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A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE 1967
MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	iii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
THE PROBLEM	1
Importance of the Study	2
Procedure	3
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
A LIMITED REVIEW OF LITERATURE PERTAINING TO FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES	4
Survey of Literature on Follow-Up Studies	7
3. METHODS & PROCEDURES	14
4. RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD	18
COMMENTS MADE BY RESPONDENTS	30
5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	33
BIBLIOGRAPHY	38
APPENDIX A - COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING THE QUESTIONNAIRE	39
APPENDIX B - FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE	40

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Degree of Satisfaction with High School Course in Relation to Abilities, Interests and Needs	19
2. Value Judgment of High School Subjects by Graduates of Manhattan High School	21
3. Value Judgments of Former Students About the Amount of Help Received from the School on Thirteen Selected Problems	24
4. Degree of Relationship Between High School Training and High School Occupational Plans to Present Job	26
5. Reasons given by Students for not Following High School Vocational Plans	28
6. Attitudes Generally Held by Manhattan High School Students in Regard to Members of Minority Groups	29
7. Value Judgments of Extra-Class Activities by Graduates of Manhattan High School	31

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Educational evaluation should be considered a vital part of a school to see if the objectives and the philosophy of the school are being met. This includes the areas of guidance services, the academic subjects, the extra class activities, and all other phases of the total school program.

One of the sources of information in a program of evaluation is a follow-up study of students who have passed through the school. It is important to remember that follow-up implies the collection of data about something which has already taken place. It should be remembered that follow-up studies are not the complete answer for evaluating educational systems. They are but one important component of a larger design for evaluating the educational endeavors. A regular program of follow-up and evaluation should be a part of the school's program of complete educational evaluation.

The Problem. It was the purpose of this study to follow-up the graduating seniors of the class of 1967 of the Manhattan, Kansas High School. The information obtained will be valuable to the school for future use in educational evaluation and possibly for improving the present school program for the students still in school.

The specific objectives of this follow-up study are listed below:

1. TO obtain former students' opinions about the adequacy of the curriculum.
2. TO determine what academic classes were most beneficial to them.
3. TO find out if the former graduates felt that they were adequately prepared for their chosen vocation.

4. TO determine what types of vocational classes were most beneficial.
5. TO obtain the students' opinions and feelings about services provided them by the counseling department.
6. TO determine ways in which the educational and counseling services provided them by the counseling department.

Limitations of this follow-up study are listed as follows:

Drop-outs were not included

Only 66 percent of the questionnaires were returned

The information is based on the perceptions of former students

This study was restricted to Manhattan High School graduates of 1967.

Importance of the Study. At the present time Manhattan High School does not have a regular program of follow-up of students who have graduated or who have dropped-out of high school before completion.

For at least five reasons, it is evident that more firmly defined follow-up procedures are needed in the Manhattan Senior High School: (1) increasing enrollments make it less likely that staff members will be aware of the post-high school progress of the majority of students, (2) recent state and national studies provide evidence of diverse positive values of follow-up programs, (3) current opinions of both lay and professional people throughout the United States endorse the continuing evaluation of educational programs, (4) widespread changes in occupational skills and opportunities denote the importance of training and job placement for youth, and (5) evidence has accrued that in the future a smaller proportion of local graduates will attend college and that, therefore, follow-up will

doubtlessly be more difficult.¹

In an attempt to get such a program started, a follow-up study of the class mentioned above was made with an emphasis on the student's feelings on how well he thought Manhattan High School prepared him for what he is now doing. The information asked for included present location and activity, opinions and feelings about the academic subjects taken, and the extra-class activities in which the student participated while in high school, and opinions and feelings about the guidance services of the school. The information obtained should prove to be valuable to the school in any future program of evaluation it may undertake.

Procedure. A limited review of literature pertaining to follow-up procedures comprise the first section of this report. This is followed by a survey of literature on follow-up studies about high school graduates. These are followed by detailed examination of the procedures and results of the questionnaires, comments made by respondents, and conclusions and recommendations based on the replies received.

The information obtained was gathered through the use of a questionnaire sent to 95 graduates of Manhattan High School from the class of 1967. The replies were tabulated when the form was returned. The conclusions and recommendations were based on the answers given by those graduates who completed and returned the questionnaire.

¹Louise M. Langford, "A Proposed Plan for Improving Follow-Up Procedures at Manhattan High School" (unpublished report in Organizations and Administration of the Guidance Services Program class, Kansas State University, 1965), p. 12.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A Limited Review of Literature Pertaining to Follow-Up Procedures

If one accepts the position advanced by behavioral counselors that outcomes rather than processes are the legitimate focus for evaluations of guidance, then follow-up activities would become the method of evaluation of guidance programs. Follow-up is generally recognized as a means of evaluating guidance programs and of providing information which can be the basis for program improvement. However, follow-up studies can become investigations of process rather than outcome despite the timing.²

Follow-up has been labeled the "Wednesday's Child" of the guidance program by Bernard and Fullmer. Unlike the placement service there is little debate concerning the necessity of follow-up in a successful guidance program as evidenced by Humphries, Traxler, and North's contention that without follow-up counseling is incomplete.³

The counselor can use returns from follow-up studies to help the school's former students as well as his present counselees. In studying the returns the counselor will discover former students who are in need of guidance services. He may arrange to have these services provided by the school or by other institution, agencies, or organizations within the community.

A high school can obtain a great deal of useful information by

²R. H. Pate, Jr., "Placement and Follow-Up; What Role in the Guidance Program," High School Journal, 1971, p. 293.

³Ibid, p. 291.

finding out from colleges what grades were earned by the school's graduates in their college freshman year. Such information is useful in enabling the high school to learn how its graduates fared. In addition, such data accumulated over a period of time help a high school to determine the kinds of colleges for which a students' secondary school preparation can best fit him.

