

EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL PRODUCES HONESTY AND FAIR PLAY NEEDED TO PREVENT DELINQUENCY AND CRIME.

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Repeated records of high school students across the United States have shown that those students who become heavily involved in extra curricular activities tend to be model students and seldom get involved in delinquency and crime. They are the role models early in the high school and community showing that the bridge between home and the work place or college is much more sturdy and complete than for other students not so involved. The real problem is that too few students get involved in the major extra curricular activities, and too often the few who get involved often monopolize such activities in a number of different areas. In the newly emerging student-centered high school such involvement must be considered to be an integral part of the high school agenda for all students, not just the select few who have profited so much from such involvement in the traditional past (Rose, 2000).

Personal Qualities Gained

In a student-centered high school the extra-curricular activities focus squarely on the student as a person, and if the function of the high school is to build a bridge between the home and the work place or college, there must be more focus on the person than in the present traditional high school. This does not mean less emphasis on the subject matter, but a recognition that real success in the subject matter areas depends first and foremost on a well functioning student. Two million inmates in the prisons across our nation with 80 percent of them lost in the world of alcohol and drugs must change, as is clearly depicted in "a nation at risk" report of our failing schools (Riley, 1983, and Wren, 1998). The real success of students who have partic-

ipated heavily in extra-curricular activities in the past that have become model citizens must be shared with more and more students in the future. In the new Student-Centered high school, extra-curricular activities must be considered as a must for all students, and as a specific requirement for graduation not unlike math and science in the traditional curriculum if we are going to reduce the size of our prison populations even a mite.

Team Spirit

The success of many competitive team sports depends in a large degree to which each and every member executes properly the expected role that has been clearly defined for such activities. Early in such competitive settings, including intramural

sports, all participants learn that no team is stronger than the weakest link, and that each person in a team is as important as every other person. This, of course, is the basic principle for success in the family structure, in the community, and in the nation as a whole. The precise manner in which all team members compliment each other is the single determinant for achieving success and victory in any competitive match. The JROTC program, band, intramural and competitive sports, debating teams and the like tend to build the basis for real success in a competitive economic society, and where there must be full recognition and acceptance of all individuals regardless of race, religion or color.

Belongingness

The personal feeling of being a part of some larger whole begins with a feeling of belonging by being part of a family and other heritage factors associated therewith. In a democracy that feeling of belonging must grow, and they must learn early that personal identity includes religion, race, culture, the high school, the community, and above all the nation and the flag of our country. Later in marriage that feeling of belonging must cause individuals to be true to marriage and later family involvements in the same manner that they would to the traditional high school football team. When that true feeling of belonging emerges there will be less need to escape into the world of alcohol and drugs so characteristic of our present prison populations.

Personal Pride

Pride is a feeling of personal gratification that derives largely from secure feelings of being a member of groups large-

ly than self and flows directly from feelings of belonging. It is typically characterized by feelings of importance of present personal involvements thereby eliminating the immediate and urgent need to seek escape through the use of marijuana, alcohol and other drugs. For too many young people during the highly emotional period of adolescence in high school with an increasing emphasis solely on scholastic and curricular activities tend to seek relief through the use of marijuana, alcohol and other drugs. The personal pride typically associated with full and flowing membership in extra-curricular activities promises personal involvements as a real and meaningful substitute for escape into the world of alcohol and drugs. Our prisons are filled with more than 80 percent of inmates who only rarely have a history of extra curricular involvements in the high school during adolescent years (Wren 1998). That promises to change in a student-centered high school

Value of Fair Play

There are always important differences between well-planned and carefully developed organizational techniques that bring victory through both fair play and foul play, and where in both instances the rules of the game are followed completely. An example of victory through foul play in the wrestling arena is where a participant notices that an opponent had a bandaged right elbow from previous mat burns, and then insisted on injuring the mat burn elbow for victory. Another example of foul play is where multiple members of a football team seek to eliminate the star player of the opponent team through roughhouse. Often these foul plays are common place but victory at any price is not victory at all,

and must be recognized as such. These are the same individuals who are inmates in our prisons throughout the nation, and coaches must not tolerate such activity.

Honesty

Of all the qualities that are gained in the participation of extra curricular activities, the most important in relation to the prevention of delinquency and crime is honesty and trustworthiness. They serve as the foundations for real success in democracy more than any other personal qualities, and they are best promoted through personal participation in competitive athletic and academic activities. It is here where the basic foundation is being laid for the prevention later in life of delinquency and crime. Honesty and trustworthiness are intimately related behavior and must be recognized as such; because the person who is dishonest can never be trusted. The single quality above all else that characterizes the two million inmates in our prisons across the nation is dishonesty and of being conniving and using "slick" tricks that they feel sure never to be caught.

Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse

More often than not when high school students begin involvement in the use of alcohol and drugs it is because they are not heavily involved in other acceptable and satisfying social pursuits. Often they sit in long rows of seats with no personal involvement that is acceptable to them in any manner; many because they have lost contiguity with the present subject matter. Almost all of the standards for the hard core subjects in high school are based on contiguity; so that if a student misses or fails to understand one part, succeeding

parts have little or no meaning. Motivation and personal goals are inter-related conditions in life; so that when there are no scientifically tested job-career plans there is a lack of personal motivation for hard core subject matter areas. Motivation and personal goals are inter-related psychologically. When students are in a high school without any career goals and objectives, the need is to round out personal development through the use of extra curricular activities. Otherwise, the inclination is to find social solace in the use of alcohol and drugs and to become involved in other deviant behavior, and sometimes just for purposes of getting attention

Student Functional Participation

Our traditional high schools have become more and more like a prison stockade where higher and higher fences are being built, and with greater and greater regimentation characteristic of a prison. The student-centered high school begins by recognizing that each and every student is an indispensable element of manpower to accomplish our democratic objectives. In the academic classes students who have acquired the subject matter must serve as tutor for those lacking such achievement. Disciplined courts must consist entirely of upper grade students, always under the careful supervision of faculty selected for their ability and willingness to be so involved. Guidance activities can be reinforced by the use of select students in relation to job-career scientific testing, and implementation. When a teacher is ill for a single day, select students can adequately fill in for a missing teacher for a day or two better than any substitute teacher. This is the real test of whether or not democra-

cy is working. If we are going to reverse the growing prison population in our country it will begin with the newly emerging student-centered high schools.

Leadership Development and Training

If the person centered high school is to become a reality there must be carefully planned leadership training programs that are a basic requisite for high school graduation (Cassel, 2000). First and foremost they must learn the basic requisites for democratic leadership, and where the only modes acceptable are: (1) a democratic-cooperative pattern, and (2) the Autocratic-submissive pattern where committees are concerned with discovering the latest and best approaches to any social or educational problem. Students must learn early the basic effective principles for the use of reward and punishment discovered in actual research by Estes at Stanford (1) Praise only when earned, otherwise praise loses psychological value; and (2) punish only when begged for, then planned to be corrective in nature. Understand the functions of self-efficacy as to mean personal expectations based on careful organizing and planning.

Change in Academic Programs

The new Student-Centered high schools must always involve some basic alterations of the academic instructional programs. Instruction must be planned so that both teacher and student are aware of how such activity relates to the contiguous nature of the academic standards that are involved. Assessment plans must be implemented as an integral part of the class introduction with no fewer than two and not more than four periodic exams planned for a semes-

ter Student expectations must be clearly defined in terms that are meaningful in relation to both the state or nation standards, and the planned subject matter involved.

College and Non-College Students

The students in our high school are of two very clear-cut basic kinds of individuals. First, it includes those students who are planning to go to college, and Second, there are students who are not planning to go to college, but may very well go to a community college. For some of the non-college students it is because they lack the ability to do college level work, but for many of them it has to do with their present readiness and disposition. It should be remembered that many of the great books of the world were written by persons after age 60. Just so, the readiness of individuals for college happens later in life, and sometimes later in high school. The new student-centered high school must make provisions to accommodate such individuals if delinquency and crime are to be reduced in the future.

Scientifically Tested Job-Career Plans

Each and every individual must have been provided with scientifically tested job-career plans before 11th grade; so that the school academic program can be appropriately adopted to such plans for each and every individual. This must include all individuals, even those who are determined to seek a job-career without such testing. If students are expected to find job-career activities where work is like play, and where going to work is like going to play, there can be no exceptions to the scientific approach as described. It means a three stage effort with the student portfolio clear-

ly showing the outcomes of such practice before 11th grade:

1. Scientific assessment and discovery of three job-career activities most liked and those most disliked.
2. Personal observation of the most liked activities in a actual work settings to confirm the testing impressions.
3. Where there are questions, it should include an actual opportunity to spend time with personal experience to further confirm the personal tastes of such liked activities.

Student Portfolio Accomplished

In a student-centered high school the student portfolio begins with actual entrance into high school, and serves a two-fold purpose:: (1) The present status of school and personal development in major areas related to expected high school requirements; psychologically like putting money in the bank, and (2) serves as the basis for college entrance, and/or for job-application purposes. The high school student potfolio must serve as the means to show not only the present accomplishments of each and every student, but also in unmistakable terms what remains to meet high school graduation requirements. Here the portfolio serves the student much like a fight plan to a pilot doing a cross-country trip in an airplane. The responsibility of maintaining the portfolio is that of the student, but to be carefully verified near the end of each and every high school year by a school counselor.

Instructional Provisions for Course Continuity

In a student-centered high school when

a student fails in school it is a serious reflection on the teacher as well, because too often student failure is caused because students loose lack of continuity with subject matter being covered. In a student-centered high school, when a student fails, it is similarly a reflection on ineffective teaching. The lack of continuity of students is obvious in the typical classroom, and steps must be taken by the teacher to help students maintain continuity with the materials being presented. Traditionally, teachers have been able to accomplish this through the use and arranging for students who clearly have achieved the continuity tutoring others lacking such continuity. For those students who loose continuity because of being late to class and failing repeatedly to accomplish home assignments, they must be dropped from the course without further delay.

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