PILOT HIGH SCHOOLS IN ALASKA

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The improved status of pilot high schools, laboratory schools, demonstration schools, model schools, or experimental schools, as they are sometimes referred to today, is indicative of their value to communities that have need for high school training not available to students in isolated areas. The importance of pilot high schools in Alaska has been particularly significant in that they have provided high school education for students who otherwise would not have been able to attend beyond the eighth grade. A similar type of high school program has been tried in other states. Both the importance of the idea and the initiation of the pilot high school plan in Alaska led to selection of this study.

State of Problem

Upon the limited information available in this subject area of pilot high schools, the author has tried to bring out how Alaska arrived at the present status in this field of education. In order to gain an understanding of the growth of pilot high schools, it seemed logical to consider such questions as: "What is the history of pilot high schools?" and, "What is the program of pilot high schools in Alaska?" It appeared to the writer to be important to teachers, parents and prospective high school students to know how these schools have achieved an important place in education, and particularly in Alaska. This investigation, "Pilot High Schools in Alaska," was designed for that purpose.

Procedure

In order to pursue this study, the writer took an assignment as teacher and principal of a pilot high school in Alaska during the school year 1956-57. During this time a review of literature dealing with experimental schools was made. In addition to a review of literature, much information dealing with the history and growth of pilot high schools in Alaska was obtained by the writer in conferences with supervisors and teachers in pilot high schools. The first of these procedures, a review of literature, appears in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature disclosed the fact that the basic idea behind experimental, laboratory, or pilot schools was to make provisions for the individual differences in the pupils. These experimental schools have done this by individualized and group instruction to take care of the individual needs of the students. Several plans have been reviewed which show this opportunity to allow for individualized instruction by making allowances in the curriculum and schedules.

Types of Plans Individualizing Instruction

It is likely that when class instruction became prominent in America, resourceful teachers hit upon the idea of trying to employ means to help the slow learner. This was perhaps the idea behind individualized instruction.

In 1888 Preston W. Search developed a plan of instruction to provide for individual differences among pupils on the secondary school level. This was known as the Pueblo Plan.[1] It was a plan for grouping pupils into relatively small homogeneous ability groups which were permitted to work and progress at their individual capacities. Individual work with a minimum amount of teacher assistance was stressed. This homogeneous grouping was based upon the ability criteria rather than age or grade.

Batavia Plan.[2] Following the Pueblo Plan we have the Batavia Plan which originated in Batavia, New York in 1898. This plan was a combination

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[1] Muse, Maude B., Guiding Learning Experiences, Macmillan Company, New York, 1950, pp. 106, 504.

[2] Otto, H. J., "Historical Sketches of Administration Innovations," Educational Administration and Supervision, Vol. XX, March, 1934, pp. 161-172.

of group and individualized instruction by which an extra teacher was employed in the same room with another to give special help to the slow learners.

Gary Plan.[1] The Gary Plan originated in Gary, Indiana, based on the idea of a school philosophy that the curriculum must be adjusted to the child and that it must be flexible in the form of schedule and objectives. This was an idea leading to individualized instruction by the organization of the school into platoons. A platoon is a group which may be studying the fundamentals of arithmetic, language, spelling, reading, writing, and social studies in the homeroom and the activity program was carried out in the special rooms. Continuous utilization of all school facilities was secured by having one platoon do classroom work while the other engaged in the activities of athletics, shopwork, and others. The advocates of the Gary Plan have insisted that this dual organization favored progressive methods which were designed for the individual.

In the early part of the century, the Morrison Plan[2] appeared. It was designed to plan the work in the form of units. It was organized into five steps. These steps were exploration, presentation, assimilation, organization, and recitation. In the first step it was determined what the pupils knew about a given subject to inform the teacher where the pupils were and where to begin the teaching of the particular topic or subject. In the second step a general review of the unit was given. In the third step the

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[1] Muse, op. cit., p. 507.

[2] Risk, Thomas M., Principles and Practices of Teaching in Secondary Schools, American Book Company, New York, 1947, pp. 426-428.

pupils were to investigate, study and pass the mastery test. In the fourth step they were to summarize and pull together the results of their work. In the final step, recitation was given by those who had mastered the material and the rest were the audience. These five steps served as drill without the child thinking of it as such and also, in the final step, used the most capable pupils as leaders in presenting the material in recitations. Assignments were based on abilities.

Any plan which provides for a high degree of individualized instruction is commonly referred to as a laboratory method. Laboratory methods also provide for variations in rate of progress. Different activities might even be set up to allow for individual differences in the form of minimum essentials. Supplementary materials may also be used to provide supplementary goals for pupils who have the ability to reach them. It is felt that in these ways pupil failure is at least minimized. The Winnetka System[1/] has been an example of the laboratory method of instruction.

Features of Winnetka Plan. This plan has allowed for individualized instruction by dividing the curriculum into two parts. One part has consisted of common essentials such as arithmetic, reading, spelling, language, writing, and social sciences. The other division is in the social and creative activities group. The pupils work individually at their own rates on the first part largely by means of workbooks or other similarly designed materials. They are permitted to progress only as rapidly as their abilities allow. In the social and creative activities no attempt is made to measure

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1/ Washburne, C. W., A Living Philosophy of Education, John Day Company, New York, 1940, p. 12.

achievement but much group work is done. Group work is designed to broaden the pupil's social traits and habits.

In the Winnetka Plan provision is made for promotion in the individual subjects. This does not necessarily mean changing rooms but merely continuing from the completed unit in any subject to the next unit in that subject.

With this plan, assignment booklets are used, mastery tests are used, each pupil has a goal card and time is budgeted in this planning. The materials selected are appropriate to each child's capacity for his project assignment. When work in the skills is being carried out, class recitations are left out.

The Winnetka Plan was begun in 1919 in Illinois, and at this writing is still being used in that public school system.

Another plan of instruction which has emphasized the laboratory teaching is the Dalton Plan.[1/] In this plan the pupil is free to work on his assignment, or contract, without heed to a daily schedule. Assignments are adjusted to fit the ability levels of pupils so as to start them with something they can do and encourage them by this means to progress further. The teacher is available to give help when the pupil is working on his contract or study problems. Economy of time is done by budgeting, and the fixed daily schedule is not used. During the individual work and laboratory periods individual attention is assured as the teacher is observing and pointing out errors. Help is given on individual study difficulties at this time. The classroom is a workroom and not an oral recitation room. Self-

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1/ Parkhurst, Helena, Education on the Dalton Plan, George Bell & Sons, Ltd., London, 1930, p. 120.

corrective practice materials are used to allow for independent study and and checking on the part of pupils. In this plan there is correlation of assignments to bring about integration in the pupil's work and also to save time. The curriculum is divided into (a) minimum essentials and (b) subjects offered to satisfy personal needs and interests.

