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The principal's part in planning the program for the gifted child

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THE PRINCIPAL'S PART IN PLANNING THE PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED CHILD

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Approval Sheet

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A major responsibility of school administration lies in recognizing current trends in education. One of the current major trends in education today is that of discovering, planning and providing for the gifted child. More than ever, men and women with ability are needed in positions of influence in all fields of human relations and technical knowledge. To discover and develop talent and ability, and to facilitate their use for common good, must be a major objective of the school and community. "The democratic ideal can be most fully attained when every individual has opportunity for educational experiences commensurate with his abilities and for vocational responsibilities commensurate with his qualifications."[1]

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this report (1) to study methods of identifying gifted children; (2) to show the various administrative arrangements in the

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[1] Portland Public Schools. Progress Report No. II of the Cooperative Program for Students with Exceptional Endowment. Portland, Oregon: Portland Public Schools, April, 1954, (Mimeographed.) p. 1.

school to care for the gifted; (3) to present a curriculum that will meet the needs of the gifted; (4) to discuss the problem of working with the parent; (5) to evaluate the program and make recommendations on the basis of information secured in this study.

Definition of terms. Various terms have been used throughout this study to indicate the gifted child. However, such terms as talented, superior, exceptional, rapid learner and bright are restricted in their application. For instance, rapid learner and bright usually refer to academically outstanding students. The term exceptional refers to all deviations from the average, whether above or below. The term talented is often used to indicate effective performance along certain lines. Gifted refers to outstanding ability in a wide variety of areas. There also may be found other terms which are used interchangeably to refer to outstanding abilities in any of several areas of endeavors. The terms used in this study are intended to indicate individuals above the average in all areas.

Review of what has been done in the field. The challenge presented to schools by the intellectually superior child has received considerable attention from research workers and educational theorists in the past quarter century. Writers have pointed out that sufficient effort has not been

put forth to educate adequately the top three to five percent of our school population.[3] Some have gone so far as to say that our brightest pupils are simply wasting their time in school.

In those schools where something is being done about the program for the gifted child, there are limitations to the administrative adaptations. The three most common methods of dealing with the problem are acceleration, enrichment and grouping. Each method has very definite strengths and weaknesses. There is no evidence to show that any one method should be used exclusively.[3]

The first large-scale program for academically outstanding students, designed to provide for more frequent promotions was reported in St. Louis in 1868.[4] Students were promoted first on a semi-annual, then on a quarterly and finally on a five-week basis. Similar administrative procedures were adapted in other school systems across the country. Program modifications for the gifted in the latter half of the nineteenth century were characterized by flexible promotions. Somewhat later flexible promotion plans were

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[2] Long Beach Public Schools, "Origin and Development of the Long Beach Program." (Long Beach, California: Long Beach Public Schools, 1951), p. 1.

[3] Ibid., p. 2.

[4] A. H. Passow and others, Planning For Talented Youth. (Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1955), p. 2.

followed by such adaptations as special classes, double promotions, individual instruction, credit by examination and special teachers. Some of these plans still exist in many schools.

In 1901 Worcester, Massachusetts, organized what was probably the first American public school for gifted children. Subsequently many other cities established similar special schools.[5] These schools endeavored to enrich their progress with more advanced subject matter for purposes of eventual acceleration of their pupils. Rapid advancement, in fact, became the most widely used method of meeting the needs of the exceptionally able student.

Since these early beginnings little change has taken place in the basic design of plans for educating the intellectually gifted. Shifts of emphasis, however, have occurred.[6] Motivated by a strong concern for the emotional and social development of school children, which grew out of psychological and social research, educators in the 1920's and 1930's tended to veer away from acceleration and to favor enrichment as the more desirable modification of school experiences for the exceptionally able. The feeling was that a more wholesome environment for the child would be created if he

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[5] Ibid., p. 2.
[6] Ibid., p. 3.

remained with his age peers, regardless of the difference in learning ability.

Current practices in schools throughout the country continue to reveal a strong partiality to enrichment as opposed to acceleration. However, recent research has turned back somewhat toward granting opportunity for rapid advancement to the ablest children.[7]

Contribution of the present study. Throughout the time spent in collecting material for this paper, it became increasingly evident that very little is done in the State of Virginia for gifted children. The results of a questionnaire show only three school systems that have programs for gifted children, while one or two school divisions have a more or less limited or exploratory type of program in certain areas of school work.[8]

The responsibility for providing any program in the school rests entirely upon the administrator of the school. Administrative planning is basic if a program for the gifted is to get under way in any school. It is for this reason that this study was made.

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[7] Ibid., p. 3.
[8] See Appendix B.

TABLE I

SCHOOL DIVISIONS IN VIRGINIA THAT HAVE PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED CHILDREN

School Division	Have Program	No Program	Planning Stage	No Answer
Arlington County	X			
Charlottesville			X	
Danville				X
Fairfax County		X		
James City-Williamsburg		X		
Martinsville				X
Norfolk County	X			
Richmond City			X	
Roanoke City		X		
Suffolk City	X			

PROCEDURE AND TECHNIC

The material for this study was gathered from authors in the field, school systems already having established programs for the gifted, and from universities having experimental research programs in cooperation with certain public school systems. Some of the information was found in periodical literature.

It was decided in the beginning to find out what was being done for gifted children in Virginia. With the assistance of the Special Education Department, State Board of Education, a list of ten school divisions was suggested for investigation. A questionnaire was sent to each of these school systems asking for pertinent information on the gifted child program.

The method of reporting the study was to describe present trends found among the various sources of information described above.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Of the various administrative adaptations used in the program for the gifted, no one plan can be recommended for universal adoption. Different schools deal with the problem according to their particular situation. The most effective approach is to use a combination of different

provisions suitable to the circumstances of a given school. Most frequently mentioned are such provisions as (1) acceleration, (2) grouping, (3) enrichment and (4) special courses.

Identification of the gifted is one of the first steps in the program. This is done most frequently by means of testing. Since one test is not generally considered a sufficiently valid judgment upon which to label a child as gifted, the usual procedure is to give a battery of tests or individual tests at varying times after a group test has been given. Other measures of identification that were found to be used included observations by both teacher and parent, the use of checklists and study of previous records.

The time at which identification was made varied with the school. In some it was as late as the upper grades of the elementary school, while in others children may be in school at age three. In the Hunter Elementary School in New York, the ages of children range from three to eleven or twelve.

The administration of a testing program must be developed with skill and caution. It takes a well-trained person to interpret the results of certain tests, and in a large system it could be costly.

The principal must win acceptance of the program from the teachers, parents and the community. What will the teachers and the pupils do with this kind of program? How will the community accept it? Does the home and the commu-

nity, along with the school, provide the necessary potential resources for such an undertaking?

Parents can be an effective part of the gifted child program, but because talented children do not necessarily come from talented parents and because the talents of the parents may not be the same as those of their children, parents may lack the sensitivity or understanding or knowledge necessary for guiding the talented child.[9] Therefore, it becomes a very necessary part of the program for the principal to establish a working relationship with those parents whose children are identified as gifted. They must be given the opportunity to understand the child and the program.

Techniques for evaluation should be planned before any program is put into practice. In planning the evaulation of the program the school must define the several ways in which such a program differs from previously used procedures.[10] The selection of criteria should come from the purpose in having the program. A specific list of desired outcomes should be drawn up. Everyone involved in the program should be a part of the evaluation procedure.

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[9] Passow, op. cit., p. 61.
[10] Ibid., p. 70.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF IDENTIFICATION OF THE GIFTED CHILD

This portion of the problem is concerned with the methods of identification of gifted children. It is one of the major parts of the program.

The materials used in this chapter were sources received from other school systems, authors in the field, experimental research programs and articles from periodical literature. It has been the object of this chapter to describe methods that have been used to discover gifted children.

The discussion concerns itself with (1) a definition of the gifted child and (2) the procedures used in identification.

