

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GUIDANCE DIRECTOR IN PROVIDING
FOR THE SUPERIOR STUDENT IN MONTANA'S TWENTY
LARGEST HIGH SCHOOLS

BY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Education degree
in the Department of Education
Montana State College
August, 1960

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In every school system there are students with superior academic abilities. These students deviate from the so-called normal students in their ability to comprehend basic academic skills at an accelerated rate. This skillful ability enables the superior student to forge ahead of the normal student. The awkward methods of acceleration characterized by today's schools do not allow the superior student to be fully challenged, as evidenced in the following statement by Lewis Terman:

The exceptionally bright student who is kept with his age group finds little to challenge his intelligence and all too often develops habits of laziness. . . .¹

In fact the very nature of our democratic society has retarded the intellectual growth of the superior student. It has been due to the nature of the democratic educational system that identical opportunity has been confused with equal opportunity. Identical opportunity for the superior student to learn at the same rate as the normal student is certainly not equal opportunity for the superior student. This point was so ably presented by John Dewey:

If democracy has a moral and ideal meaning, it is that a social return be demanded from all and that opportunity for development of distinctive capacities be afforded to all.²

¹Terman, L., The Discovery and Encouragement of Exceptional Talent, Number 14, p. 4.

²Dewey, J., Democracy and Education, p. 142.

The leadership in identification and acceleration of the superior student through guidance and counseling rests with those professionally trained in this field. It is the responsibility of the teachers in general, and the guidance personnel in particular, to insure that identity and equality are not confused. That this responsibility has not been met has been brought out by Magary and Eichorn¹ who have shown that the two major abuses in the educational system have been the failure to identify the gifted and the failure to provide the kind of counseling service when they are identified that is so badly needed in high schools and colleges. The realization that the nature of these inadequacies thwarted the superior student in our high schools today inspired the writing of this paper.

The Problem

The methods of identifying and accelerating the superior student are not peculiar to any particular area. It is, however, the uniqueness of population dispersion, geographical locations, and economic variances blended together that create unusual problems in identifying and accelerating the gifted in Montana. The variety of problems of the gifted prompted the study of "The Responsibility of the Guidance Director in Providing for the Superior Student in Montana's Twenty Largest High Schools."

¹Magary, J., and Eichorn, J., The Exceptional Child, p. 494.

Procedures

In order to determine what guidance and counseling services are doing for the superior student in Montana, the following procedures were used:

1. A survey of current literature was made to determine general practices being employed by guidance personnel in aiding the superior student.
2. A questionnaire was sent to a stratified sample of Montana high schools. Class A and AA high schools were selected.

Limitation of the Study

Inasmuch as this investigation was not started until May, it was felt that too great a burden would be placed upon school officials in smaller schools that do not have a regular guidance program to expect them to complete a questionnaire in the limited time. Furthermore, it was felt that a sampling of the larger schools with established guidance programs would indicate what was being done for the gifted child.

Definition of Terms

To aid the reader in understanding terms that are often misused, a list of these terms is provided for clarity.

A gifted and superior child is defined as one whose ability, as indicated by an intelligence test, is represented by an I.Q. of 120

or above.

Acceleration is defined as advancement in mental growth of achievement beyond the average for the individual's chronological age; also it is the term used for the passing of a child beyond his normal grade placement.

Homogeneous grouping results in a much higher degree of similarity among members in respect to a given trait or complex or traits than is found in random sampling.

Heterogeneous grouping refers to a situation in which the members have more dissimilar traits than would be expected by chance.

Placement service is defined as a function of the school designed to find employment for children, and the act of placing a child in the school grade that seems best adapted to his needs.

Follow-up service is a plan by which the experiences of young people who have left school are investigated or surveyed, either for the purpose of assisting them in further adjustment or for securing facts to improve the plan of guidance for those still in school.

Counseling service is defined as the medium, generally interviewing, through which the several guidance activities are brought to bear upon the individual pupil.

Guidance service includes all the component services used in aiding a student to better understand himself and fulfill his needs, including testing, placement, follow-up, and counseling.

The initial step in this investigation involved a comprehensive review of current literature regarding the history of the superior

child in American schools and the methods currently used by guidance personnel to aid the superior student. The results of this review are presented in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This is only to say what many have said before-
There is now a critical need for highly trained people-
There are now thousands of youth with superior ability who
are not completing their high school education-
This is a tragic waste, and
Perhaps, in retrospect, this will have been the time when
the schools made their most important contribution to the
preservation of our culture.

C. E. Bish

In the survey of current literature concerning the superior child, great variances among the definitions were found. Generally speaking, most writers refer to the superior child as the "gifted" child. "Gifted" in the broadest sense includes those who have high intelligence and special abilities. For this paper, only those with high intelligence were considered. Too, the terms "gifted" and "superior" will be used interchangeably and will refer to those students possessing an I.Q. of 120 or more.

The purposes of the review of literature were to become acquainted with the history of the recognition of the superior child and to discover what has been done for the gifted child in American schools. It was found that provisions for the gifted child in American schools included identification, acceleration, counseling, and follow-up studies. A brief history of the gifted child is reported in the first part of this chapter.

A Brief History of the Recognition of the Superior Child

The first recorded attempts to identify the gifted child appeared in early Greek literature. Plato¹, more than 2300 years ago, speculated upon ways of locating the gifted so they could be developed into leaders for the Greek democracy. Later the Romans imitated the Greeks in attempting to locate the gifted for military purposes. Following the collapse of the Roman empire, in the fifth century A.D., little was done for the general education of man or for the education of the gifted.

The discovery of new lands and the emergence of nationalism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century gave new light to education in general, and to the gifted in particular. With a renewal of interest in the development of the gifted, there developed three periods in American education. The three periods in order were the "flexible promotion" era, beginning in the 1860's, the "rapid-advancement classes" era, commencing with the 1900's, and the era of "enrichment", starting in the 1920's.

