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LAY PARTICIPATION IN THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF BILLINGS, MONTANA

by

ARTHUR BYRON GUTHRIE
B.A., Intermountain College, 1941

Presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

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This professional paper has been approved by the Board of Examiners in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Chairman of the Board of Examiners

Dean of the Graduate School

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The term "lay participation" has a two-way meaning, that of parents and other members of the community actually taking part in the school program and that of social agencies coordinating their efforts with those of the school to help meet the needs of children.

A cooperative relationship on the part of the public school, the home, and the community is desirable. Increasing economic pressure has led the community to look more closely at the program of the school. By its very nature, the public school is part of the community. Therefore, it is well that the public show an active interest in its aims, its services, and its welfare. The community will profit as it understands the aims of education, not the least of which is to fit the pupil to appreciate, to use, and to serve his environment.¹ The school will profit because the efforts of the parents and others in the community combined with those of the teachers cannot fail to have a constructive influence on the pupils.

¹William A. Yeager, Home-School-Community Relations, (Published in Pittsburgh and distributed by the University Book Store, University of Pittsburgh, 1939), foreword by Ben G. Graham, Supt. of Schools, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
in some of the elementary schools but usually only at the call of the principals of the various schools.

It would seem that the situation could be improved to the point that lay members of the community would be encouraged to participate, not only in small projects such as building bookshelves or painting the walls of a schoolroom, but also in such ways as making talks about trips, hobbies, or certain occupations to the pupils in the classroom, showing movies, or using special talents, and even in helping plan the curriculum.

As far as the social agencies of Billings are concerned, there is cooperation to some extent among a few of the agencies. However, it would be well if the services of all agencies could be coordinated.

A step in this direction was made a few years ago in Billings. Members of a few social agencies met, organized themselves as a council, and elected officers. However, the group did not include all the agencies, and jealousies and misunderstandings resulted. When the chairman of the group moved from the city, the council dispersed, and nothing has been done about reorganizing it since then.

Statement of the problem

The purpose of this paper is to suggest ways of securing lay participation in the elementary school and to recommend a program for setting up a community council to work with the elementary schools of Billings, Montana.
Purposes of the study

Being interested in securing lay participation in the elementary schools of Billings and in coordinating the efforts of the community social agencies with those of the school, the writer of this paper proposes the following:

1. To make a study of the literature on what laymen have done to help in school situations in various communities.

2. To make a study of the literature on what has been done to coordinate the efforts of the schools and the social agencies in various communities of the United States.

3. To suggest ways of securing lay participation in the schools.

4. To make a study of the existing social agencies in Billings, Montana, which have service to children as one of their primary purposes and to learn what these agencies contribute in helping children meet their physical, mental, emotional, or social needs.

5. To inquire into the degree of coordination existing among these agencies.

6. To make a study of the articles published by experts on different plans of organization of school and community.

7. To make recommendations as to the most effective approach for setting up a community council in Billings, Montana.
Procedures

1. Current literature dealing with what laymen have done to help in school situations and what has been done to coordinate the efforts of the school and the social agencies in various communities of the United States will be surveyed.

2. The articles published by experts on different plans of organization of school and community will be surveyed.

3. The amount of actual lay participation in the schools of Billings will be discussed with the principals of the various elementary schools and the assistant superintendent of schools.

4. Suggestions will be made for securing more lay participation in the elementary schools.

5. Existing community organizations will be surveyed by having personal interviews with members of various agencies, securing literature from some of the organizations, reading newspaper articles, and personal observation by the writer. The degree of coordination existing among these agencies will be inquired into.

6. The results of the studies made in procedures 1, 2, and 5 will be compared in order to note the differences between the present program in Billings, Montana, and the programs being carried on in other communities.
7. The findings will be used as a basis for establishing standards for setting up a community council in Billings, Montana.
Examples of lay participation in the program of the school are few and widely scattered. However, the very fact that some instances of cooperation may be found gives other schools the impetus to experiment along the same line. Ideas that have been tried provide guides for action in other schools and communities.

Literature on What Laymen Have Done to Help in School Situations in Various Communities

Lay participation in planning curriculum

The problem of homework provided an incentive for a group of Glencoe, Illinois parents to develop a curriculum guide designed primarily for their own use. Formal assignments of homework made by teachers were the source of confusion and annoyance to both parents and children. The parents were eager to create conditions whereby essential continuity could be achieved between school activities and what the children did at home.

To this end a selected group of parents visited classrooms regularly for six weeks and discussed their observations with teachers and administrators. On the basis
of these observations and discussions the parents assumed major responsibility for preparation of a curriculum guide entitled Together We Learn.

The guide contains a minimum of abstract curriculum theory but is rich in suggestions indicating ways in which home and school may work together to enrich pupils' learning experiences.¹

In River Forest, Illinois, room mothers plan with the teacher of each level for discussions that deal with subjects of real concern to both children and their parents. As a result of one such discussion group, parents were encouraged to help their children gain greater independence in beginning reading by having the children read aloud to members of the family group.²

Parents and teachers in the Linwood School, St. Paul, Minnesota, who took part in cooperative participation in the school program, found that their plan brought home and school closer together.

At an evening rally to which all parents were invited, talks were given on the value of closer cooperation


between home and school. Suggestions as to ways parents might help at the school which had been listed on a mimeographed sheet were passed out. Among the suggested contributions which parents might make were: storytelling, giving puppet shows, singing, playing the piano, showing collections of nature materials or hobbies, and showing films. Some ways, in which parents who could not give time during school hours, might help were: renovating equipment, obtaining needed items, such as wooden boxes, painting worn equipment, and adding to the play facilities.

Mothers and fathers who gave help were given many ideas which they incorporated in the home activities. Parents showed keen interest in the functioning of the school; they also learned a great deal about child development. Their contributions added to an enriched program for the children.3

One of the best accounts of how community schools were created has been made by Elsie Clapp in Community Schools in Action. In this volume, she describes the experiences of the staff at the Ballard Memorial School in Kentucky and a school in Arthurdale, West Virginia.4

3Gabbard, op. cit., p. 25.

Samuel Everett in a volume entitled *The Community School* gives interesting accounts of community schools in rural areas. In these projects, the major orientation of the curriculum has grown out of the needs of the community. Teachers, children, and adults have joined hands to fulfill these needs.\(^5\)

Although the activities may be of different types in various schools, there are opportunities for cooperation of adults and children for community service, particularly in neighborhood communities. This has been demonstrated by such schools as Wells High School, Chicago, and Benjamin Franklin High School, New York City.\(^6\)

A study-program approach used with parent groups by Georgia, Mississippi, and Virginia teachers has great value in helping parents understand the school program.

Many times, as a result of free discussion with parents on controversial issues, suggestions for revisions of the school program are considered carefully by the educators. Because of this, it may be said that there is some


actual lay participation. 7

Lay participation in setting up educational objectives
In many cases, previous to formulating a philosophy and aims, lay persons have been asked to respond to questionnaires regarding the needs of children and needs of society. In Shaker Heights, Virginia, the questionnaires were developed by a committee with lay members included; in other cases, such as in Norwood, Virginia, they were formulated by educators. However, in both cases, laymen were given an opportunity to contribute some of their ideas. Sometimes, after the questionnaires have been tabulated and grouped, lay persons meet for discussion and continue to make more specific recommendations.

Lay persons often work directly on a committee to formulate a philosophy. In Port Huron, Michigan, a group met and, through informal discussion, formulated its statement of aims. 9

In Schenectady, New York, "lead" questions were used as a basis for discussion. Books were read and reported to the group by teachers and laymen. The philosophy and objectives were developed as a result of this study.10

7Storen, op. cit., p. 29.
8Loc. cit.
9Loc. cit.
10Storen, op. cit., p. 30.
In various instances, laymen have helped in planning experiences relating to vocations, family living, recreation, health, group life, and personal development. Some plans are for the inclusion of certain experiences in the curriculum in whatever way seems most effective.

The lay members are usually selected directly by the superintendent or other school staff and occasionally by such a group as the Parent-Teacher Association.

Lay participation in carrying on a bond campaign

Agencies in many communities have established education committees which cooperate with school authorities. Last June in Roby, Texas, it became necessary, due to growth of the student body and regulations imposed by new statutes, to float a bond issue for the construction of new buildings. The Lions Club took an active part in the program, and those buildings were soon under way.\(^{11}\)

Similarly, in Wolf Point, Montana, the Lions Club gave a dinner for workers to get out the voters. A bond issue to construct a new high school building was carried by a large majority.\(^{12}\)

In Barrington, Illinois, there was the problem of consolidation both at elementary and high school level.

\(^{11}\)Noble J. Puffer, "Look to Your Schools," The Lion, February, 1951, p. 13

\(^{12}\)Puffer, op. cit., p. 13.
A booklet was prepared giving the facts pro and con on the project. As a result, consolidation was accomplished and a bond issue for a much needed new high school building followed.13

A good example of what lay participation can do for the school has been shown in Billings, Montana, very recently. In the spring of 1950, it became apparent to the school board that with the expected increased enrollments in the next few years it would be necessary to have at least two new school buildings and improvements to present facilities, which would mean floating a bond issue in the amount of $1,600,000.

The superintendent of schools called a meeting of the presidents and a member of each of the eleven PTA units and asked that they take the initiative in circulating petitions for a special election. To make the petitions valid, it was necessary to secure signatures of 40 per cent of the registered voters. About 4,600 signatures were secured which was more than the necessary 40 per cent. As soon as the list of eligible voters was available from the county clerk and recorder's office, the publicity campaign was started.

Appearing before civic groups, women's clubs, labor organizations, management representatives, veterans groups, and other representative bodies, PTA workers collected

13Loc. cit.
twenty-five indorsements favoring the improvement program.

An information program pointing out school needs was carried on at meetings of various community organizations and at PTA meetings.

Cards reminding people to vote and designating the proper voting place for each individual were sent to all eligible voters of which there were 11,000. These cards were addressed in two and one half hours by 250 volunteers from PTA and service organizations.

The bond election was held on March 12, 1951. Volunteer workers were used at the various polling places to speed up the voting process. They looked up the voter's name and gave the page number and section of the page to the election judges. About 150 volunteers were members of the telephone committee. Late in the afternoon, lists were taken to these people at their homes. Each person called forty or fifty people who had not yet voted.

