

A GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING HIGH SCHOOL
CURRICULUM WORKSHOPS

by

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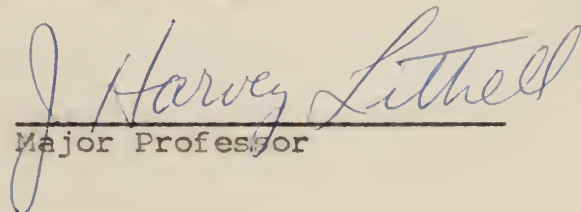
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INTRODUCTION

There will always be a need for schools to study and evaluate their curriculums. This need will exist as long as our society strives to change and improve. Society places in our schools the individuals that will be responsible for improving the social and cultural heritage. The schools must adequately prepare these individuals for this task if our society is to ultimately satisfy all of man's needs.

Society also has immediate needs that the schools must attempt to satisfy. Advances in the technical fields may create new job opportunities while the invention of a machine may leave part of the society in need of training.

The need for curriculum evaluation and change in Kansas has probably been magnified by the fact that its economy has changed. The economy of Kansas no longer depends on the farm. Agri-business and industry have become leaders in the state's economy. High school students no longer stay in the local communities as they did when farming was of greatest economic importance. The opportunities for employment in the small communities have greatly diminished. The students must now prepare for jobs in industry and agri-business that were not available a few years back. There is a wider range of skills that the student should be able to perform if he is going to seek employment immediately after graduation from high school. Many occupations require the student to make

additional preparation beyond a high school education.

Whether the student matriculates at a university or a trade school, he must have the background for advanced training. The welfare of these students should be of prime importance to educators.

There are many factors that may bring about curriculum change in the high school. Some of these factors cause a school to change without much study or evaluation of the existing curriculum. New requirements for graduation, increased requirements for college entrance, and changes in school accreditation policies are a few of the many factors that may bring about immediate curriculum change. These immediate changes in the curriculum should probably be regarded as the minimum that a school must make to serve society.

If a school is to serve society in its utmost capacity, there are other factors that should promote curriculum change. New advances in the sciences, and new vocational opportunities may cause the school to enlarge its curriculum. New concepts of individual differences and the learning processes may create a need for the teacher to change classroom experiences in existing subject areas. In some of the subject areas it may be necessary to change the scope and sequence of the entire area to make the subject more meaningful to the student. If a school is going to bring about desired changes in all of the students that it serves, it may be necessary to modify the curriculum continually to meet individual needs. A

school that is studying, evaluating, and changing its curriculum is probably serving society beyond the minimum.

The individual school is the functional unit for curriculum study and planning. This is true because curriculum planning should always be done in terms of a specific society and its needs.¹ A curriculum that meets the needs of a community in New York may not meet the needs of a community in Kansas. Vocational opportunities of the people as well as the ethnic background of the community will probably account for large differences. Individual schools within a large school system may also need different curriculums to meet student needs. Differences in socio-economic status, interests, and abilities, are but a few of the factors that may cause curriculums to vary within a single large school system. The curriculum must always be planned for a specific group of students.²

There is no doubt that a school curriculum is best improved by the teachers and staff members who are directly working with the students that a school serves.³ Teachers should be aware of the individual differences, interests, and

¹William B. Ragan, Modern Elementary Curriculum (New York: Dryden Press, Inc., 1953) pp. 210-12.

²Ibid.

³Arthur R. Olson, "Organizing a Faculty for Curriculum Improvement," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 44:94-97, February, 1960.

needs that exist in a classroom. The teacher must provide the learning experiences that will guide all of the students he has.

This does not imply that the entire curriculum study can be handled solely by the teachers and the staff. School administrators must recognize the need for curriculum study and provide necessary facilities and finances before any organized form of system-wide improvement can take place.

There are many ways that curriculum improvement may be brought about in the classroom. Study by individual teachers, staff meetings, conferences, and institutes, will provide some opportunities for changing the curriculum. For total school curriculum study, the workshop is frequently considered the best technique. Although curriculum improvement is the primary objective of the workshop, the in-service education of the teacher is a product of the workshop that becomes important to system wide improvement.⁴ Teachers are more likely to become aware of new teaching procedures that will add to their classroom learning experiences if they participate in a workshop. Teachers may become acquainted with research procedures necessary for improvement of classroom learning situations and many other skills necessary for improvement of the curriculum.

⁴Ibid.

The workshop is conducted in such a way that the problems studied are those selected by the teachers.⁵ Through classroom visits, interviews, and conferences with the teachers, a supervisor or principal is usually able to get an idea of their needs and interests. Teachers are usually eager to participate in a study program that will make their tasks easier in the classroom. Workshops that are planned entirely by the administrators of the school will probably not be completely successful in bringing about much in-service education of the teachers.⁶

Action research is another method of curriculum study that is probably inseparable with the workshop.⁷ Teachers need some method of selecting plans for curriculum improvement and a means of determining whether the plans have brought about the desired improvements. The workshop can provide a means for formulating plans of action and the action research can provide a means of determining the worth of the plans.

Action research by teachers has sometimes prompted

⁵Edward A. Krug, et al., Administering Curriculum Planning (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1956) p. 220 ff.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Olin C. Webb, & Sallilu Crawford, "Curriculum Improvement Through Action Research," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 44:86-93, February 1960.

curriculum study by producing evidence that was startling when analyzed. Many times the need for improvement of the curriculum is not realized because its failures are not apparent. Action research could probably be a guide for selecting workshop study themes and problems once a curriculum study program is organized in a school.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report was to indicate how the curriculum workshop can be used to bring about improvement of instruction in the classroom and an improved curriculum.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Curriculum workshop. A series of meetings or study sessions devoted to original production and activities for the evaluation and improvement of the school curriculum. The workshop may be conducted in consecutive sessions during a short period of time or be conducted continually throughout a school term depending upon the problem to be studied.

Workshop participants. The faculty members of the school that is conducting the workshop. The participants are responsible for selecting the curriculum problems that are under study during the workshop.

Workshop staff. Includes all of the resource persons, consultants, and personnel that are involved in pre-planning

and conducting the workshop sessions.