The first attempt to aid the gifted was during the "flexible promotion" era. The "flexible promotion" era constituted accelerating the gifted by allowing them to skip grades. The introduction of this method in American schools was reported by Sumpton, Norris, and Terman:

The earliest attempt to provide for the gifted children

¹Sumpton, M., Norris, D., and Terman, L., "Special Education For The Gifted", National Society For Study Of Education, 49th Yearbook, p. 259.

in the public schools of the United States was probably that of William T. Harris in St. Louis, Missouri, about 1867. His effort consisted largely on introducing greater flexibility into the promotion system, thus allowing gifted children to accelerate their pace rather than remaining in the "lock-step" program.¹

During the present century the "rapid-advancement classes" era was instituted. This was another attempt in recognizing the gifted child as such, according to Goddard;

During this second period the children were picked out from their regular grades and placed in special classes, where they completed two years' work in one year. . . .²

The third period was the period of "enrichment" and started in Cleveland about 1920. The "enrichment period" forced attention upon the need for new methods for a new problem, not just adaptation of old methods to a new problem. The necessity for this change in philosophy was clearly expressed by Goddard:

Both the "flexible promotion" and the "rapid-advancement" classes were merely attempts to adjust the machinery of the school to fit the child who, because of his different type of mind, was becoming a disturbing problem.³

It was the third period, the period of "enrichment", that emphasized the new look in education for the gifted. With this in mind, the current literature was examined to determine what provisions were being

¹Ibid., p. 260.

²Goddard, H., School Training of Gifted Children, p. 1.

³Ibid., p. 2.

made for the gifted.

Provisions For Aiding The Superior Student in American Schools

A major problem facing American schools is what provisions should be made for the gifted student. The problem is actually four-fold, consisting of identification, acceleration, counseling, and a follow-up program. Although each of these problems is interrelated for purposes of clarity, each will be discussed separately. Inasmuch as one must first identify the subject before one can accelerate or counsel him, identification of the superior child will be discussed first.

Identification. Standardized tests used with good common sense and coupled with objective observations are a good source of identifying most of the gifted. Support for this theory was brought out by Bish in the statement:

Practical methods of identifying high-ability high school students tend to combine the two logical extremes of simple nomination by teachers and a battery of objective tests.¹

Some abilities are best identified by use of a battery of objective tests; others can be discovered by observation; and still others by a combination of both methods. No matter which method is used it should be functional and systematic. It must be functional in the sense that it can be incorporated into the overall program, and systematic in that

¹Bish, C., "Can We Provide A Better Program For Able Students?" Secondary School Principal, p. 19, December, 1958.

it involves all of the students at regular intervals.

Most testing programs include group and individual tests. Of the many group tests now available, the most familiar is the standardized intelligence test battery. These tests serve to screen the majority of students; yet a more specialized testing program is necessary for the identification of the gifted child. Such a program should include a Stanford-Binet and such other tests as are necessary to discover special aptitudes and abilities of the gifted. The necessity of a supplemental testing program for identification of talent was pointed out by Cook:

The purpose of these tests are not the traditional ones - those of holding teacher and pupils to standards or as a basis for promotion or marking; the purpose is rather to enable the teacher to know more about the pupil...¹

The process of identification through observation is indeed a precarious one. Teachers' judgments are not always right. This is particularly true when they are not guided by clear definitions of what constitutes superior mental ability and what constitutes good work habits, ability to verbalize, or some other non-intrinsic value. The most reliable results of observations are produced when teachers are guided by use of a rating scale complete with descriptive phrases of behavior. The importance of a specific plan for teacher observations has been expressed by Dehaan:

¹Cook, W., "The Impossibility of Standardization", Crucial Issues In Education, p. 309.

More reliable results are obtained when a teacher observes many specific behaviors related to a talent than when he makes a global, over-all judgment about a child's abilities.¹

Additional sources of observations are grades, classroom leadership, and children's observations of one another.

Acceleration. Acceleration like identification lacks a "sure-fire," "cure-all" formula. Actually acceleration may be accomplished by several means, depending to some extent upon the size of the school. Some of the various methods of acceleration are grade skipping, enrichment, homogeneous grouping, special projects, and supplementary summer programs.

The most primitive method of acceleration was grade skipping. This involved disregarding the student's chronological age and placing him in a grade level sufficient to challenge his mental ability. The chief advantage of grade skipping is in challenging the student's abilities. The major disadvantage of grade skipping lies in gaps of knowledge, according to Worcester:

When it is used with care, the children who have skipped make good progress and are well adjusted. The danger of gaps in knowledge and skill must be kept in mind. If other methods of acceleration are not available, the bright child should skip a grade. . .²

Enrichment, as a way of giving better educational opportunities to the mentally advanced child, provides depth in learning together

¹Dehaan, R., "Identifying Gifted Children", The Exceptional Child, (Edited by Magary & Eichon), p. 506.

²Worcester, D., "Approaches to Helping Children of Above-Average Mentality", Crucial Issues in Education, (edited by Ehlers and Lee), p. 311.

with broader experiences. This can be accomplished if the enrichment is of value. The two chief advantages of enrichment are ease of application and avoidance of repetition. The main danger of enrichment is that too often it is confused with busy-work. The necessity of avoiding busy-work was reported by Worcester:

The line between enrichment and busy-work is sometimes a thin one. . . Necessary is the same discerning guidance needed in the teaching of any subject.¹

The National Education Association recently conducted a survey of the methods of acceleration being used today in American high schools. This survey revealed that the most predominate method of acceleration is enrichment in heterogeneous classes. The next most popular method is separate classes and enrichment. A recapitulation of the NEA findings is reported in Table 1.

