A Survey of High Schools Using Projectors in the Classroom and the Use of Projectors in the Public Relations Program

Ronald D. Fritchley

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A SURVEY OF HIGH SCHOOLS USING PROJECTORS IN THE CLASSROOM
AND THE USE OF PROJECTORS IN THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

BY

Ronald D. Fritchley

PLAN B PAPER
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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AND PREPARED IN COURSE
SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN AUDIO-VISUAL EDUCATION
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY,
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1965
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS PLAN B PAPER BE ACCEPTED AS
FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE DEGREE, M.S. IN ED.

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DATE

ADVISER

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A SURVEY OF HIGH SCHOOLS USING PROJECTORS IN THE CLASSROOM AND THE USE OF PROJECTORS IN THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

School systems in Illinois have many tools which enhance the learning of the student in the classroom and which demonstrate a great amount of flexibility in communication. Large sums of taxpayers dollars are spent by Illinois high school districts each year to give the individual student the "Good common school education" which is set forth in Article VIII, No. 1, of the Illinois State Constitution.

Many high schools use three types of projectors in the classroom; the overhead transparency projector, the filmstrip and/or slide projector, and the 16mm motion picture projector. These three projectors prove to be valuable and useful in the promotion of learning if used in the proper manner.

Some schools make various services available to the citizenry of their respective communities under the general heading of good will or public relations. Most school administrators and personnel desire to establish a favorable rapport between the school and community, loaning or renting certain materials or equipment has been advantageous to some high schools and is a common practice.

This study concerns the schools using and not using three types of
projectors in public relations activities. Since effective public relations is sometimes the key to a harmonious school-community relationship the author attempts to determine if the use of this equipment in community activities might supplement a favorable climate and attitude towards the school by the public. Effective public relations are usually vital for public support of the educational program, passing of bond issues, and increasing educational funds.

Purpose of the Study

This paper was designed to survey several Illinois high schools to find if they had the three types of projectors and if school administrators or audio-visual directors have sought to measure the effectiveness of the projectors as public relations tools as well as learning tools.

The study was conducted to determine the extent of projector utilization outside the classroom and to investigate the possibility of more extensive use of such equipment in the community. This type of projection equipment can be a costly item in the school budget, and community participation in using the projectors may help justify the expense to residents of the high school district.

The study sought to find the amount of time spent each day in performing audio-visual duties to see if there was a relationship between time spent for a-v activities and the use of projectors in the public relations program.

Method

A review of literature concerning use of audio-visual materials in public relations programs was made to determine if audio-visual
and public relations authors agreed on the use of projection equipment outside the classroom.

Several personal interviews were conducted on the campus of Eastern Illinois University with members of the audio-visual and public relations professions for interpretation of definitions and concepts regarding the problem.

Questionnaires were sent to high school administrators in nearly all sections of Illinois with a heavier concentration on the larger metropolitan areas; however, Chicago Public Schools were omitted in order to limit the survey to school enrollments of less than 3000 students. The survey did not include schools with less than 500 students, since most of these districts would be limited in types of community activities, because high schools of this size are usually in rural areas.

The survey instrument was completed by principals and audio-visual directors, and librarians depending on who was responsible for audio-visual equipment in the individual high schools.

The high schools were divided into three classifications; small schools comprising 500-999 students, middle-sized schools of 1000-1999 students, and larger schools of 2000-3000 students.

Average numbers of the three types of projectors were determined for each school size breakdown, types of public relations activities in which projectors were used, kinds of favorable comments regarding the use of equipment were tabulated, and remarks were made by the respondent regarding the effectiveness of the projectors in public relations programs.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

Review of Literature

Many articles and texts have been written emphasizing the need for increased use of audio-visual materials in connection with the public relations program of the school; only a few findings, which have a bearing on the study, will be quoted in this chapter.

Doyle Bortner, public relations author, says, "Public relations are not a matter of choice. It is a school's prerogative, however, to organize and develop that type of school public relations program that will nurture community understanding and support."¹ This comment would indicate the necessity of the school to keep the community informed and aware of happenings within the school if the faculty wishes to have their ideas and innovations supported and approved by the citizens of the district.

Bortner also points out some methods which will aid in gathering the community understanding and support.