REASONS FOR HAVING A CURRICULUM WORKSHOP

The necessity of changing the instructional experiences of the school to meet the needs of the student implies that the curriculum must under-go study and evaluation. There are many ways that the school curriculum can be studied and evaluated. Post graduate research programs, individual teacher graduate work, college campus workshops, state department evaluations, and faculty meetings are but a few of the many ways a school can study and evaluate its curriculum. The current trend of combining all the study and evaluation efforts into one activity involving the entire school personnel is best carried out in a curriculum workshop.¹ The workshop has the same goal as all other efforts, that of improving instruction to best meet the needs of the students.

It may be necessary to study, evaluate, or change the entire curriculum of a school. This type of study will usually require at least a year-long workshop. This type of workshop will probably devote more time to the organization of the subject areas within the total school curriculum than to study of any one area. A workshop for study and evalua-

¹Vernon E. Anderson, Principles and Procedures of Curriculum Improvement (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1956) pp. 149-178.

tion of a subject area without relating it to the total program may be conducted for a short period of time. The reasons for having either type of workshop are basically the same.

A workshop can strengthen the communication bonds between administration and teachers.² Teachers and administrators must be able to talk out their problems of instruction and have rapport before there can be much improvement of instruction. During a workshop where an informal atmosphere exists, the desk that is usually in front of the administrator is not present. The school secretary does not act as the go between for the teacher and administrator. There is time for the teacher and administrator to become better acquainted than is possible during the regular busy time of the school day. Sharing of ideas on school problems helps the teacher and administrator to better understand each other. Teachers are more inclined to share their problems of instruction with administrators if they are acquainted well enough that they feel at ease in discussing them. Thus, the lines of communication are strengthened.

A workshop can promote democratic administration of a school.³ The true democratic process of administering a

²Ibid.

³Mobilizing for Curriculum Improvement, American Association of School Administrators Yearbook, 1953, pp. 80-106.

school cannot be functioning unless the teachers and administrators do some planning together. The planning that is necessary for building the school budget around the curriculum is one example. The teachers need to know just what will be available for them to use in planning their instructional experiences for the classroom. If budget planning is entirely an administrative function, areas of the curriculum may be neglected. However, it would be a waste of time for the teachers to plan an elaborate curriculum that is impossible to put into action. Teachers and administrators need to plan together so that the best curriculum will be offered according to the finances that are available. Through planning such as this, teachers and administrators may develop a dependence on each other that is necessary for democratic administration of the school.

Workshops can cause the teacher to analyze the learning experiences that are being used in the classroom.⁴ Classroom learning experiences may soon be out of date if the teacher does not change them as new materials become available. In the science fields, for example, new materials are constantly being produced for classroom use. Teachers need to become acquainted with these materials and make plans to incorporate some of them into their classroom work.

⁴Anderson, Loc. cit.

Some learning experiences that have been used may not have produced the student progress the teacher had hoped for. A change in the arrangement of materials used in the experience or a completely new experience may be needed to produce the desired student progress.

It is probably easier for teachers to become aware of new materials and how to use them if there is opportunity for study with other teachers and specialists. A workshop creates the setting for group study and exchange of ideas. Group study and exchange of ideas are probably two of the best ways that a teacher can use to analyze and improve the classroom learning experiences.

Teachers can learn to seek the causes of student behavior through workshop participation.⁵ It is easier to see why some students behave as they do if more than one teacher has anecdotal records and observations to share. The guidance counselor may use the workshop to train the faculty for making anecdotal records and observations. If the school is not fortunate enough to have a guidance counselor, the sharing of records and observations by all the teachers in the school can lead to work on necessary adjustive measures that will help the student with classroom experiences. The need for remedial work may become more apparent through sharing of

⁵Ibid.

observations. By analyzing the behavior of just one student, the teachers in the workshop could gain some insight as to how student behavioral patterns can be analyzed and how this analysis can lead to better instructional experiences of the student in the classroom.

Workshops can cause the curriculum to be related to the behavioral changes of the students and not to the subject matter.⁶ Teachers should plan learning experiences with definite goals in mind. These goals should be stated in terms of behavioral changes that the learning experiences should bring about in the students. The teaching of subject matter may include many experiences that do not promote progress toward any goals; this is "busy work."

The teaching of subject matter may not allow for the individual differences in the classroom. Some students will probably be challenged and will progress while others will find the subject matter too difficult or too easy. When behavioral goals are established, it is easier for the teacher to plan learning experiences that will bring about progress for all of the students in the class.

Teachers usually need some experience in forming goals and planning learning experiences to reach these goals. The workshop can help the teachers obtain this experience by

⁶Ibid.

providing consultants for the teachers while they are forming goals and planning learning experiences to reach them. The workshop may offer the teacher a chance to study library material that will help in planning for behavioral changes.

Workshops offer the teacher a chance to grow professionally while on the job.⁷ It is an unfortunate situation, but a true one, that many teachers do not have the finances to obtain further professional training. The workshop that is financed by the school is about the only way these teachers can get further training.

Other teachers may have the finances but not the time to attend summer school or other university classes. Many times the distance from a university prohibits evening or week-end class attendance. A workshop that is conducted during the school day following regular classes will accommodate these teachers.

The school workshop would seem to be the best opportunity for a teacher to grow professionally in the light of a specific school situation. Regular summer sessions or extension classes may not offer the teacher a chance to study personal classroom problems.

Graduate credit for work done in a school curriculum workshop can probably be arranged if the workshop is con-

⁷Harold Spears, Curriculum Planning Through In-Service Programs (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1957) pp. 28-30.

ducted by a college or university. In the workshop where specialists and consultants are obtained from many institutions for the purpose of helping teachers with individual problems, graduate credit is seldom given. If graduate credit is of prime importance to the teachers, it may be necessary for the school to arrange for the teachers to participate in a campus workshop.

Letter grades and term papers are two attempts to measure professional growth through workshop participation; however, the current trend is to eliminate both of these aspects of evaluation. The amount of professional growth that a teacher makes in a workshop can probably best be evaluated by observing the changes that take place in the classroom.

Workshops can result in the best use of all community and school resources.⁸ Many times teachers conduct studies of the community to determine which people in the community are qualified in bringing to the students material on school related topics. These persons can bring the students much information that would otherwise not be available to them. Persons who have traveled extensively or have hobbies that are avocational can be called upon to bring their experiences to the students.

In some schools that maintain a departmental inventory,

⁸Anderson, Loc. cit.

materials and teaching aids that are available in one department may not be known to exist by all teachers in the school. The workshop offers a chance for the teachers to become acquainted with the materials that are available in each department of the school.