It was necessary to have a favorable vote by a majority of the 40 per cent voting in order for the bond issue to be carried. The issue passed by a six to one majority. As bond issues have failed to pass in many Montana communities which have had special elections in 1951, it shows what community cooperation can do. It was only through the combined effort of the lay members of the community with the teachers, administrative staff, and school
board that it was possible to pass this bond issue for new buildings.

**Literature on What Has Been Done to Coordinate the Efforts of the School and the Social Agencies in Various Communities**

Mr. Henry Toy, Jr., executive director of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools with headquarters in New York City, gave an address at the Commission's second annual meeting which was held January 12–14, 1951 in Cleveland, Ohio. He reported the existence of 973 citizens committees at the end of 1950, according to National Citizens Commission records. He added, however, that his belief is that there actually are approximately 5,000 counting those which haven't been reported. His statement is based on the fact that a study made by a school superintendent in New Jersey showed the existence of five times as many citizens committees in New Jersey as the National Commission had counted.\(^{14}\)

According to Dr. Helen F. Storen, coordinator of curriculum at Tenafly High School, Tenafly, New Jersey, in her book, *Laymen Help Plan the Curriculum*, it was in the realm of overall state planning that widespread participation of

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\(^{14}\)Henry Toy, Jr., address published in *Citizens and Their Schools*, February, 1951, p. 23.
State-wide Basis

Delaware

The organization meeting for the Council for Delaware Educational Advancement was held in Wilmington, Delaware, on November 8, 1946. It was through the efforts of the Parent-Teacher Association that this Council was formed. Mr. Henry Toy, Jr. was chairman of the organization committee.

As finally set up, there are 159 different organizations with a delegate member on the Council. In addition, there are many individual members who do not represent a group but, because of their interest in public schools, want to do their part.

Members of this Council meet at the call of the president, usually twice a year, and annually elect a group of officers who serve as an executive committee. It is in this committee that the power of action rests. The executive committee meets at least every two months. There are no membership dues, the organization being financed entirely through contributions and through solicitation of members.16

15Storen, op. cit., p. 22.

Kentucky
At the present time, fifty state-wide organizations are participating in the formation of the Kentucky Council for Education. Two of its purposes are to make and encourage studies of educational needs on state and local levels and to promote formation of local councils.17

Wisconsin
The State Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Educational Association are providing an organization and staff to coordinate the efforts of faculty groups, aid in solving special curriculum problems, and guide the development of a State Course of Study.18 Helen F. Storen quotes Gordon Mackenzie, formerly associate professor of education at the University of Wisconsin and state curriculum coordinator:

This all-state plan makes possible a type of cooperative thinking and planning which will enable educational workers at the state, county, and local levels to capitalize on the best educational resources of the state.19

Part of the plan consists of the organization of an Educational Policies Commission which considers broad problems of education and advises the state departments.

18Storen, op. cit., p. 25.
19Storen, op. cit., p. 25.
Members are selected by a committee appointed by the State Department and Wisconsin Education Association. Several lay organizations are represented.20

Connecticut

The state of Connecticut has Citizens Councils which give curriculum planning major emphasis, although educational problems of all natures are considered. Committees consist of one member of the local board and two laymen chosen by the superintendent in each town. A consultant selected by the State Commission serves each area. The Connecticut Council on Education with officials representing each permanent state-wide organization is the coordinating force for all groups. The meetings are informal and serve mainly to stimulate interest in educational problems, act as a sounding-board for various points of view, and provide channels for receiving suggestions.

Two of the problems discussed have been "Health, Physical Fitness, and Recreation" and "Community Responsibility and the Job of the Elementary School."21

County-wide Basis

Arlington County, Virginia

The members of the Arlington Citizens Committee for

20Loc. cit.

School Improvement of Arlington County, Virginia believe that what a community should do about its public schools depends on local conditions, not philosophical statements of theory. The committee had quite a problem during World War II when defense activities of the Federal Government engulfed the area with new population and the existing school administration appeared incapable of or unwilling to meet the resulting problems. Through the efforts of the Citizens Committee, a new school board was elected and many improvements were made in the school program. Aside from the specific accomplishments, of great importance is the change which has come in the attitude of the parents, school staff, and school administration toward meeting the problems that confront the county's educational system. There is now a feeling of mutual respect and a cooperative relationship that is very important from the standpoint of future accomplishments.

According to census figures, the schools of Arlington County expect the present school enrollment to be doubled by 1955. The best efforts of the Citizens Committee will be needed to help get additional facilities and operating budgets for the increased load of pupils.

The Committee must protect the gains that have been made and not let the community slip back into a state of disinterest and unconcern. A well-informed and active citizenry is the best way of maintaining good public schools.
The accomplishments in Arlington County are by no means the results solely of the Citizens Committee. Other organizations and interested citizens joined in the fight for school improvement, but the accomplishments are the result of cooperative effort on the part of many groups and interested citizens.22

City-wide Basis

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Minneapolis, Minnesota, has a Citizens Committee on Public Education which put across a "Vote Yes" campaign there. This was a vote to maintain a 7.5 school tax mill increase over charter limitation for a two-year period. The citizens gave a 70 per cent "yes" vote. The Minneapolis victory was an aggressive campaign characterized by door-to-door coverage with a tightly-knit ward-precinct-block setup, with workers pledged not only to distribute literature but to ring doorbells and talk with voters. Sparkling promotional and publicity ideas stimulated the workers.

The Parent-Teacher Association threw its full weight behind the campaign and the press and radio cooperated to the utmost.

However, the victory was not achieved overnight. Its

roots go back to the history of the Citizens Committee on Public Education. Community leaders, including those from all religious groups, labor, and management had learned to work together in the cause of public education over a period of years. Knowing that the referendum was on its way, the Committee undertook a series of programs throughout the year to popularize education and to interest voters in school needs. This was accomplished through a Public Education Institute which emphasized the individual voter's stake in education.23

New York City, New York

In a highly industrialized section of New York City, an elementary school principal and an assistant superintendent of schools were instrumental in organizing a Youth and Adult Council consisting of civic leaders, businessmen, and representatives of various local groups. The Council has mapped out a broad program of recreational and cultural activities for young people.24

Seattle, Washington

The Community Council of Seattle, Washington, is an outstanding example of a well-organized council. Among the


member groups are included the Buddhist Church, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, Ship Sealers Union, China Merchants Club, Alaska Fish Cannery Workers Union, Parent-Teacher Association, and a Masonic Lodge.

The Council works through civic, recreational, and health committees. In only three years of work it has secured many improvements through its united effort. Its work has proved that real progress comes when a community unites in its own behalf.

Wellston, Missouri

The Community Council in Wellston, Missouri, serves a large area of underprivileged families. It is an associated member of the greater St. Louis Community Chest and is financed from the united charities of the St. Louis Metropolitan.

The Wellston Community Council was organized because of the need for cooperation and coordination among the already established agencies. Its organization was initiated by the elementary school principals, teachers, school patrons, and other school officers. From a modest beginning, the Council has grown until at present there are official delegates from sixty local groups and agencies participating. Included in this Council are representatives from many of

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25Cockerille, op. cit., p. 132.
the major social agencies of Greater St. Louis and also many members at large. The Council employs an executive director and a secretary-hostess. These two employees are both trained social workers.

The Council elects a Board of Directors composed of fifteen members which becomes the governing body. All plans and policies developed by the Board are subject to the approval of the Council. The Board sets up committees to carry on work in the areas where need arises. Such functions as programming, developing of plans, policies, purposes, operation of community centers, and budgeting are first done in committees. Recommendations are made through the Board to the Council for final disposition. The Board directs the carrying out of the final decisions of the Council.26

San Diego, California

Recently, San Diego, California, in keeping with other large school systems throughout the nation, inaugurated a system-wide program of intercultural education. This program, operating under a full-time director and with consultant service supplied by the Pacific Coast Council on Intercultural Relations, has as its objective

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the development in every child a due regard for his own cultural background of others and an overall spirit of cooperation and loyalty to the American way of life.

Early in the program it was recognized that the development of good human relations is a total community problem which must be met by school and community working together.

The need for a civic unity council to coordinate all organizations and develop adequate provisions for full citizenship on the part of all people was obvious. On January 1, 1947 a three-month Urban League demonstration project was launched to meet this need. The program was effective in building understanding, cooperation, and unity among the many racial and cultural groups in San Diego.

The Uptown Coordinating Council was organized. A Council committee composed of representatives from the Parent-Teacher Association, the Ministerial Association, the Public Library, the City Recreation Department, the Coordinating Councils, and school administrators wrote a handbook, "What Can I Do Now?" which includes suggestions for children's out-of-school hours.27

**Summary**

From the study made of lay participation in various

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communities, indications are that most communities are attempting to solve problems along similar lines, such as those related to educational needs, curriculum problems, and community responsibility in relation to the elementary school. Although there are not many published accounts of lay participation at the present time, there probably will be more in the near future, since communities are more and more accepting the idea of closer cooperation between school and community.

Because conditions vary in different communities, no general plan has been followed for the organization of local community councils. The mechanics must be worked out depending on local conditions.

The state-wide approach creates interest in education in general, whereas the county-wide and city-wide approaches bring the problem closer to the individual.
CHAPTER III

SECUARING LAY PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOLS

Coordinating the Efforts of the School with Those of the Community

Informing the public

Of all the influences which bear upon the quality of a school's work, the attitude of the public toward education is one of the most powerful. In our democracy it is the public's task to decide whether the schools are to improve or whether they are to stand still.

Teachers and administrators must keep their public informed about what they are doing and about the direction in which the schools are moving. They must interpret to the public the purpose and meaning of newer practices which they are using.

Informing the public may be done not only in terms of good publicity but also in meetings, speeches, bulletins, and cooperative planning sessions designed to make the people see where the schools can and should be improved.

The schools of Billings, Montana, have a column in the Billings Gazette each Monday called "City School Notes." Each week, teachers of the various schools take turns gathering news items from other teachers about interesting
things that have been done by the children. These are divided so that half the city schools are represented one week and half, the next week.

