

Summer 8-1-1964

## **Selected Attempts to Organize Elementary Schools for Individualizing Instruction**

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**SELECTED ATTEMPTS TO ORGANIZE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
FOR INDIVIDUALIZING INSTRUCTION**

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**A Research Paper  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College**

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**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education**

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**by  
Edwin W. Morgan  
August 1964**

THIS PAPER IS APPROVED AS MEETING  
THE PLAN 2 REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
COMPLETION OF A RESEARCH PAPER.

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FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Individualization of teaching does not replace or supersede the content of education. Rather, individualization brightens and enhances content. If the role of curriculum content may be compared roughly with the booster rocket in the flight of an astronaut, then individualization may be analogous to the last stage rocket which puts the capsule in orbit. However, in education the booster rocket and the last-stage rocket fire simultaneously.

We believe that individualization of teaching is increased when education relies as much as possible upon reality and upon actual experiences for its content. Observations, first hand experiences, and direct contacts with the world are the raw materials of education. In general, the more direct the transactions the pupil can have with such raw materials and the more often such transactions occur, the better (20:20).

According to Aristotle (14:1-10), nature endows the young with only certain impulses and sensations; and education, therefore, must develop those forms of behavior and those ideas which are essential in the making of good citizens. Aristotle is very definite in his recognition of individual variations and the possible influence of education upon individuals of different qualities.

In order that learners may become increasingly responsible and committed in our society, their potentials as individuals must be discovered. The time demands that the individual's potential be discovered, developed and

released. This is because of the multiple benefits which the realization of his full potential can eventually offer the individual and the society in which he lives, thus making the process a revolving one.

Human potential is everything with which the individual is capable of responding. It is seen in the individual's dynamic enterplay with his environment. The most helpful orientation that an educator can hold toward releasing human potential is open-mindedness concerning each learner's potential. Along with this must go a sense of obligation to help each learner realize his potential in terms of interest and social needs. It is toward this release of hidden powers that educators need, increasingly, to direct their attention and efforts (13:14).

The matter of individuality among people and within each person is a very complex one. Thorndike (35:1-2) gives a good implication of just how important and unique each person is in this passage describing a million men:

If for each one, we could prophesy just what the response would be to every possible situation of life--the million men would be found to differ widely. Probably no two out of the million would be so alike in mental nature as to be indistinguishable by one who knew their natures. Each has an individuality which marks him off from other men. Each has not only a mind, the mind of the human species, but also his own, specialized, particular, readily distinguishable mind. Even in bodily nature, indeed men differ so much that it would be hard to find, amongst a million, two whose features are just alike,

who are equally susceptible to every disease, who have identical bodily habits. The differences in intellect and character are far greater.

With what has been elaborated on the above information concerning the individual and the nature of learning, we can now take a look at the responsibility facing administrators and teachers in their efforts to provide the type of organization and teaching method that will best facilitate the learning process, therefore, making good citizens of each individual.

The organization and method of teaching should be aimed at providing selected and guided experiences that will facilitate individual differences in children. Research has shown us that children differ in their rate of development, in status of their development at any one time, and in their own individual abilities.

Too often teachers render only lip service to the provisions for individual differences, while many of their teaching practices carefully ignore them. The common concept of "certain requirements to be mastered in each grade has been the greatest violation of this principle (23:154-55)."

#### Statement of the Problem

Many programs, some old and some new, are finding their way into the elementary school for the purpose of



individualizing instruction. As more research is completed in the areas of individual differences, more experimentation and change are the results.

Attempts to individualize instruction seem to fall into two categories. The organization and structure of schools and school programs is one area where changes have been made, based on research, to better serve the individual. The methods used by teachers, working within certain organizational patterns is another attempt to promote the well being of the individual.

It may be said that individualization could take as many forms as there are individuals (23:55). Therefore, the responsibility of teachers and administrators becomes more complex as we advance on the frontiers of individual differences.

### Importance of the Study

The purpose in writing this paper is to explore and report on selected areas where attempts have been made, or are being made, to individualize instruction. The review of literature will be done in two time periods. The first will give an overview of early attempts to break the graded school rigidity. This will cover organizational patterns from roughly 1848 to 1930. The second period reflects the more recent organizational patterns from

roughly 1950 to the present. The review of literature will be selective within these time periods.

