

A LOOK AT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

by 1264

HAROLD ROGER SUPERNOW

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## SECTION I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

#### The Problem

The purpose of this study is to report an analytical survey of curriculum development textbooks and other current literature on curriculum development. Attention was given to probable reasons for the gap between the theory of curriculum planning and the practice of curriculum planning.

#### Definition of Terms

In the literature surveyed there was agreement on the definition of the term curriculum. In 1929 Harap stated, "The curriculum consists of all the experiences that all the children are most likely to have."<sup>1</sup> That statement has, in the past decades, been refined to, "The curriculum includes all of the experiences of children for which the school should accept responsibility."<sup>2</sup>

If such a definition is accepted, the curriculum planning program, curriculum development program, or curriculum improvement

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Harap, The Technique of Curriculum Making. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929).

<sup>2</sup>Adel F. Throckmorton, A Curriculum Guide for the Elementary Schools of Kansas (Topeka: State Printing Plant, rev. 1958).



program all refer to the process by which the curriculum is continuously evaluated, reviewed, revised, and presented. Here again, there is general agreement as to the concept, although a variety of terms are used. In this report the terms mentioned above will be used interchangeably.

Although at least one writer included in his definition of faculty or teachers such persons as the school nurse, the dietitian, and anyone who has an effect on the learner's ability to learn or the learning environment provided, the term teacher will herein refer only to those certificated individuals who work in the classroom with the students.

The term administrator will include not only the superintendent and principal, but also supervisors and staff members responsible to the superintendent and principal.

Lay persons, lay citizens, or lay people will be used to denote those persons not connected with the school as a teacher or administrator.

Curriculum guide refers to the written results--usually in the form of suggestions or recommendations--of the curriculum development program.

### Limitations

This particular study is limited to those textbooks available and curriculum literature which could be located by this writer.

Finding all the answers to problems of curriculum development, even stating the problems, is risky and difficult in so brief a report. However, this writer was able to formulate some suggestions and make some recommendations which are included in Section III. Basically, the textbooks had good information, some had practical information, and most were quite explicit in just how a curriculum program is carried out. The most significant problem is that curriculum programs as envisioned by the textbooks, regardless of how much they are needed or how feasible they are, are not being carried out.

## SECTION II

### PARTICIPANTS IN AND PHASES OF THE CURRICULUM PROGRAM

The second section of this report is a survey of the textbooks and other literature concerned with curriculum planning. Emphasis was placed on 1) participants and the roles played, and 2) phases of the curriculum program.

#### Participants and Roles

According to most of the writers surveyed, both past and present, there are basically five groups involved in curriculum planning: teachers, students, administrators, lay persons, and consultants. The changes which have occurred and which will occur in curriculum programs are developed in the relationships of these groups one to another. Furthermore, since "The teacher is the most important of the 'curriculum makers'",<sup>1</sup> and is more or less the focal point of the program, the changes can best be pointed out as the relationship of the above mentioned groups to the teachers.

Teachers. The teacher-administrator relationship seems to be the most changed or changing. A brief review of some of the historical precedents will serve to show not only some of the changes which have evolved but also will indicate a reason for some of the weaknesses in current curriculum planning practices. At first glance

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<sup>1</sup>Vernon E. Anderson, Principles and Procedures of Curriculum Improvement (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1956), p. 13.

the following quotation from a textbook published in 1924 would seem to be little different from that found in modern textbooks. However, note closely the final sentence from Bobbitt's How to Make a Curriculum. This sentence implies the primary difference in the relationship between the teacher and the administrator.

Within a school system, those who are nearest the detailed labors are the ones who should take the initiative in planning the details of those labors. The teachers of chemistry, for example, should take the initiative in planning the details of the course in chemistry. The teachers in each department should take the initiative in planning the detailed labors within their several departments. They will not make ultimate decisions as to the details; but they will formulate the original proposals.<sup>1</sup>

Later in the book Bobbitt makes the statement, "The day is past when the superintendent can sit down alone in his office and formulate the curriculum for his schools."<sup>2</sup> Bobbitt in 1924 thus was beginning to recognize the break in the administrator's hold on the curriculum program. However, he still gave the administrator the final authority, even in detailed planning in the classroom.

This same implication is inherent in a textbook written by Henry Harap in 1929. One sentence illustrates very graphically the feelings of the day toward the teacher-administrator relationship, particularly as it pertains to curriculum development:

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<sup>1</sup>Franklin Bobbitt, How to Make a Curriculum (Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 280.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 284.

When a superintendent of schools decides to revise a course of study, it is necessary for him to determine who shall do the job.<sup>1</sup>

Harap follows this later, in discussing some of the rules to apply in composing the curriculum making group, with this comment:

The group should include the person who will be responsible for training the teachers who will carry on the new course of study.<sup>2</sup>

Although Harap would "include classroom teachers who will think in terms of actual conditions"<sup>3</sup>, one is led to believe that in Harap's point of view teachers could do little more than offer some assistance when called on, or provide the classroom materials needed to carry out the curriculum as determined by those who were "expert".