Another way of informing the parents in the Billings Schools is through a series of slides which have been prepared showing activities of primary and intermediate children in various schools of the city. Some of these are: project on animals showing readiness work in vocabulary development, socialization, hand work, etc., first year art; first year writing; grocery store and post office projects in second year arithmetic; note reading in second year music; study of bees in fourth year science; library reading; taking weight and height of the children; and school patrol. Teachers are requested to preview the slides before showing them to parents to determine the most appropriate things to say with each slide in terms of types of work he is carrying on in his own classroom.

A booklet called School Days was written by Dr. Charles D. Dean, assistant superintendent and director of elementary education of the Billings Public Schools. At the parent-teacher conference held the first week of school in the fall, each mother with a child starting the first year of school is given one of these books. This booklet was prepared to assist parents in understanding the basic problems of teachers as they work with children in an
attempt to provide a flexible program fitted to individual needs. It also asks for cooperation from the parents.\(^1\)

Other means of building good public relations are such things as notes sent home by teachers, the type of report card, PTA activities, school trips into the community, and letters from the pupils to local businessmen.

Also important are the children themselves. The school's contact with the community through them is chiefly with parents, but this can be exceedingly significant. Teachers can help the children feel a sense of loyalty in painting at home a truthful picture of the school.

The more the average citizen knows about the school, including its problems as well as its aims and achievements, the more interested he will be in it.

Deciding the objectives of education is a public problem which is one of the most important acts of policy that faces any community. Through the means of public information procedures, those in the community will be brought to see their task.

Education can progress only so far as the community is willing to support it and people do not really support what they do not understand. Many a progressive step on the part of the schools has been opposed merely because no adequate preparation was made by informing parents and other community leaders.\(^2\)

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Participating in community life

Administrator and teacher participation in the life and activities of the community is a powerful instrument for improving public attitudes toward the school and toward the teaching profession.

If some laymen look down on school people, it may be because they haven't known any good teachers personally. The best way to correct such an attitude is through a great amount of participation by the staff in the activities of the community.

Every teacher has a chance to help enrich someone's attitude toward the schools. Much of it will be done unconsciously. Some of it can be done deliberately too if the teacher will take every opportunity that comes his way.

First of all, teachers must be people. They need to get around among people in the community, to know some of them as friends, not just as the parents of their children. Also, if a teacher knows a great number of people who don't have direct connection with the schools and does pleasant social things with some of them, such as belonging to a club or choral group, it will help much in bringing about good public relations.

Every member of the staff must consider himself a contributing citizen in order to expand his own contacts in the community for the purpose of improving his own work.
with boys and girls and to advertise the school among citizens in the community.

Schools will learn more about the agencies and organizations which are interested in meeting the needs of childhood and youth when faculty members are serving as members of the board of directors of social agencies or are members, officers, or committee chairmen of the service organizations. These teachers will bring to other teachers a vivid picture of the work of their groups and of the possibilities for help in the solution of child problems. Teachers who are interested members of welfare organizations especially can be the best liaison agents between the schools and the agencies.

Some of the ways in which teachers may use the talents at the command of the school to bring enrichment to the community are through dramatic presentations, band and orchestra concerts, art exhibits, and participation in the promotion of community betterment drives.

Recognition by and encouragement from the principal will result in increased community participation by the teachers. That in turn will bring improved public relations and support for the schools.

Public participation in designing the better school

As members of the public become more and more informed, they are able to give more and more help in the realization of new plans.
Public participation is necessary because no small group of professionals can envision completely the emerging school; nor should they be entirely entrusted with designing either the better school or its objectives.3

Deciding the program of education is, at least in part, a public problem. Furthermore, as the program of the school expands, the help of laymen in increasing the opportunities made available to youngsters will be needed.

The first need in this field is for parents to understand the school, its present program and its potentialities. It is common practice to hold meetings at the call of the school with the Parent-Teacher Association fostering attendance through notices, announcements, and telephone calls. Occasionally, the parents initiate home-school conferences and carry full responsibility for their arrangement. These programs vary. Sometimes there is a discussion of general school practice followed by inspection of the school plant. Sometimes parents follow through a program based on a child’s school day. Grade-level meetings are of value in bringing about a more detailed understanding of school practice, aims, and techniques.

More conferences between parent and teacher, in addition to the group type of contact, are mutually valuable in learning to understand one another. Informing the parents

concerning the time teachers are available for conferences is necessary and can be done through parent-teacher publicity or by notices sent home with the children. Most parents are as timid as children about coming to an unfamiliar school. For this reason, the open-house program as the Parent-Teacher Association program which brings them to school in groups, is a simple beginning in making them feel at home. Once a parent has come to the school and met his child's teacher, subsequent visits are usually easier.

Respect on the part of the teacher for the contribution of the home to child growth and development, helps the child to respect and appreciate the contribution of his home. In turn, parents can go a long way in bringing about the child's respect for the teacher and school through the attitudes they express at home.

It may readily be seen that all participation isn't school-initiated but may be lay-initiated as well.

Specific Ways in Which Help May Be Given

Health checkup of preschool children

The health checkup of preschool children in Billings is handled through the Public Health Nursing Service and the PTA. Parents help in distributing the necessary blanks to be filled out by the family physician and dentist.

During free preschool clinics which were held at the Garfield School in May, 1951 a few mothers assisted by
taking care of the children as they awaited their turns for the physical examinations. Two mothers were trained to do the weighing and eye-testing of each child.

Support of budget increases

When it becomes necessary for a school district to ask for an additional amount of money for the school budget, many times the public is asked to vote a millage levy in order to raise the money. Many lay groups and individuals will help in such a campaign. In some schools throughout the state of Montana, this type of election is held every year in order to have a sufficient budget to run the schools. However, in Billings this has not been necessary for several years because of the tremendous growth of the community, making it possible to support the budget with increased taxable valuations.

Sponsorship of clubs and other groups by laymen

At the Garfield School in Billings, there are three Boy Scout troops: one sponsored by the Kiwanis Club, another by the American Legion and the other troop of Explorer Scouts, also sponsored by the American Legion. The mothers and fathers of a Cub Scout pack have dinner meetings with the Cub Scouts once a month.

The Girl Scouts and Brownies usually have mothers as leaders and mothers who serve on the troop committee.

The Optimist Club sponsors a weekly program at the
Garfield School for every boy willing to come and take an active part. As a culminating activity in the spring, each boy who has attended faithfully receives an attendance certificate plus a prize and a ticket to the Mustang baseball games for the summer.

There could be more lay participation in sponsorship of clubs, such as hobby clubs and nature clubs, for all school age groups. These clubs would supplement activities carried on by the City Recreation Department.

Parents as librarians

If a school does not have a library, there is an excellent opportunity for parents and other interested individuals to establish one. If the school does not have funds for the purchase of books and magazines, arrangements may be made with the local public library for borrowing books over a longer period of time than the usual time. Someone may assume the responsibility of transporting the books from the main library and back.

In many cases, the staff of a school is hard pressed to manage the details of a library. Parents may assist, not only in checking out books, but also in sorting them so that children may look through books of their own level.

If the school has its own books, parents may take over the responsibility of keeping them in good repair.

Parents as trip-arrangers and transporters

Most parents enjoy arranging field trips and providing
transportation for children to places of interest. In the past year, the children from several rooms of the Garfield School visited the South Side Fire Station. Some of the trips made by the first year groups were to a farm, to the municipal airport, to a bakery, and to the children's room of the city library. A fourth year class visited the Science Department of Eastern Montana College of Education. One sixth year group made a trip to the City Water Department.

The usual procedure is for the teacher to decide what place he would like to have the children visit, usually to fit in with a unit being studied, then to contact the room mother who makes the necessary arrangements with the place to be visited and calls other mothers to arrange for the transportation. In sharing and enjoying the same experiences with their children, an interest is created which has lasting values.

Parents as chaperones

The Junior High School has school parties at which parents are asked to act as chaperones. Thus far, the Garfield School has had teachers only acting as chaperones at school parties, square dances, and seventh and eighth year dances. It would be desirable to have some parents present also as it makes for a good feeling between home and school.

Parents as costume-caretakers

Most schools have had very little help from parents
in costume caretaking. Usually, this task is left for the teacher and students. However, mothers could be asked to help in several ways. They could mend costumes which are torn. If costumes could be cleaned after their use and packed carefully or hung on hangers, they could be used more often.

For a Christmas play at the Garfield School in December, 1950, most of the costumes were borrowed from one of the Billings churches. The teacher in charge of the play took personal responsibility for seeing that the costumes were returned in good condition whereas, if he had asked a committee of mothers to help, it would have made the task much easier and would have given the mothers a feeling of taking part.

When a teacher is getting costumes ready for a play, mothers may be asked to help with the unpacking, pressing, and any necessary alterations.

Parents on curriculum committee

Reactions of many persons who have had experience with lay participation in school planning are that participation of laymen on curriculum committees increased interest of the general public in education, valuable educational resources were discovered through the cooperation of laymen, lay participation tended to bring about better relationship between teachers and parents, and laymen brought to the
attention of the schools some of the major needs of the community.

"Workshops are gaining prestige as a means of providing opportunity for cooperative curriculum planning."¹

Each year, the Billings Parent-Teacher Association holds a summer workshop along the line of curriculum building. The 1950 theme of the workshop was "The Citizen Child in the School, the Church, and the Community."

In the last few years, parents and other lay members of the community have been invited to attend "in-service" training classes along with the teachers and principals to give opportunity for them to participate in curriculum construction. Under the direction of Dr. Charles D. Dean, the classes have been divided into study groups and each group has chosen a member to serve on the steering committee which decided on the year's program and gave direction to it. The classes have met each week for twenty-four weeks each year for a two hour period, the first half of which was spent in hearing lectures by various educators and lay people and the last half of which was spent in separate meetings of the various study groups.

The 1950-1951 "in-service" class was on Counseling and Guidance and was divided into the following groups:

Testing and Measuring, Life Adjustment Program, Records and Reports (cumulative and reporting to pupils and parents), Child Study (individual differences, emotional needs, and case study), and Community Resources. Each group reported to the entire class on the results of its studies at the end of the term.

**Parents on visual aids committee**

A committee of parents could work in cooperation with the visual aids director of the Billings Schools. If a teacher wanted a film on a certain subject, he could contact a member of the committee who in turn would secure the film, deliver it to the school, and, after its use, return it to the visual aids department.

The parents also could assist in the preparation of a list of available films according to subject matter and grade level.

