

A STUDY OF GUIDANCE PROVISIONS FOR ORIENTATION OF  
FIRST YEAR PUPILS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KANSAS

by

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## INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The secondary schools have for many years faced the problem of orientation for new students. The transition from one school to another presents to the student new problems, choices, acquaintances as well as many other factors that make adjustment to a new situation difficult. Bennett (24) makes the statement:

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 new environment. The new experiences may present a challenge for the examinations of life values and the reorganization of his life patterns.

The need for orientation in the secondary schools has come as a result of various reasons. The increase in the population of the secondary schools has been the main factor. This increased school population has resulted in a more complex school organization, to which the pupil has greater difficulty in adjusting himself. A broader curriculum has emerged to meet the needs of a more heterogeneous student body. The expansion of the curriculum has increased the size of the faculty which has added to the bewilderment of the new students. Advances in knowledge regarding individual differences and adolescent needs and problems have added to the importance of orientation. The importance given to clubs and extra-class activities by the school should also be mentioned as a factor.

Writers in the field of guidance are, in general, agreed that orientation should be a continuous process as a part of the total guidance program. These writers also recognize that

there are certain provisions that should be made by the school to help new students become acquainted with their new school environment and the opportunities offered. Margaret Bennett (24) considers orientation a continuous process when she states:

Orientation, like all other aspects of guidance is a process, not an event. Our concept of personality development as a continuous interaction between a growing individual and his ever-changing environment, material and social, precludes the possibility of effecting any important life adjustments merely by means of a discrete series of events directed into a new school environment. An adequate orientation service is an integral part of the whole guidance program, just as the latter is an integral functioning part of the entire school program.

Bennett recognizes, however, that there are definite orientation activities that should be provided for by the school when she states:

The term "orientation" is generally used to refer to those services provided to assist pupils in their adjustments to new school situations and in their best use of new school opportunities to achieve their educational objectives.

Frequently the term is applied to a variety of school activities provided at crucial points in the school program for the purpose of assisting pupils to make new choices or plans, educational or vocational, to avoid scholastic or personal-social difficulties, and to utilize new opportunities in the school environment at progressively higher levels.

The Dictionary of Education (25) defines orientation as:

The process of making a person aware of such factors in his school environment as rules, traditions, and educational offerings for the purpose of facilitating effective adaptation.

The term "orientation" in this report will be used as defined above with the addition of persons as one of the factors in the school environment that should be recognized. One of the problems confronted by new pupils is that of becoming

acquainted with teachers, administrators, and fellow-students. Thus, orientation in this study is defined as the process of making a person aware of such factors in his school environment as rules, traditions, educational offerings, teachers, and fellow-students for the purpose of facilitating effective adaptation.

The problem of this report is to determine what orientation devices are commonly used by secondary schools and what provisions are made for orientation of the first year pupils in the secondary schools of Kansas.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ORIENTATION

The history of orientation courses date back to the year 1888 when a course was offered at Boston University, which had the specific purpose of orientating new students (3). The end of the First World War brought a rapid increase in the number of colleges and universities offering courses in orientation. Fitts and Swift, divided the history of orientation courses in institutions of higher education into two periods:

1. The Pre-war Period, extending from 1888, the year in which the rudiments of definitely organized orientation courses began to appear, through the year 1917.
2. The Post-war Period, beginning with 1918 and extending to 1926.

The number of institutions offering courses in orientation has gradually been increasing.

The orientation course did not solve the problems of adjustment during the first days of college life. Orientation devices such as "Freshman Week" were organized to help acquaint the new students when they arrived on the campus.



The orientation program in the secondary schools, particularly the orientation course, has been an outgrowth of the college orientation program. Devices such as "orientation week", visitation day, printed program of study or handbook, and many others appear to have been adopted from the colleges and universities. There are few secondary schools to-day that do not use some orientation device in their school program.

#### RELATION OF ORIENTATION TO THE TOTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

The problem of orientation is one that offers the first opportunity for constructive guidance. Jones (7) speaking of the purpose of guidance states:

Guidance of all kinds has a common purpose to assist the individual to make wise choices, adjustments, and interpretations in connection with critical situations in his life.

Bennett (24) stresses the importance of orientation in the guidance program when she says:

When new conditions and choices must be faced that are too remote at the beginning of each training period to constitute vital problems for detailed study or that call for evaluation of previous plans and experiences, the need for orientation is indicated.

The statements by Jones and Bennett, stress the importance of the guidance program and the close relationship between orientation and the total guidance program. Provisions for orientation in the school program are necessary factors in assisting the individual to make wise choices and adjustments. The transition from the elementary to the secondary school by a student is accompanied by many problems and a need for

information concerning the new school situation which he is encountering. The school, however, often assumes that the new student will assimilate the routine and offerings of the school on his own initiative. Chisholm (1) stresses this point in his statement:

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.

The school through its guidance program should plan for the wholesome, consistent growth of each student toward certain values which the student himself with the help of able guidance has thought through and accepted. Knight (18) states:

Educators occasionally contend that thoughtfully planned and skillfully presented orientation programs are essential if new pupils are to adapt themselves happily to an academic career. The more that can be done to bridge the gap and soften the transition between the elementary and secondary schools, the more effective the school life of the individuals concerned, and the greater the influence of the institution as a builder of successful citizens.

Koos and Kefauver (9) regard orientation as a preventive program. It aims to prevent student maladjustment. Their criteria of a well-planned program of orientation in the total guidance program are as follows:

1. A good orientation program should familiarize sixth grade pupils with the junior high school while they are still in the elementary school.
2. Adequate provisions should be made to help pupils feel at home the first day at junior high school.