Assume that through a follow-up study a counselor has definite knowledge of the successes of former students who entered certain other training institutions or who entered certain kinds of jobs. The counselor can use such knowledge effectively in advising his present students. Next, the counselor can probe beneath the surface of the information provided by former students. He can try to uncover the factors that appeared to cause these students to succeed or fail.

In addition to the information collected through follow-up studies of former students, a school can compile useful local occupational information by means of surveys. Thus, over a period of time the school becomes better acquainted with the occupational opportunities for the school leavers in the local community.

The follow-up of the future will be a study of the total secondary school effort. That prediction is based on the current trend toward educational accountability. If that trend continues, the total school effort will be assessed by follow-up studies designed to determine if long range objectives have been met. In such a situation, the relationship of the guidance program to the total school effort will need to be determined.

The typical follow-up technique employs one or more of the following techniques: interview, postcard survey, or questionnaire.

Each approach has certain advantages and disadvantages. The questionnaire is the method which requires the least time, but the interview method usually results in more valid responses. The combination method of a detailed questionnaire sent to the entire group and a structured interview with a selected sample seems to be most satisfactory if enough interviewers are available to carry out the procedure. However, a detailed questionnaire with an appropriate introduction will usually be quite satisfactory. It must be recognized, however, that certain individuals are less prone to return questionnaires. Many of those who feel that they have done poorly in life, have certain resentments toward the school, or have been drop-outs may not report by the questionnaire method. Most schools that have a continuous follow-up service use the postcard survey, and the students are made aware of this while still in school and are more likely to return a postcard.

The popularity of the follow-up technique may sometimes obscure its limitations. The judgments of former students regarding the program, although interesting and valuable, should be balanced by the judgments of professional educators and by other citizens in the school district. The opinion of former students, by itself, is not a sufficient basis from which to make program revisions.

A second limitation comes from the nature of the questionnaires. Often these forms are long, dull, or limited and discourage the student to answer them.

A final limitation is inherent in the methodology of follow-up studies. In many follow-up studies, there is only about 50 percent return. There is evidence that those who return questionnaires of this type differ in important respects from those who do not. It

should not be concluded then that the returns received represent the opinion of all former students.

During September, 1968, the Directory of Illinois Schools published by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Institution was entered with the aid of a table of random numbers and 100 high schools outside the city of Chicago (listed separately in the directory) were thus selected. A brief questionnaire was mailed to each of these 100 schools and the telephone was used to obtain results from those who did not respond in writing with the result that 100 percent returns were obtained.

Each respondent was asked if his school had engaged in a formal follow-up study (as opposed to the "I talk with a few graduates each year" type) during the past five school years. The results showed that only about one-third of the schools had engaged in a formal follow-up study.

It is interesting to note that, in general, the larger the size of the high school, the greater the probability that a follow-up study will be conducted. Perhaps this indicates that the larger schools are more affluent and, therefore, have more time, help, and money than do the smaller schools.

SURVEY OF LITERATURE ON FOLLOW-UP STUDIES

Young people who leave school, either by graduation or by dropping out, are followed up for one or more of three main purposes. First, there is the altruistic desire to help the individual with problems of vocational, educational, and social adjustment after he goes from the school and while he is getting himself established elsewhere.

A second purpose of follow-up studies is to gather data for use in evaluating the instructional and guidance programs of the local school. This is an extremely important purpose. For instance, Patterson and Fotiu (40) followed up 155 cases to determine the effectiveness of counseling by the Highland Park, Michigan, Guidance Center and concluded that advisement was generally..."successful in assisting students in selecting educational or vocational programs which can be pursued by them with satisfactory progress."⁴

More recently, Brown (9) reported that the Highland Park, Illinois, High School had surveyed its graduates who had gone on to college to find out how well the school had prepared them. This follow-up was used to strengthen the school's curriculum and guidance program for college bound students. More than 600 students distributed among 178 colleges cooperated in the study. English and study habits were very frequently mentioned as needing special attention. The follow-up program subsequently was expanded to include graduates who went directly into the work force.

A third purpose of follow-up studies of school-leavers is to gather information of general interest concerning those who have left. Rothney, in concluding a report of a follow-up of members of the 1951 graduating classes of four Wisconsin High Schools, suggested..."that the figures we have given, and the extent to which school people are

⁴Robert North and A. E. Traxler, Purpose and Nature of Follow-Up School Leavers (New York and London: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 292.

aware of them, may assist us in keeping at least one foot on the ground in the planning of education for Wisconsin youth".⁵ (44:10)

An essential aspect of any agency offering counseling services is self-evaluation. Questionnaires, used with adequate mailing techniques, have come to be recognized as one of the more fruitful of the evaluation techniques. It is, however, a technique that can produce deceptive data. Calahan and Meier (1939) were among the first to recognize the differential effect that particular mailing procedures have on responses to questionnaires. Research by Suchman and McCandless (1940) suggested that mail survey techniques also significantly effect those who return the questionnaire. One of their most important conclusions was that an increase in the number of responses was directly related to a decrease in the bias of the resulting data. This finding was supported by Benson (1946), who listed the danger of a small number of returns producing a biased response as being the most serious disadvantage of surveys of this type. As a result of these findings, methods of increasing response percentage have been sought through the years and have ranged from varying the color of postage stamps to financial inducements.⁶

The cover letter or letter of transmittal, for a questionnaire should be developed to solicit the cooperation of individuals in providing the information requested. The purpose of the study should be stated frankly and concisely to allay suspicion on the part of the respondent

⁵Ibid.

