

A SURVEY OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATION  
OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	1
Statement of Purpose . . . . .	1
Definition of Terms . . . . .	3
Culturally disadvantaged . . . . .	4
Characteristics of the culturally deprived home . . . . .	5
Characteristics of the culturally disadvantaged Negro family . . . . .	7
Inner-city or central city . . . . .	10
II. REVIEW OF SCHOOL-SPONSORED PROJECTS FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF CULTURAL DISADVANTAGE . . . . .	13
The Need for High Skill Levels . . . . .	13
The labor market and the dropout . . . . .	13
Review of Special School Projects for the Education of the Culturally Disadvantaged . . . . .	15
Higher Horizons . . . . .	17
Other New York City and State projects . . . . .	19
Detroit projects . . . . .	21
The Norfolk State College experiment in training the hard-core unemployed . . . . .	22
Project BRIDGE . . . . .	23

CHAPTER	PAGE
III. INTRODUCTION TO SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, FOR THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED. . . . .	26
IV. SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, FOR THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED . . . . .	32
Operation Head Start . . . . .	33
The program in operation . . . . .	36
Conclusions . . . . .	39
The Lincoln-Plus and Manual-Plus Projects . . . . .	41
The program in operation . . . . .	43
Conclusions . . . . .	45
The Central High School Remedial Reading Project . . . . .	46
The program in operation . . . . .	51
Conclusions . . . . .	53
The Kansas City Work-Study Program . . . . .	56
The program in operation . . . . .	59
Conclusions . . . . .	63
Operation Salvage - the Double E Program . . . . .	69
The program in operation . . . . .	71
Conclusions . . . . .	73
The Neighborhood Youth Corps . . . . .	75
The program in operation . . . . .	77
Conclusions . . . . .	79

	iii
CHAPTER	PAGE
Kansas City Special Scholarship Program . . . . .	80
The program in operation . . . . .	81
Conclusions . . . . .	92
V. SUMMARY . . . . .	93
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	101

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. First Year Scores of Central High School Students of Kansas City, Missouri, of the Iowa Silent Reading Test .	54
II. Second Year Scores of Central High School Students of Kansas City, Missouri, of the Iowa Silent Reading Test .	55
III. Data on Institutions and Financial Grants to Class of 1965	86
IV. Data on Categories of Students in Special School Program for June 1, 1962, through May, 1965 . . . . .	90
V. Personal Information Concerning the Type of Student Chosen for the Special Scholarship Program . . . . .	91

## CHAPTER I

### I. THE PROBLEM AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

#### Statement of the Problem

The education of the culturally disadvantaged child is one of the basic issues facing the public schools of the United States. This is especially true where America's large cities are concerned.

The education of culturally disadvantaged children is not an altogether new issue. Each new wave of immigrants to the United States brought a similar problem. They were poor, they settled largely in big city slums, and responsibility for educating their children fell to the public schools. The problems that they brought with them were great, but they were resolved.

But the situation that faces urban public schools today bears only a superficial resemblance to issues that have been resolved in the past. True, the new inner-city dweller resembles yesterday's slum dweller in that he is extremely poor; he is uneducated; he is concentrated in one or two areas of our large cities; and the public schools must find ways to educate his children.

It was with these considerations in mind that this report was undertaken.

#### Statement of Purpose

It is the purpose of this report (1) to examine some of the population changes that have given rise to the present problem;

(2) to discuss a few of the important changes that have taken place in the nation since the early part of this century--changes which compound the present difficulties; (3) to review, briefly, a few of the programs that American urban school systems have initiated in an effort to solve the difficulties that face them; and (4) to present seven specific programs that Kansas City, Missouri, has initiated in an effort to resolve some aspects of the problem of educating the culturally disadvantaged that faces its school system. Information for this section of the report was gained primarily through personal interview with persons directly involved in formulation of solutions to the problems facing Kansas City.

Differences between the present problem and that of the past.

Certain basic differences separate the new city inhabitant and the old. The old immigrant was a foreigner. He was white with a strong family unit useful in aiding the cultural change that had to be accomplished. He had a powerful respect and high regard for education as a means of upward mobility. Nothing existed that could prevent him from leaving the slum and entering the mainstream of American life, once he had become fully acculturated.

The new slum dwellers are American. Some of them may be classified as white, but most are Negro--members of a minority group which has traditionally been discriminated against in this country.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The attitude of these people toward education is discussed in Section III of this chapter.

Many factors exist which tend to force these people to remain slum dwellers.

The large foreign immigrant groups came to the United States at an opportune time: they were unskilled, but unskilled labor was needed and needed badly. For those who could not find a way out of the slums through education, it was possible to earn a way out through hard labor.

The new wave of settlers in our great cities face obstacles to the achievement of a better life that did not confront their predecessors. In addition to the problems of race with concomitant prejudicial attitudes and behavior on the part of the greater society, the times have changed in the United States. The nation no longer needs unskilled labor. Only persons with marketable skills can hope to better their position in life. Only through education can a person hope to acquire the background that is necessary to achievement of marketable skills. Yet, often the schools have been unable to reach many of the people who are concentrated in the large industrial cities—the very people who so desperately need education in order to be able to face the future.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Two major terms need to be defined at this time: (1) cultural disadvantage and (2) inner-city. Since misunderstanding or disagreement is frequent about the meaning of these terms, this report will define them through a specific discussion of their effect upon the



people who are directly involved. Some of the problems that arise for our large cities will also be dealt with briefly.

### Culturally Disadvantaged

Who are the culturally disadvantaged? Havinghurst defines the persons who presently constitute the culturally disadvantaged elements of society in the following manner: they are (1) Negroes from the rural South who have migrated to Northern cities; (2) poor white persons from the rural South or from Southern mountain areas; (3) Puerto Ricans who have recently migrated to a few Northern industrial cities; (4) Mexicans with rural backgrounds and who have migrated into some Western and Mid-Western cities; and (5) a few European immigrants with rural backgrounds.<sup>2</sup>

Havinghurst states that persons classified as culturally disadvantaged can be about evenly divided into white and non-white. Other authors are convinced that the primary group that faces American schools with the problem of education for the culturally disadvantaged is the American Negro. Conant, for example, utilizes the entire first chapter of his book, Slums and Suburbs, discussing the problem of educating Negro children.<sup>3</sup> It appears that he considers the Negro to be a most important element in any

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<sup>2</sup>Robert J. Havinghurst, "Who are the Socially Disadvantaged?", The Journal of Negro Education, XXXIII (Summer, 1964), p. 215.

<sup>3</sup>James B. Conant, Slums and Suburbs, (New York: Signet Books, 1964), pp. 15-52.

consideration of urban cultural disadvantage.

There is ample justification for such a view. Consider the fact that in 1910 only about 2,700,000 of the total 9,800,000 Negroes lived in urban areas. By 1960, however, the situation was just about reversed: about fourteen million Negroes lived in the great cities of the United States. Only about six million Negroes lived in rural areas.<sup>4</sup>

With these facts in mind, the balance of this chapter will be divided into (1) a general discussion of the culturally disadvantaged home; (2) a specific discussion of characteristics of the culturally disadvantaged Negro family; and (3) a general discussion of the inner-city districts of our metropolitan areas with some background material on their evolution.

#### Characteristics of the Culturally Disadvantaged Home

Culturally disadvantaged homes typically do not demonstrate that positive values are placed on education.<sup>5</sup> Examination of such homes shows that there is seldom any area set aside for children to use for study purposes; study materials are usually absent.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>William Brink and Louis Harris, The Negro Revolution in America (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), p. 39.

<sup>5</sup>Livinghurst, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>6</sup>Nancy L. Arnez, "A Study of Attitudes of Negro Teachers and Pupils toward their School," The Journal of Negro Education, XXXII, (Summer, 1963), p. 209.

The culturally disadvantaged family does not normally engage in conversation of a type which answers a child's questions, extends his vocabulary, or encourages him to express himself.<sup>7</sup> The language behavior that such a child witnesses usually consists merely of short sentences that exhibit poor form. The sentences are usually repetitive and are often confined to simple, non-descriptive commands:<sup>8</sup> "Bring me that; move that; just because." The difference between the language usage that the child is used to hearing at home and the language that he hears spoken by a middle class person frequently forms a very effective barrier to learning--particularly if he is a recent migrant from the South.<sup>9</sup>

Silberman points out that the language usage in a culturally disadvantaged home, combined with the fact that most of the parents have very little formal education, means that the lower-class child usually has not had the experience of hearing people correct his pronunciation. Silberman considers such correction to be a major means of learning differences in sound and language.<sup>10</sup>

The lower class household seldom provides a variety of toys or

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<sup>7</sup>Havighurst, op. cit., p. 212.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>9</sup>Charles E. Silberman, Crisis in Black and White, (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), p. 271.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

play materials for children. Such a home may even lack the ordinary kitchen utensils which often provide playthings for middle-class children. Variations in room decoration are not common and a variety of colors is seldom present. Havinghurst<sup>11</sup> points out that this means the challenge to the mind that manipulation of unfamiliar objects is thought to bring to children is denied the lower-class child.

Silberman mentions, in addition to the above information, that the lower-class child may even lose out on motor skill development. At the age when he would normally begin to crawl and manipulate objects, he gets in the way of adults who have little patience with him or his activities.<sup>12</sup>

#### Characteristics of the Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Family

The lower-class Negro family is typically a matriarchal unit. This is undoubtedly due, in part, to the fact that the mother is often the only parent in the home.<sup>13</sup> The father may be unknown, or absent--due to desertion or because he is in jail.<sup>14</sup> But, according to several authorities, such an explanation by itself is an oversimplification.

Levine feels that such family organization evolved as a

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<sup>11</sup>Havinghurst, op. cit., p. 212-213.

<sup>12</sup>Silberman, op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>13</sup>Arnez, op. cit., p. 269.

<sup>14</sup>Silberman, op. cit., p. 227-8.

protective response to the forced dispersal of families which occurred under slavery.<sup>15</sup>

Riessman agrees with Levine on this matter. But he also feels that the Negro male is frequently an ineffectual family authority figure because of the fact that slavery originally made him so totally dependent on another person's will. This prevented the Negro male from experiencing responsibility as a family man.<sup>16</sup> There may be much to be said for this view, particularly when a person reflects that the system of tenant farming that evolved in the South following the Civil War tended to perpetuate slave-master relationships.

Charles Silberman agrees with this general view. But he stresses the fact that Negro women can usually find employment easier than a Negro man is able to do. Domestic servants are in demand and many Negro women possess the skill necessary to perform such jobs. Her husband, on the other hand, finds that his services are not in demand since he has no skills. The situation is made worse by the fact that even if an unskilled job is available the competition is intense and the chances are that a white man will be hired. As a consequence, unemployment is higher for Negro men than for any other group.<sup>17</sup> Silberman feels that the lack of manly regard, engendered by

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<sup>15</sup>Daniel Levine, "Coeducation--a Contributing Factor in Miseducation of the Disadvantaged," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (November, 1964), p. 126.

<sup>16</sup>Frank Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child, (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 94

<sup>17</sup>Even if the Negro is in a minority in a city, he accounts

slavery, discrimination, and unemployment, have sometimes led Negro men in Northern cities to violence,<sup>18</sup> drinking, sexual promiscuity,<sup>19</sup> and family desertion as a means of assertion of masculinity.<sup>20</sup>

The effect of this family situation on the children is not difficult to assess. The adolescent male is deprived of the authoritarian male adult figure that most middle-class boys have.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, he must model himself after whatever authority figure he admires. Most authority figures that are available in a slum area, and that are acceptable to such a boy, would be considered to be extremely unhealthy influences elsewhere.

The lack of fatherly attention and counsel is seldom compensated for by the mother. The mother, frequently hostile to all males, concentrated on preparing her daughters for life. This is reflected in the fact that twice as many Negro girls go to college

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for a high percentage of the persons who are on the city welfare rolls. Chicago has a 25 per cent Negro population. Yet, this group accounts for 80 per cent of the relief rolls. Brink and Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>18</sup>While comprising about 10 per cent of the total National population, Negroes, in 1962, accounted for 30 per cent of all crimes. Specifically, they accounted for 57 per cent of robberies, 60 per cent of murders and non-negligible manslaughters. Brink and Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup>One in five Negro births is non-legitimate as compared with one in fifty white births. Brink and Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>20</sup>Silberman, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup>Levine, *op. cit.*, p. 126.



as boys. Among whites, the situation is reversed.<sup>22</sup>

The net effect of this situation is that boys often fail to receive a sense of realistic aspiration or direction. The boy sees that his father, if a father is present in the home, is unable to find a job with dignity and status, and he has no reason to believe that education offers a way out for him. Silberman and Riessman both feel that, as a result, culturally disadvantaged children frequently resign in despair and adopt a mode of living that is guaranteed to perpetuate slum life.<sup>23</sup>

How many children are culturally disadvantaged? Riessman states that in 1950 about one child in ten of the fourteen largest cities could be considered to be culturally disadvantaged; by 1960 the figure rose to one in three. A projection based upon this increase suggests to him that by 1970 about one in two children may be considered culturally disadvantaged.<sup>24</sup>

#### Inner-City or Central-City

For the purposes of this report the terms "inner-city", "central-city", and "slum" will have the same meaning and will be used interchangeably. The inner-city is usually an older section of a relatively large community; at one time it may have been a

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<sup>22</sup>Silberman, loc. cit.

<sup>23</sup>Silberman, loc. cit.; and Riessman, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>24</sup>Riessman, op. cit., p. 1.

residential area for middle-class persons.

