

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TECHNIQUES IN SCHOOL ORIENTATION

by

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B. S., Kansas State University, 1962

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree


MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1965

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer would like to express his appreciation to Dr. Herbert E. Kaiser, Assistant Professor of Education, Kansas State University, for his advice and guidance in the completion of this study.

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INTRODUCTION

Guidance has become more and more an accepted and vital part of our school programs all across the United States. Most educators agree on the validity of good guidance programs. In several of the more popular statements of guidance function we find that a vital part of the guidance program is the orientation and adjustment of students to school situations. It is the contention of this study that orientation is being carried on quite successfully in many areas. This success should be shared in order to make it more widespread.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was first to gather, examine, and evaluate current practices in the area of orientation. From this material a program may be synthesized for a given school system. A second purpose was to aid any classroom teacher, counselor, administrator, or parent in better understanding his individual role in the orientation of students at any given school level. A third purpose was to gather many and varied techniques which will aid the educator and parent in carrying out their individual orientation roles. Lastly, this report will present at the outset a general overview of the orientation process and present some of the general considerations which must be met as well as some of the pitfalls to be avoided.

The Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was limited to the elementary and

secondary schools, namely kindergarten through grade twelve. It was limited to orientation to the school and was not concerned with orientation in the school toward outside activities and institutions. This confined and limited the study to a realistic program and separated it as a part of the larger educational and guidance objective. The study was concerned with those programs, practices, and techniques which would aid in the adaptation and adjustment of the student to the school environment.

The Method of Study

This report was primarily a library research project using the facilities of Farrell Library at Kansas State University. It depends very heavily on educational periodicals due to the very nature of the topic. It was desired to include as many current orientation practices in the study as possible.

AN OVERVIEW AND GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF ORIENTATION

The Definition of Orientation

Whether it is that first trip to school for the new kindergartener or the move up to junior or senior high school, entrance into a new school setting can be a very trying experience for many children. Most authorities acknowledge that there is a definite guidance need at this crucial time of anxiety for the new student, be he a transfer or normal "September Starter." Unless adequate guidance is provided, the new student may suffer along for many months under fears and misconceptions developed due to erroneous or late information. He may very well develop a blurred or distorted picture of the school. This problem must be avoided and is the responsibility of that specific function of guidance called orientation.

Carter Good (30) defines orientation as, "The process of making a person aware of such facts in his school environment as rules, traditions, and educational offerings, for the purpose of facilitating effective adaptation." Froehlich (26) states that orientation is "the service which is given to students to help them adjust to the new school." There is still more to guidance.

Margaret Bennett (4) defines orientation in a very complete manner in her book, Guidance and Counseling in Groups.

We might say that orientation is a mutual process of learning on the part of new students, the faculty, and student body of an institution, whereby each group becomes better acquainted with the others, and each participates in an ongoing process which will help the new students to become an effectively functioning part of the

institution and help the institution to become responsive to the needs of a changing student body. Such a learning process cannot be confined to a small group of administrators and student leaders nor to a few events of a freshman induction program, though both may be significant aspects of the process.

This now gives a much clearer picture of the guidance function called orientation. Since the nature of this report will in part be to develop a better understanding of the orientation process, the definition will further be clarified as the nature of the problem, the need, the purpose, the content, the organizational responsibility, and the specific techniques of orientation are investigated.

The Problem of Orientation

Every year the cry is the same, "Where are the lockers?"; "What's a homeroom?"; "When do we pay in the cafeteria?"; "How can I get to room fifty-four?" The first day of school is certainly an exhausting experience for both teachers and students. Are the questions ever answered? Well, they usually are, in some manner or another. Overall there are far too few really adequate answers. Most schools answer most of the questions similar to the examples above, but far too few ever incorporate well planned comprehensive orientation activities into the guidance program. It is generally found that most school systems have some type of orientation whether it be a one day assembly program or an all inclusive comprehensive program. The problem is that for the most part educators are viewing orientation too narrowly. Orientation is often some kind of an optional unit in the English or social studies activities; it is allowed to occur more than planned to occur.

For the most part orientation is "happenstance." Chisholm (12) points this out in one area of orientation:

When the student registers as a high-school freshman, he is generally assumed to have the necessary knowledge and ability, unaided, to make an adequate appraisal of opportunities afforded by the school. One's contact with high school freshmen will convince him that they generally have only the vaguest idea, for example, of what even the terms which upperclassmen and teachers frequently use really mean. Many freshmen have very vague ideas about what "algebra" and the "social sciences" mean. Many who register for such work do not know the field referred to.

Smith and Josse (47) further underline the problem by saying:

Whenever an abrupt change in the educational system occurs, teachers notice that many students experience concomitant periods of stress and strain. These periods, characterized by "problem children," increased dropout rates, daydreaming, and rowdiness, have prompted educators to search for causes and to suggest procedures and techniques designed to lessen for the student the uncertainty of the transition periods.

When orientation is neglected problems result. It is well known that human beings function better in environments which are familiar to them, and which offer the least amount of anxiety and threat. When a child becomes anxious, his relationships with people who play important roles in his life are disturbed and are temporarily or even permanently disrupted. In the school this means the teacher and fellow pupils, and it would therefore follow that the student has a learning environment which is "out of balance." This situation may lead to further complications and a chronic condition of anxiety develops in which the child eventually finds the environment cruel, unjust, unpredictable, and very much in conflict with himself. The school environment as a whole may become a threat and the child may develop feelings that he is unloved, unwanted, and treated without consideration.

Margaret Bennett (4) puts it this way:

In any new environment an individual faces many perplexing choices and adjustments that if inadequately made, may cause unhappiness and prevent satisfactory growth. The nature of the adjustment that is made depends on the neophyte and the resulting personality pattern he brings to the environment. The new experiences may present a challenge for the examinations of life values and the reorganization of his life patterns.

It is not meant to say above that by the reduction of anxiety through orientation we are going to be able to curtail all discomforting situations or eliminate discipline problems or make school some kind of a day-care heaven. In fact it is believed that it would be quite unwise to resolve all the adjustment problems. The extreme application of the view of orientation here presented would guarantee that no child would ever become the least bit upset in any new school situation. He would be so prepared for the new school that only the external entrance would be noticeable; each student would remain a perfect example of calm, emotional balance and ease. This would not be very advisable. The compromise seems to arise when we consider the learning function. Is the emotional upset blocking learning, or is it creating learning? If the situation is a block, then it is probably our job in the schools to remove it, or at least aid in its removal. If the upset is teaching the child to deal with new situations in a constructive manner, then the school should not try to avoid the upset. It seems to be a matter of a value judgment, one we can not avoid. Orientation must be placed somewhere between always holding their hands and "sink-or-swim." Teachers probably will find themselves dropping children's hands a little more at each successive educational step, as these children are

better able to "go it alone."

Another product of our times is a faster and faster moving culture. More children go to more schools than ever before. Most of the school children now go to urban or suburban schools. Many of these schools are larger and more confusing every year. Most school systems are offering larger and larger programs of both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Many students are leaving school with far more credits than necessary under the law. There are even arrangements made to have high school students take college courses during the summers and during free time in their school day. More, more, more . . . more of everything including confusion, disorganization, and anxiety.

Smith and Josse (47) sum it up this way: "Today, our high schools have become huge unwieldy institutions. Those who enter them must be made to feel welcome or they will remain strangers to the rules and regulations necessary for survival in large organizations."

