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AN EVALUATION OF THE JOPLIN PLAN
at
CHAPMAN SCHOOL, CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT

AN ABSTRACT OF
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The purpose of this study was to determine whether the Joplin Plan would produce higher reading gains than the usual grouping plan for reading instruction in a self-contained classroom in a specific Connecticut school system. Various school systems which adopted the Joplin Plan, or modifications of the Joplin Plan, are evaluated and typical academic problems resulting from this program are discussed.

The first chapter of this thesis deals with the origins and development of the Joplin Plan in America. The methods, procedures, and results obtained from Joplin, Missouri's experimental program are presented and later compared with those of Logansport, Indiana, Dundee, Michigan, Sebastopol Union School District, California, and Indianapolis, Indiana. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the similarities and differences found in each of these five studies of the Joplin Plan.

On the basis of the research conducted by the evaluator or evaluators of each study, results indicate that the Joplin Plan produced greater reading gains than the traditional method of self-contained classrooms in Joplin, Missouri, Logansport, Indiana, and Dundee, Michigan, while in Sebastopol Union School District, California and Indianapolis, Indiana, findings showed that there were no significant reading differences between the two plans. However, in each study, it was stated that the majority of the teachers, parents, and

pupils were enthusiastic and reacted favorably to the Joplin Plan.

Chapter II presents an analysis of the Joplin Plan at Chapman School in Cheshire, Connecticut. Conditions leading to the formation and adoption of this plan are briefly mentioned. The existing program is described and the problems that developed during the year are examined. Teacher, principal, and student opinions regarding the effectiveness of this program are presented and the results analyzed. The chapter terminates with an evaluation of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills to determine if the Joplin Plan produced more significant reading results than the traditional method of self-contained classrooms.

According to the material produced by this study, the Joplin Plan of cross-grade grouping appears to be an effective organization for the teaching of reading to the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students at Chapman School. Teacher, principal, and student reactions toward the Joplin Plan were generally positive.