

Prairie View A&M University

Digital Commons @PVAMU

All Theses

8-1955

**A Comparative Investigation Of The Contribution Of Student
Government To The Development Of The Characteristics Of
Citizenship**

Naoma L.D. Favors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pvamu.edu/pvamu-theses>

"A Comparative Investigation of the Contribution of Student
Government to the Development of the Characteristics of Citizenship"

Favors

1955

371.59

279c

A COMPARATIVE INVESTIGATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF STUDENT
GOVERNMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIZENSHIP

A Thesis Presented to the
Graduate Division
Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

By
Naoma L. D. Favors

August, 1955

LB
3092
F38
1955

DEDICATION

The writer dedicates this study to her mother
Mrs. Jessie Lewis, to her sister and brother
Mrs. Ernestine Gasper and Herman A. Lewis, and
to her sister-in-law, Mrs. Pansy Lee Lewis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my grateful appreciation for the valuable assistance rendered by many persons cooperating in this study. I am particularly indebted to Mrs. K. S. Gibson, whose constant guidance and generous help conveyed the entire work to its completion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS	1
The Problem	1
Statement of Problem	1
Importance of the Study	2
Purpose of the Study	2
Delimitations of the Study	3
Hypothesis	3
Definition of Terms	4
Methods of Procedure	4
Organization of the Remainder of the Thesis	5
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	6
III. TABULATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA	17
IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY	36
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	41
BIBLIOGRAPHY	43
APPENDIX	

LIST OF TABLES

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
I. TYPES OF GOVERNMENT	17
II. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES. .	23
III. STANDING COMMITTEES	25
IV. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL . .	26
V. MANIFESTATION OF CHARACTERISTICS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL	28
VI. THE INFLUENCE OF BASIC FACTORS	29
VII. RESULTS OF PROJECTS SPONSORED	30
VIII. EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION	32

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

For many years schools have been including student governments as part of the curriculum. For as many years a difference of opinion has existed regarding the relative effectiveness of the organization as a means of preventing behavior disorders and carrying out the main purpose of the school. Until recently the majority of informants viewed student government organizations with disapproval and in many instances denounced them as destructive and contrary to the purposes for which they were organized.

The statement most frequently made was that the "students get out of hand and think they are supposed to run the school." Hence, a hostility developed between teachers and students that did not exist previously.

In recent years psychology and the New Education, have lead the way for the development of favorable attitudes, understandings, appreciation, habits and skills. Many of the reports show improved relationships, working organizations and desirable participation by both teachers and students.

The Problem

Statement of the Problem. The school is an institution established and maintained by society to carry the core values of the culture and to perpetuate democracy as a way of life. These purposes should be achieved by providing a setting which resembles that of the democratic government. Therefore, the purpose of this study is, (1) to show the extent of student participation in plan-

ning and executing the policies and practices of the school, (2) How the school can shape the activities of children as they naturally express themselves and their needs so as to develop worthy individuals equipped with attributes essential for living, (3) If the main purpose of the school is to develop individuals who will be able to live together happily in a democratic manner what characteristics should the individuals have, and (4) How can the school make these characteristics an intrinsic part of each child.

Important of the Study

The practical benefits of student government has frequently been discussed. In spite of the dismal outcomes in many cases there is a growing demand for greater participation of students at all levels of learning. Many administrators realize that the functions of the school cannot be adequately achieved without the participation of students in the development of practices which seek to guide and control behavior.

This study makes a contribution to the literature because children need to identify their individual roles, to make choices and decisions, to be willing to look for new solutions and to choose between categories of persons and categories of qualities of persons. Much information is needed to clarify goals and to select suitable means for reaching them.

Purpose of the Study. The problem becomes a source of interest because of the writer's participation in the student government at the N. W. Harllee Elementary School, Dallas, Texas. This school has an enrollment of nine hundred pupils ranging from the first

grade through the seventh grade.

The writer developed a further interest in the study because she felt that as a teacher of social studies the goals of teaching and learning would be enhanced through an organization that provided for pupils to practice the behaviors of a good citizen. Student government is not the only club or organization that practice these behaviors but it is the most widely used one. By comparing the operations in different schools the writer seeks to find definite practices and procedures for developing the characteristics of citizenship. Hence, the purpose of the study is twofold, (1) to set a worthy objective, and (2) to find means of achieving it. This may result in the improvement of student government and the achievement of a major goal of social studies--to develop a good citizen-- at N. W. Harllee School, Dallas, Texas.

Delimitations of the Study. Student government has so many ramifications that the writer has chosen to limit this study to procedure used by student government organizations which contribute to the development of the characteristics of citizenship. Although most of the material studied was in the junior and senior high school level, the writer will apply the findings of the study to the elementary school.

Hypothesis. The sharing of school government with the student body is a vital factor. The development of the person in the privileges and responsibilities of future expectancies results from a qualitative experience.

Definition of Terms

Comparitive investigation. The meaning as used in this study refers to a systematic inquiry of the resemblances and differences of student government.

Contribution. That which shares in effecting a result.

Student government. Throughout the report of this investigation the term "student government" shall be interpreted as meaning that organization that provides opportunities for students to share in making policies and practices which develop behavior controls. At various times in the study student government will be referred to as the student council.

Methods of Procedure

Sources of data. To make this study it was necessary to review the practices presently advocated in the N. W. Harllee Elementary School, Dallas, Texas to determine its strengths and weaknesses.

A study was made of previous investigations to determine the findings of other writers pertinent to this study, and to determine the extent of the contributions made to the literature.

Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to one hundred and twenty-five schools to secure information to bring the study up to date and to make a contribution to the literature already in the field.

Samples of records, reports, publications and evaluative criteria were collected from which inferences were drawn to deter-

mine whether the projects caused the situation to improve, deteriorate or to remain the same and to determine the extent of pupil participation.

Much information was obtained through conferences and interviews held with different personnel connected with the organization.

The writer acknowledges that this study of student government sampling is small. Criticism could be offered on the basis of the small sampling. The study might be considered a pilot study where the indications or results may suggest further studies in the area in an attempt to verify or criticize these findings.

