Making the school a community center

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"MAKING THE SCHOOL A COMMUNITY CENTER"

by

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State University of Montana
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Chairman of Examining Committee

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MAKING THE SCHOOL A COMMUNITY CENTER

Introduction

This thesis covers a broad field about which much might be written. Consequently everything cannot be given in a paper of this kind. A great deal of such work has been done and many accounts of it have been published. The amount of literature on the subject is large.

The term 'community center' has a broad meaning. It is the educational center, the civic center, the social and recreation center, the moral center, and the economic center of the community--the place where all the people of the community meet to receive instruction and help, to discuss matters of common interest, and to satisfy their natural desires for society and recreation.

The object of this thesis is to give some help in making the school a community center under ordinary conditions found in different parts of the United States. A summary of the methods of the work is taken from the experiences of schools in different parts of the United States.

Old magazines, school surveys and reports, and books were used for a history of the movement. The latest magazines, school surveys and reports, and accounts of proceedings of educational meetings were used for a description of some of the latest work on the subject. A personal investi-
gation of schools was made for a description of work an account of which has not been published. All of the above sources of material were used for a summary of the methods of the work.

The author desires to express his appreciation for the help and encouragement given by Dr. Daughters in the preparation of this thesis.
History of the Movement

Evening recreational centers were first established in the public schools of New York City in August, 1899. In time the privileges afforded by each center were made to consist of a gymnasium, a reading room, meeting places for clubs, and the direction needed for the utilization of each.

Educational centers, as reported in the Encyclopedia of Education, were first opened in the spring of 1902 in two public schools of Boston, three more being established the following winter. Young people and adults of both sexes were afforded evening instruction in a dozen or more branches mainly of a practical character. There were classes in dressmaking, millinery, embroidery, and cooking for the women, and classes in carpentry, steam engineering, mechanical drawing, and civil service subjects for the men, while instruction in bookkeeping and stenography were furnished to both groups. There were also cultural subjects as American poets, civil government and geology. The third season 132 teachers were employed in five centers and the number of pupils registered was 8,948.

The movement did not spread rapidly until in 1907. On the evening of November 1, 1907, in Rochester, New York, twelve men of various creeds, views, and incomes met in one of the school buildings there and started a new movement—the open forum. This was the beginning of the movement to make the school a civic center. It was decided to meet weekly in the schoolhouse. The first part of the evening was to be devoted to an address on some question of public interest, and the remainder of the evening to five-minute discussions. For the first meeting these men asked their alderman to come and speak on "The Duties of an Alderman". At the second meeting over fifty men were present. At the next meeting the man who was drafting the new city charter was asked to come and talk it over. The next week a call came from another part of the city for their schoolhouse to be similarly used. By the end of the year, twelve schoolhouses were being used as public forums or as neighborhood centers of democratic deliberation. The next year a political campaign was on and the candidates for the various offices were invited to appear.

During the second year a large number of schoolhouses came to be used thus. In the meantime there had been devel-

oped many other uses of school buildings: young people's clubs, modeled upon those of adults and called "Coming Civic Clubs"; some of the buildings had been equipped with gymnasium outfits and baths; libraries and reading-room facilities were installed; a public lecture system in which citizens had a voice in the selection of topics; a beginning made with motion pictures in the school buildings; local health office established in the school buildings; a successful art exhibit; but the basis of the institution was the use of the building as a center for all-sided deliberation on public questions.

Not long after the beginning of the movement in Rochester, Dr. W. D. P. Bliss visited the city. He studied the work very carefully and soon after told Mrs. David Kirk of Pittsburg about the movement. At about the same time Francis G. Vandegrift decided that she would like to do something worth while along these lines. The two women worked together. Mrs. Kirk went to New York and became interested in putting the moving picture business on a better footing, morally and educationally. It was soon seen that it was necessary to deal with other forms of commercialized recreation in working out their program. This soon spread to

include neighborhood clubs, then civic forums, and then the idea of the wider use of the school plant. Two organizations were formed: People's Recreation Company, which was to carry on experimental work with actual problems of organizing and directing commercial amusements of the better sort; and the Social Center Organization of America, which would propagandize the social center idea and send out missionaries wherever it seemed desirable to start social centers. Such missionary work was found to be impracticable for groups were successful only when they were a matter of spontaneous growth. It was realized that greater good to the cause would come by calling a national convention which would represent all interested in the subject. Thus a national conference upon civic and social center development was arranged to be held at Madison, Wisconsin, the last three days of October, 1911. Mr. E. J. Ward, working through the Extension Division of the University of Wisconsin, was one of the leading spirits of the convention. Nearly two hundred delegates were present. There were eleven sessions and addresses by three governors, six mayors of cities, some of the most prominent educators of the country, economists, newspaper editors, etc.

The feeling was that through the movement all the people in a community could learn to know each other and so to help each other, and that this was to be accomplished through the neighborhood gatherings in some public place like the schoolhouse.

In the previous February there had been a conference held upon the subject at Dallas, Texas. The meeting was financed by Frank Holland, publisher of "Farm and Ranch and Holland's Magazine". This was the First All-Southwestern Social Center Conference. In spite of the fact that the social center idea had come to the Southwest but fifteen months before, three hundred delegates from many communities and many of the states in that section of the country responded to the call. A one-day conference was held. In the Southwest people began in most cases by getting libraries and then seizing upon the school as the focal point. Eric L. Castile, a teacher in 1911 in one of the country schools of Oklahoma, was one of the pioneers in the field in the Southwest. Oklahoma City took the lead in that section of the country. In this city by 1912, the gymnasiums and other rooms were already in practical use every night in some kind

of community service.

Following a survey of the city's recreational needs and facilities, a referendum was held in Milwaukee in the spring of 1912, which authorized its board of school directors to levy a two-tenths mill tax for the support of social centers and other recreational work.

The school centers of Columbus, Ohio, were inaugurated by the Local School Extension Society. They were carried on by the municipal department of public recreation.

In Louisville, Kentucky, they were started by the Women's Club with the cooperation of the Yen's Federation and the school board.