Workshops can be used for the writing of resource units and teaching guides.⁹ A workshop lends itself well to the production of written work. Most teachers have ideas that they would like to share with others. Teachers can be grouped into small working committees that can each produce a portion of a resource unit that can be shared with the entire group.

The current trend is not to use the workshop for the purpose of producing elaborate resource units and teaching guides.¹⁰ More workshops are being devoted to improvement of classroom learning experiences. If there is a felt need for a resource unit by the teachers, then a workshop for the purpose of producing a resource unit should be conducted.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A WORKSHOP

A workshop is just what the name implies, a shop in

⁹Edward A. Krug, et al., Administering Curriculum Planning (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1956) pp. 220 ff.

¹⁰Lindley J. Stiles, et al., Teacher Education in the United States (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1960) pp. 387-389.

which work is accomplished. This meaning was in use for centuries by artisans and craftsmen and has been applied in modern times to university activities in which the objectives are original production and development of the abilities of the participants. The workshop emphasis is upon the production of end results useful to the participants and desired by them. A second emphasis is upon the personal and social development of participants as they work with others on common problems. A third emphasis is upon the democratic method, namely co-operative group discussion and work on common problems.¹

The workshop may be an arrangement whereby a teacher or a school officer may work intensely on a problem which he brings from his own school and obtains the assistance of staff members of teacher-preparation institutions. Typically a summer workshop runs for about six weeks and includes staff members from various fields of study, particularly from the fields of curriculum, student personnel, evaluation, and administration. Workshop participants interested in similar problems form into small groups and work with the guidance of various faculty members who can give help on the partic-

¹Mary A. O'Rourke, and William H. Burton, Workshops for Teachers (New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1957) pp. 1-16.

ular difficulties that the group faces.²

The two brief descriptions given above show that there are certain essential characteristics of a workshop that separate it from the conference or lecture type of meeting. In the era following the forties, it was a common practice to call almost every meeting and lecture group a workshop, but at the present time most workshops are conducted according to the original concept. The essential characteristics of a workshop are given below.

The workshop must have a clearly defined purpose or central theme.³ A central theme or purpose for a workshop might be selected from the following examples: curriculum improvement, mental health, community resources, audio-visual aids, or building facilities. These are but a few of the many overall general themes that could be used for a workshop.

This report deals with the individual school, therefore, to further define one of the above examples in the light of the report, an illustrative workshop topic might be "To improve the classroom learning experiences in the Townville Rural High School." This topic would limit the area of work since a particular school is being considered and

²Ralph W. Tyler, "Trends in the Preparation of Teachers," School Review, 51:207-212, April, 1943.

³O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 31

just one part of the total school program, classroom learning experiences, is being considered. This does not mean that other areas given as first general examples will not be included. For example, audio-visual aids might need to be studied to improve the learning experiences. However, the general theme and purpose is still clearly defined.

The activity in the workshop must be based upon the problems, needs, and interests, of the participants.⁴ There is a limit to the amount of problem definition that can take place before a workshop is started. The central theme or purpose can be developed, but that is probably all that can be accomplished without taking away one of the essentials of the workshop. If specific problems are outlined and then presented to the participants, the workshop ceases to be a workshop.

The individual teacher participants determine just what the actual activity will be during the workshop. Considering the example already cited, the mathematics teacher may be working on teaching aids for solid geometry while the English teacher is working on business letter charts. These teachers are engaged in entirely different activity, but both are contributing to the central purpose of the workshop.

⁴Hollis L. Caswell, et al., Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950) pp. 60.

The bulk of the workshop time should be devoted to individual and small group work on related problems.⁵ Small groups and individual work will lead to the greatest accomplishment during a workshop. Lectures and addresses are limited to the amount of general information that is needed at the beginning and for short special sessions during the workshop. When the individual has his own problems to solve during the workshop, it is probably a waste of time for a lecturer to present generalities when the individual needs to work with specifics.

The resource persons required for the workshop can accomplish much more for the workshop if they are allowed to work for periods of time with each small group of individuals. In these smaller groups, the resource person can cite examples and offer suggestions that are more directly related to the problems being considered.

Enough time should be provided for the workshop so that personal and social growth of the participants can take place.⁶ Human relations are an important part of a curriculum workshop. The participants need time to become acquainted so they will feel at ease in discussing their classroom problems. The exchange of ideas that may take place during

⁵O'Rourke, Loc. cit.,

⁶Ibid.

informal conversation may be invaluable to a participant.

When the participants begin to work in groups there should be time for them to relate personal experiences to the group. When group work is rushed, there may be a tendency for one or two persons to do all the talking. The democratic process of group discussion may need fostering from time to time by calling on all of the group members.

There should be time in a workshop schedule for coffee breaks and informal luncheons. These social gatherings will contribute much to the success of a workshop, because the participants will probably develop a sense of belonging to the group.

ESSENTIAL FACILITIES NEEDED FOR A WORKSHOP

Almost all schools will have the essentials needed for conducting a workshop. Many of the facilities are available in the school, but would not be used unless there is some mention made of the importance of each to the workshop.

It may be necessary to obtain some of the facilities for use during the workshop. Rental agencies, other schools, and state organizations, can be contacted to obtain needed facilities. The following essential facilities are to be considered as being only basic, and each workshop situation may call for additions.

A large room that will accommodate all of the indi-

vidual work groups.¹ All of the study groups should probably be located in one general area. This will allow the consultants and resource persons to assist more than one group. The room should be large enough to allow all of the individual groups plenty of room. A flexible arrangement of tables may be necessary to accommodate changes in group size as the workshop progresses.

A high school gymnasium or a multi-purpose room will usually meet the needs of this essential requirement. However, factors of comfort such as heat, cooling, and sound absorption, should be considered when selecting this room for a workshop.

A room that will accommodate the entire group for general sessions.² A room that is large enough to work in will probably not be ideal for lectures and general sessions. Participants need slightly more comfort in lecture sessions than in work sessions. Arrangement, so that each individual participant can see and hear what is being done and said is important during the lectures and general sessions. A school auditorium will probably meet the requirements for the general sessions.

¹Mary A. O'Rourke and William H. Burton, Workshops for Teachers (New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1957) pp. 1-16.

²Ibid.

Office equipment and personnel for recording and duplicating materials.³ Office equipment and personnel should be obtained for a workshop. Many times such a facility is eliminated or omitted from the workshop. The workshop participants can get more work done if they are free from having to type out reports and records that have been made during the work sessions. Duplication of materials is usually necessary for all workshops. If there is a shortage of equipment and personnel for this purpose, then it may be necessary to employ added office help and rent office equipment just for the workshop.