As a social problem the term "inner-city" usually refers to an area of a city which is located somewhere near the business district. Such an area is normally in a stage of transition from a white middle-class or working-class neighborhood to an area largely inhabited by culturally disadvantaged groups. In some cities it has completed that transition.

The core of an inner-city is usually a slum area in the worst sense of the word. It is populated only by persons of the type described in this section of this report as culturally disadvantaged. The boundaries of the area may not be fixed and are often to be identified only by the appearance of "for sale" signs on the lawns of homes on its outer perimeter. These signs advertise the fact that the process of white migration to the suburbs is in progress and that a minority group is moving in.

In most Northern and Southern industrial cities, the inner-city area is primarily populated by Negroes.<sup>25</sup>

The continuing decay of an inner-city area is guaranteed by the fact that new mobility is daily being won by the Negro who has been more fortunate than the rest of his race. Such a person tends to duplicate the action of the former residents of the area by moving away to the outer edges of the district or to suburban areas. This movement leaves space in the core of the inner-city which will

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<sup>25</sup>Clement Vontress, "Our Demoralizing Slum Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, XLV, (November, 1963), p. 77.



continually be filled by a lower-class element--the rural Negro who is not acclimated to city living.<sup>26</sup>

It is in this inner-city area of most large cities that part of the present problem for American schools exists. The inner-city is the area where squalor is a way of life and ignorance is the tool which maintains that way of life. It is here that schools must try to help people to eliminate the legacy of racial discrimination.

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<sup>25</sup>For an interesting account for what happens to an inner-city area, along with suggested reasons for such occurrences, I refer the reader to Charles Silberman's new book, Crisis in Black and White, Chapter III, p. 36.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF SCHOOL-SPONSORED PROJECTS FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF CULTURAL DISADVANTAGE

Many projects designed to lessen or eliminate effects of cultural disadvantage on the individual have been tried in the United States in the last ten years. Only a brief summary of a few of those projects will be made in this chapter. No attempt will be made to discuss racial segregation per se. But the reader should be aware of the fact that racial segregation and discrimination have been major contributing factors to the problem of cultural disadvantage as it exists in the United States today.<sup>1</sup>

#### I. THE NEED FOR HIGH SKILL LEVELS

##### The Labor Market and the Dropout

Between 1960 and 1970 it is estimated that about twenty-six million students will enter the labor market. Of this number, about seven million five hundred thousand will be school dropouts. About two million five hundred thousand of that number will have less than

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<sup>1</sup>For complete information on this subject the reader is referred to three books: (1) Frank Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child, (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); (2) Charles E. Silberman, Crises in Black and White, (New York: Vintage Books, 1964); and (3) Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1944). It is also suggested that the reader consult issues of The Journal of Negro Education.

an eighth grade education.<sup>2</sup>

This addition to the labor market of people who have no marketable skills will occur during the same decade that the unskilled labor market is disappearing. According to an estimate made by Schreiber in 1963, only five per cent of the jobs available in 1970 will be for the unskilled.<sup>3</sup>

Riessman lends some weight to Schreiber's views by showing that from 1947-1963 about ninety-seven per cent of the total increase in employment came in the white collar category of occupations.<sup>4</sup>

Conant has shown what an unskilled person about to enter the labor market may anticipate for the future. A 1961 study, conducted prior to a national conference on unemployed, out of school, urban youth, revealed that in one slum area of one hundred and twenty-five thousand people the unemployment rate for youth was about seventy per cent.<sup>5</sup>

The unmistakable fact is that the labor market is no longer able to offer a future to the school dropout. As automation in

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<sup>2</sup>Daniel Schreiber, "The Dropout and the Delinquent: Promising Practices Gleaned from a Year of Study," Phi Delta Kappan, XLIV, (February, 1963), p. 216.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Riessman, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>5</sup>Conant, Slums and Suburbs, op. cit., p. 36.

industry reduces the need for unskilled labor, employers will constantly increase their minimum requirements for the educational level of their employees. At the present time the minimum requirement for most employment is a high school education.<sup>6</sup>

## II. REVIEW OF SPECIAL SCHOOL PROJECTS FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

In reviewing the literature in the field of educational projects for the culturally disadvantaged, one is immediately struck by the universality of the problem. Every large city in the United States is involved with one or more projects that are designed to try to help people overcome the effects of cultural disadvantage.

What is, perhaps, most surprising about the projects is that all of them seem to be successful in achieving their immediate goals. Riessman,<sup>7</sup> accordingly, questions if the project design is responsible for the success, or whether success may be ascribed to a phenomenon known as the "Hawthorne Effect."<sup>8</sup> He is critical of the type of approach that has been used in many of the national projects,

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<sup>6</sup>Emma Bragg, "Changes and Challenges in the '60's," The Journal of Negro Education, XXXII, (Winter, 1963), p. 32.

<sup>7</sup>Riessman, op. cit., p. 103-105.

<sup>8</sup>The "Hawthorne Effect" is a term roughly equivalent to the term "Placebo" in medicine. The phenomenon was noted in a classic experiment in a Western Electric plant. Researchers were trying to find ways of increasing productivity. They found that no matter what they did, worker production went up.

particularly the New York Higher Horizons Program, because of the fact that their results may demonstrate only that projects designed to alleviate cultural disadvantage will work.

Silberman,<sup>9</sup> however, feels that even if this is true, it does not represent a weakness of the projects. To him, the fact that all of the projects seem to work well only indicates that there is no fundamental difference between middle-class and lower-class youth. Silberman feels, however, that such results demonstrate that adequate motivation and correct procedures are lacking in most inner-city classrooms.

This report does not mean to imply that Riessman totally disapproves of such projects as Higher Horizons; on the contrary, he has stated that they represent conclusive demonstrations that culturally disadvantaged children can learn.<sup>10</sup>

Most of the projects that are reviewed in this section have the following things in common: (1) they are school sponsored; (2) they are relatively recent in origin--usually less than ten years old; (3) they are devoted to the alleviation of cultural disadvantage through a multi-pronged attack on the problem--in the school, the home, and the greater community; and (4) they are partially financed by outside grants.

No attempt is made to review all of the projects that are

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<sup>9</sup> Silberman, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-256.

<sup>10</sup> Riessman, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

being tried in this country. That would be an impossible task, as the first paragraph of this section made clear. Instead, an attempt has been made to review projects which have been particularly significant in the development of methods of attack on the problem of cultural disadvantage.<sup>11</sup>

### Higher Horizons

The New York Higher Horizons project originated in 1956 in an experiment known as the Demonstration Guidance project. Since that time it has become the prototype for a great many of the current projects that are in effect in other cities throughout the nation. In that sense, it marks a milestone in American education: Higher Horizons demonstrated beyond a doubt that cultural disadvantage is not irreversible.

The Demonstration Guidance project was designed according to the premise that human talents and lives were being wasted by the effects of cultural disadvantage.<sup>12</sup> It originated in Harlem's Junior High School No. 43 and George Washington High School. According to Shaw<sup>13</sup> the pupil population of Junior High No. 43 was forty-eight per cent Negro, thirty-eight per cent Puerto Rican, two per cent Mexican, one per cent oriental, and eleven per cent white.

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<sup>11</sup>For more complete information the reader is referred: School Programs for the Disadvantaged, (Education Research Service, NEA, 1963).

<sup>12</sup>Schreiber, op. cit., p. 220.

<sup>13</sup>Frederick Shaw, "Educating Culturally Deprived Youth in Urban Centers," Phi Delta Kappan, XLV (November, 1963), p. 94.

There were one thousand four hundred pupils in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. Half of these students were chosen to participate in the project. The mean IQ score of this group was ninety-five--they were about one and one half year retarded in reading ability.

Organization of the project. (1) Special remedial reading classes were instituted. (2) All regular classes began to emphasize reading. (3) From one-1400, the counselor-pupil ratio was reduced to one-200. (4) Group guidance programs were instituted to convince pupils that they could finish high school and have a real future. (5) Parents were contacted, counseled, convinced of the worth of the project, and enlisted into its support. (6) A state employment counselor was assigned to the high school to help students plan careers. (7) Students were transported to commercially sponsored cultural activities--ballet, stage plays, museums, etc.

Cost of the project. Shaw<sup>14</sup> estimates that the special provisions of the Demonstration Guidance project cost about forty per cent extra per pupil in high school, or about two hundred and fifty dollars more than was currently being spent.

Results of the project. Students who participated in the original project showed an average individual IQ gain of thirteen points in three years.<sup>15</sup> For the first time in its history, students

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>15</sup>Schreiber, loc. cit.



students from Junior High School No. 43 ranked above forty-first place in a graduating class at George Washington. In the class of 1962 former students of Junior High No. 43 ranked two, four, and nine. In 1960 a group from the same school ranked one, four, and six.

In addition, according to Shaw, fifty per cent more students went to high school and three times the usual number started to college.

The Demonstration Guidance project was judged to be a success.

The Higher Horizons program represents an extension of that project. Higher Horizons, as of 1962, served about fifty-two elementary schools, thirteen junior high schools, and eleven high schools, encompassing all pupils in those schools from grades three through nine, without regard to their academic potential. Costs have been reduced to about thirty-five dollars per pupil over what was formerly spent.

#### Other New York City and State Projects

New York City has originated many other projects that are of particular note. A brief enumeration of a few of them will follow.<sup>16</sup>

"Special Services" schools. These schools receive special help in addition to normal services. They are considered to be eligible for such aid when the number of students receiving free lunches reaches a certain specified number. In addition, pupil IQ

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<sup>16</sup>The first five programs are described by Shaw, op. cit., pp. 95-96.



level is considered, as is the number of permanent tenure teachers who are assigned to the building.

The Early Identification and Prevention Program. Teams of counselors and psychologists try to find pupils who display potential emotional or behavioral problems and refer them to appropriate remedial classes. The specialists also try to identify gifted children.

Junior Guidance Classes. This is a program designed to handle emotionally disturbed children in special classes.<sup>17</sup>

Programs for Non-English-Speaking Children. This program was organized to help solve a special New York problem--the influx of Puerto-Rican migrants into the city. Special teachers and coordinators are assigned to schools that have a high enrollment of such children.

Career Guidance and Potential Dropouts. This is a special program designed for the potential dropout. Such a student receives special counseling and corrective reading instruction.

Project ABLE. This is a state program that provides about two hundred thousand dollars annually on a fifty-fifty basis to communities desiring to start programs similar to Higher Horizons. Project ABLE was duplicated in 1963 by the California State Legislature in that state.<sup>18</sup>

Hunter College. Vernon Halprecht of Hunter College originated

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<sup>17</sup>Originally a two year pilot program, no information was found concerning its present status.

<sup>18</sup>Bernard Kaplan, "Issues in Educating Culturally Disadvantaged," Phi Delta Kappan, XLV (November, 1963), p. 70.

a program to train volunteers in special techniques for education of the underprivileged.<sup>19</sup> Out of fifty-one volunteers, spread over five semesters, thirty-seven program participants decided to continue serving as slum teachers after being licensed.<sup>20</sup>

### Detroit Projects

Two projects have originated in Detroit which are of particular note: (1) The Detroit City Schools Reading Program; and (2) the 1959 Detroit program for alleviation of the school problems of the culturally disadvantaged.

The Detroit Reading Program. In 1962 the Detroit School System introduced a locally developed set of preprimers into city classrooms. The books were designed to appeal to the culturally disadvantaged child. Stories were short, and, in order to guarantee high interest levels, they were not resolved until the last page. Illustrations were of a multi-racial character.

Tests showed that these books were more successful than the old standard series with all children, but particularly so with the disadvantaged child.<sup>21</sup>

The Detroit Program for the Culturally Disadvantaged. The Detroit Program for the Culturally Disadvantaged was introduced in

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<sup>19</sup>Riessman, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>20</sup>Silberman, op. cit., p. 264.

<sup>21</sup>Gertrude Whipple, "Multicultural Primers for Today's Children," The Education Digest, XXIX, (February, 1964), pp. 26-29.

1959. The basic design of the program was as follows: (1) teachers were assisted in the classroom by being assigned to reduced size classes; (2) special consultants were added in the fields of Social Work, Sociology, and Psychology; (3) school-community agents were hired to interpret the schools to the community; (4) a trained case-worker was added to each school. Called a visiting teacher, she dealt with hard-to-handle children and their parents; (5) parents were involved in school activities through special adult job-upgrading courses;<sup>22</sup> (6) comprehensive after school and evening activities were set up to serve community needs--libraries, how-to lectures, etc.<sup>23</sup>

Cost of the project. New York City estimates that less than a ten per cent extra expenditure over normal costs was sufficient to finance this program.

The Norfolk State College Experiment in Training the Hard-Core Unemployed.

Organization of the project. The Norfolk Experiment in training people who had been considered to be unemployable, because of skill level and race, was organized as follows: (1) two hundred unemployed adults from the Norfolk area were selected; (2) one hundred were to be assigned to a control group to test for the "Hawthorne Effect;" (3) one hundred were to receive comprehensive training;

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<sup>22</sup>Schreiber, op. cit., p. 217-218.

<sup>23</sup>Shaw, op. cit., p. 93.

(4) the group selected for actual training was further subdivided in accordance with an elaborate plan of education. That plan called for some of the trainees to receive only technical training: others were to be given technical and academic instruction.

Cost of the project. The project cost about two hundred and eighty thousand dollars. It was in effect for one year and was partially financed by a grant from the Federal Government. A donation of about thirty thousand dollars was given by an anonymous donor to enable a living wage to be paid to trainees with large families-- original plans called for a twenty-five dollar weekly stipend for a family of twelve.