DEFINITION OF THE GIFTED CHILD

With the development of the intelligence test and its widespread use, gifted children were defined and selected in accordance with high I.Q. L. M. Terman referred to those children whose intelligence quotients were 130 or higher as "gifted." (About one percent of the school population).[1] In Cleveland enrollment in the Major Work Classes require

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1 Paul Witty, "The Gifted Child." The Nation's Schools. Reprinted, February, 1956, p. 3.

an I.Q. of 125 to 130 or above.[2] In the Hunter College Elementary School the I.Q. average was 151 in 1945.[3] Some authorities would prefer to use the term "gifted" to designate only those whose measured I.Q.'s exceed 170. Such cases occur with a frequency of only three in 10,000.[4] Some schools have used I.Q. 140 as the dividing line that separates the gifted from the general population. Only six-tenths of one percent of the total population fall in that category. That is one person out of 167.[5]

In contrast to the highly selective designations mentioned above it is more ordinary for some school staffs to classify every pupil with an I.Q. in excess of 112 or 115 as gifted.[6] Others recognize gifted children as the top ten percent of the general public school population in terms of mental ability. This ten percent usually includes all pupils with an I.Q. of 120 or better.[7]

In searches for all potential college material on the

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2 Ibid., p. 3.
3 Ibid., p. 3.
4 Educational Policies Commission: Education of the Gifted. (Washington, D.C., National Education Association of the United States, 1955), p. 42.
5 Ibid., p. 42
6 Ibid., p. 43.
7 Metropolitan School Study Council. How to Educate the Gifted Child. (Affiliate of the Institute of Administrative Research, 525 W. 120th Street, New York 27, New York, 1956, p. 3.

basis of general intelligence alone, a cutoff point at I.Q. 110 is generally used, while an I.Q. of 125 or above is considered indicative of ability to perform work comparable to that on the Ph. D. level.[8] The term "intellectually gifted" is usually applied to those who score 130 or above on commonly used intelligence tests.[9]

It was found that the term "highly gifted" was used to designate those who were in the top one percent of the total population (roughly, individuals with an I.Q. above 137). Similarly, the term "moderately gifted" applied to individuals who fall within the top ten percent but below the top one percent (that is between I.Q. 120 and I.Q. 137).

In some schools it was found that where the practice of segregating the gifted into special classes, individuals with I.Q.'s above 110 were included in the program.[10] This was done to provide a workable group since the percentage of gifted children is very low.

The line that is used to separate the gifted from other children is a purely arbitrary designation. Where the line is drawn is largely a matter of convenience and usually

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8 Passow and others, op.cit., p. 19.

9 Ibid., p. 19.

10 Elsie H. Martens. Curriculum Adjustments For Gifted Children. (U. S. Office of Education Bulletin 1946, No. 1. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 12.

varies in accordance with the immediate group at hand. It is chiefly a question of how large a portion of a given population it is desired to include in the category of "gifted." The problem of identifying the intellectually gifted members of a particular school population is not a matter that can be settled once and for all at any given point. The problem needs continuing attention at all levels.[11]

Different levels of I.Q. have been suggested for the lower limits of giftedness, but most schools look for those above 130 I.Q. However, because of the fallibility of intelligence-identifying instruments and because of the apparently limited "gifted population" in some schools, it has been practical in some instances to consider those as low as 120 I.Q. The author has reported the variations in lower-limit intelligence quotients used in designating groups of gifted children. He is not advocating what I.Q. cut-off point should be used.

2. PROCEDURES USED IN IDENTIFICATION

Among the many problems connected with the program for gifted children is the identification of the gifted pupil. The methods currently used are many and varied. The principal must concentrate his efforts upon complete identification of

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11 Educational Policies Commission: op. cit., pp. 37-38.

12 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council. Guiding Your Gifted. (Philadelphia: Educational Service Bureau, University of Pennsylvania, 1954), p. 1.

the gifted pupil in the classroom.[13]

Group intelligence tests. It is generally agreed that identification of the gifted child should take place as early in his life as possible for both the full development of his abilities and his personal adjustment. Leta Hollingworth states that the highly intelligent child's need for "a supplement to the standard curriculum" is greatest at the primary and elementary school level.[14]

In view of the current broad conception of giftedness, it is evident that the gifted child cannot be identified by his high intelligence alone.[15] Measures of intelligence should be supplemented with other information. Physical, emotional, intellectual and other traits operate in total pattern combination which cannot be measured separately without distorting the total picture.[16]

If most authorities agree that early identification is necessary, it does not mean that a group intelligence test is administered to every first grade class when school starts.

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13 Henry J. Otto, Elementary-School Organization And Administration. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954),p. 506.

14 Marian Scheifele, The Gifted Child in the Regular Classroom. (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers, College, Columbia University, 1953), p. 1.

15 Ibid., p. 3.

16 Henry J. Otto, op. cit., p. 504.

Group intelligence tests were found to vary at the grade they were first given. In Cleveland, identification begins through teacher observation and with the advice of the teacher certain children are individually tested. The same is true in the Portland schools. However, in Cleveland standardized group tests are given periodically from kindergarten through senior high school.[17]

Some tests indicate the level of achievement in specific subjects, others show aptitudes, and from others a probable learning rate can be computed. The main purpose of a group intelligence tests is to serve as a preliminary screening device.[18]

In the Portland Public School System the teacher begins the school year by getting acquainted and after several weeks then fills out for each pupil a personality trait sheet. The sheet lists fifteen traits hypothesized to be related to giftedness.[19] After referring to other available information in the school office, consulting former teachers and noting any special talents, the teacher makes a list of those pupils who she feels are intellectually gifted or talented. She

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17 Cleveland Public Schools. Cleveland's Plan for Children. (Ohio: Cleveland Board of Education, 1956), p. 9.

18 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 2.

19 Portland Public Schools, op.cit., p. 9.

also lists those whose achievement records appear to be exceptional. From this list of recommendations pupils are taken as a group and tested. From this group some are recommended for further testing.[20]

It is more valid to consider all identification as tentative until more testing has been completed. The child who does not make a high score on a test of mental ability at one time may do better at another. The identification of a child as gifted may later be found to be a mistaken one.[21] The group test serves best as a survey instrument. School systems often use a group test for screening purposes and administer individual tests later to those children whose scores deviate considerably from the median in either direction.[22]

"The use of the group mental test, supplemented by other procedures, is perhaps the best method." Heck relates that the importance of correctly selecting the children in any program for giftedness is so great that there is general agreement that every pupil should pass a Binet.[23]

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20 Ibid., p. 10.

21 NEA Research Division, Programs For The Education of Gifted Children. (National Education Association, Washington, D.C., February, 1954), p. 1.

22 Marian Scheifele, op.cit., p. 17.

23 Arch O. Heck, The Education of Exceptional Children. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1953),p390.

Individual intelligence tests. An individual test is generally preferred for appraising and diagnosing the mental abilities of any single child. The individual test has value in diagnosis and analysis because it provides more accurate and valid measure of the child's intelligence.[24]

The most widely used intelligence test is the Stanford-Binet. The relatively new Wechsler Intelligence Scale for children is another effective individual test.[25]

In Cleveland the individual intelligence test is administered to each recommended pupil by a school psychologist. The teacher may suggest names of pupils or a list of names may be compiled after a periodic group test.[26]

In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, individual tests are given only if achievement tests, teachers' and principals' judgment of the children's ability and outstanding performance suggest that it would be advisable.[27]

The pattern of administrative procedure in identifying the gifted child through tests of intelligence was generally found to have an individual test follow a group test. A child who scored considerably above his grade level or chronological age was given a diagnostic test in one or more curriculum

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24 Marian Scheifele, op. cit., p. 17.
25 Ibid., p. 18.
26 Cleveland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 10.
27 NEA Research Division, op. cit., p. 15.

areas, such as reading, social studies, arithmetic or language which gave a more thorough analysis of achievement.[28]

Reading tests. Ability to read understandingly at an unusually early age is characteristic, and a given point in school is usually reached exceptionally early. Comprehension in reading is strongly symptomic of intelligence.[29] Many gifted children learn to read before they enter school.

Reading readiness tests are given in the Hunter College Elementary School so that children can be grouped according to their ability. From time to time standardized reading tests are given by teachers to check up on progress and the effectiveness of the reading program.[30]

Special aptitude tests. Special talents, as related to giftedness, are the subject of dispute among psychologists. Some hold that general intelligence and special abilities are more or less independent elements. However, there is agreement that outstanding creative achievement in a special area is accompanied by high general intelligence.[31]

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28 Marian Scheifele, op. cit., p. 20.

29 Leta S. Hollingworth, Gifted Children, Their Nature and Nurture. (New York, The MacMillan Company, 1929, p. 58.

30 Gertrude H. Hildreth, Educating Gifted Children. (New York: Harper Brothers, 1952), p. 122.

31 Ibid., p. 12.

Performance is the best basis for identifying children gifted in special areas such as music, art, mechanics, science and writing. Creative potentiality in painting, stories, social behavior, construction projects and problem-solving procedures is demonstrated as early as the preschool years of the child's life.[32]

There are many tests designed to indicate special aptitudes, language and others.[33]

In the Portland Public Schools, commitees for each of seven talent areas, including all of those mentioned above, were established to make a more detailed study of the possibilities of identifying children with talent in each of these areas. Many teachers and interested people in the community were invited to assist in the work of the groups. All seven committees found that standard tests available for identification purposes were inadequate for the work of this particular project. Consequently, it was decided to devise methods of talent identification which would combine standard tests with other techniques to be developed by the committees.[34]

To illustrate the type of instrument the committee developed for testing talent areas, here is a paragraph of

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32 Ibid., p. 12.
33 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 3.
34 Portland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 11.