## I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Individualized Instruction

This is a process whereby provisions are made for the teacher to go beyond the content of the curriculum and beyond standardized instruction to enhance the learning of the individual. The emphasis is placed on the child as a person and the interaction between pupil and pupil and pupil and teacher. Individualization gives relevance to experiences which the individual learner shares and receives in any learning situation.

### Individual Differences

It is the unique potential of unpredictable powers which can be expanded or diminished through the educative process. It is also the unique inherent processes by which each person grows and develops within his surroundings.

### Classification

A single factor for arranging pupils in beginning school situations, such as enrollment, is called classification.

**Organization**

The structure of a school and its curriculum to best facilitate the learning process of children is called organization.

## CHAPTER II

### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EARLY ATTEMPTS AT ORGANIZATION

The early attempts at reorganization up to about 1890 had been centered on examination of methods and promotional periods. Attention then shifted to the re-organization of the elementary school in terms of curriculum and teaching methods. One of the first persons to be recognized as loudly protesting the lock-step method imposed by the schools was Preston B. Search. He urged complete individual progress for each pupil. His ideas were first put into practice in Pueblo, Colorado in 1888. This first movement toward individualizing instruction paved the way for other experiments. The Cambridge, Portland, Santa Barbara, Batavia, and North Denver Plans were among the early movements. Later movements took on such labels as the Platoon School and Cooperative Group Plan. Still others came to be known as the Winnetka and Dalton Plans. Each of these innovations found some success in different school systems with the purpose of breaking the rigidity of the graded school.

#### The Pueblo Plan

In his plan of individual progress for each pupil, Search established a school system whereby all students

studied every unit, but each at his own rate. No marks were given, but the number of satisfactory units were recorded. Many of its elements have been adopted by subsequent plans but it was never widely adopted. It was used mainly in high schools (6:252-53); however, it was used in intermediate grades by providing and expecting more work from the more capable students. The Pueblo Plan was in effect from 1888 to 1894. Search later moved to Los Angeles, California, but failed to get his plan into full operation. A survey by Hartwell (19:296) showed less than one-fourth of nine hundred schools surveyed used some elements of this plan.

#### Dewey's Laboratory School

As a cooperative venture on the part of teachers, parents and educators, the Dewey School originated in Chicago in 1896. It was under the direction of John and Mary Dewey. The plan for the life of the school, in this experiment, was a simplified and ordered continuation of the life of the child at home. In the school's environment, both new and familiar; the child, aware of no break in his experience, could learn to become an useful member of a larger social group. It was believed that the child, through the thrill of using his individual powers toward

social ends, could become more and more an expert in making contributions to society (27:23-24).

It was Dewey's plan to center his program around, what he called, four impulses: social, constructive, investigative and expressive or artistic. He intended to guide the child toward saying, making, finding out and creating within these four areas.

The core of the school activity was to be found in occupations rather than in conventional studies. Studying and retention were supposed to be a continuing outgrowth from consecutive occupational activities. Occupations included cooking, sewing and carpentry. This was not vocational training as we know it today. It was portrayed as the fundamental relations of man in his world. The activities involved getting food, securing shelter, and clothing. Intellectual activities were required, as well as, manual manipulations. Activities were attempts to make a new flexible curriculum. They were cooperatively planned and based on the child's interests.

The Dewey School and writing has had a tremendous impact on education in the United States. It has indicated that children's interest and needs, as well as, usefulness must be considered in selecting curriculum content (27:40-41).

### The Cambridge Plan

The Cambridge Plan was a double track curriculum. It was originated by Francis Cogswell in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The same work was outlined for all pupils in the first three grades of a nine grade elementary school course. Essentially, it enabled the brighter students to move more rapidly into a double track system. They could complete a nine year program in as few as seven years (13:222). In the last six grades the work was arranged into two parallel courses, the regular course, which required six years for its completion and a special course for the brighter pupils to be completed in four years. In 1910, the nine year school course was reduced to eight and the double track plan was extended to include all eight grades.

The Cambridge Program provided chiefly for the average and superior children. A study by Hartwell showed that seventy-eight out of nine hundred sixty five cities reporting had tried the plan and that it was favored in two hundred thirty five others (19:296). However, a study by Ayers (4:37-39) showed only three cities using the plan. The Cambridge Plan as established in the City of Cambridge in 1910 was discontinued (30:166).