⁶Hurst, J. C., and W. H. Morrill, Personal Versus General Requests for Client Feedback in Evaluating Counseling Services, Journal of College Student Personnel: American College Personnel Association, 1971.

concerning any hidden or ulterior purposes.⁷

It should reveal the nature of the study and why the respondent's assistance is needed. The best form for the covering letter is the personal letter, individually typed, and signed in ink. Frequently, the offer to send copies of the survey results to the participants will elicit their participation. It should be remembered, though, that this is expensive and not always desirable.⁸

If the offer is made, it is mandatory that the researcher carry through with his promise at the end of the study. If he does not, many of the cooperating respondents may be prejudiced against further research efforts using this technique. If anonymity is a vital factor in the response, it should be so stated. However, the researcher should not use this in an attempt to get replies. It is recommended that the respondents generally be asked to sign their returns.⁹

Since most human beings, including teachers and research investigators, are liable to make serious or simple mistakes, it is always advisable, before mimeographing or printing, to check the questionnaire for adequacy. Spelling, grammatical, and typographical errors should be eliminated. It is also advisable to have other interested persons read the questionnaire and to raise questions when they do not understand the vocabulary or the meaning of various questions.¹⁰

⁷ J. Francis Rummel, An Introduction to Research Procedures in Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 99.

⁸Ibid., p. 100.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰ Joseph Justman, Irving Robbins, and J. Wayne Wrightstone, Evaluation in Modern Education, (New York: American Book Co., 1956), p. 146.

Sletto (1940) found that the nature of the appeal for assistance made in the cover letter affected the rate of return, with the most effective for his group of former college students being an appeal to help improve education for others. Moore (1941) found that a typewritten letter of transmittal increased the return rate significantly over a duplicated letter. Others have suggested that neatness rather than the actual method of reproduction is the important factor. Gerberich and Mason (1948) found that whether or not a subject was asked to sign the questionnaire made little difference in the item response. Others have pointed out that the nature of the material being investigated would possibly affect the returns rate of confidential versus non-confidential questionnaires.

Robinson and Agisin (1951) and Longworth (1958) emphasized the effectiveness of a personal plea to respond to the questionnaire. The Longworth study used a number of different techniques for increasing response and found that a personal letter followed by a personal phone call produced the highest return.

In a Wisconsin study with a 46.9 percent response, it was discovered that 78 percent of the former students in the top percentile of their class returned the questionnaire, while only 23 percent from the bottom percentile returned questionnaires. In a study in Arkansas, five rural schools conducting mail surveys did not receive any completed questionnaires from former students who had left school prior to graduation.¹¹

¹¹Floyd L. McKinney and Charles Oglesby, Determining and Conducting Follow-Up Studies of Former Students, (University of Kentucky, 1971) p. 9.

The probability of a questionnaire being returned was found to be significantly related to the sex of the subject. With an overall return rate (at the end of the four week study period) of 54.0 percent, 60.2 percent of the females had responded versus 41.8 percent of the males.¹²

Scott (1961) in an extensive study for the British Government Social Survey, investigated the effects: (A) stamped versus business reply envelopes, (B) official sponsorship, (C) personalizing the cover letter, (D) a letterhead, (E) colored paper, and a number of other factors. He found stamped envelopes and official sponsorship to be effective. Reporting on response to Project Talent questionnaires, Orr and Neyman (1965) found the average cost for handling and mailing the questionnaire to be 58.6 cents per respondent using a total of four mailings and achieving some 69.7 percent response from an original 88,000 subjects. They also found that the length of the questionnaire affected the return rate, with approximately 37 percent response for a four page questionnaire versus approximately 30 percent for an eight page questionnaire 35 days after first mailing. They further reported that the peak return rate occurred 12 days after mailing and that response rate was positively correlated with aptitude scores.¹³

Although a large response percentage is desirable in order to reduce the possibility of bias, it is also important to recognize the danger of influencing data with techniques designed to elicit

¹²David J. Pucel, Questionnaire Follow-Up Returns as a Function of Incentives and Responder Characteristics (University of Minnesota, 1970), p. 8.

¹³Ibid.

the larger response. This consideration appears to be especially important for agencies offering therapeutic services who choose to use mailed questionnaires for purposes of evaluation. Will a personal plea from the potential respondent's counselor or therapist increase the likelihood that the questionnaire will be returned, but in so doing influence what the respondent says? A survey of literature reveals no research designed to answer this and related questions important in evaluation procedures via mailed questionnaires by agencies offering psychological counseling.

The researcher should not be content with fragmentary returns, but should attempt to increase his returns by improving his questions, his follow-up procedures, and his sponsorship. It is desirable to get 90 to 100 percent returns to be assured of good representation of the group sampled.¹⁴ Conclusions based upon small percentages of returns are often suspected of bias, although this is not necessarily so. If the sampling is well done, that is, if it is representative of the individuals in the population, the percentage of returns is not particularly meaningful in itself. The most important factor in the analysis of data is to have an adequate number of representative returns rather than any given percentage of the number of questionnaires originally distributed.

¹⁴ J. Francis Rummel, An Introduction to Research Procedures in Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 108.

Chapter III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study encompasses a group of high school graduates who have been out of school for a period of five years. The questionnaire technique was found to be both appropriate and necessary for this study. The only possible way to reach a random selection of these graduates in that time was through correspondence, because many of these people have now left Manhattan to work, to establish new homes, or to continue their education. The opinions and feelings of these students were desired, and only through the questionnaire technique was there the possibility of obtaining the desired information.

The first step in this study was to obtain the names and addresses of the members of the 1967 class of Manhattan High School. The names of the graduates were copied from the commencement exercise roster of 1967. Ninety-five names were selected from this roster at random or selection of every sixth name, of which 321 was the total.

Addresses of the students were obtained from counselors at the high school, graduates of the class of 1967, information cards in the counseling department, Kansas State University Student Personnel Directory, and by contacting students' parents by telephone.

A rough draft of the questionnaire was prepared. The specific aims and purposes of this questionnaire were to gather information of educational nature for school personnel to use in future curriculum planning. The replies of these graduates will not be the sole determining factors in curriculum planning, for instance, but they will be included in any evaluation undertaken by the school in these areas.