3. There should be a definite and carefully prepared program of orientation anticipating the needs of incoming 7th grade students during the first week of school.

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

Although the criteria listed above refer to junior high schools, they are just as applicable to senior high schools.

Knight (18) gives ten areas in which high school students often need orientation:

1. The curriculum, its division, 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, note taking, etc.

The emphasis placed on the various areas listed above vary with the size of the school and its location. Schools differ widely because of local conditions as to the type of guidance program they can carry out effectively. The orientation program in guidance should be planned on the basis of the needs of the students whom their particular school serves, and the nature and

scope of the guidance undertaken in the school.

Bennett (24) has classified orientation activities into the following four groups which she calls:

1. Pre-admission activities.
2. Initial freshman days.
3. Freshman orientation courses.
4. Freshman guidance program.

The classification of orientation activities as stated by Bennett is the one adopted for use in this report. It should not be assumed that orientation ends with the completion of the freshman year. Orientation, as stated earlier in this report, is an integral part of the total guidance program, and is a continuous process which does not end until the student leaves school.

The relation of orientation to the total guidance program is very important. Despite its importance it is commonly overlooked by those responsible for planning the work of the school. Orientation is an essential process in assisting the student to adjust to changing situations. Chisholm (1) stresses this in his statement:

The importance of leaving the decisions in the areas of guidance to the individual and helping him 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 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.

#### REVIEW OF STUDIES RELATED TO ORIENTATION

Fitts and Swift (3) in a study made in 1918 found that only eight states had institutions offering orientation courses. Wrenn (23) estimated that in 1930 one-fourth to two-thirds of the colleges and universities were giving orientation courses and that one-half to three-fourths of the courses emphasized individual orientation to self and to college life.

Gardner (4) in 1936 estimated that from 80 to 85 percent of the institutions of higher education have some type of an initial adjustment program.

Hamrin, Erickson, and O'Brien (6) in 1939, found that more than 50 percent of the schools studied did not carry out such frequently recommended orientation activities as:

1. Visit elementary schools before enrollment.
2. Transfer elementary records to secondary schools.
3. Hold Freshman day.
4. Assist pupils to become acquainted with the building.
5. More intelligent use of library and cafeteria.

Erickson found that the three greatest problems the students encountered were getting acquainted, finding rooms, and adjustment to change.

Bennett (24) made a study to determine the outcome of a semester orientation course at the eleventh year level. Comparisons were made of orientation and control groups of students, all of whom were receiving a counseling service. The

group guidance course was the differentiating factor. The orientation groups made greater gains on nearly all informational aspects of the work tested, and gave evidence of a quality of thinking superior to that of the control group with respect to educational, vocational, avocational, and social-civic choices and plans, except in reasons for attending college.

Kefauver and Hand (8) made an extensive study of the guidance program in nineteen schools in ten cities selected because of their emphasis on guidance. They found that all the guidance programs studied were relatively ineffective in imparting educational guidance information.

Five major aspects of the guidance service were included in a study made by the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards (12). In the final report physical and health guidance was mentioned only four times, informing students regarding the school only twice, visitation four times, and results of guidance was not mentioned by any of the schools co-operating in the study.

Hoover (26) studied the methods used in organization of L 7 grade entrants in the large junior high schools of the East Bay District in California. The following topics were described:

1. Classification of entrants by ability grouping.
2. Social activities prior to the opening day.
3. Organization of the opening day.
4. Orientation devices of the first week.

The Subcommittee on Guidance of the Commission on Research and Service of the North Central Association (22) prepared a report concerning the characteristics of a high school guidance and counseling program. A study was made of the North Central

high schools to determine to what extent these characteristics were found in the guidance programs of the schools. This study revealed among other things that promotion cards and activities and the transfer of pupil records comprise the orientation activities in many schools. The educational, vocational, and personal adjustment of the pupils is incidental in many of the schools. No special studies are made by schools to determine the adjustment of pupils to high school and post-high school activities.

#### METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

This study is concerned with provisions for orientation of first year pupils in the secondary schools of Kansas. In order to make the picture as complete as possible it was decided to make a survey of the schools as they are classified by the State Department of Education; first class city schools, second class city schools, third class city and rural high schools. Since the median county community high school in Kansas is larger than the third class city high school it was decided to group them separately. The junior high schools were also sampled to determine what provisions for orientation they make.

Questionnaires were sent to all of the first class city high schools. Fifty percent of the second class city and the county community high schools were sampled by selecting every other school as they were listed in the Kansas Educational Directory. Every fourth school was selected among the third class city and rural high schools. Questionnaires were sent

to all of the junior high schools.

Questionnaires were sent to 232 schools of which 146 or 63 percent responding were used for this report. The classification of schools, their range of enrollment, and the median enrollment for each group are given below.

	Range	M'dn	
First class city schools	507-2000	1000	Group A
Second class city schools	128- 909	324.5	Group B
Junior high schools	72-1100	444.5	Group C
County community high schools	145-500	231	Group D
Third class city and rural high schools	18- 837	73.9	Group E

The number of questionnaires sent to each group and the percent responding are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of questionnaires sent to each group and the percent responding.

	Groups					All
	A	B	C	D	E	groups
Number of questionnaires sent.	16	41	43	12	120	232
Percent of questionnaires returned.	75	56	70	83	59	63

Hereafter in this report reference will be made to both the classification of the school and the group. The percentages listed throughout the report have been rounded off to the nearest percent.

