. Otto, "Curriculum Issues in Elementary School," Educational Leadership, Vol. VII (October, 1949), 24.

<sup>17</sup>Glenn Jensen, "Better Schools When Public Participates," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. XXXVII, No. 2 (November, 1955), 77-83.



His solution to the problem is to use laymen as good-will ambassadors and as resource persons in the community.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table 1 shows a distribution of 112 forms to participants who attended elementary school at Douglass Elementary school. Of the 112 questionnaire forms distributed, 100 were returned. An analysis of the responses led to the grouping of the respondents as shown in Table 1. Eighty-nine per cent of the respondents returned the questionnaire. Thus the percentage of return was gratifying.

TABLE 1  
RESPONDENTS

	Former Students of Douglass Elementary School	Distrib- ution	Number Returned	Per Cent Returned
Group I	Eighth Grade	14	14	100
Group II	High School Students	37	37	100
Group III	High School Gradu- ates	21	21	100
Group IV	Early Leavers (Drop Outs)	40	28	70
		112	100	89.2

Table 2 indicates that of the 100 respondents, 85 per cent expressed the belief that they should have received more training in the elementary school. Among the eighth grade pupils, fourteen or 100 per cent said they need more adequate training in elementary school.

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table 1 shows a distribution of 112 forms to participants who attended elementary school at Douglass Elementary school. Of the 112 questionnaire forms distributed, 100 were returned. An analysis of the responses led to the grouping of the respondents as shown in Table 1. Eighty-nine per cent of the respondents returned the questionnaire. Thus the percentage of return was gratifying.

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TABLE 2  
RESPONDENTS DESIRING MORE EDUCATION

Groups	Number In Groups	YES		NO	
		Number	Per- centage	Number	Per- centage
Group I <sup>a</sup>	14	14	100	0	0
Group II <sup>b</sup>	37	27	73	10	27
Group III <sup>c</sup>	21	20	95.2	1	4.8
Group IV <sup>d</sup>	28	24	85.7	4	14.3
	100	85	85	15	15

a Eighth Grade

b High School Students

c High School Graduates

d "Drop-Outs"

Over 95.2 per cent of the high school graduates desired more training. Eighty-five and two-tenths per cent or twenty-four of the "drop-out" students stated that they felt the need for more meaningful training than they had received in the elementary school.

Of the 15 respondents who stated that they had not felt the need for more training in the elementary school, the high school students gave the highest percentage of negative responses. The number of negative responses from this group was 10.

Table 2 shows then that of the 100 participants, 15 respondents believed that the Douglass Elementary School

had met their needs, while 85 students were convinced that their needs had not been met.

Table 3 shows the subjects which constitute the elementary school curriculum. Based on the answers of the 100 respondents, Table 3, also, indicates the extent to which the Douglass Elementary School has met the pupils' needs in regard to the listed subjects.

Further analysis of Table 3 shows that the pupils were of the opinion that their needs in reading, writing, spelling, social studies and health have been met adequately. This conclusion is based on the fact that of the 100 respondents, 82 checked satisfactory for reading, 77 for writing, 79 for spelling, 76 for social studies, and 74 for health.

It is interesting to note that 82 per cent or 82 of the 100 respondents stated that their needs had been met adequately in reading. Reading has been a universal problem for many years and teaching children to read is one of the greatest responsibilities of the elementary school.

It is the opinion of the writer that, though 82 per cent or 82 of the 100 respondents indicated that their needs have been met adequately; this percentage is too high. If a test in reading were to be administered to the same group, the test results would show the need for further development of this basic skill.