"an explanatory nature" taken from the report on testing for art talent:

> The art committee devised an identification instrument consisting of five exercises. Each exercise involved the painting of a picture around a stated subject. In preliminary testing sessions the printed instructions were given by the classroom teacher to pupils wishing to contribute paintings. The pupils did the actual work in their spare time, mostly outside of school. All judging of paintings was done by the committee which is made up of specialists in the field. They had previsouly agreed on the elements which, when present in a painting, seem to be an indication of talent in art. Obviously, this is a relatively subjective type of test, but when administered to over 600 elementary school pupils, a remarkable degree of agreement was apparent among the judges.[35]

The report gave such ideas as this andresults are being accumulated and will be presented at a later date.

A broad identificatinn program will concern itself with discovering the ablest students in both academic and nonacademic areas. Though the underlying purpose is to find students with a capacity for outstanding achievement, it is usually impossible to measure capacity without judging a student's actual performance. And, though some aptitude tests intend to measure capacity as opposed to achievement, most of them rely rather heavily on mastery of the skills and knowledge in a given field.[36]

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35 Ibid., p. 12.
36 Passow, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

Because there is little agreement on what constitutes talent in many areas, particularly the arts, existing instruments are not adequate to the task of identification. Locally developed procedures may be necessary to supplement them.[37]

Cumulative records. The cumulative record will give clues about a gifted child wherever a school has devised an effective system of notations on such matters as marks, tests, scores, anecdotal reports, interviews and other basic information.[38] School officials should stress the importance of individual records, since they are a vital source of information, if properly kept. The cumulative record card usually contains the basic census data, record of attendance, information about the child's brothers and sisters, parents, home environment, health data, individual test records, teachers' marks, special talents and interests and special notes on conduct and school citizenship. It is important, therefore, that as many as possible of the objective measures of growth and achievement which are gathered regularly be recorded in age and grade equivalents as well as in the form of raw scores.[39]

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37 Ibid., p. 23

38 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 3.

39 Henry J. Otto, op. cit., p. 272.

In addition to what is included in the cumulative record above, at Hunter College Elementary School, eight pages of biographical data are provided by the parents, who complete these forms and they are included with the report of the Binet Test and put in the child's record.[40]

At this same school pupils in the sixth year write autobiographies that are illustrated by themselves or with snapshots and these are kept in the files. Samples of the pupils' drawings and written work are collected at regular intervals and filed in the cumulative record as well as any letters from the parents that will provide additional information.[41]

Other things which can be added are questionnaires sent to the parents concerning the program or the child's work, inventories, records of voluntary reading, exceptional work in any area, letters, clippings from newspapers which might concern the family and any other data which may aid in follow-up studies.[42]

Teacher judgment. Asking teachers to list their gifted children is a preliminary step to getting them to par-

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40 Hildreth, op. cit., p. 206.
41 Ibid., p. 207.
42 Ibid., p. 207.

ticipate in a study of superior children.[43]

In Cleveland the discovery of talented or gifted children is usually initiated by teacher judgment when, after careful consideration and study of the individual, the teacher recommends the principal have the child tested. This leads many times to the discovery of a gifted child.[44]

Identification of giftedness begins through teacher observation in the classroom in the Portland Public Schools.[45] This is the case in many other cities where thee is a program for gifted children. However, there are a number of things the principal must guard against in accepting the recommendations of the teacher. The following is a list of precautions the principal should observe carefully whenever relying upon teacher recommendations:

(1) Tendency to over-rate conformity as a mark of superiority.

(2) Tendency to confuse school achievement with intelligence.

(3) Annoyance with pupils who manifest independent

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43 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council. Guiding Your Gifted. (Philadelphia: Educational Service Bureau, University of Pennsylvania, 1954), p. 1.

44 Cleveland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 6.

45 Portland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 9.

behavior, display marked curiosity, seek "other ways" of doing things.

(4) Tendency of some superior learners to "hide their lights under a bushel" rather than be considered "a brain" by their classmates.

(5) A habit of "getting up" - especially in the upper grades - either because of earlier lack of stimulating school experiences or from boredom with what appears to them to be "classroom trivia."

(6) Confusing chronological maturation with native ability. Thus older ones in group may be thought to be brighter, whereas in many cases the youngest will be the brightest.

Parental observations. Parents have many opportunities to observe accelerated development and special aptitudes. However, this method mayproduce some errors from (a) bias, (b) inaccurate observations (c) failure to keep the total child population in mind.[47]

Hildreth reports that parents are usually reluctant to submit material through a sense of modesty. As stated above, parents are required to provide a complete biographical report of the child besides questionnaires from time to time.[48]

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46 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 2.
47 Ibid., p. 3.
48 Hildreth, op. cit., p. 207.

Checklist of characteristics of gifted children. Many lists have been prepared on the characteristics of gifted children, but it should be noted that they indicate that it is a matter of degree rather than difference, which is important. Most analyses bring out, however, such key points as non-conformity, "frontier thinking," creativity, ability to deal with abstractions, ability to see cause-effect relationships.

A study group will find value in studying descriptive lists prepared by others. Then they should analyze the characteristics of their own students.[49]

The purpose of a checklist is to focus attention on the characteristics of intellectually gifted pupils which can be identified through observation of pupils' daily classroom activities.

While the use of a checklist is a valid procedure in the identification of intellectually gifted pupils, one danger exists which must be kept constantly in mind: these characteristics are generalizations. Individual differences will not always conform to these generalizations in all cases. Further analysis of the behavior of any individual identified as

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49 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 2.

a possibly gifted pupil through the use of a checklist is a necessity. The use of a checklist is but the first step in the identification of such pupils.[50]

SUMMARY

The variety of instruments and techniques described in this chapter indicates the wide range of information that is needed to identify the gifted child. Identification of giftedness is perhaps the most important phase of any program designed to help these particular children. Some of this information is gained through objective measures such as intellectual tests of ability, scholastic achievement, talent and social-personal development data. Some of this information is gained through subjective evaluation. A study of his performance in many areas of activity may give information leading to identity of giftedness.

Intelligent interpretation and study of the information gained is the basis of effective planning for the gifted child's total development. No program can proceed without positive measures of identification that give the fullest assurance of accuracy.

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50 Metropolitan School Study Council, op.cit., p. 51.

CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

This chapter concerns the various administrative practices a school may use in planning a program for gifted children.

The materials and methods used for this chapter are the same as those used for the previous chapter.

The discussion will deal with (1) special classes, (2) enrichment, (3) acceleration, and (4) organization of the school to study the gifted.

I. SPECIAL CLASSES

There are usually two types of special classes. One kind is that of complete segregation for all subjects both academic and non-academic. The other type of special class is partial segregation for academic subjects only or for certain academic subjects.

It would be difficult to find a truly homogeneous group. However, this should not prevent administrators and teachers from considering the relative merits of gathering

pupils together who have a small range of differences in a few factors such as I.Q., reading level, mathematical ability or scientific tendencies.[1]

Generally, students are selected for special classes on the basis of their ability. The concern has usually been with academic ability, which is measured by scores on intelligence and achievement tests. In the absence of acceptable standardized identification instruments in special areas of non-academic subjects, standards set up by the school or other agency are used to determine who should be placed in special groups. Sometimes under these circumstances, interest rather than ability or achievement largely determines grouping.[2]

Many of the criticisms of special classes are based upon misunderstanding. Below is a list of common criticism and objections frequently raised about special classes:

(1) Children become conceited when segregated.
(2) Segregation is undemocratic.
(3) It is claimed that such classes create an intellectual aristocracy.

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1 Ibid.
2 Passow, op. cit., p. 42.

(4) Other children become jealous of those placed in special classes.
(5) The claim is made that these children would tend to overwork.
(6) It is said that fewer leaders will be developed.
(7) The other children lose a certain amount of learning that they get from the gifted in regular classes.
(8) A practical difficulty is the cost.[3]

On the other hand, there are certain advantages that can be listed by those who advocate special classes:

(1) The special class provides the child with an opportunity to work to the level of his superior ability.
(2) The child does not develop habits of carelessness in doing his work in this group.
(3) Enrichment can be better motivated and supervised.
(4) Special classes make it possible for the child to progress through the grades normally with respect to chronological age.
(5) It prevents social maladjustment.
(6) It forces the child to exert himself if he is to make good in the group.
(7) The child secures definite training for leadership in specific areas.
(8) It permits the use of materials and methods adapted to the unique ability of these children.

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3 Heck, op. cit., p. 382.
4 Ibid., pp. 383-384.

II. ENRICHMENT

Every school which claims to have a good program for gifted children uses enrichment procedures. These practices may be carried on in the regular classroom where the gifted are a minority of the group or enrichment may be practiced together with special grouping.