The school center work in Boston lagged for a time, but was revived during the winter of 1911-1912 by the Women's Municipal League. Two skilled social workers were employed to conduct an intensive club work in the East Boston High School. The undertaking succeeded so well that it was taken over by the Boston School Committee.

The following from a survey of the Tussel Sage Foundation, and reported in the Encyclopedia of Education, shows the extent of the social or community center work in 1911-1912: forty-four cities showed or reported centers at which there were paid workers; in nineteen of these the workers

(in some only a part of them) were paid by the board of education; fifty-seven cities reported schoolhouses which were locally known as social or recreational centers, though they were conducted entirely by volunteer workers; in eighty-four of all the cities reporting centers the heat and light were furnished by the school board; in seventy-two the heat, light, and janitor service were provided by the board; in fifteen the board bore the total expense; total amount of money reported as expended in the maintenance of school centers was $139,535.73.

The Smith-Hughes law has an important bearing upon the subject. It outlines a system of education which has great possibilities for community betterment. A "Smith-Hughes School" provides through its part-time and evening classes a further training in industrial arts, home economics and agriculture, for the men and women already at work in these vocations. The connection between this law and the subject of this thesis is very clear in the case of agriculture. A teacher of vocational agriculture is employed by a community high school for twelve months in the year. There are similar opportunities for community betterment in home economics and industrial arts and the connection with the school is the same.

An Account or Description of Some of the Latest
and Most Distinctive Examples of Such Work.

The first school to be studied will be the Harlem School
of New York City. An account of this school is given in
the Survey, Sept. 23, 1916. All the factors at work in
making the school a community center are at work here, but
those especially prominent are the social and the moral. The
big problem was the elimination of delinquency. In 1915 more
than 600 arrests were made in the Harlem district for
juvenile delinquency. The offences ranged through vagrancy
to burglary and sexual aberration. In September, 1915, there
were 1315 boys between the ages of nine and fifteen on the
register of the Harlem School. Of these thirteen per cent
had court records, many arrested from one to eleven times.
A survey was taken and these were the conditions found to be
the causes: poor housing conditions of the people; their low
standards of living; lack of a living wage; unemployment;
in poor food; in existence of physical and of mental defects;
in large number of saloons, small candy stores, motion
picture houses in the district; in drink and drug using habits
of some of the people; in lack of playground facilities; in
large number of broken families; in number of working mothers;
in irreligiousness of a large proportion of the population;

Center", by N. Peyser.
in lack of knowledge of American custom by elders, and in consequent break between the parents and the children; in lack of sufficient welfare agencies and in their want of organization.

The work for the school was to act with the individual child and to operate against the social condition. In addition to working with the child it had to work for better housing facilities, better health conditions, better police supervision of parks, for supervision of amusement places, for more nurseries, for a free neighborhood employment bureau, for a community center for adolescents and adults, for more playgrounds for children, and for lectures and concerts for the grown-ups.

A court of parental relations—a juvenile court in the school—was established. Its function was to try all cases of social maladjustment and of misunderstanding between the parent and the child. The aim was preventative. Before the hearing was held, the home was investigated by a volunteer committee of twelve mothers. This method was in line with the neighborhood action of internal development, of permitting the neighborhood to work upon its own problems. As soon as the fundamental trouble was found the case was transferred to the proper agency—Board of Health, Charity Organization Society, Court of Domestic Relations, etc.

As soon as the case was properly disposed of the boy was
assigned to a big brother or sister—a local organization composed largely of teachers. The big brother did his utmost to keep in touch with the child, with his home and with his family, to direct him into proper lines of activity, and to keep his interest in channels that would lead him to become a good man.

The principle was recognized that some things must be substituted or put in the place of the old attractions that were taken away. They were: athletic clubs of all kinds, folk-dancing, a brass club, a burnt wood class, and a carpentry club with work after school hours, orchestra and glee clubs, poster and art club, juvenile police squad, Safety First squad, motion picture entertainments in public libraries and schools, afternoons and evenings.

The health conditions of the pupils was often miserable. All cases discovered were referred to one of the hospitals or clinics connected with the school's organization.

Monthly concerts were held for the adults of the neighborhood. There was also a Mothers' Club and an association for the parents.

In 1916 the East Harlem Community Association included nearly all the individuals which are essential elements of social unity. The field work of the organization was carried on by a series of committees on morals, health, relief, employment, housing, streets, recreation, motion pictures,
education, foods, immigration and naturalization, finance, membership, and community and advisory board. The membership was thoroughly democratic.

The following is some of the work which was done during July and August, 1916: three closed play streets acquired for the children; four school playgrounds opened from three to five-thirty, five times a week with eight supervisors; a river-front playground promised for the mothers and children of the neighborhood; conferences with health authorities; work with managers of the theaters to induce them to bar school children during school hours; cooperated with the Committee for the Prevention of Tuberculosis; and a series of community dramatic and folk-dancing entertainments.

The experience of Principal Weinthrop of Public School No. 22, of Paterson, New Jersey, in making the school a community or social center, as given in the American School Board Journal, is instructive.\(^{11}\) Paterson is a mill town where nearly all the adults are foreign born and almost every European nation is represented in the mixture. When Mr. Weinthrop went to the town this condition confronted him. The people were clannish, wages were small and families were large. Exhibitions, entertainments, and all the standard attractions were tried without success. Then a new plan was

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hit upon. For the first meeting of the residents, a call was made to come from some of the people rather than the head of the school. Near at hand was a bad district of the city where a great deal of the vice of the city found a good breeding place. Dancing halls of the lowest type and saloons were the main places of vice. Here many of the young people of the community met for their social gatherings. Thus the object of this, the first meeting of the residents, was given out as a discussion of activities and means to attract the young people away from the bad districts.