Organization of the Remainder of the Thesis

In chapter one the writer has given the statement of the problem, the definition of terms and methods of procedure. In chapter two the writer will present a review of related literature pertinent to the study that resulted from previous investigations. These findings will provide understanding for further developments of the nature and characteristics of student government to be used in subsequent experiences.

In chapter three the writer will tabulate and interpret data collected and show the relative differences and similarities of the data and the previous investigations.

In chapter four conclusions and recommendations will be made on the basis of the findings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Much has been written in regard to student government. The greatest amount of the material is mostly concerned with the junior and senior high school level. Yet in numerous periodicals and books the subject is treated philosophically so that it is applicable to the elementary school. Borgeson's study of 524 elementary schools in 1929-30 proved that only one third of these schools had central student councils.¹

The student government must grow from the students of the school. A successful democratic form of government comes only in response to a definite demand for it, and an intelligent demand comes only after an appreciation of the rights, responsibilities and obligations that it may bring. No principal, faculty, or a group of students should try to force a student government upon a school. This plan must have the support of the individuals who compose the group for which it is designed. The student council should represent the whole school. The plan of organization should be different for each school. In this regard, McKown says:

No school should take over bodily a program which some other school has developed, and the reader is warned against looking for ready-made schemes for his school. The program must be developed and development does not mean mere adoption.²

Student government should definitely be developed from within. Thornton states:

¹F. C. Borgeson, All School Activities, p. 51. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1931.

²H. C. McKown, Extra-Curricular Activities, p. VIII. New York: The macmillan Company, 1927.

In order to be effective in a school, a council organization should grow from within. It cannot be grafted from one school to another. Of course the growing process is nurtured by the principal and faculty. The time element is important. The definite schedule needs to be set up for homeroom meetings as well as for the council meeting. This means at least one half hour for the representative council and probably as long for the homeroom meeting.¹

A sound plan of student body government is one which gives natural expression of student life and training in the practical aspects of citizenship.

Rugg² says that American schools today are attempting to provide a training that will fit boys and girls to perform more efficiently the duties and to solve more wisely the problems involved in a democratic form of government.

Teachers play a very important role in student government. They should prepare adequately, for nothing will wreck a student more quickly than student recognition that the sponsor is not sufficiently interested, prepared, or personally equipped to lead it.

Eliassen states:

When more than half the teaching graduates supervise extra curriculum activities, the problem of adequate training for such participation becomes important. Teacher training institutions need to recognize adequately the need for preparing teachers for these duties.³

Not all teachers possess the personal qualifications necessary to successful sponsorship, but some teachers who do possess these qualifications make mediocre or even unsuccessful leaders be-

¹Charles A. Thornton, "A Student Council in an Elementary School," School Activities, 23: 14, (September, 1944).

²Earle Rugg, "The Theory of Student Participation and Citizenship Training," N.S.S.E., Extra-Curricula Activities, 25th Yearbook, Chapter XI, 127.

³R. H. Eliassen, "The Teacher and Extra-Curriculum Activities," School Review, 40:366, (May, 1932).

cause they do not adjust themselves to the activity setting. In an activity a teacher is not a teacher in the ordinarily accepted meaning of the word, but rather a sponsor, adviser, helper and friend.

Since the teacher is older with more experience and should be more mature she is in a position to assist children constructively in their activities of arranging their programs and carrying out their programs and projects. The pupils will be quick to note the sponsors interest, sincerity, and competency, and they will react promptly to either a favorable or an unfavorable attitude on her part.

In setting up a student government in any school the administrators and teachers should acquaint themselves with the principles upon which the organization must be built in order to be successful. Erickson gives the following criteria to be used as a guide in the development of a council:

1. The council should be significant and important in the contemporary lives of student. Will it deal with problems which are genuine, concrete, realistic and practical to students?
2. It should be desired by the teachers and students. Will teachers and students play an important part in the development of the council?
3. The council should be a school council, representative of all interests, participative in character, and socially significant. Are all interests represented? Does each pupil feel represented?
4. The council should be an educational rather than administrative form of organization. Has it been conceived as an educational instrument?
5. The council should begin with small but definite responsibilities and continue to grow and extend its activities as the powers and interests of the students grow and develop.
6. The council should serve as a positive educational force

rather than as a negative, restrictive disciplinary device.

7. The teachers, students parents and community citizens should be thoroughly acquainted with the plan.
8. The council should become an important responsible, powerful agency rather than a mere palliative to prevent real educational progress.
9. The council should accept the responsibility of training its own members and other student officers in the school.¹

In speaking of student participation in the school program, Fritz Heil, who is considered to be an authority in this field says:

The administrator contemplating pupil participation in the student government of his school will do well, therefore to consider closely its objectives as stated thus far:

1. Transition from the extraneous control of childhood by means of a cooperative type of control during adolescence to the self control of the adult.
2. Development of personality. (initiative, leadership, cooperation, and self-control)
3. Translation of the idealism of adolescence into habits of conduct.
4. Articulation between the formal school life and spontaneous pupil activities.
5. Integration of social life of the school.²

Cooperation is recognized as one of the most important demands of citizenship, and yet little is done in the traditional work of the school to teach it. Students have ideals and good intentions but they lack the judgment necessary to rule themselves. This comes from actual practice and experience. Ballard, another authority on the subject says:

¹Clifford E. Erickson, Pupil Participation in School Life, pp. 19-20. Columbia, Missouri: Lucan Brothers, 1942.

²Fritz Heil, "Pupil Participation in the Government of the Junior High School," The Journal of Educational Method, 8:160-65, (December, 1928).

Actual participation by students in the direction and government of the school and of its many varied activities is the best instructor schools have to offer to future citizens in training them to accept seriously the responsibilities of American citizenship.¹

There is no set standard in selecting representatives for the student council. There are many research studies which support this statement. Chiefly among the studies is the research by Hayden who says:

There is much divergence in methods of selecting members of councils as there is in their sizes. In twenty schools the student body officers automatically become members of the council and the remaining officers are elected by the student body.²

There are a number of ways of selecting officers as the writer will show from data collected.