Results of the project. The program started in November, 1962. One year later ninety of the experimental group received a diploma and were placed on jobs. A check in September, 1964, revealed that fifty per cent of the control group, and one hundred per cent of the experimental group, was employed.<sup>24</sup>

#### Project BRIDGE.

Project BRIDGE is an experimental program developed at Queens College in North Carolina. The purpose is to train middle-class people to work with slum children.<sup>25</sup> Similar programs exist at

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<sup>24</sup> Lyman Brooks, "The Norfolk State College Experiment in Training the Hard-Core Unemployed," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI, (November, 1964), pp. 111-116.

<sup>25</sup> Leonard Kornborg, "Slum Children and New Teachers," The Journal of Negro Education, XXXII, (Winter, 1963), p. 74.

Hunter, Yeshiva, and Newark State Teachers.

The Ford Foundation Great Cities Grey Area Program

Frequently, a grant from the Ford Foundation has been the most important single factor that has enabled many American cities to initiate a school program for the culturally disadvantaged. In many cases such grants have provided pioneering experiments in education that could not have been conducted otherwise.

The Great Cities Improvement Program has financed such projects as: (1) a language arts program for the culturally disadvantaged in Washington, D. C.; (2) a school orientation center in Milwaukee; (3) a work-study program in St. Louis; (4) a study of the problem San Francisco experiences with multilingual school classes; and (5) a team-teaching project in Pittsburgh.<sup>26</sup>

Estimates are that by late 1965 the Ford Foundation will have provided about fifty-three million dollars to enable the cities participating in the Great Cities Improvement Program<sup>27</sup> to finance projects similar to Higher Horizons.<sup>28</sup>

The impact of the Ford Foundation on American education is

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<sup>26</sup>Dorsey Baynham, "The Great Cities Projects," NEA Journal, LII (April, 1963), pp. 17-20.

<sup>27</sup>Great Cities Improvement Projects--Baltimore, Buffalo, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C.

<sup>28</sup>Meyer Weinberg, "Civil Rights and the Schoolmen," Phi Delta Kappan, XLV, (May, 1964), pp. 371-376.

difficult to fully assess. But because of this organization a generation of Americans may well grow up to a better life than they would otherwise have had.

### CHAPTER III

#### INTRODUCTION TO SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, FOR THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Kansas City, Missouri, as the focal city of a metropolitan area of 1,039,493 people, and a city of some 475,539 population in its own right,<sup>1</sup> faces the same pattern of social change that has traditionally affected urban areas of the United States during the last fifty years.

In the eleven year period of from 1954 to 1965, following the Supreme Court decision of Brown vs the Board of Education of Topeka, a decision which ended legal school segregation on the basis of race in Kansas City, a tremendous change in the neighborhood pattern of the central city has taken place. During that momentous eleven year period the inner-city area of Kansas City has been in a constant state of transition from primarily a white working-class and middle-class population to primarily a lower-class Negro population. The process of change is dynamic--the boundaries between what are considered to be white and what are thought to be Negro areas are fluid. The change may be seen by viewing buildings that ten years ago contained retirement apartments for middle-class professional persons. Such buildings have now been subdivided, rented to Negro families, and allowed to deteriorate. In these areas the cycle has been

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, Selected Characteristics of the Population 1960  
Kansas City, Missouri, Commission on Human Relations,  
1964, Table 1, a.



completed from middle-class white apartment to lower-class Negro tenement. As a careful observer travels South on The Paseo from its primarily Negro Linwood Boulevard intersection, he will be able to witness the process beginning anew as this relatively recent Negro migration continues in his direction of travel.

Naturally, such a change on the part of a neighborhood has serious implications. Part of these implications become visible in the old neighborhood school system over a period of time. Kansas City, Missouri, inner-city high schools and grade schools have, over the past several years, seen a continued lowering of academic achievement levels and aspirations on the part of their respective student bodies.<sup>2</sup> This has occurred as a lower class intellectually impoverished group of people has filtered into their district.

Such a social change has proved in Kansas City to be distasteful to many of the faculty members of the affected schools. Such teachers and administrators may find it extremely difficult to work in co-operation with the newcomers. They begin to apply for transfer to other, newer schools--schools that conform more to their prejudices. Schools experiencing a transition in student body of the type under discussion frequently find that the only manner in which they are able to retain a faculty is to "freeze" teachers in their positions. As an alternative, their choices are to accept faculty members who would be even less desirable or every year to be faced

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<sup>2</sup>See Chapter IV, Section III.



with a faculty made up primarily of new, untried teachers.

The percentage of Negro students who are in attendance in the schools of Kansas City increases each year. The graduating class of 1964 numbered 3,253 students. Records are not completely accurate, for reasons which will be detailed later in this report, but indications are that approximately 825 students, or about twenty-five per cent of the total number of graduating seniors was Negro. Projection on the basis of the 1963 enrollment in Kansas City junior high and high schools indicated that a steadily increasing number of Negro students will graduate from high school and enter the labor market of the metropolitan area. Assuming that no dropouts or transfers-in will occur, which is highly unlikely, by 1968 an estimated 32.9 per cent of the high school graduating class will be Negro.<sup>3</sup>

But, considering the record of the past, it becomes obvious that all of the students of the class of 1968 will not be in school on graduation day. Many will quit at some time in the next few years. Unless some means or combination of devices is found that will help these students overcome the disadvantages under which they labor, Kansas City will not only be faced with the prospect of providing an ever increasing number of jobs and opportunities for a newly emergent labor market sector, it will be faced with the need to provide unparalleled amounts of money for welfare rolls and police protection

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<sup>3</sup> Report: Estimates of Racial Composition and Occupational Status of Kansas City Public High School Graduating Classes of 1956 and 1959, Kansas City, Commission on Human Relations, 1964, p. 2 and table III.

for the rest of its citizenry.

What are the particular disadvantages under which the young culturally disadvantaged members of the student body of Kansas City labor? Specifically:

1. The average Negro student in the Kansas City school system is at least two years retarded in reading ability as compared with white students.<sup>4</sup> This means that for many students, school will represent a continual series of negative experiences.
2. A high percentage of Negro youth in Kansas City comes from a one parent household with the father absent and the mother living and supporting her family on welfare payments.<sup>5</sup>
3. The median income level for Negro families within the corporate limits of Kansas City, is 4,001 dollars per year, as compared with 5,893 dollars for the population as a whole, including non-white.<sup>6</sup>
4. For the entire Kansas City Metropolitan Area, lest a

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<sup>4</sup>Mrs. Ann Johnson, Project Director for the Kansas City, Missouri, Special Scholarship Program, interview, June 22, 1965.

<sup>5</sup>Mr. Carl Thompson, Project Director for Operation Head Start at We Alone Elementary School, interview, June 24, 1965; it is not possible to obtain exact figures but Mr. Thompson put it at 60% for the immediate neighborhood of his school.

<sup>6</sup>Report: Selected Characteristics of the Population, 1960 Census, Kansas City, Commission on Human Relations, op. cit., tables 1 a and 1 b.

person be led into believing that this problem is peculiar to Kansas City, Missouri, alone, the unemployment rate for Negroes as opposed to white citizens is as follows: Negro male: 9.3 per cent; White male: 4.2 per cent, less than one-half the rate for non-white males.<sup>7</sup>

5. Generally, housing available to Negroes is sub-standard compared with housing that the white population can get. In addition, real-estate restrictions that are slow to change limit the Negro in his choice of area. Income restricts his ability to purchase a home to the 10,000 dollar to 12,000 dollar price range.<sup>8</sup>
6. Discrimination and segregation, particularly if he is a member of a family that has migrated from the South, coupled with his intimate knowledge of the facts detailed above, gained by painful experience, doubtless will combine to convince many students that they are incapable of finishing school or that the "cards are stacked against them" and they will drop out of school.
7. Lack of motivation to perform the work required of them by the school will cause some of the students either to drop out or do poorly.

How does Kansas City intend to help her young culturally

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

disadvantaged citizens overcome the twin handicaps of impoverished background, both experientially and intellectually, and poor achievement level? That is the subject of the balance of this report.

It should be kept in mind, as this report is read, that nearly all of the programs for the alleviation of cultural "deprivation" that are currently in operation in Kansas City are of an experimental nature and are subject to change following careful examination. In addition most of the programs are too new for a carefully conducted, objective analysis and evaluation.

## CHAPTER IV

### SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, FOR THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

#### Classification of Kansas City Remedial Programs

As a generalization, it may be said that Kansas City has designed its remedial programs to attack the problem of the relative academic disadvantages of Negro pupils on two levels:

1. Financial programs designed to enable young people of all races acquire the funds that they may need to stay in school--usually involving work for pay.
2. Academic programs that are designed to try to remedy some of the intellectual disadvantage that many students labor under. These programs are not necessarily directed exclusively at the Negro student. But in practice, because of the areas of the city in which such projects are activated, the Negro is the primary beneficiary.

It would also be well to note that the only projects that I am going to discuss in this report are projects that are sponsored by the School District of Kansas City, Missouri. I will not touch upon private projects except to mention at this time that there are many, ranging from programs that individual teachers sponsor, to large scale projects sponsored by churches.

## I. OPERATION HEAD START

Operation Head Start is a pre-school project that was initiated in Kansas City, Missouri, in June, 1965. The program is based upon research indicating that many student maladjustments in high school can be traced to a poor initial adjustment in the first grade.

The city-wide project is financed ninety per cent by the Federal Government with Kansas City furnishing ten per cent of the total cost. The financial aspect of the program is handled in the following manner. The Federal Government issues a project contract to a Human Resource Corporation that is organized in the participating city. The primary purpose of the Human Resource Corporation is to coordinate all poverty programs within its area of jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup> The corporation performs its function by issuing a sub-contract to approved agencies for specific projects. One major recipient of funds in the Kansas City area is the Kansas City Public School System. There is no other connection between the schools and the Human Resources Corporation.

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<sup>1</sup>Including those being conducted by parochial schools. A lawsuit is being pressed against the use of Federal Funds in Kansas City parochial schools at this writing. Until a decision is rendered, however, such schools are receiving money from the Human Resources Corporation to conduct projects similar to Operation Head Start.

The School District of Kansas City furnishes its ten per cent contribution to Operation Head Start by means of monetary valuation placed on the services of volunteers who are working with the program. Kansas City must make its financial contribution in this manner since it cannot legally use public funds for education on the pre-school level.<sup>2</sup>

Woodland Elementary School is a major participant in Kansas City's Operation Head Start project. It is of particular interest for two reasons: Woodland school is a feeder school for Manual Junior High and as such is a part of the Manual-Plus program. In addition, the Woodland faculty already has experience with an educational project similar to Operation Head Start.

Woodland is located within two blocks of a large public housing project occupied by economically disadvantaged persons who have been relocated as a result of the Federal Urban Renewal Program. About sixty per cent of the adults living in this housing project are on Welfare. Most family units are characterized by the fact that there is only one parent at home with the father absent. The number of children per family ranges from four through nine--the mother is usually a recipient of Aid to Dependent Children. Virtually all of the residents of this particular housing project are Negro.

In addition, Woodland Elementary serves a large inner-city slum

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<sup>2</sup>Statement by Mr. Carl Thompson, Principal of Woodland School and Director of Project Head Start, in a personal interview. Unless otherwise stated all information for this section was gained from Mr. Thompson.



area which is largely Negro.

Children who live in the Woodland neighborhood generally have an extremely poor self-image. By the time such a child is ready for the sixth or seventh grade he has been told so many times that it is bad to be Negro and that he does not have much ability that he finally begins to accept such ideas as fact.

Even parents, perhaps in an effort to control their children, often tell their offspring that they are bad, worthless, good for nothing. Frequently the teacher is guilty of reinforcing the child's poor self-image by intemperate criticism in front of other students. Sometimes the feeling is further reinforced by failure in the first or second grade.

Another difficulty that the child faces is that Kansas City Schools, like those of other areas, have traditionally offered curriculums designed for middle-class children.<sup>3</sup> Such curriculums tend to have no meaning for the lower class child.<sup>4</sup> All of the above facts have, in the past, combined to make the Woodland School District youngster a potential upper grade dropout by the time he is enrolled in the third grade.

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<sup>3</sup>Statement by Mr. Glenn Travis, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Public Schools, personal interview, June 25, 1965.

<sup>4</sup>This is because they assume the existence of certain skills, such as reading readiness and an ability to relate to others in a positive manner. The lower class child is typically deficient in these particulars.



### The Program in Operation

The teachers who were scheduled to be employed for Operation Head Start at Woodland Elementary School were sent to the University of Oklahoma for special training. The training courses lasted one week and were designed to help the teacher improve her approach to education for the culturally disadvantaged. Emphasis was placed on convincing teachers of the value of trying a variety of approaches to see what can be done to give enriching school experiences to slum children. A major idea of the training program was to see that the participating teachers realized the value of expressing positive attitudes toward their students. In addition, the teachers were made aware of the student's need for physical love--a touch, a hug, a pat on the head.

Upon completion of the Oklahoma University workshop the teachers returned to Kansas City. On June 21, 1965, Operation Head Start started to function.

Students attend classes at Woodland Elementary from nine o'clock in the morning until noon. A lunch is furnished as a part of the project and is served about eleven-thirty.

A major obstacle to desirable development that Woodland District children face in life is that, coming from a large family--often with indifferent parents--they must constantly compete for love and attention. Mr. Thompson, the Principal of Woodland School, has done his best to organize Operation Head Start classrooms to try to overcome this problem.