The questionnaire was submitted for criticism to eight secondary school principals to check its adequacy. Space was provided for insertion of any significant items not mentioned



in the questionnaire. The fact that very little use was made of most of these spaces suggests that the principals, in general, found the list complete as it applied to their schools.

Personal interviews were made to certain selected schools after the questionnaires were returned to study the organization of the orientation program and how it was administered in accordance with the total guidance program.

#### PRE-ADMISSION ACTIVITIES

The pre-admission activities are an important part of the orientation program of the secondary schools. This importance is emphasized in the following statement by Hamrin and Erickson (5):

Whether or not a pupil has had the benefit of an adequate guidance program in the elementary school, it is the responsibility of the secondary school to contact him before he is admitted and to assist in his satisfactory transfer to the secondary school.

The pre-admission program should be one that is participated in by members of both the sending and receiving schools. Different members of the school personnel are used by the schools in contacting the pupils before entering. The school superintendent or principal usually makes the visit to the sending school. The most desirable method is to have the home room teacher of the incoming students visit the prospective students in their school before they transfer to the new school. Hamrin and Erickson (5) discuss the value of such a visit in the following statement:

The visit is valuable in establishing a friendly relationship with the contributing school, its teachers and advisors. The visit should also be an occasion for discovering the kinds of records and types of information available about each student and collecting such additional information as may seem advisable preliminary to admission.

Visits were made to the sending schools by members of the school personnel in 76 percent of the schools returning questionnaires in the survey. Over 90 percent of the junior high schools (Group C) reported making pre-admission visits compared with 62 percent of the third class city schools (Group E).

Table 2. Percentage of visits by members of the school personnel to the sending schools before new pupils enter.

	Groups					All
	A	B	C	D	E	
	No. schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Percent of schools in which visits are made by members of the school personnel to the sending schools before new pupils enter	83	87	93	70	62	76

The principal, as shown in Table 3, was named most frequently by the schools as the person making the visits to the sending schools. The superintendent was listed by 45 of the schools and the guidance director was named in 18 schools. Other persons making the visit were visiting teachers, vice-principals, dean of girls, music teachers, gym instructors and special department teachers. Several of the schools reported that more than one person made visits to the sending schools for purposes of informing the pupils of facts pertaining to the new school.

Table 3. Summary showing by number the members of the school personnel most frequently reported as making visits to the elementary and junior high schools.

Person	Groups					All groups
	A	B	C	D	E	
	No. schools reporting					
	12	23	30	10	71	
Principal	8	12	26	6	21	73
Superintendent	2	11	4	0	28	45
Guidance director	4	3	6	2	3	18
Regular teacher	2	2	2	1	4	11

Visits to the sending schools by student members of the receiving schools can be very valuable. This is done in some schools by various organizations accepting this as a group project. The student council, national honor society, or other clubs often carry out such a project. This is an excellent device to acquaint prospective pupils with the various clubs, activities, and general routine of the school.

Visits to the elementary or junior high schools by student members of the receiving schools were made by only 46 or 32 percent of the schools. The percent of schools in each group reporting to make such visits is shown in Table 4. It is interesting to note that the size of the school seems to make little difference in the use of this procedure.

Table 4. Percentage of schools reporting visits made to the sending schools by student members of the receiving schools.

	Groups				
	A	B	C	D	E
: No. of schools reporting : groups					
	12	23	30	10	71
Percent of schools in which student members make visits to the sending schools	33	30	50	30	24
					32

The practice of having the prospective pupils visit the receiving school appeared to be more prevalent among the schools as 95 or 68 percent of the schools answered this question in the affirmative. Many of the schools have a visiting day which is usually held in the spring of the year. Speaking of the purpose of the visitation day, Chisholm states (1):

The main purpose of the visitation day is to give prospective students a clear concept of as much of the work of the school as possible, through direct observation. The visitation day is, therefore a procedure for informing students so they will be in a better position to appreciate the work of the high school and to make their first high school choices more wisely. The work of the school during visitation day should be planned so that it will give as nearly as possible a cross section of the school as it normally operates. The work of the school on that day need not run according to the normal schedule.

The cooperation of the entire school staff including the older members of the student body should be secured in planning the day. It is felt the best time of the year for the visitation day is during the spring, but not late enough to be in competition with other important parts of the school program which come to a focus at that time.

The visit to the school should provide the prospective

pupil with certain information concerning the school. This information should include facts about the curricular offerings and requirements, extra-class activities, and other information pertaining to the school.

The pre-registration of new pupils is often held on visitation day. This gives the pupils an opportunity to think of the subjects they would like to take and to make possible changes before the fall term.

Sixty-five percent of the schools reporting held a spring pre-registration for prospective pupils. Over 93 percent of the first class city schools (Group A) responded in the affirmative to this question compared with 50 percent of the county community high schools (Group D). The schools in Group D being county community high schools draw their pupils from schools over a large district making it more difficult to contact the pupils.

Table 5. Percentage of schools reporting visitation day and pre-registration for first year pupils.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Percent of schools reporting visits made by pupils of the sending schools.	67	61	83	90	64	68
Percent of schools holding a spring pre-registration for new pupils.	92	69	83	50	53	65

The use of printed materials in addition to the talks is particularly significant in the pre-admission activities. The pupils should be encouraged to take the printed material home and show it to their parents.