### The Portland Plan

Although many plans were centered in the eastern part of the country, as time passed they were spread all across the nation. The Portland Plan had as its founder Frank Rigler, who in 1897 instituted a double track curriculum in Portland, Oregon. The Portland Plan was an attempt to organize the elementary school into fifty-four units of study. A child who was a member of a regular progress group would cover six of these units each year or three per semester. The more capable students in each class were placed in a separate division and were permitted to cover eight units of the course per year (except the last year, in which only six units were covered). They could complete the full course in seven years.

The two courses articulated at various points so that pupils might be transferred from the rapid progress to the regular group or vice versa. According to Mr. C. A. Rice, Superintendent of the Portland School System, this plan only lasted about sixteen years and was abandoned about 1913 (30:168).

The extent to which the Portland Plan was adopted by other schools cannot be clearly established. The plan, as such, has lost its identity. However, many elements of it, particularly the division of the course into specific



units with more rapid progress for superior children, have been further pursued and are part of many school programs today.

### The Santa Barbara Concentric Plan

This plan was initiated by Fredric Burk, who established his curriculum on three different levels. Students were placed in the "A," "B," "C" sections according to their ability. All pupils did the basic content included on the "C" level, but the students on the "B" level did more extensive work than did the "C" groups. The "A" groups did still more extensive work than the "B" groups. When transfers were made, the pupils from the "A" sections were transferred to the "C" sections of the next high grade.

There is no data available to determine the extent to which the Santa Barbara plan was successful. It was considered to be impractical. After a short trial it disappeared as its sponsors left the scene or as its essential elements became incorporated into more typical practices (30:136-37).

In 1922, Ayers (4:37-39) reported only four cities using the Santa Barbara Plan. The direct lineage between the Santa Barbara experiment and present plans for providing for individual differences can be implied from the

fact that Burk started this plan and later started the individual work at San Francisco State Normal School.

### The Batavia Plan

Along with the North Denver Plan and Bay City Experiment, the Batavia Plan is sometimes called the "coaching plan" because of two persons being in the classroom. It originated in New York under the direction of John Kennedy. Special provisions were made for slow learning children in a school in which large classes (eighty or more pupils per room) prevailed. Each room had two teachers, one a direct instruction teacher and the other an assistant teacher, who coached the laggards at a desk in the back of the room. The underlying assumption of this arrangement was that, with extra individual instruction each child could come up to one definite standard.

The system lent itself well to platooning where one teacher presented some subjects and the other presented others. In 1934, there were only two such classrooms. It was later modified by departmentalization whereby each teacher alternated between direction and individual instruction (30:168).

The Batavia Plan lasted about thirty years. A survey in 1910 (19:296) showed one hundred forty five districts out of nine hundred sixty five that had used

some elements of the plan. Elements of the Batavia Plan may still be recognized, especially in special classes designed to bolster up the achievement of the average and retarded children.

### The North Denver Plan

Whereas the emphasis in Batavia was on the slow student, the North Denver Plan was an effort to enrich the curriculum of the gifted child. Each class was stocked with a carefully selected library of from fifty to seventy-five volumes. The class organization remained largely in tact, with all pupils covering the minimum assignments and with enriched assignments, on the same topic, provided for the gifted children.

The North Denver Plan seems to have lost its identity, but differentiated assignments and curricula are very much on the current educational scene. Hartwell's survey in 1910 (19:296) showed one hundred sixty two out of nine hundred sixty five schools had used parts of the program.

### The Platoon School

William A. Wirt developed this plan in Bluffton, Indiana, in 1900. Children were divided into two groups. They received instruction in fundamental subjects in one group and had an opportunity for activities in the special

subjects in the other group. It was sometimes referred to as the "work-study-play" program and had as a part of its underlying motive, more economical use of the school space (32:54-55).

Students were alternating between the home room and the activities room. The home room was similar to the regular grade room in the graded school in that pupils were under the direction of one teacher for half the day, while working in special subject areas. The special activities room corresponded to rooms of a departmental school, each special subject being taught in such a room by a teacher who was a specialist in her field (6:41-63).