The Burk Plan,[1] was introduced in 1913 by Frederick Burk, who was superintendent of the San Francisco State Normal School. This plan was modified in several ways by the many students who interpreted it differently from its author. It has had many variations and names. Though it was a plan for individualized instruction, it was not carried out in the same way in various schools throughout the United States. The author of the Winnetka Plan was a pupil of Burk.

According to Muse,[2] "the most outstanding of these movements to individualize instruction and learning were the Pueblo Plan, the Batavia Plan, the Burk Plan, the Winnetka Plan, and the Dalton Plan."

Within recent years the emphasis on individualized instruction has encouraged the establishing of guidance and counseling. Evidence of this emphasis is given in the statement by Muse,[3] "The Dalton Plan was revised by Miss Parkhurst so as to provide more teacher guidance than originally was deemed necessary." According to C. W. Washburne,[4] "The Winnetka Schools were among the first in the country to recognize the value of

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[1] Muse, op. cit., p. 504.

[2] Ibid., p. 504.

[3] Ibid., p. 504.

[4] Washburne, op. cit., p. 16.

psychiatric help in some cases, and trained psychologists have been on the staff for approximately twenty years." It has been evident that through these services the teachers could be furnished information to help pupils with behavior, adjustments of various kinds, and learning problems. This information should help educators plan more carefully for the individual needs of pupils in the way of assignments and programs or schedules.

Home Study Courses. Many pupils have been educated entirely by their parents as shown by the statement, "There are still a number of isolated areas where the population is too scattered to justify the establishment of schools. Such areas are now found in certain Rocky Mountain states and Alaska."[1/] In a magazine article,[2/] one teacher has said, "They learn from me in lighthouses and jungles and strange foreign places, and sometimes the homework has to come by dog sled." Correspondence institutions such as the Calvert School, in Baltimore, Maryland, have sold these courses to Alaskans. They have been paid for by the Territorial Office of Education. The investigator found that the Office of Education recognized that the Calvert School met the needs of pupils in isolated places as well as can be done. For that reason, the Office of Education has directed that, "Correspondence courses are ordered by the Department for pupils living in remote places too far from any school to attend."[3/] The investigator found that materials on guidance

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1/ Noffsinger, J. S., Home Study Blue Book, published by the National Home Study Council, Washington, 9, D. C., 19 , p. 13.

2/ Fulton, Jean, "Children I Teach by Mail," Good Housekeeping, New York, Nov. 1955.

3/ General Instructions for the Operation of Schools Outside Incorporated Districts, issued by the Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska, 1956 Revised, p. 36.

were sent the parents for use in teaching their children by correspondence courses, and also that the pupils progressed only as fast as they were capable. This was a rate variation feature amounting to a flexibility to suit the individual pupil's ability. This feature has been carried beyond the eighth grade to give basis to the establishment of experimentation on the secondary level in Alaska.

The establishment of the pilot high schools in Alaska is recent. Three schools were begun in 1955-56 by authority from the Territorial Office of Education:

> If the number of correspondence courses purchased by the Department of Education for high school pupils living in the attendance area of a Territorial school is sufficient to require the need of a teacher to supervise such instruction, a pilot high school may be authorized.[1]

This left the way open for further development of the pilot high school program. Contemplated expansion of the program with guidance is indicated by the Territorial Board of Education shown in the statement, "To break through the barrier of paternalism and recognize the need for local planning and initiative in developing high school programs of study better suited to individual differences in pupils and to the various communities to be served."[2] So that pupils may increase the number of elective subjects with guidance, the Territorial Board of Education provided the following, "Use of elective credits, seven to be selected with guidance aimed at utilization of these credits to develop social, vocational or other skills in the pupil."[3]

1/ General Instructions for the Operation of Schools Outside Incorporated Districts, issued by the Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska, 1956 revised, p. 37.

2/ Mimeographed Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Juneau, Alaska, February 4-15, 1957, p. 75.

3/ Ibid, p. 76.

Limitations of Literature

Pilot high schools in Alaska evidently had as their origin the ideas basic to the experimental plans reviewed. Literature dealing directly with pilot high schools in Alaska has been very limited as seen by the statement, "The Office of Education has prepared no publications on the history and development of pilot high schools."[1] Another example of a reliable source for such information, in reply to the investigator's search for information on pilot high schools said: "We regret that at the present time we have no information available on pilot high schools."[2] Information from other important sources has not been forthcoming as several State Superintendents of Public Instruction contacted have not made replies.

The idea of providing for individual differences in children has been the basis of experimental schools in the United States. This idea has been carried forward into the development of pilot high schools in Alaska. The complete history and development is dealt with specifically in Chapter III.

1/ Personal letter written to author by John R. Ludington, July 2, 1957, Chief, Secondary Schools Section, Office of Education, Washington, 25, D. C,

2/ Personal letter written to author by Louis Kocsis, July 17, 1957, Consultant, Department of Public Instruction, Lansing, Michigan.

CHAPTER III

THE IDEA BEHIND PILOT HIGH SCHOOLS IN ALASKA

Pilot high schools in Alaska have been characterized by their locations in isolated areas and small enrollments. They have been set up with a flexible program to permit the use of correspondence instruction along with regular homeroom courses.

Historical Experimental Schools

Although the pilot high school is new to Alaska, it is not new to the United States. Several plans have been tried and still are being used. Some of the more prominent plans are the Winnetka Plan which was put into effect in Illinois in 1919, the Dalton Plan was tried in a secondary school in Dalton, Massachusetts in 1920. The Morrison Plan was developed in 1919. These, the Batavia Plan and other experimental ideas in education are the ideas behind the origin of pilot high schools in Alaska. The pilot high school is just two years old in Alaska. The three first schools began in September of 1955:

> One of the three pilot high schools is to be operated here (Glennallen) in 1955-56 in which the ninth grade will be taught from regular textbooks and the other grades will have high school supervised correspondence courses.[1/]

Up to this last year, educators in Alaska have not always been in agreement with respect to the specific functions or objectives of the pilot schools. However, a growing interest on the part of parents of high school pupils has been shown in this type of high school instruction in Alaska.

1/ Narrative from Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska, to author, May 1955.

This increased interest in Alaska is indicated by the number of requests received by the Commissioner of Education for such schools to be established in isolated areas not having access to high school instruction. The following locations for pilot high schools have been considered for 1957-58, Annette Island, Anchor Point, Kasilof, Fort Yukon, Sand Point, and Tok Junction.[1/]

A meeting of pilot high school teachers, along with two supervisors from the Commissioner of Education Office, was held March 22, 1957, in Anchorage, Alaska, to discuss further needs and planning for this type of high school. It was brought out at the meeting by representatives attending that the demand was increasing for this type of school and that interest by parents was strong. Another indication of this upward trend has been the number of such schools the Commissioner of Education has placed under consideration for establishment in 1957-58. These locations are all isolated from a regular high school and must make use of extension courses from a state university if the children are to have high school advantages.