There are two basic alternatives open to a school system. The first may be called simple enrichment which is an attempt to make school work more interesting without removing the child from his age group or regular classroom of children with varied abilities. The second may be called special-group enrichment, which places the child in special groups of children of like ability and often provides for acceleration of his passage through school.[5]

Enrichment is not adding more of the same kind of content and activity, but in providing experiences in greater variety and at a more advanced level.

Simple-enrichment in the regular classroom may be

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5 Robert J. Havinghurst, "Community Factors in the Education of Gifted Children." School Review. 63:324, September, 1955.

characterized by the following:

(1) Emphasis upon the creative or experimental.
(2) Emphasis on the skills of investigation and learning.
(3) Independent work, stressing initiative and originality.
(4) High standards of accomplishment.
(5) Cooperative planning and activity that provides opportunity for leadership training and experience in social adjustment.
(6) Individual attention given by teacher to student.
(7) First-hand experiences.
(8) Extensive reading.[6]

The gifted child in the regular classroom may do work in the arts, in music, in creative writing, in industrial arts, and in foreign language while in the elementary school. This can be done through special-interest groups set up by the teacher and principal together with other community agencies.[7]

Enrichment in the regular classroom implies the same kind of program as that which distinguishes the special class, that is, greater scope of activity, freedom to follow special interests, more opportunity to apply initiative and originality in developing a topic or project, experience in

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6 Ibid., p. 324.
7 Ibid., p. 324.

drawing conclusions and making generalizations, and more opportunity for expression of talent. The teacher will recognize these as examples of a good program for all children. However, in the classroom enrichment program for the gifted child, it is not so much the kind of experiences provided as in their variety, depth, and advanced level.[8]

III. ACCELERATION

Acceleration offers opportunity for a gifted pupil to move at a pace appropriate to his ability and maturity and to complete an educational program in less than the ordinary time. One form is grade-skipping; another is steady progress through a particular series of grades in less than the usual time; and a third is early entrance to school.[9]

In Newark, New Jersey, at the Maple Avenue School, the principal appointed a committee to work with him in devising a plan to accelerate pupils with intelligence quotients of 120 and above. The following policies were decided upon for a pupil to be accelerated:

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8 Marian Scheifele, op. cit., p. 45.
9 Havinghurst, op. cit., p. 326.

(1) Intelligence quotients of 120 or above.
(2) General high academic status, substantiated by results of standards tests.
(3) Personality ratings of superior or above average.
(4) Stable attendance and punctuality.
(5) Physical and emotional stability and maturity.
(6) Indication or prediction of success in social adjustment in new class.
(7) Results on Stanford Achievement Tests. (Level and Form appropriate for grade and age level of child.)
Score in each subject must be six or more months advanced to predict success in the grade into which the child would skip.
(8) Social maturity. (To be determined by careful observation.)
(9) Age factor. A child who misses entering Grade I by only a few days because of date of birth is automatically retarded a whole term. Acceleration would seem to be justified, all other requirements having been met.
(10) Cognizance of traits found to be unfavorable to skipping: excessive timidity, slow recovery from disappointment, tendency to solitariness, etc. If these are in evidence, child will not be a candidate for skipping.[10]

Acceleration has again and again been proposed as a desirable way to meet the needs of the gifted. Considerably more has been done for students in high schools, preparatory schools and colleges.[11] "The School and College Study of

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10 Helen M. Robinson, "Educating The Gifted Child." Elementary School Journal. 55:489, May, 1955.

11 Witty, op. cit., p. 6.

Admission With Advanced Standing," under the executive directorship of William H. Cornog of Philadelphia, is studying ways to develop curriculums for high school pupils of high ability which will lead to advanced standing at college.[12]

In Baltimore, recommended pupils may complete three years of work in two years. This has been the case for a number of years at the Robert E. Lee Junior High School.[13] Upon completing this accelerated course, pupils may select any of the senior high schools and begin in the tenth grade.

The recommendation for acceleration in the elementary school shows from genetic studies that skipping as much as two full grades does not show any undesirable later adjustment in the gifted.[14] Paul Witty writes that when gifted children are held back with those of their C. A. (chronological age) they are more likely to develop behavior and personality problems than would be the case if they were accelerated.[15]

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12 Ibid., p. 6.
13 Robert E. Lee Junior High School, Baltimore, Md., (Mimeographed.)
14 Witty, op. cit., p. 6.
15 Ibid.

Children with talent often become disciplinary problems in the regular classroom. They become bored and, whenever the teacher does not recognize giftedness in an individual, unchanneled creative ability is often used to create a disturbance.[16]

Acceleration is administratively simple. It raises no problem of space or transportation. It puts no extra burden on the teacher. But acceleration must be done on an individual basis after a careful study of the intellectual, social, and emotional factors.[17]

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL TO STUDY THE GIFTED

In most schools the initiation of a program will more or less have to be individual study. The principal must have a point from which to begin his program. More and more schools are coming to realize that important gains can be

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16 Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University, "Eight Ways of Enriching Education for Gifted Children." Nation's Schools. 56:52, November, 1955.

17 Antonia Bell Morgan, Identification and Guidance of Gifted Children in the Elementary Schools, p. 9, (Mimeographed.)

realized by joining a study council. These are especially beneficial for small school systems which individually could not afford desired advisory services. Usually these organizations utilize a college or university sponsorship which coordinates the activities and provides consultant service. However, similar groups might be formed through a county superintendent's office.[18]

The formation of a study council affords greater strength, greater exchange of ideas, and more funds for speakers, research, materials and publications. Two institutions which lend themselves to aiding and advising school systems which desire the services offered gifted child programs are the University of Pennsylvania and the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation of Teachers College, Columbia University.

In Norfolk, Virginia, the schools learned that Columbia University was sponsoring research programs on gifted children. By communicating with Columbia University the Norfolk Schools were allowed to participate in this program, which other school

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18 Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 67.

systems could do as well. This was first initiated at the very top administrative level and interested schools in Norfolk were invited to participate. Primarily, plans and experimental design were made by Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation. Because this program was not limited to any one school, principals were not too much involved in basic design of the program. However, one principal insisted on special classes in his school rather than complete homogeneous grouping.[19]

The Gifted Child Project in Portland was under the direction of a Liasion Committee composed of two representatives from Reed College and two from the staff of the superintendent of the Portland Public Schools. This committee made possible close cooperation between the schools and the college which acted as a guide in developing the program.[20]

Each principal appointdd a steering comittee from his faculty to act as an advisory council for the work in the school. An administrative director appointed by the superintendent of

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19 Information secured through letter and questionnaire from Mr. William Koontz, Director of Research of the Norfolk County Schools.

20 Portland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 8.

schools coordinated the work of the various school committees with the help of the Liasion Committee.[21]

SUMMARY

At present, little is known about which, if any, of a number of program adaptations would be the best for maximum achievement of gifted children. To meet the needs of gifted children, the school can make special provisions in any one or a combination of the following three ways:

(1) Keep gifted children in the regular class but provide them with the individual opportunities for enriched experiences.

(2) Grouping pupils into special classes homogeneously according to ability.

(3) Acceleration of the pupil through the regular school program.

To accomplish the establishment of a program it may begin with the appointment of a study council, composed of members from interested schools, with a director appointed by

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21 Ibid., p. 28.

the superintendent. The aid of universities offering such service may be secured for advice to act as a guide in developing a program for gifted children.

CHAPTER IV

THE CURRICULUM FOR THE GIFTED CHILD

This chapter concerns the curriculum for the gifted. The materials and methods are the same as those used in the previous chapters.

The discussion in this chapter will concern (1) guiding principles of curriculum for the gifted child, (2) a program based on enrichment, and (3) administrative steps for improving the program.

I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM FOR THE GIFTED CHILD

Hildreth writes that at Hunter College the developmental approach is used.[1] This assumes that the child should live as fully as possible at each stage in his growth. Education for the gifted must be essentially a childlike type of training, but functionally adapted to these children's superior intellects so that they can deal with the problems of their own child world but with the exceptionally competent

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1 Hildreth, op. cit., pp. 49-67.

insights they have for problem solving.

At Hunter College the curriculum, with respect to goals, content, and method, centers about experiences of daily living.[2] Problem centered teaching offers more opportunity for independent study, freedom to explore and experiment, more materials, less uniformity and regimentation.

The task in curriculum making for the gifted is to organize studies which fit the mature mind of these children but at the same time take account of their relative immaturity in actual age.

There are a number of general principles that must be considered, the first of which might be equal opportunity. This principle is violated as long as we proceed on the theory that we need not worry about the bright child. School practice of planning programs for the average child and slow-moving pupil, with no special attention given to the gifted group, is evidence of our failure to operate upon the basis of equal opportunity for all children.[3]

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2 Ibid.
3 Heck, op. cit., p. 375.

