

**AN EVALUATION OF NEW CANAAN CONNECTICUT'S  
PRELIMINARY ARITHMETIC COMMITTEE STUDY  
FOR GRADES ONE THROUGH SIX**

**AN ABSTRACT OF  
A THESIS  
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**by  
Herbert Bruce Taylor  
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The purpose of the thesis is to evaluate the work of the New Canaan elementary school Arithmetic Committee that functioned from September 1960 through June 1963. Information has been examined from agencies of the United States government and independent national organizations. Places involved in the study are the states of Oklahoma and California, and the Connecticut communities of Ridgefield, Wilton, Westport, and New Canaan.

Specific considerations in the evaluation are: (1) study groups: genesis, financial support, committee appointees, objectives, and committee orientation to new mathematics programs; (2) the mathematics programs studied: procedures used for studying the programs, materials studied, and textbook selections; and (3) staff orientation to new programs.

The two states and four communities received impetus for mathematics curriculum studies from independent and governmental agencies at the national level. State studies received additional momentum from state curriculum commissions, and all the groups were influenced by (1) professional literature, (2) educators participating in college courses, (3) conferences, (4) workshops, (5) key teachers, (6) school administrators, and (7) publishing companies.

In addition to the financial assistance provided by state and town boards of education, the states of Oklahoma and California received assistance from other sources; and Westport was the recipient of an anonymous gift.

Common to all study groups, except Westport, were central committees, whose purpose was to improve mathematics programs in terms of a better understanding of mathematics on the part of teachers and children. The committees' tasks were the selection and implementation of textbook series. The criteria for selecting materials varied; and the committees, except Westport, were hampered in their selections by the lack of experimental data, completed textbook series, and supplementary publications. The re-education of teachers has been a major problem resulting in a variety of approaches to teacher in-service programs.

Major advantages revealed by the two state studies are: (1) the inclusion of committee members with diversified backgrounds, (2) the financial assistance received by the combined resources, (3) the pilot programs, and (4) the long range planning. Disadvantages to the state studies were: (1) the diminishing freedom at the local levels, (2) the apparent bureaucratic structure of the educational system, (3) the dependence upon legislative action, and (4) the possible implications resulting from textbook company pressures to obtain contracts.

The effectiveness of committee action in the Connecticut communities varied in terms of (1) administrative leadership, (2) committee participants, (3) selection of materials, (4) methods of implementing new programs, (5) time, and (6) financial compensation for committee participants.

An analysis of the studies has resulted in a compilation of recommended procedures for organizing a mathematics study. Finally, five questions presented for further investigation are: (1) Does the New Canaan philosophy need to be revised in terms of recent findings? (2) Do the new mathematics programs need previous teacher and student preparation before full implementation of a one through six program within one year? (3) What are the reactions of teachers when program decisions are administrative? (4) What is considered adequate released time or compensation for participating in studies or in-service programs that go beyond the school day? (5) Are curriculum studies and policy decisions preferred and more effective at the state or local levels?