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Alternative Schools: A Literature Review and a Proposal for the Middle-School-Age Students of Decatur, Illinois, District 61

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ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND A PROPOSAL FOR THE MIDDLE-SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS OF DECATUR, ILLINOIS, DISTRICT 61

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I. Introduction

Four years in the classroom and five years experience as a school administrator have convinced me that the traditional school, while very good for most students, does little to prepare many low-achieving students for successful adjustment to adulthood and to the world of work.

I am by no means the first person to believe this and neither is this a recent revelation. Many educators have lamented this problem and many ideas on how to handle it have been suggested and tried.

This paper is not a criticism of any program, past or present, that has been developed or that has evolved in Decatur, Illinois, or any school district in the United States. It is simply an investigation of the latest in a long list of ideas that have been promoted on how best to educate low achieving students. I would be less than candid, though, if I did not admit that I think the concept of alternative schools is the most meaningful and hopeful idea in education since the beginning of free, public schools.

Many people also share this viewpoint and, as a result, many alternative schools are being started across the country. This rapid proliferation of alternative schools has been aided by the more than obvious learning problems of many students. The high rate of unemployment and underemployment, the rising welfare costs, the increasing divorce rate, the surplus of college educated professionals, the shortage of skilled craftsmen, and the epidemic proportions of venereal diseases in the United States show that in many ways the traditional schools have failed. These problems can be solved and the schools do have a major role to play. Hopefully, alternative schools will make this role more effective.

No one does a study of this type, or reaches the point in his educational career where he is able to do a study of this type, without the help, the

dedication, and the encouragement of many people. I am no exception. I would especially like to acknowledge four men - Dr. Robert V. Shuff, Dr. Walter C. Garland, Dr. Gerhard C. Matzner, and Dr. Donald W. Smitley.

I would also like to thank my family for their love and patience.

II. ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS:

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

II. Alternative Schools: A Review of the Literature

Alternative Schools Defined

The definition of alternative schools is, at best, somewhat amorphous. Some authors have defined alternative schools in terms of their process characteristics or their outcomes, such as participatory decision making or the development of individual interests. Others define alternative schools as a strategy for effecting change.[1]

The differing conceptions of alternative schools then can be divided, rather roughly, into two schools of thought. The first views the concept as alternatives to education. Ordinarily, this means alternatives to established public and private schooling. This idea has been promoted by Ivan Illich, Everett Reimer, John Holt, and others. Among other things, the idea here is to have each person assume the right to arrange his or her own education and that schools as such may actually interfere with real education. The Civil Rights movement with its history of temporary "freedom schools" and the so-called counter-cultural aspirations of the 70's are part of this view of alternatives.

The other main view of alternative schools is connected with the modification of the standardization within public schools through plural education. This group is made up mostly of persons within the established system of public schools. This group has stimulated many of the public school alternatives and has the most to do with whether alternatives, or options as they are also called, become a serious movement or a passing fad.

Because of the broad range of participants in alternatives and in the light of their differing philosophical and political positions, the tendency for mixing all of them into one overall concept of alternatives has led to

confusion on the part of parents, teachers, students, and school administrators. The serious development of alternatives within the public schools will depend a great deal, therefore, on the acceptability of the idea by mainstream parents, teachers and school administrators.[2] Those interested in developing alternatives can make the idea acceptable to the mainstream by demonstrating a need for their existence.

The Need For Alternative Schools

It is not difficult for one to show a need for alternative schools. Anyone who has ever worked with children realizes they all learn at different speeds and solve problems with a variety of techniques.

Perhaps it was stated best by Mario D. Fantini when he wrote,

> "The problem of providing a pluralistic, technologically advanced society with universal quality education continues to be a problem requiring a basic reform of our educational institutions. Because quality education has an important survival value in today's world, the absence of it becomes increasingly a matter of personal urgency. It is difficult, if not impossible, for a monolithic system of public education to respond to the different conceptions of quality education held by a pluralistic society, and consequently these differences result in increased confrontations."[3]

One of the characteristics of a democratic society is the choices its citizens have in important aspects of their daily lives. Citizens in a democracy should expect to have options in governmental policies, products and markets, vocations and avocations, places of residence and work, leisure time activities, medical and dental care, transportation, the mass media, education, religion, and social life. Options are available in our society in all but one of these areas. For most of the families in this country, there are no choices in elementary and secondary education.

This lack of choice in elementary and secondary education has led to frustration on the part of many students, parents, and educators. The

attempts to alleviate this frustration have produced a unique and interesting history of development of alternative schools.

History Of Alternative Schools

This country is 200 years old. During the first 150 years more learning alternatives were available than are available today!

Private schools have always been utilized by families that could afford them and parochial schools have been utilized by those that preferred them. Enrollment in nonpublic schools, however, is at an all-time low today, which would indicate that these alternatives are available to fewer and fewer students. In the agricultural and frontier society of our first 100 years, children could quit school for on-the-job training in farming and other occupations. Apprenticeships for children were common.

During the next fifty years, as our society evolved from agricultural to industrial, opportunities for on-the-job training increased, with many children working in plants and factories. Indeed, more school-age children were working than going to school, many of them under 10 years of age. Whether desirable or not, work was a learning alternative to schooling for our first 150 years. As more adult laborers immigrated to this country, as labor unions developed, and as child labor laws were enacted, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and regular work for those of school age became less and less available.

At the beginning of the twentieth century fewer than 10% of all youth in the United States completed high school. High school and grammar school programs were academically oriented to prepare those few who would finish high school to go on to college. Most educators recognized that many students did not learn well in this academic setting. Only a few were

expected to succeed. The development of vocational schools was an effort to provide an alternative for many students who would have otherwise dropped out to face a declining job market for school-age youth. As the compulsory school age was extended, more and more students were forced to attend public school. By 1950, the majority of school-age children had no other alternative.

Within a period of thirty years (1920-1950), those conventional schools that had been eliminating a majority of students before graduation from high school were expected to provide mass elementary and secondary education for all children. The schools had been committed to an impossible task, but it took a while for educators and the general public to realize it.[4]

A few communities realized before others that the single standard school could not meet the needs of every student. Interesting enough, one of the first changes in types of schools was in New York City in 1938 when the Bronx High School of Science was started for talented students. In 1964 the Metropolitan Youth Education Center was started in Denver for dropouts and potential dropouts. A few communities wanted to change all schools, as in the move toward open elementary education in North Dakota in 1965. But to the general public, the impetus for the alternative public school began with the Parkway Program in Philadelphia in 1969 when 143 high school students took to the streets of the city without really leaving school. In this situation the students found their classrooms, their curricula, and some of their teachers from among the resources of the city. Also in 1969 the Berkeley Community School was started, a school for over 255 students that attempted to maximize student self-expression. The Chicago Public High School for Metropolitan Studies (Metro) followed in 1970.

From these few alternative schools came the impetus for a large number of changes. For example, in Berkeley in 1972-73 students could choose from among 23 alternative schools and programs plus the conventional school. On March 13, 1973, the Minneapolis School Board voted to try to offer alternative educational styles to all elementary students in the city by the fall of 1976. Philadelphia now operates over 60 alternative schools and programs at the secondary level. A 1973 study by students, community members, and professionals in Los Angeles recommended 25 alternative schools and programs at the high school level. Multiple options are also currently available in Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, Michigan; Cherry Creek and Jefferson County, Colorado; St. Paul, Minnesota; Seattle, Washington; and Madison, Wisconsin, just to name a few.[5]

In 1970 the Center for Options in Public Education was started at Indiana University in an attempt to study, document, and promote the development of alternative public schools. The Center is under the directorship of Vernon H. Smith. Working out of this Center, under the directorship of Daniel J. Burke, is the International Consortium for Options in Public Education. The Consortium publishes the newsletter Changing Schools, occasional papers, and a directory of optional alternative public schools. The Consortium also sponsors regional conferences in all parts of the United States. Membership in this Consortium is available to public school systems, teacher training institutions, educational organizations, and individuals.

Some state education departments have also become actively involved in the promotion of alternative schools. For example, the Illinois Office of Education, operating from the premise that the public education system provides a better framework for positive educational change, developed a process

and structure to support comprehensive positive educational change. It is called the Illinois Network for School Development (INSD).

Working through the INSD, the state assumes the leadership role by acting as a catalyst to encourage and stimulate schools and individuals to work together in a systematic and organized fashion. When fully developed, the INSD will reach 135,000 students through a total of 45 school districts or consortia of districts.[6]

The developments discussed above are but a few of the major ones that have occurred relative to alternative schools in the past few years. Many individuals and organizations have contributed to the changes that have been made. As with other changes in the field of education, these developments have produced a variety of opinions concerning the merits of alternative schools.