#### The Cooperative Group Plan

The main feature of this plan was the organization of teachers into small cooperative groups. Each group was led by one teacher acting as chairman. They were brought together, not because they taught the same subjects, but because they taught the same children. The regular course of study was acceptable because there was no element of curriculum revision. Each teacher had a room especially equipped for the age of the pupils she directed and the particular type of activity she was engaged in and expected to stimulate and guide.

The school day was divided into perhaps four or five parts. The children spent each part in one of the rooms and with a certain teacher. It was hoped that growth and continuity of pupil progress would be facilitated through contacts with the same group of teachers over a period of three years (30:148-51).

### The Winnetka Plan

This plan was first started by Fredric Burk who initiated the Santa Barbara Plan in 1913. It was introduced into the public schools a decade later, under the leadership of Carleton W. Washburne, who was at the time, Superintendent of Schools in Winnetka, Illinois. The main object of the program was individualizing instruction and adapting instructional materials to the abilities of the pupil. It further emphasized the organization of curriculum materials. Also certain modifications in classroom organization were necessary to adopt these materials.

The curriculum consisted of two main parts. One part was the "common essentials," the three R's, and similar methods. The other part provided for social and creative activities. Like the platoon system, half of both of the morning and afternoon was spent pursuing each part of the curriculum (30:142-46).

The second part of the curriculum was the "group and creative activities." It included the development of appreciation of literature, music, and art; play ground activities; handwork of different kinds; projects which were an end in themselves rather than a means to mastery of subject matter. There was no common skill or knowledge to be mastered. These activities were included because it was the school's job to provide opportunities for self-expression and for the development of the special interests and abilities of each individual.

Like the Dalton Plan, the school day was divided into a way that one-half of each forenoon and afternoon was given over to individual work in the common essentials. The other half of each session was given to group and creative activities (30:143-44).

Certain features of the Winnetka Plan have been used in other cities. In a survey of 280 superintendents in cities of 10,000 or more who reported to the Bureau of Education in 1926, 43 indicated use of some phase of this plan (30:145).

### The Dalton Plan

It is unlike the Winnetka Plan in that it is not primarily a curriculum experiment. It is an effort to express a sociological philosophy through the commonly

accepted curriculum. This plan provided for an individual pupil job-sheet-unit-conference technique. Each child had his learning task set before him in an individualized sense. He was permitted to move along upon completion of the requirements, as determined through a checking conference with the teacher (32:55).

The Dalton Plan is similar to the Winnetka Plan in that each purports to allow each child to progress through a prescribed course of curriculum at his own rate. These plans also recognize, more fully than any plan previously described here, the significance of individual differences in learning facts and skills. The Dalton Plan developed by Miss Parkhurst divided the learnings in each subject into contracts which the child completed at his own rate. Washburne's Plan featured a series of "goal cards" in which each subject outlined the specific details to be learned at the child's own rate. Both plans also recognized and included activity periods of different types for cultural and social learning (12:133-34).

#### Generalizations Concerning Early Attempts

From the foregoing information about the numerous early attempts to break the rigidity of the graded school, there seems to be certain properties in evidence throughout all these efforts.

There is much evidence of philosophical floundering on the part of both educators and the public as to exactly what should be the best methods of educating children; however this is still evident today. This is shown by the mere fact that many more attempts have been tried than space for exposure allows in this paper. However, on the other hand, it might be surmized that, even though there were no major breakthroughs in these early attempts, they were cognizant of the fact that the graded structure was not the best means of providing for individual differences.

It seems logical to say that in such plans as Pueblo, Dewey's School, Cambridge, Portland, Santa Barbara, Batavia, and North Denver that the emphasis seems to be placed more on curriculum revisions; whereas in the plans such as the Platoon School, Cooperative Group Plan, Winnetka and Dalton Plans, the philosophy seems to be more toward the reorganization of the school based on rate of learning and the classifying of pupils within the same curriculum framework.



## CHAPTER III

### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CURRENT ATTEMPTS AT ORGANIZATION

#### The Nongraded School

The first attempts to achieve a formal organization for schooling, were based on a nongraded plan, although it was not definitely labeled as such. The early schools were organized on a continuous progress basis. At this time the school conformed to an agrarian society. A child might be forced to leave school because of harvest or the entire school was run on a seasonal basis. When the child returned to school, the program began where it had left off and a continuous progress plan was, in reality, established.