The meeting was held and was a success. A senior social organization was formed and arrangements were made for junior organizations under the care of committees to use the school building every night. Political candidates were asked to speak at the meetings, along with ministers, doctors, and labor leaders. The principal of the school had suggested that it was a good opportunity to become acquainted with the candidates and to discover their merits. When the Baby Welfare campaign was held the social center took up the movement. It also aided in a clean-up week. Finally a delegation from the center attended a meeting of the Playground and Recreation Commission to get public playgrounds. They got it. Next the people of the neighborhood became interested in the improvement of their streets. Another committee was formed and again they got what they wanted.
After the business part of each meeting refreshments were served. Coffee and cake were served on "Dutch nights", and spaghetti on "Italian nights", and other national dishes—and there were songs and games to round out the evening. It was made a rule that all visitors must always take an active part in the games. It was decided that the best way to have the young people's club was to have the initiative come from the young people themselves. This placed the responsibility in the right place and prevented the boys and girls from looking on it as a coercive scheme. Putting all the work of supervision on the members of the social center made it a genuine community project. The first group organized under the guardianship of the center was a dancing club for the young people. Then a number of boys' and girls' clubs were organized. Papers and books in foreign languages were purchased.

The next request came from the women. It was to learn sewing and cooking. Many of the women had to be away all day to work and so they could not teach their daughters. Here was a real opportunity. First they met with one of the lady teachers. The arrangement of the lessons was made to suit the women as nearly as possible. It was found best to give special groups of lessons, instead of long courses in cooking. Finally a regular domestic science teacher was secured.
Other activities were a Boy Scouts' troop and a Young Men's Glee Club.

The expenses of the center were borne by the community. Membership fees, special entertainments, fairs and exhibitions were the means used.

During recent years the after-class and evening use of the Cleveland school buildings has taken two main forms: (1) regular night school sessions under the direction of the educational department, and (2) letting to various clubs and organizations for miscellaneous gatherings, entertainments and indoor games under the general supervision of the business department. There are also a small number of affairs—entertainments, dances, or bazaars—gotten up either by or for the pupils of the respective schools. The board rules for 1917 permitted a school to hold only two admission-fee entertainments a year.

The following, taken from the Cleveland School Survey by Ayres, is a partial but a representative list of the bodies using the auditoriums:12

Twentieth Ward Improvement Association.

East End Chamber of Commerce.

East End Neighborhood Club.

Women's Suffrage Political League.
Spanish War Veterans.
Ladies' Relief Corps.
Knights of Pythias Lodge.
Public School Association.
D. A. R. Clubs.
G. S. R. Post.
Garment Workers' Union.
Warner Civic Association.
Normal Alumni.
Sanitation Club.
Social Center Club.
Teachers' and Mothers' Club.
Civic League.
Western Reserve Dental Club.
Thespian Dramatic Club.
Mendelssohn Club.
Boys' Glee Club.
Boy Scouts.
Boy Cadets.
Camp Fire Girls.
Y. W. C. A.
Mothers' Club.
Anti-Fly Campaign Club.
Boys' Chef Club.
Patrons' Club.
Social Club.
Latin Club.
Syrian Club.

Several years ago these groups were obliged to pay custodians' fees ranging from $0.30 to $5.00 an evening. On November 15, 1915, the Cleveland board created the Division of School Extension, whose function it was to administer the evening use of school buildings for other purposes than night schools. The board assumed the responsibility for the heat, light, janitor service, and supervision of the sixteen centers then established, but in place of the custodians' fees, individual fees to the amount of 25 cents a month were collected from all persons who regularly availed themselves of the privileges of the center. The assembly room of any other school building was let for a community gathering upon the request of five citizens who were willing to pay the custodian's fee and assume responsibility for the supervision of the meeting and any damage which might happen to the property.

C. G. Rathman in the N. E. A. reports for 1916 tells of a work which school men will do well to study. For that year the Board of Education of St. Louis appropriated for

the public school museum, the eleventh year of its existence, $13,500.00, or 14 cents per pupil. The institution at that writing had 2000 individual collections of illustrative material and 15,000 duplicate collections, each collection consisting of from four to ten objects. The pictorial illustrations consisted of 7000 lantern slides, 10,000 stereographtes, 2000 photographs, 1000 large colored charts, and a large supply of descriptive literature in booklets and pamphlets. Motion picture apparatus was placed in six schools in 1915.

The material consisted of:

Food products—cereals in the plant and grain and their products; coffee, tea, sugar, in the various stages of production; spices, etc.

Materials for clothing—the various animal and vegetable fibers of the world and the fabrics made of them.

Tree products—domestic and foreign woods; rubber, gutta percha; materials for dyeing, tanning, etc.

Industrial products—showing the various stages in the manufacture of glass, paper, leather, ink, the pen, the pencil, the needle, paper made of rags and pulp, the screw, pocket-knife, the broom, electric lamp, the shoe, etc.

In the high school at Richmond, Indiana, is an art
gallery for which the municipality has made an annual appropriation of $1,000 with which to purchase new pictures. Yearly exhibitions of paintings drew the attention of large numbers of people to the school. Several other cities in Indiana have done similar work. Ward, in his book on The Social Center, reports that in some parts of Indiana a collection of some of the best paintings is owned by several schools together. The collection is sent from school to school and in that way helps to make the school a community center.

On October 5, 1914, about 4,000 people in Sauk City, Wisconsin, gave over the whole day to a pageant interpretation of historic events under the leadership of the schools in that city. It was a celebration held because the following things had been attained by the school: use of ballot box in the school building; a free employment bureau maintained by the school, and the promise of aid from the State Bureau of Community Music and the Free Library Commission.

A report from Sauk County, Wisconsin, gives a form of community work by the school that is not common. The near-

at-home facts of history, civics, and agriculture and farm arithmetic are collected and studied. School district maps show the location of roads, streams, schools, homes, halls, churches, creameries, cheese factories, grist mills, timber areas, alfalfa fields, silos, pure-bred herds of cattle, orchards, untilled lands, rented farms, running water in farm kitchens, bathrooms, pianos, automobiles, lighting systems, paved roads, and farmers' clubs and other organizations. Such maps placed in the schoolhouse serve as an attraction to the people of the community.