**Aid in lunch room and on playground**

PTA members of the Garfield School have been invited to give assistance in supervision of the lunch room and playground. Up to this point, parents have not been interested in either of these projects. However, should a hot lunch program be established in the future, no doubt many of the mothers will participate. Perhaps when parents see the need of assistance on the playground, they will be glad to help in this way also.
Parent-sponsored entertainments

Parent-sponsored entertainments in the Garfield School are arranged through the PTA. Each month, a program is prepared using some children for special numbers and a speaker from the community.

In April, 1951 the parents sponsored a play put on by seventh and eighth year boys and girls to raise money for the purchase of a piano to be used in the Garfield gymnasium.

Parents may sponsor entertainments for the children in the classroom also. For instance, a person who has been on a trip may make a talk and show slides or movies to illustrate his talk. Also, he may show interesting articles he acquired while on the trip.

Other ways

A list which covers some of the above-mentioned ways in which help may be given by parents and other lay people and adds a few more ways follows:

1. Helping with the writing or mimeographing of the school newspaper
2. Helping in principal's office answering telephone calls, greeting callers, guiding visitors, taking messages to teachers, etc.
3. Helping with school housekeeping such as mending window shades, painting flower boxes, mending books, etc.
4. Assisting in putting away and giving out books in library.
5. Taking children to the health clinic
6. Assisting teachers in taking children on trips
7. Collecting illustrative materials which relate to subjects being studied in the various classrooms
8. Tutoring in English the parents new to this country.
9. Helping in supervision of lunchroom so that children may eat under moderately quiet conditions and develop standards of courtesy and good manners
10. Assisting in the care of children during school or parent programs so that their mothers can attend
11. Setting up a "pool" of mothers on which parents of children ill for months or parents of permanently home-bound children may call for reading, story telling, game playing, etc.
12. Assisting kindergarten and nursery school teachers in taking off and putting on wraps at the opening and closing of their school day
13. Transporting films back and forth from the film library to the school
14. Assuming the responsibility of transporting books from the main library to the school, if that service is necessary
15. Helping in hobby clubs after school
16. Helping keep the science room up to date; taking children on nature walks
17. Taking charge of the Lost and Found Department
18. Supervising play activities in the school yard or in the park after school or on Saturdays.

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CHAPTER IV

EXISTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations Which Are Related to the Elementary Schools in Billings, Montana

The Church

The church plays a very important part in the educational and social life of Billings, Montana.

Historically, the church and the public school have been traditional allies, each supplementing the work of the other in many ways. For the most part, church denominations have advocated and supported sound programs of education in spite of differences of opinion as to the manner of accomplishing the aims sought.¹

There are thirty-three churches listed in the telephone directory of Billings. Each of these churches has one or more youth organizations, and most of them have Sunday Schools. Many of the churches have expanded their programs to include recreational centers, social centers, teacher training classes, and playgrounds. Some of these activities are far reaching and touch the lives of many boys and girls. It is understood that the services of religious groups are available when they are sought in a proper manner.

In this community, it is the practice of many

¹William A. Yeager, Home-School-Community Relations, (Published in Pittsburgh and distributed by the University Book Store, University of Pittsburgh, 1939), p. 240.
teachers and school officials to associate themselves in general with the work of the church.

The Billings Ministerial Association has as its members the ministers of the various churches in the city. Some of its committees are as follows: radio and publicity, program, interchurch, and community welfare.

One of the issues which came before the Association this year was the improvement of radio programs for young people, especially on Sunday afternoons. A radio forum was held with representatives of the three radio stations at which time it was decided that an effort would be made with the sponsors to better the programs.

**Parent-Teacher Association**

Every elementary school in Billings sponsors a Parent-Teacher Association.

The purposes of the organization are parent education, child welfare in home, school, church, and community and home and school cooperation.

Membership dues are paid to the local organization which in turn sends per capita dues to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers which supplies program materials and publications to member groups. It also holds annual conventions, institutes, and conferences to keep its members informed and to train leaders. It sponsors special programs through its departments on health, education, home service,
public welfare, and extension.

Billings has a PTA Council made up of the presidents, vice presidents (principals of the schools), and secretaries of the various PTA units of the city with officers being elected at large from the city groups. The Council acts as a coordinating agency in planning the policies and program of the PTA groups.

The Council gives a $100 scholarship yearly to a deserving Billings Senior High School student who is a prospective teacher.

The Council stages an annual penny drive in each school of the city. The money, which approximates $500 yearly, is used for purchasing glasses or paying doctor bills for needy children.

About $2500 a year is allowed by the Community Chest for the PTA milk fund which is handled through the Council. Money is allocated to the various schools to buy milk each school day November through April for needy children.

The PTA units of the various schools hold meetings once a month. Speakers are heard and special entertainment is provided. Occasionally, children of the school provide some of the entertainment. Refreshments usually are served after the meetings during which time many friendly contacts are made.

A favorite money-raising event of several local organizations in the past few years has been the Family Fun Night
which takes preparation by teachers, parents, and children alike but makes for close cooperation and good fellowship. The PTA of the McKinley School started the idea and it proved such a profitable venture that many other PTA units have made it a yearly project.

Funds have been used for the purchase of various items for the schools, such as film projectors, beaded screens, blackout curtains, pianos, radios, phonographs, records, basketball standards, basketballs, baseballs and bats, public address systems, and electric clocks.

Another fund-raising affair tried by the Garfield School in February, 1951 was an old-fashioned basket social. About 400 people attended and, with the help of a professional auctioneer who volunteered his services, a large amount of money was netted with very little preparation having to be made in advance.

The feature of the PTA that comes closest to the teacher is the "room mother" idea. Each room is assigned a "room mother" upon whom the teacher may call for help. If he needs mothers for such things as supplying cars for a field trip or helping dress children for a program, he may obtain that help by calling the "room mother" who in turn sees that other mothers are on hand for the needed task.

At the Garfield School, each year in the month of May, all mothers whose children will start school in the
fall are invited to a tea given by the PTA. They are told what the school expects of the children and the parents are given precautions as to the youngsters' health before they start school.

In May, 1951 the Garfield School PTA contacted three medical doctors who offered their services in giving free thorough physical examinations to preschool children. The serums for inoculations were ordered through the Public Health Service and paid for by the PTA. The Garfield School hopes to continue this type of pre-school checkup in the future.

The usual procedure is to hand or mail blanks to each parent who must then take the youngster to the family physician and dentist for checkups and return the filled out and signed blanks.

Some PTA groups distribute these blanks during the late summer and hold a "get-together" tea in September soon after the opening of school.

Listed by Yeager in his book, *Home-School-Community Relations*, as the activities actually being carried out in one hundred Parent-Teacher Associations in order of frequency are:

- study groups
- relief for children
- parent education
- child welfare
- purchase equipment-gifts
- summer round-up
- know your school
- health
- hot lunches
- library
- beautify school
- community projects
- card parties
- literary courses
- student aid or loan fund
- character
education, recreation, lecture courses, and playground.\(^2\)

**Department of Public Recreation**

The recreation program for the city of Billings is tax-supported, but the cost to the taxpayer is considerably less than the national average which is $2.25 per capita. The cost in Billings is only $.60 per capita. It has been estimated that School District #2 contributes approximately $5000 a year since it allows the use of its buildings rent free. Much help is given by civic, social, and fraternal organizations during the year.\(^3\)

The program is carried on under a trained recreational director. There are twenty full-time employees during the summer and two full-time and forty part-time employees during the winter.

The recreation board consisting of five members formulates the policy, defines what procedures shall be used, defines and carries out the legal responsibility of the organization, selects the executive, does the budgeting for the department, maintains property, formulates service policies and program, selects the best qualified staff possible and tries to maintain good public relations. The board performs its duties without financial remuneration to its members.


Public recreation is for everyone in the community; preschool children are included. The divisions of the program are physical activities, dramatics, music, arts and crafts, scientific tinkering, gardening, linguistic arts, dancing, nature, community service, and social recreation.

An example to show the large number of children taking part in the Department's activities is the recreation follies which was presented at the Junior High School Auditorium on March 30-31, 1951. Four hundred sixty-three boys and girls participated in the revue which was a climax to the Recreation Department's winter dance program which got under way in most of the schools of the city last October. The revue included thirty-seven dance numbers followed by a special tumbling exhibition.

Contacts with the Department of Public Recreation may be made through school personnel working in related fields or through school authorities.

4-H Club

4-H Club work is a part of the extension service of the United States Department of Agriculture, working in cooperation with the land-grant agricultural colleges of each state. Only a comparatively few professional workers on the national, state, and county levels are employed. The real work in the program is done by volunteer leaders with professional assistance.
"Working Together for World Understanding" is the 1951 National 4-H theme. The basic thought of the 4-H Club was for farm youth, but the Club has been extended to the city child as well. Any boy or girl between ten and twenty-one who agrees to "learn by doing" may enroll in a 4-H Club.

Nationally, as well as in Yellowstone County, the program is helping to increase farm income, improve standards of living, increase satisfactions from community life, and prepare young people for adult responsibilities.

The 4-H Builder program for youths from fifteen to twenty-one is for developing leadership, community service, and an opportunity to do things together.

There are two 4-H Builder Camps held each year and the older 4-H Club members look forward to the State Conservation Camp which is held each year.

In the past year, there were 8,610 club members in Montana with 621 in Yellowstone County of which 353 were girls and 268 were boys. One hundred fifty-nine were fifteen years old and over.

The 4-H Clubs of Yellowstone County were awarded a plaque for the outstanding 4-H Club safety program of the state for 1950. Other plaques were won by the Lively Livestock Club of Billings for being the outstanding club in the state and by a county delegation at the club congress in Bozeman, Montana, for outstanding achievements in judging and demonstrating.
A total of 517 club members from the forty-eight clubs in the county completed their 1950 projects. Beef fattening was one of the most popular projects carried on by 4-H Club boys. Three members conducted a beef breeding project. More interest is shown each year in dairy projects. Other projects are forestry, gardening, home ground beautification, poultry raising, raising of rabbits, bees, sheep, or swine, small grain, corn, bean, legume, grass production, and sugar beet projects, and tractor maintenance. Some of the projects carried on by 4-H Club girls are food, clothing, and home living, with each project divided into several units. New projects for the coming year are farm and home electric for both boys and girls, range management, and garden and potato projects.

