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## The Value Of Extra Curricula Activities In Rural Schools

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The writer wishes to express

her appreciation to Mr. J. L. Irving

a member of the State Normal Faculty,

for My dear Mother and Father

and

Beloved little Daughters

Hiaphonia and Helen Connor

for his I encourage me during the

Dedicate my Thesis of 1937.

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## OUTLINE

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

Within the past ten years the educational program has undergone many changes. The school has come to realize the importance of the distinction between the mastery of school tasks and the learning that takes place outside the school, and the wise school master has come to see that both he and his teachers are not fulfilling their true function as instructors, guides and counselors of the youth unless they all help to organize and direct the many leisure activities of the pupil.

The result of this new vision has been that the function of the teacher is changed, her responsibility has been broadened, to include the whole child.

Extra curricula activities have gained recognition among educators as a vital part of every school program intended to train the pupils to take their places in the democracy of the social order. Their place in the program is the result of a changed view point as to what the aim of the school should be.

An entirely new interest in the extra curricula

activities of the youth has been taken over by the school, and the attention of the world is directed a new interest to the youth, as the hope of civilization.

There has been a fortunate change in attitudes, and all new tendencies of action have arisen, new emotions begin to sway youth, new ideas as to life begin to be formulated, and tends to become fixed, and serious thought is given to the conduct and qualities of teachers.

Social attitudes and tendencies of importance in later life are inclined to become fixed through these activities. The rule of the group tends to become the rewards of regular school credit. Within the past eight years the general social condition of America has increased the importance of extra curricular activities to the extent that the schools of the country have been forced to a greater degree to place them in the program of the schools.

The purpose of this paper is to show that the extra curricular activities are developing to the extent of showing increasing importance to the rural as well as the urban school children, in helping them to live a less burdensome rural life.



The fundamental purpose underlying extra curricular activities are three fold: To show first, that there is a concept of American democracy; second that the American rural school is a part of this concept of American democracy, in that it is the accepted training instrument set up to prepare American youth for responsible citizenship in this democracy; and third that extra curricular activities are the foremost rules of the adolescent.<sup>1</sup> To stimulate, guide, and direct the adolescent tendencies is both the opportunity and mission of the teacher.

Therefore, extra curricular activities offer useful tools for that adaptive, corrective, and directive training of the youth. As a workable definition of the term extra curricular activities, the author of this study has seen fit to refer to them as those activities carried on at a time apart from the hours of the regular school program, but do not give school credit. Sometime they are referred to as those activities of the school that are outside the traditional curriculum that have sprung up and developed through the student's own desires and efforts and are carried on apart from the hours of the regular school program and are

1. Robert, A. C. & Draper, E. M. - Extra Class and Intramural Activities. - p. 5.

usually participated in without the rewards of regular school credits.<sup>2</sup> If the attitude of the teacher and administrator should change then the foregoing definitions may not remain as they are.

2. Wild, E. H. - Extra Curricular Activities - p. 5.

Primary concern of the school is to develop necessary and desirable forms of human behavior, rather than to transmit subject matter. There can be no valid distinction between curricular and extra-curricular, all activities are experienced which sets up the educational environment customarily designated as the school activities, must be judged solely in the light of their ability to produce conduct of better form of human behavior.

The activities discussed later in this study are commonly designated as extra-curricular activities and are those which are not designated as curricular in the sense that they develop necessary and desirable forms of human behavior - in any sense, more than the activities traditionally designated as curricular.

The extra-curricular activities have not recently been as popular as they were in the past. Previously in many schools they were considered vital, and in some cases were not admitted in the school. As it is often said,

## Chapter II

### The Educational Influence of Extra-Curricular Activities

The time will doubtless come when there will be no such term as extra-curricular activities. From the standpoint of the new education, which is the primary concern of the school to develop necessary and desirable forms of human behavior, rather than to transmit subject matter. There can be no valid distinction between curricular and extra-curricular. All activities and experiences which make up the educational environment commonly designated as the school activities, must be judged solely in the light of their office to produce necessary and desirable forms of human behavior.