Nature of Organization of Instruction

Instructional materials were purchased and made available in the pilot high schools at the beginning of the school year for the English, science and mathematics courses for the estimated number of pupils given in the spring survey. This survey was made by the teacher to allow ample time to get instructional materials such as:

1/ Personal letter to Investigator from Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska, June 26, 1957.

> Textbooks, workbooks, and teaching materials as needed will be available in the pilot high schools at the beginning of the school year for the English, science and mathematics courses for the estimated number of pupils as indicated by the teacher in the spring survey.[1]

University Extension. In addition, correspondence courses in an elective fourth subject were ordered for the pupils who were enrolled in the ninth grade. These subjects had to be selected from the following list of courses required by the Office of Education:

> General Business (University of Nebraska, Commercial XIIIx followed by XIVx).
>
> Homemaking (University of Nebraska, Homemaking Ix followed by IIx). (Do laboratory work at home.)
>
> World Geography (University of Nebraska, Social Studies Ix followed by IIx).
>
> World History (University of Nebraska, Social Studies IIIx followed by IVx).[2]

Usual Student Work Load. The Commissioner of Education's policy has always been to require that the teacher in charge, immediately upon the close of the first day of school, wire the name of each of the ninth grade students enrolled and the name of the subject which that particular ninth grader elects as his fourth subject. These courses would then be ordered from the University of Nebraska by airmail and should arrive at the school within thirty days. Until the arrival of this course material, the pupils in the ninth grade would have only the three basic subjects.

1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 2.

2/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 1.

The usual student work load has been four high school subjects with one of those by correspondence from the University of Nebraska. However, whenever the elective fourth subject was delayed, it was always advisable for the teachers of pupils in the ninth grade to schedule more than five recitations per week in each of the basic subjects so that more than one hour per day might be spent with the new correspondence course when it arrived. In this manner, the four courses could all be completed at the end of the year as recommended by the Office of Education.[1/]

Greater emphasis will be placed upon the needs of the pupils in the near future through the Office of Education. The Territorial Board of Education, in its sixteenth regular session,[2/] went on record as favoring seven subjects in the elective fields for an academic year as the total school offering. In making this regulation, the Board of Education felt that the pilot high school program was worthwhile and should be expanded. With proper guidance, these additional electives, effective September 1, 1957, should further the development of social, vocational, and other skills.

Emphasis on Pupil Needs

Exploration of the Program. Exploratory experiences are not limited to one or two so-called try-out courses. By enriching the work in each of the basic subjects and by increasing the number of electives to seven, an

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1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 1.

2/ Mimeographed Minutes of Territorial Board of Education, Sixteenth Regular Session, February 4-15, 1957, Juneau, Alaska, p. 76.

expansion in the program is permitted through greater selection. Provision for this type of exploration had to be done by the teacher and pupils on a cooperative basis. Teaching methods, much more so than the course content, permitted exploration of the pupil's talents. In classrooms there has been flexibility to allow the student an opportunity to participate in planning learning experiences. When the student had a choice of the learning activities to reach his objectives, he was much more given to using his primary abilities and contributing more to the unit. In mathematics classes, choices by pupils were more limited than in the sciences and social sciences. Investigations made as a pilot high school teacher revealed that these fields offered opportunities for an individual to satisfy his interests and tastes through a flexible program rather than one found in the usual traditional high school situation.

Individual Instruction. An important function of the pilot high school has been to allow for individualized instruction through proper planning of courses. The type of time schedule planning has depended upon whether there were any seventh or eighth grade pupils who were also the responsibility of the teacher.[1/]

The daily preparation and recitation schedule has been very important to effect the most desirable results. The daily recitation period has been thirty minutes as was the preparation time. The type of planning to allow for the best individualized instruction, when seventh and eighth graders were involved, meant that the teacher had to plan a program which enabled

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1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 2.

him to be with the ninth graders for one-half hour at a time. However, the schedule had to provide for his being with the ninth graders at three different times during the day. The teacher also had to be with the seventh and eighth graders for a daily recitation in all of their basic subjects. During supervised study, the teacher should be helping in all levels. The time allotment was indicated for the ninth grade in the three basic subjects. For the seventh and eighth grades the time was also scheduled, but was not necessarily the time the teacher spent with them. It was the time the seventh or eighth grader spent on that particular subject in recitation and in supervised study periods. It has been required that each grade have its own schedule and that the teacher have a schedule which was a master plan. This incorporated not only those particular grades, but also made time allowance for the pupils in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades who were in school.

The ideas presented a period of planning the first thing in the morning. During this time the teacher could help each individual in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades with special lessons and could plan each persons work for the day. Supervised study for the other members of the class went on while the planning was going on in the homeroom. Later, each group could go into its own work and the teacher was with groups or with individuals as the need arose.

It has been advisable for those who were taking correspondence work to have specific times during the day when they could talk to the teacher and when the teacher could give them special help. The teacher planned one period in the morning and one in the afternoon when each pupil would be

actively engaged in his own assigned work. The teacher was then free to go to each individual to give help as needed. The usual pilot high school program in Alaska has included the seventh and eighth grades with the high school classes. It was felt that this was a desirable condition in that the eighth grade student was better equipped at the end of the year to plan for the ninth grade. This planning should lead to future development of the pilot high school.

Developing a Pilot High School Community

Parent-Teachers Association

The author found that much was done by a local Parent-Teachers Association, such as the one at Glennallen, towards building a pilot high school community. From discussions that took part in the May 1957 Parent-Teachers Association meeting, it was learned that the pilot high school could serve as a place for pupils to attend classes and also to receive guidance for other placement. It was the opinion of the group that whenever a pupil could be directed to a regular high school where a greater variety of activities than were available at the pilot high school, and if the parents were financially able to send them, that the pilot high school teacher should take the initiative in such guidance and action. It was felt that this was a very healthy condition of community interest and vigor in the welfare of the pupils and also that the community was beginning to realize more fully the value of the pilot high school. The author wishes to report good success with placing students in the Mt. Edgecumbe Alaska Native Service School in Sitka, Alaska, where courses in nursing are planned for them this fall. At the end of two

years, those who elected the practical nursing program, can be prepared to to into such positions with the Alaska Native Service Hospitals or the Alaska Public Health Service. However, before these students could obtain admission, they and their parents would come for conferences relative to proper course selection and placement.[1]

Parent-Teacher Conferences

In conferences with parents and students, it was a policy to suggest that they had contributions to make to the activities of the school and community and that the potentialities of the pupils should be developed where this could best be done. Whenever it was felt best for the student to continue attendance at the pilot high school, and sometimes this was so, the planning would include a tentative program for the next school year. Confidence and support from the parents were the end result from a satisfied pupil who could see the road he was taking.