Some schools require very high qualifications, while other schools have few if any requirements. According to Erickson, most of the qualifications specified for officers are:

1. Scholarship
2. Personal abilities
3. Citizenship
4. Outstanding character traits
5. Membership in a particular class
6. Faculty approval³

Previous studies showed that many organizations have a name that is supposed to represent a particular type of government. McKown lists the following types of student councils on the basis of form and organization:

1. Service Point system
2. School monitor

¹Mervin Ballard, "Training for Citizenship," High School Journal, 23:76-77, February, 1940.

²F. S. Hayden, "Student Councils in California High Schools," California Quarterly of Secondary Education, Berkley, Calif., 1930.

³Erickson, op. cit., p. 32.

3. Single Committee
4. School City
5. Grade City
6. Specialized Committee
7. Federal Government¹

Erickerson gives an account of five types of council organization:

1. Informal or Single Service Council
2. Central Control Council
3. Decentralized Multi-Council Plan
4. National Government Plan
5. Commissioner or City Government Plan²

It is important that every school should develop a type of organization best adapted to that school. Factors to be considered in developing a council are, the experience of the pupils in student council participation, purposes of the council, extent of pupil participation in the classroom, and interests and experience of the staff.

If the school government is to assist pupils in learning to live democratically, council purposes must be based upon the tenets of democracy. Democracy means different things to different people. The writer has chosen a quotation from Erickson that says democracy implies:

1. A belief in the worth of the individual and his manifold possibilities.
2. A belief that institutions are of value only when they serve mankind.
3. A belief that democracy improves only when as, and if the culture in which it operates improves.
4. A belief that democracy depends little upon external authority. If democracy is to flourish authority must reside within the individual.
5. A belief in mutual consultation, volitional choices, and shared decisions.

¹Harry G. McKown, Activities in the Elementary School, pp. 91-92. New York: Mc-Graw-Hill Book Company, 1938.

²Erickson, op. cit., pp. 20-27.

6. A belief that the proper functioning of the democratic process is dependent upon the will of an enlightened majority.
7. A belief in an attitude of tolerance toward, and interest in, minority opinions.
8. A belief that the role of experts in a democracy is to help other people arrive at values and decisions, but not to make decisions for them.
9. A belief that democracy must recognize, welcome and accept change.
10. A belief that democracy is always an attainment, never a gift.¹

A primary purpose of the school is accepted to be the training of active future citizens. Since the school is to develop good citizenship then the primary function of any of its parts is to help in this development. McKown states:

Good citizenship, too, is composed of elements which must be produced and articulated. Among the most important of these are (1) a knowledge of the theory of democracy, (2) sentiments of law and order, (3) intelligent respect for authority, (4) increasing self-direction, (5) leadership and followership, (6) cooperation, and (7) morale.²

Each school must devise purposes according to the needs of the children and the community being served. The purposes to be achieved should serve to make democracy a functioning reality in the lives of boys and girls.

Ragan and Stendler discuss discipline for freedom and show that children must have opportunities to make decisions and become increasingly self-directing and the school can provide these opportunities. They say that:

Discipline for freedom means providing experiences which will foster self-direction or self-control of the child. Democracy cannot survive without individuals who can sacrifice immediate interests to remote ends, who can sacrifice personal in-

¹Ibid., p. 2.

²Harry C. McKown, The Student Council, p. 33. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1944.

terests to the welfare of the group, who can exercise self-control to such an extent that social control becomes increasingly unnecessary.

Children cannot develop the discipline for freedom by being held under the complete domination of the teacher day after day and month after month; neither can it be achieved by taking the lid off and allowing children to do as they please. It can be achieved only by living in the classroom from day to day in accordance with the ways of democracy with a teacher who understands how human behavior develops and who in his daily activities practices the discipline of a free man.¹

The idea that the school is society's chief formal agency for improving and preserving the democratic way of life is not new. Democracy is a process, a quality of human relationships which has the interest of the individual as its paramount objective. Some of the elements of a democratic process as listed by Ragan and Stendler² are (a) using the method of experimentation, (b) promoting equality of opportunity, (c) providing for participation by all members of the group in determining purposes and plans, (d) having faith in people, (e) respecting the worth of human beings, (f) providing opportunities for individuals to learn the skills and techniques of freedom, and (g) providing opportunities for learning skills of democratic cooperation.

In discussing trends in the curriculum Wesley states that:

Pupil and student participation was a doctrine long before it became a practice. For years elementary teachers consulted the pupils in selecting units, planning field trips, and in carrying out projects. More recently the student participation has become frequent at the secondary level. Increased knowledge of adolescents better understanding of how people learn and a genuine desire to practice democratic procedures combined to bring about a better, more cordial relationship between teacher and students.

¹Ragan and Stendler, Modern Elementary Curriculum, p. 99. New York: The Dryden Press, 1954.

²Ibid., p. 99.

³Edgar Wesley, Teaching Social Studies in High Schools, p. 109. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1950.

The school is the agent of society. Therefore, it should seek to achieve the goal of society by developing a good citizen. To be a good citizen children must learn to live together happily in a democratic manner. Ritter and Shepherd say that:

A good citizen shows fairness in dealing with others; exhibits those kindnesses and courtesies that add to the happiness of all; develops a sense of humor, loyalty, leadership, followership, cooperation and good health.¹

They are industrious, progressive, openminded, interested in government and they select good leaders.

Several studies listed evaluative criteria. The questionnaire² by Erickson will be chosen for use in this study although others will be discussed for the benefit of the reader.

¹Ritter and Shepherd, Methods of Teaching in Town and Rural Schools, pp. 5-6. New York: The Dryden Press, 1954.

²Erickson, op. cit., p. 183.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

A study of previous investigations show a relatively small amount of source material at the elementary school level. The studies made by Borgeson were the most conclusive at this level. This is probably due to the fact that not many people believe that children are capable of participating in school practices. Many do not have an organization as such but engage in the practices incidently.