The Purposes of Orientation

Most human beings are faced with orientation and reorientation situations throughout life, and each of these situations almost always becomes more and more complex as life progresses. Skills, attitudes, and thought processes are needed by children which will enable them to meet and adapt to new situations in useful, growing, and healthy ways at every new stage of life.

Margaret Bennett (4) points out:

The objectives of orientation services to students in schools

are thus twofold: immediate for the new school situation, and long-range for the continuous orientation within changing situations throughout life. If both objectives are kept in mind for orientation services, each progressive step in schooling would become easier, and students should be preparing in an important way for life beyond school as well as experiencing more satisfying and fruitful living within each new school or college.

The broad purposes of learning are given a very comprehensive treatment by Margaret Bennett (4) in her book, Guidance and Counseling in Groups. These broad purposes are subdivided into specific goals as in the following:

1. To help the newcomer become acquainted with the new institution -- its history, traditions, purposes, physical plant and facilities, faculty and student body, rules and regulations, curricular and extracurricular opportunities and special services -- in order that he may adjust himself happily in the new environment through participation effectively in its life, and that he may utilize its opportunities for furthering his personal development.
2. To guide the newcomer in a reconsideration of his goals and purposes in relation to increased self-knowledge and in the perspective of his new opportunities for personal development as a basis for wise choices of experiences.
3. To assist the newcomer to improve his skill in making desirable adjustments within the new environment and in utilizing his various new opportunities and thus contribute to his increased skill in self direction.
4. To help and inspire the newcomer to make his own best unique contributions to his new school home.
5. To guide the newcomer in the interpretation and integration of his varied experiences in a wider social environment, in order to help him to broaden and deepen his perspective on life and plan more intelligently for the future.
6. To provide opportunities for the faculty and student body to become acquainted with the newcomers, to become aware of their needs and their potential contributions within the institution, and, in cooperation with them, to re-examine and adapt curricular and extracurricular opportunities in the light of this new understanding.

7. To help all individuals to develop the perspectives and skills that will enable them to meet and utilize new situations throughout life more effectively.

Orientation, thus conceived, can foster the personal growth of all who are involved. It serves as a catalyzer or ferment within an institution to keep it flexible and responsive to a changing population, and at the same time as a conserver of intrinsic and enduring values.

Other authors such as Peters and Farwell (41) use similar listings of purposes.

Many experts further contend that the purpose of orientation is dual. It may be factual and consist of dispensing that information felt necessary for students, or it may be attitudinal with the purpose of developing attitudes toward self-orientation. Good orientation will incorporate both of these purposes.

Some schools may not wish to state their objectives in terms which describe the effect they have on student adjustment. Clifford Froehlich in his book Guidance Services in Smaller Schools (27) recommends four criteria which any school could use to determine the extent to which its program meets generally accepted criteria. These criteria speak of seventh graders but could easily be expanded to other grade levels.

1. A good orientation program should familiarize the sixth-grade pupils with the junior high school while they are still in the elementary school.

2. Adequate provision should be made to help pupils feel at home the first day at the junior high school.

3. There should be a definite and carefully prepared program of orientation anticipating and meeting the needs of incoming seventh grade pupils during the first weeks of school.

4. A good orientation program should also include some means of acquainting the parents of new pupils with the new school.

Since the thinking on purposes of orientation is very closely linked with content and nature of orientation, the following discussion will be very much related to the above purposes.

The Nature of Orientation

Although the increments on the educational ladder may vary from state to state and even from school system to school system, there are at least three distinct and important changes for the child. The first of these takes place when the youngster has his first experience with formal education and may occur at nursery school, kindergarten, or first grade. The next change takes place when the change is made from elementary school to secondary school. Often this actually involves two changes, one from elementary to junior high school and the other from junior to senior high school. The last change which is significant inside the school system is the change from school to school or transfer change.

In dealing with the first two of the above listed changes, we find that there are three major times when orientation may be thought of as taking place: preceding entrance to the new school, the first week in the new school, and during the first term.

The preentrance activities have the major objectives of creating general attitudes which are favorable to the new school. There is little effort made to deal with specifics, and generalizations are of prime concern at this time.

The first week of school will contain most of the concentrated orientation. The detailed topics are of prime concern. Here the major problem will be to prevent the using of the cafeteria from becoming a terrifying experience, or the finding of the restroom from being an insurmountable barrier.

The "during the term" orientation is primarily used to cover the low priority topics. Here the child will learn how to use the library, the school song, and perhaps some greater detail in the area of extra curricular activities.

It is significant to note here that most of the above activity is "group" in nature. Undoubtedly the bulk of orientation is group in nature; therefore a group activity is at the very heart of orientation.

The group is related in another way. Freshman "hazing" is still common in many schools in spite of administrative efforts to the contrary, and almost all schools have some method of "announcing" the formal entry of the new students into the group. Here then lies the key to the tensions and conflicts of the new student. It is the belief of Smith and Josse (47) that the rationale of any orientation program must be based on the fact that the new student is changing groups. They believe that failure to base transition easing activities on a sound social-psychological basis could actually hinder development rather than aid it.

A group . . . consists of two or more persons who share norms about certain things with one another and whose social roles are

closely interlocking. An eighth grade student is a member of many groups, one of which is his eighth grade class. Among the norms shared by this group are certain ways in which high school is perceived. An eighth grade student is also a member of a family who hold a set of norms about high school, especially if a member of that family already attends or has attended high school. He may share a set of norms with the gang or clique of which he is a member. The norms of the primary group will, to a considerable extent, determine the kinds of attitudes he may have about high school.

A first step then in an effective orientation program will be to ascertain the norms held by the entering group and to correct distortions and clarify vague ideas concerning behaviors expected of new students.

A long range program must convince elementary school teachers of their importance and influence in helping students develop frames of reference and group norms that serve to heighten interest and create pleasurable anticipation for this period of transition.

Family norms also affect the behavior of the beginning high school student. The parents who dismiss disciplinary action by the school as humorous because they did similar things years ago, create attitudes about high school that may persist despite all efforts to change them. Long range orientation programs must then try to build adequate and useful frames of reference for parents. The new experiences should be dramatized by the parents as a big step in the process of growing up. The child will then seek to accept his changing roles and strive for greater maturity. (47)

Another change particularly notable in entering junior high students is the forced membership in a larger group formed by feeder schools with various norms. This group is also at the bottom of the hierarchical arrangement, and in short a new role system must be learned. The way the student learns these roles will affect his personality and adjustment.

Status is another concept worthy of consideration. Status as it existed in old groups in the feeder schools no longer exists. New

status must be found. Competition arises. Some find they are not able or willing to do as well as they had done previously. Some students accept the challenge and redouble their efforts to achieve. Others, who see the challenge as a threat, may drop out of the competition and withdraw. At best there is a period of relative insecurity and definite loss of prestige.

An effective orientation program must recognize the reorientation of roles and provide a variety of avenues for achievement as well as reasonable standards of judging achievement so that all new students will have some opportunities to demonstrate their competencies. The sooner this demonstration takes place, the more rapidly the student will become oriented to his new role. Encouragement may be necessary for many students unaccustomed to such intensified competition. (47)

The new role system to be learned will include ways of behaving toward individuals in groups higher on the hierarchical scale, toward teachers, toward parents, and toward peers. There are countless new situations which are unfamiliar and ambiguous. Selective imitation may aid adjustment and opportunities to observe the group which the new student will join must be afforded in orientation. A good deal of evidence points up the idea that the more sudden and drastic the role demands, the greater the chance of marked personality change. This is even more true if the role change involves a great deal of unlearning of former roles. There must be opportunity for observation.