Today, the teachers are given a much more respectable role, and administrators have less authority. In general, this follows changing educational practices and philosophy. Modern textbooks are much more concerned with the attitude of teachers toward the curriculum and the curriculum program--even to the extent of making the teacher the main focal point of the program.

To understand the degree and the implications of the change which has taken place in curriculum planning in the last four decades, one has only to compare the preceding quotations with those which follow.

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Harap, The Technique of Curriculum Making (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

We have known for a long time that the curriculum changes in reality only when teachers change. The issuance of an edict--from whatever source--is not effective in bringing about change.<sup>1</sup>

Some administrators act out the fiction that curriculum change occurs when the school board says "go", and some supervisors claim that change happens when the system buys it and the house organ proclaims its institution.<sup>2</sup>

In a report of research on relationships between teachers' perceptions of influence in local curriculum decision-making and curriculum implementation, Johansen concludes that individual teacher participation in curriculum development activities and the perception of teachers that they are influential in curriculum decision-making both increased likelihood of implementation. Conversely, the perception of teachers that they were forced to give opinions and the perception of teachers that curriculum decisions were the result primarily of their hierarchical type influence have a negative relationship to implementation.<sup>3</sup>

In review of some of the conflict over roles in curriculum planning, Oberlin mentions that both administrators and teachers want teachers, students, and lay persons to be more active in curriculum

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<sup>1</sup>Dwayne E. Huebner, A Reassessment of the Curriculum, (Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia Univ.), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>L. J. Bishop, "Change Models Need Rewriting", Educational Leadership, 25:286-7, January, 1968.

<sup>3</sup>J. H. Johansen, "Relationships Between Teachers' Perceptions of Influence in Local Curriculum Decision-making and Curriculum Implementation", Journal of Educational Research, 61:81-3, October, 1968.

development. Oberlin also found that teachers want the roles of the administrators reduced.<sup>1</sup>

If the teachers' roles have become more important in past decades, just what, then, are these roles? Most writers agree that the primary role of the teacher is the interpretation and presentation of the curriculum in the classroom. This has been, and still is, the role most accepted by teachers themselves.

Many writers are beginning to infringe upon this, however, especially when covering the curriculum program in the experience-oriented curriculum. Here a secondary role of counseling and aiding students to plan curriculum has become more frequently mentioned. The primary role of the teacher is, therefore, changing from that of autocratic upholder of the curriculum as planned by a third party to that of advisor and orientor of experiences as cooperatively planned.

Aside from the role of the teacher in close relationship to the student, there are many more roles which the teacher may play. Oliver categorizes teacher roles into three areas: "general (school or systemwide activities which draw upon them as professional educators rather than as teachers of certain subjects or grades); classroom (things done in or for the situations in which the teacher and learner meet); personal (thoughts and actions which are aimed essentially at personal growth or which the teacher carries on at an individual

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<sup>1</sup>L. Oberlin, "Disagreement Over Roles", Michigan Education Journal, 45:20, October, 1967.

level).<sup>1</sup> Oliver lists some specific suggestions for each category as follows:

#### General

1. The teacher may become a member of a general committee, e.g., Philosophy and Objectives, Pupil and Community Needs, Research, Materials, General Design, Continuity, Evaluation.
2. Membership on more special committees such as subject matter (mathematics, history) or grade level is also valuable. Presumably membership would be in connection with one's teaching specialty.
3. Teachers should exchange ideas and materials with other teachers.
4. They may act as communication agent for the school in (a) officially interpreting existing and changing curriculum matters to the public; (b) gathering ideas and expectations from the public and bringing these to the attention of the proper school authorities and groups.
5. The teacher may participate by representing the school at conferences and conventions. It is assumed that ideas will be brought back to the local school.

#### Classroom

1. A fundamental task of the teacher is knowing his students. This understanding will help him to identify the problems of individual students. Since the ultimate goal of curriculum development is to benefit each individual, it is important to discover the real meaning of individual differences. Careful case studies will lead the teacher to become more and more sensitive to the feelings and characteristics of the pupils under his responsibility. Consultation with the school nurse, counselors, and other specialists can provide much meaningful data for the case study.
2. Although ideas may be proposed from various levels in the educational hierarchy, many curriculum theorists feel that exploration at the classroom level is basic to the development of ideas and provides opportunity for the discovery of still other possibilities.
3. The teacher can help to evaluate newer practices and programs by seeing how they work with actual student group.

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<sup>1</sup>Albert J. Oliver, Curriculum Improvement (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1965), p. 55.