An analysis of the data shows that those subjects

TABLE 3  
EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTION IN SUBJECT AREAS

Subjects	Group I <sup>c</sup> 14		Group II <sup>d</sup> 37		Group III <sup>e</sup> 21		Group IV <sup>f</sup> 28		Total	
	S <sup>a</sup>	I <sup>b</sup>	S	I	S	I	S	I	S	I
Language Arts	4	10	24	13	13	8	13	15	54	46
Reading	10	4	28	9	19	2	25	3	82	18
English	4	10	23	14	12	9	12	16	51	49
Writing	6	8	28	9	19	2	24	4	77	23
Spelling	13	1	27	10	16	5	23	5	79	21
Social Studies	10	4	31	6	15	6	20	8	76	24
History	6	8	14	23	18	3	20	8	58	42
Civics	9	5	23	14	15	6	18	10	65	35
Geography	7	7	19	18	19	2	21	7	66	34
Mathematics	6	8	28	9	15	6	17	11	66	34
Science	0	14	9	28	14	17	9	19	32	78
Health	9	5	28	9	16	5	21	7	74	26
Music	0	14	5	32	1	20	5	23	14	89
Arts and Crafts	4	10	25	12	9	12	15	13	53	47
Physical Education	1	13	9	28	8	13	14	14	32	68

a S Indicates needs being met satisfactorily.

b I Indicates needs being met inadequately.

c Group I - Eighth Grade

d Group II - High School Students

e Group III - High School Graduates

f Group IV - "Drop-Out" Students

in which the needs have not been met adequately are science, music and physical education. It was found that 89 participants or 89 per cent of the 100 respondents said that their needs in music were not met satisfactorily in the elementary school. Seventy-eight or 78 per cent of the

respondents checked inadequate for science, and 68 or 68 per cent said that the physical education program was inadequate. The group of high school students was more convinced of the need for science than any other group.

Twenty-eight of the 37 high school students checked inadequate for science. The writer has observed that chemistry has been included recently in the high school curriculum. In the light of this fact, it is the writer's opinion that this accounts for the responses from the high school group. A more adequate foundation in elementary science would prepare better the pupils for science in the high school.

Table 3 shows that the needs have been met in civics, geography, and mathematics. This has been indicated by over 60 per cent or 60 of the 100 respondents who checked adequate for each of these subjects. Sixty-five or 65 per cent indicated satisfactory for civics, 66 or 66 per cent for geography, and 66 or 66 per cent indicated satisfactory for mathematics.

The data show further that 51 or 51 per cent of the respondents said that the elementary school had met satisfactorily their needs in English. Forty-nine or 49 per cent stated that their needs had not been met adequately in English. Fifty-eight or 58 per cent showed satisfaction in history and 42 or 42 per cent expressed dissatisfaction. Fifty-three or 53 per cent responded that their needs had not been met in arts and crafts. Forty-seven or 47 per

cent expressed that they had been met adequately in arts and crafts. Development includes physical, mental,

social. Table 3 points out that the former Douglass Elementary School pupils have indicated that they received adequate training in these common essentials, reading, writing, spelling, social studies and health. The curriculum has not met adequately the needs of the pupils in music, physical education and science. activities, they

Further information was secured through interviews with the teachers. Their responses were in agreement with those of the former pupils with few exceptions. The teachers stated that the needs of the pupils were not met satisfactorily in the area of arts and crafts. One of the five teachers stated that the needs of the pupils were met adequately in science. The remaining four teachers said that they were not.

One of the teachers expressed the opinion that the curriculum is limited in experiences because of an insufficient number of teachers. Another believed the cause to be due to an insufficient number of teachers for the successful operation of the departmental plan of instruction.

It was observed by the writer that the teachers were convinced that the curriculum does not provide adequate experiences in such areas as moral and spiritual values, home and family living, personal and social development. It is generally accepted that the elementary

school should contribute to the total development of the child. Total development includes physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual development. In the light of this observation the writer is of the opinion that the curriculum does not meet the needs of the elementary school pupils in these essential areas of development.

In order to determine to what extent the respondents were able to participate in high school activities, they were asked to check the high school clubs of which they were members. Table 4 shows the club participation of high school students, graduates of high school, and "drop-out" students.

TABLE 4  
CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Clubs	Group II <sup>a</sup>	Group III <sup>b</sup>	Group IV <sup>c</sup>	Total	Per Cent of Total
	37	21	28	86	
Philharmonic Club	6	3	1	10	11.6
N. H. A. Club	8	16	7	31	36.0
N. F. A. Club	9	3	5	17	19.7
Future Nurses Club	8	0	1	9	10.4
Class Club	23	19	10	52	60.4

<sup>a</sup> Group II - High School Students

<sup>b</sup> Group III - High School Graduates

<sup>c</sup> Group IV - "Drop-Out" Students

Group I, which is composed of eighth grade pupils was omitted in Table 4. Since this group had not entered high school while the study was under way, it could not respond



to this question.