High schools must make it easy for their future students to observe and, in some cases, participate in activities sponsored by the school. The more these opportunities are utilized, the fewer ambiguous situations there will be for the student to face. If he has some basis for judging his new role, the student may find the change from elementary to high school more smooth and satisfying.

The student needs ample opportunity to interact with both his new peer group members and with members of the upper classes. These groups become important socializing influences. The resulting social groups can motivate the student to accept his new role prescriptions which the larger group demands. (47)

One further consideration becomes the acknowledgment of differences between real and ideal norms. Ideal norms are as shown in movies, handbooks, and lectures. These ideal norms will come into considerable conflict for many students with the real norms learned in the unsupervised social interaction. Schools must take a realistic look at students. Polyanna-like detachment from student "bull" sessions will not work for successful orientation.

It appears from the above discussion that there are many problems in the group approach centered around the three school changing periods mentioned.

One striking weakness comes in the apparent lack of individualism. Little can be said except that the problem must be recognized. Opportunities must be provided for the individual to express himself. This must be assumed in all phases of the orientation program.

Froehlich points out three principles which, if adhered to, will overcome major shortcomings in many programs.

"The orientation service should reach all pupils in new school situations." (26) This means not just orientation for the first, seventh, and tenth grades, but for transfers at any grade level as well. This means extra work, extra consideration, and some real empathy for the student lost not only in a new school but often in a new community.

"The second principle is that orientation is a continuing process." (26) Froehlich explains it this way:

This is one of the most frequently ignored principles. The orientation activities are confined to the first day in some schools. The persons who plan such a limited exposure must have remarkable faith in the efficacy of their orientation process. To expect that in one day -- even a long one -- pupils can gain the necessary knowledge and appreciation to make a satisfactory adjustment to the new school is, in the author's opinion, foolhardy. As a minimum, the pupils should have specialized help for the first term. The first day may cover such items as a knowledge of the school building and rules. But during the semester pupils must make decisions regarding such things as attendance at school functions, participation in extracurricular activities, and utilization of sources of help on problems. Satisfactory adjustment in these and other areas does not come from being told. It comes only from an understanding in terms which are consonant with personal attitudes and motivations. Some pupils will require individual counseling before they can make these adjustments; for most pupils, group procedures will be sufficient. But the orientation service must include definite provisions for identifying those pupils in need of counseling. All pupils can profit from a continuing orientation service; a few may reject the proffered assistance, but most will eagerly accept it.

Thirdly, "the orientation service should be planned to assist pupils in a wide variety of areas." (26) Although orientation is not some blanket panacea for the solution of all problems and certainly not therapy, it is by all means a preventive measure. Anticipation of student problems, thinking through from the student point of view, and observing students making satisfactory adjustments are primary parts of planning orientation.

Froehlich (26) suggests:

Imagine that you are a pupil just entering the first grade, or that you are an entering freshman in high school. Make a list of all the things about the school you would wish to know.

After you finish your list, check the items which you think

most pupils would want to know. The checked items, if your list is reasonably comprehensive, will indicate the desirable scope of an orientation service.

Were you surprised by the large number of items? Most adults are, because once a pupil has adjusted to the school, he tends to take as a matter of course the numerous details which had originally perplexed him.

The Content of Orientation

There are a multitude of items which should be included in good orientation. Perhaps the best way of finding them would be to look at listings presently being used.

Knight (35) gives ten areas for high school orientation.

1. The curriculum, its divisions, their content, requirements, and outcomes.
2. The program, its organization, its operation, and outcomes.
3. The academic subjects, requirements, objectives, values, and relationship.
4. The library, its function and use.
5. Attendance, absences, tardiness, and excuses.
6. Clubs and societies, purpose, nature, operation, and membership.
7. Scholarship standards, marking system, its ramifications and honors.
8. Examinations, objectives, values, and preparations.
9. Laboratory, procedures, purposes, and regulations.
10. Studying, budgeting time, notetaking, etc.

Gruhn and Douglas (31) list the following four broad areas of orientation content:

1. The customs and traditions of the school -- its history, songs and yells, special sports events, and honors and awards.

2. Extraclass activities -- assemblies, clubs, music, organizations, social functions, athletics, pupil government organizations, pupil publications, and speech groups.

3. Certain administrative policies -- the marking system, use of textbooks and equipment, basis for promotion and failures, use of the library, participation in extraclass activities, the cafeteria, transportation, homework, and final examinations.

4. Rules and regulations -- school hours, excuses for leaving classes or the building, absence and tardiness, changes in pupil programs, use of automobiles and bicycles, payment of fees and fines, mutilation of school property, correct conduct, transfer or withdrawal from school, library rules, makeup work for absence, responsibility for valuables, and fire drills.

Glen Smith (48) recommends the following topics for discussion:

1. The plan or layout of the school plant.
2. Policies governing school attendance.
3. Policies and opportunities relating to part-time jobs.
4. The nature and purposes of cocurricular activities.
5. History and traditions of the school.
6. Community agencies offering services to pupils.

Margaret Bennett (4) suggests these topics:

1. The new school plant.
2. The purposes of education at their level.
3. History and traditions of the new school.
4. Rules and regulations -- their purposes and how they might be improved through democratic procedures.
5. School citizenship and democratic leadership.
6. Special services and how to use them.
7. Getting acquainted and making friends.

8. Conserving time, energy and health.
9. Using new opportunities to the best advantage.
10. Curricular offerings -- their purposes and values.
11. Extracurricular opportunities -- their purposes and values.
12. Formulation of personal goals for the school years ahead.
13. Formulation of plans for well-balanced living at the new school level -- through work, play, and citizenship.
14. Study and learning in new situations.
15. Development of personal life values.
16. A plan for evaluating progress toward goals.
17. Group plans for contributing to the life of the school.
18. Evaluation of orientation services as guides for improved services to the next freshman group.

From these listings it should be possible to select those areas of particular need and interest in any given school system, and modify and adapt them for a custom made program.

The Responsibility of Orientation

Although every school system has a great deal of variety in line and staff relationships, and in the duties of various personnel, it may be safe to generalize somewhat to make the following responsibility designations.

In line with good administrative practices, the superintendent and principal together with the guidance director (if such a position exists) are the ultimate bearers of responsibility. In many cases they will delegate this responsibility to subordinates. One of these

subordinates may be the counselor. As many experts see him, the counselor is responsible for the problem investigation, the data collection, and synthesis. Organization and co-ordination functions are also often handled by the counselor. The administrators and counselors are usually in charge of most large group sessions in orientation and also for most activities conducted outside the school such as feeder school visitations.

There is a large part of the actual work of orientation borne by the classroom teachers in spite of all else. The smaller group sessions and the continuing orientation are practically the sole property of the classroom teacher. Here perhaps is where most of the breakdown in orientation comes. Is there a breakdown in communication or public relations when the classroom teacher feels orientation is adequate when conducted on a one day basis? If so, where does the fault lie?

It would be well to note here one problem which is found not only just in orientation or just in guidance but in all of education. Orientation programs need public relations. Administrators, counselors, and teachers need first of all to agree on the support of a program and then proceed to convince others of its validity. In other words there must be a certain amount of orientation to orientation.