Fifteen students are assigned to each room. Academic instruction is furnished by a state certified teacher--mostly people who regularly teach at Woodland. In addition, every classroom has at least one volunteer worker who functions as a teacher aide. Most rooms also have been fortunate enough to secure the services of a senior high school girl from Neighborhood Youth Corps headquarters in Kansas City. The result is that teaching personnel and aides are available in each room in the ratio of about one older person for every four children. This means that a potentially great amount of personal attention is available to the child. And the teacher is free to give her full attention to instruction and the development of a positive relationship with the pupil.

The objectives of the Woodland Operation Head Start Program are three in number.

Number one on the list is to encourage and develop the language ability of participating children. Most youngsters living in the Woodland area have never used scissors and paste. They have never colored in a book or held a pencil. These children may not even know the names of such common objects as tables, lamps, pencils, crayons, books, or apples. They have had to compete for everything to the point where they possess absolutely no concept of the meaning of sharing.

At Woodland, much classroom emphasis is placed on handling and naming objects of all types. The need for positive relationships with others is stressed. It is hoped that by proceeding in this manner experiences will be provided that will enable the student to have a

better background for reading instruction that he will receive later in school.

A second objective of the Woodland Program is to try to change the student's already jaded self-image--to improve his outlook on life. At Woodland the approach to the child is always positive. The teacher makes a point of meeting the child at the door. She greets him warmly, using his name repeatedly: "Hello, John, I'm glad to see you. Come in and play with us, John." She tries to touch him if possible. It is hoped that this procedure will give the child a new sense of self-importance.

If a child engages in undesirable behavior in the classroom, he is never singled out for criticism. Instead, a substitute activity is offered: "John, wouldn't you rather come over here with me and help me straighten up these books?"

The teachers and administrators of Woodland School hope that through classroom techniques of the type detailed above the third objective may be reached. Object number three, and the primary one, is to prepare the child for Kindergarten. If this is properly done, the Kindergarten teacher will be able to begin her work at a point further along than has been possible in the past. More effective Kindergarten preparation for the first grade will then be possible.

It is hoped that through the means employed by Operation Head Start, groundwork may be prepared for success experiences in the primary grades and that such experiences will carry over in the form of improved attitudes and achievement levels. Woodland is trying to

establish the school as a pleasant place--a place of refuge from a harsh life.

### Conclusions

Summer, 1965, marks the first year of Operation Head Start in Kansas City. In a sense this first session is purely experimental. But Woodland teachers are not inexperienced in the program procedures that they are employing. At the beginning of the 1964-1965 school year, a similar program was tried at Woodland, financed by a one year grant from the Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations. Classes ran from eight-thirty until two-ten in the afternoon. Classroom techniques similar to those used in Operation Head Start were used in this earlier program.

No objective means of testing the results of this first program were developed, but Mr. Thompson feels that definite benefits were realized. Teachers stated that almost all participating pupils were more verbal by the end of the school year. All students overcame their fear of the new school experience. The pupils were able to name formerly unfamiliar objects, recognize colors, and express themselves better. All children became more responsive to the needs of others and more receptive to affection than they had been.

The Kindergarten teachers who will receive the pupils next year were also impressed by the results of this experiment. They expect the class that will enroll in the Woodland Kindergarten class of 1965-1966 to be a much more advanced group than former classes have been.

Mr. Thompson states that Woodland School is very careful to implant in the minds of parents that Operation Head Start is not a child-care program. It is always spoken of strictly as an educational program: a new part of the regular school service to the community.

Many problems arise when a project such as Operation Head Start is attempted. An eight week period is a very short time in which to accomplish project goals. This is especially true when it is considered that the student is only in school for three hours each day. Woodland has to try to reverse twenty-one hours of experience in a mere three.

Another problem is lack of room. About sixty students are currently enrolled in Operation Head Start at Woodland. Mr. Thompson estimates that twice that number would apply for a regular school session. In order to accommodate such a number and maintain the present class size of fifteen, Woodland would need eight additional rooms. That does not take into account the increased number of pre-school teachers<sup>5</sup> and volunteers that would be needed.

Advantages gained through Operation Head Start might well be negated if classroom size were not also reduced in the primary grades. Experienced teachers have indicated that in order to achieve optimum results, their classes should number no more than twenty-three pupils. Mr. Thompson says that this would require addition of four to eight rooms, over and above the pre-school requirements. Multiply Woodland's

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<sup>5</sup>About eighty for the entire inner-city area.

situation by twenty, the number of elementary schools in the inner-city area, and you can easily see the magnitude of the educational problem facing Kansas City, Missouri.

## II. THE LINCOLN-PLUS AND MANUAL-PLUS PROJECTS

In the early part of the 1961-1962 school year, The Education Study Club,<sup>6</sup> became concerned with the special problems of education in the inner-city area of Kansas City.

Preliminary study of the problem indicated to this group of men that a few projects, with the avowed purpose of lessening some of the academic difficulties faced by inner-city students, had already been initiated or proposed. But many members of the study club felt that current projects were too limited. The Central High School Reading Project, for example, was being tried only at Central High School. The proposed Special Scholarship Program was being designed to benefit only a small segment of the total inner-city school population. The Work-Study Program was a controversial project strictly limited in immediate applicability.

What was needed, it seemed to the leaders of The Education Study Club, was one specific program aimed at reduction of all of the school problems of the inner-city.

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<sup>6</sup>A Kansas City, Missouri, association of school principals and teachers.



Five school principals<sup>7</sup> presented the views of The Study Club to the Superintendent of schools. They obtained his permission to travel to St. Louis for study of the highly successful Banneker Project originated by Dr. Samuel Shepard.

Dr. Shepard is a St. Louis educator whose fame is now nationwide as a result of his original approach to solving the special school problems of the fifteen square-mile Banneker District in St. Louis, Missouri.<sup>8</sup>

The problems that Dr. Shepard had faced in St. Louis seemed to the members of The Education Study Club to be remarkably like the situation in the inner-city area of Kansas City, Missouri. The St. Louis Banneker District was mostly Negro. Almost all of its citizens, Negro or white, could be classified as culturally disadvantaged. The pupils of its schools were primarily Negro, as were their teachers.

The majority of the students of the Banneker District usually scored lower than other St. Louis students on IQ and Iowa Basic Skills tests. Only about ten and one-half per cent of six thousand children in the primary grades were reading to textbook level.

The teachers in the Banneker District had long ago adopted a condescending attitude toward their students. The parents seemed apathetic toward the problem of education for their children.

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<sup>7</sup>Among them Mr. Carl Thompson, Principal of Woodland School. Unless otherwise stated all information for this section was gained by personal interview from Mr. Thompson.

<sup>8</sup>For full details of the Shepard Banneker Project, see Paul Friggens, "Sam Shepard's Faith," The PTA Magazine, LVIII, (March, 1964), pp. 18-20.



The Kansas City principals wanted to view first hand the results of Dr. Shepard's approach of total community participation in solving some of the problems of the Banneker District Schools. They wanted to determine if similar methods could be used to try to help students in Kansas City.

On their return to Kansas City, the Education Study Club principals presented a comprehensive report on the Banneker Project to the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. James Hazlett. The first concrete result of their report was permission to try such a project in Kansas City.

Research undertaken prior to initiation of the Lincoln-Plus Project indicated that the majority of the upper grade students in the inner-city area, served by Lincoln Jr. High and High School, were at least two years retarded in reading ability, as compared to other Kansas City students. In addition, most pupils in this area of Kansas City were from homes where study areas were unavailable. Many students were coming to school insufficiently fed and clothed. School attendance in the Lincoln District was very low.

#### The Program in Operation

Taking advantage of information gained in St. Louis, the originators of Lincoln-Plus decided to organize their project in the following manner. One grade school reading consultant was added to the school staff to work with the elementary teachers in schools whose students would ultimately attend Lincoln Junior High. Other reading specialists

were added to Lincoln District school faculties where possible. They were to work one-half day with students, spending about forty-five minutes with groups of no more than ten people. Afternoons were to be spent with classroom teachers, advising them of the newest methods of teaching reading.

An attendance officer was also assigned to this area. His function was supposed to be to try to increase school attendance by attempting to enlist the parents in the project. Proceeding on the supposition that inner city parents want education for their children, the attendance officer was to try to persuade them to see that their children received some encouragement from home. The parents were also asked to see that their children were not allowed to stay home for any reason except illness.

Volunteers were brought into the classroom in order to free the teacher for more personal contact with the pupils. The duties of some volunteers were more than mere supervision. One group of teacher aides was used in the first grade to take groups of three and four students aside to read to them and listen to their reading. This was considered to be a very important item in motivating first year reading students since very few of them had ever experienced such activity at home. Another group of Volunteers worked with Great Books Clubs.

Study centers were set up in Lincoln Junior and Lincoln High Schools. These centers were to be open for about forty-five minutes after school. A teacher was to be paid to stay in order to supervise the study sessions and help with homework. College students and

advanced high school pupils of the Kansas City area volunteered to tutor any students who desired this service.

The Kansas City Star was asked for help with the project. The Star agreed to furnish daily newspapers to Lincoln High School for use in upper grade classes.

The last area of concentration that was projected for the Lincoln-Plus Program was to try to change the attitude of the teachers toward their students. This was to be attempted through the medium of in-service training sessions devoted to an explanation of the problem and suggested solutions. In addition to acquiring better attitudes toward their students, it was hoped that these discussion sessions could persuade Seventh and Eighth grade teachers to teach reading as a regular part of their courses.

### Conclusions

The Lincoln-Plus Project was initiated at the start of the 1963-1964 school year. Objective measurements of program success are not yet available. But the teachers and administrators of the Lincoln High School District are so convinced that real progress has been made that a similar project was initiated in the Manual High School District at the beginning of the 1964 school year. Manual High School's problems are virtually identical with those of Lincoln.

School attendance in the Lincoln High School District has shown improvement since the beginning of this project. The problem of ill-fed students, however, was not resolved through the home. Instead,

a fund established through donations of school personnel, and other interested individuals, known as the Breakfast Boosters Club, is used to furnish breakfast to elementary school pupils who cannot get fed at home.

It appears to me that the primary advantages of the Manual and Lincoln-Plus projects are twofold. Such projects focus attention on the importance of student and parental attitude to future academic achievement. Such projects may also demonstrate the importance of a solid elementary education to the problem of overcoming student maladjustment in the upper grades.

### III. THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REMEDIAL READING PROJECT

In 1959, when Mr. Jim Boyd became the principal of Central High School, the Central School District was involved in the process of transition from a primarily white area to a Negro neighborhood.<sup>9</sup>

The change was definitely reflected at Central High. For the first time in its history Central High School was experiencing a student body of low academic achievement level. Discipline problems of a gravity and extent never before known at Central were being brought to the attention of school authorities. Where formerly Central High had been one of the most desirable assignments in Kansas City, the the Board of Education now found that many teachers were requesting transfer from that school to other districts. Many teachers were

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<sup>9</sup>Statement of Mr. Jim Boyd, Principal of Central High School, in an interview of June 23, 1965. Unless otherwise stated, all information for this section was gained from Mr. Boyd.

resigning their positions in favor of employment in other communities. Reports from Central showed, over a period of time, pronounced and continual increase in student absenteeism.

The School District of Kansas City viewed the changed situation at Central High with alarm. It was clear that a solution to what was happening at Central would have to be found, because there was no guarantee that what was occurring there could be confined to the Central District. Kansas City had long recognized that Negro pupils did not seem to adjust to school as well as white students. Negro schools had always displayed lower academic standards than white schools; absenteeism had always been high among Negro children. But that problem, unfortunate though it might be, had always been isolated in a relatively small section of the city--affecting a minority of the citizens. But new mobility of the Negro population made it clear to the most tradition-minded educator in the system that the problem of the minority had become the problem of the majority. Something had to be done at Central or the problem might spread.

Some employees of the Kansas City School System felt that the situation at Central was due to a basic inborn inferiority of Negro pupils as compared to white pupils. To these people, the difference in achievement levels and behavior became merely a function of the assumed difference between Negro and white. For such persons, no further explanation of the problem was necessary; all that would need to be done to minimize the problem would be to lower academic levels and adapt special instruction methods. But the administration and

staff of Central High School was convinced that a solution to the problem did not lie in lowering the quality of the curriculum to match low achievement levels.

Many Central High teachers were convinced that a remedial reading course would help the situation and render unnecessary any consideration of lowering academic standards. To Mr. Boyd, a solution could only be found by positive determination of the reasons for the low achievement levels of Negro students and adopting any corrective measures that might be indicated.

Accordingly, an examination of the cumulative records of the 1960 Freshman class of Central High School was initiated. The research began with a search through the Stanford-Binet<sup>10</sup> scores that had been recorded for these people when they were in Kindergarten.<sup>11</sup> A graph drawn with the aid of the data gained by this search showed three things: (1) a nearly normal, bell shaped curve was established. This indicated that at the time the tests were administered the Central High Freshman class had compared favorable with other students of their age

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<sup>10</sup>The Stanford-Binet, Terman revision, is an individual intelligence test ranging from the two year level through adult. The basic concept is that as a child matures he can do more complex work. Therefore, questions graduate from simple to complex.

<sup>11</sup>The practice of administering Stanford-Binet tests to Kansas City students in Kindergarten and first grade has been temporarily discontinued. This was done in order to free school psychologists for research in the area of prevention of academic failure, according to a statement of Mr. Glenn Travis, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent of Schools, in a personal interview.



group, in Kansas City, regardless of race. (2) Something had happened in the years following administration of this test to place the Central students at a relative disadvantage as compared with other Kansas City students. (3) The students were probably not migrants from other areas of the country. Since most of the students had cumulative records dating back to the first grade, it was obvious that these were Kansas City children. Therefore, other school systems could not be blamed for the problem.