The extent to which provisions are being made for the gifted child and the methods of providing acceleration for him were reported in the NEA Research Bulletin:

Almost 8 in 10 school systems were providing special learning experiences for gifted children. . . . Enrichment, separate classes, and acceleration are methods of providing these specialized experiences. In both the junior and senior high schools, enrichment in heterogeneous classes and separate classes combined with enrichment were the most often mentioned means. A combination of all three came next with separate classes alone closely following.²

¹Worcester, D., The Education Of Children Of Above-Average Mentality, p. 40.

²NEA Research Bulletin, Vol. 38, No. 2, May, 1960, p. 47.

TABLE 1. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR THE GIFTED IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS*

Provision	Percentage Of School Districts
Enrichment in heterogeneous classes only	24.7
Separate Classes Only	9.8
Acceleration Only	1.3
All of the provisions above	10.5
Separate classes and enrichment	21.4
Separate classes and acceleration	2.5
Enrichment and acceleration	6.5
Total with special provisions	76.7

In summary, most of the literature indicates that the method of enrichment is as important as the enrichment material itself.

During the past decade renewed emphasis has been placed upon homogeneous grouping. As indicated in Table 1, homogeneous grouping is becoming a popular method of acceleration in secondary schools. Homogeneous grouping by its very nature implies new problems heretofore not encountered in education. Some of the problems encountered in planning for homogeneous grouping are obtaining special rooms,

¹Ibid., p. 48.

acquiring specially trained teacher, and gaining acceptance by the community and the school.

Two extreme sizes of schools, the large and the small, seem to lend themselves to homogeneous grouping as pointing out by Worcester:

The one-room school is a "natural" for this type of adjustment to the gifted - if it can only lay aside the tyranny of the grade system.¹

Selected classes are feasible only in those school systems whose enrollment is large enough to justify a special room and a special teacher.²

The problem of homogeneous grouping, according to Worcester, regarding the size of the school and the teaching is small compared to the problems regarding acceptance of the gifted program. A common myth associated with the gifted is, "ripen early and rot early". Many communities are not prepared to accept the responsibility of special education for the gifted. The problem of acceptance of something new in many communities is not original. Many of the objections faced today by advocates of special education for the gifted are comparable to those faced by advocates of special education for the retarded during the reform movement in the last century. An analysis of the objections directed at educating the gifted indicates the two general types as: the sincere and the hypocritical. The former are relatively easy to handle in that it only requires educating them to understand

¹Worcester, Crucial Issues In Education, op. cit., p. 313.

²Worcester, The Education of Children of Above-Average Mentality, op. cit., p. 30.

the need. The latter group bases its convictions on "wives' tales," suspicions, and ignorance. An example of some of the charges made by the hypocrites include making the gifted conceited, destroying classroom leadership, creating an undemocratic situation, and rushing the gifted ahead. These charges were brought out by Goddard in the statement:

Perhaps the objections that most naturally arises in every one's mind is the fear that by picking these children out and putting them into a special class of gifted ones, we shall make them "conceited little pigs". . . .the bright children are the leaders of their respective groups, and by putting them into a special class we take the leaders out. . . the special class is undemocratic. . . . do not believe in rushing children rapidly through the grades.¹

The preceding objections to special classes for the gifted may be easily rebutted. The fear of developing "conceited little pigs" should be greater in heterogeneous classes where a superior student is allowed to excel. The fallacy of destroying leadership is two-fold; the gifted are not always leaders, and secondly by removing them you offer an opportunity for someone else to accept leadership. In response to the charge of being undemocratic, it is entirely consonant with our democratic ideals that persons of quality and talent should rise above the average. Finally, regarding rushing a child through, one has only to remember that the oldest form of acceleration is the process of skipping grades.

The facts indicate that homogeneous grouping, like enrichment,

¹Goddard, op. cit., pp. 26-31.

will continue to become a part of our educational system. In school systems where homogeneous grouping is not feasible and enrichment within the classroom is not sufficient special projects and supplementary programs can be instituted.

A variety of optional courses for challenging the gifted have been introduced in different areas. Programs have been instituted consisting of seminars, major work classes, and summer workshops.

Seminars have been particularly successful in areas that have a reserve of suitable research personnel available. The results of growth in self-expression and critical thinking due to participation in seminars conducted for rural youth in New York were reported by Goldberg:

Evaluation thus far shows that the seminar members have grown in self-expression and in critical thinking. As compared to students in past years, an increased number went on to higher education.¹

The values of seminars affords young people the opportunity of association and experimentation so often lacking within the school program.

The major work program consisting of additional study in an area of ability offers the gifted opportunities to strengthen his program. Care must be exercised in selecting work that will not become repetitious and boring.

Summer workshops are receiving more impetus with the current

¹Goldberg, M., "Research On The Gifted", The Exceptional Child, (Edited by Magary and Eichorn), p. 541.

interest in mathematics and science. Many high youth are being offered opportunities to explore college curriculums. The motivation produced by such an experience is immeasurable.

Counseling. The identification, enrichment, and acceleration of the gifted child has produced new problems for our schools, communities, and parents. The success of any program for the gifted will depend largely upon the success or failure in solving these problems. The responsibility for solving the problems or educating the gifted child today, as with the retarded child of yesterday, will fall upon those professionally trained to handle the situation. Understanding and patience by the parents and educators in handling the gifted child will render significant results. This point was presented by Wright in the statement:

Perhaps it is necessary at the moment. . . to develop a special patience with the bright and the sometimes irritatingly brilliant - a patience comparable to that which we have always virtuously tried to have toward the dull.¹

Many of the counseling problems confronted by the pioneers who worked with the retarded are parallel to those being encountered by guidance personnel working with the gifted today. Some of the major counseling problems are: parental misunderstandings, self-realization, socio-economic adjustment, and educational-vocational planning.