Dr. Herb Kaiser, College of Education, Kansas State University, gave the writer valuable assistance in selection of the questions to use and information for the cover letter. The final draft of the questionnaire, Appendix B, was prepared and taken to the Manhattan Area Vocational Technical School where ninety-six personally type-written cover letters and questionnaires were completed.

Questionnaires were then mailed to fifty-five boys and forty girls who were basically residents of five states, Alaska, California, Oregon, Kansas and Missouri. After twelve days had elapsed, telephone calls were made to most of the non-respondents and personal contacts were made when it was possible.

A copy of the cover letter used in this report can be found in Appendix A. The first three paragraphs gave an explanation of why this study was conducted and attempted to show why a study of this nature is important and why the graduate should take the time to fill out and return the accompanying questionnaire.

The last part of the questionnaire assured the graduate, that is, those who were included in the study, that the answers would be kept in confidence, and revealed the inclusion of a stamped, self-addressed envelope for ease in returning the material. Each cover letter was signed in an attempt to add a personal feeling to each one.

The questionnaire was to be answered by all former students who received a copy. General information was requested concerning present address, satisfaction from high school course in relation to abilities, interests, and needs, a rating of high school subjects and extra-class activities, a rating of help received from the school

on certain problems, and an opportunity to list classes which the graduate wished they had taken but did not or were not offered. This information was requested especially for use in an evaluation of the educational or academic program and the extra-class activities that are offered.

An attempt was made to arrange the questions of the rating scale variety in such an order that they would not follow each other, so that the respondents would not develop the tendency to rate things consistently high or consistently low.

All respondents were given an opportunity to state in any way or ways that the high school guidance services could have been more helpful to them.

The three pages of the questionnaires and the various questions included on each page seem to be adequate and in their most appropriate position.

The type of items used for the make-up of this questionnaire include multiple-choice items, free-response items, short answer items, and rating scales. An example of the free-response question is item eleven where respondents had an opportunity to state how the guidance services could have been more helpful. The short answer item was question six, where the graduate was asked to briefly list the courses which he wished he had been able to take, but which were not offered.

The majority of questions used were of the multiple choice and rating scale types. The multiple choice items were questions eight and ten. The respondent needed only check the appropriate answer from a list of answers given for him. Because the opinions and feelings about school and subjects taken by the former students

were of utmost importance, many rating scales were included. There were four graphical rating scales and three numerical rating scales.

This is a brief description of the questionnaire used for this study. The questionnaire is not perfect; it has several flaws, yet it was also felt that the questionnaire was adequate and performed its function in this study by obtaining the opinions and feelings of the former students. The results and tabulations of the questionnaire are in the following section.

Chapter IV

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD

This section of the report will present, through the use of tables, a tabulation of the responses to the questionnaire. These tables will then be followed by observations and recommendations for future use of the results.

Because of extremely low scores on several items, the median score rather than the mean score was used. The median score proved to be more indicative of the respondent's answers; therefore, the median score was used to indicate the rating of items on the tables.

Of the 95 questionnaires mailed to graduates of Manhattan High School from the class of 1967, a total of 63 were returned, representing a return of 66 percent. Twenty-six of 40 or 65 percent of the females returned their questionnaires and 37 of 55 or 67 percent of the males returned their questionnaires.

Table I shows the tabulation of responses to the question, "To what degree were you satisfied with your high school course in relation to your abilities, interests, and needs?". These were two separate questions on the questionnaire, but the results of these two questions can be shown on one table. A total of 62 graduates responded to these questions. The degree of satisfaction for each of these groups and the median rating for each reply are shown on the table.

The table shows that the greatest number of respondents were reasonably well-satisfied with their course in regard to the three areas in the question.

TABLE I

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH HIGH SCHOOL COURSE IN RELATION
TO ABILITIES, INTERESTS AND NEEDS

SATISFACTION	GREATLY DISSATISFIED	MILDLY DISSATISFIED	NO BETTER COULD BE EXPECTED	REASONABLY WELL-SATISFIED	HIGHLY SATISFIED	TOTAL	MEDIAN RATING
Abilities							
Students Reporting	--	6	10	36	10	62	Reasonably Well-Satisfied
Interests and Needs							
Students Reporting	3	7	10	36	6	62	Reasonably Well-Satisfied

The information received from Table II will be most valuable in the area of subject evaluation. The graduates were asked to rate each subject they took in high school on a scale using "0" if the subject was of no help or the graduate was undecided as to the amount of help; "1" if the subject was of little help; "2" if the subject was helpful; "3" if the subject was very helpful; and "4" if the subject was of excellent help.

All of the graduates used the "0" to signify that the subject was of no help rather than to show that they were undecided as to the help or value of the subject.

On the table, the column entitled "No Help or Undecided" signifies that the respondent gave the subject a rating of "0"; the column marked "Of Little Help" signifies that the respondent gave the subject a rating of "1"; the column marked "Helpful" signifies that the respondent gave the subject a rating of "2"; the column designated as "Very Helpful" signifies that the respondent gave the subject a rating of "3"; and the column marked "Excellent" signifies that the respondent gave the subject a rating of "4".

The final column of Table II gives the median rating for each subject based on the total number of responses for that subject. If a subject received a median rating of 0.5 or below, it was considered to be of no help or undecided; if it received a median rating of from 0.6 to 1.5, it was considered to be of little help; if it received a median rating of from 1.6 to 2.5, it was considered to be helpful; if it received a median rating of from 2.6 to 3.5, it was considered to be very helpful; and if a subject received a median rating of from 3.6 to 4, it was considered excellent help to the graduate.