The work lately done in Los Angeles, California, is worthy of a report. At the Parent-Teacher Clinic, which was started by the Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations, there are dentists and physicians who administer to the children who are sent to them by the schools, and these dentists and physicians also give such care as is necessary to establish the health of the child. In 1916 it was the plan to have very soon, lectures to the mothers on hygiene, dietetics, care of children's teeth, etc.

In some of the neighborhood schools—where the particular needs of the neighborhood in which the school is located are looked after—one will find such social work as the following: the day nursery, with a competent woman in charge

looking after any number of little children who are not yet old enough to enter the kindergarten. It was necessary to look after them while their usual caretakers—the older brothers and sisters—were in school. Many of the mothers were forced to go to different parts of the city to work. In the day nursery, children were bathed and fed and provided with little beds to sleep in, and a sand pile and blocks to play with. Another interesting and useful phase of the day nursery was the training many high school girls were receiving, for they took turns in assisting at the nurseries and gained by actual experience the lessons on how to care for a baby.

There were also in the neighborhood schools, cooking and sewing classes, where not only the children of the school were taught, but where the mothers of the neighborhood came and were taught how to cut garments, and how properly to prepare the kinds of food that they liked best. Most of the work was done by teachers whose classes were dismissed at 2 o'clock and who had to remain until three. The teacher often contributed an hour as her offering to society. In these schools not only were the children taught to wash and iron, but the mothers were permitted on certain days and hours to do their family washing.

In Oakland, California, evening schools offered courses in all phases of commercial preparation, mechanical courses,
etc. A new class was formed in the year 1917, in hull and naval architecture to aid young men already at work in the yards to understand better the technical side of ship design. In this same year there were also held special classes for foreigners. Many aliens have been assisted here in getting citizenship papers.

Among special features of the School Department were several for the school year of 1916-1917 that might have been classified under extension work. Free public lectures had been given for five years. They were on such subjects as the following: travel, ethnology, history, current events, literature, etc. There was also the Chabot Observatory, the joint property of the City of Oakland and the Oakland School Department, the latter perhaps being the only school in the United States owning such property. The observatory is the fifth in size in the United States, and is pronounced by experts to be one of the best instruments ever mounted. The astronomer, in addition to other duties, offered a series of astronomical lectures annually in the various schools. Trips for inspection and observation were made by high school pupils and the upper grade elementary school pupils to the observatory. The general public was admitted as well.

In Council Bluffs, Iowa, during the summer of 1915, the
schools undertook vacation club work.\(^{18}\) The children engaged in the following different fields: vegetable and flower gardening, canning, cooking, sewing, poultry, baby pork, acre of corn, and manual training.

Upon the invitation of those in charge of the schools, the extension department of the state university met the members of the mothers' clubs of the several school districts and gave instruction in the cold pack method of canning fruits and vegetables.

Through an expert, which their high school teacher of agriculture employed for that purpose, and through the assistance of the teachers and parents interested in the work, instruction was given in every activity undertaken. The instructor in domestic art in the grade school was employed by the mothers' clubs of the city to give instruction in sewing to such girls enrolled in sewing as had had no particular instruction in this work.

The executive board for carrying on the club work was composed of: the superintendent of the city schools; one member from the Board of Education; and three representatives from the Parent-Teacher Association.

Two exhibits of the work of the children were held. At the first, garden products alone were exhibited. Over one

hundred children exhibited products and $32.00 in prizes was given. In the second exhibit there were 3,000 exhibits. The value of the products produced was slightly over $5,000. Cash prizes were again given. There were also given as prizes the expenses for thirteen short courses in the Iowa Agricultural College, three Y. M. C. A., and three Y. W. C. A. memberships, and the money for a trip to the San Francisco Exhibition.

The September exhibit was held in the city auditorium where booths were built by each school after a design made by the mothers' club of each school district. The booths were then decorated by the mothers. It cost the Parent-Teacher Association $326 to hold the exhibit. Superintendent Beveridge says that it was worth much more than this to the city. His words follow:

"The worth cannot be measured for the cooperation secured, the interest awakened, the enthusiasm for better things made manifest, the intellectual and spiritual uplift stimulated, are not measurable quantities. Parents who had up to this time manifested little interest in the school, became enthusiastic workers. Those who had never had social contact with one another learned to confer with and to make concessions to one another."

Carl Holliday in the Review of Reviews\(^{19}\) says that in Hadley, Massachusetts, there has recently been introduced what is called "Trophy Day", when the products of all the

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schools of the community are brought together and prizes are offered for the best corn, the best cake, best sewing, etc. There are also prizes offered to the teacher whose pupils show the best results. There is a junior county fair at which the school products always find a ready sale. In Licking County, Ohio, and also at Cascade and at Kalispell, Montana, school fairs with their exhibits and data charts have proved a revelation to the community.

Practical instruction for adults was held in 1916 in the high school at Sterling, California, where in a three days' course in cement work, farmers learned to make cement floors, steps and posts. At Kalispell, Montana, experiments of a like nature were conducted in making a large number of different kinds of cement.

In the U. S. Bureau of Education Bulletin are given several letters from high school principals in Illinois. They give interesting information concerning some of the work in that state.

Principal F. J. Mabrey, of the Genesee Township High School, says that in the evening school of that place, there are courses in bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, and arithmetic, which are given three nights a week from January 20.

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to March 1. There are also men's and women's gymnasium classes and an agricultural short course for farmer boys. One special phase of agriculture is studied each year. Farm periodicals are made use of.

A letter from Principal W. L. Hagan, Neoga Township High School, tells of an agricultural short course from March 6-10. Work was also given for the women in domestic science. The school ran a Babcock milk test for the people of the community; tested soils for alkali or acid and, also, tested the purity of the limestone.

Principal H. M. Thrasher, of the Huntsville Township High School, in addition to doing the work that was found in the above high schools, sought to find each particular farmer's problem and to solve it through the extension lecture courses. Near the close of the year a trip was planned to the experiment fields. It was planned to take the agricultural class and many interested farmers as well. This high school also issued bulletins, the first of which was on the boys' corn contest which was held, and the second on a review of the lectures.