Referrals to this organization are made through schools, Home Demonstration Clubs, and interested individuals.

**Boy Scouts of America**

The Boy Scout organization is a participating agency of the community chest of Billings.

The Cub Scout program, for boys eight to eleven, is built around home-centered games and stunts with a den mother and den chief present at the meetings. Cub Scouts do good turns and help other people. They have a choice of things to do in rank, such as caring for pets, studying nature, and making collections. They work for ranks of
Wolf, Bear, and Lion with certain requirements for each.

The unit of the Boy Scout organization is the troop which consists of from two to five patrols of not more than eight boys each. A troop must be sponsored by a church, school, or other organization which provides a meeting place.

The Boy Scout organization includes boys eleven to fourteen years old. The motto "Be prepared" and all the training a boy undergoes while a Scout is intended to prepare him to meet any emergency in the city, in the country, or on the water. Some Scout activities are: first aid, swimming, lifesaving, woodcraft and nature study, signaling, athletics, and camp cooking.

Explorer Scouts, ages fourteen to eighteen, have a more advanced program with more privileges and responsibilities given the boys. Their program is divided into the Air Scout program, Sea Scouting program, and Exploring program. Some Explorer Scouts act as junior leaders for other troops.

The Black Otter District is one of eleven districts in the Yellowstone Valley Boy Scout Council which holds monthly meetings to discuss such things as leadership training courses, recruiting of commissioners, council summer camps, and revision of standards for awards.

Recently, the Black Otter district reported that in
the Billings vicinity there are 740 Cub Scouts, 516 Scouts, and sixty-one Explorer Scouts with 392 adult leaders taking part in the program.

During National Scout Week which was February 6 through 12, a court of honor was held at the Junior High School Auditorium.

An annual event of the Black Otter District Scouts is the Scout circus held at Daylis Stadium in May. Members of the Billings Kiwanis Club and the Yellowstone Kiwanis Club are co-sponsors of the circus and they are assisted by the High School Key Clubs of which they are sponsors. With approximately 2,000 scouters, Kiwanis, and Key Club members taking part in preparations for the outdoor show, the circus is one of the year’s major community events.

The Scouts carried on paper drives regularly during the year. They helped distribute defense bond posters, Tuberculosis, and Cancer Society posters. In fact, any worthwhile organization may call on the Scouts for such assistance.

The Black Otter district has four summer camps where Scouts go on camping trips during the summer months: Camp Wilderness, fifteen miles south of Absarokee, Camp Highlight, sixteen miles southwest of Bozeman, Waterfront Camp at Fort Peck and Crazy Head Springs at Lame Deer, Montana.

A world jamboree is to be held in Salsburg, Austria in August, 1951. Six Scouts from the Yellowstone Valley
Council and one medical doctor from Baker have registered to attend.

Referrals may be made by school officials, churches, and parents.

**Girl Scouts of America**

The activities of the Billings Girl Scouts are financed through the Community Chest. Membership is limited to "Greater Billings"; however, the organization is in a transition period since national leaders have become concerned about extending the membership into rural areas.

There is a state adviser to Girl Scout councils and troops in Montana. Billings has a trained executive secretary, field director, and six voluntary trainees. The two professional workers meet with the Girl Scout council board and committees to plan the training programs, camps, organization, membership, staff, finances, and public relations. The major goals for the coming year are civilian defense and community service, reduction of membership turnover, and cooperation with other community agencies.

There are now 1,368 girls and adults in the Girl Scout program in Billings. Most Girl Scout troops meet once a week for an hour and a half or two hours. Each troop has an adult leader and assistant leader, also a troop committee to help plan its activities.

Brownie Scouts range in age from seven through nine
and follow a free play program. They learn to help their mothers around the house, to play with children their own age, and to prepare to be good citizens.

The "flying up" process comes at the age of ten. Girls from ten through thirteen are called Intermediate Scouts. The Intermediate Scouts have troops of eight to twenty-four girls who divide into patrols with each patrol electing its own leader. The whole troop elects general officers. The Intermediate Scouts start the badge program and center their activities on individual abilities.

The Senior Girl Scouts, ages fourteen through eighteen, do most of their work in committees. Senior Scouts concentrate on skills and on an appreciation of society. Service is the keynote of the Girl Scout program. The girls are taught to assume responsibilities and to use initiative.

Girl Scouts have the following fields of interest: sports and games, literature and dramatics, music and dancing, nature, out-of-doors, arts and crafts, agriculture, health and safety, community life, international friendship, and homemaking.

In the spring of 1951 the Billings Girl Scouts had a "Vision of Juliette Low" pageant consisting of thirteen scenes and dances with a choral reading group and chorus to supplement pantomime acting. This pageant, in which 289 girls took part, was on the thirty-ninth birthday of the
Girl Scout organization in America and was given in honor of the founder, Miss Juliette Low.

During this same week, there were several window displays of Girl Scout activities, projects, and purposes.

Each year, Girl Scout cookies are sold by the girls; this year, the proceeds will go toward the purchase of supplies and equipment for Twin Pines, the Girl Scout camp located about five miles from Billings.

There are two established summer camps for Billings Girl Scouts. The Brownies have the use of the Lions Club camp at Red Lodge, Montana, for a three-week period. The Girl Scouts have exclusive use of the Rotary camp at Red Lodge. It is used by the Intermediate Scouts for a session of eight weeks divided into shorter sessions.

Referrals to this organization may be made through the school, church, interested individuals, and adults active in Girl Scouting.

Young Women's Christian Association

The Billings Young Women's Christian Association, a member of the Community Chest, has clubs not only for adults but several for teen-agers as well.

The aim of the YWCA is to help women help themselves. It helps women of any age, race, creed, and nationality to solve personal, domestic, and economic problems, without charity or seeking reforms.
The Billings Woman's Club and Junior Woman's Club assisted in raising funds to purchase the present home of the YWCA and the Junior Chamber of Commerce took on the project of remodeling the building. One of the rooms of the building is a youth recreation center where square dances and many other activities are held. There is a well-equipped kitchen which is used either in connection with the recreation room or a clubroom in another part of the building.

There are quarters in a small adjoining building where girls may stay until they find suitable living quarters. The residence director-housekeeper is often notified of rooms which are for rent by people in the community. It is hoped that a new, larger residence home may soon be obtained.

The active running of the YWCA is done by fifteen women representatives of different church and civic groups who are elected by the members. Some of the committees are: personnel, public affairs, world fellowship, religious emphasis, social, community service, and teen-age activities.

Members of classes and clubs are expected to join the YWCA. Classes are planned quarterly as requested and include variety from beginning bridge lessons to Bible study. One group is called the Junior Gardeners in which each girl has a garden plot.

Each club elects its own officers and plans programs
under supervision of program staff workers. The Y-teen clubs of Billings are: the seventh grade Y Teen, the seventh grade Garfield Y-teen Friendship, eighth grade Happy Tri, eighth grade Garfield Hi-Sky-Y, ninth grade Y-Teen, Billings High School Hi-Tri Club, and the square dance club.

The YWCA has had a summer camping program since its beginning and has used the Lions Club Camp near Red Lodge the last few years.

The YWCA cooperates with the City Recreation Department in providing space and equipment for archery, table tennis, croquet, and other outdoor sports, and crafts workshops.4

Referrals may be made by adult members of the YWCA, school authorities, churches, recreation department, parents, relatives, and other interested individuals.

Child Welfare Service

The Child Welfare Service is a part of the Yellowstone County Department of Public Welfare which is tax-supported.

The goal of this service is to strengthen families in need of help so that they may have a more normal family life. Its primary aim is to serve children, especially those in danger of becoming delinquent.

The case workers will talk to individuals in their office, make several visits with the parents in their home,

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if necessary, and try to better their situation. They give aid with applications to schools for mentally defective children, also help get services for crippled, blind, or deaf children by making referrals to other county and state agencies. This agency works with unmarried mothers both before and after the baby is born. Often, the mothers are referred to the Florence Crittenden Home at Helena, Montana. The child is sometimes placed in a foster home for three months and the case is referred to the state office in Helena for adoption. The case history is forwarded by the Child Welfare Service.

In January, 1951, an article was published in the Billings Gazette citing the critical need for foster homes in Billings. The article stated that $30 a month is paid by the State for the child's food, an allowance is made for clothing and medical care, and, in some instances, a little more money is allowed for special care.5

Many times, a child is kept in the foster home while he is under medical treatment or while he is under treatment at the Mental Hygiene Clinic for behavior problems which result from broken homes and allied problems. Sometimes, it is necessary to place a child temporarily in a foster home because of illness in the family or because

of family trouble. Another case was that of a mentally
deficient school age child who was number 131 on a waiting
list of over 200 for the over-taxed state training school
at Boulder. He needed to be placed in a home until his
admittance could be gained.

Another article followed in a later issue of the
Billings Gazette stating that as a result of airing the
problem, there were letters, phone calls, and personal
visits from persons interested in the foster home shortage
problem. There are now forty-one licensed foster homes in
Yellowstone County, some having as many as four foster
children.\(^6\)

The Child Welfare Service works directly with the
schools in many cases. Referrals may be made by school
authorities, the sheriff's office, county nurses, churches,
parents, relatives, and other interested individuals.

Family Welfare Service, Inc.

Family Welfare Service is an organization which was
started in Billings thirty-five years ago as the Associated
Charities. About eight years ago, it became independent and
is now supported by the Community Chest.

Other community agencies often make donations. The
Elks Lodge gave $100 for the purchase of shoes last year.
The Woman's Club donated $21. The Kiwanis Club donated

\(^6\)Roy Anderson, "Some of Needed Foster Homes Found by
money for dental work and food which was distributed to needy families.

About $500 a year is budgeted for corrective work such as tonsilectomies, dental work, and glasses. Doctors and hospitals give a special rate to the Family Welfare Service. Emergency or temporary relief such as groceries and clothing, both second hand and new, are furnished to families on marginal incomes. If the case is more than an emergency, it is referred to the Department of Public Welfare.