Certainly one of the most serious counseling problems confronting the counselor and the gifted child centers around the relationship

¹Wright, J., Bishop of Worcester, Massachusetts, Founders Day Sermon, St. Louis University, November 16, 1955.

the gifted has with his parents. Often parents of gifted children are unable to cope with the superior mental ability of their offspring. This may be do in part to lack of education on their part, to socio-economic environment, or to inability to face reality. The counseling of parents with gifted children and the problems of exploiting and restricting the gifted child were presented by Strang:

Guidance of the parents of gifted children is also needed to guard against two common extremes of behavior: (1) exploiting the child - valuing him more for what he can do than for his personal qualities; and (2) restricting the child's intellectual interests, with the mistaken idea that developing a gift or talent will handicap the child socially.¹

There is evidence to show that only if parents attempt to accept, understand, and guide their talented youngsters, will these superior children realize their full potential. This responsibility facing parents was summed up by Laycock:

Only with a high degree of parental acceptance, understanding, and guidance are gifted children likely to have that equal chance for the development of their potentialities which is the goal for all children. . . .²

Self-realization on the part of the gifted child is as important as parental understanding. It is essential that gifted children understand they have superior aptitude and that only when they develop good work habits and an awareness of self will they be successful.

¹Strang, R., "Guidance Of The Gifted", Personal And Guidance Journal, October, 1952, p. 30.

²Laycock, S., "Counseling Parents Of Gifted Children", Educating the Gifted, (edited by French), p. 88.

The gifted child who does not work up to capacity is in essence failing in the words of Hildreth:

The more gifted a child is the more likely he is to achieve easy success with little effort, so that he may appear to be outstanding compared with other children, but actually he may be a failure in terms of his real abilities to achieve.¹

Failure of gifted children to work up to capacity is the responsibility of the school. When the school fails to utilize the talent of the gifted it is setting the stage for the drop-out. A report by Ehlers and Lee² indicates that of the top quarter of intelligent 18 year old boys, approximately 40 percent graduate from high school but do not go to college, and 20 percent of this group do not even finish high school. Financial need and the schools not meeting the needs were reported as the two major causes of this dilemma. The latter factor, that of not fulfilling the needs of the gifted, is the utmost responsibility of the guidance people, according to Worcester:

There is no evidence that "genius will out" in spite of environmental deprivation. All of which is to say that wise guidance. . . . is as much the right of the gifted as of all other children.³

The relationship between drop-outs and social adjustment is

¹Hildreth, G., Educating Gifted Children, p. 193.

²Ehlers, H. and Lee, G., Crucial Issues In Education, p. 298.

³Worcester, The Education Of Children Of Above-Average Mentality, op. cit., p. 65.

significant. Dropping out of school many times stems from lack of understanding on the part of parents or teachers. Goldberg¹ reported that bright children from low socio-economic status homes tend to be less motivated toward academic excellence. Just as lack of motivation may cause underachieving and eventual dropout, inability to mature socially is a hazard of some gifted. Studies conducted indicate that most gifted children mature socially but when they do not, this becomes a factor in hindering successful academic progress.

Educational and vocational guidance for the gifted does not vary remarkably from guidance for the average student. The only significant difference is that the gifted require more detailed planning to insure that special traits and aptitudes are given sufficient consideration. The importance of providing sufficient curriculum planning for the gifted was stressed by Worcester:

A gifted child is not better fitted than any other to select wisely his social or educational objectives unless he has a chance to discover what objectives are possible.²

Some gifted children have exceptional abilities in only one area thereby requiring special counseling to insure that this special trait is not neglected due to the lack of wise planning and guidance.

Follow-up. Follow-up studies have been conducted to determine what factors determine the development of the gifted. Critics have felt that conclusive proof was necessary to disprove the accusations

¹Goldberg, op. cit., p. 545.

²Worcester, The Education Of Children Of Above-Average Mentality, op. cit., p. 64.

that the gifted child "burns-out", is sickly, or is maladjusted socially. If educators can refute these accusations they can justify special classes and provisions for the gifted. Consequently several surveys were made to determine the exact status of the gifted in these areas. The results indicate unequivocally that many of these preconceived notions were unfounded as shown by Sumpton, Norris, and Terman:

In health and physique, medical examination and anthropometric measurements showed them to be appreciably superior. . . character tests, personality tests, and trait ratings placed them definitely above control groups. . . as a rule, intellectually superior children become intellectually superior adults.¹

A review of the literature shows there is no conflict between enrichment, acceleration, and guidance for the gifted and a sound all-around educational program. In fact a good program for the gifted compliments any educational program. A review of the literature indicates it is mandatory to identify, accelerate, counsel, and provide a follow-up service for the gifted child. The results of the questionnaire submitted to the guidance directors of Montana's twenty largest high schools will indicate the degree this pattern is followed. Each of these will be discussed in the following chapters.

¹Sumpton, Norris, and Terman, op. cit., pp. 272-273.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES USED IN IDENTIFYING THE
SUPERIOR STUDENT IN MONTANA'S
TWENTY LARGEST HIGH SCHOOLS

The identification of the gifted child rests somewhat upon the definition of a gifted child. The first question on the questionnaire submitted to the guidance directors in Montana called for a definition of a gifted child. The responses varied from "unable to identify", to one that would attain their ultimate goal - heaven. Three of the respondents did not answer that part of the questionnaire. Of the remaining 15, there was general agreement that a gifted child is one who possesses intellectual superiority, social presence, and emotional maturity. These definitions coincide with definitions given by most authors.

The procedures employed in the identification of the gifted child in Montana correspond generally to those procedures used in most areas of the United States. The use of a battery of tests consisting of a form of I.Q. test and personality tests was reported. Observations were also used by most schools as an added means of identifying the superior student. Table 2 reveals the exact form of I.Q. tests used, the percentage using each form, and the average significant score used to indicate above which one would consider those gifted. The number of schools using personality tests is also given. The number of schools using observations and the degree importance of the different observers are also reported.