Below is the calendar of a recently organized school in

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22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
Jersey township, Illinois. The work is for the last semester.

Club meetings.
Morning assembly.
Social hours.
High school entertainments.
Basketball games.
Parent-Teacher Association meetings.
Weekly teachers' meetings.

Commencement and dedicatory function, with a program arranged by board of education, grades, alumni, and all organizations.

Community gymnasium classes, conducted by the city for the benefit of men, women and children who are not members of regular gymnasiums have been started in Portland, Oregon, as a part of the playground system.

Through the help of the school board the use of the gymnasiums was obtained free of cost. This included the use of the equipment. The only expense to the class members is for gymnasium suits. Light and heat are furnished by the school board, while the cost of supervision is met by the City Park Bureau.

The plan so far has been to give each class one night

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each week. It has been found that one instructor cannot handle well more than 120 in a class. In some of the school buildings the attendance has increased several hundred per cent. The classes appeal to people of all ages.

The work is conducted along the usual gymnasium lines and consists of Swedish exercises, folk dances, calisthenics, apparatus work, marching, games, and general athletics. The program is diversified and usually lasts for about an hour and a half.

With the men's classes the work starts off with marching and calisthenics, after which there is apparatus work. The session is brought to a close with basketball, indoor baseball, relay races or games. The men also have a choice of exercises.

The women's classes devote more attention to formal gymnastics than to apparatus work. They start with Swedish exercises and folk-dancing and include some apparatus work, with games and races as the wind-up. The children's classes also follow the Swedish system and folk-dancing largely. The policy has been to make the work more strenuous at each successive session.

The classes for men and women are all conducted at night, except one afternoon class for men who work at night. The children's classes are held in the morning or the afternoon.

Portland now has two community houses and seventeen
school buildings that are used for community gymnasium work.

*The American City* for April, 1918, tells about Americanization work in Manister, Michigan, and club work in Middleton, New Jersey. Manister is a city of about 13,000 inhabitants, five-sixths of the people being of alien birth or parentage, one-third being of enemy alien origin. In spite of this, the number of aliens in the city is only eight-tenths per cent. The problem is to create a spirit of loyalty and to elevate the standards of citizenship.

It was decided to reach the people through a community chautauqua. A series of meetings was planned to be held in the public schools, and all the available speaking, musical, and other talent in the city was enlisted. At each program the speaker was given twenty minutes to present some phase of the topic, "Loyalty and Citizenship". The addresses were given in logical sequence with a definite object in mind. For instance, the first topic was "The American Ideal". The hearers were made to think of the things that had animated them when they came to America. The final talk was on "How We are Winning the War". Community singing was a special feature of the work.

If the efforts being put forth are successful, there

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will be 300 Orange County boys and girls around Middleton, New Jersey, during the summer of 1918 who will be engaged in growing corn and raising pigs. The particular point to be emphasized here is that several of the banks in Middleton have consented to loan money to boys and girls so that they may carry on their projects. The money is to be paid back at the end of the season.

Very recently in one of the Cook County schools in Illinois, an interesting community meeting was held. A special program for the mothers had been given and then a community banquet was held. The assembly room in the school building would hold only about 200 people and double that number was expected at the entertainment in the evening. The following plan was thought out by the principal of the school and was successfully carried through. The people were divided into three groups. Group I was asked to remain in the assembly room where a speaker lectured on gardening. Group II was asked to go to the eighth grade room where a chart lecture was given on home economics. Group III was sent to the seventh grade room where the pupils gave an original play and short talks on food conservation and War

Saving Stamps. At the end of twenty minutes the groups changed places. When another twenty minutes was up, they changed again. Such a plan helps solve the problem of sufficient assembly space which faces every small community.

Principal Albert Earley of the North Plainfield (New Jersey) High School recently started a movement which is not expensive and which many schools could follow. A good picture was hung in the main corridor of the school building and was commented on at the chapel exercises. In a few days the picture was taken down and another put in its place.

The plan was mentioned to a wealthy resident who gave a number of pictures in this way. One of them was by a well-known American artist who was induced to lecture at the school building. The parents were invited to the lecture and to look at the pictures. It is an excellent way of getting the school and the community more closely related to each other.

Many other accounts and descriptions of such work could easily be given. Attention is called at this point to an excellent article in the Tenth Yearbook, Part II, on "Community Work in the Agricultural High School". Valuable
lessons can be learned from all the articles in this book. Attention is also called to the Tenth Yearbook, Part I, which is on "The City School as a Community Center".
An experiment has been carried on at the Hawthorne School, Missoula, Montana, which is deserving of a special report. In a number of ways the experiment has worked to make that school the community center of the neighborhood.

Principal Akins and L. E. Harris of Missoula, were the leaders in the poultry experiment conducted on the school grounds. During the winter of 1917-1918, the pupils of the sixth, seventh and eighth grades worked for about a month on the plans and cost of a building in which the chickens could be housed. Most of the work, however, was done by the seventh and eighth grades. When the lumber finally arrived and all was ready, work was begun on the building. All the work was done by the pupils under the supervision of Principal Akins and Mr. L. E. Harris. The building was 14 by 14 feet.

It was planned to put 36 chickens in the house, dividing it into two parts and putting 18 chickens on a side. Although interest in the movement had drawn the attention of many people of the neighborhood, a plan was now put into

Principal Akins, Hawthorne School, Missoula, Montana.
Principal Lucas, Central School, Missoula, Montana.
Mrs. Farnsworth, Missoula School Board, Missoula, Montana.
Mr. Mecklenberg, School Gardener, Missoula, Montana.
effect which gave them a direct part in the work. Each fam-
ily which was represented in the upper grades of the school
was asked to contribute three pullets. One half of the
chicken house was to contain heavy-weight birds and the other
half light-weight birds. The chickens were soon secured and
by the latter part of January were placed into their new
home.

Arrangements had been made for a contest which was to
start about a week after the chickens were placed in the
building. This gave them time to become accustomed to their
new surroundings. The contest was to last four months.
Prizes were to be given at the end of every month and also
at the end of the contest. The prizes at the end of the
month were for boys having the pullet laying the greatest
number of eggs. There were also prizes for the boys who had
the chickens in the side laying the most eggs.