A good library is essential to the workshop.⁴ Library materials pertaining to the theme of the workshop should be made available to the participants. The participants may need to do some research to answer their own problems or contribute to the group. Most schools will probably not have all of the materials that are available in a general theme area. Materials that are needed can probably be obtained from state associations or colleges for the duration of a workshop.

The library should be placed within the work room if

³Ibid.

⁴Hollis L. Caswell, et al., Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950) pp. 60.

at all possible. This will facilitate the use of the library. Along one side or end of the work room would be an ideal place to locate the racks and book cases needed for the library. If this is not possible, a room adjoining the work room should be used so that the materials are easily obtained.

A number of small rooms for individual group work and personal conferences.⁵ There should be a number of small rooms available for use by individuals or small groups. Consultants may need to have private conferences with individual participants if their problems seem to be of a personal nature.

Small groups may need to get away from the entire group especially if they find noise a problem. The small groups may need to construct an exhibit for the entire group to see. A classroom would seem to be ideal for conferences, small group work, and exhibits.

Cafeteria facilities for the entire group are needed.⁶ Most schools are equipped with a school lunch facility that would be adequate for a workshop. It may be necessary to make arrangements with local cafes or a catering service to take care of the workshop. It is a common practice for the noon luncheon or at least one meal during the daily session

⁵Ibid.

⁶O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 42.

to be served to the group. This allows all of the group to become more socially involved than in work sessions and helps foster personal relationships.

The preceding list of essential facilities is not exhaustive, but it does contain those facilities needed for an individual school to get started. Usually the facilities are as elaborate as the finances will permit and the finances are in direct proportion to the importance the administration places on the workshop.

PLANNING THE WORKSHOP

There are many arrangements that must be made far in advance of the first general session of a workshop. One individual will need to assume the responsibility of making many of the initial arrangements; in most cases, the local principal is considered the organizer for a workshop.¹ However, committees of teachers may be formed to make some of the final workshop plans.

Selecting the central theme for a workshop. The central theme for a workshop may be selected as much as a year in advance for the actual workshop. One of the most common methods for selecting a central theme is to ask the prospective participants to submit several general problems

¹Harold B. Albery, Re-organizing the High School Curriculum (New York: The Macmillian Company, 1953) pp. 521-546.

that they would like to study.² In most schools, there will probably be some over-lapping of the problems submitted by the teachers. From the submitted lists it will probably be possible to narrow down the list to two or three general areas. At this point it may be necessary to call a planning session of all teachers or a committee of teachers to make the final selection of the problem area for a workshop.

Another method of central theme selection is to hand out a survey sheet with several themes that might be used in a curriculum workshop.³ The teachers would be asked to rank the themes in order of importance to them. The survey sheets would be reviewed by the committee or the principal and two or three of the higher rating themes would be selected. This method is almost the same as the preceding, except that the theme selection is somewhat narrowed down by the survey list.

A third method for selecting the central theme may be to have a general meeting of all participants. During the meeting, all members have a chance to express the nature of their problems and select a theme for a workshop.⁴ There may need to be several sessions devoted to theme selection if

²Mary A. O'Rourke and William H. Burton, Workshops for Teachers (New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1957) pp. 31-33.

³Earl C. Kelly, The Workshop Way of Learning (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1951) pp. 12-27.

⁴Ibid.

this method is used. It is important that democratic group process be observed during meetings.

It is of utmost importance that the prospective participants have a chance to select the general theme or problem area for the workshop. If the participants feel that a theme has been forced upon them, there will probably be little accomplished in the workshop that is to follow.

Selecting a time for conducting the workshop. Very little has been written about procedures for selecting a period of time for a workshop. This would seem to be one of the more difficult tasks in planning a workshop. Action by the administration or the board of education as to the extent a workshop will be supported financially may help in selecting a time for the workshop.

The central theme or problem area to be studied will probably indirectly influence the time to conduct a workshop. If the entire school is involved in studying a broad curriculum problem, a year-long workshop may be necessary. The time that such a workshop is begun would probably depend on when the planning is completed.

Workshops devoted to the study of individual teacher problems can probably be conducted over shorter periods of time. Two or three weeks with daily meetings may be used for this type of workshop. A workshop for study of teacher problems should probably be held outside of the time that school

is in session because of the added time needed by the teachers to concentrate work on their problems.

Reports of successful workshops indicate that the time to hold the short intensive workshop should be decided by the participants if at all possible. Summer employment, vacations, graduate study, and summer teaching, will probably cause some difficulty in selecting a time for a workshop. It may be necessary for the school administration to adopt policies concerning the time schedule, finances, and teachers salaries, before a workshop can be successfully conducted.

Obtaining resource persons and consultants. Immediately after the central theme for the workshop has been selected, the resource persons and consultant staff should be obtained. The school principal may need to organize a committee for obtaining resource persons if the workshop planning burden is becoming too great. The state teachers association, state department of education, university staff members, and teachers from other schools usually make up the field from which resource persons and consultants can be selected. To schedule the resource persons and consultants at the time they are needed will probably necessitate contacting them well in advance of workshop time.

There has not been much written about the number of resource persons and consultants needed for a workshop. It will probably depend upon the problem area, number of partic-

ipants, and the anticipated number of problem study areas. School finances may also determine the extent of the resource and consultant staff. Probably the ideal staff would consist of a specialist in each of the problem study areas.

Obtaining library materials. As previously reviewed, there must be adequate library materials available for both the short session and year-long workshop. The library materials should be as extensive as the finances will permit.⁵

Following is a basic list of materials that should be assembled prior to the workshop.⁶

- A. Textbooks, in principles of teaching, in educational psychology, in the teaching of the various subjects, on the problems and principles of school curriculum development.
- B. Curriculum documents of the dozen or more types which are available throughout the country.
- C. The largest possible exhibit of books for adolescents.
- D. A collection of source units, proposed teaching units, logs of completed units, numerous charts, working plans of class groups, results of all kinds produced by a group while organizing and carrying on a unit.
- E. Some daily lesson plans of the traditional type but improved as suggested in modern textbooks.
- F. Typical traditional daily or short-term assignments, ranging all the way from fairly bad to excellent.

⁵O'Rourke, Loc. cit., p. 7.