When children discover that they have exceptional abilities, they may easily become conceited unless they are helped to realize the responsibilities that their abilities place upon them. This must be considered when authorities responsible for curriculum making decide upon a program in their school.

The following principles were formulated by teachers and administrators as guideposts in making an informal approach to curriculum activities:

(1) Organization of subject matter should be centered about distinctly related materials to the pupil's experiences.
(2) Emphasis, through subject matter and pupil activities, should be placed upon the democratic way of life.
(3) Procedures of the class period should be so adjusted as to minister to individual needs and permit pupils to progress at their own rate of speed.
(4) Pupils should be busy during the class period in thinking through the subject matter and related problems, while the teacher should be studying the pupil's approach and method of study.
(5) The teacher should be a daily example of fruitful, logical thinking as he guides the pupils in their activities.
(6) There should be a well-balanced expression of personality on the part of both teacher and pupils in relation to the problem under

discussion or the activity in operation.[4]

A program for the gifted must combine general education with special education. It must provide for the needs that they have because they are children and at the same time provide for the needs that they have because they are gifted. Obviously, the needs of gifted children are basically the same as for all children in our schools. It is, however, toward enrichment, extension of interest, and creativity, that the full potential of such children is to be chaneled.[5]

II. A PROGRAM BASED ON ENRICHMENT

No matter which plan is used---whether the gifted are accelerated, grouped, or given special help within the regular classroom---the goal is to furnish a richer, more stimulating environment in which to develop.

Surveys make it clear that the typical elementary

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4 Martens, op. cit., p. 16.

5 Nathan Kravetz, "Instructional Material for Gifted Children." National Elementary Principal, 36-250, September, 1956.

school provides a too meager and too restricted curriculum for the gifted.[6] Increased opportunities have been planned for the very bright child in a number of ways as has been discussed. But in many of our schools, facilities do not exist for grouping into special classes and many educators are reluctant to accelerate children. The problem of caring for the gifted then depends to a large extent on the activities carried on in the regular classroom by the typical teacher.

Gifted children should be aided in expressing and communicating their thoughts and impressions. Ideas may be scientific, poetic, dramatic, literary, civic, or journalistic. Yet, those who may have much to communicate may lack basic experience for effective expression. This basic expression requires opportunity, guidance and materials such as the following:---

(1) Typewriter
(2) A simple duplicating machine
(3) A radio-phonograph
(4) A tape recorder
(5) A thesaurus
(6) An unabridged dictionary
(7) Simple English, French, German and

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6 Witty, op. cit., p. 5.

Spanish dictionaries
(8) Roberts Rules of Order Revised
(9) An atlas
(10) An almanac
(11) An encyclopedia
(12) Puppets or puppet-making material[7]

The school or school library should contain current anthologies of literary, scientific, and historical materials. However, this collection should not rival that of the public library. The pupil should be stimulated to use the public library and its wider variety of books and periodicals.[8]

The use of artistic materials in the classroom serves as a stimulant to artistic expression and appreciation. Well selected prints in suitable frames, textiles, models, statuettes, and mobiles will enhance the general atmosphere and will stimulate creativity in the graphic arts. Some of the materials that should be in the classroom are:

(1) Paints: water colors, tempera, poster and oils
(2) Charcoal
(3) Clay: glazes, plaster of Paris, clay tools, prepared and powdered clay and kiln
(4) Silk screen materials and ink
(5) Colored pencils, crayons and poster inks

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7 Kravetz, op. cit., p. 250.
8 Ibid., p. 250.

(6) Linoleum blocks and tools for carving
(7) Pipe cleaners
(8) Crepe paper and tissue paper in various colors
(9) String, wire and lead weights.[9]

Materials that should be in the classroom for the study and exploration in science for gifted children are such things as:

(1) Magnets
(2) Soldering iron
(3) Bunsen Burner or its equivalent
(4) Scales
(5) An electricl kit containing batteries, buzzers, wire, insulators, coils, transformers, switches, etc.
(6) Microscope
(7) Specimen mounts and slides
(8) Test tubes, glassware, and other utensils
(9) Basic chemicals for biological and chemical studies
(10) Pulleys and weights
(11) Aquarium
(12) Sand table
(13) Screening for cages
(14) Photographic equipment
(15) Simple steam engine
(16) Thermometer
(17) Barometer
(18) Celestial globe
(19) Astronomical charts
(20) Lenses and prisms
(21) Tuning forks
(22) Tubing: glass and rubber

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9 Ibid., p. 251.

(23) Field guides and science manuals[10]

An important asset to science experiences is the community and its resources.

Frequently gifted children show apptitudes for mathematics far beyond the scope of which even would be difficult for their own kind. When this occurs the material should be at hand to give them the opportunity to explore. Experiences should be offered with a variety of materials such as the following:

(1) Abacus
(2) Compass
(3) Protractor
(4) Solid forms: sphere, cube, prisms, etc.
(5) Measuring instruments: linear volume and those as in science
(6) Simple adding machine
(7) Games in mathematics[11]

Before the gifted child can be offered an enriched program in the regular classroom, the teacher must have at hand those things mentioned in order to provide the minimum opportunity that is required of the administrator and teacher. These are materials that the principal should

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10 Ibid., p. 252.
11 Ibid., p. 253.

secure and maintain if the program is going to succeed. Naturally, the principal must be constantly evaluating the materials and methods used because of the great variety of experiences necessary for gifted children to achieve at their maximum potential.

"A program of enrichment should permit each student to delve more deeply into his fields of special interests and to give creative expression to his particular talents; but it should also guide him to explore a wide variety of both intellectual and non-intellectual activities. The second emphasis is especially important in secondary school and in the earlier college years."[12]

The enriched program for gifted children emphasizes social adjustment and a sense of responsibility, creative effort, intellectual initiative, critical thinking, and unselfish qualities of leadership.[13] These specific aims can be restated as follows:

(1) Activities that teach community service and democratic attitudes; participation in

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12 Educational Policies Commission, op. cit., p. 59.
13 Sheifele, op. cit., p. 48.

wide projects, out of school contacts with the community.

(2) Opportunities to share in undertakings and to learn the techniques of working with others toward common goals.

(3) Opportunities to work independently in planning, executing, and evaluating; in utilizing critical analysis and original thinking; in practicing the scientific method of attacking problems.

(4) Experiences in creative expression; early introduction to the arts.

(5) Opportunities for exploration of new areas of experience---manual, recreative, aesthetic.

(6) Experiences involving the use of varied materials of advanced level; opportunities for the extensive study of problems.[14]

The enriched program meets the individual needs and interests of the child and is geared both to his experimental level and his social and emotional maturity. The normal experiences and interests of childhood are not denied him, nor is his personality growth neglected, in the process of enriching his education program.[15]

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14 Ibid., p. 49.
15 Ibid., p. 49.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS FOR IMPROVING THE PROGRAM

It has been emphasized that an important part of any program is a constant study for improving the program by evaluating the result of what is being done for these children. There are a number of things that can be done to improve the program.

First among the several steps toward improvement is to study the records. The principal should determine the number of pupils at or above I.Q. 120 in his school. Determine the frequency of I.Q. 120 in the total school population of the particular school division. Find the ages of these children and compare their average with the average for other pupils.

The second step for the principal is to make a personal evaluation of his program. If this is a program for an entire school division, the person responsible for the entire program should make the evaluation. If such questions as these can be answered satisfactorily then something is being done: What provision is your school, or school system, making for bright children? Do you have special classes? Or a plan of partial segregation? Another plan? In special provisions are not being made for the gifted, what is being

done in the regular classroom?

Working with the staff is the third step. It may be desirable to plan one or more teachers' meetings. At these meetings discuss with the staff the nature of current provisions for the gifted in the school. Are you satisfied with your program? What changes should be made? Are teachers and parents oriented?

A first faculty meeting might be devoted to a consideration of the foregoing questions. If you do not have a program for the gifted, a second meeting might then be planned for the school. This program probably will not follow any procedure but will be developed according to the needs of your particular situation.

The fourth very important step is to observe other practices. If you are dissatisfied with your present situation, consider the values in each of the following methods of caring for the gifted pupil in the elementary school:

(1) The major work classes as found in Cleveland and the special class provision in Indianapolis and other cities. Consider, too, the work in a special school such as the Hunter College Elementary School.
(2) Partial segregation as in the Colfax Elementary School of Pittsburg.

(3) Opportunities for gifted children in seven areas in addition to abstract or verbal intelligence, as in Portland, Oregon.
(4) Acceleration as one way of caring for the gifted as recommended by Dean Worcester and S. L. Pressey.
(5) Acceleration as combined with other provisions which is done in Baltimore.
(6) Enrichment within the regular classroom as found in several elementary schools throughout the country.
(7) Clubs, workshops and other extracurricular activities.
(8) Guidance programs and individual direction of the gifted pupil.