TABLE II

VALUE JUDGMENT OF HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS BY
GRADUATES OF MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL

SUBJECT	NO VALUE OR UNDECIDED	OF LITTLE HELP	HELPFUL	VERY HELPFUL	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	MEDIAN RATING
English	-	4	20	25	13	62	Very
Algebra	4	11	24	8	7	54	Helpful
Geometry	8	13	16	7	2	46	Little
World History	5	9	14	3	2	33	Helpful
Spanish	1	4	3	1	-	9	Little
Chemistry	3	9	12	6	7	37	Helpful
Biology	2	13	27	13	2	57	Helpful
Woodwork	2	2	5	4	1	14	Helpful
Ag. Mech.	-	-	1	-	2	3	Helpful
Typing	-	3	13	14	9	39	Very
Bookkeeping	-	2	3	3	1	9	Helpful
Constitution	16	20	18	3	-	57	Little
Physics	1	4	7	7	2	20	Helpful
Speech	1	4	16	10	4	35	Helpful
Economics	2	3	2	1	3	11	Little
Band	4	4	4	3	1	16	Little
Journalism	-	3	3	3	2	11	Helpful
Mech. Drawing	-	2	4	4	4	2	Helpful
Phys. Ed.	11	14	19	8	4	56	Helpful
Amer. Hist.	6	20	24	7	2	59	Helpful
Business Law	1	-	2	1	1	5	No
Chorus	4	8	7	5	2	26	Little
Psychology	-	-	3	3	1	7	Helpful
Calculus	-	-	2	2	1	5	Helpful

The results of Table II can help to substantiate or refute that some subject areas need further evaluation, and the possibility arises that certain changes will need to be made in some subject areas.

There were many students who wished that certain subjects like German, Philosophy, Photography and Electronics had been available to them, but these subjects were not offered when they were high school students.

It should be noted that Photography, one of the courses in high demand by the graduates, will be introduced this fall.

In an attempt to see if the students felt that they were being helped with personal problems and other general problems, a section was included to find out how much the school helped them in these areas and also to see if the students were aware that help was available if they wanted it.

Table III shows the feelings of the students about the help they received from the school in regard to a list of selected problems. The column headings used in this table are the same as the ones used for Table II. The column marked "No Help or Undecided" signifies that the respondent gave the question a rating of "0"; a rating of "1" is shown in the column headed "Of Little Help"; a rating of "2" is shown in the column headed "Helpful"; a rating of "3" is shown in the column headed "Very Helpful"; and a rating of "4" is shown in the column headed "Excellent".

The final column of Table III gives the median rating received by each problem. If a problem received a median rating of from 0.5 or below, it can be said that the student received no help or was undecided; if a problem received a median rating of from 0.6 to 1.5, it can be said that the student received little help; if a problem received a median

TABLE III

VALUE JUDGMENTS OF FORMER STUDENTS ABOUT THE AMOUNT
OF HELP RECEIVED FROM THE SCHOOL ON THIRTEEN SELECTED PROBLEMS

PROBLEM	NO HELP OR UNDECIDED	OF LITTLE HELP	HELPFUL	VERY HELPFUL	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	MEDIAN
Getting acquainted with our school as a new student	9	13	20	16	3	61	Helpful
Selected proper courses while in school	9	15	20	13	4	61	Helpful
Selecting extra-class activities while in school	9	16	28	5	3	61	Helpful
Solving personal problems while in school	22	17	13	6	2	60	Little
Discovering my own interests and abilities	4	17	26	9	5	61	Helpful
Getting along with teachers and other students	10	7	22	17	5	61	Helpful
Planning for education after high school	7	13	18	14	10	62	Helpful
Choosing a suitable occupation to follow	11	23	16	8	4	62	Little

TABLE III (cont)

VALUE JUDGMENTS OF FORMER STUDENTS ABOUT THE AMOUNT
OF HELP RECEIVED FROM THE SCHOOL ON THIRTEEN SELECTED PROBLEMS

PROBLEM	NO HELP OR UNDECIDED	OF LITTLE HELP	HELPFUL	VERY HELPFUL	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	MEDIAN
Applying for a job in an occupation of interest to me	28	19	9	3	1	60	Little
Providing me with job information and trends	27	12	14	5	3	61	Little
Learning about working conditions, unions, wages, and hours	37	11	10	4	--	62	No
Knowing how to get along with the "boss" and fellow workers	26	14	12	4	4	60	Little
Giving me good work habits which have helped me	13	16	21	9	1	59	Helpful

rating of from 1.6 to 2.5, it can be said that the student received some help; if a problem received a median rating of from 2.6 to 3.5, it can be said that the student received very much help; and if a problem received a median rating of from 3.6 to 4, it can be said that the student received excellent help with the problem.

None of the problems received a median rating of excellent. The area of work and working conditions received low ratings and a recommendation regarding this will be found in a later part of this paper. Another problem that received a low rating from the respondents was in the area of solving personal problems while in school.

The highest median rating was given the problem of getting along with teachers and other students. It received a rating of 2.1 based on the replies of 61 students who responded to that particular question.

One of the purposes of this study was to determine if the graduates are using their high school training and if they are following the vocation which they planned to follow while in high school. Several of the graduates indicated that they are still furthering their education in the area of their major interests, and their part-time jobs were somewhat related. Table IV on page 26 gives a breakdown of the relationship of the graduate's high school training and his present job compared to the relationship of his high school occupational plans and his present job.

Several students stated that they are not following their high school occupational plans, and it is possible that the reasons for not following these plans could be significant for the school.

In an effort to find out why students are not following high school plans, respondents were asked to indicate on a check-list or supply a

TABLE IV

DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL TRAINING AND HIGH
SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL PLANS TO PRESENT JOB

RELATIONSHIP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	% OF TOTAL
No Relationship	8	14%
Little Relationship	16	28%
Some Relationship	23	40%
Considerable Relationship	5	9%
High Relationship	5	9%
	57	100%

reason or reasons of their own for not following high school occupational plans. Table V on page 28 shows the reasons given by students for not following their high school occupational plans.

