



Five aspects of guidance.

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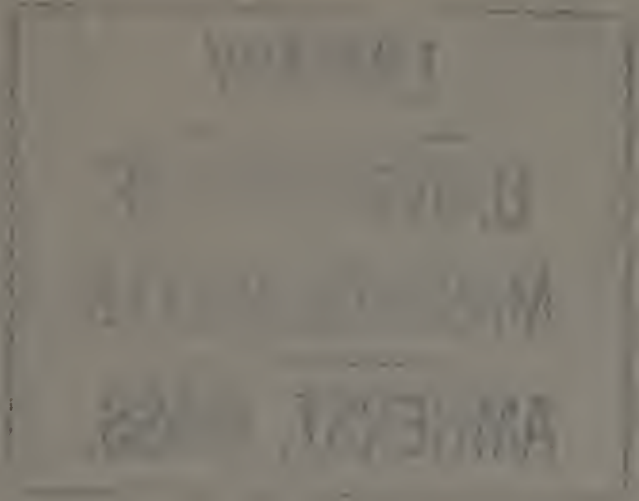


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FIVE ASPECTS OF GUIDANCE

by

JOYCE PEROSINO

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INTRODUCTION

Modern society is complex. As modern industrial society continues to become more complex, our schools have been nearly overwhelmed by the responsibility of educating students for life in that society. Services for students have increased in large numbers. Occupational education has expanded to include training in a wide variety of fields. Such training is important, of course, especially in view of the school's aim to help each student become a contributing member of the community. Yet, it is also part of the school's function to help each new generation to understand the complexity and diversity of its own era. It is in these areas of understanding society and preparing to become a community member that the guidance program is most active.

Born of necessity, in an era of uncertainty, the guidance function has matured into a respected phase of the total school program. While justification for its existence is no longer

needed, it is frequently misunderstood by lay people as well as school personnel. In part, this is the fault of the guidance directors and counselors who have been so occupied among themselves that they haven't stopped to take stock. Too seldom have they asked where they have been, where they are, and where they are going. Continuous examination of goals is of considerable importance. It is necessary to keep in mind the pressing needs which gave rise to the counseling movement. The recognition of individual differences and some awareness of the psychological effects of society on the student must be maintained. Since the primary function of the school is the educational preparation and development of youth, it is to this end that the total staff and facilities of the school are dedicated. The guidance program must be an effective supporting service in this endeavor.

For the purpose of this paper, the counselor is defined as a teacher who has additional specialized training and understanding of the educational, vocational, and personal problems of youth. However, the definition and delineation of the counselor's role may change with a different viewpoint. Some recognize the counselor as a member of the staff who performs a special service in support of the school's general goals. Others, usually administrators, see the counselor in a stereo-

typed image which fits into their own design for the school. Still others, usually students, view the counselor as just another teacher. While it is important that everyone in the school and the community understand the unique role of the school counselor, it is the perceptions of the students which are most vital to the success of the program. Conversely, the student's view will surely be colored by his perception of how others regard the school counselor. Therefore, it is most urgent that the counselor's function be clearly defined for all.

Before any definition of the counselor's role is possible, however, it is absolutely necessary to differentiate between the counselor and the teacher. It seems that the first assumption a student makes as he enters into a counseling relationship is one of expecting the counselor to be another teacher who will conform to the pattern that has been established in a particular school. As he interacts with the counselor in the school setting, these expectations are either confirmed or modified. If they are confirmed, communication may be terminated before it has a chance to begin. The development and continuance of guidance and counseling services hinge on the student's perception of the program. Only by insuring that the student is able to differentiate between the roles of the

counselor and teacher can the program be effective. If students perceive the counselor as a person primarily orientated towards their needs and interests, an important step will have been taken to enlist individual student motivation. Students need to feel that the guidance program exists for them, and that they are responsible for the outcome. Where students have these positive perceptions, the program is effective. If, on the other hand, a teacher's role and duties are indistinguishable from those of the person functioning under the title of "counselor," there is little justification for the title. If the teacher and counselor perform the same tasks, in the same way, the guidance program is ineffective. The administration and faculty, as well as the students, are being short changed.

CHAPTER I

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Role of Counselor

Now, then, it is possible to examine more closely, the role of the guidance counselor. In preparation for his role, the counselor has had advanced training in certain skills. This enables him to bring keen insights and a variety of techniques to his job. He is, likewise, adept at creating a special atmosphere for his work. The fact that counselors possess such skills and that they should be put to use is underscored in professional literature. Boy and Isaksen write that, "Since the school counselor's primary resource is his counseling skill, this skill should not be an unused resource. Indeed, the major portion of the counselor's day should be spent counseling students."¹ Likewise, Jenkins and Spears state that adminis-

¹Angelo V. Boy and Henry L. Isaksen, "Ten Secondary School Counselors Determine Their Role," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XLVI (October, 1962), 97-100.

trators are constantly searching for an "... organization of the guidance system that permits counselors to exercise their professional talents most effectively."² Not only must a counselor acquire the necessary skills for his role, but he must also possess some of the necessary personal qualities. He should be prepared to operate in an intelligent, sensitive, perceptive, and dedicated manner in all areas which contribute to his effectiveness. Finally, the counselor must be willing to read professional literature, attend conferences, and remain active in the guidance field. Kenneth Hoyt warns that, "In a field as young as guidance, our areas of ignorance are far more expansive than are the areas in which we are knowledgeable. The school has a right to expect that its counselors will be striving to keep up with additions to knowledge in this area."³ All these things are integral parts of the counselor's preparation for his role in guidance.

In functioning with students, the counselor is a person

²Thomas J. Jenkins and Mack J. Spears, "How Can We Make the Best Use of the Time and Energies of the Guidance Counselors We Now Have?" National Association of Secondary School Principal's Bulletin, XLV (April, 1961), 302-307.