4. Teachers can attempt to create a good environment for learning. . . .
5. The teacher can carry on "action research".
6. Teacher-parent conferences can be used by a skillful teacher to build an understanding of changes in programs or methods.
7. It is useful to know specialists in one's teaching field who may be asked to contribute to curriculum study as consultants.
8. The teacher should be alert to more symptoms of an inadequate curriculum from such indications as poor grades, irregular attendance, lack of interest in learning.
9. More and more instructional units are developed co-operatively. A teacher may work with others to make resource units and then draw from those units for his own classroom situations.
10. In order to gain pertinent information, curriculum workers often make use of checklists, questionnaires, and surveys. The teacher may help to prepare or validate such instruments. Wherever appropriate, he may respond to these inquiries.
11. The teacher should initiate, develop, and direct teacher-pupil planning.

#### Personal

. . . The following list summarizes activities designated as most helpful (by experienced teachers).

We examined our classroom practices.  
 We considered a range of learning opportunities.  
 We considered the use of instructional materials.  
 We considered improving teacher-pupil relationships.  
 We studied objectives in terms of behavioral change.  
 We considered the relationship of our work to that in grades above and below our own.  
 We understood the limits within which we had freedom to operate.  
 We were made to see the importance of the problems and of the part we could play in solving it.  
 We saw the relationship of the problems of curriculum to bigger problems.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-7.

Little evidence could be found that textbook writers are yet willing to give teachers a leadership role. Teachers must still depend upon administrators for leadership and action in this important area of school improvement. However, in a report written from practical experience in one school system, Hart comes closer to making the teacher the dominant participant and the administrator a helper or advisor.

His conclusion states:

If these conditions are present in a school system, innovation can happen. . .

1. Teachers must feel there is need for change. . .  
But it was school-wide departmental evaluations made by the full staff within each department which finally registered on paper our very strengths and deficiencies. . .
2. Wise and cooperative principal. . .to give advice and direction when it was sought. . .
3. A superintendent who is receptive to innovation, who dares to try something new, and who has confidence in his teachers' abilities to initiate and implement curriculum revision.
4. Board of education interested in what the teachers are doing and which will assist them in realization of their proposals.<sup>1</sup>

Another indication to what this author feels is the trend of the future is found in a federally-funded project centered in Beloit, Kansas, and serving an eight-county area. The project implemented through the North Central Kansas Educational Resource Center has as its major goal "to provide for the improvement of educational opportunities for all school youth in rural community settings through the

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<sup>1</sup>E. Hart, "Teachers Can Initiate Curriculum Change", Ohio Schools, 44:23-4 +, January, 1968.

stimulation of educational change using peer-selected change agents."<sup>1</sup> Using teachers, selected by their peers, as innovators, the purpose of this experiment is to determine whether these teachers, if properly trained and if given support of consultants, public relations, and training programs, could bring about change.

The above implies not only the ability of teachers to initiate a curriculum development program, but also to perpetuate it. Although curriculum textbook writers have not gone so far as to assign leadership roles in curriculum improvement to teachers, this concept appears to be indicative of future trends.

Administrators. If the teacher's role has been changing, so also has that of the administrator. At one time, as has been seen, the administrator was in essence the sole determiner of the curriculum program--it operated at his order. As has also been shown in the preceding quotations, the administrator's role has changed significantly. Oliver states, "To a great extent the administrator's role is that of an expeditor. Curriculum study takes time, energy, people, materials, and funds. The administrator is in a key position to facilitate study. . .".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Kansas Operational Grant Proposal, ESEA--Title III, (Developed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended for the Unified School District No. 273, Beloit, Kansas). January, 1968, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

A Curriculum Guide for the Elementary Schools of Kansas, 1958, states, "The most important duty of administrators of schools is to provide leadership in curriculum planning. Such leadership implies appropriate opportunity to teachers, various public groups, and pupils to participate in appropriate ways in the total program of developing a curriculum which will not only reflect the broad requirements of the American culture, but also be adapted to local needs and situations."<sup>1</sup>

Most authors agree that a successful curriculum program is almost impossible without the support and the participation of the administration. Just how much participation and support is the main area of difference of opinion. Generally opinion of administrative involvement ranges from initiative and consistent leadership in the curriculum development program, to support and provision of necessities as mentioned by Oliver.

The first, and perhaps most important specific job of the administrator, if he is to fulfill his role, is to get the teachers to realize the need for a curriculum program and understand that the program will be of benefit to them. Most writers give this responsibility to the principals of the various schools, rather than the superintendent. Two reasons arise for this assignment of task: 1) the principal is in closer relationship to the teachers and in a better position to know their needs, and 2) the individual building

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<sup>1</sup>Adel F. Throckmorton, A Curriculum Guide for the Elementary Schools of Kansas (Topeka: State Printing Plant, rev. 1958).

unit, for which the principal should be the primary leader, is the level at which curriculum development has the greatest likelihood of success.