With the increase in school population, it became necessary to classify children into groups, arbitrarily, on the basis of age. In 1948, the Quincy Grammar School was established. This was a very important mark on the history of education in this country. It provided for a one-teacher-per-grade and was the beginning of what is still known as the "graded" school. The continuous progress plan gave way to organization to accommodate the needs of the times (32:51).

The foundations for the introduction of the ungraded school, as we know it today, were evidently the results of

a gradual evolution of theory and practice. Such factors as recognition of individual differences, as being more than difference in age, and the desire to promote social adjustment and social learning created a demand for new systems in which grade levels would be abolished. It seems impossible to state the exact place where credit should fall for the introduction of the ungraded plan as an educational innovation. No doubt, several cities had conducted initial experiments with the plan before it received a great deal of attention from either the teaching profession or the public.

Although they were not the first such plans in operation; Albany, New York, and Richmond, Virginia, were among the first to start the ungraded plan. The former was in 1935, and the latter in 1936. The Albany Plan was sponsored by Austin R. Coulson, Superintendent of Schools. Neither grades nor teachers were essential in the Albany set up. Milwaukee started its plan under the direction of Lowell P. Goodrich in 1942, and the results were very encouraging. Appleton, Wisconsin, has had a continuous plan in operation since 1951, and reports that it has been successful also. The ungraded plan has been in operation at the University of Chicago Laboratory School since 1948, with satisfactory results (11:413-16).

The Nongraded School Program is designed to implement a philosophy of continuous pupil progress. The differences among children are great. Since these differences cannot be substantially modified, school structure must facilitate the continuous educational progress of each pupil. Some pupils, therefore, will require a longer period of time than others for achieving certain learnings and attaining certain developmental levels (16:52-59).

The ungraded plan is a means of making functional a philosophy that adjusts teaching and administrative procedures to meet the differing social, mental, and physical capacities among children. It is not a method of teaching or a departure from established procedures. It is rather an administrative tool to encourage and promote a philosophy of continuous growth.

The plan has been used mostly in the primary grades and thus given the name "primary unit plan." The plan, however, may be readily used throughout the school. The ungraded primary is simply a plan whereby children, beyond kindergarten age and below the fourth grade level, are grouped together in classes which have no grade level designations. The ungraded unit has had its largest application in a plan whereby children, of similar chronological age and social emotional maturity, are kept together when administratively possible (21:222-23).

In the ungraded plan, the administrative labels of first, second, and third grade are removed. The typical child who enters the ungraded primary enters a classroom with no label except "primary." For the next three years (or more or less, depending upon maturity and progress), he continues to live and work within this classroom. He does the same kind of lessons, presumably, at the same rate, that he would have done in the traditional structure. The difference is largely in the fact that his teacher has no grade level expectations against which to pace herself. Her only obligation is to keep the youngsters moving along as fast as they are able to move.

At the end of the school year, in June, when the children take home their final progress reports, no mention is made of the next year's grade assignment. The parent is simply advised that the child will continue in primary and pick up in September where he stopped in June. It is particularly helpful if the same teacher can work with the same group for several consecutive years. However, this is not necessarily an inherent feature of the ungraded plan.

Incomplete records over a six year period indicate that a surprisingly low percentage have actually required a fourth year of primary school (15:66-72).

When the nongraded plan includes the years normally associated with grades four through six, the average child takes three years to move through the unit, while the slow learner requires four. In essence, the primary and intermediate plans provide three major organizational advantages. In themselves, they encourage a view of learning and teaching that is not so readily accessible to persons in conventional graded systems. These are: (1) a unit span of years that is adjustable to the lags and spurts normally accompanying the development of a child; (2) progress levels that permit a child to pick up after an absence from school at a point where he previously left off; and (3) a time range that permits children of approximately the same age, chronologically, to remain together while progressing at different academic rates suited to individual capacities (15:170-71).

#### The Bay City Experiment

A fairly recent experiment tried in Bay City, Michigan in 1953, under the direction of Charles B. Park, resembles the Batavia Plan. It calls for two persons in the same classroom. It was instituted as an emergency measure to combat a teacher shortage. The second person in the room is not a qualified teacher.