Support of local legislators. Support from local legislators is a "must" for education in territorial schools as well as in many other lines. A struggle existed in Alaska the last legislative session in obtaining an increase in appropriations over the last biennium. "This support was necessary since over a period of years, school population had increased 14% each year. An increase was necessary and it was up to the school people in each locality to so inform the patrons."[2] Much was done by teachers to inform citizens of this condition of need. The Commissioner of Education anticipated

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[1] Minutes of Glennallen Parent-Teachers Association, May 1957.

[2] Letter to author from Commissioner of Education, December 1956.

that pilot high schools might have to be discontinued if the budget were not increased.[1] Through the efforts of the Alaska Education Association, the Commissioner of Education Office and teachers in the field working together to bring the issue before parents, enough pressure was brought to bear upon legislators to realize the need and pass sufficient appropriation. After informing parents of the crisis, parents sent letters and telegrams to the Territorial legislators requesting that the budget as requested by the Commissioner of Education be approved.

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[1] Ibid., p. 2.

CHAPTER IV

GROWTH OF PILOT HIGH SCHOOLS IN ALASKA

It is apparent from information obtained from other states that experimental schools did not originate in Alaska. However, it does appear that in the Territory of Alaska the present need has been such as to make demands for expansion of this type of education.

Original Pilot High Schools

The original pilot high schools began in isolated areas in 1955 in Alaska, to meet the needs of students of parents who had come to Alaska from the States and felt there was a definite lack of opportunity for high school training, other than by home correspondence study. Realizing the social needs of the young people, communities made this known to the Commissioner of Education through those parents. The Office of Education in Juneau, Alaska, then decided to try the idea of setting up pilot high schools on a trial basis. These experimental schools were set up in isolated communities, and in general, offered approximately the same high school subject-matter instruction as regular high schools, but did not have en enrollment over twenty-one students.

The school year, 1955-56, from information given the investigator by parents and other citizens in Alaska, marked a significant point in bridging a gap in education between the eighth grade and the regular conventional high school. By authority from the Territorial Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education set up three schools at Hope, Ninilchik and Glennallen.

Each of these three schools was set up in accordance with regulations of a guide by the Office of Education.[1]

Hope. The little community of Hope, with a population of about 100 people, and located 88.5 miles from Anchorage on Turnagin Arm on Cook Inlet, had an initial enrollment of five pupils in the pilot high school for the first year. This school boasted the first high school graduate through pilot high school instruction last year. This student had completed three years of high school prior to going to Hope for the 1956-57 school year.

Ninilchik. Ninilchik, the other isolated community, is located on the Kenai Peninsula. The closer town is Homer which is 38 miles distant. This community had an initial enrollment in the pilot high school of twelve students. The enrollment for 1956-57 was nineteen. The community felt it had benefitted greatly by the high school program in that it now could get high school training for its children. The parents of prospective high school students have demanded that the program be continued.[2] The population of this community is distributed along the beach which is about fifteen miles long.

Glennallen. Glennallen is a rural community but is the distributing center for Gakona, Copper Center, and Kenny Lake communities. The closest regular high school is at Valdez, one hundred miles away. However, the roads are paved to all of the smaller communities mentioned and a central

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[1] High School Program in the Pilot High Schools for the 1955-56 School Year, issued by Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska.

[2] In conference for pilot high school teachers in Anchorage, Alaska, March 22, 1957.

junior high school is being considered. The thinking behind the pilot high school program in Glennallen has been that it would be a beginning or stepping stone to a regular high school eventually. The teachers in the pilot high school found the interest in the community as strong as ever.

Pilot High Schools Under Consideration

The Administrative Assistant to the Commissioner of Education, in a letter of June 26, stated "the pilot high school program is worthwhile and should be expanded."[1/] One of the recommendations given was that the six additional schools now under consideration, Annette Island, Anchor Point, Kasilof, Fort Yukon, Sand Point and Tok Junction should each have at least ten high school pupils. He stated that the designation of "Pilot High School" would be for those with ten or more pupils. Those with fewer students would not be designated as high schools, but those students would be encouraged to take correspondence courses and to attend the grade school to get help from the teacher. He also stated that if a few high school pupils meant an additional teacher, one should be employed. The feeling of the staff in the Commissioner of Education Office has been that the pilot high school program has been worthwhile and should be expanded. Also they have felt that more study should be done on eliminating operation problems and in putting the program on a sound educational basis. Recommendations are also asked for by that office from personnel in the field of pilot high school work. With this interest in the minds of laymen and teachers in the field,

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1/ Letter to writer from Commissioner of Education Office, June 26, 1957.

the writer feels that much will be contributed by them and that the program will continue to grow and take care of education for high school students in the isolated areas in Alaska. This interest is very commendable, and holds great promise for the future of pilot high schools. As a result, regular high schools should grow out of the pilot high schools if there is an expansion in population. The pilot high schools make provisions for superior students.

Provisions for Superior Students

Pupil-Teacher Planning. Experience has shown that the provisions for the superior student was enhanced greatly by the pupil-teacher planning permitted in the pilot high school. This was much encouraged by the pilot high school program's range of flexibility. The program does not recommend special courses, but rather allows for more flexible arrangement by the time schedule. This has permitted the student to exercise more imagination, initiative, and originality in their preparation of an assignment. By permitting enrichment of the assignments, it was found that more independent work was being done by the student and also that he became interested in going much further and at a pace equal to his capacities.

Schedule Planning. The schedule planning done by the teacher and pupils was provided for by a planning period the first thing in the morning. At this time the teacher helped students with special lessons and with the regular work for the day. While this was being done, the teacher in reality was carrying on a supervised study period for all supervised members of the class in the room. After the planning period, each group went into its own

work. The teacher could then be with groups or individuals as was necessary. This flexible arrangement in schedule took care of the individual as well as the group or groups. The extent to which this could be carried out was, of course, limited by the work lead the teacher had.

Provisions for the Slow Learning Student

The slow learner was a student that could benefit by pilot high school instruction.

Flexible Schedule. In teaching the slow learning student in a pilot high school, the flexible arrangement of the schedule and the teacher-pupil planning period in mornings, allowed the student to plan according to need and ability. In the history lesson, his contribution might be in illustrating a point through his artistic ability in such a way that his contribution received recognition by the entire class. In the pilot high school program a student may need additional experience in arithmetic as far back as the seventh grade level. In this event, he, along with the teacher and parent in conference, decides that is what should be done as he is not yet ready for general mathematics in high school. Students were permitted to carry part of their work in high school and part of it in the grades by scheduling for it. They were permitted to take up the deficiencies, for instance in arithmetic, by taking that particular subject on the grade school level. This arrangement placed the student on a level where he could achieve and get a self-satisfied feeling that he was improving himself in school.

