

New disciplinary policy is proposed by Council

The School Council held its final meeting of the year on Friday, May 25. As a result of several motions and discussions, the following letter was sent to the administration under the name of Andy Barnett, proposing changes in the detention system.

"Dr. Sperduto,

"In approving our own proposal on the 'new' detention system, the School Council came across many obstacles in putting this new policy into effect. As you may remember, the proposed policy included a 'work detail' type of punishment. It has been brought to our attention that this new policy would create more work for teacher supervisors of these 'work details.' Our intention originally was to have more of a deterrent and fewer hassles for the teachers in charge. The new policy that was originally submitted required the teacher to be in several places at one time. Since this is absolutely impossible we have come up with a new (we hope foolproof) way of putting a halt to infractions of the school rules.

"We request the following:

A—Detention system be abolished

B—Adopt a demerit system

"The demerit system would include

A—One demerit slip for each infraction

B—Three demerit slips would result in a Discipline Committee hearing

C—Discipline Committee (D.C.) would assign a punishment to fit the crime, along with a letter sent home to parents

D—D.C. hearing would be written down on student's record, specifically stating whether it was for a major or minor infraction of the rules, the terms "major" and "minor" to be defined by the Disciplinary Committee.

"This proposed policy would take away the need for detention sessions, thereby cutting the burden on teachers. A student would think twice before committing second or third infractions. This policy is not to punish the first time 'gum-chewers' but to make the repeat offenders aware that they will be dealt with severely.

"We hope that this proposed policy will be considered and approved by the Administration. The School Council unanimously approved this proposal and we anxiously await your reply."

Parents meet headmaster at informal evening coffees

by Eric Combet

The Parents Association scheduled nine evening coffees this spring in which parents meet and discuss the school with the headmaster-elect, Mr. J. William Adams.

The idea for the evenings was Mr. Adams'. He wanted to meet the parents and hear their ideas and complaints about the school. He says he deliberately chose to work in a day school instead of a boarding school because he wants to work with the students' parents. "My goal is to show that parents are important to what we want to accomplish with their children."

Mr. Adams opens the evenings about 7:30 p.m. and starts the discussion. General questions and ideas are discussed and parents whose questions relate specifically to their child are encouraged to make private appointments with Mr. Adams.

These evenings were also designed to increase the number of Prep's applicants. Parents bring friends who are interested in Rutgers Prep and who want to learn more about the school. "We clarify realities for potential applicants," said Mr. Adams, who hopes to increase the size of the student body to about four hundred seventy.

Mr. Adams believes the evenings have been successful although the response is not what was expected. Mrs. Elaine Kingsley, who is on the Parents Association committee in charge of the program, said the parents "should have more interest in the man who will be in charge of their children's education."

Seniors make college choices

Bryan Beckerman—Ithaca College

Karen Bekus—Rider College

Philip Brenner—Duke University

Paul Brown—Wesleyan College

Matthew Busch—Tufts University

Nina Chanin—Lafayette College

Lori Cohen—University of Miami

Christopher Combet—Yale University

Daniel Danzig—University of Delaware

Robert Darwin—Duke University

Mary Anne Donnini—Undecided

Scott Drago—University of Bridgeport

Cheryl Dunn—Wagner College

Philip Engel—University of Maine

James Facrak—Undecided

Laurie Fortney—Boston University

Carolyn Gernert—Lycorning College

Mark Gillette—Undecided

Josephine Graham—Tampa University

Christopher Hartmann—University of Miami

Shawn Hildebrand—Spelman College

Marilyn Howarth—Swarthmore College

Ruth Howell—Austin College

William Jasonowski—Tulane University

Joanne Juhasz—Northwestern University

Kevin Kane—The Citadel

Gail Kant—Vanderbilt University

Philip Kosnett—Harvard University

James Krauszer—Villanova University

Hideshi Kudo—Rochester Institute of Technology

Carla Kuhner—Rutgers University

Edwin Lee—University of Pennsylvania

Thomas Lee—Lafayette College

Lawrence Lerner—University of Miami

Adam Moskowitz—Boston University

Vicky Neiner—Duke University

John O'Connell—Cook College

Gail Orlando—Muhlenberg Hospital School of Nursing

Edward Pahler III—Cook College

Suzette Pawson—Rider College

Carl Perelman—Seton Hall University

Roberta Petti—College of St. Elizabeth

John Phillips—Skidmore College

Anne Picker—Brandeis University

Adams works on new programs

by Walter H. Plazek

Mr. J. William Adams, headmaster-elect of the school, has been at work during the past weeks suggesting and creating ideas for the next school year. Mr. Adams currently comes to the school twice a week, and one can find him at work in the Conference Room at almost any time during his days.