The plan provides for class sizes of forty-five students with one teacher and her aide. Non-teaching duties of the day were timed and found to take up 26 per cent of the teacher's time, exclusive of before and after the school day. Aides were recruited from the community on recommendations of the P.T.A. and other prominent people. After a brief training period, they were placed in the classroom and given one-half the salary of the teacher. The aide assumes all non-teaching duties, conducts some review work, and directs group activities while the teacher presents new material to another group. Classes with aides were found to achieve their work easier and more effectively. Other than presenting new materials, written exercises could be given on the new work. Corrections could be made and errors discussed on the same day, while the ideas were still fresh (28:36-41).

### Team Teaching

The conception of regrouping and large lectures originated several years ago. It came about as a solution for educational problems of the day, as reported by Frances Keppel, Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The idea remained undeveloped until 1957, when the Fund of the Advancement of Education, supported by the Ford Foundation, was created. They invited Harvard to work

with three school systems in the State of Massachusetts to develop new techniques for education.

After agreeing to oversee the project and with a large grant from the Fund, Harvard established SUPAR (School and University Programs for Research and Development (24:45-48). John Blackhall Smith and Harold Gores, Superintendents of Schools in Lexington and Newton, Massachusetts, had been enthusiastic about the theory of team teaching. Due to the heavy amount of finance required, they were prevented from experimentation along this line. Now with the Fund's grant they were able to proceed.

The Massachusetts School District began the study for Harvard, and from this point it grew steadily. As team teaching grew, it came to the attention of the Association of Secondary School Principals. They organized a special committee entitled "The Commission on the Experimental Study of the Utilization of the Staff in the Secondary School." Dr. Lloyd Trump, formerly professor of education at the University of Illinois, was appointed director of the Commission. The Commission is also supported by the Ford Foundation. The project has been under the direction of the Commission and its findings have been reported in the Bulletin over the past few years (37:9-12).

Advocates of today's team teaching point out that the program has special merit in that it makes the teacher

more conscious of the school curriculum when she has a definite part in its planning. Supporters of team teaching maintain further that guidance of students is improved. The teachers of a team know more students and, as a group, can deal with individual and class problems effectively. They also point out that it provides a method of grouping and regrouping of students during the teaching day to provide for individual differences in learning rates. Team teaching also permits flexibility (36:115-19).

According to Smith (34:58-62), team teaching has the advantages of redeployment, regrouping, and flexibility. Instead of facing a certain group of twenty-five or thirty students in a classroom situation, each individual teacher may work at times with one student. He may also work with twenty-five, thirty, or even one hundred or more, depending on the nature of the objectives to be realized. In this way the teacher can be exposed to all the children while concentrating on her own area of strength. Objectives are realized through more detailed, imaginative lesson planning and more enriched approaches to instruction. The teachers, themselves, pretty much determine how they will operate and what decisions will be made.

In the matter of grouping and regrouping, the children are brought together in groups, whose size may vary for each lesson period. The group is not determined



by the size of the classroom or by dividing the number of teachers into the number of children. They are determined by the content of each lesson and the needs of the individual.

Grouping may be primarily by ability. For example, reading groups are set up among the children taught by the team. They are not designated within each classroom. The grouping may be primarily by the number, as in the case of presenting a new concept in arithmetic, which is introduced through large group instruction. The large group situation usually gives way to at least two opportunities for small groups. Individual conferences are set up for those children who do not readily understand or grasp meaning in the small group situations. Conferences are also set up to help those who are advanced beyond the concepts being presented within the group.

The teacher has the opportunity of flexibility in scheduling, programing, and other building facilities. The teacher endeavors to fit the organizational pattern of the school to the individual rather than on a vice versa basis. The teacher in the team situation has a quicker use of the best techniques, equipment, and approaches to help solve the problems of the individual.

Cunningham (8:54-55) suggests two ways that administrators can organize team teaching. First, he can find

the teachers within his building or immediate staff and solicit their participation in the program. Secondly, he can organize the structure of the team and recruit the teachers to fit this structure. The former method is considered the better, because the administrator already has some idea of the potential of the present teacher. To date, no teachers have been professionally trained as team teachers.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of team teaching is that it furnishes an impetus to significant curriculum improvement. Also, it is believed that superior teachers can have an opportunity to produce their fullest capabilities under this program. Team teaching provides a great deal of flexibility in the use of time space and materials. It does not solve all problems, but it does invigorate teacher concern for them (1:5-7).