Extra-Curricular Activities. In the pilot high school program the recess and recreation periods have not been slighted. There has been a fifteen minute break in the forenoon and a fifteen minute break in the afternoon. This has offered opportunity for supervised games, Where facilities are available, athletics planned for a two-hour period per week have been highly recommended for the pilot high school program.[1/] The slow learner might be good in some form of athletics and, when included in this program of recreation, made to feel like a regular member of the group as he grew into it. For example, one of the Glennallen students became an excellent table tennis player and was accepted and looked upon as one who excelled in this form of recreation. The regular social activities included this student as well as the superior student. Games at socials were a great stimulus to the slow learner if he enjoyed the activities. When he did,he sometimes was the life of the party.

Vocational Courses. In general, it was found that the vocational courses in homemaking were very useful. Many of the pilot high school students were Natives who could profit greatly from vocational courses which provided a reasonable laboratory situation in the home. Many of the Natives had the facilities necessary to profit by courses in homemaking. The homemaking courses for girls pretty well integrated clothing, foods, and management of a home, and carried this out in an artistic way.

The program for boys has been much more limited in that very few homes have had a workshop such as boys would like, or have been equipped with

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1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 2.

necessary tools for a woodworking or other trade experience course. However, interest has been shown on the part of boys that they would like to work out an arrangement with government officials to make use of the local facilities in the machine shops for training for mechanical vocations. These facilities or machine shops are owned by the Bureau of Public Roads. It is hoped that expansion of the pilot high school program might be permitted to include this resource.

Transfer to Special Schools. The large government shops at Glennallen, which are staffed with competent men in charge of the various departments, would make an excellent training facility on an apprentice basis if government regulations would permit. However, this accommodation would require additional personnel and special authority which perhaps would even require federal legislation. If this thinking should ever develop beyond the talking stage and materialize into a reality, boys could take training in any of the various mechanical trades.

However, not being able to do this, teachers have encouraged mature boys who were so inclined to apply for admission to Mt. Edgecumbe School for Natives in Sitka, Alaska, where training for these vocations is offered. They could apply for admission either to Sheldon Jackson Junior College, located at Sitka, or to some school in the United States. This would depend upon the financial ability and desire of parents. Sheldon Jack Junior College is equipping to teach vocations to both natives and whites. As yet, facilities for giving training in these vocations in any of the pilot high schools was inadequate. Students wanting this training were referred to other schools for taking care of this need.

Taking care of students' needs is in keeping with basic principles and philosophy of a pilot high school.

CHAPTER V

BASIC PRINCIPLES IN PLANNING THE PILOT HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The planning of a pilot high school curriculum must begin with consideration of young people in their early teens. Their many needs must be considered.

Student a First Consideration

The planning of the pilot high school program in Alaska has considered that the student should come first with respect to his educational needs. Students represented home of Natives and a population from the United States in the many trades and professions. The program has attempted to set up a framework to develop values and objectives to be achieved by pupils of this wide differences of background. What the individual needs were could be determined to some extent by observation, home visitations, conferences with parents, and testing. Parents were found helpful with course selection and as a support for the program when taken into partnership to guide the student in his work.

Proper Teacher Selection. To utilize the pilot high school program to its fullest extent required an understanding teacher and one who had a broad training with experience. Proper teacher selection is an important factor along with the parents and pupils for carrying out an effective pilot high school program. The minimum requirements for a teacher in Alaska is a bachelor degree with at least 16 semester hours in professional education.[1/]

1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 8, 1957, Juneau, Alaska, p. 2.

Proper teacher selection has helped to provide for better schedule planning since the experienced teacher has had a backlog of experience that has been helpful in realizing the importance of budgeting of time. The Office of Education has required that schedules be sent for approval by the end of the first month of school. During the year, departmental staff members have visited the schools and have noted the use made of the schedules for flexibility.

Scheduling. A recommended general plan has existed for scheduling pilot high school activities.[1/] This bulletin is quite general and it would be impossible for it to be specific because each school was somewhat different from the other. The pilot high school at Ninilchik had just the eighth grade included. The one at Glennallen had the seventh and eighth grades with the high school students and the one at Hope had the elementary and high school pupils together in the same room.

Importance of Schedules. The schedule has been flexible enough to allow students ample time to prepare their assignments and to avoid crowding or slighting of subjects due to a tight schedule. A tight schedule could cause poor study habits and attitudes. Combining subjects as much as possible, since the pupils were all in one homeroom situation, did much to avoid separation of subjects. The social sciences and natural sciences afforded many opportunities for combining with other subjects. Topics could be combined and made more interesting through enrichment and time

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1/ Office of Education, High School Program in the Pilot High Schools for 1955-56 School Years, Juneau, Alaska.

could be saved for other preparation. In this situation, it was felt that the pilot high school offered opportunities the conventional, departmentalized high school was unable to do. The pilot high schools have not been departmentalized.

Subject Offering. The basis for determining range of subject offering grew out of inventorying the interests, aptitudes, and learning ability of the students. In the freshman class, general mathematics was the more practical course to recommend as a study for the group. This served as a review of the more difficult eighth grade arithmetic and also as an interesting review for the more capable student. If the more capable student desired to take algebra the first year, he could do so if the teacher could schedule for the subject. If not, he could apply for a course by correspondence and do most of the work independently and see the teacher for help during a specific time set up in the schedule for students who were taking correspondence courses.

The usual arrangement was for the group as a whole to decide to take general mathematics and follow with algebra the next year if they chose to do so. There were students who, by choice, individually felt that they preferred a particular subject different from the group, but it was not the usual case. Sometimes it was felt that students needed to become acquainted with a field new to them. A range of five electives[1/] could be offered and it was also possible to arrange for others upon writing the Office of Education for permission. Two students in Glennallen wanted a course in American

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1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 2.

Government and permission was granted immediately. In view of this practice, the range of studies was tentatively set and could be widened when a need was shown and permission granted by the Office of Education.

Opportunities for Pilot High School Students

The outline for extra-curricular activities beyond the regular classroom work has been given in the general outline for pilot high schools.[1] This provided for or required recesses in addition to the noon lunch period. When interest was strong among the students in some particular game like table tennis, regular tournaments were planned. Other activities or games that the pupils enjoyed were softball, horse shoe games, and outdoor basketball. Several community clubs were enjoyed by students which had regular socials.