³Kenneth B. Hoyt, "What the School Has a Right to Expect of Its Counselor," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XL (October, 1961), 133-134.

committed to the individual in a special way. He performs specific services for those whom he advises. He interviews. He administers psychological tests. He interprets the significance of past behavior. He helps students become aware of special talents and limitations. He advises them about educational and vocational planning. He provides information, but refrains from determining how it will be used. He appraises a student, but does not judge him. He works with disciplinary cases, but does not prescribe a dogma. He works with students to help them determine what, if any, are the factors interfering with their performance. He tries not so much to solve a student's immediate problem as to teach him to solve it for himself. He helps them look for alternatives when pressures come to bear and conflicts arise. In short, the counselor helps the student to help himself. This is also in keeping with professional policy as expressed by the American Personnel and Guidance Association. In describing the role of the counselor, the Association states that, "The major responsibility of the counselor is to assist an individual through the counseling relationship to utilize his own resources and his environmental opportunities in the process of self-understanding, planning, decision making, and coping with problems

relative to his developmental needs and to his vocational and educational activities."⁴

Interrelations with Staff

Yet, the counselor does not work with students in a vacuum. He must also interact with the administrators and teachers of the school. While it has been stressed that the counselor's role must be distinct from that of the teacher, it is most desirable that they maintain a close relationship since both are intimately concerned with the growth and development of their students. Too often the members of the teaching staff are kept ignorant of the exact role of the counselor. This may lead to an atmosphere of suspicion or feelings of repugnance. Sound relations must be established. To this end, the counselor may find it beneficial to define his position at the very outset. He can explain that, while his short-range goals may be quite different, his long-range goals are those of the entire school. Then, as professional colleagues, the teacher and the counselor can share insights, knowledge, and skill in such a way as to aid each other and contribute to a more profitable learning situation for the stu-

⁴American Personnel and Guidance Association, "The Counselor: Professional Preparation and Role," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLII (January, 1964), 536-541.

dent. While their competencies are in different areas, their concern for the individual's development is the same. When their approaches are complementary, the student is strengthened. And it is the student, after all, who is the primary concern of the entire staff.

Similarly, the student and the counseling program both benefit from a close relationship between the counselor and the administrator. The administrator determines the general policies under which the counselor will operate, while the counselor determines the most effective way of translating those policies into services for his students. The administrator provides the organizational setting into which the student will be placed, while the counselor may suggest assignments to specific sections or teachers for certain students. Here, the roles of administrator and counselor may become so closely associated that both may lose sight of the counseling program's goal. It is imperative that the guidance counselor maintain both a positive relationship with the administration of the school and a distinct sense of his own prime function. To summarize the role of the guidance counselor in relation to the school staff, the words of C. Gilbert Wrenn seem appropriate. He writes, "... the counselor today is an interpreter of

students and of the world of students to the faculty and the administration."⁵ And further, to summarize the dual role of the counselor in relation to both students and staff, the statement of Anthony C. Riccio is inclusive. He writes, "As practitioners, they must strive to employ all appropriate resources in aiding in the developmental process of the youth in our schools. As professional personnel, they must explain to the people with whom they come into contact what guidance is and how it can help in the attainment of educational objectives in contemporary America."⁶

⁵C. Gilbert Wrenn, The Counselor in a Changing World (Washington, D.C.: American Personnel and Guidance Association, Inc., 1962). p.42.

⁶Anthony C. Riccio, "The Guidance Worker and Human Relations," National Association of Secondary School Principals' Bulletin, XLV (November, 1961), 86-92.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Role of Administrator

The administrator is the head of the building. He is wholly responsible for the success or failure of each program offered in that building. He is likewise responsible for the policies under which those programs will operate. In other words -- he sets the tone, he creates the atmosphere, he initiates the personality of his building. No two schools are exactly alike because no two administrators are exactly alike; and therefore, no two guidance programs can be exactly alike since each must be compatible with its own surroundings. The administrator, therefore, is most influential in the guidance program, even if such influence is felt only indirectly.

To form policies for the operation of the school is the administrator's main task. It is these policies, taken as a whole, which creates the unique environment of the building. As these administrative policies effect the environment, they

effect the guidance program. Policies concerning school organization, discipline, scheduling, grading and reporting, and so forth, have consequences which are felt by the guidance counselor. More important are policies concerned with financing the program, supporting its objectives, and encouraging its growth. Through these policies, the administrator demonstrates, for school personnel and public alike, his confidence that the program will advance the school's goals by serving its students. This kind of administrative support creates an environment which facilitates the operation of the guidance program. Many of the school counselor's contributions are dependent upon a favorable atmosphere. Such an environment includes both psychological and physical conditions. Desirable conditions of work can be developed only through the joint efforts of administrators and counselors. Through understanding and support, the school administrator assists the counselor in the total counseling and guidance services of the school.

Psychological Elements in Environment

Psychological conditions of work are concerned with the inter-personal relationships within the school, a permissive

atmosphere within the program of guidance, the administrative and personnel policies, and a climate within which the school counselor has freedom to exercise his skills on a professional level. Physical aspects include such things as office facilities, equipment, materials, and personnel.

A person who is being considered for an appointment as a school guidance counselor should have demonstrated his ability to work effectively with pupils, parents, members of the school staff, and representatives from the community. The director or supervisor of guidance should have a joint responsibility with the principal and the superintendent in the selection of school counselors.

A permissive atmosphere helps to motivate pupils to seek counseling. Means of communication must exist so that the counselor can interpret the guidance program and his own role not only to the pupils, but also to the teachers, administrators, parents, and the community. It is important to recognize that the participation in the guidance program by other members of the school staff is essential. Provision should be made for the counselor to furnish the staff with initial and follow-up information on individual pupils as well as materials and information to encourage staff participation

Permanent Record

in guidance services. It is also most important that the administrators be informed when the school program is insensitive to the individuality of pupils. Counselors should see that this is done.

Administrative and personnel policies should allow the counselor to be available. Provisions should exist which enable the counselor to initiate and have systematic counseling or conference appointments and group activities with pupils during school hours without interfering with the planned work of teachers. It is just as essential that the counselor work with other pupil personnel specialists, teachers, parents, and those from resource agencies.