Reactions To Alternative Schools

Prior to 1970, alternative public schools were little talked about and very seldom referred to in the educational literature, but by 1973 a Gallop Poll reflected support for the idea by both the lay public and professionals (62 percent of parents, 80 percent of professional educators indicated that it is a good idea).[7]

In their brief existence the alternative schools have also attracted a small, but prestigious, circle of critics. Albert Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers, has expressed concern with what he perceives as unfair comparisons between the alternative schools and the conventional schools.[8] Robert Hutchins of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, favors plurality of modes of education to meet the learning needs of all members of society, but is critical of those who wish to de-school

society.[9] Harry Broudy, editor of Educational Forum,[10] and Mortimer Smith of the Council for Basic Education,[11] both fail to see the difference between the non-public free schools and the optional alternative public schools.

Another area of concern is how colleges react to students who have attended alternative public high schools. To date, admissions and placement into colleges have not been a problem when admissions officers have been informed about the schools' programs. Many teacher education institutions have also developed programs to prepare personnel for various roles in alternative public schools.

The most important reaction concerning alternative public schools is that of the school's own community. Since the alternative exists as an option, the crucial test is whether it attracts and holds students. Many communities report great success with their alternative schools. As an example, the Metropolitan Youth Center, operated jointly by the Denver and Jefferson County Public Schools, served over 10,000 dropouts and potential dropouts between 1964 and 1973.

Many of the criticisms of public alternative schools can be eliminated by selecting the proper alternative or alternatives for a given community. This selection process can be improved by the establishment of a set of criteria for alternatives.

Criteria For Selecting Alternatives

There is no best set of ground rules, or criteria, from which to legitimize an alternative school. There has been enough experience gained from the various alternative schools around the country, however, to suggest the following set of criteria for the selection of a proper alternative.

Alternatives should:

1. not be superimposed on the participants, but a matter of choice for

teachers, parents, and students.

2. be viewed as another way of providing education alongside the existing program, which continues to be legitimate.

3. not practice any form of exclusivity with regards to race, religion or wealth of individuals.

4. have a comprehensive set of educational objectives that deal with work careers, citizenship, talent development, intellectual and emotional growth, problem solving, critical thinking, and so forth.

5. not cost more money per student than existing programs. The idea is to make a wiser use of existing funds.

6. have a plan for adequate evaluation.[12]

Alternatives selected on the basis of these criteria should be readily accepted and supported by communities wishing to equip the citizens with the skills needed for social, political, and economic survival. Another important aspect of community acceptance of alternative schools is the goals that are established for them to accomplish.

Goals For Alternative Schools

Goals are the cornerstones of a successful enterprise. Without proper goals, a great deal of time, effort, money, and public support can be lost. Knowing this, most planners and implementors of alternative schools have established goals for these schools that are motivating, attainable, and based upon the needs of a given community. Some examples of goals for alternative school are as follows:

1. Encouraging the retention of youngsters who might otherwise give up an opportunity to continue their formal education.

2. Developing different ways for students and teachers to relate.

3. Increasing opportunities for students to determine their own learning experiences.

4. Enabling students to search for new ways of gaining knowledge.

5. Allowing teachers to use innovative methods in their interactions with students.

6. Shaping the learning environment so that it functions as a setting suitable for many educational purposes.

7. Addressing personal problems of students that may interfere with their ability and desire to learn.[13]

The above goals were developed for an alternative program designed to help in the areas of student alienation, basic skills improvement, human relationships, motivation, career development, and attendance. Of course, no one set of objectives would be appropriate for all alternative programs or all communities. The goals are as diverse as are the types of alternatives that have been developed.

Types Of Alternative Schools

Realizing that a pluralistic society can not adjust to a monolithic educational process, more and more educators are viewing alternative schools as the answer to the problem. If alternative schools are to truly serve their purpose, each community should have an alternative school that is at least a little unique. There are enough similarities, however, to make it possible to look at them by types. These are some of the more common types.

1. Open Schools

Learning activities in these schools are more individualized and are organized around learning centers within a classroom or within the school building. The St. Paul Open School and the Brown Open School in

Louisville, Kentucky, are two examples. These two schools each enroll approximately 400 elementary and secondary students.

2. Magnet Schools and Learning Centers

These schools and centers are oriented toward a specific interest area; e.g., the visual and performing arts, the musical arts, the sciences, environmental studies. Sometimes these schools are designed for particularly gifted students. The Berkeley High School of the Arts is an example of this type of school.

3. Schools Without Walls

One of the first modern alternative public schools was the Parkway Program in Philadelphia which is still going strong. It was a leader in making extensive and systematic use of community facilities for educational purposes, holding classes in office buildings, museums, and public libraries. Parkway has no school building in the conventional sense.

4. Drop-out, Drop-in Schools

These are centers for youngsters who have dropped out of regular schools and for potential dropouts. Sometimes the educational program is combined with a community-living center. Number Nine in New Haven, Connecticut, was one of the first efforts to provide this kind of educational opportunity.

5. Alternatives for Disruptive Students

Some schools are trying to stabilize their conventional schools by creating alternative schools with programs designed to give disruptive students enhanced self-images and other kinds of help. Philadelphia has some 30 alternative schools designed explicitly to salvage the disruptive student.

6. Free Schools

These schools tend to be more radical in ideology and looser

in structure than other alternative forms and they strive to help young people and adults learn to live together in an atmosphere of freedom. Pacific High School in Palo Alto, California, is an example. Most free schools are non-public.

7. Freedom Schools

Chiefly community-based and developed, these are schools operated by and for blacks and other ethnic minorities. They stress ethnic studies and basic learning skills. Harlem Prep in New York City was one of the first and is probably the best known of this type of alternative school. Most freedom schools are also non-public.

8. Career Schools

These are newly developed alternatives that are trying to find new ways for young people to gain greater knowledge of careers and to acquire more useful job skills. The Career Academy, operated by Research for Better Schools, is one of several such schools that have been funded by the U.S. Office of Education.

9. Survival Schools

These are not really schools in any usual sense of the word. Rather, they are groups of adults who take young people into challenging natural environments to teach them how to get along together, how to brave the elements, and how to discover who they really are. Outward Bound was one of the first such efforts, and it has encouraged a host of followers.[14]

Another example of an alternative is the Multi-Culture Schools in Berkeley, California. These schools include children carefully selected on the basis of diversity of race, socio-economic status, age, and sex. During part of the school day the students meet and work together. At other times

they meet in their own ethnic, social, or educational groups, learning their own culture, language, customs, history, and heritage, or other special curriculum; later, these aspects are shared with the wider group.[15]

The above are the major types of alternative schools. Although they are all uniquely different, they all share some common characteristics.

1. They are significantly different from their conventional counterparts in curriculum and in instructional practices.

2. They strive for greater involvement of staff and students in decision making than is the case in most regular schools.

3. They are more flexible and, therefore, more responsive to evolution and planned change.

4. They tend to make more extensive use of community resources and facilities.

5. They usually have a commitment to be more responsive to some community need or needs than conventional schools have been.

6. They are most often comparatively small schools with student bodies ranging from 30 to 400.

All these alternative programs and schools have come about because someone or some group perceived a need for their existence. A great deal of leadership is required, however, to implement an alternative, even after the need has been established.

Implementing Alternative Schools

If the powers that be have examined their situation, have determined that an alternative school is needed, have established the goals for the school, have agreed upon the type of alternative school, and have documented the level of interest, they are then ready to deal with some of the various aspects of implementing an alternative school.

Implementing an alternative school involves a goodly amount of planning if the venture is to be successful. Not everyone, however, shares this view. Dwight W. Allen feels that,

> "one of the significant weaknesses of most strategies of educational change is the preoccupation with pre-planning. Our tradition is to establish all sorts of planning mechanisism, plan up a storm, and then have only a little energy left over for correcting our mistakes. Also, once we have implemented our plans, we have so much invested in the direction of that implementation that it is really hard to change. To change takes another huge planning session, and that is just terribly difficult to come up with. Knowing that this is such a problem, we plan even more feverishly to make sure the initial direction is right."[16]

Although it is hard to dispute Allen's logic, those responsible for implementing an alternative school should do enough pre-planning to give the alternative school a fair chance of being successful. Establishing quantitative standards and satisfying state law requirements, developing a curriculum, financing the alternative school, acquiring staff members, and administering and evaluating an alternative school are all very important aspects that require a great amount of planning and decision making.