⁶Ibid. (This is a modified form of the library list)

- G. An extensive collection of tests of all kinds: intelligence, achievement, diagnostic, improved essay examinations, problem situations, battery tests, forms for interviewing, and the like.
- H. A collection of films, film-strips, still pictures, models, --all types of audio-visual aids should be available.

Planning a workshop schedule. A workshop schedule will probably need to be planned up to the point where group work begins. The orientation and first general sessions can be planned ahead of time. When small group work is begun, the schedule should evolve around the groups. Some groups will work much faster than others and some groups may have problem areas that require more research time. Each group should be able to proceed at a rate that seems most efficient. Some definite guide posts of time should be established however, so that too much time is not spent on one part of the group study.

Planning with the staff for group work. Planning for group work is another phase of planning the workshop that must be done if the workshop is to be successful. Group work is used throughout most of the workshop. Most of the participants will probably not be accustomed to doing group work and study prior to the workshop. The resource persons and consultants may be well trained in group work, but the individual school workshop staff may need some review before the workshop starts.

It is important that the study groups get started

correctly or they may get discouraged and not accomplish much. The staff should be prepared to help each group get started. It is probably well to correlate group work with the steps in action research or reflective thinking. This will give the staff a plan to follow in guiding the group work. The following essential steps of action research have been correlated with the steps for group work in an attempt to show the relationship between the two.

Identifying a problem area or general theme for a workshop. One of the first steps already discussed in starting a curriculum workshop is to select a problem area for study.⁷ Most all teachers have problems in their work but may not be aware of them or do not want to let other persons know they have problems.⁸ Democratic supervision through observation and individual conferences may be necessary to help a teacher sense and identify a problem area that is in need of study.⁹

A general theme for a workshop might be one of the following: Curriculum design, language arts, physical education, health, mathematics, guidance, citizenship, or

⁷O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 31.

⁸Joseph Lees, et al., The Teacher in Curriculum Making (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1961) pp. 463-487.

⁹Ibid.

community resources. There is probably no end to the list of problem areas that could be identified by a faculty.

For the purpose of research, as with the starting of a curriculum workshop, there must be a selection of a few problems to be studied. The difficulty at this point is to decide which problem deserves attention first. The problem area that involves the greatest number of students is probably the best place to start.¹⁰ Another factor that must be considered in a research program is that the teachers need to feel that they have the ability to under-take the problem. It may be necessary to select a simple problem first and then progress to the problem involving more of the students.

Pin pointing the problem and defining the population.¹¹

This step in group work is taken when the teachers select the individual study groups with which they would like to work. The participants will probably need considerable assistance at this point to identify their specific interest or need.

Proposing a hypothesis and making a plan for action.

In action research, this section is sometimes separated into two parts: Proposing a hypothesis for the problem situation, and designing a test.¹² Teachers in a workshop study group

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Fred P. Barnes, "We Are All Researchers," The Instructor, 9:6-7, June, 1960.

¹²Ibid.

would probably propose many hypotheses and select several tests or plans for action. The hypotheses may also be considered as desirable goals to be reached and the plan for action would be the learning experiences that are planned for reaching the goals.

Applying the plan of action and obtaining the evidence. These steps take place in the classroom following the workshop and may not involve group work. Teachers in a school system may make comparisons on their own concerning how some of the plans have worked.

The method used for gathering evidence should be as objective as possible. That is, there should be a numerical scale or objective rating of the evidence if at all possible.¹³

There are certain basic skills in statistics that may be needed by the teachers for obtaining and recording evidence.¹⁴ Such skills as determining mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and rank correlation, may be needed. It may be necessary to offer some training during a workshop session to guide the teachers in obtaining evidence.

Challenging and generalizing from the evidence

¹³Francis J. Rummel, An Introduction to Research Procedures in Education (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1958) pp. 122-202.

¹⁴Ibid.

obtained. There must be some care taken in this step of action research because results may be biased.¹⁵ A plan of action that worked well in one particular situation may not work in other situations. It must be clearly understood that the evidence was gathered from one situation and, therefore, will apply to that situation only.

If the teachers carry on with a program of action research, a workshop that is conducted on a continual basis may be the best. Teachers will have a chance to report to the group the evidence they have gathered and there can be more work accomplished in analysis of the evidence. Periodic reports by the teachers would help in keeping a research program on schedule. There would also be greater interest in the research program if it is done during a year-long workshop.

Replanning and retesting the hypothesis. When sufficient evidence and results point out that the plan of action has not achieved the desired results, it will be necessary to propose another plan for action. The same sequence of events as previously stated for action research would be followed.

CONDUCTING A WORKSHOP

The workshop should not be started until the planning

¹⁵ Ibid.

is complete. A workshop that gets off to a poor start because it is inadequately planned will probably not result in much learning or curriculum improvement. All of the previously mentioned essentials of planning should be complete. The staff should have time to meet previous to orientation for the purpose of planning for group work. This should complete the planning of the workshop. Planning can go too far if every session is planned within a rigid schedule. There must be some flexibility in the schedule or the workshop may lose some of the aspects of in-service training.¹

Orientation of the workshop participants. The purposes of orientation are: to acquaint the participants with each other and the staff, to establish the working groups, and to help all participants become working group members as quickly as possible.² In the individual school workshop orientation will probably not be lengthy because most of the participants will be acquainted and will probably feel at ease in discussing their problems.

It is feasible to start orientation with a registration where each participant supplies some background information regarding his experience in the problem area. This

¹Mary A. O'Rourke and William H. Burton, Workshops for Teachers (New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1957) p. 44.

²O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 59.

registration may also be helpful in forming the study groups if the participants indicate an area of the general theme they would like to study. In large workshops of more than fifty participants it may be possible for the pre-planning committee to complete the registration before actual beginning of the workshop orientation. The same information as mentioned above should be obtained.³

Before the first general session of the workshop the participants should have time to tour the work room, library, and all other areas of the workshop. There should be time for the consultant and resource staff to meet each participant if possible.

The first general session should probably include a lecture or speech from one of the specialists in the general theme area. This may cause the participants to think of problem areas they desire to study that were previously not considered. The first general session may also include a formal introduction of the complete staff. A discussion of workshop procedure may also be necessary if workshop experience of the participants has been limited. A schedule of daily events for the first few days may also be presented during the first general session. A typical schedule of daily events is included in the appendix of the report.

³O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 46.