Orientation and the Total Guidance Program

Orientation is obviously a part of the larger guidance program, but by the same token guidance is also part of the larger educational

process. All of life is orientation to something, someone, or some-place. Chisholm (12) points out:

The importance of leaving the decisions in the areas of guidance to the individual and helping him to make adequate decisions cannot be too strongly stressed. Guidance is conceived as a service designed to help the individual make more adequate decisions in the solutions of his problems. To that end, each pupil is helped to develop an educational plan, which is to be revised as conditions warrant. But the individual cannot develop an adequate plan -- cannot decide wisely -- unless he is informed concerning the problems around which the plan revolves; that is, guidance cannot function properly except with an informed student body. Thus, the extent to which guidance can function efficiently depends to a considerable degree upon the amount of information the student body has concerning the problems they as individuals face, the alternatives open to them, and the probable consequences of pursuing each alternative. The need in the orientation program has been adequately met when the program reaches all pupils, and to such an extent that an effective understanding results.

Peters and Farwell agree and add: (41)

At the outset, and depending upon the grade and the person, some individual preparation and attention will have to be an integral part of the orientation process. Many have conceived of all orientation as information and experiences common to all, but this negates the individuality of persons. The guidance point of view places the individual at the center of the adjusting-learning-maturing process, and the orientation process is only one part of the over-all guidance process. This implies that individual conferences for appraising information about the pupil and for giving information to the pupil may be desirable in assisting him in this next step. We should not "guess" that he understands his new environmental situation, but should make sure that through group procedures and individual attention he is able to relate the facts of the situation to himself and see direction in his action.

TECHNIQUES IN ORIENTATION

A discussion of orientation would be incomplete without some thought regarding specific techniques. The elementary school will be discussed first, followed by the junior high school and the senior high school in that order, since that is the common division found in schools today, namely six-three-three. There are many techniques described on the following pages which may be adapted to several different grade levels. There are others which are almost the exclusive property of some particular level. It is important to keep in mind that each reported technique should be modified and adapted to fit specific school and community situations. There is no effort made therefore to fit these techniques into a particular setting, only to report them as clearly and concisely as possible.

Orientation Techniques for the Elementary School

In many schools today there is a large amount of planning for the child's first school experience. Much of this takes place in the spring and is involved with parents as well as children. Calm reassured parents aid in creating feelings of calm and reassurance in their children.

Arensa Sondergaard tells of the program in Bronxville Elementary School, Bronxville, New York (49).

Spring registration of fall entrants has proved of definite help to parents and teachers. The parent about to place his child under the influence of adults unknown to him gains a degree of assurance; the teacher sensitive to these first impressions of children and

parents begins even now to plan needed procedures for the fall.

Frequently a gaily illustrated booklet is given the family telling of school hours, activities and learnings provided for, articles needed, and other such items of significance to those whom the booklet is meant to serve. A short personal history of the child is garnered as questions paramount to the child's well-being are mutually asked and discussed.

Often an invitation is extended to the parents for a spring showing of a film depicting nursery, kindergarten or first grade work. An understanding of the learnings involved and the importance of the guidance given to a group or an individual is thus fostered. Both parents meet the teacher informally, view the classroom where the children will operate, and meet the administrators and other staff members to whom they may wish to turn for help or guidance in the years to come. Here parents meet each other and sense a community of interests. Together, their children will venture on this new road to greater independence and enriched learning.

Following a spring get-together of the parents, the mailman may leave with the new entrant an invitation to come after regular school hours to view his classroom and teacher-to-be. With Mother present, the schoolroom is fully explored, the teacher at least partially accepted, equipment tried out, juice and a cookie enjoyed. Such a visit heightens anticipation and gives teacher and child a thimbleview of each other of direct help in establishing later and complete rapport.

Marshall O. Donley (16) reports these seven basic purposes to spring round-up or pre-enrollment activities.

1. Registering children prior to school entrance.
2. Providing preschool children an opportunity to become acquainted with the teacher and the classroom situation.
3. Telling parents about the organization and operation of the system.
4. Informing parents regarding the instructional program.
5. Explaining requirements for physical examinations of children prior to school entrance.
6. Acquainting parents with the school-lunch program.
7. Extending an invitation for P.T.A. membership.

Nicholas P. Georgiady, principal of Lydell School, Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, reports a similar program to Sondergaard, but makes some additions (28).

The school system, through its recreation department operates a summer nursery program utilizing the facilities of the community's schools. Children of preschool age, three- and four-year-olds, are eligible to participate in the six-week program. This provides children with an introduction to school and makes their adjustment in the fall an easier one.

A second aspect of the program is the spring registration of kindergarten children. The school system operates a two-year kindergarten program and the children who are chronologically eligible for the junior or first year kindergarten program register at their respective schools in May preceding the start of the fall term. The registration gives the parents and the children an opportunity to see the school and to meet the kindergarten staff as well as the nurse and the principal. In addition, a handbook for parents has been developed by staff members and is distributed to parents at the spring registration. The handbook contains much information which is of value to parents in helping them prepare children for the start of school in the fall.

Another valuable feature in aiding pupils in their adjustment is the orientation schedule which has been developed. Each new kindergarten class is divided into halves, usually designated as Group A and Group B. On the first day of school, Group A (the first half of a class) will attend for one hour. On the second day, Group B (the second half of that class) will attend for one hour. On the third day, Group A will attend for one and one-half hours and on the fourth day, Group B will attend for one and one-half hours. On the fifth day, Group A will attend for the full two-hour period and on the sixth day, Group B will attend for the full two-hour period. On the seventh day, Groups A and B will attend together. Thus, the entire class will meet for the first time seven days after school has begun. For the previous six days, the teacher has had an opportunity to meet the children in a smaller group for a shorter period of time and has a much better opportunity to become acquainted with them. The children, too, appear to adjust to their class more rapidly when the group is smaller, and by the time the entire class begins to meet they have become much better oriented.

Carl Hassell (32) reports another spring orientation program but uses the parents uniquely:

While the youngsters got acquainted with each other in this kindergarten preview, their parents met for their workshops. The mornings started with a get-acquainted coffee period.

Then a discussion period got underway and the parents considered these topics: the purposes of kindergarten activities; how parents can help a child make a good start in school -- and particularly a good start in reading (here they discussed the meaning of "reading readiness"); school policies on parent-teacher conferences, reporting and bus safety; and the health program, including vaccinations, inoculations and clinic services.

Each discussion was preceded by a film which served as a common thinking point for the parents (one particularly helpful film was "The Frustrating Fours and Fascinating Fives"). Each session allowed ample time for questions and answers. A question box was set up so that parents could leave queries for the following session.

Hassell also reported summer home visits by kindergarten teachers during the summer. They were paid an extra half month and scheduled their visits anytime during the summer.

Hassell also reported some interesting evaluations:

The children (120 participated) will be eager for, or at least unfearful of, school; the parents (also 120) now know most of the answers and will not be telephoning anxious questions next fall; the parents know the school's open-door policy, they will be more ready for parent-teacher conferences and will work more effectively with teachers; and, of course, the parents now know why kindergarten is a "must."

The Linden School in South Bend, Indiana, uses an interesting slide program which concerns these four areas:

1. Introduction to school (picture of school, informal shots of teachers and school staff, children donning coats and hats).
2. Helping to prepare the child for school (picture of parents reading a story, picture of a local store, children doing an activity at home).
3. A kindergarten day (children pledging allegiance to the flag, playing with toys, rhythm games, painting at easel, listening

to a story or a record player, a flannelboard lesson).

4. School policies (patrol duty, children on playground, health checkup).

This program is coupled with other techniques to form an excellent basic program.

Betsy Mason (39) of Burns Valley Elementary School in Clearlake Highlands, California, reports these simple techniques she uses:

Beginning around the first of March, one prospective kindergarten child visits my kindergarten each day, Monday through Thursday. Before these visits, I talk over with the kindergarteners their roles as hosts and hostesses. One child, preferably one who knows the visitor, is selected to be the visitor's "special friend." He helps the visitor hang up his coat, introduces him to other children, includes him in the activities, and answers his questions. He secures puzzles for him, helps him put paper on the easel, and accepts the responsibility of helping me help the visitor have a happy day.