The writer sought to study investigations to secure a knowledge and understanding of all phases of student government. Included in the research study was literature on (1) planning and organizing the student government, (2) principles of student government, (3) selection of representatives, (4) qualifications for representatives (5) types of student government, (6) evaluative measures, (7) the primary function of the school.

The previous investigations show that student government is more likely to succeed if:

1. The request for it is made by the students
2. All the children and teachers become active participants
3. It serves as a positive educational force instead of a negative restrictive disciplinary device
4. Students and teachers are thoroughly acquainted with the plan
5. Teachers and students practice the modern concept of discipline.
6. The essential elements of the democratic process becomes functional.

The following chapter will present and tabulate the data

collected through questionnaires, conferences, interviews, records and publications. These findings will be interpreted in the light of the research.

CHAPTER III

TABULATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In addition to making a study of previous investigations the writer prepared and distributed one hundred and twenty-five questionnaires to principals and teachers. The number of schools answering was one hundred four.

Some administrators feel that children in the elementary school are not mature enough to take over the responsibility for solving problems that arise in their everyday classroom living. Many authorities, however, feel that children in the elementary school can take some responsibility of planning and carrying out the function of the school. This sharing provides an opportunity for children to learn the duties and responsibilities of freedom and to manifest the characteristics of citizenship.

There are several different types of student government and other organizations which may be used for this purpose as shown in Table I. Each type has a particular meaning, that should be studied

Table I

TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

Type	Number	Percentage
Assembly plan	20	19%
Central Control plan	20	19%
Club Plan	32	30.9%
Decentralized plan	0	
National or Federal Government plan	0	
School City plan	12	11.5%
Representative plan	20	19%
Owl Club	1	
Hi-Y; Tri-Y	1	

thoroughly before making a selection. A brief interpretation of the seven major types will be given. Since this study is concerned with student government, the owl club, the Hi-Y and Tri-Y will not be included in the interpretation, but are listed since it was mentioned that other organizations were used.

The Assembly plan. Whenever a problem arises a number of persons meet together to devise a possible solution. Most of the participants volunteer their services. This plan is weak because there is no basic structure or plans for school wide participation. Usually it may disband or drag along without specific goals.

Central Contron Plan. This type represents a highly centralized and a very powerful council which is responsible for initiating supervising and evaluating most of the student activities of the school. The members of the council are elected as direct representatives of the homeroom groups. The faculty sponsor or sponsors are appointed by the principal. The council determines its major functions and establishes all appropriate committees. The homeroom class representatives report directly and frequently to their groups, and the officers of the council are chosen by the council.

An organization of this type provides for a powerful central council. Each pupil can exert a direct influence in shaping the work of the council through the homeroom representative. The organization is very flexible, and the size of the council can be readily changed. Each pupil in the school has a direct representative, and the principal has a direct relationship to all of the committees through his faculty sponsors.

Club Plan. The type of organization is being used in many

schools where regular government has met with either failure or distrust. Under this plan the regular officers are selected by the entire student body. Two or three names may be nominated for the same office. Each nominee selects a campaign manager to canvass for votes. At the said date all receive a ballot and cast a vote for the candidate of their choice. Committees are appointed and projects chosen with the approval of the sponsors and principal. This plan seldom serves as a positive educational force.

Decentralized Plan. In many schools this is called the Decentralized Multi-Council Plan. In this plan the work of the council is decentralized in an attempt to provide more extensive pupil participation and in an effort to center the work of the council in home room advisory groups. Under this plan a number of councils are organized, with the home room or advisory as the most important governmental unit in the school. Each council has a definite responsibility and can be added or withdrawn without upsetting the basic organization. This plan is good because it necessitates extensive participation.

National Government Plan. Three divisions of government are created: legislative, executive and judicial. The responsibilities of each are similar to the national government. Although pupils almost have complete control, the intricate organization is difficult for students to understand clearly. The procedure for delegating responsibilities is too involved and consumes too much time.

School-City Plan. This type of organization is patterned after the organization of the government in a city. Due to the complex organization it will probably function best with older students.

Representative Plan. Representatives may be selected from

classes, homerooms other organizations or appointed by the principal. They perform the regular duties of the council. One advantage of this plan is that the officers rotate frequently thereby providing an opportunity for many children to participate.

The Role of Personnel

A vital factor in the process of initiating and carrying on a student council depends upon harmonious relationships among principals, teachers and pupil has been recognized. McKown¹ states "Despite its ancient origin, the modern program of group activities is new and largely experimental." McKown² further states that understanding of administrative relationship, faculty leadership, and pupil guidance must be given a basic consideration in the establishment of a student council.

Principal. "As is the principal so is the school" is an oft quoted statement which may aptly be used in regard to the success of a student council. Therefore, the writer sought information concerning the role of the principal. The data collected lists the duties of the principal as follows:

1. Provide for overall administration and supervision of the council.
2. Act as an advisor
3. Act as a consultant
4. Act as a resource person
5. Supervise elections
6. Stimulate growth
7. Work cooperatively
8. See that all departments in the school are represented
9. See that efforts are directed toward the achievement of goals
10. Serve as coordinator in planning and organizing
11. To delegate authority
12. To interpret the council to faculty and students.

The principals role in the establishment and progress of a

student council is of primary importance. Enthusiasm for the council must be accompanied by understanding its values and its experimental hazards.

Interpretation of the council must include opportunity for faculty and student consideration and discussion, and should precede organization.

The delegation of authority requires careful consideration of persons to whom it is delegated. However, rather than delegate teachers and principals should plan together. Teachers who show disapproval of or reluctance to sponsor a student council should not be forced to do so.

Teachers. The response of the faculty determines the opportunity for successful growth of the council. With adequate interpretation and the principals willingness to develop the plan slowly, opposition will be less likely to occur. The study showed that teachers should perform these duties, namely:

1. Sponsor
2. Advisor
3. Supervisor and guide
4. Aid and assist in planning and executing the activities
5. Resource person

To avoid overlapping these could consist of the first three. Usually a teacher is responsible to work with the council in planning and to give advice where needed and encourage initiative and understanding.