"School public relations is a long-range, solid and democratic course. It is a process which seeks to foster understanding and finally working relationships between schools and their communities. It is an operation which helps schools know their communities in order that they may not only serve educational needs but also select more intelligently the media and activities which will keep the people informed about the schools, their purposes, programs, progress, and problems."²

Use of graphic materials is clearly illustrated as Bortner states:

²Ibid., p. 3.
"Both home-produced and appropriate commercially-prepared visual aids can be useful to associations in stressing local educational progress, problems, and needs when exhibited and interpreted before community groups. Moreover, local groups will often welcome such programs."

Another public relations author, Leslie W. Kindred, strongly urges the use of audio-visual materials in a 1957 publication which states:

"Without a doubt audio-visual aids are the most effective media for mass communication today. Schools have used these media to interpret their programs and to build better relations with parents and other taxpayers, but on a comparatively small scale."

In the next paragraph Kindred says, "The motion picture should have a definite place in the public relations program."

Audio-visual authors and practitioners have also supported the use of their materials in conjunction with effective public relations. James Kinder emphasizes, "One of the duties of every supervisor of audio-visual education is to assist the school administrator in educating the community to the values of his department."

In a listing of 16 tools of communication which are used in public relations situations motion pictures and slides are listed.

Dr. Carlton Erickson, director of the audio-visual center at the University of Connecticut, recommends community use of audio-visual

---

3 Ibid., p. 101.
5 Ibid.
equipment in certain cases.

"Many audio-visual centers say firmly, though sympathetically, 'No', to agencies seeking to borrow the school's projectors and tape recorders. Some directors have no problem in this area because they find themselves in community-oriented school systems where it is not strange for the school plants to be in use daily (after school and nights, that is) for adult education purposes. School equipment is thus in convenient position for use, and with a night-school supervisor assisted by one or two trained, paid student projectionists, there is little cause for worry. In some cities, in accordance with wise school-system policy, a motion picture projector and a screen, and a slide projector are purchased out of school funds and set aside for loans to nonschool community agencies. However, there is little justification for a school's audio-visual center that does not have enough equipment to handle its own service commitments to loan a projector and screen to the local Boy's Club, for example, if it jeopardizes the showing of a scheduled instructional film in the first-period science class the next day.

Actually, therefore, the loan of A-V equipment to other community agencies may, while contributing to good public relations, work against the accomplishment of basic instructional service."

Dr. Erickson's statements support both the schools who do loan equipment and those who do not loan equipment. He endorses the use of school equipment for public relations if it interferes in no way with the task of educating the students of the school.

The findings of the survey in this study show school policy taking both sides on equipment use by the community.

Definition of Terms

Audio-Visual Director---The person in charge of coordinating and distributing audio-visual materials in the school. This term covers a very broad area of duties and may pertain to a librarian or instructional materials director.

---

Audio-Visual Materials—"A term referring to experiences, equipment, and materials used for communication in instruction, it implies techniques based upon practice utilized in education and training."9

Instructional Materials—"Devices which assist an instructor in the teaching-learning process by simply presenting supporting or supplementary material, usually intermittently. They are not self-supporting."10

Public Relations—"A process which seeks to foster understanding and friendly working relationships between school and their communities."11

Public Relations Programs—"Planned programs to transfer information from the school to the public giving them the most reliable and direct information possible."12

---

10 Ibid., p. 54.
11Bortner, p.l. (Refers again to Bortner's book, cited in full form in n. 1.)
CHAPTER III

FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

The findings of the survey which was conducted among sixty-four Illinois high schools showed trends developing in accordance with enrollment of the schools and gave indications of whether or not the three types of projectors were being used in public relations programs.

As mentioned earlier in this study, high schools were separated according to enrollment to see if student population had any bearing on the findings. Small schools listed in this paper are those of 500-999 students, middle-sized schools with 1000-1999, and large schools over 2000 enrollment but less than 3000. All schools in the survey were members of the Illinois High School Association and were chosen by the writer in an attempt to represent various regions of the state with the exception of the City of Chicago.

Sixty-four questionnaires were mailed with a letter of explanation asking administrators to have the information supplied and returned. Forty-seven schools responded to the questionnaire for a total return of 73.5 percent. Of the total, eleven small schools replied for a 73.3 return, 22* middle-sized schools answered for 68.7, and 14 large schools responded for a 82.3 return.