TABLE 2. FREQUENCIES OF USE OF TYPES OF I.Q. TESTS, PERSONALITY TESTS, AND OBSERVATIONS USED IN IDENTIFICATION OF THE SUPERIOR CHILD IN MONTANA HIGH SCHOOLS.

Methods of Identification	Number Reporting	Percent	Minimum I.Q.
<u>I.Q. Tests</u>			
Otis	13	.65	125
DAT	11	.55	95*
ACE	4	.20	130
Henmon-Nelson	3	.15	125
Kuhlman-Anderson	3	.15	125
Others	7	.35	---
Nine	1	.05	---
<u>Personality Tests</u>			
<u>Observations</u>			
Teachers	19	.95	
Counselors	17	.85	
Administrators	9	.45	
Others	14	.70	
None	1	.05	

*Denotes Percentile

Types of Intelligence Tests Used In Identification of The Gifted Student

Otis Gamma. The Otis Gamma test is the most frequently used test for the identification of the gifted child in Montana. It is reportedly used by 65 percent of the 20 largest high schools.

The Otis Gamma provides one score from 80 test items. These items include word meaning, verbal analogies, scrambled sentences, interpretations of proverbs, logical reasoning, number series, arithmetic reasoning, and design analysis. It employs the split-level

reliability method with coefficients of .91 and .92 recorded. The standard error of measurement is approximately three points, which is favorable to the error of measurement on Stanford-Binet.

The Otis Gamma is designed to predict academic achievement and does so for the majority of people, according to a statement by Lefever:

Useful to both teacher and counselor by revealing within fairly broad limits of accuracy the probable level of academic achievement for a majority of people.¹

It is a good selective test for the majority of the people, but it fails to reveal particular talents. The inability of the Otis Gamma to identify the gifted was pointed out by Yates:

A high score on a test of this kind does not necessarily imply that a pupil can be expected to distinguish himself in some particular branch.²

Inasmuch as the Otis Gamma fails to identify the gifted child, it would seem to be an inappropriate test for general in identifying the gifted.

Differential Aptitude Test. Eleven schools reported using the Differential Aptitude Test as a means of identifying the gifted child in Montana high schools.

The Differential Aptitude Test consists of eight individual

¹Lefever, D., The Fifth Mental Measurements Yearbook, Edited by Buros, p. 362.

²Yates, A., The Fifth Mental Measurements Yearbook, Edited by Buros, p. 362.

tests. They are as follows: verbal reasoning, numerical ability, abstract reasoning, space relations, mechanical reasoning, clerical speed and accuracy, and language usage. The language usage portion gives scores for spelling and sentences.

The Differential Aptitude Test is designed to appraise students in each of several abilities in order that a comprehensive judgment may be made. The DAT is considered a sound test for this purpose when used with the average student. It is of some value in predicting high school course success, but it is of little value in identifying the gifted child because of its low ceiling, according to Birdie:

Because of the relatively low ceilings of the tests, young adults or college students of high ability can not be differentiated adequately by means of these tests.¹

The DAT uses the split-half technique to determine reliability. Reliability coefficients are provided for each test separately for the two sexes. The reliability coefficients range from .86 to .93 on all of the tests, with an intercorrelation test range of .06 to .67.

Finally, the relationship of the DAT to other tests available has not been established, thus making it difficult to correlate the information and establish exactness of ability of the gifted. Inasmuch as the critics question the validity of the DAT in this function, it may be concluded that although the DAT is a sound test for the average student, its use in identifying the gifted child is questionable.

¹Birdie, R., The Fourth Mental Measurements Yearbook, Edited by Buros, p. 711.

American Council On Education Psychological Examination. The American Council on Education Psychological Examination for high school students is being used by 20 percent of the large high schools in Montana. The ACE provides three test scores: quantitative, linguistic, and total. The quantitative score is derived from three tests; arithmetical reasoning, figure analysis, and number series. The linguistic score is also derived from three tests: same-opposite, completion, and verbal analogies. The quantitative and linguistic scores combined furnish the total score.

Reports by critics indicate the ACE has about outlived its usefulness. This is due in part to lack of validity and reliability as reported by Fowler¹ who has said "No reference is made in any of the norms bulletins to reliability estimates or validity estimates."

In addition to low validity and reliability, the ACE test results are reportedly inconsistent. The lack of consistency is evident when judged by the increasing number of colleges and universities that have discontinued using the ACE in favor of the Cooperative School and College Ability Test (SCAT).

Henmon-Nelson Test of Mental Ability. The Henmon-Nelson Test of Mental Ability is used by only 15% of the high schools questioned in Montana.

The test is designed to give an overall score of general intelligence. It consists of 90 items arranged according to difficulty. Due to a high degree of verbal content, it is generally felt that the Henmon-Nelson test measures scholastic aptitude more than general in-

¹Fowler, H., The Fifth Mental Measurements Yearbook, Edited by Buros, p. 308.

telligence. The validity and reliability coefficients are not given. A danger of the Henmon-Nelson is the lack of statistical information necessary to correlate the test results with other test results.

Two sets of norms are given in the Henmon-Nelson which enables the counselor to obtain intelligence quotients and percentile ranks by grade. A general evaluation of this fitness of the Henmon-Nelson test for reasonably large groups was given by Fowler:

The manuals for the elementary and high school tests show that for reasonably large groups the mean mental ages and the mean IQ's of the Henmon-Nelson agree fairly closely with the corresponding averages obtained on other group tests of intelligence, but some recent investigations indicate that the Henmon-Nelson does give mental ability estimates which are too high.¹

The test may be considered adequate for those desiring a quick, single score of intelligence. The only major danger of using the test is that the authors have failed to keep the questions on the test up-to-date.