The leg bands which were used to distinguish the
chickens were donated. The School Board furnished the lumber,
the Chamber of Commerce the feed, and donations were also
received. These last were to pay for the prizes. About
$30 was collected in this manner. A boy was paid $5 a month
to look after the chickens in the mornings and evenings and
on Saturdays and Sundays. Money received from the sale of
the eggs was turned back into the fund.

Two pupils were assigned each week to look after collect-
ing the eggs and letting the hens off the nest. This had to be looked after every hour. The nests were of the trap variety, so that when a hen went into the place where the nest was she could not get out until she was let out. This allowed the children to examine the leg bands and to tell what chicken was let off the nest. The record was then entered on a sheet of paper, posted on the wall of each pen.

The Hawthorne Council Society, made up of the upper grade pupils, managed the business. This society elects its own officers at stated times during the school year. One of the officers deposited in a bank all the money received from the chickens. He also made out the checks when any money was to be paid for supplies, etc.

At the end of each month, people in the neighborhood were invited to the school to hear a report by the society on the poultry experiment. At this time the cost of producing a dozen eggs was figured out, also, the loss per chicken, the profit per chicken, the cost of feed per chicken, and the profit of the best hen. A printed summary was sent to each home at the end of each month. This brought the people in yet closer touch with the work the school was doing.

The children made a balanced ration for the chickens. They did the actual work in the school room.

The Hawthorne Council Society has had a number of pro-
grams to which the parents have been invited. It has sold War Saving Stamps and has done good work for the Red Cross.

The Lowell School has done a good work in its part of the City of Missoula. This school has become the community center for the neighborhood in which it is located. In this school there was perhaps more of a need for such a center than in some other parts of the city. A number of years ago when the work was in its first stages of growth, plans were made to make the school the civic center of the neighborhood. City officials and candidates for office were asked to come to the school and address the people on topics of interest. Many people came to hear the speakers. An interesting result of the work and a proof of its success was that at the next city election this district showed a greater percentage of people who came out to vote in proportion to its population, than any other district in the city.

In this community there is a prosperous Mothers' Club. The mothers hold their regular meetings in the school building and have been very enthusiastic in everything connected with the school. Through their help the principal of the school has been able to have the school grounds made much more beautiful. The Mothers' Club owns its own piano in the school building, besides a number of tables and

dishes for banquets. This club has held meetings at which all the people in the community were invited. It often happens that the mothers desire a special program for a meeting which they wish to hold. They make their wishes known to the principal of the school and usually he is able to arrange for several of the pupils to give songs, recitations or plays.

The Roosevelt School is located in a section of the city somewhat different from that where the Lowell School is located. The people taken as a whole are more prosperous. The Parent-Teacher Association and the Mothers' Club, while useful here, do not serve the same purpose as they do in some other parts of the city. This school has its literary societies and other organizations existing for the pupils. Programs are often given to which the parents are invited. An annual track meet is held between the upper grades which takes on all the spirit of the regular meet held at the State University each spring.

Conditions at the Willard School are similar to those of the school spoken of above. At this school and at several other schools in the city the pupils will have regular meetings during the summer to plan for their garden work.

The War Garden work now being carried on through the schools of Missoula has an important bearing on the problem. A school fair will be held in the fall when prizes will be given. A teacher of canning is to be employed this summer for the girls.

During the school year 1916-1917 at Elliston, Montana, several plans were tried with success in making the school a community center. At one time the parents were invited to the school to see the work done by the boys in the manual training class. The girls in the class in domestic science prepared a surprise for the parents when they invited everyone to a lunch which they had prepared in an adjoining room. Speaking contests were held every week to which the parents were invited. Toward the end of the school year a final contest was held for which prizes were given by the Elliston School Board and by people in the community. May Fete exercises were given in the spring on the same general plan as at the State University. The Boy Scouts under the direction of the principal did valuable work for the community in several ways. The daily weather forecasts were received in the morning and then sent out to the people living in the town. This was done by means of flags which were raised on a pole in the school yard. A strong foot bridge

34. C. S. Jackson, Missoula, Montana.
was built by the Boy Scouts over a deep and wide creek. People had used an old bridge over the place until it had been washed out some time before.

A school band was started at Plains, Montana, during the winter of 1916-1917. It made its first public appearance last August when the members were taken in automobiles to other parts of the county to advertise the chautauqua. At the county fair held at Plains last fall, this band played forenoons, afternoons and evenings for three days in succession.

Twice during the winter of 1917-1918 the members played at Paradise, Montana, to help draw a crowd for local talent plays given for the benefit of the Red Cross. They have also played at a number of meetings held in Plains on similar occasions.

At the present time a school orchestra is being trained. It is planned to have the members of this organization give selections at the special exercises to be held on the last day of school in Plains.

The Como School near Hamilton, Montana, did some important work during the winter of 1917-1918 which will count much in making that school the community center. Active

36. Ibid.
club work was carried on and as a result one of the girls won as her prize the money for a trip to the state fair. On the last day of school a picnic was held and a special program given. A number of leaders in the educational work of the county were present and gave talks to the people of the neighborhood.

The school at Victor, Montana, started a plan some years ago which proved a success. All the schools of the county were invited to send contestants to a track meet to be held at Victor in the spring.

On Friday, May 18, 1918, the last day of school for the Lower Three Mile and the Lone Rock school children, 16 automobiles of the neighborhood took them for an all-day visit to Missoula. The children visited the sugar factory, the theater and other places of interest. This is a new way to spend the last day of school, but it required the willing cooperation of the people of the neighborhood and put the responsibility on them. These are two of the things required in making the school a community center. The account of this is given from the Missoulian.