Use of resource persons and consultants. Resource persons and consultants are extremely valuable to the individual study groups during the formation of group goals. The consultants do not tell the group what the goals should be, but they help the group to analyze their problem area and define their goals. Many times workshop participants get discouraged during the first few sessions because they do not know what to do or how to do it. It is a partial responsibility of the staff to help the group get started discussing and analyzing the problem area, but not telling the group what to do.⁴

Following the first general session, it may be possible for the participants to have individual conferences with the consultants who are specialists in the chosen area of study.⁵ The size of the workshop and the number of consultants will determine if this is possible. Individual guidance given the participants at this time may help in determining the problem areas of most interest and need. The consultant is not responsible for assigning the participants to groups but for helping each participant realize what his needs are.⁶ Individual conferences at the beginning of the workshop may

⁴Earl C. Kelly, The Workshop Way of Learning (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1951) p. 48.

⁵O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 61.

⁶Kelly, Loc. cit.

eliminate much of the group changing that may take place if the members are not sure of what their need and interests are.

It is not necessary to have a consultant for each working group; probably one consultant for every two groups will be sufficient.⁷ If there is a consultant assigned to each group, there may be a tendency for the consultant to become a teacher and the participants, students. This is not the intended situation in the workshop and should be avoided.⁸ When one consultant works with more than one group, the teacher situation is usually eliminated.

If one consultant is assigned to each group, the consultant should visit other groups and not spend all of the time with one group. Such an arrangement will make the group more dependent upon its own resources and skills; thus, more in-service training may result.

Individual study group work. Individual group work usually begins with election of a recorder and chairman. However, the election of a chairman is optional, because it limits the group participation of the part of the member elected to the position.⁹ The size of the group also determines the need of a chairman. If the group numbers less than

⁷O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 38.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Kelly, op. cit., p. 29.

seven members, a chairman may not be needed.

Following the election of the recorder and chairman, if needed, the study group should begin to analyze its problem area and determine goals. The formation of goals will probably take considerable time at least to get started. The consultants play an active part in getting the group started on this task. However, the consultants must be cautious when working with the groups because the group may select goals that the consultants propose. The consultants should not point out the goals for the group, but should guide the group so that they will select their goals. As previously stated in the report, professional consultants will probably be trained in group work, but the school staff members that are acting as consultants may need to prepare for the task.

Work session schedule. The group work sessions should be short enough to keep interest and yet long enough for development.¹⁰ During the first few sessions of the workshop, the sessions will probably be shorter than after the goals have been set and the planning has started. Coffee breaks and general sessions should be scheduled so that they will offer the participants a chance to relax between work sessions.

When a system-wide problem workshop is being conducted

¹⁰O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 48.

during the school year, it may be best to start each work period with a general session and a social event. It is suggested that if workshop sessions are held after school during the year, a general session will give the participants time to relax from a busy day and get oriented to workshop thinking.¹¹

It would seem difficult to set a definite time for ending a workshop because some groups may need more time than others for making the plans to reach their goals. A closing time for group work should be established with conditions that may be changed to meet the needs of the participants.¹²

Lay participation in curriculum workshops. Lay participation in curriculum work has been gaining in popularity during recent years. Laymen can bring to the curriculum workshop a supplementary knowledge of the community and pupils. Many times it may be necessary to study the community to determine its background, job opportunities, and other resources. Laymen can be very helpful when making such a study.

Curriculum change may sometimes meet with criticism if the community patrons are not adequately informed about the curriculum status. Laymen can help explain the curriculum

¹¹Kelly, op. cit., p. 64.

¹²O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 44.

changes to the community so that criticism may be avoided.¹³ However, there is a limit to the lay participation that should be allowed. Laymen can best participate in those curriculum workshops that are conducted for system-wide curriculum change. Laymen should not participate in workshops dealing with methods of teaching or planning classroom experiences. These workshops should be for the professional educators only.

When laymen do participate in system wide change, their status should be clearly understood. They should participate on an advisory basis only and the actual changes or methods of change should be left up to the professional educators.¹⁴

The workshop staff will probably need to make some added preparation for a workshop that includes laymen. The staff should have available a complete outline of why certain subjects are offered in the school and have information as to why certain changes in the curriculum are needed. If the staff does not have this information ready, laymen can cause some pitfalls to curriculum work because:¹⁵

¹³Hollis L. Caswell, et al., Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950) p. 95.

¹⁴J. Harvey Littrell, "Lay Participation," Clearing House, 36:137-139, November, 1961.

¹⁵Ibid.

1. They may have an incomplete knowledge of the school curriculum program.
2. They may be reticent to express their views.
3. They think in terms of their own children.
4. They tend to put a "halo" around their own experiences.
5. They may draw conclusions before any objective evidence is determined.

When the staff has prepared for lay participation, considering the above factors, the system wide curriculum workshop should benefit from the participation of lay people.

EVALUATING THE WORKSHOP

The best evaluation of the workshop will probably not be made during or immediately following the workshop, because the real worth of the workshop is determined by the changes that take place in the classroom.¹ Classroom visitation, interviews, and conferences are probably the best techniques that can be used to evaluate the workshop.² The principal, supervisor, or workshop staff member assigned to making the evaluation will probably want to visit each teacher some time during the year following the workshop. There should be time allowed for the teacher to put the workshop plans into action

¹Mary A. O'Rourke and William H. Burton, Workshops for Teachers (New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1957) p. 68.

²O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 79.

before the visits and conferences are started.

There also is a need for evaluation during and just following the workshop. These evaluations are needed by the staff for immediate and future workshop planning. It is possible to evaluate almost anything and everything about a workshop, but the emphasis should probably be on processes and methods, not people and abilities.

Evaluation during the workshop. After the workshop has reached the point where small group study is taking place it may be necessary to evaluate the workshop for immediate needs. This evaluation may point out the need for more library resource materials, more time in small groups, and many other factors about the mechanics and facilities of the workshop. Evaluation techniques used at this point should probably be of the objective type. This will enable the participants to quickly fill out the forms and the staff will be able to arrive at the results easily. An example of an objective evaluation form to be used during the workshop is included in the appendix.

It may be necessary to supplement the objective evaluation form with a "flow chart" of group work to get the best evaluation of small group work. The flow chart may indicate needs in group process or individual conferences. A flow chart can be kept by the recorder or an observer. It should be kept without being known to the group if possible. This

flow chart will probably give a better picture of what is going on in group work than will an objective evaluation. The size of the available staff will probably determine who keeps the flow chart of the group discussion. An example of a flow chart is included in the appendix.