Freedom of movement out of the school building is important for the counselor. He needs to visit educational and training institutions, confer with representatives of community agencies, visit local business and industrial establishments, and attend professional conferences and meetings.

Counseling relationships with a pupil and his parents, as well as the resulting information, must be considered confidential by the counselor. Decisions regarding disclosure of information obtained in counseling interviews rests with the initiator. This is always the case except as provided for in

the statement of Ethical Standards of the American Personnel and Guidance Association.⁷ All other information should be handled in accordance with the principles as they are set forth in that statement.

Physical Elements in Environment

An atmosphere allowing flexibility and growth, accompanied by sound planning, should exist within a school in order that the counselor might fulfill his responsibilities for research and for evaluating his own effectiveness. This atmosphere and planning should provide the stimulus for professional growth as well as service to pupils through experimentation with different methods, materials, and use of personnel.

In the high school there should be a counseling suite centrally located so that it is easily accessible to persons seeking the services of a counselor. This suite should be a separate unit. It should, however, be located next to and with inside access to the administrative offices of the school. The area in which the suite is located should be relatively free from noise and confusion. There should be an area which gives some privacy for records of students now in school and of those

⁷American Personnel and Guidance Association, "Ethical Standards," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XL (October, 1961), 206-209.

who have graduated or left school. This area should have working space for the counselors and other members of the school staff.

Each counselor should have an individual office which has privacy. There should be appropriate furnishings to accommodate at least three persons in addition to the counselor, furnishings to meet the counselor's professional needs, a telephone, adequate lighting, heating, and ventilation. A waiting room is also necessary. It should provide space for pupils to use reference and informational material, for parents and other people to wait for counselors, for clerical work and the reception of visitors, for counselor's files, for material on occupational and educational opportunities, and for bulletin board and display areas. Files and storage space for guidance materials are greatly needed. A room large enough for case conferences, staff meetings and other related guidance activities should be in this suite. It should be separate from the waiting room.

Special equipment should be provided for the counselor. A counselor frequently needs equipment for dictating, photocopying, duplicating, calculating, and data processing. Audio-visual equipment should also be available. Required materials

include up-to-date career and educational references and pamphlets, brochures on social adjustment, standardized tests, and other devices for individual appraisal. Carefully designed individual cumulative records and other guidance forms should be available. The counselor should work on the design of pupil record and guidance forms. They should assist in planning procedures for their most effective use.

Student workers may be helpful in the guidance office, but due to the confidential nature of the counselor's work there should be adequately paid clerical and secretarial assistance. Clerks and secretaries who deal directly with students and parents should have the ability to convey a permissive atmosphere and acceptance of individuals in addition to their technical skills. They should exercise a high degree of ethics and be able to use sound judgment in handling unexpected situations.

While the counselor and the counselee are the essentials of the program, these psychological and physical conditions of the environment can greatly facilitate the program and make it more effective.

CHAPTER III

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Objectives of Program

An effective guidance program in any school can result only from the combined efforts of the entire staff. The most essential item in establishing a program is the statement of objectives. Among the goals of a guidance program are: (1) It must be an integral part of the total instructional program. (2) All pupils need effective guidance, but it must be recognized that some pupils need more individual help than others. (3) Each pupil must be helped to make the best of himself and his opportunities toward a useful, productive, and happy life. (4) Pupils, parents, and teachers need to understand that each child has the capacity to change, develop, and improve. (5) A sense of belonging, self-respect, emotional security, achievement recognition, and genuine appreciation and understanding of the world in which he lives needs to be provided for each pupil.

(6) In each pupil a greater appreciation and loyalty for democratic ideals and values must be developed.

Counselor in Program

The school counselor in an effective guidance program should be employed in a full time guidance position for a period that extends beyond the regular school year. The salary should be in accordance with this extended year. A longer school year allows the counselor to pursue his regular responsibilities as well as special projects related to the over-all improvement of the school program. In order to enable the counselor to give reasonably prompt attention to all pupils, the assigned pupil load should approximate 300 students to one full time counselor. A pupil load of 300 is suggested by Conant.⁸ However, an adequate pupil-counselor ratio is not enough in itself. Such duties as substitute teaching, disciplinary responsibilities, and excessive routine clerical tasks reduce the effectiveness of the counselor in discharging his responsibilities. In order for the counselor to make the fullest contribution to the guidance and educational program, he should have a time schedule which will

⁸James B. Conant, The American High School Today (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1959). p. 31.

enable him to grow professionally and permit him to pursue the less pressuring aspects of his position such as research, evaluation, and visits and conferences outside of the school building.

The school counselor's primary role in the school guidance program is counseling. Eckerson explains this counseling role in detail. She states, "The counselor's function in guidance is to help students understand themselves, to help them mold their future according to their interests, aptitudes, and values, and to make significant contributions to family and community life."⁹ The counselor assumes other roles such as consultant, resource person, researcher, and teacher only when those roles support his counseling relationships. The effective school counselor must always show initiative in finding new ways to carry out his professional responsibilities in an ever-changing environment and should not, therefore, view the functions which are to follow as restrictive.

Components of Program

While it is true that no one program is best for all school systems, the following provisions are offered for con-

⁹Louise Omwake Eckerson, "Testing and Counseling: Three Letters," School Life, XLIII (September, 1960), 10-11.

sideration. It is essential that the major portion of the school counselor's time should be devoted to individual or small-group counseling. Steel emphasizes this point when she says that, "The core of the guidance program is counseling with individuals. It is a service which the counselor hopes to help the typical student as well as the one with special personal or educational problems."¹⁰ In these sessions the counselor assists the pupil to understand and accept himself by furnishing personal and educational information which strengthens his ability to analyze and solve his problems. Several methods of accumulating such information are available to counselors. These include interviews, standardized tests, academic records, anecdotal records, personal data forms, records of past experiences, inventories, and rating scales. A confidential file of pupil data must be organized and maintained in order that the counselor may be able to interpret this information for parents, teachers, administrators, and any others professionally concerned with the student. Through the use of these many media the counselor tries to identify those pupils who have special abilities or needs. Many school systems are now making use of

¹⁰Carolyn Steel, "Emerging Programs of Counseling and Guidance," National Association of Secondary School Principals' Bulletin, XLVII (September, 1963), 10-18.

available data-processing equipment to facilitate this phase of the program. With this wealth of data and skill in interpretation, the counselor is both a leader and valuable consultant in the school program of pupil appraisal.