Among the changes Mr. Adams is working on is the establishment of two Councils: the Academic Council, and the Administrative Council. The Academic Council will consist of all the Upper School department heads, the principals of the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools, and the heads of three Lower School departments—the Primary Department (Grades K, 1, and 2), the Intermediate Department (3 and 4) and the Early Adolescent Department (5 and 6). This Council will establish all curriculums, judge the curriculums, and then assess them to see if any changes should be made. Dr. Sperduto will chair this committee. Its function will not interfere with the functioning of the Academic Advisory Committee, a committee of the Board of Trustees. The Administrative Council will consist of the three principals, the Director of Athletics, the Head of the Office of Development, and the Business Manager. Mr. Adams will chair this committee. Both Committees will advise the Headmaster. In addition, Mr. Adams would like the School Council to take a more active role in advising the Headmaster.

A faculty evaluation plan is also being worked on. Through this method, each faculty member at the school would be evaluated once every three years. They would be evaluated both by Mr. Adams and their peers. A schedule for next year for this plan is currently being arranged.

The physical arrangement of the offices in the Upper School will also be changed next year. The current Conference Room will become the Headmaster's Office. The current Headmaster's office will be changed into the Office of Development. The old library will be split; the front third

will be an area for the secretaries, and the rear two-thirds will become a college counseling center. The Assistant Headmaster's office will be moved into the current Office of Development. For easier access, a door will be opened in the wall. Finally, the area where the secretaries are now will be turned into a reception area. There is at present no area for the public to wait. A receptionist with a central switchboard will be located here.

Several projects which Mr. Adams is also pondering are a longer school day, a change in the traffic flow on campus, the problem of student parking, a series of signs on the campus buildings, and an increase of about 100 in the student enrollment for next year.

"Two things spring has taught me," said Mr. Adams, "are the incredible receptivity of the faculty—there are some wonderful teachers here—and the pleasant students. In some schools I visited the students would look at me and turn away in silence, but here they smile and say 'Hello.'"

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RUTGERS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 1978

Board takes on more visible role

One of the most notable developments seen this year at Rutgers Preparatory School is the increasingly visible role that the Board of Trustees is playing in school life. According to Mr. Harold H. Oertell, the Board's president, that role will indeed continue.

"I believe very firmly in communication," says Mr. Oertell. Acting on that conviction, some members of the Board, including Mr. Oertell, have met with students several times this year and Mr. Oertell intends to continue that practice.

The higher profile that the Board will be assuming in coming years was presaged last year when, for the first time, the president of the Board spoke at Commencement. This year's Alumni-Trustee Cocktail Party represents the first year that the Board has

co-sponsored the affair. There has also been increasing interaction among trustees, parents, and faculty, the best example of that being the Search Committee, whose job it was to find a replacement for retired Headmaster David M. Heinlein. Finally, the Academic Advisory Committee has long been one body where trustees, faculty, parents, and students (in the persons of two representatives) all worked together.

This year, however, there has been concern among the teachers that the Board is removed from the "day-to-day activities that affect the faculty," as Mrs. Dalrene Hagin phrased it. Trustees were also, it was felt, making decisions on issues concerning the faculty without any faculty input, as well as mishandling faculty grievances. In an attempt to remedy the communications problem, the Board met, for the first time ever, with some faculty members on May 1 in an exchange that both parties seemed to feel was worthwhile.

According to Mr. Oertell, as the Board of Trustees continues its active role in the school life, it will involve itself more in "development and long-range planning." One example of trustee-initiated reform in such important programs is the pension plan. Under the old plan of several years

ago, the cost to Rutgers Preparatory School and its teachers was more than it should have been for the benefits provided. After the trustees became involved, a plan was found which provides better benefits at a smaller cost.

As the Board becomes more involved in long-range projects, it will "probably taper off" in its concern with "day-to-day activities." Explaining further, Mr. Oertell noted that the Board "at times worked in administrative decisions." This involvement would decline.

Indeed, prior to eight years ago, the Board of Trustees consisted of a body of people who met as a whole only rarely, once or twice a year. An executive committee consisting of officers and committee heads of the Board met monthly with the Headmaster and decided policy. Mr. Oertell points out that this system was not necessarily "against the school's interest" and that the campus of Rutgers Prep as it is today is in large part a result of work conducted according to the executive committee system. However, many felt that it made the school's important officials rather inaccessible and, under Board president Walter Szymanski, it was changed. The entire Board now meets every month.