Sponsor. The sponsor is a participating teacher, and has a double role—responsibility for the program and for pupil participation. In addition, he must endeavor to avoid antagonism of non-participating teachers. It is generally stated that the sponsor or supervisor should:

1. Submit recommendations from council to principal
2. Guide and direct all activities
3. Keep the council running along desired lines
4. Have an enthusiasm for the organization
5. Maintain effective relationships

In the performance of duties the sponsor should help the students reach the greatest adjustment possible. The activities should be directed to provide for an increasing awareness of the roles of the student.

Members of the Council. The pupils in a council will have initial guidance in their planning and organization. Their responsibilities should supply the initial basis upon which can be built the sense of leadership. They must feel the need to secure class cooperation and participation. The democratic process of group discussion and planning should be used. In turn, council members must allow a democratic process in the acceptance or non acceptance of its recommendations. The members need the sympathetic understanding of the non-participating teachers and the principal to develop self confidence. With this confidence they will learn to follow as well as lead.

It is possible that others may play a role either as members or non-participating members. The visiting teachers and parents should be able to assist with the development of desirable characteristics of growth.

Qualifications and Duties of Officers

Some schools require very high qualifications of officers while other schools have few, if any qualifications. Table II lists the qualifications listed by the participants, the percentage dis-

Table II

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Qualifications	Rank Order of Preference															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Scholarship	80	77	16	28	12	12			4		8				4	4
Originality	52	50	8	4	4		1	2	2	2	1	1		4	4	4
Faculty Approval	52	50		4	8					4		4	16	1	4	3
Initiative	72	69	4		4	12	12	16	4	4	8	8	4			4
Self-Control	80	77	12	12	8	28	4	4	4			4		4	4	
Neatness	68	65	4		8	4	8		4	12		12	4	8		8
Healthy	60	58	12	8		20	4			8	4	12	8	4		
Honesty	84	81	20	36	16	4	8		8	4	8				4	
Particular Grade	32	31		4	4					4	4	4	4	4	4	12
Fluency of Speech	72	69		4					4	8	8		4		3	3
Good Judgment	88	85	2	2	2	3	1	2	1			1	1	1		1
Dependability	88	85	8		8	12	12	4	4	4		1			2	1
Punctuality	72	69			1	12	4	12	4	8		1		4		16
Refinement & Behavior	64	62		4			4	16	12				8			4
Poise	40	39				1	1		4	4	4	4	8		4	8
Industrious	56	54				4	4		2	3	3				8	

tribution and the order of preference.

The tabulation shows that consideration is given to the qualifications of officers. Eighty five percent of those participating in the

study recommended good judgment and dependability. Eighty percent recommended honesty and seventy-seven percent recommended self-control and scholarship.

In order of preference for qualifications are honesty, scholarship, self control and health.

Duties of Officers. The officers usually consist of president, a first, second and third vice-president. According to the data the president presides at meetings, stimulate good patterns of conduct and act as a liaison between faculty and students. The vice presidents preside in the absence of the president, act as committee chairman and carry out delegated duties.

The secretary records the minutes of all meetings. The assistant secretary records the minutes in the absence of the regular secretary and assist with other matters of record keeping. The corresponding secretary has charge of outgoing correspondence, corresponds with groups for joint meetings, keep parents and community informed, post notices and prepare publications.

In many of the returns there was no treasury. In the cases reporting treasuries, they keep the money, pay bills with proper signatures, and prepare financial statements.

All studies reported that the chaplain held devotions and directed spiritual activities.

The parliamentarian, interprets rules and clarify procedures. The sargeant-at-arms prevents disturbances and arranges for the meeting place.

All officers serve for a term of one year except in three cases. These were four and one half months, one semester, and two

years. Officers are elected by the following methods:

1. Majority vote
2. Popular vote
3. Ballot
4. Vote of all students
5. Members of the council
6. Acclamation

One of the contributions to the study had a unique organization. The council was composed of a president who presides over the body; four board members who serve as jurors; a court secretary to record testimony; a trial counsel to convict the accused; a defense counsel who sought acquittal for the accused, and a sargeant-at-arms to maintain order.

All officers are chosen for a term of one school year by secret ballot except the counsel. The trial counsel is chosen by the principal for the duration of court, and the defense counsel is chosen by students for the duration of court.

Standing Committees. The council determines its major activities and appoints the appropriate committees. The committees found in the study are listed in Table III. The chairman of each committee is usually a member of the council. The committees serve an important function. They plan the activity program for the year. The percentage listing committees was relatively low.

Table III

STANDING COMMITTEES

Committee	No.	Per.
Assembly	5	5.8
Lunchroom	7	6.7
Library	-	-

Table III

Committee	No.	Per.
Mother - daughter	-	-
Father - son	-	-
Constitution and by-laws	7	6.7
Policies and practices	2	1.9
Lost-and-found	3	2.8
Playground committee	17	16
Social committee	59	56
Program	42	40
Discipline	5	5.8

Contribution to objectives. Organizations are expected to contribute to the educational objectives of the school. They become the means by which the school achieves its goals. The objectives listed in Table IV carry the essential elements of the democratic process.

Table IV

CONTRIBUTION TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL

OBJECTIVES	None	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
a. To foster the values of our democratic society	4	4	8	32	44
b. To recognize individual differences interest, abilities, and needs of pupils	8	12	24	32	20
c. To help children become increasingly self-directing		4	16	32	40

Table IV

OBJECTIVES	None	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
d. To emphasize effective living now as the best possible preparation for the future	4	4	16	52	28
e. To promote desirable changes in behavior	4	4	12	44	20
f. To provide for social and emotional growth as well as mental growth		4	32	36	28
g. To prepare pupils for effective participation in the improvement of living in the community		4	4	48	48
h. To develop skills in human relationships		4	12	48	40
i. To develop skills for speaking reading, writing and listening		8	24	36	36
j. To encourage the establishment of worthwhile goals			16	60	24
k. To provide opportunities to participate in planning, executing, and evaluation			28	48	28
l. To learn skills needed in group living		4	16	60	20
m. To make use of special talents		4	12	48	36
OTHERS:					
To develop a feeling of responsibility	0			4	
To promote worthwhile group relationships				4	

The activities performed serve as definite means to worthwhile ends. The majority of reports were either good or very good.