Oliver also expresses the role of the administrator as that of a "social engineer", since success of the program depends upon changing people and upon getting them to work together.<sup>1</sup>

Other specific duties as listed by various curriculum textbook authors and assigned to administrators are:

1. He should provide time and place for teachers and other groups to meet.
2. Schedules should be so arranged that teachers who are to plan together may be free at the same time.
3. Other groups can be asked to participate. For example, a high school principal might want to have some elementary teachers join the study of the school's philosophy or give clues to pupil needs.
4. The administrator should know what people would make good consultants and arrange to have them meet with appropriate groups.
5. He can set up in-service programs, special workshops, and study groups.
6. Arrangements should be made for key teachers to attend conferences, institutes, and national conventions, or visit other schools.
7. Often journals, reports, and pamphlets come across the administrator's desk that teachers may never know about, unless he established the practice of channeling items of possible interest to the proper teacher or teachers.
8. The administrator should keep up to date on educational ideas and programs.
9. One of the most important responsibilities of the building principal is to understand what is going on in the system-wide curriculum planning program and to make the services of the system-wide planning available in his school.

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<sup>1</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 52.

10. . . . During the months in which a teacher is experimenting, collecting, organizing, and manipulating materials related to a new curriculum, there will be a need to analyze and evaluate it in relation to the overall school program.
11. The principal often arranges for consultant or supervisory services from the central office.
12. The principal also serves as the connecting link in the school-community relationship.<sup>1</sup>

Many writers do not list specific tasks of administrators.

However, since the textbooks are set up primarily for administrators, by scrutiny of the table of contents one can get a good overview of the scope of responsibility of the administrator as educational leader and leader of the curriculum program.

Students. The role of the student in the curriculum program as conceived by most curriculum textbook authors is primarily that of cooperation in detailed classroom planning. However, some writers are giving the students more and more responsibility in the cooperative planning of general goals and guidelines. Oliver described the student role as comparable to "that of a junior partner in a cooperative venture".<sup>2</sup> Krug supplies the following ideas:

The most direct way, of course, is to ask them what they want, what they don't want, what they like, and so on. This is usually done by means of questionnaires. Sometimes it is done by having a group of school children or high school youth put on a public panel or forum stating what they want.

The everyday details of working and living together make the real curriculum, and it is on these matters that youth participation becomes vital and important. At its most significant level, the participation of children and youth in curriculum planning becomes one and the same thing with student-teacher

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<sup>1</sup>Krug, Babcock, Fowlkes, and James, Administering Curriculum Planning (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), pp. 89-91.

<sup>2</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 57.

planning in the classroom instruction, in the total life of the school, and in school-community relations.

There is another kind of important participation for children and youth in curriculum study. Suppose a local school system launches an intensive study of community realities important in any consideration of the school program. Children and youth can gather and help interpret significant data on local social problems and conditions, such as health, housing, employment, and recreation.

Lay participation and student participation can be tied together by urging children and youth in school to take some part in community discussions of educational purposes.<sup>1</sup>

With current feelings and attitudes toward student involvement being what they are the trend seems to be toward more and more use of students in curriculum planning.

Lay persons. The writers of curriculum textbooks consider the participation of lay persons in the curriculum program of great importance. According to the limited amounts of literature available most school systems using lay persons in curriculum programs have been enthusiastic about the results. Textbook writers give warning to curriculum leaders as to the role played by lay persons in the development of the curriculum. The activities of such people must have real value and must result in something definite or interest will soon be lost. However, most of the writers surveyed insisted that the role of lay persons could be only advisory.

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<sup>1</sup>Edward A. Krug, Curriculum Planning (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), pp. 19-21.

There is little evidence that the role of lay persons has changed in the last four decades. Their primary contribution was, and still is, to help in determining goals and objectives. However, considered in the light of the change of educational organization, primarily in connection with local control, this role has changed considerably. At one time patrons of the school district exercised almost total financial control, and to a great extent controlled what was taught. This control has changed and is continuing to change as school district organization becomes larger and larger, and as more funds are provided from state and federal sources. The citizen now holds his role not because he is in a position to demand, but because he has something of value to add to the curriculum program.

In a report of lay participation in curriculum planning in public schools in Iowa, Darlington mentions several points that give an indication of the actual extent of lay participation in curriculum programs, and of the realized advantages of such participation. Of all the school systems in Iowa, she could find only 33 that actually employed lay participation in curriculum development.

Of those systems which did allow lay participation 90.0 per cent planned to use it in the future. Some of the advantages listed were better relations with the community and improved attitudes of parents, increased communication between home and school, decreased criticisms of the educational program and growing confidence and support by the public, and an improvement in school plants. The general effectiveness



was rated good to excellent by 87.9 per cent of the respondents.