Consider these approaches at the secondary school level for the rapid learning pupil:

(1) Honors classes or honors schools as in New York City.
(2) Specialized high schools such as the Bronx High School of Science.
(3) A school program in science such as that described by Paul Brandwein for Forest Hills High School or programs such as those described by Samuel Bloom and Paul Witty for other cities.
(4) A high school program for several areas in addition to science as found in Portland, Oregon.
(5) Acceleration and plans for giving college credit for advanced work taken in high school.
(6) Guidance and extracurricular activities.
(7) Utilization of community resources.
(8) Differentiated assignments and special course offerings.

Although this may apply only to high schools there is no reason why this fifth step toward improvement should not include elementary schools as well as junior high schools. The utilization of scholarships is important to the child, the parent and the school. What provision is your school system making for scholarships and for participation of pupils in national contests such as the Science Talent Search?

The sixth and last step is interpretation of the program. If your school has a program for the gifted, what is the provision made for interpreting it to parents? And for giving teacher training?[16]

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16 Witty, op. cit., p. 8.

SUMMARY

The curriculum for the gifted child does not differ in principle from the curriculum offered any other child. The developmental approach used at Hunter College Elementary School assumes that the child should live as fully as possible at each stage in his growth. The task in curriculum making for the gifted is to organize studies which fit the mature mind of these children but at the same time take account of their relative immaturity in actual age.

If the curriculum is organized around experiences of daily living, more opportunity may be offered for independent study, freedom to explore and experiment, with less uniformity and regimentation.

No matter what administrative procedures are used in the school for the gifted, the goal is to furnish a richer, more stimulating environment in which to develop. Because of many restrictions in schools, more work in the field of enrichment is recommended. A survey of necessary materials for classroom teachers must be made and provided for if the teacher is to help the child beyond what the other children are doing.

A program for the gifted must permit the child to investigate more deeply the fields of his special interests and to give creative expression to his particular talents. The enriched program meets the individual needs and interests of the child and is geared to both his experimental and social and emotional maturity.

Constant appraisal of the program must continue at all times. Study the records to keep abreast of the number of gifted pupils in the school, evaluate your program with the teachers, work with the staff to educate them in the study of the gifted child, observe other practices and interpret the program to the parents. Education of parents is necessary if the work of the school is going to succeed.

CHAPTER V

WORKING WITH PARENTS IN THE PROGRAM FOR GIFTED CHILDREN

This chapter is a discussion of the relationship of principal-parent-teacher-child. The principal in establishing a program for the gifted must consider working with the parent as part of the overall program.

The discussion includes (1) helping the parent understand the gifted child, and (2) helping the parent understand the school program.

The materials and methods are the same as those used in the previous chapters.

THE PRINCIPAL HELPING THE PARENT UNDERSTAND THE GIFTED CHILD

In cases where gifted children do not come from understanding parents, it is desirable to educate the parents to understand their offspring.

In San Diego, California, it was found that parents of gifted children were promptly notified when they were discovered. This was followed by individual conferences and

group meetings for parents of gifted children.[1] At these meetings a decision must be made by the parents concerning the future of the child's school program. In most cases a child is not given special attention without the consent of the parent of the child.

By holding a joint conference with principal, teacher, and parent, the parent can be advised on the various aspects of the gifted child program.

In a town of 10,000 people, the superintendent of schools initiated a preliminary study program to help eliminate misunderstandings and to reach accord on a gifted child program. Parents and teachers studied the characteristics of learning as an individual process along with some of the problems involved in a gifted child program.[2]

The way in which parents are informed about the talents of their children should be based on such considerations as the following:

(1) The kind of knowledge the parent already has about his child's ability.

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1 NEA Research Division, op. cit., p. 4.
2 Martens, op. cit., p. 15.

(2) The degree of understanding they can bring to a discussion of testing results.
(3) The kind of aspirations individual parents have for their children.
(4) The educational background and special abilities of parents.
(5) The attitudes of parents toward specific talents and toward post-high school education.
(6) The parent-child relationship in the home.[3]

II. THE PRINCIPAL HELPING THE PARENT UNDERSTAND THE SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED CHILD

"The Portland project has considered three aspects in promoting the acceptance of its program: developing understanding and cooperation within the community at large; developing understanding and cooperation of the parents of gifted children; and maintaining understanding and cooperation among school district personnel."[4]

There were a number of ways in which this particular school system promoted these three important aspects of the program. Local newspapers kept the community informed at large on the overall program. This was done through news

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3 Passow, op. cit., p. 32.
4 Portland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 52.

articles, editorials, and feature articles concerning the various phases of the program.

Radio stations made time available to the schools. Programs were extended to television. Members of the staff appeared before civic and community groups for the purpose of describing the project. Members of the staff were called upon to talk to various parent groups. Their cooperation and understanding was solicited in order to facilitate the success of the class.[5]

In Cleveland, when a child is identified as gifted, not only are the parents notified of this fact and asked to come for a conference in order to explain the situation, but opportunity is provided to help the parent understand what the program is and why the child is recommended for the Major Work Classes.[6]

In Arlington County Public Schools, three main areas are explored in planning with parents. One of these is

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5 Ibid.

6 Cleveland Public Schools, op. cit., p. 11.

understanding of the school program - its contributions to his growth, reasons for grouping, the meaning of enrichment, and the curriculum offered.[7]

The primary method of communicating with parents is the parent-teacher conference. In addition, parent-teacher meetings or study groups are helpful in promoting understanding of the school program.

In studying with parents, the behavior of gifted children and developing a program for them, the school should take the lead. More will be learned by working together than by working alone. It is only through mutual understanding of the role of both the home and the school in the education of gifted children that a consistent program can be developed. To a certain extent, this role will vary from school to school and from home to home.[8]

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7 Arlington County Public Schools, Suggestions For Working With The Gifted, p. 47.

8 Metropolitan School Study Council, op. cit., p. 8.

SUMMARY

Working with parents is a part of the overall program for the gifted child. The parent must understand the gifted child, and the school program.

A study group may be organized to study the program for gifted children. Consultants, the principal, and teachers can help the parents of gifted children become informed.

The principal must develop an understanding of the program in the home, the community and among school personnel.

CHAPTER VI

EVALUATING THE PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED

This chapter is concerned with evaluating the school program. The materials and methods used will be the same as those used in previous chapters.

The discussion will be on (1) selecting criteria, and (2) planning evaluation procedures.

SELECTING CRITERIA

Investigation shows that techniques and procedures used in the evaluation process of a program for gifted children are the same as those used in evaluating any other program.

Kimball Wiles says that in order to determine progress, it is necessary to know where the group started. Some base line must be established.[1] Harry Passow, writing

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1. Kimball Wiles, Supervision For Better Schools. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 292.

specifically about evaluating a program for the gifted, says that since most evaluations attempt to ascertain whether growth, increase, or improvement has taken place, some base must be available against which change can be measured.[2]

Concerning who is to be included in the evaluation process, Wiles writes that everyone involved in the situation - supervisors, principals, teachers, parents, pupils, community groups - should be a part of the judgment process. This is the same advice given by Passow in his work on the program for the talented.[3]

In the opinion of Wiles, the specific criteria by which a program and the principal are judged fall into four categories:

(1) More responsible participation of students, teachers, and community members in the improvement of the program.
(2) Enrichment of the school program through an increase in opportunities and activities for all.
(3) More efficient learning situations that result in more rapid pupil growth.

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2. Passow, op. cit., p. 65.
3. Passow, op. cit., p. 63-69.

(4) Greater contribution of the school to the improvement of community living.[4]

The criteria selected by the school should be a direct outgrowth of the purposes that underlie the program to be evaluated. For example, if a school's purpose is to increase the number of science-contest winners, it would be interested in discovering whether the new program actually led to an increase in this number. If the school's purpose is to enrich the experiences of intellectually gifted students in a variety of subject-matter areas, a comparison could be made between the depth or breadth of learning of gifted students who had participated in the program and that of those who had not. Selection of criteria is impossible without a recognition of purpose. The evaluation program should be concerned with the many and varied criteria suggested by the many and varied purposes a school may have.[5]

"Whether the interest is in testing the value of the identification program, the adequacy of its interpretation of the findings, or the superiority of one special method over

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4. Wiles, op. cit., p. 327.
5. Passow, op. cit., p. 66.

another, a specific list of desired outcomes should be drawn up so that it can be ascertained whether these results have in fact been achieved."[6] Much of the discussion in the preceeding chapters will suggest possible criteria for evaluating a school's program for gifted children.