Objectives of the Council. The council has specific aims and objectives, some of which are long term goals and others of which are immediate goals. Conditions within the individual school will, to a large extent determine the activities by which the objectives are to be achieved.

Table V

MANIFESTATION OF CHARACTERISTICS
OF MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

CHARACTERISTIC	INTERPRETATION	'LITTLE	'MUCH	'MORE	'MOST
Fairness	Gives credit and respect	4	28	52	16
Courtesy	Acting in a polite manner		44	32	28
Kindness	Gentle	8	28	32	16
Humor	Laugh at the self	12	32	40	8
Loyalty	Faith and support	4	32	52	12
Leadership	Initiate and carry ideas of completion	12	12	44	32
Followership	Contribute to the group welfare	8	24	36	28
Industry	Dignifies labor	28	24	36	8
Progressiveness	Alert to change	12	48	28	12
Openmindedness	Receptive to ideas	12	32	36	20
Select good Leaders	Chooses the best person for the job	12	36	32	20
Interest in Government	Concern for law and order	8	36	40	16
Co-operation	Work with and for others	4	24	52	16

That student government has helped children to live happily together is indicated by the tabulations. In a practical way the council helps students to organize and carry on those activities which are recognized as important in the democratic way of life. It is a laboratory for the study and practice of desirable citizenship. Training for citizenship should be done in a situation of life, it becoming increasingly the theory and practice in the schools of today.

Table VI

THE INFLUENCE OF BASIC FACTORS

FACTOR	'Little	'Much	'More	'Most
Purpose of council		32	24	32
Objectives of the school	4	24	24	28
Interest of staff	16	16	32	20
Ideas of discipline	12	28	16	28
The Nature and Needs of children	4	20	16	48
Interest of parents	28	20	20	16
Interest of students	4	24	28	32
Interest of the board of Education	28	24	20	8
Knowledge of student government in other schools	24	12	20	20
Contribution of group processes to human relationships	8	20	40	16
A belief in Freedom	4	24	20	36
Theories of progressive Education	4	24	28	28

Basic factors. Many factors serve as a basis for stimulation. The reasons why we do things may be just as important as doing them.

Activities. There are many things about the school which the council can do or help to do, but it should be careful not to assume professional and technical tasks for which the principal, faculty, or janitorial forces are responsible. It should confine itself to student affairs. Table VII shows a list of projects and an estimate of the benefits derived.

Table VII
RESULTS OF PROJECTS SPONSORED

PROJECTS	The same	Deteriation	Improvement
1. Care of the school and personal property			
a. Conduct lost-and-found department	20	-	64
b. Promote care of desks, walls, grounds school equipment	8	8	28
c. Teach respect for all property.....	-	5	32
d. Promote respect for neighboring private property.....	9	7	63
e. Care of lunch room.....	9	-	63
f. Care of playground	13	3	62
2. Service			
a. Welcome new students	7	9	62
b. Promote safety-first, to and from school	21	3	43
c. Supervise sanitation activities	19	-	52
d. Provide special help for teachers and librarians	7	9	32
e. Visit and carry flowers to sick students	20	5	47
f. _____			
g. _____			
h. _____			
i. _____			
3. Discipline			
a. Appoint study-hall monitors	7	-	64
b. Encourage good behavior about school....	7	-	64
c. Supervise corridors, stairways, and traffic police.....	-	19	61

Table VII

PROJECTS	The Same	Deteriora- tion	Improvement
d. Encourage desirable behavior before and after school	11	-	61
4. Drives and Campaigns			
a. Better health	13	7	52
b. March of Dimes	4	-	60
c. Red Cross	12	3	33
d. Clean Up	-	-	56
e. Better Speech	12	4	32
f. Better Lessons	7	-	41
g. Courtesy	8	-	48
h. Fire Prevention	8	-	36
i. Stay in School	4	-	36
j. Punctuality	3	3	30
k. Friendliness	4	-	32
l. Safe Riding	8	4	20
m. No gum-chewing	12	12	28
n. No smoking	4	16	32
o. Neatness and Cleanliness of person	4	-	48
p. Self-inventory	12	-	28

How to Prevent Weaknesses or Remove Them. Students like to assume the role of leadership. They like to solve their problems. However, it should be clearly stressed that only student problems will be dealt with. Do not become over anxious to have other students punished or abuse privileges. Things work out better when they are student directed and initiated. Conferences and interviews usually pointed out that:

1. There should be a better understanding of purposes.
2. One should stress responsibility with privileges.
3. Checks and balances should be placed on freedom.

4. Meetings should be regular but not too frequent.
5. We should be discreet and judicious in the selection of representatives.
6. We should give more time to supervision and guidance.
7. Students have more freedom in planning.
8. Meetings should be held during regular school time.
9. Teachers and parents become interested.
10. Teacher dominance be avoided.
11. Leaders become more effective through participation.

Evaluation. The questionnaire technique was one way to determine the strengths and weakness of a plan of work. It was used by most schools. These unsigned blanks were used by teachers and faculty members.

Table VIII was the simple form used in most schools. The use of this form in the study showed that results are satisfactory in all areas covered except the interest of parents and teachers and the care of the playground.