There are several types of printed material which may be used to provide information for new pupils. Certain types of printed material such as the school handbook are particularly applicable to large schools, while publications such as the school paper and printed course of study are well-adapted for use in the small school as well as the large. This was shown to be true in Table 6 in which the printed course of study was named by the schools as the printed material most often used to acquaint new students with school life, activities, and regulations. The main criticism of the handbooks is that they are commonly written by the administration, and in an attempt to increase the importance and appearance of the publication its main purpose is often lost. An example of this is an excerpt concerning enrollment taken from a handbook of one of the large county community high schools used in the survey:

Enrollment will be conducted in the office of the main building at any time between August 21 and September 4. The office will be open from eight A. M. until six P. M. each day. Some classes will be limited in the number enrolled such as typing, due to the number of machines. Students first enrolling will fill such classes first.

The following excerpt was taken from the same publication explaining the purpose of the school:

The secondary school should not only help the individual to adjust to the cultural patterns of the local community but also to the cultural patterns of a democratic nation. Much emphasis of the school should



be upon the pupil, taking into consideration his viewpoint and interest. A spirit of cooperation should be encouraged and maintained between teachers and pupils, and between school and community. Due to the rapid economic and sociological changes in our social order it is essential that the faculty be ever alert, in their teaching, to such problems both on a local and national scale.

The secondary school pupils are not very concerned with a philosophy of secondary education and although it is well to have such material available for use by the faculty and the community its value to the student is questionable. The purpose of the handbook of the Abilene High School as printed in that publication is given below:

The purpose of the handbook is to furnish the student needed information about the school in concise and convenient form.

The handbook will be especially helpful for the new student who usually knows little about the school or what is expected of him. He does not know the teachers, the rules and regulations, the school traditions, what programs he is eligible to take, the social organizations, school songs, yells, etc. The handbook should help the student become a real citizen of the school.

The student handbook can be an important tool in orienting new pupils but much care must be taken in its construction and pupil participation in its preparation should be encouraged.

The printed course of study was used by 91 of the schools. Many of the schools using this included in it other information pertaining to the school. The Junction City High School gives an enrollment information bulletin to each prospective pupil in the spring of the year. The pupils take the bulletin home to their parents and study it carefully before enrolling. In addition to the course of study this bulletin includes such

information as the required and elective subjects, a list of possible majors and minors, a definition of terms, and the classification of students.

Table 6. Frequency of type of printed material used to acquaint new pupils with school life, activities, and regulations.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Printed course of study	10	20	21	5	35	91
School paper	7	8	10	7	45	77
School handbook	7	12	15	5	23	7

There were 115 or 79 percent reporting that the printed material was given to the new pupils before entering school. It is interesting to note that 100 percent of the first class city schools (Group A) made this material available to new pupils before entering while this was true of only 70 percent of the third class city and rural high schools (Group E).

Table 7. Percentage of schools making printed material available to new pupils before entrance.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Percent of schools in which printed material is given to new pupils before entering	100	91	80	80	72	79

The principal, as would be expected, was the person most often named by the schools as being the person responsible for the orientation program. Table 8 gives the number of times each member of the school personnel was named. The superintendent was named 13 times, director of guidance 8, and a committee was used in three of the schools reporting. The vice-principal, counselor, and regular teacher were named by three schools as being responsible for the orientation program.

An organized orientation program should be the responsibility of one individual although the co-operation of the entire school staff is necessary for its success. The principal is usually responsible for the guidance program and it is advantageous for him to assume the responsibility for orientation.

Table 8. Member of the school personnel held responsible for the orientation program of the school in frequency of times listed by the schools.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Principal	4	4	17	4	23	59
Superintendent	0	3	0	0	10	13
Director of guidance	3	1	2	0	2	8
Committee	2	0	1	0	0	3
Others	1	1	1	0	0	3

Only 59 percent of the schools reported one person responsible for the orientation program of the school. Here again the size of the school appears to make a difference as 83 percent

of the first class city schools (Group A) reported in the affirmative while this was true of only 50 percent of the county community and third class city schools (Groups D and E).

Table 9. Percentage of schools making one person responsible for the orientation program of the school.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Percent of schools in which one person is responsible for the orientation program	83	65	67	50	51	59

#### INITIAL DAYS FOR FIRST YEAR PUPILS

The initial days are extremely important to the new pupils as their first impressions are lasting. The use of orientation week is sometimes used by schools to help the new pupil become adjusted to the class schedules, cafeteria, extra-class activities, and other activities associated with the school.

A three day "Orientation Institute" has been used at the Sharon High School, Sharon, Pennsylvania (19). The "Orientation Institute" was a result of the feeling among the school staff that the new pupils would start the school year much better if they were better acquainted with the school. One staff member stated:

If we could only take these boys and girls and

segregate them for a few days. If before they opened their textbooks we could develop in each one a desire to make the most of his opportunities; could help him select his subjects; show him about the building and explain how the school operates - surely that pupil would find it easier to adjust himself to his new world.

The "Institute" included in its program three core courses: "The School and Its Opportunity," "How to Study," "The School and Its Ways." The pupils were also taken on a conducted tour of the building, filled out a battery of tests, filled out a personal questionnaire and an occupational-interest questionnaire, an autobiography, and given health examinations.

A decided improvement could be seen in the adjustment of the new pupils to the school. The following evaluation was made by the school staff:

1. The freshmen, even by the admission of upper-classman, were not the usual shade of green in their initial comings and goings about the school. Freshman disciplinary cases have been relaxed.
2. With the new understandings acquired, a number of freshmen changed their schedules during the course of the institute.
3. A better use of study periods by the freshmen, as compared with previous freshmen classes has been noted.