The Family Welfare Service program is very flexible. Help is given in adjustment after family changes due to a death, sickness, an accident, financial difficulties, desertion, or a divorce. Case work service is given to unmarried mothers. Although no adoptions are done through this agency, the Montana Children's Home papers in the adoption program are handled by this office. The Family Welfare carries the Traveler's Aid program which consists of meeting trains and case work service. Work is also done in cooperation with the United States Employment Office. This agency often finds temporary boarding homes for children. Frequently, neglected or potentially delinquent children are reported to this office. The homes are investigated and counsel is given both to the parents and to the child.

This office can provide limited financial help. For
example, the parents of a little Mexican boy who had been
calmed to go to the Lions camp for a week were unable to pro-
vide the required clothing for such an outing. The Family
Welfare outfitted the boy. There was another case in
Billings when transportation was provided for a time by the
Family Welfare for a spastic child whose parents were unable
to send him to the Cerebral Palsy Center.

Recently, in a report by the Family Welfare Service,
it was stated that 420 families in Billings have been sup-
plied with clothing needs in the past year and a total of
325 school children have been aided by this service.

The policy of the Family Welfare Service is to supple-
ment rather than to duplicate the work of other welfare agen-
cies.

Recently, a Home Service Club was formed for women
who have come to the Family Welfare Service for help. Meet-
ings are held in a room in the Salvation Army building. De-
monstrations are given on remodeling clothing. Talks have
been given by a public health nurse on sanitation and by the
Home Demonstration agent on victory gardens.

Referrals may be made by the visiting teacher of the
Billings School system, public health nurses, sheriff's
office, probation office, churches, parents, and interested
individuals.
Yellowstone County Public Health Service

There are five public health nurses, three for the city of Billings maintained by School District #2 with two months' pay from the State and two employed by Yellowstone County.

The program serves individuals from infancy to adulthood and also concerns itself with prenatal care. The specific aims of the nursing service are to help maintain health and conserve the life of children, to restore sick children to health and help prevent harmful after effects, to stimulate in every child a desire to safeguard his own and others' health, to create a desire for and a knowledge of how to obtain medical and dental service, to assist the schools in a program of home and school cooperation in health matters, to contribute to the community a plan for the prevention and control of communicable diseases, to aid in the problem of attendance placing emphasis on legitimate absence as well as regular attendance at school, to cooperate with all legitimate health and social agencies to help children, and to promote community understanding and needed facilities for children's health.

In the Billings Schools, a health record is kept for each child. This record shows such things as the dates of immunization shots, records of communicable diseases, and hearing and vision tests. Periodical checkups are made by
the school nurses and their findings are recorded on the cards. The nurse may make a home visit to refer the child to the family physician, an oculist, or a dentist. The child must return a signed card showing that he has had further examination.

Each year before the opening of school, there is a health checkup of preschool children. During the school year, well-child clinics are held monthly through cooperation of the State Board of Health, the County Welfare Department, and Parent-Teacher Associations. A typical clinic is attended by about thirty children with twenty-five being given physical examinations and five referred to their family physicians by the city-county health officer in charge. Ten children might receive diphtheria inoculations, fifteen, whooping cough shots, and, five, smallpox vaccinations. The Health Service assists Boy and Girl Scouts each spring by giving tick shots.

The public health nurses investigate all calls made to their office. These are made through schools, doctors, other nurses, hospitals, Cerebral Palsy Center, social workers, family welfare workers, and interested individuals. Sometimes, cases are referred to another appropriate agency or to the county doctor.

**Mental Hygiene Clinic**

The Mental Hygiene Clinic of Billings is a state program supported partly from Federal and partly from State
funds. Its goals are education in the principles of mental health and treating or helping people who have emotional disturbances. All children are eligible for the services. The Clinic also works with parents and adults who are directly connected with the child's problems.

The procedure followed starts with an "intake" interview which consists of talks with the parents by one member of the staff and with the child by another member of the staff. This is followed by psychological testing and psychiatric evaluation. Treatment is then given if indicated, or the case is referred to some other place. The Clinic endeavors to help parents accept the idea that sometimes the child must be referred to various institutions.

In addition to the treatment of the youngster, the program goes into the schools. Case conferences are conducted by the Clinic in the Billings Schools three times each month.

The public health nurses make most of the referrals at the present time. However, the Clinic is also contacted by school officials, physicians, parents, interested individuals, vocational agencies, and other social groups.

Cerebral Palsy Center

The Cerebral Palsy Center operates in cooperation with the State Board of Health and the Montana Chapter of the National Society for Crippled Children and Adults. The
sale of Easter seals is the chief source of income. Other sources are: voluntary contributions received from individuals, money for therapies paid by the State Board of Health, and grants made to the State by the United States Children's Bureau.

In Billings, Eastern Montana College of Education houses the Cerebral Palsy Center which is interested in the health, welfare, education, recreation, and rehabilitation of youth physically handicapped by cerebral palsy. There are eighteen students for five days a week. Ninety-three is the case load. This includes those who come for occasional treatments. The outpatients are from thirteen counties. The youngest child in the nursery pre-school room is three and one half years old. The children are mostly eight to fifteen years old.

Each child has a program set up to meet his special needs which are never identical with the needs of the others enrolled. Each program, which is adapted to the needs and type of handicap, has maximum development as its goal.

The Center has the following objectives: physical developments through full use of abilities and capacities, emotional security for the child, his home, and community, intellectual development at the most feasible rapid rate as nearly like public school as possible, and parent education. It is emphasized that intelligent, sympathetic,
and persistent participation by the parent as well as the teacher is essential to the successful education, development and training of the child.

Recently, a Girl Scout troop was formed at the Center. The girls will carry out regular activities with some modifications to meet their physical abilities.

The Center has a medical advisory council and is assisted by the Montana Medical Association. Its affiliation with the National Society for Crippled Children and Adults, active for more than twenty-five years, assures an exchange of experience and knowledge and gives Montana national counsel and advisory services.

Referrals are made through school officials, doctors, public health nurses, health departments, parents, and interested individuals.

**State Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation**

The State Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation came in with the Smith-Hughes Act and is a public service supported by matched amounts from State and Federal funds. The operation and control of the program rests with the State Board of Education. Headquarters are in Helena and there are five branches in the State with one in Billings.

The service is for vocationally handicapped persons sixteen years of age or older who are in school or have left school. Cases are reported while the youngsters are
still in school, even in the lower grades, and their records are kept until the year after graduation from High School or until the individual has left school. (It is very helpful to the Bureau if the school has kept a good permanent record card for the individual who is to be helped.)

The Bureau will assist in sending the handicapped children to college even if the parents are well-to-do. Individuals are prepared for a useful occupation or are restored to one.

Services available to the handicapped individual, whether his condition is physical or mental, if it interferes with a useful or gainful occupation, are:

(1) physical examination and diagnosis, (2) vocational counseling, (3) vocational training and training supplies, (4) maintenance while in training to help with living expenses if the financial support cannot be obtained from any other source, (5) placement equipment, the money for which is to be repaid, (6) prosthetic appliances, such as artificial limbs, braces, and hearing aids, (A financial statement is necessary first.) (7) physical restoration which includes the payment of medical costs for the correction or removal of a relatively stable physical handicap, (Financial statement necessary), (8) placement assistance and follow-up to see that handicapped person has been properly placed.7

Elementary school or college officials often report cases to the Bureau. Doctors, nurses, ministers, welfare departments, and labor unions also make referrals.

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7Vocational Rehabilitation (Leaflet distributed by Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, a division of State Board of Education, Power Block, Helena, Montana, 1950).
The American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is a national organization which carries on its own drive for funds. The direction of all activities of the American Red Cross is centered in the governing body, the Central Committee, and carried out by five area officers and 3,754 local Red Cross chapters.

The main purpose of the Red Cross is to function in disaster and national emergencies. During World War I and World War II, the American Red Cross supplied skilled medical and nursing care, surgical dressings, hospital supplies, and entertainment for men of the armed forces. During World War II, Red Cross committees tried to see to it that the international code for treatment of prisoners was preserved, distributed American-packed food parcels to prisoners of war, and worked with the military to maintain communication between men in the armed forces and their families.

In Billings, the Red Cross still works through all branches of the armed forces and makes investigations for service men and their families.

The Yellowstone County Red Cross Chapter offers courses for all youth. In first aid, individuals are taught what not to do in emergencies. Billings Senior High School has a registered nurse who teaches home nursing classes twice a week. Swimming and life saving are taught by trained personnel.

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The Junior Red Cross carries on its program through the schools of Billings. There is no membership fee. Every child who wears the Red Cross button has won this right by some service to his school, town, or Red Cross chapter.

Each fall, the grade school children pack boxes to be sent to children overseas. Such items as pencils, crayons, soap, and combs are included. Last year, the boxes from Yellowstone County were sent to Denmark and Austria.

Each year, a Junior Red Cross fund drive is conducted in the schools. Last year, the amount collected was $514, of which $400 was used to purchase milk and clothing for people in foreign countries, the rest, for the cost of shipments.

Referrals to the local Red Cross chapter may be made by individuals, military personnel, and Red Cross Field Directors.

Other organizations

The various agencies described are those which have service to children as one of their primary purposes. However, there are many other local organizations which touch education and social welfare at many points.

In Billings, there are service clubs, civic clubs, fraternal organizations, sororities, veterans' organizations and their auxiliaries, labor unions, business and professional
associations, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Commercial Club.

Several of these groups sponsor clubs for youth and take part in such activities as community Hallowe'en parties, summer camps for boys and girls, student loan funds, scholarships, formation of baseball leagues, nourishment for underweight children, free medical service, orthopedic clinics, assistance to crippled children, aid to the blind, prizes for essays and orations usually of a patriotic or civic nature, and contributions of money to the schools (usually designated to be used in the purchase of certain items, such as books for the school library).

One group, the Junior Women's Club, is making plans for establishing a receiving home for children which will follow the foster home idea but will care for five or six children at a time and will be supervised by a couple who will be paid for their services. The Junior Women's Club committee is planning to contact the youth committees of various organizations of the city to see what financial assistance may be had and hope that the project will be under way by the fall of 1951.

Summary

In describing the various agencies, the writer has shown that there is cooperation to some extent among a few of the agencies, especially those concerned with recreation,
health, delinquency, relief, and guidance. However, the consensus of opinion of agency representatives contacted is that Billings is in need of a coordinating council to reduce inefficient overlaps and duplications of services, to spot unmet needs, to prevent inter-agency "squabbles", and to improve and expand services.