Further evaluation of the cumulative records of the Central High School students revealed that at the fifth grade level an Otis test<sup>12</sup> had been administered to them. A curve drawn on the basis of overall results from the Otis test showed that as a group the Central students had lost some ground in comparison with other Kansas City pupils. But the curve was still nearly normal so there was really no answer here. Whatever had happened to the students had not adequately demonstrated itself by the fifth grade.

Part of the answer was finally found through the results of a Stanford Achievement Test<sup>13</sup> that had been administered during the eighth grade. That test indicated that most of the students were clearly functioning below their grade level. Language Arts, Arithmetic, and

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<sup>12</sup>The Otis Test is a group IQ test.

<sup>13</sup>The Stanford Achievement test is administered in Kansas City schools in April. The object is to see at what grade level the students are functioning; based on word and paragraph meaning, spelling, math, and language usage.



Reading sections of the test showed very low overall results.<sup>14</sup> On the Language Arts category of this test, it was found that about twenty per cent of the students were operating two and one-half to three grades below the eighth month, eighth grade level.

Several Central High School teachers felt that they had finally isolated data that seemed to support their theory that instruction in reading might help to correct some of the academic problems of Central High School pupils.

The problem now, as far as these teachers were concerned, was no longer what to do to help solve the problem: the problem was how to do it. Simple logic told these people that if the lower scoring half of the group could be helped by remedial reading classes, their higher scoring classmates would be just as much in need of such a course. One-half of the students had scored below the seventh grade level on the Stanford Achievement test. That meant that a large number of the half that had scored above the seventh grade level were still below the city average.

It became apparent that if a standard remedial reading course were to be added to the curriculum, thirty additional special teachers would be needed by Central High School alone. The need for a special solution to the problem of Central High was obvious.

Two English teachers, Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Shriver, decided to

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<sup>14</sup>To be fair, it should be noted that a few students scored as high as twelfth grade levels on this test. But the median score was the grade seven level.

try to design such a program in collaboration with Mr. Boyd.

#### The Program in Operation

The designers of the Central High School Remedial Reading program soon discovered that the most severe limiting factor to an untried project was one of finances. It was clear to these people that any program they might organize would have to be capable of execution with a minimum of monetary outlay. Existing classrooms would have to be used, no additional teaching personnel could be hired, and the program would have to be of such a nature that it could be fitted into the present school schedule.

A check of the Central High School student files showed that the one course most pupils had in common was English. The decision was made to make the remedial reading program a part of the regular English course.

The Central High School records also showed that a total of forty-two English classes were offered in the Central High curriculum. The average number of students reached by each class was thirty. Fortunately, the two English teachers who were planning the program had participated in college courses designed to train teachers in the field of remedial reading. Therefore, full-time responsibilities as remedial reading teachers were assigned to Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Shriver. Both teachers were then assigned seven remedial reading classes per day. This basic organization meant that if the time period allotted to the remedial reading course were to be set at five weeks, between twelve-

hundred and thirteen-hundred students could be trained each year. A secondary advantage could be gained from such organization due to the fact that Central High School students are required to take more than one English course. If the program should prove successful and be continued, each pupil would be able to benefit from more than one exposure to the special training.

With these and other considerations in mind Mr. Boyd made the necessary arrangements to put the basic program that I have described into effect. It began in September of the 1961-1962 school year, following the general plans of procedure detailed below.

The regular English instructor is required to be present during all remedial reading classes. It is hoped that the regular teacher will be able to pick up techniques and attitudes that will inspire him to continue some remedial work when the students return to their normal schedule.

The first remedial reading session that the students attend is devoted to the administration of reading tests to determine actual class ability level. Following this, each student is privately counseled and told exactly where his scores place him with reference to where he should be, as compared with national norms.

At the second class meeting an overhead projector is used to explain the standing of the class as a whole. The program and its goals are explained with the hope that a certain amount of self-motivation for improvement will result.

During subsequent class sessions the work begins in earnest.

In order to try to improve reading speed, a control reader is utilized.<sup>15</sup> Listening and reading tapes and SRA<sup>16</sup> Reading Labs are also used.

The reading teacher determines what is needed at any given time and directs class progress.

### Conclusions

Many studies are presently being conducted to try to determine the long term effectiveness of the Central High School Remedial Reading Project. No studies are yet complete enough for formation of a definite conclusion. Immediate results have, however, been so encouraging that the Board of Education of Kansas City is prepared to grant the necessary funds for construction of a reading laboratory at Central High. The remedial instructors have, until now, had to make do with existing equipment. They hope that the new reading laboratory, with the modern equipment that it contains will free them from classroom routine and enable them to devote more time to individual instruction and counseling.

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<sup>15</sup>A control reader is a film strip projector utilizing a scanning device which moves from left to right, at a controlled rate. This exposes part of a line of a story with each movement. The rate of movement is increased over a period of time in order to develop faster reading speed and better comprehension.

<sup>16</sup>Science Research Associates. The Reading Lab is a series of reading exercises which are rated according to level of difficulty.

Here are some of the results that convinced the School District of Kansas City of the worth of the Central project. The information is based on the Iowa Silent Reading Test which was administered at the beginning and end of each group project. All data is compiled from averages.

TABLE I

FIRST YEAR SCORES OF CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF KANSAS CITY,  
MISSOURI, OF THE IOWA SILENT READING TEST

First Year	First Score	Final Score
Median	18th percentile	36th percentile
Q3	37th percentile	65th percentile
Q1	5th percentile	14th percentile

It is estimated that during this first year the students were raised, on the average, one full year in reading ability during each five week period.

TABLE II

SECOND YEAR SCORES OF CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF KANSAS CITY,  
MISSOURI, OF THE IOWA SILENT READING TEST

Second Year	First Score	Final Score
Median	19th percentile	32nd percentile
Q3	48th percentile	65th percentile
Q1	5th percentile	12th percentile

Gains were not quite so spectacular this year. But they were considered good enough to demonstrate that the experimental results of the first year were not a result of chance.

## IV. THE KANSAS CITY WORK-STUDY PROGRAM

The Work-Study program of Kansas City, Missouri, should not be confused with the work-study program provided for under the Federal Economic Opportunities Act.<sup>17</sup> Unlike the Federal plan, the Kansas City program was not specifically designed to alleviate conditions which are normally attendant upon the social condition characterized in this report as constituting social disadvantage.<sup>18</sup> The fact that, in practice, the Kansas City plan has been directed toward such a goal is coincidence.

In 1959 the Kansas City School District decided that a formal program for the purpose of reducing the incidence of juvenile delinquency among children of school age ought to be designed.

In accordance with that decision a committee was formed, officially headed by the Superintendent of Public Schools, Mr. James A. Hazlett.

After a period of research and study of the problem of juvenile delinquency, the following conclusions were formed:

1. Boys want to grow up and enjoy the rewards of manhood.

Those rewards are seen to be: a steady job, good pay,

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<sup>17</sup>For an explanation of the Federal Economic Opportunities Act, see Section VI of this report: The Neighborhood Youth Corps.

<sup>18</sup>Mr. Ralph Berry, Project Director of the Kansas City Work-Study Program, interview, June 21, 1965. Unless otherwise stated, all information in this section was gained from Mr. Berry.



car, girl friends, etc. Two visible patterns of success are observed:

- A. progress through high school.
  - B. progress through high school and college.
2. Some boys are content to wait for the advantages of adulthood while taking the slow path toward achievement of their goals; the path through high school and college. Lower-class boys are less willing to wait for the process of maturity and education to help them earn what they desire; they tend to want a job and adult status as early as possible.
  3. About fifteen per cent of all boys experience difficulty in maturing through the channel offered by the school. Such boys tend to be below average in intelligence, to come from lower-class homes, and to have a history of failure and conflict within a school situation.
  4. For such a boy, the normal school situation may become intolerable. Yet, normally, no alternative manner of satisfying his needs exists. If the youth makes the decision to drop out of school he may not be able to find a steady job, or if he does, the chances are that he will not be able to hold it. Two major patterns of behavior become evident.
    - A. The boy secures a job and immediately acquires as many symbols of manly success as possible:

cars, jewelry, etc.

- B. Failing that, he will seek certain gratifications that seem to make his failure to grow up more tolerable: fighting, drinking, sexual promiscuity, and the "easy" profits of stealing. These activities fill the gap of adolescence until the boys become mature enough to make some sort of adult adjustment.<sup>19</sup>

From the data gathered during the course of its study, the School District Committee on Juvenile Delinquency formulated the following hypothesis. The assumption was that boys vulnerable to delinquency would become less so if they could be given systematic work experience commencing at about the seventh grade level and continued until they should reach the age of about seventeen or eighteen. It was also theorized that if such experiences were to be sponsored by the schools as part of an educational program, boys who participated in the project would be less likely to become school dropouts.

In order to test this theory, it was decided to set up an experiment based on the research of Dr. Robert J. Havighurst, Professor of Education at the University of Chicago. Accordingly, Dr. Havighurst was contacted and he agreed to help organize a work-study program in Kansas City and to serve on a steering committee for the project.

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<sup>19</sup>A Work-Study Program To Reduce Juvenile Delinquency, Kansas City, Board of Education, 1960, p. 17.

Fortunately, some research on the problem of identifying boys who displayed the anti-social tendencies which were commonly identified with youth who are prone to commit delinquent acts had already been begun by the Mental Health Foundation of Greater Kansas City. The Mental Health Foundation was utilizing procedures which had been worked out by an earlier project, reported by Professor Havinghurst, known as the Quincy Youth Development Study.<sup>20</sup> In addition to the procedures that had been developed in the Quincy Project, it was decided that for the purposes of the Kansas City Program, identification of the potential delinquent would be made on the basis of classroom teacher evaluation, the pupil's cumulative record, existing intelligence tests, and administrator recommendation. After tentative identification of the potential dropout had been made, the Delinquency Committee planned to verify their findings through the medium of a sociometric test designed to give a score on Aggressive Maladjustment, Withdrawn Maladjustment, and Social Leadership.<sup>21</sup>

#### The Program in Operation

It was decided that the experimental project would be organized in the following manner. After the means of objective identification of the potential delinquent were decided upon, a test and a control group, each group to be fifty per cent Negro and fifty per cent white,

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<sup>20</sup> A Work-Study Program to Reduce Juvenile Delinquency,  
op. cit., p. 4

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

was to be assembled following the acquisition of parental permission on the eighth grade level beginning in 1961. Control boys were not to be made aware of the fact that they were a part of an experiment. In consideration of that fact, their names are known only to the program researcher. In 1962, in order to compensate for any errors in project design that might become apparent by that time and to provide further control, a second group was to be assembled. This control group was to be as nearly identical to the first group as possible. The experimental group was to consist of about two-hundred boys. The control group was to be set up with an additional two-hundred boys, as closely matched to the first group as possible. A second control group would consist of an additional thirty boys whose parents might refuse permission for participation in the experiment.

The Work-Study project was to consist of three phases.

Phase I: This phase was designed to be carried on in two parts. During the first half of a school day, boys, aged thirteen to fifteen were to perform socially useful work, such as, landscaping parks, refinishing school furniture, filling Civil Defense water cans, and so forth, under the supervision of an employment supervisor. During the second half of the day, the boys were to participate in an academic program geared to the

general group ability.<sup>22</sup> The object of "Phase I" was to accustom the children to supervision and to productive work--while at the same time guaranteeing a certain minimum standard of formal education.

Phase II: After successful completion of Phase I, boys aged fifteen to seventeen were to be placed on a part-time job, being supervised by an employment supervisor and, naturally, the employer. The participating youth was to continue the academic program for half of each day. Since the boys would, during this phase of the program, reach the age of sixteen, when they could legally drop out of school, every effort was to be made to encourage them to remain in school. And any boy who desired to do so was to be allowed to leave the program to return to a regular academic high school program so that he could earn a diploma.<sup>23</sup> The object of Phase II was to give the youth actual employment experiences, yet to keep him close to the school for counseling, guidance, and

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p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> A Work-Study Program to Reduce Juvenile Delinquency, op. cit.,

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

possible future placement.

Phase III: Following successful completion of Phase II, boys aged sixteen to eighteen were to be placed on a full-time job. It was hoped that by this time, the boy would have been made ready for such a step, that he would be better able than the control group to function in such a situation, and that some of his academic disadvantages would be lessened. Following evaluation, usually at about age eighteen, the boys participating in the program at the Phase III level were to be issued a certificate of completion, and, except for occasional follow-ups, to be terminated from the program.<sup>24</sup> During all three phases, the program participants were to be paid for their labor.

The experiment was supposed to have a duration of six years per group. A total of seven years would be needed to allow both groups of boys to finish.

Financing for the Work-Study project was arranged for in the following manner: it was decided that a total of 650,000 dollars apread over a seven year period would be needed. The Kansas City Public School System agreed to furnish 252,780 dollars of the necessary amount;

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

the Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations was persuaded to contribute 75,000 dollars; a Ford Foundation grant of 323,000 dollars was to comprise the balance.

### Conclusions

Final evaluation of this program must wait until after the 1967 date of official termination. Objective data will probably not be compiled and released until 1968. But, on the basis of two progress reports, issued in 1962 and 1964, combined with some observations from people closely associated with the Work-Study program, it is possible to see some of the strengths and weaknesses of the project and, perhaps, reach some tentative conclusions.

