

EVALUATING INTERMEDIATE GRADE DEPARTMENTALIZATION

as

A MEANS OF MORE EFFECTIVE TEACHING

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by
Margaret B. LaPolt
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The organization of a school is the framework around which an educational program is built. The bases of what constitutes a good framework for a school program have varied from time to time. In this period of time, when our educational system is always in the spotlight, the organization of our school is being considered seriously as one means to more effective teaching. This thesis discusses in general, several of these organizational patterns, and relates, specifically, the uses of departmentalization in Royle School in Darien, Connecticut during the school year of 1962-1963.

Chapter One of the thesis discusses, in brief, some of the problems in our schools today. Reasons are given for why, at this point in our educational history, so much emphasis is being placed on educational practices in a democracy.

In Chapter Two three of the most current types of horizontal school organization are discussed in relation to their advantages and disadvantage. Team teaching, as practiced in Norwalk, Connecticut is reviewed. The cooperative teaching plan employed in Newton, Massachusetts including ideas of both team teaching and departmentalization is discussed. These two plans are compared to the self-contained classroom, the most popular idea of organization until recently. Chapter Three gives a brief history of the various ways that departmentalization has been used with varying degrees of success since the early beginnings of our history.

The remainder of the thesis discusses this plan of organization as it was used in Royle School in Darien, Connecticut during the school year of 1962-1963. In Chapter Four the planning done by the Darien administration to set up time allotments and precepts is considered from its conception in the winter of 1962 to its inception in the school program in the fall of 1962. The problems and difficulties involved and the ultimate solving of them is stated in detail. Copies of original schedules as well as the final schedules followed are set forth.

In Chapter Five the writer discusses the evaluation of the departmental plan through subjective questionnaires from teachers, standardized tests, and opinions of pupils. Direct quotations of teachers' opinions and pupils' opinions are given. Median scores achieved by the pupils in the Stanford Achievement Test during two different schools years are shown.

After a year of evaluation by the staff members, no definite answer as to the validity of the organizational pattern could be found. All evidence did point to the possibility that this will not be the answer the system is seeking in its effort to improve instruction. The possible answer may be some combination of team teaching, departmentalization, and the self-contained classroom in an organizational pattern that considers the pupil and the teacher as major forces for effective teaching.