One staff member of an agency brought out the point that a council could prepare a printed directory of social agencies which could be revised every few years and which would state such things as the name, program, and location of all agencies in Billings working with children.

A member of another agency emphasized the need of a central body to prepare a calendar of community activities and thus act as a clearing house for the agencies.
CHAPTER V

ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Necessity for Adequate Organization

A coordinating council is a cooperative organization of groups and individuals who work together to improve social welfare within a given local community. Such a council is primarily an advisory rather than a super administrative agency. Its purpose is to clarify community problems and needs and to stimulate existing agencies to more intelligent and cooperative efforts in meeting those problems and needs.

The general purposes of community coordination have been stated in a bulletin called "A Guide to Community Coordination":

1. To promote cooperation among organizations and citizens interested in making the community a more wholesome place in which to live
2. To foster the coordination of efforts of the foregoing organizations and individuals in order to meet the needs of the community more effectively
3. To sponsor the study of resources, conditions, and needs
4. To advance the education of the general public regarding conditions to be improved
5. To secure democratic action in meeting local needs through existing agencies, organizations, and institutions.

1A Guide to Community Coordination (Bulletin by Coordinating Councils, Inc., 145 West 12 St., Los Angeles, California, 1941), p. 2.

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In small towns and cities, councils usually invite into membership representatives of all organizations interested in the welfare of children and youth or in making the community a more wholesome place in which to live.

There is necessity for adequate organization so that the council will function effectively as a coordinating or planning group. It must keep member agencies from encroaching on each other's territory of service.

The council works through the many organizations, agencies, and departments included in their membership depending on the type of problem. Through cooperative planning, through the pooling of ideas and resources, a way is usually found to meet the needs which all agree are urgent.

Following are some of the fields in which improvements have been made by councils in communities through cooperative planning: recreation, public service, health and safety programs, organizations for boys and girls, employment for youth, new youth groups, educational opportunities for adults, community conditions, and new organizations and agencies.

Plans of Organization

Executive direction

In larger cities, it has been the practice to secure the services of a director of public relations. In cities
of more than fifty thousand it is recommended that he be employed on a full-time basis. In many cities, his public relations duties are combined with other duties such as research, child accounting, or adult education. Occasionally, an assistant superintendent of schools may serve in this capacity.

In small communities, the superintendent may assume the direction of public relation or he may delegate the job to a principal or teacher. The several principals of school buildings may direct their own public relations activities, perhaps in cooperation with a community council or selected agencies or individuals. When a teacher is selected, he should have some form of preparation and experience to fit him for the service to be rendered. Since the size of the district determines the nature of the position of director of public relations, the point to be observed is that the proper administrative offices direct the program.2

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers suggests the following qualifications for a public relations director:

He must be able to work amicably with people—his success depends upon them. He must be capable of permitting others to assist him—publicity is not a one-man job. He must have a sense of humor—he does not take himself too seriously. He must have a sense

2William A. Yeager, Home-School-Community Relations, (Published in Pittsburgh and distributed by the University Book Store, University of Pittsburgh, 1939), p. 451.
of proportion—he is able to distinguish between the important and the irrelevant. He must be courteous and considerate and cooperative at all times—no matter how trying the situation, his temper remains unruffled, his poise unshakable, and his spirit unperturbed. He must be tactful, patient, and resourceful. He must be courageous—defeat never discourages him. He must avoid taking the spotlight personally, but seek to place his organization there.3

Many announced duties of public relations directors have been conceived largely in terms of publicity, as in the performance of a single group of functions in a school campaign. Directors have not often been called upon to bring about better home-school-community relations in its broader aspects as a cooperative endeavor in the interests of complete child welfare. It can readily be seen that a proper philosophical approach is important.4

School coordinating council

In this plan of organization, the impetus may come from the administration or from a teacher's professional organization as a result of some spontaneous realization of educational problems, needs, and conditions. The purpose is to develop a greater spirit of cooperation within the school system through common educational objectives, the solution of pressing problems and the improvement of relations between the school, home, and community.

3Yeager, op. cit., p. 452.

4Loc. cit.
The procedure in setting up such an organization is to call together representatives of the administrative staff and the teachers with representation accorded later to the board of education, the pupils, the non-professional staff, and interested parents or community leaders. Attention should be focused upon some definite need or problem in effecting a plan of organization as an outgrowth of this conference. Problems may be revealed through the outcome of previous survey of such problems as lengthening the school day, homework, or recreation.

Under skillful leadership, an effective organization may be brought about as a result of such a conference. A small coordinating council may be formed under the direction of the superintendent; assistant superintendent, a principal, or perhaps a teacher who has been given available time. The larger school council may be retained, meeting as occasion demands while the small coordinating council becomes the steering committee.

The school coordinating council should assume large responsibilities for policy and program development and personnel selection. They should meet often enough to exchange ideas, discuss school and community problems and make recommendations or decisions. They should outline the duties of those who may be called upon to perform them. From time to time, they should determine the general scope of the
program. The administrative head will want to take at least some part to be assured that the adopted program is in accord with general administrative policy.

In adapting this plan to larger school systems, the necessity for an increased allotment of time for public relations direction appears. The rule in this connection would depend upon local needs and problems, personnel and funds available.

If a director is able to give but a limited time to these duties, he may be given some secretarial or clerical assistance. The secretary's office should become a clearing house for the business of the coordinating council.

The limitations of the school coordinated plan of organization lie in the fact that not enough recognition is given to the more informal and varied aspects of child development occurring outside the public school. As community representation is extended, this limitation will be overcome.5

Community-coordinating council

While such councils differ widely in plan, organization, and purpose they seem to have the following characteristics:

1. They organize on a community or neighborhood basis
2. They bring together both lay and professional representatives of many organizations interested in the welfare of children, youth, family, and the community

3. They do not act as agencies but as counselling or coordinating bodies
4. They are interested in the prevention of delinquency. Some make this their major objective while others consider it secondary.

Public education is concerned with rapidly expanding political, economic, educational, and social problems which arise as a result of rapidly changing social order.

The educational program has been expanded to meet many of these new responsibilities of citizenship by providing a changing curriculum and special services. However, it is agreed that the work of the school will be inefficient without community understanding and support.

The community coordinated council plan has been proposed as the most desirable solution to the problem. Effective school-community programs of coordination have been developed in many communities seeking to study, plan, and improve community and public school conditions and relationships.

The impetus for organizing such a council may come either from within or outside the school. It may be initiated by the board of education or superintendent, by the parent-teacher association, the women's club, or any other agency or group of agencies or individuals. The school is the most logical impetus because of its position as the community educational agency.

Ibid., p. 457.
Immediate school or community problems such as a safety program, juvenile delinquency, crime prevention, public health, or recreation may well provide the occasion for call to organization.

At the first meeting, the purposes should be made clear and the plan of organization outlined. The scope of services to be rendered and the program policy and program to be adopted should be discussed. It is important to determine the participating organizations to be included and the form of representation accorded.

Areas of school and community service should be marked clearly, selection being made of those for immediate and those for ultimate study and improvement. These may well be made on the basis of a community survey to ascertain their nature and urgency. Means should be provided for interchange of opinions as discussion groups or public meetings when deemed advisable.

Executive leadership must be provided either on a full or part-time basis. He may be the chairman or a member of the coordinating committee with the necessary time and experience or employed by them. The size of the community, services to be rendered, and funds available will be factors to be considered.7

7 Yeager, op. cit., pp. 458-459.
Possible Approaches in Initiating the Program

"Grass-roots" approach

Realizing the different stages of the development of teachers, the differences in neighborhood needs within a city, and the shortcomings of the city-wide approach to curriculum planning, certain school systems are encouraging individual schools within a system to work as units in developing programs which suit their needs and which take advantage of the particular resources available. The trend toward the grass-roots approach is not peculiar to education. It is the belief of many who contend that creative participation is the safeguard of democracy that a certain amount of decentralization is necessary.8

The school principal's desire to bring about happier relationships with the home and community is part of this approach. Beginning with his own teachers, he will create in them a desire for more wholesome home and community contracts. Two or three problems may be proposed for solution, preferably suggested by the teachers themselves. By his own enthusiasm, he will create more and more enthusiasm. All the while with an eye to a future developing program, the superintendent and principals will create in the board of education, teachers, pupils, parents, and community a desire for something better and more adequate.9

This approach should include cooperation with community adults. If the "face-to-face" relations between members

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9Yeager, op. cit., p. 474.
of the school staff and members of the community are pleasant ones, the possibility of enlisting lay help will not be difficult. Since specific problems of their own locality or school are of greater interest to members of a community than the more remote curriculum problems of a city-wide school system, this approach contends that the home-front approach to curriculum planning is one of the most effective ways of obtaining lay participation.  

The opportunist's approach

Many times within a school system occasions occur which create an opportunity for the development of home-school-community relations programs. These are usually of an unusual or emergency nature, such as campaigns for increased school support, school strikes, rise of a tax justice association, or a destructive school fire demanding a new school building.

Wise public school leadership sensing strategic occasions in these situations seek to convert them into the development of desirable relations programs.

The solution of the immediate problem is the first consideration but under the "feel" of success and wise sponsorship, a developing program should emerge.11

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10 Yeager, op. cit., p. 474.

Specific problems approach

Numerous school problems concerned with many aspects of education have arisen during the past few years. Many of these concern public school and public relations in particular. Attempts at solution call forth joint efforts of school and community. In this approach, it is proposed that such a program be based upon the joint problems of the home, the school, and the community, each in relation to the other. The immediate program would concern the ultimate solution of the problem or problems, such as those concerned with juvenile delinquency, crime prevention, or public health. A large spread of responsibility should characterize the solution of problems, not only to create a wider spread of interest but to anticipate future problems before they arise. In this way, boards of education, administrators, teachers, pupils, parents, and many citizens and groups may participate in the solution. It is important that a solution to the problem be found and in its solution, good will toward the school and within it will prevail. The arousal of genuine school and community interest in education often arises when a real school problem is faced and solved together.\(^\text{12}\)

Survey approach

A scientific determination of the bases for adequate

\(^{12}\text{Yeager, op. cit., 475-477.}\)
procedures of good public relations may be predicted by a thorough study of needs and conditions upon which such a program may be derived. Two general forms of surveys may provide the means by which this may be accomplished.