The activities discussed later in this study are commonly designated as extra-curricular activities, and many others which are not discussed are educative in the sense that they develop necessary and desirable forms of human behavior - in many cases, more than the activities traditionally designated as curriculum.

The extra-curricular activities have just recently gained entrance to the school. Previously in many schools they were considered evils, and in some cases were not admitted in the school. As it is often said,

"When literary society comes in the door, scholarship flew out the window".<sup>3</sup> This was the attitude in earlier years to all extra-curricular activities.

More recently there have been marked changes in attitude toward extra-curricular activities in rural schools. The teachers of the rural have realized that these activities have great educational possibilities, and it is the business of the school not only to welcome and encourage them, but to control and direct them in such a manner that they may be utilized educationally to the fullest possible extent.

From all evidence extra-curricular activities movement represents an important step in curriculum making. It makes available for educational purpose, a great variety of pupil activities and experiences, which are and were formerly almost entirely overlooked.

The two theories of education are knowledge and practice. They lead back to the object of education. The first duty of education is to teach those students to do better the desirable things that they are going to do any way.<sup>4</sup> Another

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3. Anonymous.

4. McKown, Harry C. - Extra Curricular Activities - p. 1

duty is to reveal higher types of activities and to make them both desirable and to an extent possible.<sup>5</sup>

Many values are derived from the extra-curricular program in the rural school, namely: moral, social, intellectual, civic, vocational, physical, aesthetic, and many others.

When pupils voluntarily organize themselves to conduct certain activities primarily, for the good of the school, and for their own pleasure, the underlying motive is certain to be altruistic, and all the values which spring from altruistic effort will as a result remain.

The main objective of the extra-curricular activities may be stated as follows:<sup>6</sup>

1. Developing physical fitness.
2. Applying fundamental processes to scientific and social phenomena.
3. Discovering interests and aptitude.
4. Using nature as a capacity to the maximum.
5. Preparing for economic independence or advanced training.
6. Participating in diversified, aesthetic, and recreational activities.

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5. IBID

6. Jordan, R. H. - Extra Curricular and Classroom Activities - p. 7-8

7. Evaluating high standards of conduct in personal and group life.
8. Contributing to worthy home life.
9. Evaluating the past in determining its contribution to the present.
10. Understanding the significance of larger group relationships in the world today.

his dependence and it is here that the teacher and the teacher become better acquainted. The pupil learns to admire, respect, appreciate, and love his teacher as an individual, and not the old teacher as one thought a few years passed.

In the homeroom the teacher has an opportunity to know the pupils' likes, abilities, attitudes, and can direct and guide the pupil more intelligently.

The homeroom reaches all the pupils in the school. It is the natural unit through which to develop pupil's participation in school management. Here school policies are initiated, vital questions concerning the welfare of the pupil, the school, and the community are discussed and often adjusted. In the homeroom the child's best work is done, if he feels free to ask questions, and is satisfied with

### Chapter III

#### Extra-Curricular Activities During School Life

The homeroom organization is an arrangement by which the student is assigned a school home, during his period of school life. He reports to a certain teacher in a specified room at a designated time during the day. The teacher keeps an account of his attendance and it is here that the teacher and the pupil become better acquainted. The pupil learns to admire, respect, appreciate, and know his teacher as an individual, and not the old taskmaster as was thought a few years passed.

In the homeroom the teacher has an opportunity to know the pupils' likes, abilities, attitudes, and can direct and guide the pupil more intelligently.

The homeroom reaches all the pupils in the school. It is the natural unit through which to develop pupil's participation in school management. Here school policies are initiated, vital questions concerning the welfare of the pupil, the school, and the community are discussed and often adjusted. In the homeroom the child's best work is done, if he feels free to ask questions, and is satisfied with

his surroundings.

The homeroom activities are especially valuable to the slow and non-aggressive children; where there is contact with other children, and constant encouragement from the teacher; shyness is overcome, and soon these children are participating in the many activities of the school and are brought into living contact with all the ideals of the school.