Community Socials. Each community had its own service clubs which had gatherings and the public was invited for special occasions during the year. Then there were the 4-H clubs which were sponsored by the Agricultural Extension Service of the University of Alaska. The 4-H clubs were separate from the school. This was a matter of policy set by the Extension Service. Other organizations for pupils were Sky Pilots for the boys, and Pioneer Girls for the girls, sponsored by the Central Alaska Missions, Inc. The sponsors of these two clubs were very prompt and effective in organizations. Hobbies were the usual activities for the boys such as building model planes and

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1/ Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 2.

2/ Meeting with Mary Lou Rideout, Extension Service, Palmer, Alaska, March, 1957.

other woodworking activities. The usual activities planned for Pioneer Girls were combined with cultural and ethical training. The Central Alaska Missions, Inc. is non-denominational.

Citizenship Clubs in School. In addition to these community clubs, the school schedule permitted citizenship clubs within the school as a part of the regular curriculum. Citizenship clubs were carried on with a view to teaching parliamentary procedure centered around a school project.

Expected Curriculum Improvement

Suggestions for improving, organizing and evaluating the pilot high school program have always been invited by the Office of Education.[1/] In a meeting of pilot high school teachers and supervisors in Anchorage, Alaska, March 22, 1957, the year's operations were reviewed. It was suggested that the course content for the ninth grade by only one high school course by correspondence and the other three by regular classroom instruction. More freedom to get away from correspondence courses for grades beyond the ninth were also suggested. Further improvement is to be expected this year.

Curriculum Supervisor Appointed. It is expected that improvement in the curriculum will take place with the assistance of Miss Joan Terry, newly appointed Curriculum Supervisor. Miss Terry is an expert on construction of curriculum and is expected to help improve selection of electives and course content and methods. This expected improvement was announced in a meeting of the Territorial Board of Education in February, 1957. Her

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1/ Letter to author from Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska, March 13, 1957.

assignment included working with the University of Alaska on a curriculum development program financed by special research funds. Miss Terry has been assigned to work and confer with district teachers and curriculum committees. She is also to make evaluations through group studies with teachers to determine needs of Alaska schools.[1]

Improvements in Course of Study. This added service in curriculum building should be a great help towards the outlining of a course of study which would aid the pilot high schools. These schools have been operating on a general sort of an outline. This outline has been supplemented by conferences with supervisors from the Office of Education which has been excellent for attempting to do something so new in Alaska. The curriculum supervisor has been assigned visitation work out of the Anchorage Field Office which will take her to the pilot high schools. The pilot high schools are on the Kenai Peninsula and on the Road Belt. It is expected this addition will help solve the types of problems that have existed.

Since the pilot high school program considers the pupil first, the curriculum supervisor should aid the teachers in learning to better understand the pupils.

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[1] Mimeographed Minutes of Territorial Board of Education, Sixteenth Regular Session, February 4-15, 1957, p. 42.

CHAPTER VI

TEACHING PROBLEMS IN A PILOT HIGH SCHOOL

The investigator, comparing notes with other pilot high school teachers, found that approximately one-fourth of the students in pilot high schools were Natives. High school was something newer to those pupils than the average white student who, not more than a few years ago, had come from the States. With Alaska having been designated as a defense area, the school population had been increasing at a rate of 14% each year for several years.[1/] Native and white students had adjustments to make. These factors presented problems for the teachers. Perhaps the greatest was understanding the pupils.

Understanding the Pupils

Problems of Native Students. The investigator found a wide gap of differences in reading ability between the Natives and whites. The background of English language usage in the homes of Natives showed that Native children were lacking in this practice in comparison with white pupils. This was reflected in their speaking and pronunciation of English. Those who had been taught in a regular Alaskan Native school were found to be slower than those who were products of public schools and had experienced opportunities of communicating with white children. The average pilot high school teacher knew that there were wide individual differences in reading ability among high school students. The differences between whites and the Natives was

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1/ Letter from Commissioner of Education to writer, December 1956.

due to the use of the Native language in the home. It was apparent to the investigator that competence in handling this situation of such wide differences was to be gained by making careful evaluations and by proceeding with caution to make improvements in reading. Native pupils are, as a whole, timid and shy, and finding material to suit the level of the student without making him feel inferior, was a real problem, especially with limited facilities. A project such as a review of eighth grade classics in the ninth grade was one of the means employed since teachers did have such reading material in every pilot high school.

Supervised oral practice was a technique used by the teachers to make observations of weaknesses that could be used later for planning corrective measures. After skill had been developed in establishing good relations with students, teaching became easier in that communication between the teacher and student was freer. Native students were in position to gain socially by being in pilot high schools with white pupils. Unfortunately, reading was not the only area where weaknesses were discovered in Native students. 1/ Another area of weaknesses was found in arithmetical reasoning.

Considering Individual Differences

Another Problem of Pilot High Schools. Up until after World War II, Natives had very little money. The economy was very much changed after the influx of government employees from the States. As a result, there developed

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1/ Investigator in conference with pilot high school teachers in Anchorage, Alaska, March 22, 1957.

a greater need for the Native student to learn to develop a mathematical literacy to enable him to more fully understand what was going on in the surroundings about him in that field. Understandings, appreciations, and insights into general mathematics, as well as computational skills, needed to be stressed. It was found that Native students needed more review than whites. A review of elementary arithmetic was found necessary. The author found as a whole that Native students were lacking in the essential skills in computation. One family of Natives[1/] decided that it wanted its girl to review elementary arithmetic under her former teacher and to take part-time work in the pilot high school. This type of adjustment in the program for remedial work in arithmetic was not uncommon.

The chief problem of Natives seems to have been to encourage educational activities that would provide the proper training in concepts of arithmetical fundamentals. When this training was attempted by going back to a lower grade, it was necessary to convince the parent and child to make the program work out satisfactorily. Flexibility of the pilot high school permitted this. Other problems required attention.

Problems for Teachers

Records Presented a Problem. The people who move most frequently have been military personnel, engineers, and skilled tradesmen. These people serve in the Air Force, Alaska Communications System, U. S. Coast Guard, Bureau of Public Roads, Civil Aeronautics Authority, and as people working

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1/ Investigator in conference with Mr. and Mrs. Harry Johns, Copper Center, Alaska, November 1956.

for private construction firms and others for limited periods. Students from these homes often came to school before a request had been made for their permanent school records. In such cases the teacher had no information about the pupil's past record. The teacher had to rely upon the students and parents for records. One occasion arose where this was damaging to the student.

Before records of new students were available, they had to be requested. It sometimes took as long as a month before replies were received. Until those records would arrive, the teacher was denied a study of the pupil's past school and health records for guidance purposes. This type of student, if he was an upperclassman, usually had to wait about thirty days before his correspondence materials would arrive from the University of Nebraska. The student was hampered by not having had the benefit of earlier planning. The teacher had to substitute courses similar to the ones ordered. However, the tradition of going to school is strong among the type of people who are civil service employees. They were also quite reliable in a very high percentage of cases concerning information for their children.