Kuhlman-Anderson Test. The Kuhlman-Anderson test was used in identifying the gifted student by three schools in Montana. The Kuhlman-Anderson test, like the Henmon-Nelson test, is designed to measure intelligence. Unlike the Henmon-Nelson, the tests are not nearly as verbal. The test reliability is based on the split-level coefficient and is reportedly quite high. Reliability coefficients range from .88 to .95. The standard error of measurement of about six I.Q. points resembles the standard error of measurement for the

¹Ibid., p. 299.

Stanford-Binet. The Kuhlman-Anderson Intelligence test was devised to provide a measure of mental age as well as an I.Q. score. The authors caution not to use the individual parts of the test to determine strengths and weaknesses, but rather to consider the whole test as an indication of intelligence. Inasmuch as the Kuhlman-Anderson test is inept as a counseling device, its use in Montana has been restricted to only 15 percent of the high schools reporting.

Supplemental Tests. A variety of other supplemental tests were used by most schools in Montana to identify the gifted. Some of the supplemental tests include the Stanford-Binet, Wechsler, Terman-McNemar, and the California Test of Mental Maturity. The extent to which the supplemental tests were used was not indicated by the schools reporting.

A minimum I.Q. score of approximately 125 was used by Montana's high schools to indicate the point beyond which the student would be classified as gifted. Establishing the point at approximately 125 would include approximately five percent of the normal high school population.

Types of Personality Tests Used In Identifying The Gifted

Aside from types of I.Q. tests, personality tests were used by 40 percent of Montana's 20 largest high schools to aid in the identification of the gifted child. The eight schools reporting the use of personality tests to identify the gifted use the Mooney Problem Check List, Thurstone Temperament Schedule, or the California Psychological

Test.

Mooney Problem Check List. The Mooney Problem Check List is based on an analysis of brief statements by the person taking the examination. It is not a test and, therefore, does not render a score. Whenever the check list is used for purposes for which designed it is found to be an aid in establishing rapport for counseling. It is not meant as a substitute for the interview. In counseling situations where it has been used in Montana it was found to be highly successful as an aid in identification of the gifted child.

Thurstone Temperament Schedule. The Thurstone Temperament Schedule contains 140 "Yes"-?"-No" questions, which measure seven areas of personality; as follows: active, vigorous, impulsive, dominant, stable, sociable, and reflective. Intercorrelations among some of the seven traits were quite high. The reliability of the test is questionable as the authors admit a 20 percent error in classifying the population. Inasmuch as the gifted in Montana represent only five percent of the school population, this could conceivably be a tragic miscalculation. The most useful part of this schedule for purposes of identifying the gifted is the emphasis on normality. When used as a guide, the schedule would be helpful in identifying certain characteristics of the gifted such as personality, vigorous, and sociability.

California Test of Personality. The California Test of Personality is also used in Montana to aid in the identification of the gifted. It is based upon positive and negative responses to questions about personality adjustment. The personality traits scored are as follows: self-reliance, sense of personal worth, sense of personal

freedom, feeling of belonging, withdrawing tendencies, nervous symptoms, total personal adjustment, social standards, social skills, anti-social tendencies, family relations, school relations, occupattional relations, community relations, total social adjustment, and total adjustment.

A shortcoming of this type of test is that it merely gives a positive or negative reaction without revealing the degree. Too, it is necessary with this test, as with most personality tests, to establish rapport in order to have validity. However, the California Test of Personality is considered one of the better tests of this type according to Sims:

All in all, in spite of criticism, as personality inventories go, the California test would appear to be among the better ones available.¹

In summing up the testing program for the identification of the gifted child in Montana, it is evident that a great variance exists among the 20 schools inventoried. It may be surmised by the types of tests used, and the reports of the validity of these tests by experts, that a good job is being done in testing the majority of the high school students and little is being done in identifying the gifted.

Types Of Observations Used In Identifying The Gifted Student

The third means of identification of the gifted in Montana high schools is through the use of observation. Data, as shown in Table 2,

¹Sims, V., The Fifth Mental Measurement Yearbook, Edited by Buros, p. 103.

indicates 95 percent of the schools use this along with others as a means of identification. Many of the schools use all of the sources listed on the questionnaire. In order of importance, teacher judgments are used by most, counselors second, and administrators last. Many schools use observations of members of the clergy, family, and friends. The exact method employed in regulating and judging observations was not reported.

With the identification of the gifted child completed, the next logical step is acceleration provisions for the gifted. The provisions for acceleration of the gifted were contained in section III of the questionnaire, which appears in the appendix. These results will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV
PROVISIONS FOR ACCELERATION
OF SUPERIOR STUDENTS

The methods of accelerating the gifted vary from school to school, depending upon the resources available and local philosophy. For these reasons, all commonly reported methods of curricular and extra-curricular acceleration were listed in the questionnaire. The extent to which these methods of acceleration are used is reported in Table 3.

Methods of Curricular Acceleration

The methods of curricular acceleration most commonly used in Montana schools are homogeneous grouping and used of special projects. The practice of enriched heterogeneous acceleration, although number one nationally, was reported to be the third most popular type of acceleration in Montana. Too, the method of homogeneous grouping, which is preferred in Montana, is ranked second by high school administrators nationally.

Responses by most schools to the statement, "Check the appropriate provisions and adjustments you provide for the gifted child", consisted of merely placing a check mark in the appropriate space. Two of the schools, however, elaborated with responses as follows:

Sorry to say our student-teacher ratio is too high for homogeneous grouping. Try getting 119 students into four sections and group eh?

We simply don't have the staff, room, or equipment to do much more than we are now doing. We cannot concentrate on the few at the expense of the many. We are discouraging in every way possible absence from classes by the better students by attendance at such affairs as state conclaves, state convention, high school week, and all the rest of it that seriously interferes with the student's achievement in school. Most of us feel that this loss of class time cannot be compensated for by accelerated classes or anything else.

The two preceding statements and the response from two schools that reported no means of acceleration, indicate what is being done to accelerate the gifted in at least one-fifth of the schools reporting.