Purposes listed for involving lay people were to develop a greater understanding for the school and its needs (42.4 per cent), greater support of the school and its programs (27.3 per cent), and to revise, expand, upgrade, and update the curriculum (15.2 per cent).<sup>1</sup>

Darlington also gave a list of curriculum areas of general consideration by lay citizens. It is, perhaps, the best indication of the role of lay persons in actual curriculum programs.<sup>2</sup>

General Areas	Percent of Respondents
Curriculum improvement	21.2
Curriculum revision	24.2
Curriculum evaluation	12.1
Improvement and revision	6.1
Improvement evaluation	9.1
Revision and evaluation	6.1
Improvement, revision, and evaluation	18.2
Setting up the new program	3.0

This study indicated that lay persons were used much as curriculum textbooks say they should be used. However, even though textbook writers seem to think of lay participation as important and valuable, and even though the experiences mentioned above would indicate this to be true, it appears that very few schools take advantage of this ready-made source of assistance. The same idea has been expressed as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>Wanda Darlington, "Lay Participation in the Planning of Curriculum" (unpublished Master's thesis, Drake Univ., Des Moines, 1966).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

There seems to be little disagreement among educators that public participation in curriculum planning is important. Lip service has been given for years to the belief that '... participation by laymen in curriculum planning would greatly enrich the school program and would guarantee that school experiences reflect the will of the community.' Yet, there seems to be little evidence, in spite of the tremendous growth, that public participation in curriculum planning has become general practice. Public participation tends to center in such areas as the financial support of schools, the building program, salary schedules, and district boundaries, rather than in actual curriculum work. Here the broad gap between school and community in too many instances, still exists.<sup>1</sup>

They then go on to give some possible reasons for the broad gap:

In the first place, too many educators have not clearly assessed the advantages to be derived from community participation in curriculum planning. . . .

Second, educators have failed to think clearly as to what contributions of lay participants in curriculum planning should be . . . .

Third, educators have sometimes assumed that the sole approach to public participation in curriculum planning is an all-out, system-wide program with a large community-wide citizen's committee . . . .

Fourth, there has been difficulty in obtaining participation on the part of the public because professional educators have frequently failed to explore the wide variety of ways of stimulating public interest in helping to build the school program.<sup>2</sup>

These same authors list two major approaches to public participation in curriculum planning. "One is through the use of a large advisory committee representing the people of the entire

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<sup>1</sup>Krug, Babcock, Fowlkes, and James, Administering Curriculum Planning (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 160.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 160-161.

school district. The other is through the use of small groups and individuals in specific areas of curriculum development.<sup>1</sup>

Another task of lay persons, given by writers, is the development of community resources for classroom enrichment.

Consultants. The role of the consultant, like the roles of other participants in the curriculum development program, has changed through history. To Bobbitt or Harap the consultant was the "expert" brought in mainly to write the curriculum or to direct its writing. To present writers, the consultant is "not there to provide answers but to help the group in its search for better solutions."<sup>2</sup> Anderson lists the consultant's responsibility as that of giving consultation and assistance.

Quite similar to the consultant's role are the roles for those of members of the state department, county or school district services, and state and national professional organizations. Basically members of these groups function in advisory capacities, and are to suggest rather than direct.

As has been seen the roles of participants in curriculum development programs change and inter-change. The curriculum leader has the responsibility of seeing that no group is left out of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 166-167.

<sup>2</sup>Vernon E. Anderson, Principles and Procedures of Curriculum Improvement (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956), pp. 175-6.

curriculum program, and that a balance is maintained. General precautions given by most authors are. 1) be sure the roles are valuable and the results readily recognized, and 2) be sure the roles of the various participants have limits which are known and understood.

#### Phases of the Curriculum Program

As with the participants in curriculum programs, most of the writers surveyed generally agree as to what constitutes the phases of a curriculum program. The Curriculum Handbook for School Administrators lists the following "tasks" or "stages" of development in curriculum change:

- Identification of a particular need to change
  - Evaluation of existing program
  - Criticism of status quo
- Study of alternative proposals for change
- Selection of proposed change
- Pilot study designed
  - Trial of proposed change
  - Equipment and instructional materials proposed
  - High involvement of total staff
- Appraisal of data collected from pilot study
  - Further tryouts, modification of proposal
  - Extensive communication
- Continuuous study by all staff involved
  - Adequate in service activities, time, and consultant help
- Comprehensive evaluation to determine need for the proposal
  - Decision to adopt, adapt, or reject
- Implementing action
  - Integration into the school system (for one or more buildings tentatively before integration into total system)
  - Not "all eggs in one basket"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Forrest E. Conner and William J. Ellena (ed.), Curriculum Handbook for School Administrators (Washington, D. C.: American Association of School Administrators, 1967), p. 315.

Krug and his co-authors have this to say concerning "phases" of the curriculum program:

Writers on curriculum have identified various aspects of the planning process which constitute a kind of job analysis or breakdown. These usually include in some form or other the defining of objectives; the formulating of the all-school program; the developing of guidelines for various teaching fields, the extra-class activities, work experience, and the like; the developing of teacher-learning aids and units; and the conducting of the teaching-learning process.