Facilities for Physical Activities. Facilities for physical activities have been limited in the pilot high school systems. A school has been considered lucky to have a recreation room, some table tennis equipment, or other inexpensive equipment. However, during the cold winter months, it was surprising how the students improvised with respect to indoor amusements that are recreational. During the spring months softball was a very popular game and contests with other schools took place. Volleyball was also enjoyed by both boys and girls outdoors.

Student Dislike of Much Writing. An objection frequently heard and raised against the pilot high school program was that students beyond the ninth grade were required to take their subjects by correspondence. This dislike was raised by parents. Some students were definitely opposed to the great amount of writing that they had to do for each lesson and they felt that they could do better by doing the reading assignments and by having regularly scheduled full period recitations. The investigator found that the superior students could do better by correspondence than the average student. However, for the average student, it worked better to have two courses by correspondence and the other two by regular class recitation than by writing the lesson and mailing it in to the University of Nebraska. At Glennallen, the Office of Education allowed the teaching of a mathematics course and an American Government course by regular class instruction instead of by correspondence. The courses were successful and students taking them expressed a preference of doing it that way. This reduced the great amount of writing to which they objected and it solved their problem.

Seasonal Absences. Seasonal absences were a problem where parents depended upon trapping for an income. This was the case at Ninilchik,[1/] as reported by the teacher there. The student left with his father during the latter part of the winter for the trapline. Other cases of investigation revealed that the winter's meat supply must be obtained while the moose or caribou were available during the fall season before too much snow arrived and made transportation difficult with respect to getting the meat home.

1/ Investigator in conference with pilot high school teachers in Anchorage, Alaska, March 22, 1957.

This was a problem very vital to many Native families and was the main source for their meat as they could not afford the prices of meats sold in stores.

Inspite of the problems in pilot high schools, the opportunities to deal effectively with them existed in that the enrollments were small. Freedom for better guidance was permitted by the class schedules. General satisfaction among parents has led to a demand for continued progress of pilot high schools.

CHAPTER VII

PROGRESSIVE FEATURES OF THE PILOT HIGH SCHOOL

The basic idea behind the High School Program in the Pilot High Schools for the 1955-56 School Year[1] had as its main purpose the setting up of a flexible program. This program was to accommodate students coming from many backgrounds and degrees of proficiency in school accomplishments.

Effective Pupil-Teacher Planning

Conferences. In the pilot high schools, teachers had the opportunity to share with parents in the planning of a course of instruction for the student by conferences planned with that object in mind. However, the success of such conferences was dependent upon wise planning on the part of the teacher. It was the duty of the teacher to be sure that the conference dealt with the aptitudes and general ability to learn of the student. The student, having been in conference, was given an opportunity to be heard in a democratic way. Such experiences, as was found by the investigator, taught democracy and created a working agreement with the student. One student,[2] in particular, wanted to drop the General Business course. After a conference and a review of his record, he was convinced that he could make up the unfinished work. This student completed the course.

Use of Test Records. In using test records in conferences with parents, numerical scores were not given. The reason for this was to prevent one

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[1] Office of Education, Department of Education Mimeographed Bulletin No. 7, 1955-56, Juneau, Alaska, p. 5.

[2] Investigator in conference with Herman Jackson, student in 1956, from Copper Center, Alaska.

family in the community from comparing its child with that of another in such a way as to create jealousy. Results were given in terms of general levels of ability rather than in specific numerical values. It was found that no difficulty was experienced by this policy.

Students From Itinerant Families. The high school population in Alaska has been quite mobile because civil service personnel made up a great number of parents of high school pupils. These people were transferred in and out of an area or community as their services were needed. This was also true of personnel working for private contractors. To accommodate pupils of itinerant people in Alaska, the Board of Education increased the number of elective subjects from five to seven.[1] Though the new addition was aimed at more flexibility, the change was not intended to be so broad as to get away from a program one ordinarily finds in a regular departmentalized high school. The choice of these electives was intended to be wisely used, as the writer found in the Minutes of the Board of Education:

> Use of elective credits -- to be selected with guidance aimed at utilization of these credits to develop social vocational or other skills in the pupil.[2]

From this directive, only one may see that the thinking of the Board was to expand the educational program by using guidance to first discover needs and then direct the pupil into elective units that would meet those needs.

Small Enrollments. Low enrollments in pilot high schools[3] allowed for greater freedom in giving more individual attention to students than

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1/ Mimeographed Minutes of Territorial Board of Education, Sixteenth Regular Session, Juneau Alaska, February 4-15, 1957, p. 76.

2/ Ibid., p. 76.

3/ Office of Education, Alaska Educational Directory, Juneau, Alaska, 1955-56.

was permitted by the time schedule. The highest enrollment of the three pilot high schools in 1955-56 was Glennallen with nineteen pupils. In 1956-57, Ninilchik had an enrollment of nineteen. Hope has had an enrollment of five pupils each year. The average enrollment of the three schools has been ten.[1/] This small enrollment gave the teacher more opportunity to observe students for guidance. Students who could get the means to attend a regular high school the following year were aided by the school. An example of this feature of the small school is one boy, who had athletic ability, was guided into attending Mt. Edgecumbe at Sitka. Here some vocational experiences are also available that are not offered at the pilot high school. This procedure was also followed with four girls who wanted nurses training courses which were offered at Mt. Edgecumbe.

The second main feature of the pilot high school program is the use one may make of local community resources to enrich the curriculum and social activities as well.

Making Use of Community Resources in a Pilot High School

Alaska Public Health Service.[2/] The Alaska Public Health Service was a great aid in the planning of a health program in the Glennallen community. In conjunction with the Faith Hospital, and its staff of nurses and two doctors, the health needs of the pupils were taken care of as they arose. The Faith Hospital doctors carried out an all-school physical examination.

1/ Office of Education, Personal letter to author, Juneau, Alaska, June 26, 1957.

2/ The Alaska Public Health Service is an organization receiving its appropriations from the Territorial Legislature each biennium.

Each pupil was examined and findings were recorded on health record cards. Throughout the year, the Public Health Nurse, whose offices were right on the school grounds, would follow up suggestions made by the doctors relative to vaccinations for polio and other diseases. In addition to this, a series of instructional exercises were planned by the doctors to be given at the school once a month. This supplemental health program consisted of having the doctor from the hospital report to the pilot high school and talk to the students on some beneficial health topic. The students were permitted to ask questions and to relate the questions to their regular school health program.