*One questionnaire from a middle-sized school was returned but was not properly filled in by the administrator. This response will not be included in other totals.
### TABLE 1

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Size</th>
<th>Mailed</th>
<th>Returned</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The schools involved in the study were asked to list the number of each of the three types of projectors which they had for use in their respective high schools. The findings of this question naturally showed the larger schools possessing larger numbers of projectors with only one apparent difference; the small schools definitely are below the middle and large schools in the number of overhead projectors with two schools having no overhead projectors and four with only one.

### TABLE 2

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PROJECTORS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Size</th>
<th>Filmstrip/Slide</th>
<th>16mm Motion Picture</th>
<th>Overhead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All percentages and number totals will be rounded off to the closest tenth.
A large number of schools use the three types of projectors in various kinds of public relations activities within their communities. All of the large schools surveyed use projectors or make them available as part of their public relations program compared to the small schools who recorded 72.7 using the projectors.

The results show that communities, administrators, and schools in general are aware of establishing favorable relationships with each other and the use of equipment rates high as a means of helping each to understand the other.

**TABLE 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools Using Projectors in Public Relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public relations programs include many types of group projects which provide an extensive listing and are thus broken down into several main headings for simplicity. Adult education is included as part of the public relations program in this study because it is not required by law, tuition or fees are usually collected, special and non-certified faculty are sometimes employed as instructors, and it is a vital link in using the three types of projectors for instructional purposes before the public.

One school in the small school area loan district loaned projectors to local industries. This is possibly the most unusual use of projectors in establishing favorable public relations, nevertheless, it is apparently successful to the program in the eyes of the school involved.
TABLE 4
ORGANIZED GROUPS USING PROJECTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Group</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Large</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Groups</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Teacher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Activities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Groups</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some instances groups wish to express approval of school owned equipment and many of the schools surveyed are recipients of such approval. Usually a thank you is passed along from the group in the form of a letter, phone call, thank you note, or verbal response to the principal or audio-visual director.

One audio-visual director of a middle-sized high school comments; "Many of them (groups using equipment) expect the school to provide them. Most, however, acknowledge the use and show appreciation by sending a letter or making a phone call."

Another director in a middle-sized high school says, "The PTA has expressed approval by giving small sums each year to the Visual Aids Department."

An A-V director in one of the large schools surveyed remarks, "We receive phone calls and notes to the principal or A-V director expressing confidence and satisfaction with services performed, especially when school trained student operators are supplied."

Others indicated they had no response when the three types of projectors were used.
TABLE 5

FAVORABLE COMMENTS WHEN PROJECTORS ARE USED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Size</th>
<th>Received Comments</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some schools employ a full time staff member who is in charge of audio-visual or instructional materials for one building or an entire school district. This writer attempts to find the number of hours during the school day which each director devotes to audio-visual activities. Some directors are full time classroom teachers and are assigned one hour or their preparation period for attending to A-V duties. Sometimes these people are given extra assignment pay or release time from teaching duties.

Findings indicate that 35.7 percent of the large schools employed a person designated as a full time audio-visual director. The middle-sized schools have 33 percent full time audio-visual directors, and none of the small schools surveyed employ a full time director.

Since most high schools hire teachers for a seven hour day those respondents indicating four hours or more for A-V work are considered full time because this leaves less than half a day for classroom teaching.
TABLE 6
TIME SPENT FOR A-V DUTIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Size</th>
<th>1 hour or less</th>
<th>2 hours</th>
<th>3 hours</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents were asked to relate whether or not they believed the projectors used in public relations projects were effective and how they measured their effectiveness. Many questionnaires were returned with comments stating there was no way to measure effectiveness or the respondent considered usage not effective in public relations.

Some of the favorable comments may be worth noting from large, middle, and small high schools. A superintendent in one of the small schools stated, "I think that the use of projectors have been good public relations and have been effective by the evidence of citizens support of tax increases and building projects."

One small school A-V director said, "This equipment should be made available for any endeavor which can be justified on an educational basis. To this extent I believe the use of equipment by community organizations is effective."