The attitude of the teacher can do much in making the homeroom a happy and pleasant place to be. Where the best method is used enrollment, and attendance are increased, and other routine of activities can be intelligently handled.<sup>7</sup>

The interest of both teacher and student are essential to the creation of an adequate sentiment for the school. The teacher and student must cooperate if educational values are to be found in any form of school organization. The smaller the group the larger the number of opportunities for each pupil causing each to get more practice, thus increasing his advantages.

Pupils learn to observe the qualification of leadership and fellowship. They learn how to vote,

7. McKown, H. C. - Extra-Curricular Activities \* p. 25



and conduct meetings with parliamentary procedure. They learn to make, and keep appointments, and set up for themselves standards of responsibilities and service.

The proper use of homeroom period may enable all its members to know the history and about all connected with the school.

Intellectual intergration is not enough, there must be opportunity for emotional intergration as well.<sup>8</sup>

#### School publication in rural -

A bit of news published each week and circulated among the children of a single grade or community is a good method of advertising the school and is one method of emotional intergration in that it offers opportunity for self submission and expression. The school is not only put in touch with other schools, but encourages enterprises and help to promote school spirit.

The school publication stimulates the use of better English, a love for poetry, and a desire for each individual to do his best work, in order that it might warrant a place in the paper.<sup>9</sup>

8. Fretwell, E. K. - Extra-Curricular Activities - p. 32.

9. Jordon, R. H. - Extra Classroom Activities - p. 68

When the student is properly guided, he becomes acquainted with the planning, the arranging, and the composition of each issue and receive from it a training that will help in later life.

The weekly paper of a rural school may be simple yet it may make public the activities of the school by carrying the school news to the community, thus giving parents and patrons an opportunity to know what the school is doing. Such will tend to result into an increased attendance of students; each one will have to do his best in order to have his name on the honor rool. That the well wishers might see what he is doing.

If the students have the responsibility of planning the news for the paper each week; they must show leadership, initative, tact, tolerance, and a high degree of cooperation.<sup>10</sup>

Athletics - To know the strength or weakness of a school one might examine its athletics. If there is weakness, hypocrisy, dishonesty, cowardace, selfishness, or if there is truth, honor, courage, self-control, self-abnegation, these will be manifested. Through athletics all that is noble self-sacrificing, brave, and even heroic can be developed.<sup>11</sup>

10. McKown, H, C, - Extra Curricular Activities - p. 297

11. Jordon, R. H. - Extra-Curricular Activities - p. 167

To gain the best and avoid the worst there must be a clear understanding as to the importance and true function of athletics.

To have perfect program of athletics those concerned must be fair minded. A Coach and Principal may be honest in matters in general, but in athletics they may be dishonest. They must work in such a way that will cause the on lookers to believe that he is fair and square. They must cooperate to insure fair play, honesty, teamwork, and to convince the public that the only desirable athlete is the clean type; and the first requisite is a combination of a clean and fair-minded Coach and Principal.

In the system where we find a successful program of athletics we find the following:<sup>12</sup>

1. A better physical development than would otherwise obtained.
2. A development of physical courage.
3. Better health habits growing out of good training rules, and properly adjusted diet.
4. Formation of a habit of exercise which may become a life habit.
5. A willingness to endure the ordeal of training for the good of the school without thought of personal reward.

6. A willingness to sacrifice one's self for the good of the team.

Athletics give the student plenty of physical exercise and makes them strong and healthy in body and mind.

Through group games boys and girls receive physical training, moral and social training naturally develop out of competition in athletics. It gives an opportunity for plenty of recreation which makes one feel well, and it aids in developing good carriage, easy coordination in motion and locomotion. It also gives vigor and strength and develops muscles.

The following sports afford adequate exercise: hiking, jumping, tennis, volleyball, soft ball, basketball, football, track, gymnastics, bicycle riding, swimming, and numerous other sports.

Hiking is one of the best forms of exercise that all ages and sizes may participate in and gain strength.

Basketball and football are rough, but are valuable to health, give lessons in teamwork, cooperation, and self-control.

In swimming all muscles of the body are brought into play.

Track allows more breathing, plenty of running and jumping, and is rough enough to insure

exercise of all the nerves, muscles, and personal courage.