The curriculum development program thus includes all phases of planning for the experiences which make up the curriculum; from the daily planning of the teacher and student to the planning of system-wide objectives. Textbooks surveyed generally agreed that the phases of the curriculum program were not a step-by-step progression. Rather, many could and should be carried out simultaneously. Textbook writers also agreed to the idea of a continuing curriculum program which would not end with a curriculum guide, but would re-evaluate and re-develop.

There exists, at the time of this writing, a broad gap between what we know about curriculum planning and what we do about curriculum planning. Considering the prolific documentation of both participant roles and the phases of the curriculum development program, and of the relatively long period of time that these ideas have been available, one wonders why more activity is not in progress. There is little

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<sup>1</sup>Krug, et al., op. cit., pp. 4-5.

doubt but that in today's complicated and expensive educational process there is a great and immediate need for a concentrated effort to bring practices up to their potential.

### Trends in Curriculum Planning

What is the potential? Where are the trends pointing? To answer these questions would, of course, be impractical without further evidence. However, a good indication of at least some of the thinking of those involved in curriculum work can be obtained from the pages of Educational Leadership, the journal of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. When one considers the present state of affairs in curriculum development, the ideas expressed in Educational Leadership seem to project into the next several decades. A brief presentation of some of the ideas presented in Educational Leadership should serve at this point as an indicator of the direction curriculum thought and theory are moving.

As was mentioned earlier no textbooks surveyed, and few journal articles read, would go far in giving teachers more of the responsibility for curriculum development. Also in evidence was the lack of lay participation in curriculum development. In "Impacts on Today's School", Muriel Crosby states:

Today the profession is reaping the wild wind produced on the one hand by failure to recognize teachers as real professionals having significant responsibility for curriculum development. On the other hand, much of the parent reaction against the schools is the result of the closed door policy maintained by many administrators in the involvement of parents in the schools in a significant way.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Muriel Crosby, "Impacts on Today's Schools", Educational Leadership, 26:8, October 1968.

In this same issue is both a presentation and some practical examples of a value centered curriculum. This curriculum orientation is presented as an advancement not only on the subject-centered curriculum (where we are now), but also the experience-centered curriculum (where educational practices seem to be leading).

Pilder offers what might be a new theoretical basis for the curriculum guide:

In this context the design enterprise is not one of arranging of matters to be learned, but one of designing a situation or environment that will enable the experience of a person to continue in a direction previously established.<sup>1</sup>

Thurman explains a proposal for replacing the principal, which calls for replacement of image rather than the person, with the following:

A factor which limits the effectiveness of classroom teachers in developing good learning situations for children or young people is the role expectation of the building principal.<sup>2</sup>

From where the curriculum programs now stand, and judging by the apparent attitude of educators, these are very advanced ideas. However, one can ask if the realization of these theories will take as long as those presented by Bobbitt in 1924.

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<sup>1</sup>William Pilder, "Curriculum Design and the Knowledge Situation", Educational Leadership, 26:595, March 1969.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Thurman, "The Principal Must Be Replaced", Educational Leadership, 26:779, May 1969.

One can see, then, that theory thus far easily out-distances practice--as it should. It is extremely difficult to jump from 1924 to 1970 in practice, even if advantages can be seen. Therefore, one must consider the present location on the continuum of educational planning, and attempt to chart some possible progress in curriculum development.



### SECTION III

#### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In reviewing the literature concerning curriculum development, some inconsistencies between curriculum theory and the reports of research become visible. Also, some areas of weakness in the practical implementation of curriculum development theory can be seen. This section contains a summary of the study, recommendations for further study, and the author's suggestions for beginning a successful curriculum program.

##### Summary.

It was found that most textbook writers agreed that there are basically five groups concerned with curriculum planning: teachers, administrators, students, lay persons, and consultants. The greatest change in curriculum planning over the past four decades has been in the relationship of these groups to each other. Generally, the primary change has been in the relationship of the teacher and the administrator--from a period of curriculum dominance by the administrator to a period of greater emphasis upon teacher involvement and direction.

Although textbooks would not give the teacher the responsibility of initiating activity in the program, most agreed that the teacher must be interested and involved. Several sources concerned with curriculum change and several curriculum theorists implied that the

teacher must be the initiator if the curriculum program is to be successful.

Participation in curriculum programs by lay persons was considered important by textbook writers and by those few school systems where the practice was carried out. Although the role of the lay person had changed little in four decades, lay persons held that role not because of their control of the school but because of the need of the school to keep the citizens informed.

Student participation in curriculum planning is becoming more accepted, although still primarily in daily classroom planning.

The role of the consultant has changed from that of the expert who wrote the curriculum to one who advises, consults, and helps. The consultant can also be of some use in building teacher interest in the program and therefore in initiating the curriculum program.