During rest time, I jot down my observations of the visiting child's reactions. This helps me remember him when he enters in the fall.

I send home with the child papers to be filled out for his fall enrollment and a card with the child's name printed in manuscript. I also send a letter telling the parents how much I have enjoyed the child's visit and listing some of the things they can do to prepare their child for school.

This method has proved satisfactory in our situation. The child remembers his visit, and is assured that school is a warm friendly place where someone familiar is waiting for him. He remembers the appearance of the room and the enjoyable things he did there.

Eleanor Ansman (39) uses this home visit technique in Valley Stream, New York:

At our school, class lists are ready in July. After we kindergarten teachers got ours one year, we began to make phone calls to parents, introducing ourselves and asking if we should pay a visit to the prospective kindergartener. In most cases, the parents were happy to have us come.

We made our visits short -- about twenty minutes in length. Some youngsters were shy and merely listened as we visited with the mother or some other adult in the home. With other children, we had nice conversations. We told each one we would be at the bus platform to meet him, that he should look for us and come to us that first day.

This past year, we tried another scheme. We sent notes to all the coming class of kindergarteners, welcoming them. We wrote that if Mother cared to have a home visit before school she could telephone us.

The replies were overwhelming. Many wanted house visits because of shyness or insecurity on the part of the child. Some just wanted to meet the teacher and to feel acquainted before school opened. We also received thank-you calls from parents who felt their children were ready. They just wanted to express appreciation. In some cases, we spoke to the child over the phone.

It is very enlightening to know the family situation. And it is wonderful, on the first day, to know each child and be able to call most of them by name. The children definitely feel more secure and there are fewer first-day problems.

Of course, this takes some of our vacation hours, but it is so rewarding that we expect to continue the practice.

This program is used at Whitney Point, New York, and is one of the best ones reported recently (33):

On the day before regular sessions begin in our school, parents are asked to bring their children at specified times to look over their room and meet the teachers. Usually it is the mother who comes but we are very pleased if the father or both parents come.

As soon as the mother and child arrive, the mother is given a sheet of instructions which helps her orient her child to the room even before they meet the teacher. Placed about the room are signs, some to be read to the child and others for the mother's benefit. Mother is asked to let her child choose a hook on which to hang his wraps. She writes his name on the tab provided. Now a bit of the room becomes his very own. Another spot becomes his when he chooses a cubicle in which to place his blanket for naps. Mother shows him how to fold his blanket to fit the space.

The gay, soft mats for resting are pointed out by Mother also. Thus the idea of taking a nap at school is accepted.

The instruction sheet invites Mother to introduce her child to toileting facilities. He sees where to wash his hands, how to use the soap dispenser, and how to dry his hands on one paper towel. He learns, with Mother's help, to use the enthralling drinking fountain.

On the wheeled toys, which he is sure to find without Mother's help, is a sign: GOOD DRIVERS NEVER RUN INTO PEOPLE OR THINGS. The sign on the big hollow blocks says THESE BLOCKS ARE RESTING UNTIL WE HAVE TIME TO TALK ABOUT SAFETY RULES.

The instruction sheet asks the mother to call her child's attention to where the toys are kept and to explain that they are to be put away after each play period. This glimpse of the toys that he can play with when he comes to school the next day often helps him to leave his mother more willingly.

The sign on the piano says: THE PIANO IS FOR THE TEACHER TO PLAY. Before someone came up with this idea, often on orientation day as well as on opening days, there was a din from that source, while the teacher was conducting interviews or working about the room. Another sign that makes for good discipline from the beginning says: WE NEVER TOUCH ANYTHING ON THE TEACHER'S DESK. Obviously, individualized teaching in regard to such matters is essential. Twenty-five or thirty-five-year-old recruits are not ready to listen together for many days.

If there is to be a student teacher at the beginning of the term, there is a sign reading: PLEASE TELL YOUR CHILD HE WILL HAVE TWO TEACHERS. In this way, from the very first, the child recognizes the authority of the student teacher as well as the sponsor teacher.

By this time the mother has found an identification hat made for her child -- an adjustable cardboard band with visor stapled in place. It has his name on it and the number or insignia of his bus. Thanks to the hat, when the teacher is ready to greet him, she can call him by name. Incidentally, the teachers wear the same dresses for the first few days -- choosing their most attractive ones, of course -- so the children will have an aid in recognizing them.

Other signs help the parent to understand the kindergarten program. With vases of various sizes: "If your child brings a flower, it will be recognized and put in a vase." Near a pegboard: "Pegs and pegboards help develop small muscles -- a preparation for writing." Beside an empty pet cage: "We are happy to entertain your child's pet. Please write a note telling us when to expect it." On a painting easel: "A five-year-old does not always paint things; he just paints."

Betty Lou Applegate (3) reports an evening kindergarten for parents at Ardena School in Farmingdale, New Jersey. She and three other kindergarten teachers give the parents a sample of kindergarten life in a very successful evening session for parents. She also reports some parent-taught skills the child should have when he enters school.

1. Tell the teacher my full name.
2. Tell the teacher where I live.
3. Tell the teacher my telephone number.
4. Take off and put on my own wraps and rubbers.
5. Be able to make my zippers work.
6. Be able to recognize my own clothing.
7. Wait on myself.
8. Put away my playthings.
9. Carry a handkerchief or a cleansing tissue, and know how to use it.
10. Go to the lavatory alone.

The parents participated in many of the child's kindergarten activities and at the close were sent home with an orientation booklet. Teachers and parents alike reported a delightful as well as educational evening.

Most schools reported the use of either publications or films to help present their roundup program. Some schools use pamphlets prepared by national organizations (for example Happy Journey, a thirty-two page publication prepared for parents of preschool children by the Department of Elementary School Principals and the National School Public Relations Association and the National Congress of

Parents and Teachers). Others use publications by civic organizations or insurance companies. Most schools use their own however. A typical list of contents might include:

1. Welcome to parents.
2. Admission requirements.
3. Listing of what children should know and be able to do before entering school.
4. A description of learnings in kindergarten.
5. Health services and diseases.
6. What to expect of a five- or six-year-old.
7. Safety rules.

Safety is stressed in many schools such as Lakewood, Ohio, (16) where the safety pamphlet, Parents, Your Child's Life Is at Stake is used. The pamphlet is presented by the Kiwanis Club and was developed by the P.T.A., police, and school board people.

Donley (16) reports this list of suggestions in organizing preschool roundup activities. Many of them apply equally well to other orientation activities.

1. Prepare a good introductory pamphlet.
2. Make sure that the parents of every preschool child receive a copy.
3. Have separate programs for parents and children.
4. Allow parents to observe a regular class in action.
5. Plan the program well in advance.
6. Get as many various groups in on the planning as possible.

7. Watch the length of meetings carefully. Overlong meetings can be fatal.

8. Don't have a program that is too formal for impromptu variations.

9. Use outside help such as car pools and civic groups.

10. Plan meetings around the needs of your community.

11. More than one meeting is better than a one-shot program.

12. Build up interest. Be sure that the staff, P.T.A. groups, and parents are informed and interested before you actually hold the program.