Church Organizations. Church organizations existed in every pilot high school community. They are either Protestant or Roman Catholic. Each of these had organizations or clubs for its young people which pilot high school students could always join. The various clubs sponsored after-school exercises supporting moral and ethical training and were always available to the students. In addition to the sponsoring of clubs for moral and ethical training, church organizations were of a great help in that they had leadership personnel. They were also a source for musical talent. Leadership personnel in community organizations helped with the organization of a Parent-Teacher Association and also The Copper Valley Community Library. This talent was often used to provide cultural entertainment for other community organizations.

Homemakers. The Homemakers Club wss an organization sponsored by the women in the community. It sponsored homemaking activities and gave demonstrations and programs to which the public was oftentimes invited. To

round out the club's yearly activities, a dinner was given in December and school children were invited to take part in the program of entertainment. This entertainment often included talent from church leadership personnel. There were also clubs not sponsored by church organizations which rendered service to the pilot high school students.

4-H Clubs. The 4-H clubs, sponsored by the University of Alaska Extension Service, were separate from the school's activities, although some assistance was given by the pilot high school teacher. The pupils were active in developing films and in planning exhibits of work completed for the 4-H club in the arts and crafts. The club activities were largely educational and money was raised for a summer camp outing for members of the club.

Cooperation on the part of the school with community organizations and clubs aided the pilot high school teacher in making evaluations of them in terms of school benefits. It also strengthened his position in guiding them. This was important to facilitate the school program for better evaluation.

CHAPTER VIII

FACTORS IN EVALUATING THE PILOT HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The first testing program to evaluate elementary pupils in the Territorial schools was begun in the spring of 1956. In November of that year the pilot high schools were included in the program.

Testing Program

Standardized Tests. The Stanford Achievement Tests[1] were used for the elementary grades in the spring of 1956. The SRA Primary Mental Abilities Tests[2] were used for the pilot high school students in November of that year. In April of each year, the Metropolitan Achievement Tests[3] have been used as a final examination for the eighth grade pupils. The SRA tests were scored by IBM machines and results were sent to the school for filing and use. The other tests were scored by the teacher, but numerical scores of them were sent to the Office of Education in Juneau, but the profiles were kept at the school and placed in the files for future use. This was found to be a standard practice required by the Office of Education.[4] In addition to the standardized tests, teachers were at liberty to make their own tests.

1/ Office of Education, Report of The Commissioner of Education, Juneau, Alaska, June 30, 1956, p. 30.

2/ SRA Tests are published by Science Research Associates, University of Iowa, Iowa City.

3/ Metropolitan Achievement Tests are published by World Book Company, Yonkers, New York.

4/ Office of Education, letter to investigator, Juneau, Alaska, October 26, 1956.

Teacher-Made Tests. It was found that tests made by the teachers aided them in their day-to-day estimates of work covered. Informal testing had a very useful value in specific guidance relating to particular subjects under instruction and for future planning for the student.

Essay Tests. Another form of testing that was much used at the Glennallen pilot high school was the essay type tests. This was done to give students practice in organizing their material logically and in a unified and coherent sequence.

Use of Test Results. The Office of Education required that permanent record cards be kept of pilot high school students. Test results were indicated on these cards.[1] Also, observations of the student's conduct, made by the teacher were recorded. Pilot high school teachers considered observation data valuable information to use in determining strengths and weaknesses of students. These observations were also thought useful in diagnosing difficulties in certain areas of subject matter, and even to the extent of behavior difficulties.[2] The testing program was valuable in screening pupils who were in need of special guidance as well as locating the outstanding pupils.

Provisions for Outstanding Students. In regard to provisions for the outstanding or exceptional student, the statement was made by the Territorial Board of Education:

1/ Office of Education, General Instructions for the Operation of Schools Outside Incorporated Districts, 1956, Juneau, Alaska, p. 48.

2/ Information obtained by author from Teachers' Meeting, Anchorage, Alaska, March 22, 1957.

> Provision will be made to allow partial units of credit for enrichment seminars, special topics courses or special subjects, activities, etc., for pupils of demonstrably superior abilities.[1]

The student with an I. Q. of at least 110 and well adjusted emotionally and in good health were common requirements in the pilot high schools for extra work assignments.

Administrative Evaluations. School administrators in the pilot high schools felt that the provision made by the Board of Education had the following advantages for the pilot high school student:[2]

1. The pupils could be stimulated to work to capacity. The more able pupil was not held back by the slower ones.
2. Enriching the curriculum left room for the inclusion of many activities of sound educational value.
3. Leadership qualities could be brought out from the superior student.
4. Time was saved for the student who had the ability to complete the course sooner than the required time.

In making the above evaluations, it was felt that the pilot high school program as a whole was worthwhile and should be expanded and continued.

1/ Mimeographed Minutes of Territorial Board of Education, Sixteenth Regular Session, Juneau, Alaska, February 4-15, 1957, p. 76.

2/ Information obtained by author from Teachers' meeting, Anchorage, Alaska, March 22, 1957.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY

From the material compiled in this investigation, it was found that experimental education has existed in the United States for quite some time. It seems to have taken a specific form in the Winnetka Plan in 1919. The Winnetka Schools are very active in their experimental plan to date, and it is felt they are meeting the needs of their students better than any conventional school plan they know of.

The pilot high schools in Alaska are serving a very distinct need in that they are providing high school instruction for pupils in isolated areas. Without this setup, many pupils of high school age there would be unable to get formal school instruction beyond the eighth grade.

One of the very important functions in teaching is to understand the pupil and adjust the subject matter to suit his individual needs and capacities. This, it is felt, the pilot high school was able to do because of the low enrollment in each school. The low enrollment also made allowances for better opportunities in guidance with a flexible school schedule.

The Territorial Board of Education has made more room for the program in their resolutions and recommendations to increase electives and more use of guidance in schools.

With the added impetus given experimentation in education by the National Association of Secondary School Principals in May, 1956, it would seem the pilot high schools in Alaska should be allowed to prove their value. From information showing the number who have availed themselves of the

opportunities afforded in pilot high schools in isolated areas, it would appear that this type of school instruction is an important means of furthering education in Alaska.

Evidence shows that the program is expected to expand and that more isolated communities in Alaska will be permitted to have such schools. The pilot high school porgram in Alaska is only two years old. It is too new to be fully evaluated as the experience so far has been too limited to make any definite conclusions at this date.

Perhaps no better summary can be given at this time than that stated by Mr. Robert P. Isaac:

> "Our feeling at this time is that the pilot high school program is worthwhile and should be expanded; however, it was also thought much more study should be done to eliminate operational problems and put the program on a sound educational basis. With this in mind, we would be glad to get your recommendations when they are available."[1]

To arrive at a definite conclusion at this early date on the pilot high school program's effectiveness would be speculation. The writer recommends further study when more information may be available in the course of three or four more years.

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[1] Official letter to author, June 26, 1957, from Robert P. Isaac, Administrative Assistant, Office of Education, Juneau, Alaska.

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