Most textbooks were found to be explicit insofar as the different phases of curriculum program was concerned. Although there were some minor variations, the overall pattern was found to be commonly accepted. Also, there was general agreement as to formal organization.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

Evaluation. The first area in need of further investigation is in determining the present status of curriculum planning. This author found a lack of evaluative studies of broad scale, such as that of Darlington concerning lay participation in the schools of Iowa.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wanda Darlington, "Lay Participation in the Planning of Curriculum" (unpublished Master's thesis, Drake Univ., Des Moines, 1966).

Before a definite program of progress from the present situation to a more active situation can be developed, the present situation must be fully evaluated and documented.

Curriculum textbooks. The second area is that of the curriculum textbooks and their influence upon curriculum planning. As was indicated in a preceding section the role of the teacher has changed so as to make the teacher the focal point of the program. In short, if no change of behavior in the teacher and consequently a change in student behavior is evidenced, the program is not a success. This implies the necessity of teacher interest, of teacher realization of the need, before success can be expected. The writers surveyed were consistent on this point. The inconsistency comes in the emphasis of the textbook upon the administrator. If teachers must realize the need, the textbooks should be written to reach teachers as well as administrators.

What needs to be done in this area of curriculum endeavor then is research and preparation of textbooks for teachers to cover both the responsibilities of their roles as suggested above, and the potential worth to the educational effort of teacher-centered curriculum development programs.

Personnel preparation. A third area which needs to be discussed and further developed is the preparation of personnel for curriculum development programs. As mentioned previously, a gap exists between what writers are saying and what is going on in curriculum work. Earlier

in this section the suggestion was made to orient curriculum textbooks toward teachers. This might lead to the feasibility of including curriculum development, in all its phases, in the undergraduate portion of teacher education. In methods courses, where daily planning is presented, a logical extension to the possibilities of all-out curriculum planning could readily be made. Hopefully a greater understanding of curriculum planning and realization of its need would develop if presented as a part of the duties and responsibilities of the professional teacher. Hopefully, also, this action would help bridge the gap of forty or more years between lip service and realization.

Curriculum guides. A fourth area needing to break its historically predetermined form is the curriculum guide. Curriculum guides vary greatly from very specific as to course content to very general. However, nearly all those surveyed were set up on the basis of grade levels or specific knowledge areas. If the curriculum guide or scope and sequence study is to be effective for use by today's teachers, the grade-level orientation should be replaced. In its place must come a concept-oriented guide which lists not only concepts deemed necessary, but also experiences which provide the background for understanding the concept. A curriculum guide of this type would be useable in relation to individual students, and therefore of more use to teachers in many of today's individual-oriented classrooms.

In order for an adequate job to be done in developing the experience-concept type of curriculum guide, much research must be

done in developing the experiences, and in the proper sequencing of experiences (instead of knowledge) to bring maximum understanding and retention of concepts. Research of this type could lead eventually to computerized sequencing for individuals. Educationally sound and potentially of great value to education, computer sequencing needs a great deal of development to make it practical for school use.

#### Suggestions for Beginning a Curriculum Program

Based upon this limited study, and in conclusion, this writer would like to present some suggestions for establishing a curriculum development program which would have a greater chance of bringing about educational change.

First, the curriculum planning program must grow out of the teacher's classroom planning. It is at this level that the need must be felt, and it is at this level that the success or failure of the program will be determined. The teacher's attitude toward and understanding of curriculum change are of more importance than any specific organization of the curriculum program.

Building a positive attitude in teachers can be approached from the viewpoint of a fellow teacher or professional school personnel who do not have teaching responsibility. Of the two, the teacher has the greatest opportunity. Some suggestions as to how the teacher might work to improve the attitude of fellow teachers are listed below.

1. The teacher must become knowledgeable in all phases of curriculum work.

2. The teacher must develop definite objectives for classroom work.
3. The teacher can experiment in classroom planning and discuss possibilities with fellow teachers.
4. Where successful in establishing a worthwhile classroom practice, the teacher can discuss the possibilities of expanding the practice.
5. In discussions the teacher can listen for leading questions, then mention the potential of more formal discussion and planning. Such questions are heard frequently in the daily discourse among teachers.

A few examples of what might be heard are:

- A. I wonder if grammar is really that important?
- B. I think I'll requisition a science kit for next year.  
What are you requisitioning?
- C. I don't like the way this textbook presents fractions.
- D. I wish these kids could have had a little better  
concept of history.

6. Talk over evaluative methods and ask what others think should be evaluated.
7. The teacher can have parent conferences, and can work toward the acceptance of the idea by other teachers.
8. Through local teachers' associations, or with a group of interested teachers, a program of public information can be carried out (newspaper articles, speeches, demonstrations).

9. Once teachers are curious, suggest the planning of a specific area of the curriculum as a lead-off. Of primary concern will be to accomplish something definite and of value to the teachers.
10. The teacher must be imaginative, must keep a positive attitude, and must be tactful and patient.

For the professional school personnel who do not have teaching responsibility the task of establishing a positive attitude toward curriculum planning is probably more difficult than for the teacher. Teachers generally are suspicious of "outside" guidance, and often feel the classroom is their private domain. Therefore, the non-teacher must be extremely careful and tactful during this most important phase of the curriculum program. Following are some suggestions for the non-teacher who would initiate curriculum planning. As with those suggestions listed above, the list is by no means complete, but will serve as an example.

1. The theory being research by the North Central Kansas Educational Resource Center is one of the best means for a non-teacher to change teacher attitudes and lay the groundwork for a successful curriculum program. Basically, the idea is to work with peer-selected teachers, and let the leadership of that teacher provide the initiative.
2. Administrators can keep channels of communication open.
3. Through proper supervisory practices administrators can get an indication of the needs of teachers and establish the rapport which will enable the administrator to provide initiative in the curriculum program.

4. The administrator can provide for in-service training programs and demonstration classes, make information available to the teacher, provide time and materials, locate and provide consultants. Action cannot be demanded, but some of the teachers should begin to understand the importance of the curriculum program and take the initiative.
5. Provision can be made for more formal training of emerging leaders.
6. If the teachers fail to realize the need and voluntarily proceed with the planning, the administrator can do very little. Required representation or forced participation will have little success.
7. In general, the non-teacher (usually the administrator) can provide the opportunity or the environment in which a curriculum program can function. However, usually the non-teacher cannot make it function.

Once the attitude is established and the curriculum program is firmly rooted in classroom practices, the more formal aspects of the curriculum program can be started. The formal structure should build logically and as the need is felt by the teachers. Consultants and training programs should also fit the need, rather than a pre-established program.

Because of the flexibility needed and the belief in the necessity for the evolutionary buildup, this writer hesitates to list specific committees which should be formed. Most curriculum textbooks give a general pattern which can be followed. Therefore, this report will



conclude with a memorandum of things which this author feels are important for a successful curriculum program.

1. Teachers, and therefore student behavior, must change or little is accomplished.
2. Teachers must feel the need for a curriculum program before it has much chance of success.
3. The administration can serve in a leadership capacity in the curriculum program, but can be of greatest value in the role of expeditor of the curriculum program.
4. Lay persons should be used whenever possible in curriculum planning. They have something of value to contribute and they own the school.
5. Students can contribute to the curriculum program, especially at the classroom level.
6. The formal structure should never interfere with the progress of the program.
7. The curriculum should be planned for the future as well as the present.
8. All participants should have definite limits of authority within which to function. These limits should be understood from the beginning.
9. Activities of the participants must be meaningful to the participants and must get results which the participants can realize.

10. Leaders must become knowledgeable not only of curriculum processes, but also of ideas now being developed in curriculum theory, learning theory, and other areas where change in philosophy may occur.
11. Above all, it must be remembered that the entire structure, the whole process from beginning to end exists for that one student sitting near the back of the room looking out the window--or for that one individual with the long hair and dirty sneakers who might be a president or a public enemy some day--or for the extremely bright student who is being choked intellectually--or for the future solid citizen upon whom so much depends.

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A LOOK AT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

by

HAROLD ROGER SUPERNOW

B. A., Kansas Wesleyan University, 1960

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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

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The purpose of this study was to report an analytical survey of curriculum development textbooks and other current literature on curriculum development. Attention was given to probable reasons for the gap between the theory of curriculum planning and the practice of curriculum planning.

It was found that most textbook writers agreed that there are basically five groups concerned with curriculum planning: teachers, administrators, students, lay persons, and consultants. The greatest change in curriculum planning over the past four decades had been in the relationship of these groups to each other. In general, teachers were being given much more responsibility, and the trend was toward making the teacher not only the main participant but also the focus of the curriculum program.

Administrators and consultants were no longer expected to develop the curriculum. Their role was becoming more of an advisory role, rather than one of initiation.

Students and lay participants were considered important by textbooks and by contemporary journal articles. However, little evidence was found of any but a limited use of these two groups in curriculum improvement.

Textbooks were found to be in general agreement as to the organization of phases of curriculum programs. The primary weakness of the textbooks was found to be that they were written for administrators rather than teachers.



Based upon this limited study, the author then presented four areas for further study: evaluation of the present status of curriculum programs; the development of curriculum textbooks designed for the use of teachers as well as administrators; better preparation of personnel in both the undergraduate and experienced teacher levels; and the development of more effective curriculum guides.

The study concluded with the author's suggestions for developing teacher attitudes and laying the foundation for a successful curriculum development program. This was approached from the standpoint of both the teacher and the professional school personnel who do not have teaching responsibility.