Vivian Stewart and Christine Carlson (51) have reported an interesting visitation program. The kindergarten visits the first grade; is given a booklet, shown charts, pets, activities; enjoys a program and refreshments. Everyone in both groups participates. The teachers reported several phases of learning were incorporated. The social host-guest relationship was explored. Oral and written skills were demonstrated. Music and art made the event more enjoyable. Both groups recalled learnings; and everyone reported that the project was fun.

Carol Lukert (36) of Fort Rucker, Alabama, points out some useful practices to use with transfers.

A regular classroom reception committee might gather information about the new pupil. Of course, the committee must be wary of embarrassing their new classmate or making him feel uncomfortably self-conscious.

The teacher may select a pupil to be a sponsor for the newcomer. The sponsor -- who might be called a "brother" or a "sister" -- may be given the responsibility for including the newcomer in groups in the cafeteria and on the playground, for familiarizing him with the school building and the facilities, for telling him about class procedures and routines.

A class party or some small celebration may be held in honor of the newcomer to foster the general feeling "We're glad you're here!"

The teacher may encourage afterschool visits of the newcomer to the homes of other children to work on class projects.

After the newcomer has revealed his liking for certain classmates, the seating may be rearranged so the new pupil sits near his friends or his sponsor, who can help, accept, and support him.

A bulletin listing names, addresses, and ages of children in the families of newcomers should go home with each child to encourage parents to make the entire family feel recognized and wanted in the community.

P.T.A. members might telephone parents of new pupils, welcome them to the community, and invite them to P.T.A. meetings. "New" parents often appreciate the offer of an old-timer to escort them to their first P.T.A. meeting, and the children will reflect the good will of the parents.

New pupils and their parents may be invited to take part as guests of the school. The program might include a tour of the school building and its facilities, discussions of school routines and regulations, announcements of club and extracurricular activities, demonstrations of books and other instructional materials used in the classes, and a discussion of fees and required supplies.

Parents of newcomers might be invited to contribute to various classes. A father who is a construction engineer might talk to the children about building materials. His visit might give his child an opportunity to bask in reflected glory and become more firmly established in his classmates' esteem. Such visits would not only help the new pupils but would enrich the entire instructional program.

Show-and-tell and travel or geography units may also be useful to help the newcomer enter the group more successfully.

Phyllis Westlake (55) uses an interesting primary unit which aids orientation. She has the children study "school helpers" such as the nurse, principal, custodian, school patrol, and others. The children's activities include:

1. Interviewing helpers.
2. Draw pictures of helpers.
3. Take part in role playing of helper roles.
4. Pantomime work of helpers.
5. Make maps and charts showing where these helpers work (as well as other features of the school).

Dr. Harriett Chace (11), Elementary Supervisor for Harwich and Chatham, Massachusetts, also tells of a primary unit for first grade. This program incorporates group participation with an understanding of school geography.

Other authors present interesting variations on the above mentioned techniques, and there are undoubtedly many other equally effective programs. Those reported here reflect a representative sampling.

Orientation is a process, not an event. Our idea of personality development as a continual and moving process of reaction to an ever changing material and social environment rules out the possibility of really effecting any crucial adjustments by a few discretely directed orientation events. Adequate orientation is a vital part of the total guidance program, just as guidance is a vital part of total education.

Orientation Techniques for the Junior High School

A very important and critical time in the life of every child occurs when he moves from the relatively sheltered life of the self contained elementary classroom to the strange and often cruel environment of departmentalized junior high school.

Many of the techniques used in junior high are merely modifications of elementary school practices. Some of these seen over and over are pre-entrance visitations, parent orientation and September activities.

Joseph Rush (43) of Claymont High School, Claymont, Delaware, reported these outstanding problems faced by junior high school children:

1. The change from one teacher to many teachers.
2. The lack of time for a teacher to really "get to know" children individually.
3. A more formal, rigid schedule than in the self-contained classroom of the elementary school.
4. The fact that records and files are not so easily accessible to the teacher as they are in elementary school.
5. Larger numbers of classmates to meet and work with.

These are some of the specific problems which must be overcome in junior high orientation.

Brinkopf also relates an extensive group-guidance class in which orientation problems were discussed in addition to study-habits, the testing program, personal-social development, occupational information, sex education, and other topics.

Rush (43) makes an interesting suggestion which might aid new junior high students, although it would call for some possible administrative changes.

Teachers in the junior high school might teach two subjects instead of one (as they already do in many systems). Classes, for example, might have Mr. Jones for mathematics and science,

and Miss Smith for English and history. There would be fewer teachers to adjust to.

Detjen (14) devotes a short section of his book, Elementary School Guidance, to orientation. This short section is of particular interest:

The first step in the orientation program is often taken when the elementary students make a visit in the spring to the junior high school which they expect to enter in the fall. A special program of some kind is usually planned for their entertainment. In some schools this program is in charge of the student council or of former pupils of the visiting elementary school. It may consist of a skit about the school or some of its activities; music by the band, orchestra, and glee club; or exhibits and demonstrations by the fine arts, industrial arts, home economics, and physical education departments. The program may be followed by a tour of the building conducted by student guides and ending in the cafeteria where refreshments are served. Copies of the school newspaper, floor plans of the building, and mimeographed information sheets giving important data about the school are sometimes distributed at meetings of this kind.

Handbooks prepared by the junior high school are frequently used as instruments of orientation. They contain helpful information about such things as daily schedules, length of school day, lunch program, clubs, health and dental services, absence, tardiness, lockers, homework, guidance, and athletics. The handbooks are usually presented to students when they enter school in the fall. Sometimes a special issue of the school newspaper is dedicated to the newcomers. Mimeographed answers to questions sent in by the incoming students are distributed in some schools.

The junior high school principal or the counselor and the homeroom teachers or teachers of special elective subjects sometimes visit the elementary school late in the spring to meet the sixth-graders or eighth-graders and to explain the offerings of the new school. At this time, the youngsters are usually told when and where and what they may expect to do on the first day. They may also be told about the help which students can get from the homeroom teacher, the guidance counselor, the health counselor, and the visiting teacher. The information given at this meeting will probably be general in nature. It is not necessary to burden youngsters with details concerning daily schedules, lockers, gym suits, and supplies until school actually begins. Sometimes one or more of the junior or senior high school students return to their

former school with the principal or the counselor to discuss some phases of the school program and to answer the elementary pupils' questions. They may describe a typical day at school and tell some of the things they would like to have known when they were new to the school.

Detjen (14) also has a listing of suggested activities to aid orientation. Some are worthy of consideration:

1. Pupils in the upper class of elementary school may write a letter to the seventh-grade or ninth-grade class of the school they are to attend the next year, asking the students to tell them some of the interesting things about their school.
2. Before going for a visit to a secondary school, pupils may make a list of the questions they want to ask and the things they especially want to observe while there.
3. After returning from a visit to a secondary school, pupils may discuss the interesting things they have seen and heard and may exchange impressions with their classmates.
4. Plan to have a panel discussion on the subject, "What a new pupil should be told about the school." From ideas that come out of this discussion, make a list of facts and suggestions which would be helpful to a person entering your school for the first time. Make copies of the list and have them ready to give to any newcomers to your class.
5. Plan some get-acquainted games and activities for the first days of school. Try to have discussions, question-and-answer periods, and other occasions when students are required to address each other by name. Occasionally have different children try to call the names of each one in the class until you are sure that they all know each other.
6. If your school does not have a handbook, plan a simple orientation sheet giving important information about the school and any of its traditions or annual events. Include special information about your classroom, its location, and any projects or activities which are a part of your plans for the year. Mention ways in which parents may contribute to the success of the program.
7. If you teach the upper-grade class in the school, invite the principal or the counselor of the secondary school to visit your group. Plan to have a member of the class meet him, bring him to the room, and introduce him. Be sure that all the pupils know his

name, some of his duties, and the contacts they may expect to have with him during the following year.