Standards And Laws

One would sometimes like to assume a cavalier attitude toward all the laws and regulations concerning schools and simply say that all a school has to do is meet the needs of the students. This is especially true of alternative schools, many of which are avant-garde.

Surprisingly enough, there are no special guidelines for alternative schools in Illinois. The regulations concerning schools in the School Code of Illinois apply to all public schools.[17]

This is not true of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, which has a set of policies and standards for the approval of alternative schools. Those school districts wishing to have their alternative schools

accredited must satisfy twelve standards adopted by the Association in 1974.[18]

In addition to standards established by state or regional accrediting associations, Bruce Howell thinks there are at least two other areas that require the setting of standards for alternative schools.[19] They are the standards concerned with student admittance and the standards of legitimization, which are the standards of acceptance by the state, the community and the school's peers.

An alternative school that will be readily accepted is one that has a curriculum based upon the needs and goals of the students and the community.

Alternative School Curricula

Alternative schoolers are often confronted with the misinformed assumption that what goes on in alternative schools is something less substantive with regard to basic skills and overall curriculum than in traditional schools. In general, the curriculum in the alternative school seems to be more comprehensive than the curriculum of the traditional school, perhaps because tradition acts as a constraint on curricular change. The alternative school, with little or no tradition, can be more responsive to the curricular needs of their students. This is one of the biggest selling points of an alternative school.

Also, alternative schools are systematically developing new and different curricula along with the equally important methods, human resources, materials, learning climates, and time utilization that often determine curricular effectiveness. The "do your own thing" concept, which is often assumed to be the curriculum basis in alternative schools, has no more place in them than it does in traditional schools.

In its broadest sense, curriculum includes these six components - persons, places, times, methods, materials, and content.[20] Most alternative

schools consider how these components vary with the uniqueness of the people involved. For example, "persons" refers to all people involved in the educational process (students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other community members). Teachers become managers of learning activities, facilitators, and guides and students become involved in designing and implementing their educational activities. Students may become "teachers" of other students and lay persons may play a role as resources, as "teachers", and as aides. Above all, alternative schoolers view education as a people business.

Looking at the "places" aspect of curriculum, much of what is educationally relevant in contemporary times falls outside of school classrooms. Learning theorists state that most learning is acquired through experience and that people tend to learn more readily what is relevant to their individual needs. Utilizing these theories, alternative schools have expanded the variety and number of places in which learning can take place.

Utilizing "time" effectively in education is a concern that alternative school personnel are confronting. In general, learning activities take precedence over time. That is, learning tasks determine time usage, rather than have the clock determine the length of a given learning experience. This method of using time is essential since teaching and learning styles require variability in the amount of time needed for successful learning. There is no master schedule in some alternative schools.

Differences in the "methods" dimension of curriculum are also explored in alternative schools. Teachers are encouraged to express their individuality in terms of teaching styles, talents, interests, skills, and training. Teachers practicing almost any methodological technique are likely to be successful if that technique is a comfortable and natural one. Doing what

one does best in a climate conducive to the success of a learning activity should produce more effective learning and teaching.

As curricular opportunities are expanded by establishing alternative schools, the availability of "materials" is also expanded. Using community resources automatically offers a wealth of materials for both teachers and students. When students are involved in designing some of their learning experiences, they frequently bring materials or identify materials that will help them achieve what they have set out to do.

Finally, with regard to "content", the major component of curriculum, the significance of alternative school curriculum is based not upon the acquisition of new learning or new information, but rather the attachment of new meanings to information that is already known or readily available. In a technological society, it is impossible to teach or experience all of the new information available in any given decade. What is essential is acquiring skills that will enable people to deal effectively with the significance and meanings of new information. Being able to comprehend, adjust, and cope with new information is as important as the new information itself.

In the final analysis, the content of the curriculum of an alternative school will be determined by the objectives of the school itself.

The depth and breadth of curriculum offered will be effected by the uniqueness of the staff. The finances available will affect both the objectives formulated and the staff that is made available.

Financing Alternative Schools

The financial woes of New York City, the troubled budgets of various states, the rate of inflation, and the dwindling numbers of school-age children are separately and concurrently clouding the financial picture for

schools and school planners. During the past decade the cost of public education increased at a faster rate than the growth of the national economy. This phenomenon is not likely to continue.

The results of this increased spending have not been all good. Addressing the 91st Congress, President Nixon stated:

> "The best available evidence indicates that most of the compensatory education programs have not measurably helped poor children catch up.
>
> Recent findings on the two largest such programs are particularly disturbing. We now spend more than $1 billion a year for educational programs run under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Most of these have stressed the teaching of reading, but before-and-after tests suggest that only 19% of the children in such programs improve their reading significantly; 13% appear to fall behind more than expected; and more than two-thirds of the children remain unaffected - that is, they continue to fall behind. In our Headstart program, where so much hope is invested, we find that youngsters enrolled only for the summer achieve almost no gains, and the gains of those in the program for a full year are soon matched by their non-Headstart classmates from similarly poor backgrounds."[21]

How much should education cost? Perhaps more important than how much should be spent, is what the money should be spent for. Spending more money to improve a monolithic system results in doing more of the same.

Public schools need to reform themselves with the resources that they have on hand. Failing referenda are blocking the road toward continuous add-on reform. New approaches to school reform are needed. Alternative education is one such approach.

Alternative public schools usually operate on the same per pupil budgets as other schools at the same level within the same community. Per pupil costs are difficult to compute in most alternative schools. This is a result of a constantly changing pupil population in an operation that does not follow the typical school day or calendar year. The Metropolitan Youth Center of Jefferson County, Colorado, reports a per pupil cost figure that is three times as much as the per pupil cost in the Jefferson County system.[22] This

is not total picture, however, as the students of Metropolitan Youth Center tend to complete course requirements in one-third less time than the typical high school student and teachers spend more than one-fourth of their pupil contact time outside the classroom setting.

Sometimes alternative schools save money in unusual ways. For instance, an alternative school for disruptive students should enable traditional schools to have larger pupil-teacher ratios since the disruptive students that demand a lot of teacher time are no longer present.

Plant facilities have proven to be another area of alternative school operation where cost savings have been achieved consistently. This has been because most of the schools have used facilities such as unoccupied portable classrooms, empty elementary buildings, church basements, abandoned former high school buildings, etc. These kinds of savings should be credited to an alternative school when per pupil costs are being determined.

Not all educational decisions, however, should be made on the basis of costs. Sometimes a little extra money spent in education can prevent a lot of money being spent in other areas, such as welfare and penal institutions.

Since alternative schools are often times experimental in nature, funds for them can sometimes be acquired through categorical state or federal aid or private foundations. The pitfalls of this are the constraints imposed by the funding agency. Such constraints may lead to major changes in the original objectives of the alternative schools.

There has been little opposition to alternative schools based upon their operating costs; and budgetary problems are likely to be no greater for the alternative school than for the traditional school as long as parents and students feel they have a real voice in the type of education the school provides and as long as the district is attempting to satisfy their needs.

A creative and dedicated staff will help make this possible.

Staffing Alternative Schools

As in a traditional school, the single most important factor determining the success of an alternative school is the teacher. The teacher is the heart of the program. Realizing this, the following list of characteristics to look for when interviewing candidates for teacher positions is suggested by Jennings.[23] The candidate should:

1. like teaching, students, and people in general
2. have a knowledge of general educational goals and philosophies
3. recognize that education's major outcome should be an effective person and a responsible citizen
4. have skill and expertise in a particular subject
5. acknowledge that all curricular areas potentially are equally important to a student's education
6. recognize that education can be improved and have the ability to articulate some needed improvements
7. be flexible and open to new ideas
8. be open to student and parent participation in assessing the alternative program's success
9. be willing to make a commitment of as much time as the job takes
10. be interested in a variety of activities that are personally fulfilling.
11. have good physical and mental health for the rigors and demands of the job
12. be willing to undergo the necessary training to improve skills, such as counseling, keeping records, communicating, and community involvement

13. have supervisory and organizational ability

14. have tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity

15. have knowledge about alternative programs through experience, visitation, or reading.

With the exception of item number 15, it is hard for this author to see how this list of characteristics desired of teachers for alternative schools differs from those desired of teachers for traditional schools. If this is true, then it should be no harder to find good teachers for alternative schools than it is for traditional schools.

There is no question, however, that item number 15 does have unique requirements. Responding to this growing demand for non-traditional teachers, a few colleges and universities have created teacher education programs that focus on emerging roles in alternative public schools. This type of program can be found at such colleges and universities as Indiana University, the University of North Dakota, the University of Massachusetts, Mankato State College and San Francisco State University.