The educational survey seeks to analyze and evaluate the public school, its personnel, its policies, its work, and its support. Reports present to the community at large an unbiased evaluation of the work of the public school and recommendations of the schools.

The social survey came into existence as an outcome of the investigation of social problems, such as crime, poverty, disease, and vice. Community disorganization resulting from changing social, political, and economic conditions has brought about the need for careful planning of community life in which the school as well as other educational and social influences plays an important role.13

Other Aspects of Organization

Lay advisory groups

The use of parents as members of groups engaged in planning the school curriculum, in planning for the construction of school buildings, in studying guidance problems, and in evaluating methods of reporting to parents is rapidly expanding.

Before any school decides to bring parents into the fold, it should take stock of the relationships between administrator, teachers, and principal and between teachers and children. There is little to be gained unless the groups inside are working harmoniously. Teachers should feel secure in their work and their relationships with the principal. They should enjoy working with the children and get satisfaction from the job they are doing. Likewise, the principal should feel that he enjoys the loyalty of the teachers and has the support of the administration. The administrator, principal, and teachers must believe that there is something to be gained from reaching out into the community. If this is the case, conditions are right for the development of productive and cooperative relationships between parents and school staff.\textsuperscript{14}

After discussion of general policy, if the group is large, the membership may be broken into small work groups, each with a particular function.

In order to develop a philosophy and determine goals, curriculum planners may make community surveys, read material pertaining to the needs of children and youth in today's society, and visit other schools. In deciding upon a division of labor for these activities, the question of time

and ability of both teachers and laymen must be considered. Usually, the volunteer principle is the most effective method of giving out jobs. In some cases, it may be necessary to build up the confidence of certain individuals before they will volunteer. This may be done by letting them work in teams or by asking them to do a simple job in which they are sure to succeed.\footnote{Storen, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 70.}

It might be wise for at least one Parent-Teacher Association program yearly to present an all parent panel interpreting the needs of the family and community to the teachers. It is just as good for school people to understand the problems and influence of the home as it is for parents to work at the job of understanding and appreciating the school.

For the individual school, it is possible to have conferences for lay groups. The thinking through process is often slower than seems to be the case when one person makes a carefully prepared presentation. However, the emphasis is placed on the new understandings and appreciations which emerge. Deliberate effort to understand, bringing into expression the differing points of view, fusion of ideas into some statement that can be understood by everyone all help to bring about a better feeling among those taking part in the conference.
Discussions may be held on topics concerning child welfare. Home-school groups often procure speakers on this subject. Sometimes the entire year's program will center around one theme such as recreation or safety. Movies, lectures, and other kinds of programs may be provided. At other times, a group may undertake to bring before the community facts regarding local, state, or national problems relating to the school and the welfare of the child.

In planning the more specific aspects of the program, . . . laymen may cooperate by contributing factual information or skills in the fields in which they are expert. In some communities they have helped by collecting resource materials and in aiding in the selection of reference material for teachers and pupils. In a few cases they have cooperated in the preparation of bulletins. The criteria for determining the extent of lay participation might be laymen may participate in any way which results in a broader, richer and more realistic experience for children.16

Selection of personnel

In selecting laymen to help plan the school program, the basis of representation should be as wide as possible. Selection might be made from organized social, civic, industrial, and business groups, also from geographic areas. In planning the curriculum for an individual school, representation should be drawn from all groups directly concerned with the education of the children in that particular area.

Lay members of curriculum committees are frequently selected by the school superintendent or principal. In some

16Storen, op. cit., p. 71
local school systems, where organized groups are included, the group membership selects its own delegate. Perhaps there is no one method of selecting the members which would be equally good for all committees. As a rule, the administrator consults the teacher and parent groups, asking them to name persons who should represent various points of view in the community.17

In small communities, all interested members might be invited to a general meeting where they would elect representatives for smaller working committees. In planning for a particular grade-room activity, the teachers or pupils might select the lay participants.

In the larger coordinated plans of organization when there is a public relations director, he should be well qualified to assume his duties. He should have adequate preparation, interest in his work, and a background of broad human relationships and understanding. He must be prepared with a rich academic and professional background and grounded in a knowledge of research and its uses. He must know the educational field, how to teach, how to supervise. He must know something of journalism and must be a good speaker.

The Queensboro Council of Social Agencies of New York has set up the following characteristics of a good coordinating committee executive:

17 Storen, op. cit., p. 70.
1. Background training or experience in community surveys, studies, and organization
2. Knowledge of and contact with public and private agencies, their organization, function, and service (including schools, social agencies, libraries, community clubs and organizations, public and private health agencies)
3. Experience as an able discussion leader, speaker, and publicist
4. Personal qualifications that will make the coordinator sympathetic and accessible to the community
5. Knowledge of current sociological trends in such fields as crime prevention, character education, health, housing, recreation, education, and adult education, and an unbiased objective attitude toward problems in community planning
6. An ability to adapt to changing conditions and viewpoints with a maturity that warrants confidence in leadership and judgment
7. An ability to initiate community activities and then to stimulate widespread participation and assumption of responsibility in the community.18

Under the school coordinated plan of organization, if the director is given a secretary or other clerical assistance it must be remembered that there are qualifications to be considered here also. The secretary and his assistants should have business training, possibly some social service preparation or experience. They should have pleasing personalities and should be tactful and diplomatic in dealing with people.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL SUMMARY

As a result of various interviews, it was learned that there is in the schools of Billings, Montana, little participation by lay members of the community.

The writer of this paper has shown what laymen have done to help in school situations in various communities in planning curriculum, in setting up educational objectives, and in carrying on a bond campaign.

The following are suggested as specific ways in which help may be given by parents and others: helping with the health checkup of preschool children; supporting budget increases; sponsoring clubs and other groups; acting as librarians, trip-arrangers and transporters, chaperones, and costume-caretakers; serving on curriculum and visual aids committees; assisting in lunch room and on playground; sponsoring entertainments; helping with the school newspaper; helping in the principal's office; helping with such things as mending books and repairing window shades; collecting materials to be used in the classroom; helping with tutoring; caring for children during programs so that parents may attend; calling on children who have been ill for months to help with reading, story-telling, etc.; helping with hobby clubs; taking children on nature walks; taking charge of the Lost and Found Department of the school.
The articles published on what has been done to coordinate the efforts of the schools and social agencies in various communities of the United States have been reviewed—on state-wide basis: Delaware, Kentucky, Wisconsin, and Connecticut; on county-wide basis: Arlington County, Virginia; on city-wide basis: Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York City, New York; Seattle, Washington; Wellston, Missouri; and San Diego, California.

Executive direction, school coordinating council, and community coordinating council are offered as the different plans of organization of a community council, according to experts. Possible approaches for initiating a program are: "grass-roots" approach, opportunist's approach, specific problems approach, and survey approach, with lay advisory groups and selection of personnel being taken into consideration in other aspects of organization.

As a result of making a survey of the existing social agencies in Billings with service to children as one of their primary purposes and inquiring into the degree of coordination existing among the various organizations, it was found that there is cooperation to some extent among a few of the agencies, especially those concerned with recreation, health, delinquency, relief, and guidance. The consensus of opinion of agency representatives contacted is that Billings is in need of a coordinating council to improve the services.
The findings as a result of the above studies were used as a basis for establishing standards for setting up a community council in Billings.

Which Plan of Organization Could Be Adapted to Needs of Billings, Montana and Its Schools

The writer suggests that the plan of the community coordinating council as described in this paper be followed. The general plan would be to form a community council with representatives of the various agencies as members. It would be the business of the council to study local conditions affecting family life, to discover the common problems and needs of local families, to work through existing organizations to interpret these needs, and to find ways of meeting them.

Such a council would not be just another organization. It would be a clearing house of ideas. It would analyze, investigate, and recommend, but it would not initiate new undertakings or employ personnel. The school board might provide a person to serve as coordinator or executive secretary, but each idea would grow out of the council's around-the-table thinking. The council would be a clearing house for community action, a stimulator and a guide so far as member agencies would make and take suggestions.

Since councils are composed of representatives of
agencies and organizations, it means that there is a combination of professional people, such as school principals, clergymen, social workers, public officials, and laymen. If general planning is to be accomplished, the representation must be broad enough to give expression to points of view and to insure support of recommendations agreed upon.

Problems and Other Factors

The writer of this paper suggests that the call to organization could well be issued through the PTA Council, since all elementary school principals and many lay people of the community are members of this Council.

Since the Billings Gazette is always willing to cooperate with the schools of the city, perhaps a feature story could be written on the proposed functions of a community council and thus prepare the public for the idea of establishing such a council.

Volunteers from the PTA Council could be asked to visit the various agencies which have been described in this paper to invite them to send a representative to an organization meeting, or letters could be sent to the agencies asking them to send representatives.

At the first meeting, the purposes would be clarified, the plan of organization outlined, the scope of services to be rendered and the program policy and program to be adopted.
discussed. At this time, the group could also determine other agencies which might be included and the form of representation accorded.

At the following meeting, a qualified person, such as the superintendent of schools, assistant superintendent of schools, the chairman of the community chest, or a person provided by the school board to act as coordinator or executive secretary could describe the program and activities of councils in other cities. He could explain that the power in a community council is simply the power inherent in member agencies working together and accomplishing things together which they cannot accomplish as well separately.

Approaches in Initiating the Program

At the present time, it would seem that the "grass-roots" approach would be the most satisfactory in Billings, with the principal of each elementary school leading his staff to be well informed about the services available in the community and assisting parents to realize what services may help their children. This may be done at staff meetings and Parent-Teacher Association meetings. Gradually, the idea of the formation of a community council would be presented. The groundwork for an interest in the total welfare of children would be laid and the idea could then be presented to the public.
After the organization of the council, the specific problems approach could be used. The group could be divided into small study groups to study such problems as those pertaining to juvenile delinquency.

Recommendations

Since it would be desirable to have more participation by lay people in the schools of Billings, Montana, the writer of this paper recommends that the suggestions for securing lay participation as given in this paper be followed.

The writer also recommends that the plan of the community coordinating council as described in this study be followed in setting up a community council to work with the elementary schools of Billings.

The combined efforts of the community with those of the school would undoubtedly have a constructive influence on the total welfare of children.
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