To promote the self-direction of the pupil is the purpose of the guidance program. To this end, the counselor tries to provide pupils and parents with an understanding of the pupil as an individual in relation to educational and occupational opportunities for his optimal growth and development. The pupil's interests, aptitudes, and abilities must be related to current and future educational and occupational requirements. Information concerning career opportunities, further education and training, and school curricular offerings needs to be collected and distributed to both pupils and parents. This information should be collected in up-to-date educational and occupational files readily accessible to pupils. It may be distributed through bulletin boards and guidance newsletters. Much information can also be gained through visits to places of business and industry and to educational institutions. The counselor also assists students and parents in understanding procedures for financing the student's educational goals beyond high school.

Placement can be made only after counseling assistance, pupil appraisal, and career planning. The counselor needs to make recommendations appropriate to the student's current school progress, co-curricular activities, community interests, employment choices, and future goals. In this regard, pupils and parents are urged to make long-range plans for the high school years and assume the responsibility for periodic review and revision of such plans. Revision may be necessitated by a change in school curriculum, academic achievement, pupil interest, parental goals, or a number of other factors. Also, in this area of placement, it is the counselor's task to confer with admissions officers and personnel directors at institutions and establishments of interest to the pupils. Likewise, it is necessary for the counselor to realize his limitations. At times he will not be able to provide all the services an individual will need. Yet, he is the principal person on the staff who makes and coordinates referrals to other specialists in pupil personnel services or to public and private agencies in the community. He must make these services known to both pupil and parents, and he must maintain relations with such specialists and agencies.

Conferences with parents are another important part of

the guidance program. During these conferences the counselor acts as a resource person on the growth and development of the student. Such parent conferences may be held on an individual basis or in groups. Here the guidance and counseling services of the school are interpreted. Counselors should try to present a realistic view of the student's aptitudes, abilities, interests, attitudes, and development as they are related to educational and occupational planning, school progress, and personal-social development.

Still another facet of the counselor's work is to maintain a close relationship with members of the administrative and teaching staff so that all of the school's resources may be directed toward meeting the needs of the individual student. In this part of the work, the counselor shares appropriate pupil data with staff members, helps teachers to identify pupils with special needs or problems, and keeps the teacher informed of developments concerning individual students which have a direct bearing on the classroom. In-service training programs, staff meetings, and case conferences are segments of the guidance program which bring many benefits to students.

Finally, the guidance program reaches out into the community. In addition to advising pupils, parents, and staff,

the counselor is responsible for interpreting the counseling and guidance services of the school to the community which it serves. There is great potential for the guidance program in this area of public relations. The school counselor should participate in programs of civic organizations, furnish information for school and community publications, and assist in programs to be presented on radio or television.

Thus, the components of an effective guidance program are numerous. The counselor must be trained to work directly with students and, likewise, with parents, faculty, and the public for the sake of the students. The task is not an easy one, but the school guidance program will be only as strong as its counselors.

As mentioned previously, no one guidance program is best for all schools. Furthermore, a truly effective program can become an ineffective one without revision. It is important to study changing pupil needs if the program is to continue to meet those needs. The school counselor can be a leader in research by conducting pertinent studies and by cooperating with others in studying local conditions. Such research studies might be in the areas of follow-up, drop-outs, the relationship of scholastic aptitude and achievement to selection of courses,

educational and guidance needs, the use of records and personal data, occupational trends in the community, and in particular, the evaluation of the school's counseling and guidance services.

Permanent Records

Self-Administered as
Permanent Records

CHAPTER IV

MODERN TESTING

Modern testing is both an art and a science. It is the art of fashioning and using many different kinds of devices and techniques for appraising human beings and trying to foresee how they will develop as students, workers, and members of the community. Behind these techniques and devices is a new science, a growing body of theory drawn principally from psychology and mathematics, known as psychometrics. Both the art and the science of testing are imperfectly developed and constantly changing, a characteristic of all arts and sciences. But the rate of development and improvement in testing is remarkable, considering the relatively short history of a systematic, scientific approach to the problem of assessing individual differences.

Testing has become a very important activity in education. Tests used by school guidance counselors are basic

tools for their function of assisting students to understand and to make the most of their aptitudes, abilities, and interests. Decisions of students regarding entrance into programs of higher education are influenced largely by the results of standardized tests. Still other tests are used as determinants for college admissions and for scholarship awards.

Purpose of Testing

The central purpose of testing is to aid students, both directly and indirectly. Tests may serve to help individual students understand and develop their academic abilities and, likewise, to help educators make better judgments about these students. The goal of the testing program, in terms of the students, is to help them, not to coerce them; to highlight the vast range of individual differences among students, not to encourage conformity. The goal, in terms of the teachers, counselors, principals, and admissions officers working with these students, is to assist them in their difficult tasks of directing and advising. Test results provide these people with additional kinds of information which can be used in the selection and guidance of students, in evaluating current instruction, and in planning curriculum changes.

Uses of Tests

Test results may also be used for many other purposes. They are valuable in identifying pupil ability as low, average, or superior. They may be the basis of classifying and grouping pupils for assignment to classes where they will receive instruction suited to their own needs. They are also helpful in the selection of students for college, business, industry, or the armed services. Perhaps the most important use of tests is providing basic data for pupils, counselors, and parents to aid them in educational and vocational planning. Used properly, standardized tests are valuable tools in an educational program.