The use of orientation week, or a similar device is needed more in the large than the small school. Regardless of the size of the school, it is a good plan to have new pupils enroll early and at a special time provided for them. Lefever, Turrel, and Weitzel (10) encouraged this when they wrote:

Having new students enroll a day earlier, will provide an opportunity for them to become acquainted with the important features of the school before entering upon regular classwork. Such a procedure is especially effective in schools having large enrollments and correspondingly heavy registration duties for school officials.

It tends to lessen registration terrors for large numbers of students and at the same time conserve the time of officials.

First year secondary school pupils enrolled at a special time provided for them in 122 or 84 percent of the schools reporting in the survey. Student advisors were assigned to first year pupils during their initial days in only 23 percent of the schools. One of the difficulties in carrying out this device is contacting the older students prior to the enrollment period in the fall. Over 40 percent of the first class city schools (Group A) used this device indicating that this is more applicable to the larger schools.

Special provisions to enable new pupils to meet members of the faculty and other students were made in 65 percent of the schools. Fifty percent of the schools reported making special provisions to enable new pupils to meet members of the various clubs and organizations. Sixty-seven percent of the junior high schools (Group C) made such provisions while this was true of only 40 percent of the county community high schools (Group D). Speaking of the value of the extra-class activities to the orientation program Chisholm states:

Participation in a comprehensive program of extra-curricular activities, so far as the orientation program in guidance is concerned, may furnish the student valuable information about the nature of many wholesome activities. Through the extra-curricular activities, the individual may become better informed about curricular offerings, other extra class work, and the nature of the work in various vocations.

There were 25 or 83 percent of the junior high schools (Group C) reporting that they provided an opportunity for parents



Table 10. Provisions for orientation made by the schools during the initial days of first year pupils in percent.

	Groups					All groups
	A	B	C	D	E	
	Number of schools reporting					
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Assign student advisors such as "Big Brother" and "Big Sister" to new pupils.	42	17	17	40	21	23
Pupils enroll at a special time provided for them.	75	91	83	80	85	84
Special provisions to enable new pupils to meet members of the faculty as well as other students are made by the school.	59	68	73	50	62	65
Special provisions are made by the school to enable new pupils to meet members of the various clubs and organizations.	50	63	67	40	40	50
Opportunity is provided by the school for parents to meet members of the school personnel.	67	77	83	50	60	67

to meet members of the school personnel. Fifty percent of the county community high schools (Group D) provided this opportunity. Many of the third class city and rural high schools (Group E) stated that due to the fact the school and community was small most of the new pupils already knew the upper classmen and most of the teachers. The Parents\*Teachers Association was mentioned frequently as the device used to enable parents to meet the members of the school faculty. Several schools used "American Education Week" and "Open House" to enable parents to meet the teachers.

The school assembly was the most popular method used to acquaint new pupils with the course of study, rental fees, books, etc. Table 11 reveals however that 92 percent of the first class city schools (Group A) use the home room while only 14 percent of the third class city and rural high schools (Group E) reported using this plan. One hundred percent of the schools of the county community high schools (Group D) used the assembly while 60 percent of the junior high schools (Group C) used this method. The larger schools use the home room for initial orientation purposes while the smaller schools make use of the assembly.

The conference periods with students is probably one of the most satisfying methods of conveying this information to new pupils. Speaking of the conference period, Lefever, Turrel, and Weitzel (10) state:

The conference period is based on a recognition of the fact that not all teachers are able to promote guidance activities in heterogenous groups of students. The conference period seems destined to be successful

because only teachers who are capable of counseling in areas not represented by their own subjects are put in charge.

Conference periods with students were used in 41 percent of the schools. Fifty-five percent of the second class city schools (Group B) indicated they used the conference period to acquaint new pupils with the course of study, rental fees, etc. Nearly 70 percent of the schools used printed material to acquaint new pupils with this information at the time of enrollment. Here again the higher percentage is in the larger schools with 92 percent of the first class city schools (Group A) using printed material at time of enrollment compared with 59 percent of the third class city and rural high schools (Group E).

The use of the individual interview was more widely used in the county community high schools (Group D) as 51 percent of the schools indicated their use of this method. The interview was used in only 8 percent of the first class city schools (Group A). The size of enrollment in the smaller schools makes it possible to use individual interviews during the initial days while it is extremely difficult to do in the larger schools.

Many of the schools indicated that they used more than one of the methods listed to acquaint new pupils with this information.

One of the schools interviewed used this method to acquaint new pupils with school information during the initial days. The pupils at the time of their enrollment are given a room number to which they are to go the first period of the first day of school. This period is called the "zero period". The pupils are given their locker numbers, their home room number and other information

Table 11. Methods in percent used by the schools to acquaint first year pupils with the course of study, rental fees, books, building, etc.

Method	Groups					All groups
	A	B	C	D	E	
	Number of schools reporting					
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Assembly	75	74	60	100	77	75
Home room	92	41	90	10	30	41
Conference periods	42	55	40	40	36	40
Printed material given at time of enrollment	92	83	77	70	59	70
Individual interviews	8	39	43	40	52	43

which will help them during their first day. Assemblies are held during the week at which time various members of the school personnel and officers of school clubs address the student body. All of the home rooms for the first year pupils discuss the school and community during the first two weeks of school. It is felt by having each pupil report to a specific room to receive instructions the pupils will experience less uncertainty and bewilderment.