TABLE 3. CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR MEANS USED IN ACCELERATION OF THE GIFTED CHILD.

Means of Acceleration	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
<u>Curricular:</u>		
Homogeneous Groups	16	.80
Special Projects	13	.65
Enriched Heterogeneous Program	8	.40
Summer Program	4	.20
Challenge Course For Credit	3	.15
Special Laboratory Facilities	1	.05
None	2	.10
<u>Extra-Curricular:</u>		
Student Government	18	.90
Athletics	16	.80
Debate	16	.80
Music	15	.75
Forensics	14	.70
Drama	13	.65
None	1	.05

Methods of Extra-Curricular Acceleration

The provisions for extra-curricular acceleration reported by Montana high schools conform to the methods being used nationally. Nearly every school polled encourages the gifted to participate in at least one extra-curricular activity. Participation in student government was reported by 90 percent of the schools, and athletics and debate were reported by 80 percent.

The importance of extra-curricular participation is that it offers the gifted student an opportunity to become a more well-rounded individual and a better citizen. Also, many of the gifted excel in one or more of these activities and contribute a great deal to other students and to the program. It is apparent that with such a large percentage of schools reporting participation in extra-curricular activities as a method that this is the area where the gifted child is benefiting most in Montana.

The identification and acceleration of the gifted child make it necessary to have a guidance and counseling program to insure self-realization and ease of adjustment on the part of the gifted child. The problems encountered in counseling the gifted child will be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER V
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES
AFFORDED THE SUPERIOR STUDENT

One of the most important services a school can render is the guidance and counseling service. This is true not only for the average child but for the gifted. Hence, section IV of the questionnaire submitted to guidance directors in Montana was designed to find out the problems they encountered in counseling the gifted. Three problem areas were covered; academic, personal, and vocational and educational. The responses to each of these questions are summarized in Table 4.

Types of Academic Problems

The major type of academic problem confronting the counselors with the gifted centered around underachievers.¹ In response to the question on the questionnaire, "Please check any of the following problems you encounter in counseling the gifted". Sixty-five percent of the schools reported they are engaged in counseling the gifted students regarding selection of courses in school. Fifteen percent of the schools indicated they did not have counseling problems in this area. The remaining 20 percent of the schools did not complete this portion of the questionnaire.

¹Underachievers are those students not working up to their potential.

Types of Personal Problems

Problems of personal adjustment were reported by nearly all of the schools. Counseling the gifted in family relations was the most predominant problem and was reported by 55 percent of the counselors. An even one-half of the schools reported problems in counseling the gifted in their relations with their friends. Personal problems confronting the gifted child with his teachers and school administrators were reported in only 35 and 20 percent of the cases respectively. Five of the schools contacted reported no counseling problems on a personal nature.

TABLE 4. FREQUENCIES AND TYPES OF ACADEMIC, PERSONAL, AND VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN COUNSELING THE GIFTED CHILD IN MONTANA'S LARGEST HIGH SCHOOLS.

Types of Counseling Problems	Number Reporting	Percent
<u>Academic</u>		
Selection of Courses	11	.55
Underachieving	13	.65
Overachieving	00	.00
None	3	.15
<u>Personal</u>		
Family	11	.55
Friends	10	.50
Teachers	7	.35
Administrators	4	.20
None	5	.25
<u>Vocational and Educational</u>		
Scholarship Selection	10	.50
Vocational Opportunities	12	.60
None	5	.25

Types of Vocational and Educational Counseling

The need for vocational and educational planning for the gifted child in Montana is recognized by 75 percent of the schools questioned. Ten schools indicated they counseled the gifted in scholarship problems and eleven schools stated they aided the student in vocational planning. Unfortunately, none of the schools elaborated on the specific educational or vocational problems encountered with the gifted or the manner in which they were handled.

The provisions being made for the identification, acceleration, and counseling of gifted students in Montana have been presented in the preceding chapters. The follow-up studies for evaluating the extent of these provisions for the gifted is presented in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER VI

EXTENT OF FOLLOW-UP SERVICES FOR EVALUATING THE
PROGRESS OF THE GIFTED IN MONTANA HIGH SCHOOLS

The effectiveness of a program of special education for the gifted child can not be determined until an evaluation of the program is made. It was the purpose of the follow-up study to determine this effectiveness of a program for the gifted child in meeting his needs. A careful analysis is necessary to determine the needs of the gifted child while in school and also to determine whether special learning provided while in school had a significant carry-over value to adult life. It was this objective for a follow-up study that led to the question in section VI of the questionnaire, "Do you have a follow-up service for the gifted?"

In Montana, 50 percent of the schools indicated use of a follow-up study. Forty percent stated that due to lack of personnel they could not have a study at the present time. The remaining ten percent did not answer this part of the questionnaire.

Of the schools providing a follow-up study, the majority indicated reliance upon interviews with the student, his friends, or his relatives as a means of evaluation of the program.

The means recommended by authorities for providing special educational opportunities for the gifted were presented in Chapter 2. The approach used in identification, acceleration, counseling, and follow-up of the gifted child in Montana has been presented in the preceding chapters. The summary and conclusions of the results of this study are discussed in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This investigation was conducted to determine what has been done to provide for the gifted child in Montana's twenty largest high schools compared to other high schools throughout the nation. A review of current literature was made to determine what is being done in the nation to aid the gifted student. A questionnaire was submitted to guidance directors in Montana to determine provisions being made in Montana for the gifted child.

Summary

A review of current literature indicated the growing need for providing special educational opportunities for the gifted child. The need for basing the identification of the gifted child upon something more than a single test pattern yielding an I.Q. was stressed. The need for a series of objective tests designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individuals also was indicated, together with observations and common sense. Reports also indicated that the provisions for acceleration of the gifted should vary according to the size of the school and the attitudes of the community. Some of the most often mentioned means of acceleration suggested were grade skipping, enrichment, homogeneous grouping, special projects, and supplementary summer programs. Counseling the gifted child to insure self-realization, emotional stability, parental understanding, socio-economic adjustment, and educational-vocational planning was con-

sidered necessary. Finally, a follow-up program to determine the needs of the gifted and to evaluate the educational provisions afforded the gifted youngster within the school was indicated as highly essential.