Lower School parents and students lunch during Family Day, May 10.
photo by L. Schulman

Editorial

Tuition bill is needed

Seventeen years ago, it was so controversial that discussion of it was front-page news in the New York Times. Today, Congressional hearings on it were not mentioned on any page of the Times. The subject is tuition tax credits, specifically, the Packwood-Moynihan Tuition Tax Credit Act of 1977, and the dearth of attention the hearings on it received may be an indication that the idea is becoming more palatable to the general public.

And well it should be. The bill would provide a tax credit, that is, a certain sum that could be subtracted from a person's final income tax debt for the year. That sum would be 50% of tuition expenses, with a \$500 limit on the amount to be subtracted. That means that after the first \$1000 in tuition, no additional credit could be obtained.

What most critics of the bill tend to ignore is that this credit is for individuals, or families who have members attending public schools as well as for those attending private schools. The tax credit is not solely for private schools, and certainly not only for parochial schools. In fact, according to Sen. Robert Packwood (Dem.-Ore.), a co-sponsor of the bill with Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Dem.-N.Y.), the bill would most benefit those people attending public colleges and public elementary and secondary schools. Furthermore, upon examining the statistics (the earliest available are from 1976) one sees that 44 million students attend public schools in grades kindergarten through twelve, whereas private school enrollment in those same grades is only 5 million. For public vs. private colleges, the figures are 8 million as opposed to 2 million. The final score, then, is fifty-two million to seven million. A bill that applies to both public and private schools would benefit millions more public school families than private.

Nevertheless, there are those who would begrudge private school students and their families even the small assistance provided by the Packwood-Moynihan bill. One opponent whose forebodings approach the apocalyptic is Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers. His principal argument seems to be that the Packwood-Moynihan bill is a vicious blow against public education and will eventually mean its demise. This is nonsense. What the bill is a long overdue attempt on the part of some legislators to provide some sort of tax relief to the middle class. To provide that relief through educational assistance is certainly a logical way, for it is educational costs, particularly college expenses, that weigh so heavily on middle class families. Most existing aid programs are geared to lower income levels, the largest such program, the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant, being open only to families with adjusted income of less than \$6000 per year. The best a middle income family can do is a guaranteed loan. Meanwhile, college costs have risen 40% in the last five years for public institutions and 35% for private universities.

However, even Mr. Shanker does not deny that middle class families do need assistance. But how he can cling to his argument that legislation which in some way would help relieve the burden on private school parents would therefore do great harm to public schools is beyond us. The figures speak clearly enough. Of the money spent on elementary and secondary education in 1976 (again the most recently available figures), 90.4% went to public schools, 7.1% of it from the Federal government, 36.5% from the state governments, and 46.7% from local governments. A mere one-tenth of one percent came from the "miscellaneous" category. As for the non-public schools, their tiny 9.6% of the total was all from the miscellaneous category—no federal, state, or local funding was supplied. For higher education, two-thirds of the money was for public institutions, the Federal government supplying 9.1% of it, the state governments 29.2%. Of the non-public third, the Federal government provided 5.3% of the money, the states, 0.9%.

The small contribution made by the states to non-public education was greatly weakened, at least in New Jersey, by the loss of the \$1000 state income tax credit for parents of children in private schools. All that is left is federal aid. And when one considers that in 1977 the average cost of a public college was \$3005, and of a private, \$4905, and when one considers that at a kindergarten-through-twelve institution like Rutgers Preparatory School tuition can be between two and three thousand dollars, and when one considers that many families are paying these prices for more than one child, that \$500 figure becomes pitifully, laughably small. The picture of hordes of people clutching their five hundred dollar tax credits and madly swamping the offices of private schools like Rutgers Prep becomes highly improbable, and if Mr. Shanker seriously believes it, he is saying more about the state of the country's public school system than about the Packwood-Moynihan bill.

Furthermore, Mr. Shanker and all levels of government ought to be grateful to private school parents because, while their numbers (as shown earlier) are not considerable enough to threaten public schools, the money they save state governments surely is considerable. In New Jersey in 1976, it cost the state \$2076 per pupil in a public elementary or secondary school. Even the relatively small enrollment of Rutgers Preparatory School means almost one million dollars the state has saved. Moreover, the parents of private school students continue to pay the taxes that support public education.