#### ORIENTATION OF FIRST YEAR PUPILS THROUGH COURSES

The orientation course for first year pupils is increasing in popularity. Credit is usually given for the course, but not in all cases. The orientation course is usually built around the needs of the pupils and includes problems that are general to boys and girls of that age.

Lefever, Turrel, and Wietzel (10) give four essentials that an orientation course should consist of:

1. The student should acquire sufficient information to have something to think with and to think about.

2. He should be given frequent opportunities to understand and appreciate the values inherent in the various aspects of the course.

3. He should have considerable practice in making plans related to a variety of life interests, and to the extent that these essentials are achieved, there should result:

4. An increasing improvement of the student's judgment.

Many schools do not use a textbook, but base the course on various units aimed to help student adjustment and adaptation. This has been partially due to the lack, until recently, of

adequate orientation textbooks. Some of the textbooks that are used in the orientation course are Living Your Life by Crawford, Cooley, and Trillingham; Making Good in High School by Hamrin and McColloch; School and Life by Bennett and Hand; and Home Room Guidance Program for the Junior High School Years by Detjen and Detjen.

Wharton (29) gives five common elements which she thinks should be included in an orientation course:

1. Information and problems concerning the curriculum and activities of the school.
2. Information and problems concerning the choice of course and elective subjects.
3. The study of occupations.
4. The study of the educational and vocational opportunities in the community.
5. Problems of personal and social relations.

The home room is used to present orientation units in some schools. The main criticism of this plan is the difficulty in obtaining home room teachers who are interested and qualified to present this type of material.

Only 8 percent of the schools returning questionnaires offered a course called orientation. One-third of the first class city schools (Group A) offered the course while none of the county community or third class city and rural high schools (Group D and E) did.



Table 12. Percentage of schools offering a course in orientation.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Percent of schools offering a course called orientation	33	9	20	0	0	8

Several of the schools used courses other than orientation for orientation purposes. Following is a list of the courses reported in order of the frequency of times mentioned.

Occupations or vocations	14
Family living	13
Psychology	9
Student problems	5
Citizenship	3
Social problems	2
Problems of living	2
Human relations	1
Social conduct	1

Some schools reported using orientation units in other courses. Other schools indicated they included orientation units in all of the courses taught. The principal of one of the rural high schools (Group E) wrote: "All the teachers of first year pupils spend the first week of school in orientation". An orientation workshop is held by this school for all teachers of first year pupils prior to the opening of school. Following is a list of the courses in which orientation units were reported

and the order of frequency mentioned.

English	8
Social living	4
Social studies	3
Common learnings course	2
Health education	1
Geography	1
Speech	1

One school reported that the freshman English teachers spend the first week on orientation to the school. Orientation units such as how to study, use of the library, and other units can be integrated into the English course in a very profitable manner. There was rather close agreement among the schools concerning the units embodied in the orientation course or other courses used for orientation purposes. The units taught in order of the frequency of times reported are given below.

How to study	44
Educational information	42
Orientation to school activities	42
Orientation to school	41
Citizenship	39
Safety	34
Etiquette	34
Personality development	32
Occupational information	29
Use of library	2
Orientation to the home	1

Student responsibility	1
Unit on savings	1

In most schools the guidance counselor teaches the course in orientation. The following description of the orientation course taught at Winslow High School, Winslow, Arizona is a good example of what usually is included in such a course (28):

All ninth grade students take the orientation course which consists of a study of the high school, its purpose various courses offered, the meaning of majors and minors, school regulations, vocations, study habits, use of the library, etc. We use no textbooks in the orientation course but follow an outline of various units of work, the outline being under continuous revision.

One of the schools interviewed required all first year pupils to take a course entitled "Orientation and Occupations". The first part of the course consisted of such units as a study of the high school, how to study, use of the library, and health. The students had to make their educational plan during the second part of the course and make a study of one occupation. A battery of tests was given to the pupils at this time. The pupils then outline their course for the next three years and work extensively on their educational and occupational plans which were based on the results of the tests.

The person responsible for teaching the course in orientation should be an experienced teacher with at least some preparation in the field of guidance. Wilber J. Gooch (16) reports a study in which 65 percent of the orientation classes conformed to the traditional procedure of questions on an assignment by the teacher with answers by the pupils or specific directions were followed by either board or seat work. Constructing the

course around the experiences of the students and their problems is a determining factor in the ultimate success of such a course.

#### THE FRESHMAN GUIDANCE PROGRAM

The transition from one school level to another cannot be adequately cared for in a week or a day. Certain problems of pupil adjustment must be met after the pupil has begun his work in the new school. It is to the home room teacher in most schools that the pupil will normally look for orientation and guidance after he has made the transfer. Hamrin and Erickson (5) believe that each home room teacher should have the following information concerning their students:

1. Record of a student's educational program.
2. Scores on standardized tests of achievement.
3. Scores on intelligence quotient tests.
4. Health records.
5. Record of social adjustment.
6. Future educational plan.
7. Information about home and family.

The home room teacher can do much during the year to help the pupils with their problems. The home room can also make a major contribution to guidance in the areas of civic responsibility, ethical character, appreciation of the home, as well as health, leisure time, and vocations.

Certain data are needed concerning the pupil for the purpose of guidance and counseling. Most of these data can be obtained through personal data blanks and questionnaires, interviews with students, student autobiographies, cumulative records received from the sending schools, visits to students' homes, teacher conferences, and through testing.