The Philharmonic Club is made up of members of the high school band and choral club. Persons who are especially interested in music may be members also. It has been found that membership of former Douglass pupils in the Philharmonic Club is very low. The percentage is 11.6 or 10 out of 86 respondents are members. It was pointed out in Table 3,<sup>18</sup> that 89 per cent or 89 of the 100 respondents stated that the need for music in the elementary school was met unsatisfactorily.

Table 4 shows that the Future Nurses Club has the lowest membership of former Douglass Elementary School pupils. The club with the highest percentage of membership is the class club. Fifty-two persons or 60.4 per cent of the 86 respondents checked the class club.

Reasons which respondents gave for failure to participate in club activities in high school are set forth in Table 5. The reason checked most frequently was that students did not know how to carry on business meetings. The second reason indicated that they did not know how to take part in business meetings. Table 5 indicates that in several instances the respondents checked more than one reason for non-participation in club activities.

In order to improve conditions which exist in any organization one must be aware of its limitations.

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<sup>18</sup> Supra, p. 15.

TABLE 5

REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN CLUBS

	Frequency
Did not know how to carry on business meetings	26
Did not know how to take part in business meetings	14
Did not get along with other members	5
Was not interested in club activities	1
Could not have my way	1

The respondents were asked to indicate points of weakness in the Douglass Elementary School curriculum by checking reasons why they dislike elementary school. Table 6 shows the reasons checked by each group.

The lack of instruction in physical education was checked by 60 persons, the lack of music instruction was checked by 55 persons, and 40 of the respondents checked the lack of science in the elementary school as a reason for failure to like elementary school. Thirty-two persons checked dull school subjects, 25 checked the exchange of classrooms and 24 checked the lack of interesting outdoor activities. The last three reasons were checked by less than 20 respondents. Sixteen persons checked the reason, nothing taught that could be used at present. Thirteen checked, did not teach what students like, and 10 indicated too much waste of time as a reason for disliking elementary school.

Many respondents checked more than one reason for

TABLE 6  
REASONS FOR DISLIKING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

	Frequency				Total
	Group I <sup>a</sup>	Group II <sup>b</sup>	Group III <sup>c</sup>	Group IV <sup>d</sup>	
No physical education taught in school	8	25	8	19	60
No music taught in school	12	27	9	7	55
No science taught in school	8	19	6	7	40
Dull school subjects	3	13	8	8	32
Changing classrooms for each class	8	3	8	6	25
Lack of interesting outdoor activities	4	14	5	1	24
Nothing taught I could use at present	2	4	1	9	16
Did not teach what I like	3	3	1	6	13
Too much waste of time	5	1	1	3	10

a Group I - Eighth Grade

b Group II - High School Students

c Group III - High School Graduates

d Group IV - "Drop-Out" Students

failure to like the elementary school. Table 6 shows the reasons checked most frequently were the lack of physical education and the lack of music instruction in the elementary school.

The students who left school early were asked to indicate their reasons. Table 7 was designed to show the reasons checked most frequently. More than one reason was pointed out in many responses, therefore the frequency is shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7

REASONS FOR LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Group IV <sup>a</sup>	Frequency
Was not interested in what was taught	16
Could not keep up in school work	9
Did not feel at ease	6
Married	6
No music taught in the school	2
Did not know how to take part in club activities	2
Not developed enough for football	2
No science taught in the school	0

<sup>a</sup> Group IV - "Drop-Out" Students

The reason checked most frequently was the one which states that the students were not interested in what was taught. The second highest in frequency was that students could not keep up in school work. The other reasons were not checked a significant number of times, but it is the opinion of the writer that they are important reasons. Six of the respondents stated that they left school early because they did not feel at ease in school. Six gave marriage as the reason they left early and three reasons were checked by two persons each. These reasons are, no music

taught in the school, did not know how to take part in club activities, and not developed enough for football. No one checked the reason: no science taught in the elementary school as a reason for leaving school early.