8. Prepare a bulletin which could be given to parents of children who are entering school for the first time. Include ideas for creating a readiness for school and specific instructions for the opening day.

9. Interview several parents to find out what they would like to know about the secondary school their child is to enter or what improvements they would like to have incorporated in the present plan of orientation.

There are a multitude of well written commentaries on orientation (19), (29), (34), but one of the best programs reported in current literature is found in Pattengill Junior High School of Lansing, Michigan. Anna Brewer, (8) Assistant Principal at Pattengill, reports:

The orientation program for seventh-grade students entering Pattengill Junior High School is fourfold: first, an orientation evening for students, parents, and sixth-grade teachers in May; second, multiple counseling at the beginning of the school year; third, separate meetings of boys and girls as an entire group; and fourth, seventh-grade parent night in the fall.

The first phase, an orientation evening, consists of an auditorium meeting, discussion groups, building tour. Information booklets were given to each family. The table of contents for the booklets follows:

- Welcome
- Time Schedule
- Attendance, Excuses and Admits
- Citizenship and Discipline Policies
- Required and Elective Subjects
- General Information:
 - Athletic Program
 - Citizenship Oath
 - East Courier (School Paper)
 - General Organization (Plan of)
 - General Organization Point System of Awards
 - Hall Lockers
 - History
 - Sending Schools

Supplies Needed (General)
 Supplies . . . Boys' Physical Education
 Supplies . . . Girls' Physical Education

The second phase of the Pattengill's program includes services through multiple counseling. Brewer explains the purposes of Pattengill's multiple or group counseling as being fourfold.

A. To develop desirable pupil relationships by giving pupils an opportunity to see their counselors and open an avenue whereby the pupils may feel free to discuss any problems by asking for individual conferences.

B. To guide the pupils by giving information.

C. To service more pupils on certain general topics in a given length of time.

D. To strive to develop desirable attitudes and habits of citizenship.

Counselors use a plan of explaining, discussing, questioning, and then touring. An outline follows:

- A. Purpose of meeting
 1. Explain counseling
 - a. Information
 - b. Assistance
 - c. Questions
 2. Explain counseling tools
 - a. Counselor cards
 - b. Box for counselor cards
 - c. Appointment slips
 - d. Counseling rooms
 3. Question cards
- B. Discussion period
 1. Conduct of Pattengill students
 - a. Corridors
 - b. Home rooms
 - c. Classrooms
 - d. Auditorium
 - e. School events
 - f. Street and public places
 2. General Organization
 3. Extracurricular activities and clubs

- C. Question period
- D. Tour of counseling facilities
 - 1. Counseling rooms
 - 2. Box for counselor cards
 - 3. Lost and Found Department
 - 4. General office
 - 5. Mr. Chamberlain's office
 - 6. Miss Brewer's office
 - 7. Mr. Smith's office

The third phase involves the boys' meeting with the man assistant principal and the girls' meeting with the woman assistant principal. Although there is considerable overlap, each group deals with different topics. A listing follows:

Seventh-Grade Boys

- A. Attendance, tardiness, excuses
- B. Wholesome respect for girls
- C. Use and care of rest rooms
- D. Awards -- Athletic, G. O., Attendance, Scholarship
- E. Records -- How they are kept, good behavior, poor behavior
- F. Personal dress (including hair styles)
- G. Policy regarding gum chewing, smoking, carrying weapons, snowballing, defacing property
- H. Importance of asking for help, counseling program opportunity provided to request individual or group appointments (3 x 5 cards)
- I. Participation in extracurricular activities
- J. Block program and home room

Seventh-Grade Girls

- A. Attendance regulations
- B. Illness during day
- C. Excuses
- D. Notes from parent or guardian to keep appointments and to cover absences
- E. Care of rest rooms
- F. Policies regarding gum chewing, comic books, slacks, headscarfs, play things (special emphasis)
- G. Policies regarding general conduct in the corridors, home rooms, classrooms, streets, dances, games
- H. G. O. awards -- emphasis on first -- (points omitted)
- I. The noon-hour program and doors to be used
- J. Tips on how to budget time and how to study
- K. Disposition, personality, associates
- L. Counseling program-opportunity provided to request individual

appointments or appointments in groups of 2 to 5 (3 x 5 cards)

The fourth phase of Pattengill's program involves parents in a "back-to-school" night. A few general remarks explaining some general procedures such as P.T.A., report cards, assemblies and attendance are made by home-room teachers. The parents then follow the child's schedule for the day. Classroom teachers explain:

1. the purpose of each course.
2. how the course is important in the total school program and in the educational program.
3. the scope and type of activities in the course of study.
4. the classroom procedures used.
5. grading and homework.

Orientation to the junior high school must be carefully planned to insure continuing positive experiences. Transitions at any level are difficult, but the transition to junior high presents a particularly difficult problem. There certainly is a need to involve every student to the fullest possible degree.

Orientation Techniques for the Senior High School

Senior high orientation techniques offer virtually nothing new, and are for the most part only modifications of earlier reported techniques. For the most part the senior high can offer the same type of procedures regarding parents, pre-entrance and post-entrance activities. Many students will feel adequately informed in many areas due to the similarity of junior and senior high activities and to the increased contact many junior high students have with senior high.

For the most part orientation for the senior high is more in the nature of educational guidance than at any earlier period. The physical plant, staff, extra-curricular activities are still important mysteries to most students, but the sophisticated sophomore would not be caught dead in a guided tour of the building.

Arthur Mennes (40) reports on a typical senior high orientation program as seen in Central High School, Madison, Wisconsin.

The orientation program for new students often begins before they actually enter Central High School. Each year administrators and counselors visit schools from which new students usually come to discuss with prospective students the offerings, opportunities, and customs of the high school. Teachers in the sending schools are provided with information about Central to enable them to be of maximum assistance in preparing the students. Also, scheduled visiting days to the high school are arranged for elementary-school and junior high school pupils during their last semester. Activities on visiting days include special programs and talks by administrators, teachers, and students. Before school closes in June, all students, both old and new, have an opportunity to go to their assigned classes and meet their teachers for the following year.

The parents of the incoming students are sent materials to acquaint them with the program of the school. Group meetings of the parents with administrators and counselors are held at parents' nights and open houses throughout the year.

At the beginning of the school year a handbook is issued to each new student. Special orientation procedures are used to acquaint the students with the physical plant, and a special library course acquaints new students with the library services. The social-studies course, required of all first and second-year students, includes a complete orientation unit, which provides information concerning rules and regulations, activities, courses, opportunities, requirements, customs, purposes, physical plant, and the like.

Other activities and procedures are used to help the new students adjust to the situation. For instance, a series of group meetings for new students is arranged during the early part of the school year. These meetings take place in the social-studies class, the

home room, and in special assemblies. Special assemblies familiarize new students with school songs and "pep" routines, and a school "mixer dance" held early in the school year is designed to welcome the new students and to make them feel that they "belong." The services of the student council as well as of individual students are utilized in aiding the new students. Also, printed materials, such as news releases and the school newspaper, are distributed to the students.

Ample opportunities are provided for individual conferences with counselors, administrators, and teachers.