The previously mentioned techniques are an attempt to evaluate the total workshop and to diagnose shortcomings that may need correction. It is possible to evaluate each session, speaker, and group, if it is desired. Small objective forms such as check lists and rating scales could be used for these evaluations. The size of the staff and the ease with which facilities can be changed will probably determine the necessity of spot evaluations such as these.

Immediately following the last work session the participants and staff should evaluate the workshop. The evaluation should be considered as part of the workshop. It will probably be best to make a subjective evaluation at this time because an objective evaluation may not get all of the comments. The techniques used for this evaluation will probably be best determined by the staff. Some of the areas that probably should be evaluated at this time are:³

A. Mechanics and organization

1. Length of workshop

³O'Rourke, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

2. Time of year
3. Physical facilities
4. Library facilities
5. Resource materials
6. Scheduling
7. Allocation of time for various activities
8. Committees
9. General procedures of operation

B. Process and staff

1. Advance planning
2. Methods of determining goals
3. Availability of qualified resource persons
4. Number and distribution of regular staff
5. Degree to which individual needs were met
6. Neglected areas
7. Moral and cohesiveness
8. Degree of democratic participation
9. Effectiveness of problem-solving procedures
10. Activities of most value
11. Activities of least value
12. Ways of improving the work sessions

The above listing is not considered to be complete, but as examples of the mechanics and processes that probably should be evaluated.

A self-evaluation should be made at the close of the workshop for the purpose of obtaining a value judgment of the workshop. Each participant could be ask to rate or evaluate his growth in the following areas:⁴

A. Individual growth

1. In ways of working together
2. In knowledge of resources and how to use them
3. In development of usable plans for teaching
4. In changed attitudes and understandings
5. In achievement of workshop objectives

⁴O'Rourke, Loc. cit.

Post-workshop evaluation. Evaluation made in the classroom following the workshop will be of the most value. To get the best indication of accomplishments in the workshop, the staff should have conducted classroom visits and interviews previous to the workshop. When a school holds its first workshop, previous visits to the classroom may not have been made; but after workshops are an established procedure for a school it will be possible to better evaluate them because previous visits will have been planned.

The staff persons in-charge of post-workshop evaluation should probably be trained in supervisory work. All of the democratic principles of supervision should be observed when making this evaluation. It may be possible to determine the study area of a future workshop while evaluating the preceding workshop.

SUMMARY

A curriculum workshop will probably improve the learning experiences in the classroom more than any other type of curriculum improvement technique. The workshop lends itself well to in-service education of the teacher because it is conducted in the individual school at a time when all of the faculty can attend. The workshop must be adequately planned before it is started or it may fail to bring about much curriculum improvement. Planning should be started well

in advance of the time for starting the workshop. It will probably be necessary to obtain library materials, office equipment and personnel, resource persons, and consultants for a workshop. Committees can be appointed to procure these materials and schedule the needed staff. Committees can also be formed to plan the social and recreational part of the workshop.

Individual group work is the action part of the workshop. There must be ample time for the participants to do some work in the study groups if the workshop is to be successful. Consultants and resource persons can add to the success of the workshop if they act in a consultant capacity and not in a teaching capacity. Group work should proceed on a plan similar to the steps of action research if possible. Action research can promote curriculum study that may lead to a continual workshop program.

Evaluation of the workshop should be done in terms of the improvement that is brought about in the classroom. The principal or supervisor should make the evaluation by observing the classroom learning experiences. It may be possible to discover an area of study for another workshop while evaluating the preceding workshop.

This report has reviewed the basic essentials for conducting a workshop and should be considered only as a guide for planning the individual school workshop. There may be

other essential requirements that must be met for specific school situations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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APPENDIX

EVALUATION OF TOTAL WORKSHOP

At the end of the first workshop week, may we ask your help in an assessment of the standing and progress of the whole workshop endeavor this far? Please answer the following questions and write in your comments. Be frank and honest in your opinions. Do not sign. Thank you.

PURPOSES

A. Please number in order of importance (1,2,3, etc.) the real reasons you are in attendance at this workshop.

1. Improve my own professional skills and understandings....._____
2. Better understand the school system and its problems....._____
3. For credit on the salary schedule....._____
4. Desire to improve general teaching in our school....._____
5. Nothing better to do....._____
6. Comment:

B. Please number in order of importance (1,2,3, etc.) what you consider should be the specific purposes of this workshop in terms of individual growth and in terms of our total educational program.

1. To improve qualifications of individual teachers....._____
2. To gain stimulation and guidance from the staff and others....._____
3. To move toward a generally accepted philosophy of education....._____
4. To work on specific problems confronting the school....._____
5. To provide a testing ground for future workshops....._____

MECHANICS

A. Are you generally satisfied with the organizational set-up of the workshop? Check the appropriate blanks.

	Satisfied	Not satisfied
1. Time schedule	_____	_____
2. Accommodations	_____	_____
3. Work area	_____	_____
4. Conference rooms	_____	_____
5. Library	_____	_____
6. Cafeteria	_____	_____
7. Office equipment	_____	_____

B. Do you find adequate time and space to do the following:
Check appropriate blanks

	Yes	No
1. Carry on individual study	_____	_____
2. Confer with staff members	_____	_____
3. Use the library	_____	_____
4. Enjoy arts & crafts	_____	_____
5. Hold committee meetings	_____	_____
6. Other, comment:	_____	_____

GROUP ACTION - Place a check mark in the blanks of your choice.

A. Are general sessions:

1. Interesting....._____
2. Stimulating....._____
3. Informative....._____
4. Related to real need....._____
5. Boring....._____

B. In Discussion Groups is there:

- 1. Adequate leadership....._____
- 2. Good participation by most members....._____
- 3. A fair chance for you to participate....._____
- 4. Hospitality to differences of opinion....._____
- 5. Evidence of progress toward goals....._____
- 6. Interest and stimulation....._____
- 7. Tendency for one member to dominate
the discussion....._____
- 8. Others: Comment

C. Do staff members:

	Yes	No
1. Have time to confer with individuals	_____	_____
2. Help you to attain self direction	_____	_____
3. Prove stimulating	_____	_____
4. Give adequate help with problems	_____	_____
5. Dominate group discussion	_____	_____
6. Force their thoughts on the group	_____	_____

PERSONAL-SOCIAL RELATIONS: Check the appropriate blanks.