The professional persons participating in the Work-Study program have experienced a great deal of difficulty with one element of the program that was perhaps not adequately taken into consideration during the planning period: the parents of the boys involved. Little difficulty in obtaining permission for offspring to participate in the program was experienced with Negro parents. But it was almost impossible to persuade Negro parents to fully participate in the program themselves by praising their children when they did well in school, or by supervising the children in order to be certain that they made it to work or to school on time. By way of contrast, considerable difficulty was experienced by the Work-Study program staff in convincing white parents to allow their children to participate in the program. Nor did white parents take a much greater interest in the progress of their students



than did Negro parents. It would seem here that perhaps participation in a program of this type, especially a new and relatively unpublicized program, constitutes a threat of social stigma to white families, whereas it does not do so to Negro families.

Obtaining employment for the students who were finally admitted to the program proved to be a formidable task. Businessmen were difficult to convince that boys participating in a project of this type, particularly considering the reasons why they were in the program, could be trusted. The most frequent excuse given for not hiring boys was that they were considered to be too young to have any responsibility. Another prevalent reason given for not hiring a boy was that business was too bad to allow the addition of another employee.<sup>25</sup> Other factors that contributed to the initial negative attitude of many Kansas City businessmen toward the Work-Study program were state restrictions on hours that children under eighteen years of age are allowed to work each day and restrictions on the type of labor that minors may perform.<sup>26</sup> In addition, biases toward employment of Negro youth were found to exist, even among Negro businessmen.

Happily, the employment situation has eased somewhat. Publicity and continued efforts of the part of the program employment coordinators have combined to reassure prospective employers that the Work-Study project is worthwhile. The addition of a large restaurant chain to the

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<sup>25</sup>Progress Report Number Three, Work-Study Program, Kansas City, Board of Education, 1964, p. 25.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., Table XVI, p. 23.

number of work-study employers has helped the program considerably. Particularly in the placement of Negro boys.

During the initial period of attempting to obtain employment agreements from a sufficient number of businessmen, many boys grew restive. Those who were ready to enter Phase II of the program began to doubt that the employment they had been promised would materialize. Some became angry at the delay, and it was feared by the program staff that a large number of students would quit. Fortunately, the employment situation eased in time to prevent such an eventuality.

A great deal of difficulty is still being faced by the program, however, with the problem of meaningful placement of boys who are chronologically ready for Phase III. Several boys have had a succession of job failures that precludes full-time placement of them. At the present time, there is not a sizeable number of boys ready for this, the final step of the program, most of the boys are now in Phase III.

Some of the part-time jobs that the boys have been placed in do offer potential for future full-time employment. Some of the boys have positions that may lead to advancement within the firm with which they are associated.

About forty-eight of the boys are trainees in such diverse fields as mechanical trades, food handling jobs, florist's helper, and shoe repair. These boys should experience little difficulty with gaining full-time employment. In fact, many have been told that their present employers will be willing to advance them to full-time status at the proper time. For these boys the program has definitely been a

success.

The men responsible for the continuation of the Work-Study project feel that the participating boys have benefitted in large measure from the continuous counseling that has been a part of the program. Particularly beneficial has been the counseling and other aids to readjustment that have been available when boys were fired or failed in their first jobs. Personal contact with the employers has helped the employment coordinators to give realistic information to the boys concerning what they must do in order to improve their chances on the next job. Many boys have succeeded on their second or third job, with the aid of such counseling, where otherwise they might have faced continued failure.<sup>27</sup>

The dropout rate for experimental boys as compared to control boys presents a very interesting and encouraging contrast. Comparing the 1961 class experimental group (X-1) with the 1961 control group (C-1) one finds that for X-1 group the dropout rate by 1964 was twenty per cent--the dropout rate for the C-1 group was twenty-seven per cent.<sup>28</sup> But such a comparison without qualification may be misleading. West Junior High School is in a special category since there is no senior high school in that area and the expected adjustment to education in the West Junior area is termination at the ninth or tenth

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., Table V, p. 7.

grade.<sup>29</sup> Students from West Junior comprise forty per cent of the total X-1 dropouts. Elimination of West from consideration in this comparison, then, results in an extremely interesting discovery. The proportion of dropouts for X-1 is reduced to thirteen per cent while C-1 remains at twenty-seven per cent. The figures for the second year program display a similar situation for X-2 as compared to C-2. The dropout rate as of 1964 for X-2 was seven per cent. The C-2 dropout rate was eleven per cent; both figures include West Junior.<sup>30</sup>

There is no escaping the conclusion that boys who are participating in the Work-Study program have a lower dropout rate than the control group. Since both groups were closely matched in attitude and both groups were comprised of potential dropouts, it seems fair to ascribe the lower dropout rate of the experimental group to the Work-Study program.

The major hypothesis that was to be tested when this program was set up, was the theory that juvenile delinquency would be reduced if boys inclined to this type of life-adjustment could be provided systematic

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<sup>29</sup>Generally, this area is mixed: Mexican, Negro, and poor white. Some insight into the educational problem that this area of town faces may be gained by a statement that Mrs. Ann Johnson made when she was being interviewed concerning the Special Scholarship Program. She said, "The administration and counselors do not encourage Mexican children to go on to high school. They explain this by saying that all Mexican children want to do is to quit school and get married: so why bother?"

<sup>30</sup>Progress Report Number Three, Work-Study Program, op. cit., Table IV and Table V, pp. 7-8.

work experience over a five to six year period of time. Such a hypothesis cannot be adequately tested until the conclusion of the program. But statistical information that was compiled in 1964 is not encouraging. Figures indicate that during the first two and one-half years of the Work-Study program, police contacts with the experimental group as a whole have not been reduced. As a matter of fact, for two schools--West Junior High School and Lincoln High School--the experimental groups show a marked increase over the control groups in frequency of police contacts: sixty-six per cent as compared to forty-two per cent, and sixty-one per cent as compared to thirty per cent, respectively.<sup>31</sup>

Attitudes are, at best, difficult to measure. But if one were to draw a conclusion on the basis of interviews with Mr. Ralph Berry, and other persons connected with the Kansas City, Missouri, Work-Study program, it would have to be said that everyone was found to be somewhat less than pleased with the results of that program to date.

A word, a gesture, a look all combine to make a person feel that confidence is lacking in the overall effectiveness of the Work-Study program.

To be fair, it must be recognized that the project has had some successes. A few students, especially Negro students, have been given work experience that they might otherwise have been denied. Other students have been allowed to gain an insight into themselves and into

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., Table VII, p. 12.

the realities of an employment situation that they might never have been able to realize had it not been for their participation in this program.

The Kansas City Work-Study program has not always been able to operate in the smooth manner that was envisioned for it. But, if nothing else comes of this project, if it is abandoned totally<sup>32</sup> it may be said that the program was at least a start. The information and skills that have been gained will be invaluable to future and present projects, specifically, the Double E and Youth Corps. For that reason alone, perhaps, it may also be said that the expenditure of time, effort, and money, was worthwhile.

#### V. OPERATION SALVAGE - THE DOUBLE E PROGRAM

In 1962 representatives of the Kansas City Rotary Club approached Mr. James Hazlett, Superintendent of Kansas City Schools, with a proposal. Rotary wanted to sponsor a program designed to try to furnish employment for some of the more than thirteen-hundred school dropouts that Kansas City experiences each year.

The proposed project was to be based on the successful Chicago Carson Pirie Scott and Company Double E<sup>33</sup> program. That program was then in its second successful year and was thought to be a model

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<sup>32</sup>The person who indicated to this writer that the program might be abandoned is in a very sensitive position of employment with the Kansas City Board of Education. The writer has been asked not to divulge the name or title of the person, and he will respect their wishes.

<sup>33</sup>Employment and education.



example of cooperation between private business and a school system for the purpose of solving a community problem. Indications in 1962 were that the Pirie Scott program had been able to achieve success in raising employability levels for people who had been considered to be of marginal value for the purposes of any employer.

The basic idea behind the Kansas City proposal was to try to initiate a program that would offer educational and job training help to school dropouts. The theory was that cooperation between private business and the School District of Kansas City could accomplish three things: (1) it would provide otherwise unattainable training for dropout students; (2) the gap from training to actual employment would be bridged; (3) the dropout would be stimulated toward accepting the value of further education.<sup>34</sup>

The Rotary Club approached the Superintendent of Schools at a very favorable time. In 1962 the School District was involved in beginning various experiments designed to accomplish some of the very ends that the Double E proposal was supposed to effect. Mindful of the difficulties that had been encountered in achieving adequate cooperation between business and the School District on such projects in the past,<sup>35</sup> Mr. Hazlett committed the Kansas City School System to the proposed Rotary Club project.

The basic Rotary Club proposal consisted of two parts:

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<sup>34</sup>Double E Program, Rotary Club-Board of Education Project, Kansas City, Board of Education, 1963, p. 2

<sup>35</sup>See the section of this chapter concerning the Kansas City Work-Study Program.



(1) Cooperating Rotary Club members were to furnish employment for selected dropout students; (2) the School District was to furnish special school facilities and courses for students enrolled in the program. The school-connected portion of the program was to be financed by the Board of Education.

#### The Program in Operation

The Kansas City Double E program was designated Operation Salvage. It began in October, 1963, with an enrollment of thirty. Mr. Donald E. Tira, a school district employee, was selected as project coordinator. Two basement classrooms located in Franklin Elementary School were made available to him. They were to serve both as project headquarters and as classrooms.

Students who participated in the first years program were screened, prior to acceptance, by Kansas City School System placement counselors. Only two criteria were used for selection: students were to be between sixteen and twenty-one years old; they must show some potential for success.<sup>36</sup>

The first stage of the project was a three week training program aimed at preparing the student for employment. The participants were trained in such areas as interview behavior, how to complete application blanks, the importance of good grooming, legible penmanship,

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<sup>36</sup>Statement by Mr. Donald E. Tira, in an interview on June 25, 1965. Unless otherwise stated all information for this section was gained from Mr. Tira.

and the need for following directions.

During stage two the students were actually placed on jobs. Each job was made to serve two students in the following manner: the students were divided into two groups, and an alternating schedule was established which allowed one group to work while the other group attended classes at Franklin. Under this arrangement, each group would work three days and attend school for two. Wednesdays were set aside to allow the coordinator to visit students and their supervisors in order to make on-the-job evaluations of their progress. Each employer was supposed to arrange for one of his employees to become a "big brother" or "big sister" to the Double E student. This arrangement was supposed to give the student a certain feeling of security, and guarantee that he received a great deal of personal attention while learning his job.

Jobs that the students received were in such areas as stock handling, office work, theater ushers, bus boys, and gift wrapping. Original participating firms were: Hallmark Cards, Old American Insurance, Adlers, Emery-Bird-Thayer, Muehlebach Hotel, Durwood Theaters, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and Gilbert's Restaurants.<sup>37</sup>

Classroom work had no reference to grade level. Rather, an attempt was made to gear it to individual needs. Such subjects as

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<sup>37</sup>Double E Program, Rotary Club-Board of Education Project,  
op. cit. p. 4.

typing, reading,<sup>38</sup> basic arithmetic, and personal problems were taught by Mr. Tira and volunteer teachers.<sup>39</sup> No high school credit was offered for this work. But Mr. Tira is currently trying to persuade the Kansas City School System to grant elective credit for completed course-work.

At no time was pressure applied on Double E participants to return to school. One of the basic assumptions of the program had been that these former pupils had left school for good. In view of that fact, all that Project Salvage could hope to accomplish, would be to try to give some constructive guidance and purpose to the students lives. However, several of the participants did return to day school on a full-time basis. In addition, a number of students expressed their intention to attend evening classes.

### Conclusions

One of the weaknesses of the Kansas City Double E program is that it is woefully understaffed. The only full-time person assigned to the program is Mr. Tira. During the first year of operation he was able to utilize the services of a part-time secretary for two days per week. But during the 1964-1965 school year, this aid was not available.

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<sup>38</sup>Utilizing the same SPA Reading Lab that was used by the Central Remedial Reading Project.

<sup>39</sup>Dr. Marcus, of the University of Missouri at Kansas City, and his practicum class in education were a big help here. During the first semester of the 1964-1965 school year four Education students helped with Double E classroom work. During the second semester, seven college students helped with the course work.

The only other persons who work with Double E are volunteers and Rotary Club members who employ students.

Naturally, such a situation makes an adequate follow-up on former students an impossible task. However, a telephone survey, taken in September, 1964, indicated to Mr. Tira that out of twenty-six full-time placements that had resulted from the first years program, fifteen were still employed and doing well--a total of fifty-eight per cent. Three students had joined the armed services and several had returned to school. The only information presently available concerning the participants in the 1964-1965 Double E program is that of forty-five original participants, forty-three were employed on a part-time or full-time basis as of May, 1965.<sup>40</sup>

Another shortcoming of Double E is that the project only functions during the months that regular school classes are in session. The nature of the program demands, it seems to me, full-time professional supervision. Under the present arrangement the participating students are abandoned by the project for three months out of the year. The only counsel that they receive during this time must come from their employers. Such help may be adequate for problems that deal with the job. But it may not be of much help for personal problems.

The Kansas City School Board feels that The Double E Project

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<sup>40</sup> Donald N. Tira, "Rotary-Board of Education Double E Program: School Year 1964-1965" (unpublished report submitted to the Kansas City, Missouri, Superintendent of Schools).

should be continued. Double E performs a service that is not performed by any other organization at the present time. Other School District projects try to deal with the potential dropout: they are aimed at attempting to correct academic deficiencies, presenting a source of financial help, or they try to aid the more talented culturally disadvantaged child. Only Double E works with the student who has actually quit school.