A number of other colleges and universities have initiated courses on alternative public schools. Such courses can be found at Central Michigan University, California State University, Glassboro State College, the University of Colorado, Washington University and the University of British Columbia.

Most alternative schools have attracted young, radical teachers that were eager to explore the new dimensions of freedom. The alternative schools that have been most successful, however, have been ones that had a few more mature teachers from the traditional schools.

Alternative schools have also expanded the concept of "teacher" since they have also used part-time teachers, volunteers from the community,

parents, undergraduate and graduate students, and their own students.

A staff consisting of this many different types of teachers in a school with so many unique learning opportunities would present many administrative challenges.

Administering Alternative Schools

The challenges of administering an alternative school fall into two main categories - the role of building administrator and the methods of governance.

Somehow the administrator of an alternative school is expected to be different from the principal of a traditional school. Most school principals spend their time maintaining their organizations. This role is totally different, however, from the role of a change agent and the leadership behaviors required for developing alternative schools. In this instance, leadership means the skills and behaviors necessary to meet the needs of the school.

Among these skills are the ability to conceptualize, communicate, and gain agreement to the developmental stages through which a school must evolve; the ability to involve the community; the ability to initiate a new system of decision making; and the ability to adapt.[24]

Implied by these concepts is the idea that some form of shared decision making is germane to alternative schools. The critical issue that those developing alternative schools need to realize is that all governance matters are determined through discussion in the planning stages so that lines of communications are clear, state regulations and laws are known, and that individual school procedures are developed by those who will be subjected to their restraints or conditions.

After the discussion, the next step is to put the ideas into practice. What are the appropriate organizational structures? Each alternative school

develops its own decision-making groups and its own nomenclature, but the following structures, suggested by Glatthorn,[25] seem to be the most common.

1. The "board" that makes policies that apply only to the alternative school

2. The "group", somewhat analogous to the homeroom, that meets regularly for administrative business, group guidance and social activities

3. The "town meeting" that consists of the entire student body

4. Standing and ad hoc committees

5. Staff meetings

6. A full-time administrator.

No two alternative schools will set up the same structures for decision making, but the ones that are established should be efficient, rational, humanistic, and unifying. Some start out assuming that no rules are needed, that beautiful youth are naturally good, and that they will work together in a climate of love and harmony. Unfortunately, this is not true. Young people, like the rest of us, need limits in order to grow. Freedom is most meaningful for everyone within a context of limits. When students have a hand in establishing these limits, they are more likely to support them.

After all the rules and policies and procedures have been set up for an alternative school, some form of evaluation will have to be planned to see if they have produced the desired results.

Evaluation

The final component in the process of implementing an alternative school involves accountability. Some system of evaluation needs to be developed to determine the effectiveness of the school, but, to date, no system has been developed very well.

Johnston and Parker think there are at least four reasons for this.[26] First is the perception of those developing and working in alternatives that evaluations based on the theories of behavioral science have no application to the outcomes sought in alternative public schools. Second is the practical fear that conventional school evaluation procedures may not be used as tools for program improvement, but as weapons to close alternative schools. Third is alternative school programs and students provide difficulties in administering conventional evaluation designs. Fourth is that alternative and traditional pedagogies are based upon conflicting theories of pedagogy and knowledge.

Before alternative schoolers decide that evaluation can not be done adequately, it would probably be good to remember the purposes of evaluation. There are at least four. First, and also of the highest priority, is the purpose of self-improvement since results of evaluation affect planning. Second, evaluation creates a credibility with the public. Third, evaluation provides a basis for determining which strategies of change work. Fourth, evaluation of the program helps develop an understanding of student evaluation.

What to measure to see if the school's objectives have been met is not an easy thing to agree upon. Some examples of aspects that can be evaluated are the attitudes of the community, staff, students, and parents; community participation; academic achievement and participation; attendance and discipline data; follow up data of school's graduates; development and growth of school; and student activities inside and outside of the school. Of course, the school's objectives will determine which aspects are evaluated and to what depth.

Accountability in education is here. Educational programs, and especially new and innovative ones will have to develop their own system of evaluation

or face being evaluated by someone outside the program. It is better to act than react. Evaluation is but one problem that must be administered if alternative schools are to succeed. There are others.

Problems

Utopian seekers soon learn that alternative schools are not a panacea. As a matter of fact, they have about the same number of problems as do larger and traditional schools. The extent and degree of these problems will vary from community to community, but below are some of the more common problems that have been observed to date.

In some communities there is an image problem with the alternative school concept. Some people think that the alternative school is the place to send someone else's children. Part of this problem has stemmed from the fact that some alternative schools have been nothing more than dumping grounds for disruptive students and that some are attempting to meet the needs of dropouts and potential dropouts. They see the alternative school as a place where students and professionals have unlimited freedom and where little is taught or learned. For whatever the cause, some administrators, teachers, parents, and other community members may be suspicious of the idea of developing an alternative school.

Other problems arise when an alternative school is established prematurely and an adequate understanding does not exist among the people involved. Sometimes an enthusiastic professional, board member, or vested-interest group attempts to start an alternative school without first analyzing local needs and opinions. Educational faddism may also cause problems. Just because one community has a successful alternative school is not a reason for every community to have one.

Involving all the concerned parties and analyzing community needs presents the problem of how to provide adequate planning time. Planning time and program development is important when any new school is opened, but is absolutely essential when starting an alternative school.

The first alternative school in any community will be a novelty and, as such, it will probably attract much attention from the press, radio, television, and from the community at large. Many even attract visitors from outside the community. This overexposure can create problems. For instance, some students, teachers, and administrators in the traditional schools resent the alternative because they feel their schools are effective and equally worthy of attention. Too much exposure of the first year's operation, which rarely goes smoothly regardless of the type of school, can make normal developmental problems appear to be major catastrophes to the community.

The problem of evaluation that was alluded to in the previous section is discussed any time directors of alternative schools meet. Although this problem can be aggravated by the problem of lack of adequate planning time mentioned earlier, it can be minimized by integrating it into the planning and developmental stages. It is not unusual though to find an alternative school already in operation with its staff just beginning to consider their methods of evaluation.

In many communities providing adequate funds is a problem. Even though, as discussed earlier, alternative schools should be designed to operate on relatively the same per pupil costs as traditional schools, providing funds can still be a big problem. Considerable planning and negotiating are usually required to transfer funds from traditional school budgets to the alternative school that will enroll students who would otherwise have been

enrolled in several traditional schools. It is also common for this problem to be worked on at the expense of other problems.

In addition to these major problems, there are also a number of smaller problems, such as marking and grading practices, student record keeping procedures, college admission requirements, teacher transfers, building codes and other state regulations, and transportation arrangements.

Some types of alternative schools have unique problems. For example, the school-within-a-school faces an additional set of problems as it is difficult to have different rules and regulations for different groups of students within the same building. The schools-without-walls also have a different set of problems because many communities are not used to having students scattered throughout the city during regular school hours.

One problem that many alternative schools have, and it is a problem that many like to have, is that they are oversubscribed. This results in long waiting lists and often times feelings of resentment by those who are not admitted. Each school needs to develop in advance fair and equitable admission procedures.[27]

These problems and many that can not be foreseen can still be solved. Hill and Eyres suggest that when problems do arise they can be solved by the techniques that apply to the solution of any problem.

> "Determine exactly what the problem is (not just what you think it is), get all the facts, develop possible alternative actions to reduce or eliminate the problem, discuss the ideas with those involved, and take time to let the ideas brew. Then implement the ideas that will solve the problem with the least chance of new problems being created."[28]

Whenever fallible human beings are brought together into some common enterprise about which they care deeply, problems are sure to result. This has not caused communities to abandon the idea of alternative schools, however,

as their number is constantly increasing and the indications are that the number will continue to increase.

The Future

At first glance, alternative schools might seem beset with problems. This is not true, however, and the many benefits far outweigh the problems associated with the institution of one of the most promising ideas in the field of education. Some of the many promises are listed below. Alternative schools provide:

1. schools of choice rather than compulsion
2. ways to make schools more responsive to the pluralistic needs of the community
3. a structure for continued change and the trial of new types of organization, staffing, financing, learning, and teaching
4. strategies for the decentralization of decision making and control
5. an organizational structure that will be more responsive to change and to the needs of the future.

These benefits and many others help account for the increasing number of alternative schools in the United States. In the 1974-75 school year, the number of alternative public schools identified more than doubled. Over 460 alternative schools had been identified by the fall of 1973 and 584 by the spring of 1974. By the spring of 1975, the number had increased to 1,250.