In a middle-sized high school the principal remarked, "The continued requests by the community seems to be a good measure of effectiveness of their use."
A principal in another middle-sized school commented, "Due to the fact we have never received complaints and expenditures have grown with public and administrative approval, the projectors are considered effective."

The audio-visual director in a large high school said, "We most generally hear from those who have had success with a benefit or program of some kind as a partial result of effective utilization of A-V media.

In a middle-sized school the principal approved projector use with: "The people seemed to better understand the programs presented and have indicated that there was clarity of presentation."

Some of the negative answers were: "Projector use questionable", "Not very effective", and "Not particularly."

It can be assumed that many schools do not use projectors in the public relations program of the school because they do not consider their use as effective as other means of presentation and communication.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This study was conducted to determine if high schools using projectors in the classroom also used projectors in their public relations programs. The attributes of audio-visual materials, including projectors has been an invaluable tool in learning situations. This survey sought to find how they were used, if an adequate supply existed in the school, and if administrators and audio-visual directors felt they were effective as public relations tools.

An attempt was made to determine how many of the responding schools employed full time A-V personnel who would have time to work with community groups and could plan projects in which the projectors could be utilized. There seems to be little relationship between the number of hours assigned for A-V personnel to perform duties and the number of schools using projectors in public relations. Nearly 90 percent of the schools surveyed used equipment in public relations, while only 26 percent employed full-time audio-visual directors.

In general, schools have the three types of projectors for classroom and public relations purposes. However, small schools of less than 1000 enrollment tend to have very few overhead projectors, whereas, schools over 1000 enrollment average over seven overhead projectors per building.

Several respondents feel there is no measure for effectiveness
of projector use in the public relations program or projectors are not effective at all. Many respondents feel that continued public support in audio-visual, as well as other activities, is the best measure of effectiveness of projector use in public relations.

Of the nearly 90 percent of the schools using projectors in public relations only 56.5 percent received favorable comments from groups using the projectors. This indicated possibly two conclusions: groups expect the school to provide this type of service to organizations since the school is a public supported institution, or leaders and members of community organizations are very negligent in not extending the courtesy of a "thank you" to the school, especially when it involves student operators.

The findings of this paper show that schools are aware of these three types of projectors and are also aware of them in connection with improving public relations. Effectiveness of their usage is still questionable in most cases, but favorable remarks from groups using the projectors would seem to indicate projector use has been effective over 50 percent of the time in public relations programs.

Recommendations

This study was conducted on a relatively small scale in comparison to the total number of high schools in Illinois. This writer recommends a more extensive and comprehensive study be made to substantiate the findings reported previously in this paper. Other recommendations to consider include:

1. Courses and workshops offered through State universities which would show methods and techniques which may be employed by audio-visual, public relations, and administrative personnel in using projectors in public relations programs.
2. Audio-visual directors who have adequate release time from school duties to work with public relations, administrative, and faculty members to plan and promote effective public relations.

3. An adequate supply of the three types of projectors for classroom use should first be obtained and then equipment which can also be used in public relations. The educational program should not be neglected for the sake of effective public relations.

4. Faculty, administrators, and students should be involved when projectors are used in public relations to show a close tie between the school, the child, and the public.
APPENDIX

The Questionnaire Completed By
A-V Directors And Administrators
Name _______________________________ Position _______________________________

Name of School _______________________________ Enrollment ________________

Who is responsible for the audio-visual program in your school?
Principal _____ Teacher _____ Audio-Visual Director _____ Other _____

How many hours during the school day does the audio-visual supervisor devote to audio-visual activities? ______________

Who is responsible for the public relations program in your school?
Principal _____ Teacher _____ Public Relations Director _____ Other _____

How many of each type of projector are available in your high school?

   Filmstrip and slide projectors _____
   16mm motion picture projectors _____
   Overhead transparency projectors _____

What types of public relations projects are conducted in your community in which these projectors are used? Examples: civic group meetings, PTA, adult education classes, community activities, etc.

Does the public approve the use of these projectors through commendation such as favorable comments, letters, telephone calls, etc. If so, please give examples of public approval.

Do you believe the projectors used in your public relations projects have been effective and how is the effectiveness of their use measured?

I would like to have a copy of the study summary: Yes _____  No _____
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Periodicals


Other Sources