#### VI. THE NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS

The Neighborhood Youth Corps Project of the School District of Kansas City, Missouri, was designed and organized to qualify for Federal aid under the Federal Economic Opportunities Act.

That act, briefly, provides for three types of projects which are designed to enable needy youth to remain in school by furnishing them with a modicum of financial aid. All three of the programs involve work which is to be performed by the recipient of the aid, and all of the projects are intended to be administered primarily, if not exclusively, on the local level.

The three basic programs are: The Job Corps; The Neighborhood Youth Corps; and a Work-Study program.

Title I, Section B, of the Economic Opportunity Act provides for a work-training program, called the Neighborhood Youth Corps. Some of the more important restrictions and stipulations for such an organized program are as follows:

1. Local sponsors, i.e., employers of participating youth, shall be:
  - A. Public agencies within the state, county, or local governmental systems--such as schools, park systems, welfare agencies, recreational departments, health boards, conservation agencies, and similar systems.
  - B. Private, non-profit agencies not devoted exclusively to sectarian activities--such as neighborhood houses or centers for the day care of children, hospitals, social service or welfare agencies, and other such organizations.
  - C. Employers are to pay nothing for student services.
  - D. Only students who are truly classifiable as financially deprived may qualify for aid under this program. To determine whether a student is qualified for participation, the following restrictions exist: All children receiving employment must be from families whose income is under three thousand dollars per year. As an alternative; if the family income is higher than that figure, a modified scale of seven hundred and fifty dollars per capita head may be used in order to decide qualifications of an applicant.
  - E. A major object of the Economic Opportunities Act is to furnish money that will enable needy children to remain in school. Therefore, the Neighborhood Youth Corps project must be restricted to include only young people



of from sixteen to twenty-one years of age who are actually enrolled in school or indicate that they intend to re-enroll at the next opportunity. High school graduates are not eligible to participate.

- F. The sponsoring agency, in this case the Kansas City, Missouri, Board of Education, needs to furnish only ten per cent of the money necessary to finance the program. The Federal Government will furnish the balance.
- G. Salaries paid to participating students must meet the Federal minimum wage requirement of one dollar and twenty-five cents per hour.<sup>41</sup>

#### The Program in Operation

Kansas City's application for Federal funds under the Economic Opportunity Act was accepted and the first phase of the project was placed in effect as of the first week in August, 1965. The initial goal is to find gainful employment for three-hundred high school and junior high school students. Mr. Ralph Berry, Project Director for the Neighborhood Youth Corps, seems to feel that such a number of qualified applicants may not be hired this first summer--especially in view of the fact that it is just a new program.

In addition to the fact that it is a new program, the Kansas City project is so organized that before a student is even considered for

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<sup>41</sup>Department of Labor, form GPO: 1964 O-743-537.



interview for possible employment, he must be referred to the project office by his school counselor. Since the program is devoted only to in-school youth, the counselor has a powerful motivating device to use in persuading a dropout to re-enroll in school. Provision was made in the Kansas City application for Federal aid to continue the program during the school year, with participating students working a maximum of fifteen hours per week while attending school full time. The determination of continuing eligibility of individual students is intended to be largely left up to the youth's counselor--giving added opportunity for the culturally disadvantaged youth to receive the benefits of continued counselling service.<sup>42</sup>

Upon proper application to the central office of the Youth Corps, the prospective participant is interviewed to try to further determine suitability for employment and to attempt to categorize the student in order to place him, as nearly as possible, in a job that is right for him and that will give him a meaningful employment experience.

Little difficulty has been found in placing students. The Board of Education has requested several young men to work with buildings and grounds departments throughout the school district. Neighborhood centers have employed several girls as baby-sitters for working mothers. Operation Head Start, which was described in Section I of this chapter has found this particular project to be almost heaven-

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<sup>42</sup>Mr. Gene Dexter, Project Supervisor, Neighborhood Youth Corps, interview, June 23, 1965.

sent. It has requested as many qualified girls as can be furnished to work as class-room aids. Their duties will be to take two, three, or four children aside and read to them. Seldom have the students had this done before, and seldom have the girls had a real chance to do it. Both, it is hoped, will benefit. The Park Department of Kansas City has employed several boys. Hospitals throughout the city have been extremely anxious to receive workers from the Youth Corps.

#### Conclusions

Actually, very little difficulty of any type has been experienced with the program to date. One factor that has caused some embarrassment is that the one dollar and twenty-five cent minimum wage that the students must be paid per hour has been found, in one or two instances, to be more money than the supervisors assigned to detail their work for them have been making. Hard feelings have been avoided, but it is a ticklish point, particularly since the central office wants the students to have the success experience of being able to retain their jobs.

Another possible trouble-spot is that, according to the Economic Opportunity Act, a student may not displace any regular worker; they must perform duties above and beyond those handled by the normal working staff of an organization. Mr. Dexter, Neighborhood Youth Corps Project Supervisor, seems to feel that a close watch will need to be kept over some participating employers in order to be certain that they do not take this opportunity to reduce their expense by discharging a paid employee and thereby jeopardize the continuation of the

program.

At the time of the interview with Mr. Berry and Mr. Dexter, the Neighborhood Youth Corps office had been successful in obtaining summer employment for eighty-five to ninety young people. Figures are not available as to the percentage of Negroes employed since the Federal Government forbids the keeping of such records. However, the nature of the program, considering its financial requirements, makes it a fair certainty that a large percentage of the participating youth will be Negro. And all, regardless of race, will truly be classifiable as culturally disadvantaged.

It is impossible at this time to make an objective evaluation of this program. Indeed, two years may not be sufficient time for proper objective analysis. It remains to be seen whether the students will participate in good faith, whether they will be able to satisfy their employers, whether any real good will accrue to them as a result of this employment, and whether steady income will be a motivating factor strong enough to keep the students in school. The hope, of course is that all of these things will happen; that success will reinforce their counselors efforts, and that a better adjustment to school will result.

#### VII. KANSAS CITY SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Special Scholarship program of the School District of Kansas City, Missouri, is an experimental project. It was initiated in February, 1962, in an effort to increase college attendance among

students from economically, culturally, and educationally marginal segments of the population. The primary focus is on high school graduates who show college potential but for whom a college education represents a severe economic and social obstacle.

#### The Program in Operation

Any high school senior from the School District of Kansas City, Missouri, is eligible to apply for a scholarship award. Application is made to the counselor of the high school in which the student is currently enrolled. The counselor evaluates the pupil's qualifications. If the school records show that the student may have college potential, a further check is made to determine the financial situation of his family. If there are adequate indications that the student will probably be able to succeed in college, but that his familial situation is such that he will be unable to attend, the student is referred to Mrs. Ann Johnson, Project Director of the Special Scholarship Program.

Mrs. Johnson is a former counselor at Lincoln Junior High School. She also reviews the student's school records, recommendations, and family history. If she agrees with the original counselor's conclusions about the student and his ability, she will interview the student to further evaluate him and to explain the program fully. If both Mrs. Johnson and the applicant are satisfied with the interview, Mrs. Johnson approves the application and refers it to the Special Scholarship Committee.

Occasionally the Scholarship Program has students referred to it

who have serious academic weaknesses, but are still thought to have definite college potential. In such a case, definite commitment for financial help is deferred until after the first phase of the program has been completed and the student's progress evaluated. Such a pupil knows in advance that his continued association with the program will depend upon academic proficiency and that, therefore, his receipt of a scholarship is strictly up to him.

Since the Special Scholarship Program is only for culturally disadvantaged students, two things are normally encountered: participating students are usually not adjusted to school life and even though their high school grades may have been adequate, actual achievement levels may be below those of students from more advantageous backgrounds.<sup>43</sup> In order to try to aid program selectees in achieving some adjustment to academic life, and to attempt to remove some of the deficiencies that their economic and cultural background may have combined to foist upon them, phase one of the Scholarship Program is an eight week summer school session of intensive training designed to ready the prospective freshmen for college work.

Teachers for the summer school session are chosen on the basis of their demonstrated ability to relate to students from culturally disadvantaged backgrounds, and also because of the fact that they have shown definite proficiency in their subject matter area.

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<sup>43</sup>Mrs. Ann Johnson, Project Director for the Kansas City Special Scholarship Program, Interview, June 22, 1965. Unless otherwise stated all information for this section was gained from Mrs. Johnson.



The eight week program is organized to furnish the participating pupils with a carefully ordered example of what college life may be like for them. Therefore, the program selectees meet for four hours each day in regular class sessions at Central High School in Kansas City. Two hours of each session are devoted to a stringent study of English composition--a course specifically designed to remedy some of the anticipated lacks in this area of communication; deficiencies that most participants display. One hour is spent on a developmental reading and vocabulary course with some concentration in the area of increasing reading speed. Mrs. Johnson teaches the final hour and her goal is to help the students learn how to study, how to make a budget, plan their time, take tests and select career fields. Afternoons are spent in supervised study.

The final period of the summer program is spent on a nearby college campus and the students live there for an entire week. The object of this part of the program is to show the students what it is like to be away from home and to try to acclimate them further to college life. The host college sets up two college level academic courses which the students attend in the morning. Once again, their afternoons are spent in supervised study and recreation. The culminating activity is to write a short paper and take a final exam. This gives more contact with the college campus and shows the students what they may expect when they attend school in the Fall.

Parents are invited to visit their children Wednesday evening

on campus to see what they have been doing. Most of the parents have no college training, indeed, many do not even have a high school education. Generally, they are amazed at campus life. Most parents who attend these sessions say that they had expected to find their children somewhat idle and poorly supervised. They are agreeably surprised to find that the pupils have been so busy and so well looked after.

Parental hostility and lack of interest have been, from the beginning of this program, one of the major things that the project counselors have had to try to overcome. As a matter of fact, out of a total number of ninety-eight students in the prospective freshman class of 1964, only thirty-eight parents actually availed themselves of the opportunity to visit their children on the campus visitation night. That is a particularly low number in view of the fact that all transportation to the host campus was furnished, and the campus, Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kansas, was less than fifty miles away.

The amount of financial aid that a student may expect to be given by the Special Scholarship Program is confidential. Students and counselors have no idea how much money is available. As a matter of practical fact, the Scholarship Committee and Mrs. Johnson do not want such information to become a matter of general knowledge since they do not want a student or counselor to get the idea that help is unlimited or too easy to get. Generally, however, financial help is available on a sliding scale ranging from about one hundred and fifty



dollars to twelve hundred dollars with the average grant being nearly 498 dollars. The actual amount that a student may receive is determined by his need and by how much money the participating college will contribute.<sup>44</sup>

Mrs. Johnson has had a great deal of success in persuading participating colleges and universities to furnish scholarship money to students who have been selected for this program. Examples of the scholarships that have been set up by participating schools and the number of pupils who are scheduled to attend classes at those institutions in 1965 may be seen in the partial table that appears on the following page.

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<sup>44</sup>This information is confidential and should not be quoted for any purpose.

TABLE III

DATA ON INSTITUTIONS AND FINANCIAL GRANTS TO CLASS OF 1965<sup>45</sup>

Number of Students Enrolled	College	Amount of Grant per Year for Class of 1965
1	Antioch College	\$1,050.00
1	University of Arkansas	none
1	Baker University	\$1,000.00
1	Denver University	\$1,600.00
1	Kansas State University at Manhattan	\$1,500.00
2	Kansas University	\$2,000.00
29	Lincoln University	\$12,700.00
12	University of Missouri at Columbia	\$6,760.00
17	University of Missouri at Kansas City	\$5,100.00
1	Princeton	\$2,800.00
3	William Jewell College	\$1,950.00

Total grants of all participating colleges and universities for  
the class of 1965 . . . . . \$60,683.00

Total grants of all participating colleges and universities for  
the class of 1964-1965 . . . . . \$52,051.00

<sup>45</sup>This information is confidential and should not be quoted for  
any purpose.

Financing for the Special Scholarship program is obtained in the following manner: one-third of the total amount needed for one year of operation is contributed by the Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations. The Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations is a non-profit foundation devoted to the support of worthy community cultural activities. One-third of the needed finances are contributed by the School District of Kansas City. The balance is furnished by the Ford Foundation. The average yearly budget has been about one hundred and twenty thousand dollars--not counting the money that colleges and universities have made available.

But financial help is not the only benefit that a pupil participating in the Special Scholarship Program may realize. There are many inducements offered to encourage the students to stay in school. One of the major advantages available to a Special Scholarship pupil is that continual counseling is available. Mrs. Johnson has even traveled to College campuses in order to confer with students who need help. For a child whose home life and relationships may have been marginal at best, such interest being displayed in him may represent the only time in his life that people have really been kind to him. The effect is most encouraging.

At the end of each semester cooperating colleges send student transcripts to Special Scholarship headquarters. When the student returns to Kansas City for summer vacation, Mrs. Johnson contacts him

and reviews his progress. She makes recommendations where necessary and may, if such help is indicated, make arrangements for tutoring in a developing area of academic weakness.

Mrs. Johnson goes out of her way to try to obtain appropriate summer employment for students who are participating in the program. She tries to find work for them that will remove them from an undesirable home situation as far as possible. Yet, generally, she tries not to select employment that might prove so attractive to the student that he would feel unwilling to return to school.

What type of student does the Special Scholarship Program help? I have stated that the program is restricted to students from financially deprived backgrounds. Perhaps it would be well to illustrate that point with some concrete figures and case histories.

Dorothy L. is a young Negro girl, one of seven children. Her father has a sixth grade education--he is unemployed at present. The mother earns about three thousand five hundred dollars per year as a waitress in a small Negro restaurant. There is some indication that she is also a prostitute.