II. PLANNING EVALUATION PROCEDURES

In Norfolk County Schools, Virginia, a team from the Horace-Mann Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation visited the schools with the idea of instituting an experimental program for gifted children. The visit of this team resulted in a definite plan for grouping gifted children. Three plans evolved and four schools were used in the experiment to determine the effects of special classes for gifted children upon the gifted themselves and the rest of the children in these schools. Plans were made for testing, provisions were established for class organization in each school, and the aims or outcomes were set up before the program was under way. It was to be a long range program in

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6. Ibid., p. 65.

which the administration made the adjustments recommended by the visiting team. Teachers, as far as possible, were not made aware of the purpose and ability of the distribution of these classes. At the beginning of the year, all teachers of the grades to be tested were told of the tests but not of the specific reason. Only the teacher that received the gifted group was informed shortly before the appointed time for the grouping to take place.

Results of the Norfolk County program were not available at the time of this investigation. The first children actually identified as gifted under this program were established into sections in their respective schools in February, 1957. They were to remain intact until June, 1958. No evaluation will be made until that time.

In planning the evaluation of any particular phase of the program, a typical problem might follow an outline such as the recent project entitled Experiments In Acceleration and Partial Ability Grouping In the Elementary School:

> Purpose: (a) To study the effects of acceleration a group of gifted elementary school children one year on their further academic and social development; (b) to assess the effects of the academic and social development of gifted fifth

and sixth grades grouped together for half of each day in special resource class.

Cooperating Schools: (a) Sylvania Heights Elementary School; (b) Central Beach Elementary School, both of the Dade County Public Schools, Dade County, Florida.

Subjects: (a) Thirty gifted third grade students selected on the basis of intelligence, maturity, academic achievement, etc., retained as a group through the fourth grade and then placed in the several sixth grades of the school; (b) eight gifted (IQ 130+) fifth grade and eight gifted sixth grade pupils placed together in a special resource class for one half of each day. A comparable number of pupils matched on ability (from a neighboring school) for whom no special provisions were made.[7]

Such a plan makes it possible to study the outcomes of such a group and results can be used to improve the program. Whatever evaluation procedures are planned, consideration should be given to the use of matched groups, pre- and post-tests, and other control techniques that will lend assurance to the findings.[8]

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7 Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, The Talented Youth Project, p. 5. (A pamphlet illustrating some of the current research studies under way at present.)

8 Passow, op. cit., p. 72.

SUMMARY

Investigation shows that the techniques and procedures used in evaluating the school program for gifted children is the same as that used for any other type of program. The progress of any program must be measured from the point at which it started. The object is to ascertain whether or not growth, increase, or improvement has taken place.

Everyone involved in the situation - supervisors, principals, teachers, parents, pupils, community groups - should be a part of the judgment process.

Criteria should be selected and the objectives of the program should be planned when the program goes into operation. A comparison of what has been accomplished should be made between those taking part in the program and those not included in the program.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This investigation has been concerned with the administrative duties of the principal in planning a program for gifted children. It was learned that there are five important aspects that the principal should recognize in order to plan a program for an individual school. This study has been concerned with (1) the identification of gifted children, (2) the various administrative procedures that a school may use, (3) the type of curriculum needed for the gifted child, (4) the problem of working with the parent, and (5) evaluation of the program for the gifted.

The procedure for this study has been to describe what other successful school programs have done. A questionnaire was sent to various school systems in Virginia. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out waht the schools in Virginia were doing for gifted children.

Certain cities in various states have had programs for gifted children for many years. Several authors have done considerable research in the field. It is from these sources that the information for this paper was taken.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF EACH POINT RAISED IN THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Methods of identification of the gifted child. It is necessary for the school to define what is meant by "the gifted child". Most gifted children are selected on the basis of standardized intelligence tests. The I.Q. cutoff point varies in the different schools. This is determined by the objectives of the school, the population of the school system, the type of program the school has, and other administrative considerations. Some school systems used an I.Q. as low as 110 while others ran as high as I.Q. 135 as the low mark. But generally, for practical purposes, most schools used an I.Q. of 120 as the low score in identifying the gifted child.

There are a variety of instruments used in identifying these children, some of which have not been mentioned. Group intelligence tests followed by individual intelligence tests are perhaps the most widely used methods of identifying gifted children. This is not the only method nor is some cases the final step in identification. Reading tests, and special aptitude tests are sometimes used to supplement

previous tests. Some of the preliminary instruments leading to identification are teacher judgments, cumulative records, checklists, parental observations, and, in some cases, case studies are made. However, case studies are the exception rather than the rule.

It is highly important that the best instruments and techniques available be used in the interest of accurate identification of gifted children. The program is concerned with discovering the ablest pupils in both academic and non-academic areas. The intelligence test alone is not always a sufficient basis upon which to make final judgments and supplements must be found.

Administrative practices. One of the problems in dealing with the gifted child is school organization. The principal must provide the leadership, initiative, and guidance for developing the program. He must allow for flexible scheduling for both the child and the teacher.

One administrative provision is the special class. There are advantages in gathering pupils together who have the same range of intelligence in such factors as I.Q., reading level, mathematical ability, and scientific tendencies.

It is the general tendency to select pupils for special classes on the basis of their ability.

A second administrative provision for the gifted child is enrichment of content in the regular classroom. This is especially recommended in both the large school and the small school. Enrichment is not adding more of the same kind of content and activity, but in providing experiences in greater variety and at a more advanced level. These children in the regular classroom are generally working as a separate unit but the teacher may use them to help other children as well. Enrichment in the regular classroom implies the same kind of program as that which distinguishes the special class. This means greater scope of activity, freedom to follow special interest, more opportunity to apply initiative and originality in developing a topic or project, experience in drawing conclusions and making generalizations, and more opportunity for expression of talent. It is not so much the kind of experiences provided as their variety, depth, and advanced level.

A third administrative provision the principal may provide is acceleration. Acceleration places a child in a

group where his mental ability allows him to work on a higher level than he would if kept in his chronological age group. Acceleration offers opportunity for a gifted child to move at a pace appropriate to his ability and maturity and to complete an educational program in less than the ordinary time.

There are three forms of acceleration one of which would not be permitted in states where legal provisions dictate the age at which a child may enter school. These are: grade-skipping, steady progress through a particular series of grades in less than the usual time, and early entrance into school based upon results of standardized tests and psychological studies.

Acceleration is administratively simple. It does not present the problem of space or transportation. In most cases it puts no extra burden on the teacher. There is disagreement among educators as to whether grade-skipping leads to undesirable later adjustments in gifted children. Acceleration should be done on an individual basis after a careful study of intellectual, social, and emotional factors.

Whatever device is provided in the school it must be

done on an individual basis. It is considered highly desirable to form a study council through the division superintendent's office for the purpose of studying the gifted child and the program that is provided in the schools. A good many school systems ask for the services provided by certain universities which allow them to participate in their experimental programs for the gifted.

If this is not done, the principal may appoint a steering committee from his faculty to act as an advisory council for the school. This group may study and make recommendation to the principal for appropriate administrative adjustments to meet the needs of the gifted child.

The curriculum for the gifted child. The curriculum for the gifted child must be set up to function in their school life. The principles that guide curriculum making for the gifted are no different from those for the ordinary child. The task is to organize studies which fit the mature mind of these children but at the same time take account of their relative immaturity in actual age. A program for the gifted must combine general education with special education. It is toward enrichment, extension of interest, and creativity

that curriculum making for the gifted child should be directed.

No matter what administrative arrangement is used, the goal is to furnish a richer, more stimulating environment in which to develop. The enriched program emphasizes social adjustment and sense of responsibility, creative effort, intellectual initiative, critical thinking, and unselfish qualities of leadership.

The principal should study the school records to help him determine what is being done for the gifted in his school. He should make a personal evaluation of his program. The school staff should participate in the evaluation of the program. Other school practices should be observed both by the principal and key personnel.

Working with parents in the program for gifted children. Working with parents is an important part of a program for the gifted child. The parent must be made to understand what is meant by the term gifted. The parent must be made to understand the school program, its goals and objectives. There must be close cooperation between the school, parent, and community if such a program is to be completely successful.

A study group may be organized. This group may be composed of the principal, teachers, and interested parents, especially those who have gifted children. Consultants may be called in to speak to this group or the principal may interpret the program.

The parent can aid the school materially in providing worthwhile interests and experiences at home.

Evaluating the program for the gifted. Criteria should be selected when the program is in the planning stages. The selection of criteria should be an outgrowth of the school's purpose in having a program for the gifted. Selection of criteria is impossible without a recognition of purpose.

In planning the evaluation of any particular phase of the program, definite objectives should be drawn up before the program is put into operation. Consideration should be given to the use of matched groups of children, pre- and post-tests, and other control techniques that will lend assurance to the findings.