Table VI shows the tabulation of responses to the item, "Attitudes Generally Held by Manhattan High School Students in Regard to Members of Minority Groups". A total of 60 graduates responded to this item.

The table on page 29 shows that the greatest number of respondents felt that the attitudes generally held by Manhattan High School students in regard to members of minority groups were of a cooperative nature.

Extra-class or co-curricular activities are an important part of any school program as long as they contribute to the achievement of the philosophy and objectives of the school. They should provide learning situations which will be beneficial to both the student and the school.

A list of the extra-class activities available to Manhattan High School students was included in the questionnaire, and the graduates were asked to rate each activity in which they participated with regard to the value they felt they have received from each activity since leaving high school. As in the other items using median rating scales, the respondents gave an activity a rating of "0" if they felt that the activity had been of no value or if they were undecided; a rating of "1" if they felt that the activity had been of little help; a rating of "2" if they felt that the activity had been helpful; a rating of "3" if they felt that the activity had been very helpful; and a rating of "4" if they felt that the activity had been of excellent value to the student.

TABLE V
REASONS GIVEN BY STUDENTS FOR NOT FOLLOWING HIGH SCHOOL
VOCATIONAL PLANS

REASON GIVEN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	% OF TOTAL
Lack of proper training	5	9%
Change of vocational interest	19	35%
Change of geographic location	7	13%
Health or physical limitations	1	2%
Marriage	5	9%
Lack of available jobs	4	7%
Service interfered	4	7%
Uncertain in High School	9	17%
TOTAL	54	100%

TABLE VI

ATTITUDES GENERALLY HELD BY MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
IN REGARD TO MEMBERS OF MINORITY GROUPS

ATTITUDES	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	% OF TOTAL
Wish they were not in school	1	2%
Uncooperative	7	12%
Cooperative	35	58%
Highly Cooperative	13	22%
Excellent	4	6%
TOTAL	60	100%

Table VII is an indication of the responses given to this particular question. The column headings are identical to the ones used in Table II and III and have been explained earlier in this section.

COMMENTS MADE BY RESPONDENTS

In answer to question 11 on the questionnaire, "In what way, if any, do you feel that the high school guidance service could have been more helpful to you? Please answer briefly", the following are some of the comments made. Errors in spelling were corrected but grammar and punctuation were not corrected.

"More time should be devoted to helping young people be well adjusted, rather than highly productive."

"It could have promoted a more "accessible image."

"They were helpful in meeting all my needs."

"Perhaps contacting each student instead of waiting for the student to come to them."

"I did not know them well enough or feel that they were interested - so I did not go to them with personal problems. All the counselors did was interpret tests."

"Make students more aware of the services. I didn't realize until I was a junior that the counselors were available to everyone."

"I never felt I could take my problems to them."

"I never saw the counselor."

"Seminars on sex education, group encounters to discuss subjects, free drug conferences (films, speakers)."

"Could have stressed getting established with first semester college routine first; then second semester getting involved in social and curricular activities."

"At the beginning of one's sophomore year, he should be told what preparatory courses he should take for his chosen field."

TABLE VII

VALUE JUDGMENTS OF EXTRA-CLASS ACTIVITIES BY
GRADUATES OF MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL

ACTIVITY	NO VALUE OR UNDECIDED	OF LITTLE VALUE	OF SOME VALUE	VERY HIGH VALUE	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	MEDIAN RATING
Hi-Y	12	8	8	3	--	31	Little
Y-Teens	6	4	13	1	--	24	Some
FHA	4	--	4	2	--	10	Some
Pep Club	10	5	8	4	--	27	Little
Lettermen's Club	3	4	5	1	--	13	Little
Student Council	3	--	4	1	1	9	Some
National Honor Society	4	1	--	3	--	8	Little
Athletics	3	--	6	7	5	21	High
Cheerleaders	3	--	--	1	1	5	No
Class Officer	4	--	2	2	2	10	Some
Dramatics	5	4	3	5	3	20	Some
Boys State	3	3	4	4	3	17	Some
Girls State	3	--	--	--	1	4	No

Several comments indicated a need for more adequate counseling services. Many students felt that the guidance program needed to be expanded to reach more students, and provide them with information of personal-social nature along with educational information. Counselors needed to initiate more contacts with students individually or in groups.

The comments below refer to vocational and occupational information. The comments would seem to indicate that this phase of the guidance department could be greatly enhanced if the counselors would do a better job of making the students aware of the different opportunities available. Also, providing counseling for the students in terms of their interests and abilities seems to be indicated.

"Enlightening me to the opportunities of Distributive Education and 'on the job training'. Also, possibly directed to a vocational training in addition to college."

"Job trends would have been helpful."

"More information on unemployment fields, importance of vocational training, how to be interviewed for a job."

"More job information and aptitude tests. Manhattan High School prepared me very well for going to college, very poorly for job hunting."

"Aptitude and interest testing with feedback to the student. Job trend counseling."

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions and recommendations from this study will be divided into the following sections: the school in general and its help in various areas, extra-class activities, academic areas, and the guidance services.

A total of 63 graduates returned usable questionnaires. This was 66 percent of the 95 graduates to whom questionnaires were mailed. Twenty-six of 40, or 65 percent, of the females and 37 of 55, or 67 percent, of the males responded.

Judging from the responses to the questionnaire, Manhattan High School did an adequate job of preparing its students in most respects. There are some indications, however, that certain areas need to be studied further and perhaps some changes made.

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that the abilities, interests, and needs of the students were being met. A total of 58 percent of the graduates who replied were reasonably well-satisfied with their high school course in relation to their abilities, interests, and needs. Three students responded that they were greatly dissatisfied in regard to their interests and needs. Based on the replies received, one may conclude that the abilities, interests, and needs of the former students are adequately being met.