One respondent indicated that the reason he left school early was that his parents were not able to provide sufficient clothes for all members of the family. Another stated that activities outside of school life had a stronger attraction for the respondent.

The school should manifest interest in the problems of those who leave school early. The school has contributed to the cause of the drop-out in many instances.

Table 8 was designed to show the jobs held by those who left school early. Many of the respondents have indicated the selection of more than one type of job. Table 8 shows the number of times each occupation was checked by a respondent.

TABLE 8

OCCUPATIONS OF "DROP-OUT" STUDENTS

	Frequency
Baby Sitter	11
Cook	8
Dish Washer	7
Farm Hand	5
Yard Cleaner	4
Laborer	4
Truck Driver	4
Car Greaser	3
Presser	2
Waitress	2
Maid	2
Beautician	1
Porter	1
Janitor	1

TABLE 9

## PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE

	Frequency				Total
	Group I <sup>a</sup>	Group II <sup>b</sup>	Group III <sup>c</sup>	Group IV <sup>d</sup>	
Use the Telephone	14	36	21	27	98
Write a letter	13	36	21	26	96
Shop for groceries	13	35	21	25	94
Keep the house neat and clean	13	34	21	26	94
Follow traffic signals and rules	13	33	21	26	93
Cross correctly traffic intersections	13	31	21	26	91
Understand newspaper headlines	9	30	21	26	86
Manage own money	10	31	20	25	86
Care for babies	11	27	19	22	79
Deposit money in a bank	4	25	21	25	75
Fill out a check	6	19	20	24	69
Elect class or club officers	3	24	20	21	68
Send a telegram	7	16	20	23	66
Act as secretary of a club or Sunday School	2	22	20	21	65
Act as president or chairman in a club	0	24	19	19	62
Plan a balanced meal	1	20	19	20	60
Do the current dance steps	7	21	15	12	55
Ask correctly for a dance	9	20	12	14	55
Make and acknowledge introductions	2	13	20	15	50

a Group I - Eighth Grade - 14

b Group II - High School Students - 37

c Group III - High School Graduates - 21

d Group IV - "Drop-Out" Students - 28

Table 9 was designed to show the extent to which respondents were able to participate in the community life in which they lived. These persons were asked to check

items which they could do.

Those items which were checked the least number of times indicate areas in which there was inadequate training in elementary school. Only 69 of the 100 respondents said that they know how to fill out a check. Sixty-eight know how to elect class or club officers. Sixty-six stated that they could send a telegram. Sixty-five are able to act as secretary of a club or the Sunday School. Sixty-two indicated that they know how to act as president or chairman in a club. Sixty persons knew how to plan a balanced meal. Fifty-five are able to do the current dance steps and 55 knew the correct way to ask for a dance. Only 50 of the 100 respondents indicated that they were informed on how to make and acknowledge introductions. The pupils are therefore, limited in the area of social living.

An analysis of Table 9 shows that the items checked the least number of times are areas in which more meaningful experiences should have been provided in the elementary school.

1. Do you think that the curriculum is being revised to meet the needs of the pupils?
2. How should the curriculum be revised to meet the pupil's needs?
3. Are the pupils capable of participating effectively in the high school program?
4. Are the pupils capable of taking part in community programs?
5. Do pupils receive adequate training in current

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the adequacy of the curriculum of the Douglass Elementary School, Mexia, Texas.

The Douglass Elementary School is a small school with a faculty of five teachers. There are eight grades which are taught on the departmental plan. The average enrollment for the past eight years has been 115 pupils per year.