However, a great deal of caution must be observed in using test data. Test results alone are not adequate criteria for making decisions which have real consequence in pupils' lives. Such data should be coupled with the other information included in a pupil's cumulative record. Personality factors, special interests, emotional stability, and social maturity also deserve consideration, as well as the previous academic history. Conant stresses the importance of such a broad view in his book "The American High School Today." He says that counselors "should be familiar with the use of tests and measurements of

the aptitudes and achievements of pupils. ... the counselor should be in close touch with the parent as well as the pupil. Through consultation, an attempt should be made each year to work out an elective program for the student which corresponds to the student's interest and ability as determined by tests of scholastic aptitude, the recorded achievement as measured by grades in courses, and by teachers' estimates."¹¹

For proper use of all data, there should be a counseling program organized to assist students, together with their parents, in making decisions concerning their educational and vocational plans. Interpreting test results to the student and his parents is most important, but the school counselor should not forget that the responsibility for such decisions belongs to the student himself. When test results are being interpreted, care should be exercised so that test data are not overemphasized. It is important that test results be interpreted, not merely reported. In this area, counselors with limited training will have their greatest difficulty, for interpreting test results is far from being an incidental part of counseling. The experienced counselor realizes that tests do not make value judgments. The evaluation of a student does not

¹¹Conant, loc. cit., pp.44-45.

start with measurement, but it is within the framework of this evaluation that measurement acquires a purpose. Neither does evaluation stop with measurement, it moves on to action. Test data, rather than gathering dust in the files, should be put to effective use.

Categories of Tests

Today's tests may be divided into five major categories: intelligence tests, achievement tests, aptitude tests, interest inventories, and personality inventories of various kinds. Intelligence tests seek to measure the individual's capacities and potentials. The most commonly used means of identifying students' ability are standardized group intelligence tests. The scores from these tests provide information which, at best, allows for only an arbitrary selection of specific "cut-off" scores to separate able students and slow students from the average. In using mental ability tests, it seems desirable to have more than one set of test scores for each student and, if possible, to consider a composite of such scores. This is feasible when an organized testing program encompasses the entire twelve grades. No counselor, in his evaluation of an individual's capabilities, should rely solely on one intelligence score. By the time a

student enters grade eight, a minimum of two intelligence scores should have been recorded on his cumulative record. A third intelligence test should be given during the student's first year of high school. In addition, achievement and aptitude test results should have been recorded.

Achievement tests seek to measure the individual's mastery of a certain body of knowledge, a certain set of skills, and his ability to apply what he has learned to the solution of new problems. Batteries of these tests are available in science, mathematics, social studies, English, foreign languages, and reading. Since they are measures of educational progress, they should be given at frequent intervals. When administered repetitively, achievement tests are perhaps the most generally effective instrument for assessing pupil progress. Such tests indicate accomplishment to date, and frequently identify areas where enrichment or remediation would seem to be appropriate. Properly chosen achievement tests have the additional virtue of being excellent predictors of future academic success.

Aptitude tests seek to measure the individual's capacity to acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable him to perform a given kind of work. A scholastic aptitude test should yield a score with as little dependency on academic skills

as possible. This should be a reasoning test, based on material not directly taught in school. Its score should serve as an effective supplement to information already obtained from achievement measures. In addition, this test should, if possible, yield another score based on verbal and quantitative material directly related to school success. Such a score, together with achievement measures, would be of value in planning class groupings and enrichment or remedial activities for students.

Interest inventories and personality inventories, as their names imply, seek to determine what interests an individual has and what basic personality tendencies underlie his behavior. It should be pointed out that an interest score is no indicator of the ability of the person, although a person may have a greater chance for success in work which he likes to do. Current research indicates that there is considerable stability of scores after grade ten. This suggests a level at which this type of test might prove most useful in helping a pupil make a vocational choice. Many educators question whether or not personality inventories should be considered as part of the school's general testing program. Data on the validity and usefulness of personality inventories in school are complex and confusing, but could be most helpful when used in conjunction with other data which is available in the cumulative record. Much care

should be exercised in the use and interpretation of these results, for much damage can be done when inadequately trained people interpret inventory scores.

Errors in Tests

None of these instruments is infallible, but they are the best indicators we have of individual abilities and achievement, which, considered in relation to all other pertinent information, can guide people in making important decisions. In general, good modern tests can measure reasonably well what a person knows, less well what interests he has, and only poorly what he is and may become. Good tests of academic and certain other specific aptitudes are reasonably reliable instruments, as are good tests of academic achievement. Interest inventories and personality inventories are in a much more primitive stage of development at the present time. In summary, it can be said that, while standardized tests are not absolute measures, they are a source of valuable information to be considered in guiding students.

In testing, the objective is to get the best possible sample of a student's ability and knowledge. The larger the sample, the more representative the sample, and the better the

individual test items, the better the test will be. But even the best test is subject to error -- because all possible content is not sampled, because authorities may differ in their evaluations of responses, and because language itself is imprecise. The best test is no good unless it is used properly by individuals fully aware of the fact that tests are but samples of behavior subject to sampling errors, and that a test score is not an absolute unchanging truth. It is but an estimate, and predictions based on it are but estimates.

People who use test results know that an individual's test scores can vary, even on the same test given at different times. They know, too, that no scholastic aptitude or achievement test measures a student's "innate ability" or his "creativity." They have found that good tests can measure reasonably well a student's developed abilities to perform certain academic tasks. And they know that these abilities are the result of whatever mental capacities the student was born with plus whatever opportunities he had to develop those capacities. It is quite obvious that a test score by itself means very little. It takes on meaning only in relation to all other information about an individual. The wise user does not make decisions on the basis of test scores alone. However, the kinds of information

provided by good tests cannot be ignored by conscientious educators seeking all possible information about a student before making important decisions.

The most obvious development in testing is the dramatic increase in the number of tests available and the number of persons tested. The most significant growth has been in the size and scope of nationwide testing programs. Growth inevitably creates problems and the growth in testing has generated its share. Yet, there have been positive results as well as problems. Today, there are better tests, better accompanying materials and services, and more people better trained in the principles of sound educational measurement. Lindquist gives the conditions under which testing should continue to grow. He writes, "If measurement is to continue to play an increasingly important role in education, measurement workers must be more than technicians. Unless their efforts are directed by a sound educational philosophy, unless they accept and welcome a greater share of responsibility for the selection and clarification of educational objectives, unless they show much more concern with what they measure as well as with how they measure it, much of their work will prove futile or ineffective."¹²

¹²E. F. Lindquist, Preliminary Considerations in Objective Test Construction, Educational Measurement (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1951). p.4.