Personal data blanks and questionnaires were used by 68 percent of the schools returning the questionnaire. Eighty-three percent of the first class city schools (Group A) used the student autobiographies as a source for gaining such information. Less than 10 percent of the third class city and rural high schools used this device.

Interviews with students were used as a source for obtaining information in 66 percent of the schools. Only 19 percent of the schools reporting used the student autobiographies as a source for obtaining information about the new pupil.

Cumulative records were received from the sending schools in 71 percent of the schools reporting. One hundred percent of the first class city schools (Group A) received cumulative records from the sending schools compared with 57 percent of the schools in the third class city and rural high schools (Group E).

Visits to students homes were made in 39 percent of the schools. Interviews with parents to obtain information concerning the pupil was slightly higher as 38 percent of the schools indicated they used this method.

Teacher conferences were used in 39 percent of the schools. Such conferences were used in 50 percent of the county community high schools (Group D) and 37 percent of the third class city and rural high schools (Group E).

The type of test used most commonly by the schools returning questionnaires was the scholastic aptitude test used by 62 percent of the schools. Twenty percent of the schools tested for social adjustment, 49 percent tested for achievement, 37 percent tested

for interests, and 24 percent of the schools tested for special aptitude.

It is interesting to note in Table 13 the rather consistent trend between the percentage of the five groups using the different types of tests. The implications are that the larger schools tend to use tests much more than the smaller schools.

Table 13. Percentage of schools using tests to obtain information about new pupils for guidance purposes.

	Groups					
	A	B	C	D	E	All
	No. of schools reporting :					groups
	12	23	30	10	71	146
Scholastic aptitude	92	70	60	60	55	62
Achievement	83	39	60	60	34	46
Interests	50	57	47	40	25	47
Special aptitudes	50	35	20	20	18	24
Social adjustment	33	17	17	30	18	20

Orientation as stated before is a continuous process in the total guidance program. As the guidance program should continue throughout the student's school life so should orientation. Bennett (24) suggests that the freshman orientation program should accomplish the following:

1. To guide the student in becoming acquainted with the new institution in order that he may adjust himself happily in the new environment through participating effectively in its life, and that he may utilize its opportunity for furthering his growth.
2. To guide the student in a reconsideration of his goals and purposes in relation to increased self-knowledge, and in the perspective of his new opportunities for well-balanced growth.



3. To guide the student toward a growing awareness of the wider social scene and of his place therein.

4. To contribute to the development of increased skill in self-direction through improved skill in adjusting intelligently to the new environment and through experience in utilizing new opportunities.

5. To provide opportunities for school officials (administrators, workers, and other teachers) to become better acquainted with new students and more aware of their growth needs, in order that the school environment may be made more responsive to these needs.

#### SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. Pre-admission visits to the sending schools were made by 76 percent of the schools. A larger proportion of visits were made by the junior high schools, 93 percent.

2. The principal was the member of the school personnel most frequently named as making the pre-admission visit to the sending schools.

3. Visits to the sending schools by student members of the receiving schools were made in 32 percent of the schools.

4. Over 67 percent of the schools held a visitation day for prospective pupils. This was more commonly used in the county community and junior high schools.

5. Ninety-two percent of the first class city schools have a spring pre-registration of prospective pupils compared with 65 percent for all of the schools.

6. Printed material containing information pertinent to the new school was made available to the prospective pupil prior to entering in 78 percent of the schools. A larger percentage of the larger schools made this material available: 100 percent

of the first class city schools, and 91 percent of the second class city schools.

7. The type of printed material used for orientation purposes most frequently named was the printed course of study.

8. The principal carries the primary responsibility for the orientation program in most of the schools.

9. Over 94 percent of the schools had new pupils enroll at a special time provided for them.

10. Twenty-three percent of the schools assigned student advisors to new pupils.

11. Special provisions were made by over 50 percent of the schools to enable new pupils to meet members of the faculty and to meet members of the various clubs and organizations.

12. Special provisions for parents to meet members of the school personnel were made in 69 percent of the schools. A larger proportion of the junior high schools, 83 percent, made such provisions.

14. The home room was used most predominantly in the first class city and junior high schools for orientation purposes. The county community high schools, and the third class city and rural high schools used the assembly more commonly for this purpose.

15. Only 8 percent of the schools offered a course called orientation. One-third of the first class city schools offered the course while none of the county community or third class city and rural high schools offered the course.

16. The occupations course was listed most frequently by

the schools as being the course used for orientation purposes. English was the subject listed most frequently by the schools as the course in which one or more orientation units were taught.

17. The orientation units listed most frequently were:

- (a). How to study.
- (b). Educational information.
- (c). Orientation to school activities.
- (d). Orientation to school.
- (e). Citizenship.
- (f). Safety.
- (g). Etiquette
- (h). Personality development.
- (i). Occupational information.

18. Personal data blanks and questionnaires were used by 67 percent of the schools. The highest percentage was in the first class city schools.

19. Individual interviews were used in 65 percent of the schools for guidance purposes.

20. Nineteen percent of the schools reported the use of student autobiographies. The junior high schools used the autobiographies more than the other schools.

21. One hundred percent of the first class city high schools reported that cumulative records were received from the sending schools. Over 50 percent of all the schools received cumulative records from the sending schools.

22. A smaller proportion, 29 percent, of all the schools made visits to the student's home. A larger proportion, 38 percent, used interviews with parents to obtain information for guidance purposes.

23. A greater percentage of the county community high schools used teacher conferences, 50 percent, compared with 39 percent for all the schools.