Extracurricular Activities

Up to now, in developing the study of the value of extracurricular activities in rural schools there have been little signs of encouraging participation in these activities. This can be done by offering suitable recognition of awards, medals, pins, etc. Also, student report cards should mention these activities.

Early phases of the program of school participation are today making the attitude of educators. Some of the unsolved issues are as follows: Should there be a restriction of participation on the basis of scholarship; should there be eligibility rules governing participation in all these activities; should there be compulsory participation in these activities on the part of all students; should participation be limited to a certain number of activities; should there be activities in the school system offered as alternatives.<sup>14</sup>

even if the student does not have much time to give to various extracurricular activities, his interest in them must be aroused if "school spirit" is to be created. Some forms of participation of the

13. McKown, W. C. - Extracurricular Activities - p. 122  
14. Will, R. H. - Extracurricular Activities - p. 122

## Chapter IV

### Means of Encouraging Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities

Up to now, in developing the study of the values of extra-curricular activities in rural schools there have been little means of encouraging participation in these activities. This can be done by offering suitable recognition of awards, medals, pins, record cards, student report cards, and certificates.<sup>13</sup>

Many phases of this question of student participation are today holding the attention of educators. Some of the unsettled issues are as follows: Should there be a restriction of participation on the bases of scholarship; should there be eligibility rules governing participation in all these activities; should there be compulsory participation in these activities on the part of all students; should pupil be limited to a certain number of activities; should there be activities in the school system offered as electives.<sup>14</sup>

even if the student does not have much time to give to various extra-curricular activities, his interest in them must be aroused if "school spirit" is to be created. Some means of equalization of the

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13. McKown, H. C. - Extra-Curricular Activities - p. 153

14. Wild, E. H. - Extra-Curricular Activities - p. 153

extra-curricular activities should be considered, to keep some student from over-loading, while some excellent talent go to waste.

An excellent device for stimulation and encouragement of participation in various forms of activities is rewarding, successful participation by means of school honors or school awards.<sup>15</sup>

At one time awards were limited to those participating in athletics. Today the fact has been recognized that other activities bring recognition to the school and the policy today is to honor and reward those who best represent and serve the school, regardless of the activity.

A record should be kept of each student's participation in all social affairs it is equally as valuable as the scholastic record. They should be allowed to plan, control, and manage these activities.

The student's report card is a good means of encouraging participation in the extra-curricular activities. The cards sent home each month to parents should prove some value, they should know what the child is doing. By these report cards we can distribute more evenly the opportunities for participation.

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15. IBID p. 176

The participation certificate serves as a good incentive and should not be over looked. Any thing that will make a student believe he is being honored and given some recognition, he will become interested and will be willing to participate. At one time the idea of rewards and incentives were not advocated, but they are used to a great extent.

of rural life.

In every community there should be organized a number of worthwhile clubs to lift the rural folk out of despair and let them realize that rural life is a joy and comfort, and not a place of toil, but should be regarded as a place where pleasant cooperative spirit exist for developing more community interest.

Clubs are valuable in that they give some definite place to go, an interesting function to perform, and a chance to develop better talent, and an interest in rural community life is increased. They also, make worthy use of one's leisure which makes clubs rank high in educational values.

The more clubs organized in a rural community, the larger the opportunity for developing better talent, and the greater the educational values. The sponsor should be one who has a wide awake mind, and



## Chapter V

### Extra-Curricular Activities After School Life

To keep a rural community alive and all of the folks looking to something that inspires. As we think of the many activities, the one which the grown ups can be interested, we think of the variety of clubs that we may organize to help lessen the burden of rural life.

In every community there should be organized a number of worthwhile clubs to lift the rural folk out of despair and let them realize that rural life is a joy and comfort, and not a place of toil, but should be regarded as a place where pleasant cooperative spirit exist for developing more community interest.

Clubs are valuable in that they give some definite place to go, an interesting function to perform, and a chance to develop better talent, and an interest in rural community life is increased. They also, make worthy use of one's leisure which makes clubs rank high in educational values.