Dorothy graduated from a Kansas City high school in 1965. Prior to graduation she obtained a job as a clerk in a credit union. When accepted for the program she quit work. Her father was furious. He said that her money was needed to help support her brothers and sisters. Her talk of further education was just "putting on airs" and he threatened physical harm if she did not withdraw from the

program and go back to work. After conversation with Mrs. Johnson, Dorothy's aunt and grandmother agreed to remove her from the home and take her to live with them, while allowing her to remain in the program.

Allen B. was a graduating senior from Northeast High School in the Spring 1965. His father died in 1963. Allen lives with his mother and their total income for 1965 was 789 dollars, this from Social Security payments to Allen. Although a registered nurse, Allen's mother is unable to work because she must give constant care to a grandmother who is a bedpatient in a nearby nursing home. The grandmother is a welfare patient whose condition would require the nursing home to employ a full-time worker to tend her if not for the services of Allen's mother. In consideration of her services, therefore, the mother is allowed to take her meals at the nursing home. The 789 dollars is devoted almost exclusively to Allen.

Allen is such a promising student that Mrs. Johnson was able to obtain a grant of two thousand eight hundred dollars from Princeton for his freshman year. The Special Scholarship Program is going to contribute an additional 675 dollars.

Johnny O. is a nineteen year old boy. He graduated from high school in 1964. The week after graduation his parents moved to California, leaving him in Kansas City. Mrs. Johnson arranged for his support. He is now a sophomore at the University of Missouri at Kansas City with a B average.

TABLE IV

DATA ON CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS IN SPECIAL SCHOOL PROGRAM  
FOR JUNE 1, 1962, THROUGH MAY, 1965<sup>46</sup>

	High School Class of 1962	1963	1964	Totals '62, '63, '64
Total applicants	127	133	271	531
Approved	79	84	147	310
Not approved	48	49	124	221
Enrolled as				
Freshmen	63	83	98	249
Active	54	61	81	196
Deferred	14	22	17	53
Did not enroll	11	1	49	61
Currently enrolled	34	57	90	181
Quit school	34	26	8	68

<sup>46</sup>This information is confidential and should not be quoted for any purpose.

From this table one can see the excellent progress that the Special Scholarship Program has made. From a dropout rate of fifty per cent for the class of 1962 to a freshman dropout rate of less than nine per cent for the class of 1964 is an enviable record for any educational program. But for a program devoted to children who can be officially classed as financially and culturally disadvantaged, it is especially remarkable.

Here is the type of student who is chosen to participate in this program. The figures are from student application blanks that were filled out by the class of 1965.

TABLE V

PERSONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE TYPE OF STUDENT CHOSEN  
FOR THE SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM<sup>47</sup>

Number of actual awards for September, 1965 . . . . .	123
Number deferred pending satisfactory achievement in summer college readiness classes . . . . .	14
Number deferred . . . . .	16
Number of selectees living with both parents . . . . .	98
Number of selectees living with one parent . . . . .	48
Number of selectees living with neither parent . . . . .	7
Number of children in selected families (range 1-14) . . . . .	(average) 3.8
Family income (average)	
Selectees . . . . .	\$4,681.20
Deferred . . . . .	5,514.22
Rejected . . . . .	6,528.25
Racial composition of class of 1965	
White . . . . .	55%
Negro . . . . .	45
Other . . . . .	5

<sup>47</sup>This information is confidential and should not be quoted for any purpose.



To date, the Special Scholarship Program has had only one student graduate from college; a girl from the class of 1962 who attended summer sessions at Warrensburg, Missouri. She has a job for the 1965-1966 school year teaching German and English in a German community south of St. Louis.

### Conclusion

This program, although a new one and, strictly speaking, an experimental one, may be said to be a success. Evaluation of the record of the project is so encouraging that there is every indication that the School District intends to make it a permanent service.

A person may easily determine that Negro students are being given favorable consideration by the Scholarship Committee. Consider the fact that whereas probably one-third of the present total school enrollment in Kansas City Schools is Negro. Yet, the Special Scholarship Committee has chosen to award forty-five per cent of the available aid to Negroes. This has been done for several reasons. The Ford Foundation has indicated, as a condition for their support of this program, that they expect a part of their grant to be used to help Negro pupils. One of the trusts involved is The Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations, a contributor of one-third of the total grant from this source, has requested that its funds be used to support promising Negro pupils. These wishes are not binding, however, and the Scholarship Committee insists that it judges each case strictly on individual merits. And perhaps it does.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

This report was undertaken for the following purposes:

(1) to examine some of the population changes that have given rise to the present need for special educational programs for the culturally disadvantaged; (2) to review a few of the programs that American urban school systems have initiated in an effort to solve the difficulties that face them; (3) to discuss a few of the important changes that have taken place in the nation since the early part of this century; and (4) to present seven specific programs that Kansas City, Missouri, has initiated in an effort to resolve some aspects of the problem of educating the culturally disadvantaged that face its school system.

Persons who are classified as culturally disadvantaged generally meet the following conditions: (1) they are at the bottom of American Society in terms of income and prestige; (2) they suffer from social and economic discrimination; (3) they usually have a rural background; (4) they are a frequent victim of unemployment; (5) they usually have families that are much larger than those of the middle-class; (6) families are disorganized, frequently with only a mother present in the home. They are often characterized by a general lack of communication or warmth of a type that would be understood by a middle-class person; and (7) widely distributed, they are present

everywhere. But they are most conspicuous in large cities.<sup>1</sup>

Persons from the rural South represent a new wave of migration to the large industrial cities of the United States. But they are different from previous immigrants in that they represent an unskilled labor group at a time when unskilled labor is not needed.

Frustration builds among these people and a high crime rate is one result. Large cities are unable to cope with the increased need for governmental services made necessary by the new citizens--welfare, police, and fire protection to name a few.

It is not likely that the problem will diminish unless definite steps are taken by the schools to provide programs which will enable these people to upgrade their skills. Only through education can this be accomplished and the public schools of the United States are the most logical agency to furnish that education.

That the schools have been less than effective in the past is obvious when one considers the high dropout rate that the culturally disadvantaged now exhibit. That the schools must become more effective is just as obvious when one considers the fact that the school dropout is in no position in the future to become anything but a welfare statistic.

Evidence is presented in Chapter II that the market for unskilled labor is disappearing. This fact is evident to all observers, including

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<sup>1</sup>Havinghurst, op. cit., p. 215.

the culturally disadvantaged child. But in spite of the overwhelming evidence in favor of staying in school and acquiring a high school education, a large number of culturally disadvantaged students leave school each year. In addition, a large number of such students who manage to remain in school do poorly.

Many studies have been conducted in an effort to explain this phenomenon. Most authorities seem to agree that the average public school system is often inadequate to meet the needs of the culturally disadvantaged child. But there is basic disagreement concerning where the inadequacies lie and what should be done to remedy the situation, especially in view of the fact that nearly all programs that are attempted show positive results.

Most American schools have traditionally been oriented toward middle-class values.<sup>2</sup> The schools, therefore, have often made certain basic assumptions concerning students who are about to enter school. For example, they have assumed (1) that the child is ready to read; (2) that he knows how to get along with other children; (3) that toilet training is complete; (4) that he can communicate with other persons well enough to make himself understood; (5) that if he has difficulty in understanding a teacher he will ask questions; (6) that he knows enough about the world around him to identify most objects with which he may come into contact; and (7) that he is in reasonably good health.

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<sup>2</sup>Silberman, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-79.

This report has demonstrated earlier,<sup>3</sup> however, that the culturally disadvantaged home does not tend to raise a child in a manner that is conducive to the development of such skills, attitudes, and conditions.

New understandings of the special problems that confront culturally disadvantaged children are now being acquired by the schools. Methods of providing such children with compensatory education and activities are being evolved and schools are putting these methods to use.

The widespread interest in the problem would indicate that even more significant means of alleviating the problem of cultural disadvantage will be available in the future.

Kansas City, Missouri, as the focal city of a metropolitan area of 1,039,493 people, and a city of 475,539 people in its own right, faces the same pattern of social change that has traditionally affected urban areas of the United States during the last fifty years.

Over the past several years the Kansas City high schools and grade schools of the inner-city area have seen a continued lowering of academic achievement levels and apparent aspirations on the part of

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<sup>3</sup>Chapter I, Section II. A brief summary of twelve programs is presented in Chapter II. These programs are thought to be of significance in the development of means that will allow the schools to fight the effects of cultural disadvantage. The researcher is referred to additional sources of such information.

their respective student bodies. This has occurred as a lower class intellectually impoverished group of people has filtered into their district.

For example: Central High School for many years had been one of the better secondary schools in the Kansas City School System. In about 1959, however, the Central School District entered a period of transition from a white middle-class neighborhood to a Negro lower-class neighborhood. Discipline problems never before felt began to appear at Central: academic excellence seemed to be a thing of the past.

Research into the problem revealed that whereas Central High had long been known for the quality of her student body, twenty per cent of her new students were operating two and one-half to three grades below the eighth month, eighth grade level. One-half of her student body had scored below the seventh grade level on the Stanford Achievement test.

Central's case is not unique in Kansas City. City-wide data shows that the inner-city student is at least two years retarded in reading ability as compared with students from other areas.

Many Negro children in Kansas City come from a one parent household. In most of these homes the mother is the parent who is present and most of the households are subsisting on welfare payments.

The median income for Negro families in Kansas City is 4,001 dollars per year: 1,892 dollars per year less than the median income

for the population as a whole.

The unemployment rate for Negro males in Kansas City is 9.3 per cent as compared with 4.2 per cent for white males. Nearly all of the Negro population of Kansas City is to be found living in sub-standard housing in the central area of town, near the business district.

The problem that faces Kansas City, the challenge to its school systems, is how to help her disadvantaged students overcome the hardships that are inherent in the sort of life described above.

The schools have responded by initiating seven programs. They can be somewhat separated into two general categories:

1. Financial programs designed to enable young people of all races acquire the funds that they may need to stay in school: the Work-Study Program and the Neighborhood Youth Corps are good examples of this category.
2. Academic programs designed to try to remedy some of the intellectual disadvantage that many students labor under: Operation Head Start, the Lincoln and Manual-Plus projects, the Central High School Remedial Reading Project, and the Kansas City Special Scholarship Program serve to illustrate what Kansas City is doing in this area.

Another project that the Kansas City School System sponsors is the Double E Program. This program is in a special category; it is designed for the student who has already left school and who



probably will not return. The object of Double E is to try to train the dropout so that he will be employable.

Kansas City's programs are all too new for a proper evaluation. Generally, however, they have been successful. There is no question that Kansas City could do more than it has attempted to the present time. But once the programs have been fully evaluated, and the most successful ones have shows the proper techniques to use in overcoming cultural disadvantage, Kansas City will be able to design truly effective programs for alleviation of the problem.

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A SURVEY OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATION  
OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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The education of the culturally disadvantaged child is one of the basic issues facing the public schools of the United States. This is especially true where America's large cities are concerned.

Persons from the rural South represent a new wave of migration to the large industrial cities of the United States. They are different from previous immigrants in that they represent an unskilled labor group at a time when unskilled labor is not needed. In addition, the new group is largely Negro. Frustration builds among these people; the result is that large cities are experiencing high crime rates, increased welfare rolls, and unprecedented disruptions of their educational institutions.

It was with these considerations in mind that this report was undertaken.

The purpose of this report was (1) to examine some of the population changes that have given rise to the present need for special educational programs for the culturally disadvantaged; (2) to review some of the programs that American urban school systems have initiated in an effort to solve the difficulties that face them; (3) to discuss a few of the important changes that have taken place in the nation since the early part of this century; and (4) to present seven specific programs that Kansas City, Missouri, has initiated in an effort to resolve some aspects of the problem of educating the culturally disadvantaged.

In order to present the material concerning projects the large cities of the nation have instituted to try to alleviate

cultural disadvantage, a review of literature was made.

Due to the fact that intensive programs for culturally disadvantaged students are, for the most part, less than ten years old, periodical literature was most helpful.

The Kansas City information was obtained primarily through the medium of personal interview. This was the only practical technique to use, considering the fact that Kansas City has only placed emphasis on educational projects for the culturally disadvantaged since about 1960--less than five years.

Introductions to persons who were involved in the projects were furnished by the Kansas City Commission on Human Relations. This organization also furnished many statistics about racial prejudice and discrimination in Kansas City--some of which was used in this report.

Any general statement made about progress in the field of education for the culturally disadvantaged would have to note several things. For example: (1) as mentioned earlier, most programs are less than ten years old; (2) every large city is faced with the problem of culturally disadvantaged students and has at least one school program aimed at the alleviation of the problem; (3) most projects, no matter what they are, show positive results.

It is obvious that the culturally disadvantaged child, contrary to opinions that have been expressed on the subject, can be educated. Too often in the past, however, procedures for maximum effectiveness in attacking the problem have been lacking. The main



value of most of the programs at this time, therefore, is not their immediate results, but the new techniques that are evolved.

This report concerns itself with enumeration of twelve national projects that are thought to be of particular significance. The projects were selected either because of their pioneering characteristics, or because of the area from which they originated. These projects are discussed briefly.

The seven projects that Kansas City is currently sponsoring are discussed in detail in Chapter IV. They are: Operation Head Start, the Lincoln-Plus and Manual-Plus Projects, the Central High School Remedial Reading Project, the Kansas City Work-Study Program, Operation Salvage - the Double E Program, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and Kansas City Special Scholarship Program.