Table VIII
EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION

PARTICIPATION	No	Yes
1. Are you satisfied with the present council?	44	56
2. Do you desire changes in the set up?	32	60
3. Have you been helped by having a student council in your school?	1	86
4. Is there any improvement in student conduct in your homeroom?	1	101

Table VIII

PARTICIPATION	No	Yes
	5. Is the tone of the voices of children moderate while eating in the lunch room?	20
6. Are children passing in and out of the building without making extra noise?	49	55
7. Are students careful not to throw food particles, waste paper, and wraps on the lunch room floor?	20	62
8. Has vandalism decreased?	16	84
9. Are students showing the proper respect for others? (students, officers, teachers, etc.)	16	80
10. Were there less absentees without legal excuses?	42	57
11. Is there any lack of interest shown by the teachers?	56	44
12. Do teachers give full support to the council ?	28	60
13. Are parents pleased with progress the council is making?	8	96
14. Do parents show by continued visitations that they are interested in the council?	56	10
15. Does the organization serve as a positive educational force?	8	82
16. Is the school as a whole represented?	15	62
17. Are students thoroughly acquainted with the plan?	32	61

Other Methods. Other methods were used to evaluate activities. These were facts and opinions. For example, care of the lunch room, playground and halls may be one of the programs sponsored by the student council. A check on the condition of these facilities will definitely reveal improvement, deterioration or maintenance of the status quo. This evaluation is regarded as

factual. Evaluation based upon opinion may come from two sources; namely, outside the activity and inside the activity. The outside evaluation comes from the principal, non-participating teachers and students. The inside opinions are given by the sponsor, the participating teachers and pupils. While the "outside" opinions express a general overall evaluation, the "inside" opinions express detailed observations.

Record of Participation. The councils attempted to discover the extent of pupil participation. Appropriate forms and blanks were essential for recording participation in activities.

Self Analysis Inventory. As children receive training they should occasionally interview themselves concerning their success and mastery. Although they receive criticisms and suggestions from others which are helpful, the most effective momentum toward growth comes from the self-realization of some defect that should be eliminated or some needed skill or insight that should be acquired.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

From the previous research, the tabulation and interpretation of data it has been revealed that in order for a council to make a favorable contribution it should have a good beginning. The initial procedure necessary to inaugurate a student council may largely determine its success or failure.

Interpretation of the council to the faculty is important. The teacher should know how a student council can be helpful in solving problems of discipline, in promoting better teacher-pupil relationships as well as being shown its potentiality in the development of pupils for democratic living.

Initiation of the Program. In order to initiate a student council it will be necessary to solicit the cooperation of the principal, the faculty, and the student body. To carry out a school program successfully the principal must be in accord with it. A conference should be held with the principal to clarify ideas, establish goals, identify roles and function.

A discussion of the particulars should be held with faculty in an informal manner. Reading material explaining the council should be made available for teachers either before or during the discussion. Later a discussion should be planned for students. The pupils should understand that a council is to help promote, organize, and supervise all of the activities of the school. It is not an end in itself neither is it something apart from the school, but it is an integral part of the school.

Student Participation. Pupil participation should be purposeful and helpful in solving the problems of group living. They should be lead to recognize and accept responsibility and obligations and to discharge them to the best of their ability in the interest of the common good. The school is obligated to provide an opportunity for children to practice self-control and direction, leadership, followership, respect, loyalty, cooperation, and other characteristics of citizenship. These would be difficult to understand in terms of subject matter.

Objectives. Specific aims and objectives should be worked out cooperatively by faculty and students. Some objectives are immediate others are remote.

A. Remote objectives are:

1. To develop self-control
2. To develop initiative
3. To develop leadership
4. To develop followership
5. To develop self-reliance
6. To develop respect for authority
7. To develop ability to cooperate

B. Immediate Objectives:

1. To provide a democratic environment
2. To provide emotional satisfactions
3. To learn to live happily together
4. To develop the powers of expression
5. To develop a set of values.

Activities. Activities will be determined by conditions and facilities of the individual school. Only those duties and responsibilities should be undertaken which can be achieved satisfactorily. The writer will list a few things which it is generally felt can be done by most councils.

1. Develop and respect law and order.
2. Develop an honor system.

3. Promote good manners and morals.
4. Sponsor activities to improve reading, speaking and writing.
5. Provide volunteer services.
6. Share in planning, executing and evaluating.
7. Supervise programs, dramatics.
8. Organize a constitution.

Organization. Many plans of organizations exist. The plan of organization adopted should be suited to the structure and organization of the school and the personnel. Blankenship and Erickson say that there is no one and only successful type of organization. Much depends on the individuals who operate the plan. Early and careful planning are important. The council should select its major activities and appoint appropriate committees. The meetings are officially scheduled and arrangements are made for participation. The activities are planned for the year and surveys should be made to check progress.

It is not the purpose of the writer to project any plan in the mind of the reader. Several plans have been presented in Chapter III and the reader should make a selection in terms of need.

Role of Personnel. A vital factor in the process of initiating the carrying on of a student council depends upon harmonious relationships among principal, teachers, and pupils. The need to clarify the role of principal, teacher, pupil, sponsor and other helpers, McKown states, "Despite its ancient origin, the modern program of group activities is new and largely experimental."¹

¹Harry C. McKown, Activities in the Elementary School, p. 25. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1938.

McKown further states that understanding of administrative relationship, faculty leadership and pupil guidance must be given a basic consideration in the establishment of a student council.²

The choice of sponsors entails consideration of the teachers personality, ability and interest in this student activity. If teachers have had neither training nor experience in student government activity, it is the principal's responsibility to provide, at least the former. McKown suggests that the principal must be mindful of the teacher's self-evaluation as a possible sponsor.²

The sponsoring teacher has a double role, first the role of responsibility for the program and pupil participation and second, the role to avoid antagonism of non-participating teachers.

Evaluation. A well organized and continuous process of measuring the worth of a school council has been greatly neglected. It is both as logical and as necessary to evaluate the results of participation in school activities as it is to measure the results of participation in reading, history, writing, or any other school activity.

In general, educators agree that more opportunity exists to observe the development of the child in the course of extra-curricula activities. It is informal in setting and non-compulsory in participation; the child often responds more naturally than in a classroom situation.

Deeper needs of the child are revealed. The needs may show

¹McKown, loc. cit., p. 25.

²Ibid., p. 36.

that the aggressive child in the classroom lacks security because he needs guidance to redirect his leadership ability. It is highly desirable that every council devise a plan for testing itself.

The collection of data does not support the research in this matter. Each school reporting on the questionnaire showed both a lack of evaluative criteria and the use of it. No records were collected that could be used as evaluative measures although each school reporting in the study had many activities.

The report card and the permanent record card ranked highest on the list. The writer recommends that every council devise or select a plan for testing itself. There should be a definite check to reveal improvement, deterioration or maintenance of the status quo.