A survey of the practices being employed in Montana high schools indicated the use of the Otis Gamma, DAT, and ACE intelligence tests to aid in the identification of the gifted in the majority of the schools. The Mooney Problem Check List, Thurstone Temperament Schedule, and the California Test of Personality were the only personality tests used in the ten Montana schools reporting them as aids in the identification of the gifted. Of the three observations of gifted children by teachers and counselors was indicated as the most common practice of identification. Means of acceleration varied among the 20 largest high schools. All but two of the schools engage in curricular acceleration with many reporting use of more than one method. Sixteen schools reported the use of homogeneous grouping, 15 specified special projects, and eight indicated the use of enriched heterogeneous programs. All but one school stated that the gifted participated in extra-curricular activities, with student government being the most popular. Counseling the gifted child in the areas of academic, personal, and vocational and educational adjustment was reported by approximately 50 percent of the schools. The use of a follow-up program to evaluate the methods of identification, acceleration, and counseling of the gifted was reported by only 10 or one half of the schools.

Conclusions

It may be concluded from a review of current literature and practices being employed in Montana that although some provision is being made for special education of the gifted, it leaves a great deal to be desired.

Testing programs being conducted to identify the gifted student rely upon tests that are designed for use with average children and do not allow for identification of special abilities and aptitudes possessed by gifted children. This conclusion is based on information given in the review of literature. The use of special test, recommended by experts, to identify the gifted is rare.

Too, only 40 percent of the schools in Montana employ any form of a personality test, deemed necessary by authorities, in assessing the talents of the gifted.

It is in the highly subjective area of personal observation that the Montana schools have placed the emphasis in identifying the gifted, an area in which caution should be used, according to the experts.

A recent national survey conducted by the NEA reveals that enriched heterogeneous classes are used twice as much as homogeneous groups throughout the nation, yet Montana schools rely upon the homogeneous groups as a means of acceleration.

As a final conclusion, the absence of responses to counseling inquiries by 25 percent of the schools reporting indicates a lack of vigilance in this area by the guidance personnel. Also, the lack of a follow-up program to evaluate the results of provisions for the

gifted in 50 percent of the schools is not in accord with the conditions set down by the experts.

In the final analysis, although the findings are based on a limited sample representing only the 20 largest high schools in Montana, the results of questionnaire submitted to Montana schools indicate that in comparison with the rest of the nation, Montana is doing an inferior job in providing for the needs of the gifted child.

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APPENDIX

MONTANA STATE COLLEGE
Bozeman

Department of Education

April 22, 1960

Dear Sir:

I am doing graduate work in the field of Guidance and Counseling at Montana State College. I have selected as my topic for a graduate research study, "The Role Of The Guidance Director And The Gifted Child In Montana's Twenty Largest High Schools." Dr. M. S. Monson is collaborating with me in this research project.

Enclosed is a questionnaire form indicating the general areas of interest in my investigation. Any further data you can provide will be helpful.

Inasmuch as time is limited your earliest consideration in the completion of this form will be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Lester W. Edens
Lester W. Edens

/s/ M. S. Monson
M. S. Monson, Coordinator of
Graduate Studies in Education

sja

P. S. Please accept my apologies for using a form letter. I know you will realize that I do so for expedience only.

L.W.E.

The Role Of The Guidance Director In Aiding The Gifted Child
In Montana's High School.

I. In your own words please describe a gifted child.

II. Which of the following methods do you use in the identification of a gifted child.

A. Tests

__1. I.Q. - Type Used _____

Indicate Gifted Range 110 120 130 140 150 160 170

180

__2. Personality - Type Used _____

__3. Other Tests Used (Specify Name & Cut Off Point) _____

B. Observations - Indicate by rank order observers results you most commonly use.

__Teachers

__Administrators

__Parents

__Others (Specify)

C. Other methods used (ie) rating scales

III. Check the appropriate provisions and adjustments you provide for the gifted child.

A. Curricular Acceleration

__1. Special homogeneous classes

__2. Enriched program - heterogeneous grouping maintained

__3. Special projects for the individual

__4. Special laboratory facilities provided

__5. Gifted allowed to challenge courses for credit

__6. Summer programs

☐ 7. Supervised advanced correspondence courses

☐ 8. Others (please specify)

B. Extra Curricular Activities - Check any of the following activities used in developing leadership for the gifted.

☐ 1. Athletics

☐ 2. Forensics

☐ 3. Music

☐ 4. Debate

☐ 5. Drama

☐ 6. Student Government

☐ 7. Others (please specify)

IV. Please check any of the following problems you encounter in counseling the gifted.

A. Academic

☐ 1. Selection of courses

☐ 2. Under achieving

☐ 3. Others

B. Personal

☐ 1. Family

☐ 2. Friends

☐ 3. Teachers

☐ 4. Administrators

☐ 5. Others (please specify)

C. Vocational and Educational

- ☐ 1. Scholarship selection
- ☐ 2. Realizing vocational opportunities
- ☐ 3. Others (please specify)

V. Do you have a definite plan for placement of the gifted in the following areas.

A. In educational planning. Yes ☐ No ☐B. In orientation with occupational information. Yes ☐ No ☐VI. Do you have a follow-up service for the gifted. Yes ☐ No ☐

A. If so check the means used.

- ☐ 1. Survey mailed periodically to student
- ☐ 2. Occasional interview with student
- ☐ 3. Interviews with close friends and/or relatives
- ☐ 4. Others (please specify)

VII. Suggestions and Comments: