

Education
High School Curriculum
1993

4/1993

Nancy Pearce / Marty Hernandez

EDUCATION STUDY

I. STRUCTURING THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

1. WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY PURPOSES OF A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION?

The primary purpose of a public high school education is to create literate citizens who can be productive members of a democratic society. This education should be available to everyone.

2. WHAT ARE THE SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE THAT EVERY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SHOULD MASTER IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A DIPLOMA?

The skills and knowledge that every high school student should master are :

Basic skills (writing, reading, oral communication, basic computation)

Problems solving skills: (research, analysis and interpretation)

Liberal arts (humanities and fine arts, social and natural sciences, foreign languages)

Understanding of the political process

Positive attitude toward learning (curiosity, initiative, responsibility)

3. CURRICULUM CONTENT

There should be both a core curriculum and individualized programs of study for every high school student. The content of the educational program should be determined by professional educators with advisory input from the community representing a broad base of viewpoints and to include the following groups: parents, students, recent graduates, employers, and tax payers.

4. EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of a student's high school work should include qualitative as well as quantitative measures of mastery of skills and knowledge. Assessment of the student's mastery of the required skills and knowledge should be made by education professionals accountable to the community.

II. DEFINING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

5. WHAT DOES EDUCATIONAL EQUITY MEAN?

Educational equity includes the following:

- a. All students have equal access to all programs.
- b. All students must meet the same standards of performance but not necessarily

in the same time period.

c. All students have access to the same co-curricular programs.

6. Equity is an important goal for public education.

7. The following should be available in the Appleton Area School District to support district-wide equity:

a. busing (public transportation should be used whenever possible). User fees should be charged for any school bus service with waivers available for low-income students.

b. open enrollment when feasible. We advocate the establishment of a review board which would provide systematic and impartial consideration of all requests for boundary exceptions.

c. Cross registrations when feasible. We support the investigation of distance education as a possible means of accomplishing cross registration.

d. 3 comparable high schools.

3/16/93

Education Unit
Mtg

HIGH SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE APPLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSAL

average time
to complete
core courses is
2 yrs.

use of
portfolios
use of multi-
media +
technology

CORE

- Math
- Social Studies
- Communication Arts
- Science
- Application
 - Basic Life Skills
 - Technology
 - Physical Education

ELECTIVES

Lawrence University
UW-Fox Valley
Fox Valley Technical College

HOUSES

Life Skills	Humanities	Science/ Technology
Social Studies Communication Arts	Foreign Language Fine Arts	Math Sciences

Fox Valley Technical College

APPRENTICESHIPS (YOUTH)
Necessary Classes From Other Houses
Community

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT

assessment

"Tech Prep"

THE COALITION OF ESSENTIAL SCHOOLS AND THE RE:LEARNING INITIATIVE

The coalition was formed in 1984 and is an association of school people and faculty at Brown University. Two hundred schools in twenty-three states were involved in the coalition by the middle of 1991. Members of the coalition agree on a set of nine principles as the foundation for a good school. They also believe that these principles must be applied with regard to the concerns and needs of the community within which the school is situated. They agree that no two good schools are identical, but that all share the following principles:

1. The school should focus on helping adolescents learn to use their minds well. Schools should not attempt to be "comprehensive" if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.
2. The school's goals should be simple: each student should master a number of essential skills and be competent in certain areas of knowledge. Although these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that students need, rather than by conventional "subjects." The aphorism "less is more" should dominate: curricular decisions are to be directed toward the students' attempt to gain mastery rather than by the teachers' effort to cover content.
3. The school's goals should apply to all students, but the means to these goals will vary as these students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group of adolescents.
4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. No teacher should have direct responsibility for more than eighty students; decisions about the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time, and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be placed in the hands of the principal and staff.
5. The governing metaphor of the school should be student as worker, rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher as deliverer of instructional services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.
6. Students embarking on secondary school studies are those who show competence in language and elementary mathematics. Students of traditional high school age who do not yet have appropriate levels of competence to start secondary school studies will be provided with intensive remedial work so that they can quickly meet those standards. The diploma should be awarded on a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation -- an Exhibition. This Exhibition by the student of his or her grasp of the central skills and knowledge of the school's program may be jointly administered by the faculty and higher authorities. Because the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of credits earned by time spent in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.
7. The tone of the school would explicitly and self-consciously stress the values of unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you, but I expect much of you"), of trust (unless it is abused), and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity, and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's students and teachers should be emphasized, and parents should be treated as essential collaborators.
8. The principal and teachers should perceive of themselves first as generalists (teachers and scholars in general education) and next as specialists (experts in a particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.
9. Administrative and budget targets should include substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per-pupil cost not more than 10 percent higher than that at traditional schools. Administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided for students in many traditional comprehensive secondary schools.

IDEAS EXPRESSED IN *HORACE'S SCHOOL*

Kids Differ

- There is no one best curriculum, one best way of learning, and one best rate at which all students learn.
- Traditional schools use extensive variety in courses and tracking as their primary means of dealing with difference. These methods ignore significant research on how people learn and tend to reinforce the idea that learning is only for some not all. The standard to be achieved is different for different kids. Instead, the standard to be achieved should be clear and expected of all. It is the means that should vary to accommodate difference.
- Accepting difference and teaching well implies that teachers are given the time and the means to get to know each student so they can tailor the methods of learning to the needs of the student.

The Purpose of School

- The central function of the school ought to be to teach all its students good intellectual habits--how to use knowledge and how to acquire more. Knowledge, facts, and details change. Many of the jobs of tomorrow do not exist today. All students need basic tools to help them deal with change and meet tomorrow's challenges. All students are capable of doing "serious" work and should be pushed to do so.

- Intellectual habits that should be at the core of the school's efforts:

The habit of **perspective**: Organizing an argument, read or heard or seen, into its various parts, and sorting out the major from the minor matters within it. Separating opinion from fact and appreciating the value of each.

The habit of **analysis**: Pondering each of these arguments in a reflective way, using such logical, mathematical, and artistic tools as may be required to render evidence. Knowing the limits as well as the importance of such analysis.

The habit of **imagination**: Being disposed to evolve one's own view of a matter, searching for both new and old patterns that serve well one's own and others' current and future purposes.

The habit of **empathy**: Sensing other reasonable views of a common predicament, respecting all, and honoring the most persuasive among them.

The habit of **communication**: Accepting the duty to explain the necessary in ways that are clear and respectful both to those hearing or seeing and to the ideas being communicated. Being a good listener.

The habit of **commitment**: Recognizing the need to act when action is called for; and stepping forward in response. Persisting, patiently, as the situation may require.

The habit of **humility**: Knowing one's rights, one's debts, and one's limitations, and those of others. Knowing what one knows and what one does not know. Being disposed and able to gain the needed knowledge, and having confidence to do so.

The habit of **joy**: Sensing the wonder and proportion in worthy things and responding to these delights.

The Standards

- Less is more. The development of habits takes time. Trying to be comprehensive with

regard to the content covered in the schools works against the development of good habits.

- The development of habits requires doing. The traditional school philosophy of teacher as provider of knowledge and students as recipients (and all that implies: contact-hours, time in school, lectures, multiple-choice tests) must be recast. Students should be viewed as workers pursuing the goal of intellectual habits and teachers are coaches, guiding and assisting students in the pursuit of those goals.

- Students in traditional schools are capable of doing more, taking more responsibility.

- Habits are expressed over time. Habits are expressed by doing. The achievement of intellectual habits must therefore be measured over time in a way that allows students to demonstrate their use of knowledge, not merely its acquisition.

The Community

- The community in which the school is located is a significant partner in the educational enterprise. We can seek common standards across schools, but must be sensitive to and address the needs and concerns of the particular community. The expression of the common standards in the context of this sensitivity implies that no two good schools will be alike.

A Possible Solution

- The student-teacher ratio must be significantly reduced if it is a priority that students are known well in order for them to receive appropriate instruction. Schools should be divided into smaller units or houses--a group of students and a team of teachers--that stays together over time. The teachers for each house would be drawn from mathematics/sciences, history and philosophy, the arts (including English and other languages), and include several generalists. In *Horace's School* houses consisted of 310 students and a team of 13 teachers.

- The school is no longer driven by contact-hours and courses. The principal and the teachers in each house are given control of scheduling. Chronological age is not used as a grouping mechanism. Students proceed at their own pace, some more quickly and some more slowly.

- Students demonstrate their achievement of the standards required for a diploma through portfolios and Exhibitions which allow them to demonstrate over time the achievement of intellectual habits. Disciplines are regrouped, for example sports falls under both math/science and the arts, and the school newspaper falls under English and contributes to the students' portfolios of accomplishments. Final Exhibitions may be given and judged by persons from outside the school.

- Preparatory Program: There must be provision for remedial work for students who have not mastered basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills. These students would not be admitted to the high school program until they demonstrated these competencies.

- Core Program for the Standard Diploma: Most students would be expected to complete the base degree program by the age of seventeen. Completion of the program denotes a level of accomplishment that would be acceptable for entrance into any good college.

- Advanced Diploma: Some students would opt to spend an additional one or two years doing advanced work that might include courses at area technical colleges, junior and four-year colleges, or area businesses. Successful completion of such work would culminate in an advanced diploma.

Education Study

In the first phase of the Education Study, the committee studied the overcrowding in the Appleton Area schools, particularly relating to the secondary level. The three proposals which were examined were year-round school, a third high school, and the concept of the "High School of the Future". In the November newsletter we stated: "After studying year-round education, we are convinced that no variation of this proposal can begin to address the severe overcrowding and still maintain the quality education upon which our community was built."

After eliminating the first proposal, the study has concentrated on the need for a new high school and the role which the "High School of the Future" could play in all three Appleton public high schools. With the passage of the referendum on February 16th, the prospective third high school became a reality, further narrowing our focus for the consensus units on March 16 and 17.

In studying the concept of the "High School of the Future", two major underlying issues arose. What is the role of a high school education and what is our local position on educational equity?

With regard to the first, should high school students be encouraged to focus their academic work on career options? This raises the issue of the varying developmental levels of high school students both personally and cognitively. Or should the goal of a high school be to create literate and informed students? And how should the curriculum be structured, whatever the role of high school education?

As to educational equity, our state position is as follows: "to promote equal educational opportunity for each child through an equitable state aids formula while retaining substantial program and personnel responsibilities in the local district." What does this mean at the local level?

Please join us either Tuesday night, March 16 or Wednesday morning, March 17 for a lively discussion of these questions.

Education Study Committee

Marti Hemwall, co-chair
Diane Barkmeier
Pam Daly
Diane Lynch
Ann Norman

Nancy Pourciau, co-chair
Linda Bjella
Mary Klasen
Michelle Missner

Family Leave Bill - 8 hrs. of leave/yr to attend school functions -
State proposed

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

I. Structuring the High School Curriculum

10 min.

1. What are the primary purposes of a public high school education? *To be good citizens etc.*

10 min.

2. What are the skills/knowledge that every high school student should master in order to be graduated? *Reading, writing, oral communication, basic math, humanities, citizenship, → Give students a core of skills so they have choices*

15 min.

3. Curriculum content

Should be flexible to respond to community + workplace

a. Should there be a single core curriculum or individualized programs of study or a combination of both for high school students?

b. What is the role, in either case, of students, parents, and the community with regard to the content of the curriculum? *input from parents + community*

15 min.

4. Evaluation process

a. What methods should be used to evaluate a student's high school work and determine whether she/he should be awarded a diploma?

b. What is the role of students, parents, and the community in that evaluation process? *school is ultimately responsible for granting diploma leave it to the professionals + accountability!*

II. Defining Educational Equity

15 min.

5. What does educational equity mean?

a) all students have equal access to all programs

b. all students have access to equal educational facilities

c. all students must meet the same standards of performance, but not necessarily in the same time period *creative teaching to accomplish goals*

d. all students have access to the same co-curricular programs *for special needs*

5 min.

6. Is equity in education an important goal for public education? *yes*

5 min.

7. Should the following be available to support district-wide equity?

a. busing - *public transportation when possible*

b. open enrollment - *already a policy - to be used practically*

c. cross registrations - *providing student can provide his own transportation + when feasible*

d. 3 identical schools - *comparable* *impossible to give* *possible*

Consensus
Appleton L.W.V. Education Study
1986

Objective: To study and come to consensus on the written recommendations of the Appleton Board of Education's first phase of the Five-Year Facilities Plan.

Consensus Questions

1. Does the League support the first phase of the Five-Year Facilities Plan?
(See attached outline).
 - A. There was a general acceptance of the Five-Year Facilities plan as stated.
 - B. There was strong support for each of the following referendum items:
 1. We felt the urgent need for a new Northwest-Side Elementary School to be built.
 - A. Increasing grade school population in that area.
 - B. Inadequacies of Twin Willows.
 2. There was strong support for the Appleton High School-West renovation and additions.
 - A. Title IX made a big impact on Physical Education area.
 1. Inadequate facilities.
 - B. Science area outdated.
 - C. Office lay-out inefficient.
 - D. West would be needed even if another High School would be built.
 - E. Substandard heating, electrical and plumbing.
 - F. Commons area cannot handle the increasing population.
 3. There was strong support for the Columbus Elementary School addition and renovation.
 - A. Lack of safety features.
 - B. Loss of school would hurt the neighborhood.
 - C. Lack of gymnasium and IMC space.

4. There was strong support for an addition to Badger Elementary School.

A. Projected increases of student population by city and county planners.

B. Lack of IMC and storage space.

C. Minority Views

- There were reservations about the championship gymnasium, the expansion of the commons area, and the renovation of present gym facilities. More emphasis should be placed on human resources (teachers) rather than facilities.

- There was concern over objections to boundary changes by North-Side parents.

D. There was strong consensus that enrollments are increasing rapidly enough to justify the projects proposed on the referendum.

E. There was strong consensus that the referendum is the best way to pay for the projects.

1. Bonding spreads out cost of projects over a longer period.

2. Fairness to taxpayers.

F. We strongly support the fact that maintenance items are not included in this referendum.

2. If the League does not support the first phase of the Five-Year Facilities Plan, what are the possible alternatives?

A. There was strong consensus that each of the alternatives (split-shifts, mobile classrooms and extensive leasing) would greatly diminish the quality of education and provide no long term solutions.

APPLETON SCHOOL DISTRICT; FACILITIES PLAN - PHASE I
REFERENDUM ITEMS

I. NEW NORTHWEST-SIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (cost:\$3.7 million)

- A. Identical school to Horizon
- B. 600 pupil capacity with ability to accomodate 750 with an addition
- C. To be located east of CTH-A on Capitol Drive (School District has option on this 10 acre land parcel)

II. RENOVATION AND ADDITION TO APPLETON HIGH SCHOOL-WEST
(cost: \$3.2 million)

- A. Addition of championship gymnasium (two additional physical ed. teaching stations)
- B. Expansion of Commons area and new guidance offices
- C. Renovation of present gym facilities
- D. Upgrading of electrical services, heating and plumbing
- E. Renovation of science labs
- F. Renovation of central offices

III. COLUMBUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: ADDITION AND RENOVATION
(cost: \$858,000)

- A. Separate structure adjacent to present building NE of school to house offices, IMC, and gymnasium (separate heating, plumbing, etc. would enable this addition to stand by itself in the event that the old building deteriorates)
- B. Fire prevention updating

IV. ADDITION TO BADGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (cost: \$250,000)

- A. Addition of four classrooms and storage area
- B. IMC will be expanded to accomodate increased enrollment

Appleton L.W.V. Education Study

1986

A. Does the League support the first phase of the five-year facilities plan?

1. Are each of the four referendum items needed at this time?

a. Construction of Northwest School (\$3.7 million)

b. Renovation of Appleton West High School (\$3.2 million)

c. Columbus addition (\$858,000)

d. Badger addition (\$250,000)

2. Do you think enrollments are increasing rapidly enough to justify the projects proposed on the referendum?

3. If the projects are needed at this time, is this referendum the best way to pay for the projects?

B. If the League does not support the first phase of the five-year facilities plan, what are the possible alternatives?

1. Leasing?

2. Twelve month school year?

3. Split shifts?

4. Mobile classrooms?

5. Other?

~ \$200/house \$50,000

if put into general budget instead of referendum

COPY

Gifted and Talented Education Consensus

Students

Students may be selected for the program through any combination of the following: peers, parents, teachers, self-identification and objective testing.

Program

The program should start in second grade and continue through high school.

Its goal should be to allow each child to develop his/her own individual potential to the utmost, leading to creative productive adults.

All schools at the same level (e.g. all elementary schools) should have similar offerings. All schools involved in a gifted program should have their own space and staff. A budget for materials should be established.

Staff

The director should have a graduate degree in gifted education and the staff members should have specialized training.

Extensive in-service training is essential and on-going training opportunities such as seminars and video-tapes must be available.

In 1985-6 Appleton's League of Women Voters studied programs for the gifted and talented, recommending to the school board that such a program be initiated here. We were pleased to see this occur the following school year and expanded this year. We thank you for your support of this educational program.

In our study we found that numerous criteria are used to identify gifted and talented students. Descriptions of these students vary as do the strategies for identifying them. Therefore, selecting participants in a program should be based on as multifaceted a system as possible. Input from peers, parents, teachers and self, with a tandem objective test for creativity, aptitude and academic ability are important criteria that need be considered with ALL students if possible.

Authorities agree on the fallibility of IQ and achievement tests. Achievement and IQ tests should not eliminate students from consideration in a gifted program, ~~certainly~~. Teachers need to be trained to identify gifted students using criteria other than school achievement and test scores. Parent input should be mandated and efforts toward more objective questions are necessary. Peer and self identification should be accepted as valid identification tools.

An ideal gifted and talented program would entail several stages, the first available to the classroom as a whole. Participation in the subsequent stages of the program would be determined by individual interests and abilities. This type of program allows for a certain amount of self-selection and a "revolving door" participation that admits children with specific areas of giftedness such as science, art, leadership, etc. Identification of participants would be a more natural process that would include all who were both interested and able.

Can we afford these changes in our identification process? Can we afford not to change? Do we want to help those gifted and talented students who are being "missed" by our present educational programs, or merely showcase those students who already excel?

If we are to find those students truly in need of our help it is essential we leave the eligibility pool as large as possible for as long as possible. The Appleton School District's APEX program must constantly guard against becoming elitist or discriminatory in its selection process.

Sam Murdoch