Everyone involvdd in the situation should be a part of the judgment process.

AN EVALUATION OF THE THESIS

The limitations placed upon this investigation can be readily understood when considering the fact that all information came through correspondence. Information was slow to come in and in some cases never came at all.

In no case was personal observation a part of the procedure for securing information. Because of the limitations of time and money, personal observation was out of the question. One of the objectives in this investigation was to find out what other schools in Virginia were doing for the gifted child. With the assistance of the State Department of Education, a questionnaire was sent to ten school divisions. Only two questionnaires were returned fully answered. Three wrote letters to the effect that they were attempting to make some provision for the gifted but the provisions were on an exploratory basis.

It is the opinion of the investigator that any principal desiring to make provisions for a gifted child program in his school could do so after reading this paper. Adjustments would have to be made on the basis of the individual school.

CONCLUSIONS

Basically there are three plans used in making administrative provisions in the school: enrichment in the regular classroom, homogeneous grouping or special classes, and acceleration. These plans may be used independently or in combination. No one plan will suit all schools. The school is an individual as is the child and must be treated accordingly.

Identification of the gifted comes early in some schools and in others not until the fourth or fifth grade. Some schools say the earlier identification takes place the better. Hardly any school has a program for the gifted below the fourth grade. Only in special schools such as Hunter College Elementary School do children enter early.

There is a variety of instruments for selecting the gifted. One used alone is not a valid measure. Follow-up testing is necessary for all children and should be carefully and accurately graded.

It is necessary for a community to be properly schooled in what is taking place, especially the parents of the gifted. They are a necessary part of the program and it needs the full

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in his school by reading this investigation and referring to certain sources in the bibliography.

In developing a program for gifted children, especially in situations where grouping or special classes will be attempted, the principal should proceed gradually and enlist the aid of others concerned. Children should be allowed to have experiences on a half day basis before attempting a full time program.

FURTHER RESEARCH NEEDED

The gifted child program is not a new thing in education. But the lack of provisions for so many pupils in so many schools shows that much can be done. A more intense study is needed to accumulate more material on the programs throughout the country. Many answers may be found to many questions left unanswered by getting more information than this study has been able to get. It would be interesting to know how many boys and girls in Virginia have the mental capacity to be classed as gifted in each school division.

We need to know more about planning appropriate programs for these children, how to identify them more accurately, and how to evaluate procedures in the school program.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

A teacher's checklist for the identification of gifted pupils

Pupil's Name _____ Scores on:
Grade _____ Recent Mental Measures _____
Birth Date _____ Recent Achievement _____
Date _____ Summary of grades _____

Directions: Check the word which, in your judgment, describes best the degree to which the characteristics being considered has shown itself to be evident in the case of this pupil.

Part I: Mental Characteristics

1. Makes logical associations.
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
2. Shows long attention span.
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
3. Displays originality in self-expression
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
4. Exercises initiative
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
5. Gives evidence of power to generalize
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
6. Has deep and varied interests
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
7. Uses vocabulary in excess of age level
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
8. Shows a marked degree of inquiring curiosity
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
9. Displays the ability to follow relatively complex directions
   Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
10. Reads widely for informational purposes
    Usually _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____

Comments:

Part II: Emotional Characteristics

1. Displays good social adjustment.
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
2. Demonstrates superior mental health
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
3. Shows signs of accelerated character development
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
4. Shows self-reliance
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
5. Prefers older companions
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
6. Easily gives way to boredom with routine
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
7. Is critical of self and others
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____
8. Seeks adult approval rather than peer approval
   Usually_____Sometimes_____Seldom_____

Part III: Physical Characteristics

1. Is taller than the height prescribed by his age norm
   Yes_____ No_____
2. Is stronger than his age peers
   Yes_____ No_____
3. Displays good general health
   Yes_____ No_____
4. Is more physically mature than his age group of the same sex
   Yes_____ No_____
5. Demonstrates good physical coordination
   Yes_____ No_____

Comments: [1]

---

1 Metropolitan School Study Council, op. cit., p. 51.

1. Physical Traits

( ) 1. Tend to be stronger, healthier, taller, heavier than the average.
( ) 2. Do not become fatigued as readily as the average.
( ) 3. Dislike routine and repetitive tasks.
( ) 4. Tend to mature earlier than others of same age.
( ) 5. Manual and meter abilities not so superior as are intellectual abilities.

2. Mental Traits

( ) 1. Possess intellectual curiosity.
( ) 2. Possess large and picturesque vocabulary which they use accurately---originality of expression.
( ) 3. Have long span of attention.
( ) 4. Show keen powers of analysis, synthesis and reasoning.
( ) 5. Are able to work with abstractions.
( ) 6. Learn rapidly---do well in academic work which they often master in about half the time.
( ) 7. Have good memory---recall details.
( ) 8. Show an outstanding degree of originality, resourcefulness, initiative and imagination.
( ) 9. Display wide range of interests.
( ) 10. Have the capacity for self appraisal.
( ) 11. Like to read---both intensively and extensively.
( ) 12. Require less detailed and repeated instructions---often resist suggestions.
( ) 13. Are capable of planning and organizing.
( ) 14. Have great sensitivity to cultural stimuli.
( ) 15. Show an ability to see qualitatively as well as quantatively.
( ) 16. May appear bored or lazy unless challenged.
( ) 17. Possess a high capacity for self-direction.

3. Social-Emotional Traits

( ) 1. Tend to associate with those of same mental age.
( ) 2. Are enthusiastic about activities---tend toward those which require thinking.
( ) 3. Are generally good citizens.
( ) 4. Have potential for leadership.
( ) 5. May appear boastful due to positiveness of knowledge.
( ) 6. Tend to enjoy individual activities.
( ) 7. Possess acute sensitivity to normal problems of adolescence.
( ) 8. Respond quickly to the feelings of others.
( ) 9. Are concerned about school marks---feel parental pressure.
( ) 10. Have cheerful disposition, tend to be optimistic.
( ) 11. Are emotionally healthy.
( ) 12. Show keen sense of personal responsibility.
( ) 13. Are superior morally, high in honesty.
( ) 14. Make an easy adjustment to new situations.
( ) 15. Strive for group recognition.
    ( ) a. Rejected by peers.
    ( ) b. Evoke imaginary playmates.[2]

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2. Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, op. cit., p. 4-5.

APPENDIX B

The following information is needed in determining the principal's part in planning the program for gifted children. If more space is needed for answers please use the back of these sheets.

1. What is the enrollment of the school? _____

2. What is the approximate number of gifted pupils in the school? _____

3. How were your gifted children identified?

4. What administrative provisions are made in your school?
   Homogeneous grouping _____ Special classes _____

   Enrichment in the regular class _____

   Acceleration _____ if so to what extent:

   Other comments:

5. What provisions are made for planning and to what extent does the principal take part?

6. What suggestions do you have for enlisting the cooperation of teachers in planning a program for the gifted child?

7. What special help can the principal give the teacher?

Return to: Jack E. Dickson
Crestview Elementary School
1901 Charles Street
Richmond 26, Virginia

8. How do you evaluate and report the progress of the gifted child?

9. How did you seek and obtain acceptance of a program for gifted children?

10. What administrative steps are taken to improve the curriculum for gifted children?

11. What records are kept on your gifted children?

12. At what grade does the program actually start?

13. What measures are taken in working with parents?

14. What plans and procedures do you have for studying and evaluating the school program for gifted children?

15. Do you have any literature on your program that could be returned with these questions?

Return to: Jack E. Dickson
Crestview Elementary School
1901 Charles St.
Richmond 26, Virginia

VITA

The author, Jack Edwards Dickson, the son of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Dickson, was born February 25, 1919, in Gary, Indiana. He attended schools in Gary, Indiana and Dickson County, Tennessee. While attending high school he joined the Tennessee National Guard and was inducted into federal service in September, 1940 as a Private. He was discharged a First Lieutenant of Infantry at the end of the war.

He entered Richmond College as a special student in September, 1945. Two years later he was entered as a regular student after taking the Virginia high school completion test.

With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, he saw service again, this time with the United States Marine Corps. After discharge in 1951, he was employed as a teacher in the Hanover County School System, where he taught four years at Washington-Henry High School from 1952 to 1956. While teaching at this school he was graduated in 1954 from the University of Richmond with the Bachelor of Arts degree.

He next moved into Henrico County Schools as Assistant

Principal of Crestview Elementary School. He became Principal of Longdale Elementary School at the end of his first year in Henrico County.

In the Summer of 1955, he entered graduate school at the University of Richmond and began working toward the Master of Science Degree in Education.

Mr. Dickson is married to the former Ellen Chisholm Campbell of White Plains, New York. She is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Harris W. Campbell of White Plains. They have two children, Tommy, age 8, and Dixie, age 5.