CHAPTER V

TESTING PROGRAM

Due to the rapid growth of testing, there has been little time for the authors to make validity or reliability studies. While tests have been constructed to cover almost everything, there is still no perfect test. Yet, many tests are good and can provide useful information. If tests are to be a valuable part of the total guidance program, extreme care must be exercised in establishing a testing program. Goldman states that careful planning is becoming even more important because of the "increased numbers of students, greater demands on school budgets, and a constantly flowing supply of new tests."¹³

Objectives of Testing Program

Before a testing program can be established, it is necessary to formulate the objectives. The program should provide

¹³Leo Goldman, "School Testing Program," New York State Counselors News Bulletin, XXXIX (October, 1964), 67.

information, not otherwise available, for the individual inventory of a student. It should aid the teacher and counselor in discovering a student's specific learning difficulties. A record of each student's progress and growth should be compiled and used to help eliminate unnecessary academic failures. This program should provide a basis for necessary educational or occupational choices. As another objective, the program should indicate areas of the curriculum where revision is desirable. Information gained through testing may also indicate the necessity for remedial work and other methods of individualized instruction. Likewise, it may show a need for new or different materials. Finally, the testing program should provide a basis for the solution of individual problems.

The three criteria that should be used as the basis for tests chosen for use in any school system are validity, reliability, and usability. A valid test is one that measures accurately what it is supposed to measure. A reliable test measures consistently what it is supposed to measure. A usable test is one that is practical and can be administered with relative ease. It is rare when one test meets all three requirements.

Purposes of Testing Program

Even though each school system is somewhat unique, it

must be remembered that any testing program serves several purposes. It contributes assistance to the student, the teacher, the counselor, and the administrator. Students are helped to know themselves better and to apply this knowledge in making educational or occupational choices. Tests also help teachers to know students better and to plan instruction more efficiently. The test results offer the teacher specific information about the student's abilities, achievements, interests, and needs, which are valuable in planning for individual motivation, acceleration or remedial work. Tests are useful to the counselor, for test results reveal patterns of development in students. Here, a counselor may make a comparison of a student's ability and his achievement or of his interests and achievement. In this way the counselor gains further insights into his students. Finally, the administrator is helped to know his students better and to organize the curriculum more efficiently. He can evaluate how well the school as a whole is functioning. He can compare the work of his students with local, state, or national norms. He can use the test results to demonstrate the manner in which the school is implementing its goals.

As mentioned previously, tests are an important aspect of the total guidance program. When administered and interpreted

properly, they are one of the best sources of information that can be provided for the guidance counselor. It must be kept in mind that tests need to be revised periodically to see if they are fulfilling the objectives of the testing program as well as the entire guidance program. If any are found lacking, a revision is in order.

Organization of Testing Program

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

DIRECTOR OF GUIDANCE

ELEMENTARY GRADES

PRINCIPALS
COUNSELORS
SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

SECONDARY GRADES

PRINCIPALS
COUNSELORS
SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

The following outline of a testing program has been based on definite needs and requirements of a specific school system. It has been kept within the budgetary limits and in line with the objectives of the total guidance program of this school system. The tests that have been selected for this program are believed to be as valid, reliable, and usable as possible. It should be pointed out that even though the first four

chapters are viewed mainly from the junior and senior high levels, this outline of a testing program is looked at from a broader view. Grades one through twelve are included. The testing program starts early in a student's school life and continues towards its goals as the student matures and develops. The testing is carried out under the supervision of the guidance director and those designated to assist. At all times the counselor works in conjunction with the school principal.

Tests in Program

Grade I

METROPOLITAN READINESS TEST

This test for kindergarten and grade one entrants is among the most widely used. The tests are intended to measure readiness for reading, arithmetic, and writing. They are somewhat broader in scope than most other readiness tests which are usually designed to measure readiness in reading alone.

The Metropolitan Readiness Test comes in one form and takes approximately seventy minutes to administer. Percentile norms are available in the manual of directions. These norms show that there is a significant relationship between scores on the test and achieve-

ment in the first grade. High correlations exist between scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Test and scores on intelligence tests. Therefore, it would probably be unnecessary to give the pupils an intelligence test and this readiness test.

Grade II

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

This test comes in a single primary battery for grades two and three and takes about eighty minutes to administer. Most of the items in the second revision are new. Age and grade equivalents and a profile chart appear on the cover of the primary forms in order to facilitate the recording and interpretation of scores. Instructions to the pupils have brevity, simplicity, and clarity.

CALIFORNIA TEST OF PERSONALITY

This writer would like to see some sort of personality test given in the second grade and again in the seventh grade. The validity of questionnaires is entirely unestablished, but at the moment it is possibly one of the best personality tests available.

The manuals give no data on the validity of

the California Test of Personality, other than to appeal to the face values of the items, and to make vague references to the use of teacher judgments and student reactions. The low reliabilities of subtests are ignored in the instructions and illustrations on the interpretation of the test profile. Thus, a personality picture is drawn from indicators based on scores whose reliabilities run as low as .60. If a test user is statistically unsophisticated he might very well succumb to this attractive pitfall.

Personality norms are given for total scores for the two principal components and for each of the twelve subtests. The normative cases come from the vicinity of Los Angeles, California. These raise doubts concerning the applicability of the norms to pupils in this area or in any other subcultural area.

On the whole, the faults of the California Test of Personality are those of personality questionnaires in general. They look for an easy, inexpensive, and foolproof method for studying human personality. These tests involve the arbitrary scoring of highly subjective responses. This instrument has a very low objective value. This test should be used in cases where such a

test is indicated. It should be administered by one who has been trained along these lines.