The more clubs organized in a rural community, the larger the opportunity for developing better talent, and the greater the educational values. The sponsor should be one who has a wide awake mind, and

has a certain amount of self-control, and is willing to make a sacrifice for the interest of the community. The following clubs may be organized in a rural community and will give the best results: Art and Study clubs, health, reading, canning, dramatic, debating, bird club, garden, flower yard and many others.

The most important factor of life is health, thus a good health drive should exist in a rural community. Good Health should be the slogan of the community. Such a slogan can be made very effective through clubs. Here health may play a great part in the developing of the community. Health may be discussed and health programs developed, emphasizing everything that is practical to improve rural health.

Dramatic clubs offer opportunity for clear and vivid expression; new words are added, better enunciation is practiced and confidence is gained. These clubs are valuable as a good cause or source of revenue for the school or community. Through dramatic clubs one receives educational values.

One of the most neglected of all rural community extra-curricular activities is debating, yet it is one of the most helpful. For training in teamwork it

equals athletics. It tends to develop the intellectual capacities and individual interest. Like the other activities, debating has added its share to the educational values of rural communities. It has brought liked minded people together for higher development of special skill, than would be done in a classroom. It gives opportunity for every child to develop some special interest or aptitude in his avocational life.<sup>16</sup>

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16. Jordan, R. H. - Extra-Curricular Activities - p. 127

## Chapter VI

### Summary

The writer has attempted to present in a very brief form the values of extra-curricular activities in the rural schools. The average rural school teacher needs a list of practical plans and procedures. She has little time for theories. She must organize and get results promptly, she must have a background of educational theories, but many of her educational courses have been theoretical, and they leave her to devise her own plans of application.

Extra-curricular activities provide such an opportunity for practice in social relationship.

The basic principles are civic, leadership, social, moral, vocational, and lessons in leisure training. The homeroom is an arrangement by which the student is assigned a school home. The teacher and the student become better acquainted and more intelligent guidance is made. It affords the student an opportunity to prepare for membership in democracy.

The school newspaper must be attractively organized. Good ideas of what constitutes a good rural school paper may be gotten by noting what is considered by judges in newspaper contest. There are

many values attached to athletics.

Extra-curricular activities tend to rid a boy or girl of some, if not all of his or her selfishness, and helps to make out of him or her a law abiding and worthwhile citizen, and in turn will help make the community a better place to live.

It is concluded that these amusements and the interest in school life give the mind a direction and attitude toward rural school life and help the school better to pass easily and swiftly, and both students and teachers welcome all extra-curricular activities as a part of their school program.

The more directly a fact, skill or habit meet genuinely life's demand the more surely and fully the learning will function in life; and when the experiences of these extra-curricular activities during school life are combined with the extra activities after school life a general balance in education will be the result.

Therefore, extra-curricular activities in the rural school should not merely be an activity, but a type of activity that facilitates the physical, mental, civic, ethical, and educational development of the pupils.

## Chapter VII

### Conclusions

Since extra-curricular activities have been valuable to the rural school teacher in making her classwork a pleasure by mixing some of the spice of life into her daily program of work, it might be concluded that these amusements and new interest of school life give the mind a different attitude toward rural school life and help the school hours to pass easily and swiftly, and both students and teachers welcome all extra-curricular activities as a part of their school program.

The more directly a fact, skill or habit meet genuinely life's demand the more surely and fully the learning will function in life; and when the experiences of these extra-curricular activities during school life are combined with the extra activities after school life a general balance in education will be the result.

Therefore, extra-curricular activities in the rural school should not merely be as <sup>classified</sup> activities, but a type of activity that facilitates the physical, moral, mental, civic, ethical, and educational development of the pupils.

## Chapter VIII

### Recommendations

On the basis of the foregoing conclusion the writer wishes to recommend: (1) that in the rural school only those teachers should be employed who are capable of directing such out of classroom activities as will promote new life in school work, and will make the work a pleasure instead of a drudgery.

(2) Since there are many students who would not be in school if it were not for these extra-curricular activities. Parents should be urged to see that their children remain regular in attendance so that they may be benefitted to the fullest extent by these activities.

Marshal, J. J.

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