While the growth in alternative public schools has shifted a little to new states, the majority of alternatives is still clustered in a few states. 70% of all alternative schools identified are found in nine states, with California having 29% of the total.

The most recent listing of alternative schools has shown a shift in the types of alternative schools that have been started during the last 18 months.

The most significant changes have occurred in the areas of open schools and schools without walls. Open schools slipped from 20% of the total alternative school population in 1973 to 15% in the spring of 1975; schools without walls decreased from 22% to only 6%. Continuation schools increased to 20% of the entire alternative school population, mainly because of a California law requiring all school districts to provide such alternatives, and schools within schools made up 17% of the total.

Four years ago the idea of alternative public schools were looked upon as a radical concept. The perception of this idea has changed over the last few years. Today, it is viewed by most as a conservative response to local needs.[29]

While addressing the First International Convention on Options in Public Education in 1973, Dwight Allen, Dean of the College of Education, University of Massachusetts, stated,

> "Changes must occur at all levels. Administrators, teachers, students, parents, all factions involved with public education, must recognize the need to make education more responsive to the real and diverse needs of students. The alternative school movement is going to succeed wherever we can get a road in. Sometimes it will be parents that will be the spark; sometimes it will be the kids themselves; and sometimes it will be teachers, administrators, or the school board."[30]

If an alternative school is going to be started in a community, someone will have to care, someone will have to perceive a need, and someone will have to make a proposal.

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III. A PROPOSAL FOR AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL FOR THE MIDDLE-SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS OF DECATUR, ILLINOIS, DESTRICT 61

III. A Proposal for An Alternative School for the Middle-School-Age Students of Decatur, Illinois, District 61

Statement Of Need

Decatur is a Central Illinois city of over 90,000 people with a school-age population of over 19,000 students. The school district has 25 elementary schools (grades K-6), 5 middle schools (grades 7-8), and 4 high schools (grades 9-12). There are approximately 3,000 middle-school-age students.

An analysis of the SRA Achievement Tests scores of Mound Middle School students showed that many of the 559 tested students are deficient in reading and math skills. Using stanine three, which is at least two grades behind normal progress, as the criteria for assuming that a student is deficient, it was found that out of 293 seventh graders tested 56 scored in the first, second, or third stanine in both total reading and total math. Out of the 266 eighth graders tested 50 scored in the first, second, or third stanine in both total reading and total math. City-wide SRA Achievement Tests scores show that the Mound Middle School students are not significantly different from the students in the other four middle schools (see appendixes A and B). By extrapolation this would mean then that Decatur has 400 to 500 seventh and eighth grade students in regular classrooms that are at least two grades behind in both reading and math skills. Many of these students are frequently absent and many are suspended for disciplinary problems.

Critiques of four Mound Middle School students will illustrate the plight of these 400 to 500. For the purposes of this study, they will be called Cindy, Danny, Rita, and Mark.

Cindy is a shy, black seventh grader who is average size for her age. She is the youngest of five children in a home with a working mother and no

father. She has an older sister who had an illegitimate child when she was an eighth grader. Although she attended only one elementary school, she progressed slowly, but never repeated a grade. Her tests scores show she is in the third stanine in reading and the second stanine in math and that she has an IQ of 89. Her attendance is good and she is not a discipline problem. Her mother is very supportive of schools.

Danny is a defiant, belligerent, white seventh grader who is below average size for his age. He is the older of two boys in a home of a mother and a chronically unemployed father. His father and other relatives have spent time in jail. He has made little progress in the two elementary schools he attended, but he never repeated a grade. His tests scores show he is in the third stanine in reading and in the third stanine in math and that he has an IQ of 91. He is chronically absent and tardy. In the first semester of the seventh grade he was suspended five times and has been denied busing privileges permanently. His mother would like for him to succeed in school.

Rita is a white eighth grader who is physically mature for her age. She is the second of three children in a home with a mother and a permanently, disabled step-father. She has made little progress in the four elementary schools she attended and repeated the first grade. In the seventh grade she failed three of the four required, major subjects. Her tests scores show she is in the first stanine in reading and in the second stanine in math and that she has an IQ of 81. She is chronically absent and tardy. In the first semester of the eighth grade she was suspended three times. Her mother and step-father have little formal education, but would like for her to continue going to school.

Mark is a cheerful, black eighth grader who is above average size for his age. He is the older of two children in a home of a working mother and a

working father. He has made little progress in the two elementary schools he attended and repeated the fourth grade. In the seventh grade he failed two of the four required, major subjects. His tests scores show he is in the third stanine in reading and in the second stanine in math and that he has an IQ of 92. His attendance is good and he is not a discipline problem. His mother and father are both very supportive of school.

Present Alternative Programs

At the present time Decatur has several alternative programs in existence for middle-school students. Some of them are within the middle schools, some are outside the middle schools, and one is part of the judicial system.

For example, Mound Middle School has an experimental section of students that follows its own unique schedule of classes (see Appendixes C and D). Another middle school, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, has an Interdisciplinary Program for advanced students. All five of the middle schools in Decatur have a Title I reading program and a tutorial math program. Another program common to four of the five middle schools is the upgrading of older seventh graders into the eighth grade at the end of the first semester.

There are also alternative programs for middle school students outside the middle schools. These include a Secondary Adjustment Program (see Appendix E) for serious disciplinary problems, a Home Study Program (see Appendix F) for disabled students and serious disciplinary problems, and a program for pregnant girls (see Appendix G).

The program under the auspices of the judicial system is the Day Probation Program for adjudicated students. With this program students that get into trouble with the law and that present discipline problems in the schools are assigned to the Day Probation Center (see Appendix H).

Proposed Alternative Program

Middle-School Alternative Program (MAP)

In light of the afore mentioned needs, this writer would like to propose that Decatur, Illinois, District 61 create a middle school that would stress basic skills and exploration of careers. This school would serve as an alternative to the traditional middle schools and could be created by designating one of the current middle schools as the MAP School.

It would not be intended that the MAP School replace the regular school program which is recognized as the most desirable educational program for most students. Rather, it would offer a viable alternative for the potential school dropout. The MAP School would not be a terminal school, but a transitional one geared to successful integration of students back into the traditional high schools that have a larger selection of courses than the traditional middle schools.

It should be recognized that many students would not be able to make the transition back into a traditional high school. With these students the MAP School would strive to develop social, homemaking, and vocational adequacy that would prepare them for adulthood.

The stress in the MAP School, therefore, would be on individualization of program by emphasizing the students' strengths and aptitudes, remediation of behavioral disorders, and developing social, homemaking, and vocational skills. In general, individual counseling, group interaction, and where possible, the cooperative work training programs would be utilized in the educational process for each student.

The MAP School could serve as a central location for many of the small alternative programs currently in operation. This would make for more efficiency

and a greater concentration of effort on the problems. It might also, in time, eliminate the need for some of the programs.

Proposed Goals And Objectives

The broad goals of the MAP School would be to:

1. Improve the social, academic, homemaking, and vocational skills of the students
2. Improve the attitudes of the students toward school, other people, and life in general
3. Encourage the retention of students who might otherwise become drop-outs
4. Reduce the causes of discipline problems, absenteeism, and tardies to school
5. Reduce the number of suspensions from school
6. Increase opportunities for students to manage their own learning experiences
7. Enable students to explore new ways of gaining knowledge
8. Allow teachers to use creative and innovative techniques to teach students
9. Help students solve personal problems that may directly or indirectly interfere with their ability and desire to learn
10. Help students set and work toward attainable goals
11. Help students become aware of their community resources
12. Help students become responsible, tax-paying citizens.

Proposed Curriculum For The MAP School

Since the reason for proposing an alternative school stressing basic skills and exploration of careers was the large number of students needing this type of formal education, the curriculum then would reflect this special emphasis.

The curriculum in the traditional middle schools in Decatur consists of five hours per week of English, math, science, and social studies, and two or three hours per week of home economics, industrial arts, physical education, art, music, band or orchestra.

There is no reason why all of these courses could not be offered in the MAP School. Of course, they would have to be modified to meet the unique abilities and limitations of the students.

One way the above courses could be offered in a six-hour day and still stress basic skills and career exploration is as follows:

1. 1½ hours per day of reading skills, English, and social studies totally integrated
2. 1½ hours per day of math and science totally integrated
3. 5 hours per week of physical education, art, and music or band
4. 2 hours per day of home economics or industrial arts.

This type of program would offer sufficient time for developing basic, homemaking and vocational skills. There would be no need to provide study halls as all work would be done in class. The two-hour block of time provided for home economics or industrial arts would also enable the school to utilize the learning opportunities in the community.

One advantage of alternative schools is that they are a fertile ground for curricular experimentation. Indeed, the biggest limitation would be the creativeness of the staff itself. No curriculum would be developed without the total involvement of the entire staff and also the students themselves.

Staffing The Proposed MAP School

If, as proposed, one of the current middle schools would be designated as the MAP School, then enough teachers to staff it would already be present

in the school district. In addition to these staff members, the teachers and para professionals who would no longer be needed in the traditional middle schools would be transferred to the MAP School. These would be the teachers and aides who are involved with the Title I reading and tutorial math programs. Some of the other middle support personnel, such as guidance counselors, social workers, and speech correctionists, would also be relocated in the MAP School. All of these would help to reduce the pupil/teacher ratio.

The biggest problem concerning staffing the MAP School would be to find teachers who would be effective with this type of student. The characteristics of effective teachers are discussed in the preceeding literature review.

Selecting Students

Any middle-school-age student in Decatur would be allowed to attend the MAP School, but students for which the school would be intended would be encouraged to attend. The process of encouraging students to attend would be one that would involve students, teachers, parents, administrators and other support personnel.

Removing the remedial programs from the traditional middle schools would greatly facilitate this process. In some disciplinary situations students might also be placed into the MAP School. It would be the responsibility of everyone concerned, however, to make the MAP School a desirable place to be and not just a dumping grounds for students that have not succeeded in traditional schools.

Financing The Proposed MAP School

The proposed MAP School would not increase any operating costs, with the possible exception of transportation, and would provide more revenue for District 61 from the State School Fund since fewer days would be lost because of absenteeism and suspensions. The district would realize a cost benefit by

having all the current small programs centralized for greater efficiency. The district would also benefit by having many potential tax users being turned into taxpayers.

Operating The Proposed MAP School

The operation of the MAP School would not only be unique in many respects, it would also be very interesting and challenging.

In matters relating to instructional techniques, provisions would have to be made for teaching the students in small groups and for using individualized instruction. Making these provisions would also require that teachers be given adequate time for planning, developing, and evaluating learning activities and materials and student progress.

Students who are behind academically are traditionally behind in social development and seldom get involved in school activities and functions. Opportunities would need to be provided, then, for student involvement in extracurricular activities, social functions, and school governance.

In the MAP School, as in any school, maintaining good discipline would be of prime importance. Many teachers and administrators would shudder at the thought of having a building full of students with a history of low academic achievement, but most discipline problems with this type of student are the result of frustrations from being in situations with which they are unable to cope. It would be necessary then to operate the MAP School in an environment as free of frustration as possible. Individualized instruction, small group work, and involvement of students in all phases of the operation of the school would be the best approach to preventing and solving this problem. No one should be so naive as to assume that the removal of frustration in students would occur instantaneously and, therefore, adequate disciplinary procedures, but ones

no different than for traditional schools, would have to be provided.

In order for the MAP School to operate efficiently and effectively, it would be necessary to have an administrator who would be inspirational, intuitive, patient, foresighted, tolerant, persuasive, knowledgeable, emphatic, aggressive, adequate, confident, creative, and tireless.

Evaluation

In the opinion of this writer, letter grades are by far the most widely understood system of reporting pupil progress in school to both students and parents. Letter grades, however, would have little meaning in a school full of students who are all at least two grades behind in reading and math skills. Another system of reporting pupil progress would have to be developed. One way of solving this problem would be to let the teachers, students, and parents work out a method of reporting progress that would be mutually agreeable to everyone concerned. The evaluation should be as individualized as the instruction.

The evaluation of the MAP School as a whole would be based upon the objectives that were set forth earlier. The success of fulfilling these objectives would be determined by measurements established by the MAP School personnel and approved by the school board.

IV. APPENDIXES

Appendix A

SRA Achievement - Form E
7th Grade -- May, 1975

Decatur, Illinois, District 61

School	Read. Comp.	Read. Vocab.	Total Read.	Gram. Usage	Spell.	Total Lang.	Math Conc.	Math Comp.	Total Math	Social Studies	Science	Use of Sources
Grade Equivalent of Mean												
Jefferson	7.3	6.9	7.2	7.1	6.9	6.9	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	7.1	6.7
Johns Hill	7.7	7.1	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.4	7.2	7.1	7.2	7.9	7.5	7.5
Mound	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.3	7.6	7.4	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.5	7.4	7.1
Roosevelt	7.3	6.9	7.3	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.5	7.1	7.1
Woodrow Wilson	7.5	7.1	7.4	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.7	7.5	7.3
City	7.5	7.1	7.3	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.5	7.2	7.1
National Percentile of Mean												
Jefferson	44	38	40	40	38	37	38	41	39	39	40	34
Johns Hill	49	40	45	48	44	46	42	38	41	50	48	45
Mound	44	40	42	45	46	46	42	41	41	45	45	39
Roosevelt	44	38	42	43	41	40	42	41	39	45	40	39
Woodrow Wilson	46	40	44	45	44	43	38	38	38	47	48	42
City	46	40	42	45	44	41	42	41	39	45	42	39
Local Percentile of Mean												
Jefferson	45	40	44	44	45	43	47	53	48	41	47	45
Johns Hill	51	43	51	51	51	53	51	49	51	48	56	53
Mound	45	43	47	49	54	53	51	53	51	46	49	51
Roosevelt	45	40	47	46	47	46	51	53	48	46	49	45
Woodrow Wilson	48	43	49	49	51	46	47	49	47	48	52	53
City	48	43	47	49	51	47	51	53	48	46	52	48

Appendix B

SRA Achievement - Form E
8th Grade -- May, 1975

Decatur, Illinois, District 61

School	Read. Comp.	Read. Vocab.	Total Read.	Gram. Usage	Spell.	Total Lang.	Math Conc.	Math Comp.	Total Math	Social Studies	Science	Use of Sources
Grade Equivalent of Mean												
Jefferson	8.1	8.2	8.2	7.5	7.6	7.7	8.4	8.3	8.4	8.1	8.3	7.5
Johns Hill	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.6	9.1	8.8	8.9	9.1	9.1	8.6	9.1	8.1
Mound	7.6	8.8	8.2	7.8	9.7	8.7	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.5	7.7
Roosevelt	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.3	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.5	7.7
Woodrow Wilson	8.9	8.8	8.9	8.9	9.1	8.9	9.4	8.3	8.7	8.8	9.1	8.7
City	8.2	8.5	8.3	8.1	8.6	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.4	8.2	8.8	7.9
National Percentile of Mean												
Jefferson	40	41	41	37	34	36	44	44	45	39	41	33
Johns Hill	46	44	46	49	51	51	49	52	52	47	52	42
Mound	34	47	41	40	59	49	39	41	41	39	44	36
Roosevelt	40	38	40	43	42	42	39	41	41	39	44	36
Woodrow Wilson	52	47	51	52	51	53	53	44	48	49	52	49
City	43	44	43	43	47	45	44	44	45	42	48	39
Local Percentile of Mean												
Jefferson	45	43	46	40	47	39	47	48	49	47	44	36
Johns Hill	50	46	49	51	52	53	52	56	56	54	53	44
Mound	41	49	46	43	60	51	43	45	45	47	47	39
Roosevelt	45	40	44	45	44	44	43	45	45	47	47	39
Woodrow Wilson	55	49	53	54	52	55	58	48	52	56	53	51
City	48	46	47	45	48	48	47	48	49	49	50	41

Appendix C

Schedule of a Regular Section of Students at Mound Middle School in Decatur, Illinois, District 61

SECTION 7-1 HOMEROOM 111 Mrs. Libert	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 8:30 - 9:30	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111
2 9:35-10:30	Science 212	Science 212	Science 212	Science 212	Science 212
3 10:35-11:30	P.E. 301	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 208	P.E. 301	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 208	Orchestra 308 Study 302
4A 11:35-12:00	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
4B 12:05-12:30	English 102	English 102	English 102	English 102	English 102
4C 12:35-1:00	English 102	English 102	English 102	English 102	English 102
5 1:05 - 2:00	Math 101	Math 101	Math 101	Math 101	Math 101
6 2:05 - 3:00	Band 308 Study 102 Music 205 (Orch. Members)	Orch. 308 Music 205 (Band Members)	Band 308 Study 102 Music 205 (Orch. Members)	Orch. 308 Music 205 (Band Members)	Band 308 Study 112

Appendix D

Schedule of an Experimental Section of Students at Mound Middle School in Decatur, Illinois, District 61

SECTION 7-11 HOMEROOM 209 Mrs. Hantel	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 8:30-9:30	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107
2 9:35-10:30	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 206	P.E. 301	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 206	P.E. 301	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 206
3 10:35-11:30	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111	Social Studies 111
4A 11:35-12:00	English 111	English 111	English 111	English 111	English 111
4B 12:05-12:30	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
4C 12:35-1:00	English IMC	English IMC	English IMC	English IMC	English IMC
5 1:05-2:00	Art 204	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 206	Art 204	Ind.Arts 302 Home Ec. 206	Art 204
6 2:05-3:00	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107	Reading 207 Math 107

Appendix E

MACON-PIATT SPECIAL EDUCATION SECONDARY ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

Staff: 4 teachers (one acting as a supervisor)

4 aides

support from a school Psychologist, Attendance Officers, Title I and a Social Worker

The Social Worker:

Works with each teacher.

Attends all staffings.

Helps establish a workable, total program for each student.

Counsel individual students.

Make home visits, counsel parents, and compiles a family history.

Serves as a "reward" for students.

Follow up with the student and family after return to regular classes.

Teacher-Coordinator:

Plans and leads orientation of new teachers and aides in the fall.

Attends all staffings.

Works with the teacher and social worker to develop individual programs for each student.

Calls and leads department meetings as necessary.

Informs high school teachers of vocational opportunities available to students.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Re-shape behaviors that contributed to the student's enrollment in the Secondary Adjustment Program.

2. Provide the student with a challenging educational program at his level.
3. Provide opportunities for appropriate social interaction among students and staff.
4. Prepare the student to re-enter his regular attendance center.
5. Acquaint the student with the world of work plus educational and vocational opportunities beyond high school.
6. Guide the students toward appropriate recreational activities.
7. Provide whenever possible insight into the cause of the behaviors that contributed to the student's enrollment into Secondary Adjustment Program and offer findings to appropriate attendance center.
8. Hold parent meetings.
9. Follow progress of those students who are re-integrated to their attendance center.
10. Devote a short period of time each day to teaching self-disciplinary techniques.
11. Include school psychologist and/or social worker with various sessions dealing with understanding others and various other subjects.

REFERRAL PROCEDURES

1. Each Middle School and High School should exhaust all means at their disposal of solving the student's problems within the school setting.
2. When it is felt that the school problems involving the student are too intense to be solved at the regular attendance center, the school administration should refer the case to the Director of Secondary Schools.
3. The Director of Secondary Schools will discuss the matter with the staff of the respective school and call the student and his parents to his office for a conference. This will be followed by another conference with the initiating school.

4. At this conference, the Director of Secondary Schools will determine whether the student should re-enter school under specified conditions or whether alternative placement is necessary.
5. The Director of Secondary Schools will review with the parents the various alternative placements including:

   The Secondary Adjustment Program

   The Day Probation Center

   Home Study

   Residential Placement

   Webster-Cantrell Program (Residents only)

6. If the Secondary Adjustment Program seems most appropriate, the Director of Secondary Schools will refer the student to the Assistant Director of Special Education for possible placement.
7. Special Education will set up a staffing with the school to determine if they are able to provide a program to meet the specific needs of the student.
8. If placement in the Secondary Adjustment Program is the concensus of the staffing, Special Education will schedule a conference with the parents and student to fully explain the program and the expectations.
9. If it is decided at the staffing that placement in this program is not appropriate, the student will be referred back to the Director of Secondary Education with the reasons given for not placing the student.
10. If a student enrolled in the Secondary Adjustment Program demonstrates no progress and does not cooperate with the staff and follow the program rules, a re-staffing should be held to consider alternative placement or expulsion.

Appendix F

HOME AND HOSPITAL PROGRAM

The Macon-Piatt Special Education District handles the Home and Hospital Program for Decatur District #61. It consists of instructional services provided by qualified teachers to a student in his home or in a hospital.

Home and/or hospital services may begin as soon as eligibility has been established and the student's physical and mental health allow. Any student whose health or physical impairment, in the opinion of a licensed medical examiner, will cause him to be absent from school two consecutive weeks, may qualify if school personnel determine that he can educationally benefit from such a program. Such a program may also be determined to be the most appropriate and effective for other students as determined by a case study and a multidisciplinary staff conference.

Such instruction shall be scheduled on days when school is regularly in session. It may be provided during the summer to complete the preceding year's educational program. Usually this instruction consists of daily teaching of one hour on the elementary level, one and one half hours on the middle school level, and two hours per day on the high school level.

The Special Education Office should be contacted when it is anticipated that a student will be out of school two weeks or longer. The form for the doctor's statement will be taken to him by the parents and once received by the Special Education Office, a teacher will be assigned. The teacher will make contact with the student's attendance center to secure his program and pick up books and other materials. She will keep in contact with the school to keep the child up with his class. She will also make contact with the home to establish a suitable schedule for the instruction. A quiet place should

be provided by the home for the instruction and there must be an adult present in the home while the program is in progress.

The Special Education Office will advise the school when the student is to be dropped from their enrollment to Home Study. When the student receives a release (note from doctor) to return to school the Special Education Office will advise the school of the date the student should be re-enrolled. Students can not be re-admitted to regular school without being released from Home Study by the Special Education Office.

Appendix G

SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED
(Type A - Pregnant Girls)

I. Eligibility

A. The girl must be certified pregnant by a physician, giving the date of confinement.

B. The girl must be under 21 years of age and in grades 7-12.

C. The girl must be no more than 4 months from confinement upon entrance into the program.

D. The girl is eligible whether wed or un-wed.

II. Admission

A. Resident of the Decatur School District #61. The girl is directed to the Dean of Girls at her respective junior or senior high school as soon as she knows she is pregnant and is desirous of alternate placement. The following procedures are followed in preparation for entrance to the program as soon as possible.

1. The Referral Form - Type A - Socially Maladjusted (Pregnant Girls) is completed by the Dean of Girls. A copy of the permanent record card is attached and sent to the Director of Special Education, Public School Office.

2. The forms are then referred to the supervisor of the maladjusted program. He will call the Dean of Girls if they need more information.

3. The school should collect all textbooks when the girl leaves her regular school four months before confinement.

4. The supervisor of the program will consult with building principal, or his representative, to decide what classes are

available for the girl in his program, and what substitutions might be made if necessary.

5. The supervisor will order books from the Dean of the building.
6. Upon entrance into the program, the attendance will be handled by the supervisor.

B. Non-Resident of the Decatur School District.

1. Non-resident students will be considered only when there are available facilities and teachers.
2. Service is given to children from outside District #61 upon receipt of a letter from the Superintendent stating that his district will pay tuition costs to District #61. Arrangements for tuition charges are made with the Director of Special Education. Tuition charges will be billed at the end of the school year when complete costs for the program are determined. They will be billed for the difference between costs and state reimbursement on a weekly basis.
3. If the girl is living in the Decatur School District, but her parents or husband are not legal residents, arrangements must be made with the Director's office to establish either guardianship for the girl or responsibility for tuition by the home district.
4. Arrangements for transportation are made either by the home district or the girl's parents or husband.
5. Arrangements will be made with the home district superintendent by the supervisor for classes which will be transferable to the home district.

6. Each girl will be responsible to pay the regular textbook rental for that grade level. This will be paid at the first evening class.

7. After meeting the above requirements the same procedures for entrance are followed as listed above for residents of the school district #61.

III. On Going Program

A. Classes offered will be the same as those the girl was taking in her home school as long as facilities and staff of teachers permit.

B. The girls will meet for six hous per week at the Area Vocational Center from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for the duration of the school year.

C. The girls will be assigned to classes and teachers on an individual basis by the supervisor of the program. This will be done at the Center.

D. Pre-natal classes are offered to the girls as regular part of the program.

IV. Evaluation

A. Pupil Evaluation.

1. Letter grades shall be the same as in the regular school program.

2. Grade reports will be made on the same forms as for home study. One copy will be sent to the home school, one to the Director's office, and one will be given to the girl.

3. Since each girl is working on an individual basis, all grades will be given accordingly.

4. Grades will be sent out at the semester, at the completion of a course, or upon dismissal from the program.

B. Teacher Evaluation.

1. The supervisor of the program is responsible for conferring with the teachers regarding ways of improving the classroom program for the girls.

2. The supervisor is under the direct supervision of the Director of Special Education.

C. Program Evaluation.

1. The Director of Special Education is in charge of the program and has the direct responsibility for working with the teachers and supervisor on problems of curriculum, instruction, over-all policies and procedures.