Some 42 percent of the graduates who are now employed felt that there was little or no relationship between their high school training and their present position. It must be remembered, however, that

students who were employed part-time while attending college or vocational technical schools were included in this figure. Forty percent of the graduates responding replied that there was some relationship between their high school occupational plans and their present positions. Approximately 83 percent of the graduates were not following high school vocational plans. For one reason or another, many students were not being adequately trained to do the jobs they are presently engaged in. It is therefore recommended that the school make an attempt to find out vocational plans of the students early enough to insure that the training they receive will be adequate for their chosen occupation. The conclusion is that too many students are not doing what they planned to do in high school and that their high school training is of little help to them at the present time.

The college-bound students were satisfied with the help the school gave them in meeting entrance requirements, extra-class activities, and getting along and acquainted with teachers, students, and the school as a new student. A total of 65 percent of the graduates indicated the school was helpful, very helpful, or excellent in these areas.

However, the replies indicated that the students felt they were not receiving much help from the school with other problems. Especially noticeable in this area was the solving of personal problems, choosing a suitable occupation, applying for a job in an occupation of interest, providing job information and trends, and knowing how to get along with the "boss" and fellow workers. All of these were rated by the graduates as having received little help from the school.

Most of these areas have been greatly improved recently. Occupational information and job trend information is readily available

in the library. This writer recommends that the counselors take the initiative to contact more students and make them more aware of the services available in regard to occupations and personal problems.

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that the attitudes generally held by Manhattan High School students in regard to members of minority groups are adequate. A total of 58 percent of the graduates who replied rated the attitudes as being of the cooperative nature. Two percent of the students responded that they wished they were not in school. Twenty-eight percent of the graduates responded that the attitudes generally held by Manhattan High School students in regard to members of minority groups were highly cooperative or excellent. Based on these replies received, it may be concluded that the attitudes generally held by Manhattan High School students in regard to members of minority groups are cooperative. It must also be noted that the black respondents answered in the negative and did not reflect the majority opinion.

In the subject matter fields, there were several subjects of which the respondents criticized by their rating. It is possible that some of the students held grudges against the school or a teacher, and this can have an affect on the ratings. However, the ratings received were taken at their face value and tabulated. It is concluded that the students are generally well-satisfied with the subjects they studied in high school and that the courses have been helpful to the graduates since leaving high school. Exceptions were in geometry, Spanish, constitution, economics, bank, business law, and chorus. It is recommended that these areas be examined further to see if objectives are being met and to see if the students' criticism is justified.

Courses receiving special praise from the graduates for the amount of help received were English and typing. Many of the students that were in college emphasized that English should have been harder. Photography, one course which was of high demand by the graduates, will be offered this fall.

The activity that was thought to have been most valuable was athletics, and the Athletic Department is to be complimented for the work it is doing. It is concluded that some of the activities were of more value to the students than others, and that a further examination of the Hi-Y Club, Pep Club, Lettermen's Club, National Honor Society, Cheerleaders, and Girls' State would be in order.

One of the main purposes of this study was to obtain the feelings and opinions of the students about the guidance services offered by Manhattan High School. One purpose was to check the students' awareness of the guidance services and to what extent the students took advantage of the services offered. One conclusion is that more personal conferences are needed. A way is needed to let the students feel free to come to the counselor with any type of problem, and it is recommended that the counselors make an effort in this direction.

Another recommendation is that the counselors spend as much time with the vocationally-minded students as with the college-bound students. Most of the "bitter" criticism of the school and the guidance services came from vocationally-minded students. These students need to feel that the school cares as much for them as it does for the college-bound students. It is recommended that the school make a concentrated effort to help those students who do not plan to go on to college and bring an end to such feelings and criticism. Also, guidance

services should be improved in regard to aptitude and interest testing by providing feedback to the students.

In other areas, the guidance services were adequate, especially in regard to college entrance requirement information and scholarships that are available.

It becomes evident that everyone at Manhattan High School is working hard to prepare the students for the future. Several of the shortcomings have been pointed out in this report; and perhaps because of this, steps can be taken to overcome these problems. It is recommended that Manhattan High School initiate a program of follow-up of its graduates at certain intervals, based upon the available finances and resources of the school. Each year, graduates should be informed before graduating of the follow-up possibilities and told of its importance and usefulness to the school in regard to the full evaluation process.

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June 16, 1972

Mr. John Doe
3015 El Paso Lane
Tampa, Florida 33600

Dear John:

As you are no doubt aware, our schools are continuously under pressure to do a better job of preparing our young people to take their place in society.

This is a questionnaire designed to obtain information that will be of value to us in future curriculum planning.

The success of this study depends entirely upon you, the past graduates of Manhattan High School, and, because of this, I sincerely request your cooperation. Your answers will be incorporated into the final decision made in curriculum building, and it is my desire that you will take time to answer each question as carefully as possible.

Copies of the questionnaire are being sent to members of the graduating class of 1967. All answers will be kept in strict confidence. Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope.

I would be grateful for a prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Sylvester Benson

Sylvester Benson
Counselor
Manhattan High School

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

To be completed by all who receive the questionnaire

1. NAME _____

2. PRESENT ADDRESS _____

3. To what degree were you satisfied with your high school courses in relation to your abilities?

_____/	_____/	_____/	_____/	_____/
Greatly Dissatis- fied	Mildly Dissatis- fied	No better could be expected under pre- sent conditions	Reasonably well satisfied	Highly satisfied

4. To what degree were you satisfied with your high school courses in relation to your interests and needs?

_____/	_____/	_____/	_____/	_____/
Greatly Dissatis- fied	Mildly Dissatis- fied	No better could be expected under pre- sent conditions	Reasonably well satisfied	Highly satisfied

5. Rate all of the subjects you took in high school according to the value or help you feel you have received from the subjects since leaving high school. Cross out the subjects you did not take. Rate the rest in the following manner:

- 0 = No help or undecided
- 1 = Of little help
- 2 = Helpful
- 3 = Very helpful
- 4 = Excellent

____ English	____ Biology	____ Constitution	____ Journalism
____ Algebra	____ Woodward	____ Physics	____ Mech. Drawing
____ Geometry	____ Ag. Mech.	____ Speech	____ Phys. Ed.
____ World History	____ Typing	____ Economics	____ American History
____ Spanish	____ Bookkeeping	____ Band	____ Business Law
____ Chemistry	____	____ Chorus	
____ Others (Please List)			

6. Are there any subjects which you wish you had been able to take, but which were not offered when you were a MHS student? If so, please list them.