Mennes (40) also reports that students stated they received much help through the following, listed in order of preference:

1. student handbook
2. orientation unit in social-studies classes
3. help from students through the student council
4. special assemblies
5. group guidance
6. help from teachers
7. individual conferences with counselors
8. parent conferences
9. help in subject fields
10. tests and personal folder
11. school bulletins and school newspaper
12. social activities at school

Edward J. Blecha (5), Guidance Director of Preble High School, Green Bay, Wisconsin, reports on a very comprehensive approach to orientation.

The Preble Plan is fourfold; first an individual interview with the counselor in which the following items were covered:

1. The student completed counselor sheets and the health and guidance data sheet with parent's help.
2. With parent and student, the guidance director made out the current year's class program plus tentatively making out the full four-year schedule, using the student's last years report card and standardized test results as a guide.
3. Test results from the testing program given earlier were explained and evaluated.
4. Details of the first day of school were outlined.
5. Explained fee system -- what payments are required and why, and which are optional.
6. Explained the school's report card grading system, unsatisfactory reports, and poor study habit reports.
7. Explained the importance of regular attendance, and what to do if absence does occur.
8. Explained the bus transportation system as it affects each student.
9. Explained the school's method of ability grouping and why and how each student is placed in any one of the tracks.
10. Answered any questions asked by parent or student.

These individual sessions lasted about fifty minutes and in the eyes of both the counselor and students much was accomplished. Listed below are some of the benefits.

1. The school is able to have all freshmen and transfer students' records completed by opening day. Without this summer system, this could not be completed until about five or six weeks after school opens.
2. There is a mutual understanding of the total school picture on the part of the student, parent, school, and the guidance office.
3. Individual counseling supplemented testing result information which helped us discover the academically talented students at the earliest possible moment.

4. These conferences aided in discovering early those students who had isolated skills.

5. These conferences confirmed standardized test results that students vary tremendously in ability and that provisions and arrangements must be made to take care of them.

The second phase of the Preble story is in the nature of an orientation day set aside just for the entering freshman. It was a full day and like any other except for the lack of upper classmen. This enabled the freshmen to acquaint themselves with the routes and schedules without hurry or fear of embarrassment in front of upper classmen. At the end of the day the new students had forty-five minutes to explore the entire building at their leisure. They also ate lunch with the entire faculty.

The third facet of Preble's orientation involves general and subject field orientation. Blecha explains:

A 35-minute period is set aside each day for all students, which is called the activity period. One day each week is set aside for either group guidance or individual counseling by the student's home-room teacher. During three other days, students can attend club meetings, and the other day is reserved for assembly programs. No freshman may join any club until the second semester at Preble. So during two of the days reserved for club meetings, the freshmen orientation program is continued. The opening sessions dealt with how a freshman can fit into the guidance program, proper dress, acceptable manners, and an explanation of the rules and regulations of the school. After these come the subject fields orientation programs.

In the subject fields orientation, each academic department has one or more capable teachers discuss what is covered in the department, how it is related to other fields of learning, how it fits in with the overall school philosophy, and the values a student can expect to receive by studying in that field.

The prime objectives of the talks are to create a better understanding of the various areas for the student, and how all fields

are related. These are overviews -- not outlines of what is taught in class. Rather, they are summaries of values and historical importance of each area in our total culture.

In carrying out the objectives of the orientation, a variety of techniques are employed including the use of audio-visual aids, student assistants, or any method which helps bring alive for the student the material to be covered.

Preble's final phase of orientation begins in December when upper classmen explain the school clubs and their activities. This includes eligibility, function of the organization, results, values received, and responsibilities. This phase is carried on during the same time as subject orientation which it replaces.

Finally, it would be well to look at at least one handbook content. Froehlich (26) reports this outline of the handbook at Santa Ynez Valley Union High School.

- Title page
- Introduction
- Welcome
- Student creed
- Table of contents
- School calendar
- Activities calendar
- List of student officers
- History and description of Santa Ynez Valley Union High School
- Government and organization of Santa Ynez Valley Union High School
 - Trustees
 - Staff
- Student organizations and activities
 - Student body (purpose, etc., a general statement)
 - Student council
 - Student-body finance
 - Class organizations
- Clubs, such as Future Farmers of America, Lettermen, and Girls' Athletic Association
 - Student committees, such as safety, health, conduct, and handbook
 - Publications, including the school paper, yearbook, student body constitution, and handbook

Miscellaneous student activities or services

Student librarians

Student assemblies discussing plans for programs, desired behavior, and similar topics

School parties described and statements concerning provisions for guests, need for planning them carefully, cleaning up, and conduct

Awards

Scholarship awards, such as university and college scholarships, scholarship pins, Pepsi-Cola scholarship contest, and similar awards

Activity and service awards, including senior service awards, music awards, F.F.A. Bankers Award, Boy's State, Girl's State, Lions Club Speaker's Contest, V.F.W. Auxiliary Essay Contest, and Lions Club Safety Award

Sports awards, explaining the letters in interscholastic sports, Girls' Athletic Association letter awards, volley ball tournament award, D. H. Hall intramural track trophy

Traditions of the school

Guidance (general statement of arrangements)

Attendance, absence and tardiness, excuses, and withdrawal from school

School services, explaining the library, health service, lunchroom, transportation by bus, locker service, telephone service, school supplies

Songs and yells

Index

The student handbook can be a very functional tool in orientation. It is however, only a good tool at best. It is never an orientation program by itself.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Orientation is that particular facet of guidance which aids the new student with introduction and adjustment to a new school situation. Without adequate adjustment unnecessary anxieties may develop. Because human beings seem to function better in environments which offer the least amount of anxiety, it is important to the larger educational goals to provide adequate orientation.

Often educators view orientation too narrowly and tend to limit it to a few isolated activities at the first, seventh and tenth grades. There is a need therefore to re-educate toward an orientation point of view. With schools growing larger and larger the need for orientation must not be overlooked or allowed to take a back seat to less important activities.

The purposes of orientation are also more complex than at first believed. Even with orientation minded educators, there is a tendency to separate orientation from the remainder of the guidance program. It can not be done. Orientation is a continuous process which interlaces each new situation with those already experienced. Orientation is in fact education, only in a more here and now practical application than popularly seen.

Orientation techniques now in popular use fall into these five broad areas:

1. Orientation before entering school.
2. Parent orientation to aid student orientation.

3. Orientation through home visitation.
4. Orientation through individual counseling.
5. Orientation through group activities during the first weeks of the school year.

A large variety of techniques are found. Audio-visual aids are popular as are student and parent handbooks. For the most part good orientation techniques depend very heavily on good teaching techniques.

Orientation in the schools is normally group centered and located, for the most part, at the entrance to elementary, junior high, and senior high school. There is, however, an equally important effort needed to orientate the transfer student. For the most part this transfer orientation is individual. This must not be the extent of individual orientation however.

Groups which must be oriented have norms with which educators must deal. Areas which must be considered include the search for status, membership in a larger group, new roles to be learned, real as opposed to ideal norms, and sufficient opportunities to immitate desirable behavior.

Orientation, in short, is a process, not an event. It must reach all children, be continuing in scope, and assist students in a wide variety of areas.

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TECHNIQUES IN SCHOOL ORIENTATION

by

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B. S., Kansas State University, 1962

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1965

This report was primarily a library study involving the resources of Farrell Library at Kansas State University. Its purposes were fourfold:

1. To gather, examine, and evaluate current practices in orientation.
2. To aid educators and parents in identifying their roles in orientation.
3. To aid educators and parents in finding techniques for fulfilling their roles in orientation.
4. To present a statement of general considerations for the orientation process.

The study was limited to elementary and secondary schools, and to orientation to the schools and not to outside activities or institutions.

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