23. Testing for scholastic aptitude was the type of test most commonly used by the schools. The type of test used least by the schools was the social adjustment test.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The orientation of first year pupils in the secondary schools is a function that is not often assumed by those responsible for the planning of the school program. Regardless of the size of the school there are certain provisions that should be made by the secondary school to help in the adjustment of the new pupil to his school environment. The following recommendations are suggested as guiding posts in organizing a program for orientation as a part of the total guidance program of the school.

1. One person or a committee should be given the responsibility for the orientation program. The cooperation of the entire school staff should be enlisted to insure the success of the program.

2. The persons in charge of the orientation program should make definite provisions to contact prospective pupils in the

elementary school before entering. Visits to the sending schools by the administration, teachers, and members of the student body should be made. If home room groupings can be made the most desirable method is to have the homeroom teacher make the visit.

3. Provisions should be made for a visit to the receiving schools by members of the sending schools before entering. A program for the day should be planned which would include a conducted tour of the building, talks by members of the school staff and students, lunch in the cafeteria, and participation in as many of the normal school functions as time will permit. Pre-registration of new pupils should also be made during the day.

4. Enrollment for new pupils should be made at a time provided especially for them.

5. Provisions should be made during the initial school days for the new pupils to meet the members of the various clubs and organizations of the school. This can be done through assemblies, student advisors, or the home room.

6. If the enrollment of the school is large enough it is profitable to include an orientation course for all first year pupils. In smaller schools orientation units may be used in other courses. The English course is one that is well-adapted for this purpose as most first year pupils are required to take it.

7. The guidance program should place special emphasis on the freshman guidance program. If the school operates on the home room plan, teachers conferences should be held to discuss

and plan home room activities and units. Cumulative records received from the sending school, pupil data blanks and questionnaires, student autobiographies, and home visitations are excellent devices to obtain information about new pupils. A testing program should be organized and used to obtain additional information for guidance purposes.



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## APPENDIX

# A SURVEY OF ORIENTATION PROVISIONS FOR FIRST YEAR SECONDARY PUPILS

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ . ENROLLMENT \_\_\_\_\_ .

INCLUDED GRADES 7-9\_\_\_\_, 6-12\_\_\_\_, 9-12\_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_\_ .

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_ . POSITION \_\_\_\_\_ .

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle the "Yes" or "No" to indicate your answer to the question it pertains to. Where there are two or more answers to choose from place a check in the blank to indicate your preference or preferences.

## PRE-ADMISSION ACTIVITIES

1. Are visits made by members of the school personnel to the elementary or junior high schools before new pupils enter?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
2. If answer to (1) was "Yes", who makes the visits:
  - (a). Superintendent . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b). Principal. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c). Guidance director. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (d). Home room teacher. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (e). Regular teacher. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (f). Please specify others: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are visits made to the elementary or junior high schools by student members of the receiving schools?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are visits made to the receiving schools by pupils of the sending schools?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does your school hold a spring pre-registration for prospective pupils? (those who have not yet entered)  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. Check the printed material used to acquaint new students with school life, activities, and regulations:
  - (a). School handbook. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b). Printed course of study. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c). School paper . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (d). Specify any other material used \_\_\_\_\_
7. If one of the answers to (6) was checked, is this information given to the new students before entering school?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_



8. Is any one person responsible for the orientation program of the school?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. If answer to (8) was "yes", please give the member of the school personnel who is held responsible \_\_\_\_\_.

#### INITIAL DAYS FOR FIRST YEAR PUPILS

1. Please check the orientation provisions made by the school during the initial days of first year pupils:
  - (a). Assign student advisors such as "big brothers" and "big sisters" to new pupils. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b). Pupils enroll at a special time provided for them \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (c). Special provisions to enable new pupils to meet members of the faculty as well as other students \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (d). Special provisions to enable new pupils to meet members of the various clubs and organizations including athletics. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (e). Opportunity provided by the school for parents to meet members of the school personnel. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Which of the following methods do you use to acquaint new pupils with the course of study, rental fees, books, etc:
  - (a). Assemblies. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b). Home room . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (c). Conference periods. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (d). Printed materials given to pupils at time of enrollment. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (e). Individual interviews . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (f). Others \_\_\_\_\_.

#### ORIENTATION OF FIRST YEAR PUPILS THROUGH COURSES

1. Do you offer a course called orientation? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please check the course used for orientation purposes:
  - (a). Orientation course. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b). Human relations course. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (c). Student problems course . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (d). Family living course. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (e). Problems of living course . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (f). Social conduct course . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (g). Occupations or vocations course . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (h). Psychology course . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (i). Orientation unit in \_\_\_\_\_ course . \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (j). Specify any other course used \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Please check the units covered in the orientation devices listed in (2):

- (a). Orientation to school. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (b). Orientation to school activities . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (c). How to study . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (d). Personality development. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (e). Etiquette. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (f). Citizenship. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (g). Health . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (h). Safety . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (i). Educational information. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (j). Occupational information . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (k). Other units: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you obtain information about new pupils for guidance purposes through the following devices?

- (a). Personal data blanks and questionnaires. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (b). Interviews with students . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (c). Cumulative records received from the elementary or junior high school . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (d). Visits to students home. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (e). Interviews with parents. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (f). Teacher conferences. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (g). Testing for scholastic aptitude. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (h). Testing for social adjustment. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (i). Testing for interests. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (j). Testing for special aptitudes. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (k). Testing for achievement. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_
- (l). Others \_\_\_\_\_