2. Coordinators of special areas, such as music, art, library, health and safety are on an "on call" basis to help the teachers if necessary.

V. Dismissal

A. A girl is dismissed from the program for the following reasons:

1. Recommendation by physician - At any time the designated physician feels that the child is physically able to return to the normal classroom situation, a conference is held between the supervisor, social worker, principal and the teacher.

2. Recommendation of supervisor - If, as the result of a staffing, it seems that a girl is not making sufficient progress, is emotionally unstable, or is ready to return to school, it may be decided that the child should be dismissed from the special program. It is suggested that the following persons be included in such a staffing: The Director, supervisor, teachers, and principal, or his representative from the regular building.

VI. Transportation

A. No transportation is provided by School District #61.

VII. Textbook Rental (See II, B, 6)

VIII. Requisitions

A. All textbooks are ordered from the regular school buildings by the Supervisor and transferred to the Type A Program. For "out of district" students, books are ordered from whichever building in District #61 has a supply of texts.

B. Special equipment including instructional aids and materials required by the girls are secured by requisition through the Director's office.

Appendix H

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: MACON COUNTY DAY PROBATION AND EDUCATION SERVICES *
by Wayne Cobb, Program Director, August 15, 1973.

I. Introduction

As briefly as possible I want to describe the main purpose of the Day Probation Program, the services provided and who is to receive those services. I will also describe some of the background leading to the organization of the program. Finally, I will answer some of the questions which are most frequently asked of me. I hope that this discussion of the program's background and of the services available will help better your understanding of what Macon County Day Probation and Education Services is all about.

II. Background

Several facts have motivated the efforts to expand and improve the services offered to adolescents with emotional and conduct problems. 1) Macon County, over the last few years, has had one of the highest rates of juveniles committed to the Department of Corrections of any county in Central Illinois. 2) The steadily increasing costs of placing problemed youth coming through the court system are now in excess of $360,000.00 per year. This is much more than is spent by other counties of Macon's size. 3) Most informed observers regard the juvenile detention facilities as inadequate at best. 4) Macon County has a very high drop-out rate (over 20%) and in the past five

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* This program is funded by a grant through the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission, Grant #797, May 25, 1973. Additional funds are provided by Macon County and Webster and Cantrell Halls.

years has had the highest rate of teen-age unwed mothers in Central Illinois. These and other facts have spurred efforts to develop services designed to deal with these problems. The Day Probation Program has been one result of this work.

There have been many people involved in the development of the Day Probation Program. These concerned individuals have approached the area of juvenile problems from diverse points of view. Members of the County Board of Supervisors, juvenile judges and their juvenile probation staffs, the United Way, public school personnel, mental health staff, and individuals associated with the group homes in Macon County, Webster and Cantrell Halls, have all been instrumental in the development of a comprehensive plan for dealing with the problems of delinquent adolescents. While the individuals involved are too numerous to mention, one effort bears special mention. During the past year the Boards of Directors of Webster Hall for Girls and Cantrell Hall for Boys completed an agreement which committed the respective Boards and their professional staffs to cooperate in the development of a comprehensive plan for providing services for delinquent adolescents in Decatur and Macon County. A part of this comprehensive plan was the provision for a Day Probation Program to serve adjudicated adolescents in Macon County. With this objective in mind, representatives of the joint Webster-Cantrell Committee, the Macon County Board and the Department of Mental Health submitted a grant requesting funding for a Day Probation Program to the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission (I.L.E.C.) during the early spring of 1973. After several revisions, the grant was finally approved on May 25, 1973, with the program scheduled to begin July 1, 1973.

III. Our Services and Our Clients

The Day Probation grant approved by I.L.E.C. provided for the development of the following organization. Overall responsibility for the operation of the program is assigned to a Board of Directors. This Board of Directors presently has ten members. Two members are appointed by the Macon County Board of Supervisors, two by the Board of Directors of Webster Hall, two by the Board of Directors of Cantrell Hall, and one each by the Piatt, Moultrie, DeWitt, and Shelby County Boards. Serving in an advisory capacity to the Board and the Director is a Professional Advisory Committee. Responsible to the Board for the day-to-day operations of the Day Probation Program is the Director and six staff. The staff consists of two Youth Counselors, a Vocational Counselor, and Evaluator, Secretary and a Bookkeeper. The job of the Day Probation staff is to help the adjudicated youngsters assigned to the program achieve a successful probation. Our clients are adolescents on probation and are attending the Day Probation Program as a rule of probation. These young people are assigned to us by the judges of the five counties in the CIRCLE sub-division of the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission: Macon, DeWitt, Piatt, Moultrie, and Shelby. The Day Probation Program, in a very real sense, is an extension of the probation programs in each of these five counties.

In providing these services, the Day Probation Program must work in cooperation with allied agencies. First and foremost the Day Probation Program must function as an integral part of the juvenile justice system. In addition, the Day Probation Program must act in conjunction with the various school systems in the CIRCLE area. It is a further goal of the

program that the Director and the Board continue to work with the Joint Committee of Webster and Cantrell Halls in continuing to develop the comprehensive services planned as a part of the Webster-Cantrell Joint Agreement. Other agencies with which Day Probation will cooperate are mental health agencies, both local and state, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Children and Family Services.

The services offered by the Day Probation Program are of two types. The first is educational. The second is counseling. As a part of the educational services, youngsters assigned to the Day Probation Program have available the services of two special educators assigned to the program by Decatur District #61. These educators help the youngsters overcome academic problems or classroom behavior problems. The objective is to return the youngsters to public school, if possible. The counseling services are provided by two Youth Counselors and one Vocational Counselor. The Youth Counselors help the youngsters in the program with personal/social problems and family living problems. As often as possible the youngsters stay at home where the problems usually are, and they and their families are helped to deal with their difficulties. The Vocational Counselor provides vocational evaluation and work-adjustment training. The counselor's main job is to teach the youngsters how to get jobs and how to keep them. The priority in the educational services is to get the child to finish school, if possible. The priority of the counseling services is to keep the child in the community and functioning as effectively as possible.

Admissions

According to the conditions described in the Illinois Law Enforcement

Commission Grant, the youngsters assigned to the program must meet certain criteria. The first criterion is that they must be adjudicated. The youngsters assigned to the program are assigned by a judge at a disposition hearing on the recommendation of the probation officer. A second criterion, which is a prohibitive condition, is that T.M.H youngsters may not be a part of the program. A third criterion which is also prohibitive, is that youngsters below the age of thirteen and who are also below grade seven may not attend the program. In general, the youngsters assigned to the program are of a pre-delinquent nature. They tend to be first and second offenders, and their offenses are usually not hard-core criminal.

IV. Program Objectives

The Day Probation Program has a number of specific objectives. These include: 1) to reduce the number of adolescents involved in the court system who are referred to services out-of-county or out-of-state, 2) to significantly reduce the high school drop-out rate of youngsters served, 3) to significantly reduce the rate of referrals to the Department of Corrections, 4) to improve the quality of family life for those youngsters remaining with their families, 5) to find adequate placements within Macon County for those youngsters for whom return to natural families is not feasible, and 6) to enable the youngsters to find different, more beneficial friends with whom to identify.

V. Frequent Questions

Q: Can non-adjudicated minors attend the program?

A: No

Q: Can youngsters from outside Macon County attend?

A: Yes, any youngster (who meets the other admission criteria) from

DeWitt, Piatt, Moultrie, or Shelby counties can attend the program.

Q: What about transportation for youngsters living outside Macon County?

A. The Day Probation Program does not have a transportation budget. The probation office will need to arrange for transportation. A limited number can also spend week nights at Webster or Cantrell Halls.

Q: Is there any charge?

A. For non-Macon County residents there is a tuition charge ($950.00 per year) due District #61. The home school districts may claim A.D.A. for these youngsters. Also, there is a $10.00 per day charge for those youngsters staying at Webster or Cantrell Halls.

Q: Will the probation office still maintain control over the youngster?

A: Definitely. Our job is to see the youngsters through a successful probation. The probation officer will be involved all along in this process.

Q: How many youngsters are you expecting to serve?

A: We expect to average between 20-25 youngsters using both counseling and educational services and 5-10 utilizing only the counseling services.

VI. Conclusion

I have explained the background of the Day Probation Program, its major purpose, the organization of the program and the services offered, who is eligible for the services offered, and answered some common questions. The Day Probation Program is an exciting attempt to provide comprehensive, community based and community supported services for problem

adolescents. Continued community support of the Day Probation Program will, to a large extent, depend upon how much our services can be effective and still cost less than do current efforts.