	Yes	No
1. Have you had enough opportunity to meet new people....._____	_____	_____
2. Do you find a friendly and con- genial atmosphere among workshoppers.._____	_____	_____
3. Comments:		

GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS: Please write in comments below.

(Note) This is a modified version from O'Rourke, p. 76.

DAILY WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

9:00 A.M.

General assembly: Report of Science Teachers Improvement Program conference.

10:15 - 10:30

Coffee

10:30 - 12:00

Group meetings or individual work.

1:30 P.M.

General assembly: Definition and Description of the Core Curriculum.

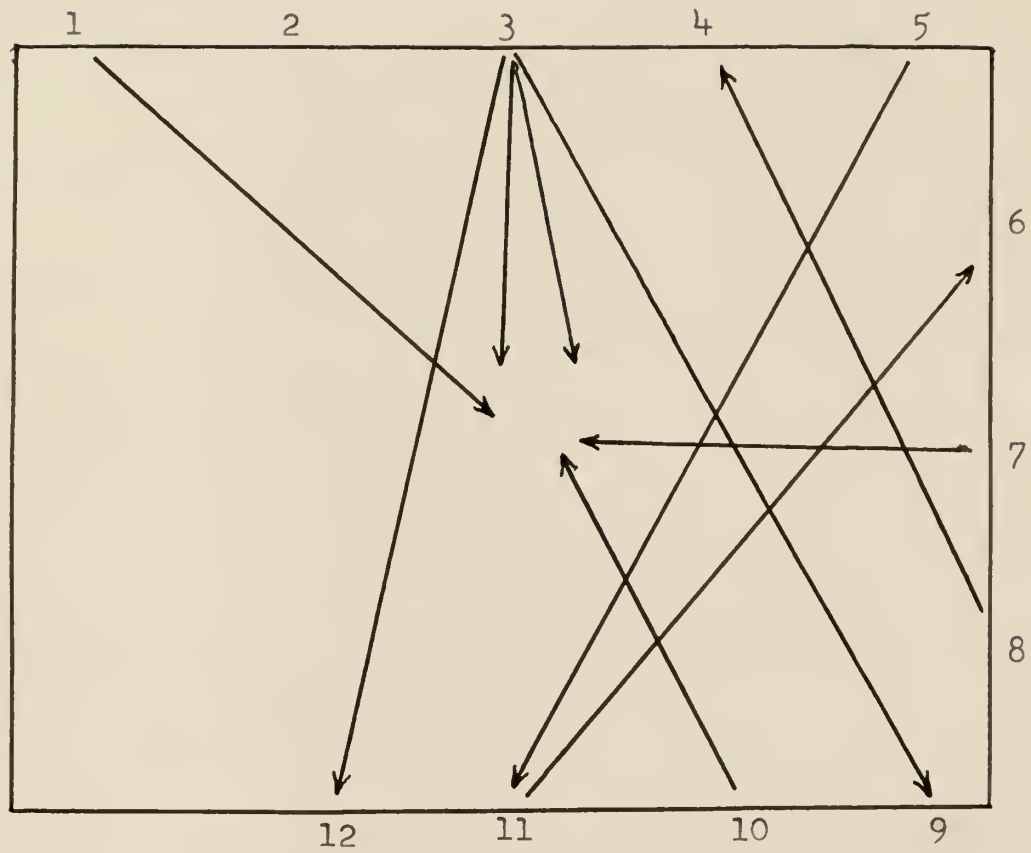
2:15 - 4:00

Group meetings or individual work.

4:00

Daily schedule closes.

FLOW CHART



- 1 = Resource person
- 2 = Observer
- 3 = Chairman
- 4 = Recorder
- 5 - 12 = Group members

A GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING HIGH SCHOOL
CURRICULUM WORKSHOPS

by

DARYL L. HAEGERT

B. S., Kansas State University, 1956

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1963

Approved by:

Major Professor

Society has placed many responsibilities upon the high school. The high school serves the community in which it is located according to the interests and needs of that community. The needs of one community or school are usually very different from other communities due to background, social status, and vocational opportunities. If the school is to serve society to a maximum degree, the school must be aware of community needs and continually study and evaluate its curriculum to meet these needs. The purpose of this report was to indicate how the curriculum workshop could be used to bring about curriculum study and improvement.

There are many reasons for having a curriculum workshop, but all of the reasons seem to center around improvement of instruction. The workshop can strengthen communication bonds between administrators and teachers and promote democratic administration of a school. The workshop can cause the teachers to analyze learning experiences that are being used in the classroom. Teachers can learn to seek the causes of student behavior and learn to relate classroom learning experiences to student behavioral changes. The workshop offers the teacher a chance to grow while on the job.

The essential characteristic of a workshop is that the work being done must solve problems that are real to the participants. To accomplish work that is important to the participants, the workshop must have a defined purpose or

central theme that has been chosen by the participants. The bulk of time during the workshop is devoted to individual and small group work on common problems related to the central theme or purpose.

A workshop should be held in an atmosphere that is conducive to work; therefore, physical facilities are important to the success of a workshop. The work sessions should be held in a large comfortable room where sound is absorbed so that noise will not be a problem. An auditorium is needed for general sessions. Small rooms are needed for individual and small group conferences. Cafeteria facilities should be available for one meal daily during the workshop.

The workshop must be carefully planned if it is to be successful. The central theme or general problem should be chosen well in advance of the workshop. A time schedule should be set by the prospective participants if possible. Resource persons and consultants need to be scheduled and library materials need to be obtained before the workshop can begin. All of the physical facilities should be arranged prior to the workshop. The local workshop staff should review the steps of reflective thinking or action research so they will have a plan to follow during group work.

At the beginning of the workshop there should be an orientation period so that the participants can become active participants as quickly as possible. Resource persons and

consultants should take an active part in starting the small group work. The work groups should adopt their own goals and plans, but the consultants should help analyze the problems and guide group thinking. Individual and group work should proceed at a rate that is most efficient for the group. General sessions and social activities should be planned so they will facilitate the workshop progress, not hinder it.

The evaluation of a workshop should be started during the workshop for the purpose of determining how well immediate needs are being met. The most important aspect of evaluation will probably take place during classroom visits by the principal or supervisor following the workshop. The amount of curriculum improvement that was brought about by the workshop will be indicated by the improvement of the learning experiences in the classroom.