As has been previously indicated, no system or approach to improving instruction has been without its problems. Lambert (22:5-7) reports that the real problems in the team teaching approach have been centered around matters of organization, curriculum planning, budgeting, and school designing. A great deal of skilled organizational work must be done while the team is in the experimental stages. Although the team teaching program should cost no more once it is in force, it is expensive in the

beginning in terms of time and money. This very fact will cause many school districts to move slowly in this approach.

In terms of cost of the team teaching program, Dr. Calvin Gross, in an annual report on the Pittsburgh team teaching program, declares it successful in the largest experiment in the United States involving 7,500 students. It is estimated that by this year (1963-64) the schools will have spent \$1,116,400.00, nearly half of which is provided by the Ford Foundation and will involve an estimated 8,500 students in ten schools (17:2).

The following are listed as advantages of this program over the traditional method of teaching:

1. Students are manifesting a greater desire to learn and are doing more serious study and work. Their instruction becomes more individualized as each student is encouraged to progress at his own rate.
2. Teachers are showing more enthusiasm for their work. Relieved of many non-professional duties, they have more time to think through and plan together what they are going to teach.

3. Parents are being helped to understand and accept more fully their responsibilities in the education of their children.

### The Amidon Plan

Carl F. Hansen, Superintendent of Schools in Washington, D. C., initialed the Amidon School in 1960. He took advantage of a new school and placed in it all new staff members whom they selected on the basis of their philosophies and training in basic curriculum areas. The curriculum is a modern self-centered one which reflects the council of basic education philosophy.

The Amidon Plan purports to accomplish the same desirable educational aspects as the non-graded school, from almost an entirely different angle. The philosophy of the non-graded school advocates such areas as: continuous progress; importance of social environment; "within grouping"; teacher-pupil planning; and unit method and fluid gradation. On the reverse side, the Amidon philosophy reflects such areas as: subject centered curriculum; three track grouping (basic, regular, and honors); teacher as subject specialist; school responsibility for academic areas only; no vertical grouping; unit method carried out for class pollinization only; teacher in an authoratarian role; rigid physical arrangement and strict gradation.

The plan evolved from two factors: (1) Mr. Hansen, as superintendent, was persistent in finding a place to put his ideas into practice; and (2) the imminent completion of a new elementary school where there were no children to use it presented a challenge that could not be ignored. He states the purpose of the school in the following passage:

Self-fulfillment of the individual is the common objective of public education in the District of Columbia. In this school, as in all public schools of this city, the best possible opportunity for the development of the useful talent of each pupil will be offered.

The aim is to make it possible for each pupil to use his talents to fulfill for his own satisfaction and for the protection and improvement of the American way of life (18:41-46).

In this plan, the most important job of the school curriculum is to teach for intelligent behavior. This objective applies to all students in the school; the bright, the average, and the slow. To obtain these objectives, the Amidon Plan is organized by basic subject fields. It is said to be selective in that only the most essential skills and knowledges can be adequately taught in the school day. The curriculum is pre-planned so that teachers, pupils, and citizens are informed as to what is to be taught. It is meant to stretch the mind, create new interests, and ennoble aspiration.

The curriculum is built on the premise that the main purpose of organized education is to cultivate the basic subjects as the building blocks of intelligent behavior.

The following are selected samples from the curriculum and should show a reflection of the basic philosophy of the subjected centered curriculum:

1. Reading is done silently for knowledge, ideas, inspiration, and recreation. There is also to be oral reading and memorization of poetry. Reading instruction begins with a study of the alphabet, phonics, and syllabication. The purpose of instruction in reading is to know the word, and learn how to know new words independently. The method combines seeing and sounding with much writing to gain mastery.
2. Spelling is scheduled in regular periods as well as being given attention in writing.
3. Writing is expected to be extensive and for a variety of purposes. It includes creative writing, letters, reports, composition, and others. Writing is a contribution to self-expression and self-realization. Much writing is done in early grades with the belief that it helps develop logic.