37. C. S. Jackson, Missoula, Montana.
38. The Daily Missoulian, op. cit.
The Factors Involved in Making the School a Community Center

The first factor involved in making the school a community center is the leader.* This may include the following: teacher, leader of women's or men's clubs, county superintendent, local minister, government demonstration agent, and a few men and women who appreciate the significance of the movement. The teacher is the natural leader in such a movement and upon him the success or failure of the work depends. He must be back of all the organizations, must know at all times what is going on and be able to find the social points of contact with the people of the community and to keep them. Outside of the teacher's leadership, it is perhaps true that the leaders of the clubs for mothers have done more than any other people in getting the work started. It must be remembered that no matter who takes the initiative in the movement, all must be loyal and stand by the leader.

There are certain qualities which are necessary for such successful leadership. The first is enthusiasm, because it stirs up the enthusiasm of others; second, tolerance for those who hold different views; third, a knowledge of school work; fourth, constructive work with a definite object in view; fifth, a democratic spirit; sixth, a knowledge of problems in all kinds of homes; seventh, a good knowledge of

*Applies to city and country.
what the community center means and of ways in which the school can be made such a center.

The second factor involved is the people. Under this topic several things will be discussed. They are: education*, foreign element*, religious or other disputes*, consciousness of social need*, presence of college or university graduates*, organization of farmers**, tastes of people*, and isolation caused by small number of people in the community**, by poor means of communication**, and by wealth*.

The people in the community is the first factor that needs to be studied by the leader. It is perhaps the most important of the factors, for if all the points considered under people are favorable, the other factors may in time be made to take care of themselves. Some of the points considered under people may be favorable or unfavorable, while others may only help to determine the nature of the plans for making the school a community center.

The kind of education which the majority of people have will determine in a large measure the plans for making the school a community center. The tastes of educated people are different from those of people who have but little education. If there is a very large foreign element in the community the leader's powers may be taxed to the utmost.

* Applies to city and country.
** Applies to country alone.
Such people are often clannish and have but little consciousness of a social need. If there happens to be some religious, party or family dispute in the neighborhood and the leader does not find out about it, he may get into trouble. He might select for one of the leaders or for one of the important positions a man who was the leader of a small but important minority which was on the losing side in a bitter dispute. The presence of college or university graduates will usually make the work easier for the leader. Such men and women are supposed to acquire a certain liking and training for such work during their college days. Sometimes they start out in life and feel that there is but little opportunity for the social work that they have been doing at college. College men and women will usually be found enthusiastic workers. If the farmers are closely organized and have worked together for some time, they will know how to cooperate in the work.

The third factor to be considered is the buildings and their surroundings.* Under this topic, these things will need to be noticed: size, location, suitable assembly rooms, equipment and attractiveness.

The buildings and the grounds should of course be large enough to accommodate all the people in the community. If

* Applies to city and country.
the buildings are not large enough, the plan can be tried of dividing the program into several parts and having the different parts held in different rooms at the same time. The people can then be divided into an equal number of groups and each group sent to the different rooms. By repeating the program all the groups can see the entire entertainment. The school ought to be located in the center of the neighborhood that it is intended to serve. An assembly room, gymnasium, library, stage, and manual training and domestic science rooms usually provide the necessary facilities. Each of the rooms ought to be properly equipped for the purpose that it is intended to serve. A piano and provisions for lighting the building are necessary. If the grounds are large so that a part of them can be used for the planting of farm products and for athletic contests, so much the better.

The drawings on pages 46 and 48 show the plans for a country school building and for a city school building. Both buildings are planned with the idea of making them the community center of the neighborhood.

Page 46 shows the plans for a country schoolhouse. The plans were recently prepared by Messrs. Brooks and Bramhall of Decatur, Illinois, at the request of Mrs. D. B. Parr of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs. The plans were developed from Mrs. Parr's observations. She has been an advocate for the use of the school building for social center
purposes and has done more than perhaps any other woman in Illinois to advocate its value. She has studied the problem closely as it relates to the rural school.

The school building may be built complete with the auditorium as shown—or a brick curtain wall may be built in place of the rolling partition and the auditorium omitted—which may be added at some future time.

The social room may be used as a gymnasium or with manual training at one end and domestic science at the other. The total seating capacity of the auditorium and the school room is 200 persons. The seating capacity of the school room is 54.

The estimated cost of the building complete is $9000. If the auditorium is omitted, the estimated cost is $6500.

Page 48 shows the plans for a city school building. The building is the one used at Wheaton, Minnesota. The stage is equipped with scenery for all kinds of entertainments, amateur theatricals and other social center features. There is also a motion picture and stereoptican machine for entertainment and educational purposes. The remaining space on the second floor is given to an agricultural laboratory and to a community library and ladies' rest room. The last mentioned room is equipped with wall bookcases, reading table, writing table, desks, easy chairs and a couch. A private lavatory and a couch are provided for the use of
patrons. A matron is employed to take care of the room.

The auditorium is 60 feet by 70 feet and with a gallery which accommodates about 1,500 persons. The seats are interchangeable so that they can be used for community or gymnasium purposes.

The total cost is about $35,000.

The fourth factor is the organizations that are already existing in the community.* These may include clubs, societies, lodges and churches. The most important of such organizations in making the school the community center is perhaps the club for mothers. If any organization already exists for the parents and teachers, its help would be of importance.

The fifth factor is the interest manifested by educational leaders.* Under this will be considered the county superintendent, the state superintendent, and college professors. The state superintendent will usually act through the county superintendents. If he takes an active part in encouraging such work, the teachers can secure literature on the subject and also much direct help. College professors who are interested in the work can give talks in such schools as are not located too far away from the college.

The sixth factor is the school board.* The factors to

* Applies to city and country.
be considered are the attitude and the activity of each member. Miss Herman, of Missoula, reports that two years ago a graduate from the State University of Montana finished teaching a term of school near the Bitter Root Inn in the Bitter Root valley. All three members of the board were college graduates and took a most active interest in the work of the school and in making it the community center. With their cooperation the teacher was able to secure a number of entertainments of the best type. Several speakers from the State University visited the school, the University Glee Club gave an entertainment, while other kinds of active work were carried on by the people of the neighborhood themselves.