Data were collected through questionnaires being administered to 100 former Douglass Elementary School pupils. Additional information was obtained by observation, interview, from books, periodicals and journals. Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. In what ways does the curriculum meet the needs of the pupils?
2. How should the curriculum be revised to meet the pupil's needs?
3. Are the pupils capable of participating effectively in the high school programs?
4. Are the pupils capable of taking part in community programs?
5. Do pupils receive adequate training in common



essentials? The pupils are music, science, and

6. What should be done to improve the curriculum?

It was found that:

1. The 100 respondents composed four groups of former Douglass Elementary pupils.

Group I, Douglass Eighth Grade pupils

Group II, High School students who attended Douglass Elementary School

Group III, High School Graduates

Group IV, "Drop-Out" students

2. Eighty-five per cent of the respondents expressed the need for more training in the elementary school.
3. The high-school students gave the highest number of negative responses. Most of the high-school group did not express a need for more training in the elementary school.
4. The subject areas in which the curriculum does meet the needs of the pupils are reading, writing, spelling, social studies and health.
5. The curriculum provides adequate training in the common essentials.
6. The areas in which the curriculum was not seriously inadequate are English, history, mathematics and arts and crafts.
7. The areas in which the curriculum does not meet

15. the needs of the pupils are music, science, and physical education.
8. The teacher responses were in agreement with the pupil responses on all subject areas, except the arts and crafts.
9. The former Douglass Elementary School pupils participated more in high school class clubs than in any other of the school clubs.
10. The two high school clubs with the least club membership of former Douglass pupils were the Philharmonic Club and the Future Nurses Club.
11. The two principal reasons for non-participation in club activities were: (a) Pupils did not know how to carry on business meetings, (b) Pupils did not know how to take part in business meetings.
12. These limitations restricted participation in high school and community programs.
13. Most pupils dislike elementary school because there is no physical education program. Some dislike elementary school because the music program is inadequate.
14. The high school group expressed a greater need for physical education, music and science than did any other group.
15. Most of the "drop-out" pupils left school early because they were not interested in what was being taught.

16. Since the school curriculum had failed to arouse the interests of the early leavers, it was partly responsible for many of the out-of-school youth.
17. Job selection of the "drop-out" students was mostly unskilled labor.
18. It would appear that the departmental plan for the organization of the Douglass Elementary School is not conducive to the total development of the child.
19. The pupils appear to be limited in the area of social living.
20. Interviews with teachers and pupil responses indicate that total development of the Douglass Elementary School child has not been accomplished.

In the light of the findings of this study the writer makes the following recommendations:

1. The enrichment of the curriculum of the Douglass Elementary School should be effected by placing more emphasis on educative experiences in the subject areas of science and music and in physical education.
2. The teaching of separate subjects should be changed to the broad-fields plan:

Language Arts

Mathematics

Science-Health

Fine Arts

Physical Education.

3. The departmental plan of organization should be replaced by the organization of the self-contained classroom.
4. The curriculum should be planned around the interests and needs of the children and their capabilities should be developed through more concrete experiences.
5. The curriculum should be developed around the entire organism--physical, mental, moral, and social--in the quest for total development of the child.

It follows then that a revised curriculum for the Douglass Elementary School should:

1. Provide greater scope and depth of experiences for the child.
2. Prepare the elementary pupil for greater participation in the high school programs and in community life.
3. Help the pupil to explore and recognize his interests, abilities and limitations.
4. Provide a body of knowledge which will help the pupil to choose a vocation and an avocation.
5. Enable the pupil to live a more enriched life in childhood and in adult life.

6. Meet the needs of the child and contribute to the development of his total personality.

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APPENDIX I

408 West Main Street  
Austin, Texas  
May 11, 1957

Dear Former Student: **APPENDICES**

I desire that all students who leave Douglas School be successful as adults. The purpose of this questionnaire is to help in developing a school program that will be more useful to our boys and girls. You, as a former student of Douglas School, will help us greatly in improving our school if you will kindly answer each question in the questionnaire and mail it to me as quickly as possible. A self-addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Very gratefully yours,

Mrs. Dorothy M. Jackson



APPENDIX I

Read each item carefully. Most items can be answered with a check (X).