4. Grammar is scheduled formally at the fourth grade level. It will include parts of speech, diagramming, accuracy of expression, and interpretation. Drill is used to center attention on grammar and usage.
5. Mathematics involves a means of developing mental discipline as well as its own utility. Many concepts of algebra and geometry are taught in primary grades.
6. Science is taught as a regular scheduled subject for knowledge about the physical environment and as a way of thinking.
7. United States History, beginning in grade five, is taught as scheduled subject. In grade six, it is taught in relation to special events.
8. Geography is introduced systematically at grade four, with the United States being the beginning point. World Geography and Economics are introduced in grade six.

The weekly schedule is set up so that each subject field is on a pre-determined time allotment. Direct instruction in these fields is to have first priority. Reasonable flexibility is needed, but interruptions and digressions are kept to a minimum. Large unit organization around centers of interest is to be supplemental,

and where used, it is carefully planned as to goals and procedures.

The ultimate goal of the school is described in this passage from Mr. Hansen:

The desired end product of the school is not a spoon-fed, protected individual, but a self-disciplined personality interested in continuing his education, capable of intelligent decision making in every aspect of living, and most importantly, governed in all his actions by the highest moral principles (18:41-46).

### Generalizations

According to the four selected organizational patterns evolving out of the past fifteen years, there seems to have been several developments worthy of some thought. The non-graded school with its continuous progress philosophy seems to be a very important step in terms of the growth of the child from a purely and individual standpoint.

In the Bay City Experiment a shortage of teachers lead, even though indirectly, to more attention being given to the individual, by freeing the teacher from non-teaching duties and giving help to slow learners.

Team teaching has great potential in using large lecture groups followed by small group and individual instruction. However, it seems that cost will continue to



be a determining factor in terms of capital outlay for the program.

It might be generalized that in the Amidon Plan there is a need to return to basic education; however, this would depend upon one's philosophy. It seems that a greater portion of educational philosophy is tending toward a continuous progress plan, with wide variances made for the individual.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY

Since the days of Aristotle, there has been evidence of concern for developing the full potential of individuals to keep society a reciprocal way of life. Thorndike, in his studies, has tried to describe, as clearly as possible, the variety and intangibility of differences in individuals.

Early curriculum revisions have centered around modifying curriculum and teaching methods, with Preston B. Search being a pioneer in the early attempts to break the lock-step methods of the graded school. These early attempts produced a number of problems, even though they all made steps toward more individualized instruction. In these curriculum settings, the child who learned rapidly ordinarily stayed with the group. He became lazy or was given extra work with no pre-planned outcomes, while the dull child was held back and was sometimes ridiculed by younger class members and accepted failure. Later plans allowed the bright child to skip grades which placed him in a curricula setting that was out of step with his stage of development.

As a remedy for the foregoing attempts, the philosophy shifted to the other extreme, whereby everyone was

promoted. This was not the solution either, because the bright students were not really challenged, and everyone realized that they would pass no matter how slowly they worked.

The graded school and the classification of students by age has always been a problem for teachers, who have a wide range of achievement and abilities. Teachers have tried to meet the challenge through organizing small groups, which refine the original classification. This has become more successful as we have learned more about individual differences.

As departmentalization came on the scene, the emphasis shifted from curriculum revisions to that of re-organizing or re-arranging the students to accommodate the same curriculum. There have been attempts to keep the same group of teachers with the same group of students throughout the day on an interchange basis, along with this came the practice of platooning students from subject matter to activity sessions.

Although most of the early organizational attempts have passed from the educational scene, many parts of their programs remain a part of our philosophy. They testify to their influence upon present day education. It seems clear that all experiments were concerned with individual

differences; however, they were hampered by lack of knowledge in human growth and development.

A more recent attempt to organize for individualized instruction requires greater adaptability and effort on the part of the teacher. This is a challenge to teachers and administrators; and determines, to a large degree, the success of their programs.

In the past fifteen years, there has been a further trend toward meeting individual differences. Attempts are being made through grouping, redeployment of teachers and flexible organizational patterns. The efforts have been concentrated on small groups and one-to-one pupil-teacher ration, which is aimed at reducing ranges in ability.

In our democratic society, where freedom of experimentation is evident, we have seen the educational pendulum swing from the non-graded school to strict gradation. There has been a gradual trend away from the graded school, because it does not accommodate the philosophy of human growth and development. Mr. Hansen, with the philosophy of the Council of Basic Education, may have some effect on our educational direction. It could be surmised that in the future, as in the past, education will continue to be characterized by changing times and philosophies within these times.

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