A Self-Analysis Inventory. As the children receive training they should occasionally interview themselves. Although they receive criticisms and suggestions from others which are helpful, the most effective momentum toward growth, comes from the self realization of some defect that should be eliminated or some needed skill or insight that should be acquired.¹ In an effort to focus this self-examination toward tangible traits, the writer has devised a simple form which may be suggestive to the reader.

1. Name the clubs and organizations to which you belong.
2. List books and magazines you read.
3. List the committees of which you participate.
4. Describe your contributions to the meetings?

¹Edgar Bruce Wesley, Teaching Social Studies in High Schools, p.23
Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1950.

5. List the names of others you like to work and play with.
6. Do you share with others who are less fortunate?
7. Do you take a responsible part in activities?
8. List the ways you win friends and influence people.
9. Do you achieve as much as your ability and effort permit?
10. Do you have faith in ability of people to make the right decisions?
11. Can you identify your role?
12. Do I fear criticism?
13. Do I feel free to admit mistakes?
14. Do I like all races?
15. Do I work effectively as a member of a team ?
16. Are you courteous and kind?
17. Are you an adequate loser?
18. Do you respect property rights of others?

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The modern school realizes that interest is much more conducive to effort than fear. Interest to a large extent is dependent upon a voice in planning and control. Stated in another way, this means simply that interest is aroused through activity, which in turn, increases effort. This is at present an accepted philosophy which hardly seems debatable.

It is the duty of the school, as society's agent to foster the characteristics of citizenship. It should also develop a satisfactory means of developing habits that instill within the individual the characteristics which make a worthy citizen of the community. This end can be accomplished if the means are qualitative.

The student council serves as a laboratory for the study and practice of desirable citizenship. In a practical way the council helps students to learn to accept privileges and share responsibilities.

Training for citizenship should take place in a setting similar to the process of the government it represents.

The organization of a student government calls for early and careful planning by the faculty. Ample time should be allowed for study and preliminary investigation. Some things to be considered are:

1. Desirable attitudes to be developed
2. Activities which can be undertaken successfully
3. Development of effective personal relationships
4. The mechanics of organization
5. The selection of personnel and determination of duties
6. Clearly defined powers, objectives and responsibilities.

There is no one and only successful type of organization.

Some factors to be considered are:

1. The nature and needs of children
2. Interests and experience of students
3. Purpose of the council
4. Abilities, interests, and experiences of the staff
5. The philosophy and type of administrative organization

The teaching of attitudes, ideals, and right thinking has always been a difficult problem in our schools. They cannot be satisfactorily taught by the traditional textbook method. As imperfect as student government may be, they offer the best solution toward the development of these attributes.

Since the school is society's chief formal agency for developing citizenship there are certain habits, traits, and characteristics which it is the duty of schools to foster in each individual. Among them are fairness, courtesy, kindness, humor, loyalty, leadership, followership, industry and cooperation. The investigations show that the method used must provide an opportunity for children to work out unique solutions for problems to achieve as much as their ability and effort permit, for sharing in the choice of activities to be undertaken, to become a responsible self-directing citizen, to have faith in the ability of others to make the right decisions, to develop a respect for the human worth of all people, to learn that freedom is not a gift but an achievement and to learn to work effectively as a member of a team.

The task of student government is not to educate children to suit the government but to become the government. To accomplish this purpose it must provide a qualitative experience. This it has done by qualifying the process of growth toward maturity through need fulfillment. The process is interactive, creative, self selective and self evaluative.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Allen, Charles F., et. al., Extra-Curricular Activities in the Elementary Schools. St. Louis, Missouri: Webster Publishing Company, 1937.
- Borgeson, F. C., All-School Activities. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1931.
- Bowden, A. O. and Clark, Ida, Tomorrow's Americans. London: G. C. Putnam's Sons, 1930.
- Erickson, Clifford E., Pupil Participation in School Life. Columbia, Missouri: Lucas Brothers, 1942.
- Kyte, George C., The Principal at Work. New York: Ginn and Company, 1952.
- McKown, Harry C., Activities in the Elementary School. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938.
- _____, Extra-Curricula Activities. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937.
- _____, The Student Council. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1944.
- Millard, C. C., The Organization and Administration of Extra-Curricula Activities. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1930.

Periodicals

- Altschuler, Helen, "Suggestions to the Advisor of An Elementary School," Educational Methods, 22:281-82, March, 1949.
- Avery, B., "Elementary School Council is Practical," School Activities, 20:221-22, March, 1949.
- Ballard, Mervin, "Training for Citizenship," High School Journal, 23:76-77, February, 1940.
- Blankenship, A. H., "A Student Council Elementary Children," The National Elementary Principal, 27:40, April, 1948.
- Hayden, F. S., "The Student Councils in California High Schools," California Quarterly of Secondary Education, Berkeley, California, 5:266, April, 1930.

- Heil, Fritz, "Pupil Participation in the Government of the Junior High School," The Journal of Educational Method, 8:160-65, December, 1928.
- Rugg, Earle, "The Theory of Student Participation and Citizenship Training," National Society for Study Education, Extra-Curricular Activities, 25th Yearbook, Chapter XI.
- Thronton, Charles, A., "A Student Council in An Elementary School," School Activities, 23:14, September, 1944.
- Zyve, C. T., "A Suggestion for Evaluating School Activities," Teachers College Record, 38:648-659.

Bulletins

- Brogue and Jacolson, "Student Council Handbook," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 24:61-62, March, 1940.
- Cory, F. B. B., "High School Graduates Appraise Extra-Curricular Activities," School Review, 43:672-682, November, 1935.
- Counts, G. S., "Procedures in Evaluating Extra Curricular Activities," School Review, 34:412-420, June, 1936.
- Courmyer, A. E., "A Self-Governing Student Body," Journal of Education, December, 1930.
- Eliassen, R. H., "The Teacher and Extra Curriculum Activities," School Review, 40:336, May, 1932.
- Guild, Bruce, "Of the Students, By the Students, For the Students," School Executive, 60:36-7, June, 1941.