Grade III

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

As in the second grade, the Stanford Achievement Test would be used again. The best time to administer it would probably be in February or March in order to use the recently acquired knowledge.

Grade IV

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

The Stanford Achievement Test should be administered in each successive grade through the eighth grade.

CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY

This test should be given about three-fourths of the way through the school year so as to use the recently acquired knowledge.

The test, consisting of five batteries, is designed to cover the range of mental ability from kindergarten to college. The subtests are described as measuring memory, spacial relations, reasoning and vocabulary, as well as tests of visual and auditory acuity and motor coordination. MA's and IQ's may be determined for the

language and nonlanguage tests separately and for the test battery as a whole from the age norms supplied. The diagnostic profile allows one to easily appraise the relative strengths and weaknesses of the student in the various subtest groups.

Directions for administering and scoring, data on reliability, age norms, and relations to tests of school progress are adequate. The tests of visual and auditory acuity and of motor coordination are useful. The pictorial tests are clear and well designed.

However, the authors offer no evidence to show that these test batteries are so constructed as to fulfill the conditions of IQ constancy. The test user must recall that the labeling of groups of tests as measures of logical reasoning, spacial relations, and the like is very often a common sense idea as to probable function.

The authors state that it is their desire to break down the IQ into its component parts. This is a fine ambition. The score derived from the test battery as a whole is about the most valid measure of mental level which the test gives. The tests themselves will probably prove to be very useful at this grade level, and under circumstances that normally give reliable re-

sults.

Validity is chiefly inferred, but a correlation of .88 with the Stanford-Binet Test is established.

The large amount of nonverbal material is a distinctive and commendable feature of this test.

Grade V

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

This test would be given in either February or March as in previous grades.

Grade VI

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

This test would be given in either February or March as in previous grades.

Grade VII

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

This test would be given in either February or March as in previous grades.

CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY

This test should be given in April as in the fourth grade. It is believed by this writer that it is a good idea to repeat this test in order to estimate growth or change. It also would act as a control of the test given in grade four.

CALIFORNIA TEST OF PERSONALITY

It is felt that the seventh grade would be a good time to repeat this test for those children to whom it had been administered in grade two. It could help the counselor to recognize any changes in personality that might have taken place. Also, this test might be given to students who had not taken it in grade two, but only in cases where it is indicated.

Grade VIII

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST

This test would be given in either February or March as in previous grades.

KUDER PREFERENCE RECORD - FORM B

The value of this test rests not upon how the test was constructed, but rather upon how well the test predicts those occupations in which individuals will derive the most satisfaction.

The results presented by Kuder do show that each of the seventy-two occupational groups obtains mean scores on one or more of the nine scales which are statistically different from the mean scores on those scales for a base group of 2,667 men and another base group of 1,429 women. Kuder also presents profiles originally

obtained from a study by Barry for groups of women students preparing to enter twenty-four different occupations. The groups are small in size, but the obtained profiles were generally consistent with the occupation chosen.

The reliability of the test is satisfactory, with test - retest reliabilities for the nine scales ranging from .81 to .98. The reliability of "test interpretation" is not the same as the reliability of a test score. As interpretations based upon profiles of test scores are different, possibly more reliable, from interpretation based upon single scores. These reliability coefficients must stand in their own frame of reference.

More important, from the point of practical vocational guidance, is that the Kuder Preference Record places the emphasis upon preferences rather than upon capacities.

More research needs to be done before the Record can be considered a well-understood instrument, but it is a valuable tool in the hands of a counselor.

The Kuder Preference Record is administered at this time so that it may be of help to the student, par-

ents, and counselor when making course choices upon entering high school.

MINNESOTA CLERICAL TEST FOR GIRLS

This test is brief, easy to administer, and easy to score. It is a test of speed and accuracy in two types of performance -- number checking and name checking.

The new manual contains a summary of several additional studies of reliability and validity and much more information on norms than was contained in the earlier manual. The reliability of the test, as attested by statistical studies presented, is high. A satisfactory validity is indicated by correlations of the test with ratings of clerical workers, ratings of clerical abilities of commercial students, grades of students in accounting, and speed of typing by typing students. Extensive norms are also presented in this new manual. They are given separately for men and women, and all in terms of percentile ratings.

On the whole this test can be recommended for guidance use in the selection of students for clerical training.

REVISED MINNESOTA PAPER FORMBOARD TEST

This test should be used for boys. It is short and takes about twenty-five minutes. It consists of sixty-four items of the multiple-choice type which measure the student's ability to think spatially in two dimensions. The test is easy to administer and score; the directions to the student are complete; and eight preliminary exercises give the student a good familiarity with the nature of the test.

The reliability of a single form of the test is .85. When both forms are given the reliability is .92. The manual does not mention the type of the group to which the test was administered to obtain these coefficients.

The authors indicate that the test is predictive of ability to master descriptive geometry and mechanical drawing. It also is supposed to predict success in mechanical occupations and success in engineering courses.

COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST Higher Level Forms R, S, and T

These tests are a combination of a reading skills test and two English skills tests, mechanics of expression and effectiveness of expression. They are brought

together to permit in two hours of testing time a rather full analysis and diagnosis of English abilities at the eighth grade and high school levels.

The materials of the test are well chosen and clearly presented. The directions are simple, concise, and make clear to the student the purpose of each test. Mechanics are tested functionally rather than in isolation from English expression. It is one of the best tests available in the field of English skills.

Its principal defect, as in other objective tests in English, is that it does not test the power to compose English and should therefore be used cautiously in the placing of students in ability groups.

Grade IX

The following tests should be administered in the first quarter of the school year in order to help the students, parents, and counselors to more carefully work out the best possible program for the student. Also, subject grades are used when considering the student's subjects.

DIFFERENTIAL APTITUDE TESTS

This battery stresses the significance of abilities rather than "ability" as the basis for pre-

diction and guidance at the secondary school level. The parts, other than the clerical, are power tests rather than speed tests. The average reliabilities range from .85. to .93. The exception to this is for that of girls on mechanical reasoning, which is .71.'