1. Check (X) for those subjects in which you believed you should have had more information when you entered high school.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Language Arts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics
- \_\_\_\_\_ Science-Health
- \_\_\_\_\_ Music
- \_\_\_\_\_ Arts and Crafts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Physical Education

408 West Main Street  
Mexia, Texas  
May 13, 1957

Dear Former Student:

I desire that all students who leave Douglass School be successful as adults. The purpose of this questionnaire is to help in developing a school program that will be more useful to our boys and girls. You, as a former student of Douglass School, will help us greatly in improving our school if you will kindly answer each question in the Questionnaire and mail it to me as quickly as possible. A self-addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

- \_\_\_\_\_ writing \_\_\_\_\_ grammar \_\_\_\_\_ math
- \_\_\_\_\_ spelling \_\_\_\_\_ health \_\_\_\_\_ art
- \_\_\_\_\_ others \_\_\_\_\_

Very gratefully yours,

2. Check (X) by the clubs in which you took (took) part in high school.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics Club
- \_\_\_\_\_ NA Club
- \_\_\_\_\_ NA Club
- \_\_\_\_\_ Future Teachers Club
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your High School Class
- \_\_\_\_\_ club

Mrs. Dorothy M. Jackson

3. Check (X) by reasons for your failure to take part in club activities.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Did not know how to take part in business meeting

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

Read each item carefully. Most items can be answered with a check (X).

1. Check (X) for those subjects in which you believed you should have had more information when you entered high school.

- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Mathematics
- Science-Health
- Music
- Arts and Crafts
- Physical Education

2. Since attending high school, do you still believe that you should have received more training in elementary school?

- Yes  No

3. Check (X) by the subjects listed below in which you believe you needed more training.

- |                                   |                                    |   |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English  | <input type="checkbox"/> history   | <input type="checkbox"/> science            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading  | <input type="checkbox"/> civics    | <input type="checkbox"/> mathematics        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing  | <input type="checkbox"/> geography | <input type="checkbox"/> music              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spelling | <input type="checkbox"/> health    | <input type="checkbox"/> art                |
| others <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> physical education |

4. Check (X) by the clubs in which you take (took) part in high school.

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Philharmonic Club           |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NHA Club                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NFA Club                    | <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Future Nurses Club          | <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your High School Class club | <input type="checkbox"/>        |

5. Check (X) by reasons for your failure to take part in club activities.

- Did not know how to take part in business meeting

- Did not know how to carry on business meeting
- Was not interested in club activities
- Could not have my way
- Did not get along with other members

Other reasons \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Listed below are reasons some students dislike elementary school. Check (X) by the statements which apply to you.

- Dull school subjects
- Too much waste of time
- Lack of interesting outdoor activities
- Did not teach what I like
- No science taught in school
- No music taught in school
- Changing classrooms for each period
- No physical education in the school
- Nothing taught I could use at present

7. Persons who have left school should check (X) below for reasons which caused them to stop school.

- Did not feel at ease
- Could not keep up in school work
- Was not interested in what was taught
- No teaching of science
- No teaching of music
- Did not know how to take part in club activities
- Not developed enough for football
- Could not play basketball

Other reasons \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Check (X) by each item listed below which you know how to do.

- Cross correctly traffic intersections
- Follow traffic signals and rules
- Understand newspaper headlines
- Elect class or club officers
- Act as president or chairman in a club
- Act as secretary of a club or Sunday School
- Make and acknowledge introductions
- Ask correctly for a dance
- Do the current dance steps

- Manage own money
- Deposit money in a bank
- Fill out a check
- Shop for groceries
- Plan a balanced meal
- Use the telephone
- Write a letter
- Send a telegram
- Care for babies
- Keep the house neat and clean

9. Check (X) by the type of work you do to make a living.

- Salesman
- Secretary
- Grocer
- Barber
- Baker
- Carpenter
- Painter
- Paper Hanger
- Brick Layer
- Plumber
- Electrician
- Dress Maker
- Tailor
- Presser
- Entertainer
- Musician
- Singer
- Dancer
- Cook
- Cafe Cook
- Chef
- Maid
- House Maid
- Baby Sitter
- Hotel Maid
- Janitor
- Porter
- Hospital Attendant
- Practical Nurse
- Filling Station Attendant
- Mechanic
- Mechanic's Helper
- Car Greaser (Monkey)
- Car Washer
- Chauffeur
- Taxi Driver
- Truck Driver

\_\_\_\_\_ Truck Driver's Helper  
\_\_\_\_\_ Laundress  
\_\_\_\_\_ Farm hand  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yard Gleaner  
\_\_\_\_\_ Laborer  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dishwasher