7. Rate each of the following problems according to the help you received at school by using this scale:

0 = No help or undecided
 1 = Of little help
 2 = Helpful
 3 = Very helpful
 4 = Excellent

___ getting acquainted with our school as a new student.
 ___ selecting proper courses while in school.
 ___ selecting extra-class activities while in school.
 ___ solving personal problems while in school.
 ___ discovering my own interests and abilities.
 ___ getting along with teachers and other students.
 ___ planning for education after high school.
 ___ choosing a suitable occupation to follow.
 ___ applying for a job in an occupation of interest to me.
 ___ providing me with job information and trends.
 ___ learning about working conditions, unions, wages, and hours.
 ___ knowing how to get along with the "boss" and fellow workers.
 ___ giving me good work habits which have helped me.
 ___ check here if you received no help with any of these problems.

8. How much time elapsed from your high school graduation to full employment?

Years ____ Months ____ Weeks ____

9. What is the relationship of your high school training to full employment?

/	/	/	/	/
No Relation- ship	Little Relation- ship	Some Relation- ship	Considerable Relationship	High Rela- tionship

10. If you are not doing what you planned to do in high school, please check the appropriate reason below.

☐ lack of proper training
☐ change of vocational interest
☐ change of geographic location
☐ health or physical limitations
☐ others, please state _____

11. In what way, if any, do you feel that the high school guidance service could have been more helpful to you? Please answer briefly. _____

12. Rate the attitudes generally held by MHS Students in regard to members of minority groups.

☐ Wish they were not in school
 ☐ Uncooperative
 ☐ Cooperative
 ☐ Highly Cooperative
 ☐ Excellent

13. Below is a list of the extra-class activities which are available to MHS students. Rate the following activities in which you participated according to the value that you feel these activities have been to you since leaving high school. Use the following scale.

0 = No value or undecided
 1 = Of little value
 2 = Of some value
 3 = Very high value
 4 = Excellent

<input type="checkbox"/> Hi-Y	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Class Officer
<input type="checkbox"/> Y-Teens	<input type="checkbox"/> National Honor Soc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Dramatics
<input type="checkbox"/> F H A	<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics	<input type="checkbox"/> Boys State
<input type="checkbox"/> Pep Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Cheerleaders	<input type="checkbox"/> Girls State
<input type="checkbox"/> Lettermen's Club		

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE 1967
MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

by

SYLVESTER BENSON

B. S., College of the Ozarks, 1967

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

1972

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to initiate a program of follow-up of the graduating seniors of the Class of 1967 of the Manhattan, Kansas High School in order that the information obtained might be used by the school in future educational evaluation and in improving the present program.

One of the purposes of a follow-up study is to get the present location and activity of the graduate and to find out his feelings and opinions about high school education. These were the main points of emphasis in this study. Copies of the final results have been requested by school officials in Manhattan for their examination and possible use.

Information for use in this study was obtained by means of a questionnaire which was based on recommendations from the school principal, the guidance counselors, and Dr. Kaiser, Department of Education, Kansas State University. The questionnaire was sent to 95 graduates of Manhattan High School's Class of 1967, of which 63 were completed and returned for a total of 66 percent.

An analysis of the responses to the questionnaire showed that the abilities, interests, and needs of the graduates were met in relation to their high school course of study.

Many students are not following their high school plans in their present positions. Over half of the graduates replied that there is little or no relationship between their high school training and their present positions. A similar situation exists between high school plans and the present position.

The school is doing an adequate job of preparing the students who continue their education. Based on the responses received, it was concluded that the college-bound students are more likely to follow their high school plans than are those graduates who enter the labor force and vocational schools upon high school graduation.

It was recommended that the counselors take the initiative to contact more students and make them aware of the services available in regard to occupations and personal problems. Very low ratings were received from students as to the amount of help given by the school in these areas.

Based on the replies received, it was concluded that the attitudes generally held by Manhattan High School students in regard to members of minority groups are cooperative.

The respondents indicated a need for the addition of several subjects to the curriculum. The subjects of high demand were philosophy, photography, electronics and German. Photography will be offered beginning this fall.

It is recommended that the subjects geometry, Spanish, constitution, economics, band, business law, and chorus be examined further to see if objectives are being met and to see if the students' criticism is justified.

The Athletic Department was to be complimented for the work it is doing. It was recommended that further examination of the Hi-Y Club, Pep Club, Lettermen's Club, National Honor Society, Cheerleaders, and Girl State would be in order.

The guidance service was doing an adequate job, especially in regard to college-bound students concerning college entrance requirements,

and scholarships available. However, many graduates who were not going on to college indicated that the guidance services did not seem interested in them. It was recommended that the school make a concentrated effort to help those students who do not plan to go on to college and bring an end to such feelings and criticism. Also, guidance services should be improved in regard to aptitude and interest testing with feedback to the student.

A final recommendation was that now that a follow-up program has been initiated, the Manhattan High School should continue the program at regular intervals. Each year's graduates should be informed before graduating of the follow-up possibilities and its importance. Follow-up programs of graduates should then be continued at certain intervals based upon the available finances and resources of the school.