Separate percentile norms are given for boys and girls based on national selections. Profiles of percentiles and standard scores are drawn. The loose-leaf manual is convenient for reference and for the addition of future data.

Even though there are many immediate applications for tests of this type, much research is needed on the validity of profiles for predicting various sorts of educational and vocational success.

TERMAN - MCNEMAR TEST OF MENTAL ABILITY

The very first reason for using this test would be that it has a high correlation with the Stanford Achievement Tests given in the first eight grades.

The construction has been done very carefully and systematically. The norms appear to be extremely well standardized. Data are available for interpreting the results in terms of standard scores, mental ages, percentile ranks, and "deviation IQ's."

The manual is complete and useful. Even a non-statistically minded test user would be able to use it with relative ease. Reliability has been analyzed in terms of split-half correlation, inter-form correlation, and the probable error of measurement with a reliability of .96 reported for age fourteen. This is about the average age for this grade.

About the best test for validity, which is extremely hard to measure, is its successful use over the period of years since the test was first issued. The validity of the new test is measured by the correlation of .91 between it and the original Terman Test.

Grade X

KUDER PREFERENCE RECORD - FORM C

Although this test was given in grade eight, it appears that it should be administered again in grade ten. By giving different forms of the same test, the reliability of the test increases and, therefore, is beneficial. Recent research, as stated in a previous chapter, indicates that interest inventories appear to be most stable at grade ten.

COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST Complete Test

It appears to be an excellent idea to give this

test again after grade eight in order to see what improvements have been made over the two years time. Also, it would be beneficial to point out the student's strengths and weaknesses so that he might work on them so as to be more prepared for college or an occupation.

Grade XI

IOWA TESTS OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This test can be used to determine how well the school and pupils are doing in important areas of instruction.

The Iowa is designed to measure the important and lasting outcomes of secondary education. It is a compromise between aptitude and achievement. Despite this shortcoming, which likely depends on your philosophy of testing, this program of tests is about the best conceived and executed battery that is available for use in the senior high school.

The reliability of each of the tests is reported as being approximately .91. The quality of the tests themselves is even more than matched by the quality of the manuals that have been prepared for the school administrator, the examiner, the guidance counselor, and

the teacher. In addition to norms the manual contains sound and extensive advice on the interpretation of the test scores.

The one question that remains is that of validity. However, this is the case in almost every test.

OTHER HIGH SCHOOL TESTS

The following tests are neither compulsory nor are they paid for by the school. However, it is felt that they should be made available to the student. These tests are used mainly for college admissions, placement, and scholarships. The students usually take these tests in their junior and/or senior years.

Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test

National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test

College Entrance Examination Board Tests

American College Testing Program

MACQUARRIE TEST FOR MECHANICAL ABILITY

Some tests may be given when there is found to be a need for them. One of these tests might be the MacQuarrie Test for Mechanical Ability. It would be a valuable aid in selecting trainees for mechanical occupations, particularly when it is used with other tests

and with adequate application blank data.

It is a paper and pencil test widely used to furnish a rough appraisal of both manual and mechanical aptitudes. It is easily administered to a group and may be given in about a half hour. The test is a battery of seven subtests which may be analyzed separately. The total score seems to be much less valuable than the evaluation of the various subscores.

WECHSLER - BELLEVUE INTELLIGENCE SCALE

Individual tests are to be given as needed.

This individually administered point scale is particularly suitable for appraising selected verbal and performance abilities of adolescents and adults. The sum of the weighted scores of this performance group of tests yields a performance IQ and, in combination with the weighted scores of the verbal group, makes possible the derivation of a full-scale IQ.

The Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Scale seems to give a more valid and complete picture of the intellectual functioning of a student than does any other single measure of intelligence. Only at the extremes do other measures possibly make available a richer, more

complete picture of the general functioning ability of the individual.

This test could not be given to every student because it is much too expensive and takes a great deal of time to administer. Also, the examiner must be skilled in order to administer this test properly. When a group test will not give the desirable information than and only than should an individual test be given.

It does not appear to this writer that there is an ideal testing program. It must be remembered that this program was formed with the objectives of a specific school system in mind. It was done with a practical mind, remembering that budgets are a reality. The testing program heretofore presented appears to be a basically sound, practical testing program. A testing program must, therefore, be developed for the local needs in terms of local resources and with active participation by local personnel, who will be the users and interpreters of the test results. An effective testing program means not only sound choice of the tests to be given, but good planning for their administration and for recording the results. Finally, adequate procedures are needed by which the results of testing programs can reach interested parties.

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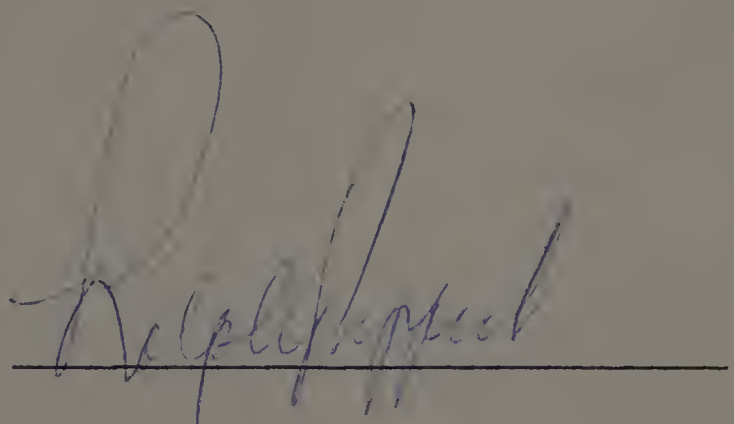
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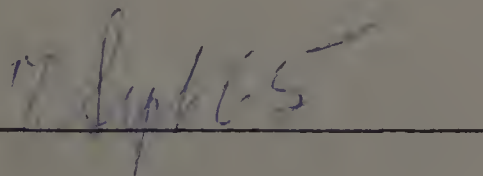
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Problem Approved By:

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(Problem Committee)

Date:

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