The School Board at Lodge Grass, Montana, has taken a somewhat unusual stand as far as such bodies are concerned generally. They have employed a principal for the school there for practically the whole year. It is distinctly understood that a part of the work of the teachers will be to make the school the community center of the neighborhood. Where such is the attitude the teacher can consider himself fortunate.

The seventh factor is distance.** This refers to the distance to a large city or some place where special talent can be secured. The task of the leader in making the school a community center will be easier, if he knows that he can
secure without a great deal of trouble good speakers on
topics that will interest the people of the community.

The eighth factor is the presence of other educational
factors than the school. Those which will be discussed
briefly are: telephones*, press*, lectures*, trolley cars**,
and good roads**. The presence of nearly all of these will
make the leader's work easier. If there are too many out-
side attractions it may be difficult to get the people to
come to the school building and to regard it as the community
center. Good roads, telephones, trolley cars, and automobiles
make it easier for the people to get together. If there is a
paper in the town through which the work of the school can be
advertised, so much the better.

* Applies to city and country.
** Applies to country alone.
Getting Started

It is usually an easy matter to get started with such work, but the important thing is to start right.

The first thing the leader needs to do is to make a survey of the field or a careful study of the factory involved with a view to their application to the community studied. At the same time he is doing this he can get acquainted with the leaders or men of influence in the community and as many other people as is possible. Where the district is not too large, a card index of all the families in the neighborhood can be made. The name, address, business, influence, number of times they attend a school meeting or answer letters sent out by the principal of the school, etc., can be placed from time to time on the card. It is valuable for future reference.

The next thing is the advertising of a community meeting to be held the first day of school or the end of the first week of school at the schoolhouse. This can be done by posters, by use of the press, by telling the school children, and by sending out letters or invitations to each of the families in the neighborhood. Getting the addresses of all the people is one of the first things that the card index can be used for. A short musical program can be given and then a statement of the aim of the meeting by a leader in the community. This can be followed by talks by other persons
with whom arrangements have been previously made. A short talk by the principal of the school and any one who will speak may be next. The last thing is the perfecting of the organization and a brief outline of the work that is to be covered.

A caution is given here which is well borne out by experiments in community work. It is wise whenever possible to have the request for the formation of an organization come from the people first. The responsibility for the success of the work will naturally then fall upon them and no one will feel that he or she is being coerced.
Keeping up Interest

Getting started right is not such a difficult matter. The problem is how to keep going.

There are six principles of efficiency which every leader in making the school a community center will do well to keep in mind. There are perhaps others which might be added to the list.

The first principle is clearly defined aims. When all the aims of the people in the neighborhood can be lined up so as to pull in the same direction the result is a powerful force. The leader needs first to get his aims and ideals very clearly in his own mind. When he has done that he is in a position to make his immediate helpers get a vision of the work.

The second principle is common sense. This means ability to see in the future and to use good judgment in decisions.

The third principle is competent council. If the leader is the principal of the school, he may form a cabinet from all the other persons mentioned under leaders on page 42. Especially important is it that he should include the teachers who are working with him in the school where he is principal. This cabinet could meet at certain times for a study of the subject, "Making the School a Community Center".

The fourth principle is reliable, immediate and adequate
records. The card index will be a part of these. Other records will include those of good speakers, lyceums, addresses for good literature on the subject, etc.

The fifth principle is dispatching or getting the thing done on time. Organization of the work will accomplish this.

The following outline may be brought forward as the leader sees there is need for such work. Some of it can be started on immediately in any school. Other parts of it might never be needed in a community.

Plans for the school as:

An educational center:

Art:

School decoration.
Beautifying the school grounds.
Exhibitions of paintings.
Drama.
School pageants.
Art museum classes.
Music classes.

Training for work:

Industrial schools.
Vocational guidance.
Household art.
Employment offices.
Classes in salesmanship.
Citizenship:
Classes for foreigners.
Boy Scouts.
Camp Fire Girls.

Historical museum:
Objects of historical interest to the community.
Objects of historical interest to the people of the state or nation.
Maps and surveys of district.
Educational moving pictures.
Daily papers, magazines, etc.

A civic center:
Addresses by public officers.
Addresses by candidates.
Open forum.
Voting.

Social and recreation center:
School playgrounds.
Athletic contests.
Folk-dancing.
Public entertainments.

Health center:
Public baths.
Dentistry.
Medical inspection.
School nursing.
Open-air rooms.
Anti-cigarette leagues.

Moral center:
Dances under proper supervision.
High class of moving pictures.
Home credit work.
The influence of meeting the best people of the neighborhood.

Economic center:
School store for prize seed secured through boys' and girls' clubs.
Products of such clubs other than that which is awarded prizes.
Free employment agency.
Note: A great amount of work has been printed upon organizations, method of organizing, constitutions, programs, literature, etc. Such material is not given in this thesis for the reason that it can be easily secured by any one.

By addressing the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations, 910 Loan and Trust Building, Washington, D. C., the following publications can be secured:

National Year Book, published annually containing much of general information, $.10.

How to Organize Parent-Teacher Associations and Mothers' Circles, $.05.

List of One Thousand Good Books for Children, $.10.

Parents' Duty to Children Concerning Sex, $.10.

Child-Welfare Magazine, $1.00 per year. Address P. O. Box 4022, West Philadelphia.

The Evolution of the Mothers' Pension, $.50 per one hundred copies.

Twenty Years Work for Child Welfare, $.10.

What Does the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations Do with the Dimes We Send?

What Prominent Educators Think of the Movement.

Parents' Associations or Departments in the Church or Sunday School.

The Argument for Parent-Teacher Associations.
What the National Congress of Mothers Expects of Local Organizations.

Program Plans for Child Welfare Day and Star Booklet. Aims, Methods, Material, Results.

A letter addressed to the Commissioner of Education, Washington, D. C., will bring a complete list of available publications. These can be had on club work for the boys and the girls and on almost any topic that is desired.

A letter addressed to the State Agricultural College will bring a similar list of publications.
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*Refers to books which were read, but no special part of which was reported on in this thesis.