The principal difficulty left to discuss is the constitutional one. In 1947, the United States Supreme Court ruled that neither Congress nor the states could pass laws aiding religion, despite the fact that some constitutional lawyers held then and hold now that the First Amendment bars only preferential treatment of one religion, not aid to all of them equally. This decision would be less distressing were it not for the inconsistency the Court has shown since then. For example, the Court, in 1971, declared most of an act providing aid to church-related colleges and universities constitutional. They then lamely supported their finding by claiming, without any evidence, that college students are "less susceptible to religious indoctrination" than high school students. What makes a seventeen-year-old more impressionable than a nineteen-year-old remains a mystery. At any rate, the Packwood-Moynihan bill consists of payment to parents, not to schools, and perhaps could pass a constitutionality test on that basis.

One final point concerning the First Amendment. Not to deny sectarian schools and the parents of children in them the aid they certainly need, but what is the rationale for lumping non-sectarian institutions like Rutgers Preparatory School with religiously-affiliated ones? That is patently unfair and unsupportable.

Senator Moynihan has acknowledged that the Tuition Tax Credit Act is not nearly sufficient. But he calls it a "necessary beginning." However small, a beginning is definitely necessary.

The Gatekeeper—Part II

ETS faces varied criticisms

by Christopher Combest

"It is a good test," asserts John Smith, Director of Media Relations for the Educational Testing Service. William Turnbull, ETS's president since July of 1970 and a thirty-year veteran of the organization (he worked earlier in research and development), agreed in a telephone interview, calling standardized testing "an enormously valuable tool." But, he took pains to point out that Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores should not be seen as giving "a total diagram" of a student, academically or otherwise.

That "otherwise" is extremely important to William R. Mason. Mr. Mason is Director of Admissions at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Bowdoin is one of the few colleges in the North that does not require the Scholastic Aptitude Test (or any ETS test) for admission.

"We don't think it's a good predictor taken alone. One element that is missing and is absolutely pivotal is the emotional make-up and family background of the student," Mr. Mason emphasized the importance of such considerations. Dana Johnson, Assistant Director of Admissions at Chatham College in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, another school that does not require SAT scores as part of its applicants' admission material, states that this policy has in no way "hurt the quality of the student body" and reflects the college's feeling that it is "unfair to count anyone out due to test scores."

Legislative Action

Another man who feels that way is the sponsor of Bill HR6776 in the United States House of Representatives, Congressman Michael Harrington. His measure was introduced last year and has been sent to psychologists, educators, and people in the testing field. Revised over the past few months, the bill has as one of its provisions a clause forbidding colleges and universities from designating minimum cut-off scores for applicants, that is, minimum SAT results below which the institution will not consider a candidate.

"Most colleges rely too heavily on scores," according to James Castello, legislative assistant to Congressman Harrington. Many institutions, he said, have an "economic incentive to look at numbers, because it is faster and cheaper. But there is no one to protect the consumer."

The bill would also require that ETS publish its test questions within thirty days of administering the test. This provision is a response to what Rep. Harrington sees as "com-

puterized impersonality" in multiple-choice tests. Also, he claims that the only way for a student to discover his mistakes is by examining the questions. The overall purpose of HR6776 is to "get more information about standardized testing in the open."

Mr. Turnbull believes the Harrington bill, which is to be re-introduced in Congress in the near future, has a "commendable aim" in trying to make information on testing available to the public, but he believes that ETS does that well as it is. He also worries about the consequences of publishing test questions so soon after the test. Because the Service often re-uses test questions, and because it could no longer put into tests questions that had been made public, new questions would have to be written more often and in greater volume than now, which could, warns Mr. Turnbull, "at least double the price" of tests like the SAT.

Competition for ETS

The many tests that ETS administers do, at present prices, bring in a healthy share of its revenue—almost \$62 million of the seventy million it took in in 1977. Those testing revenues have risen consistently over at least the last five years, from \$46 million in 1973 to the \$62 million of 1977. The College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) which sponsors the SATs and achievement tests, among others, contracts with ETS to administer exams that reach about 1,300,000 students in a year. The Service's nearest non-profit competitor, the American College Testing Program (ACT) reaches between three and four hundred million fewer students per year than ETS. The CEEB program also comprises more elements than that of ACT. The Advanced Placement Tests (see The Argo, April 26, 1978) have no parallel in ACT and are therefore administered only by ETS.

Some charge that ETS's close relationship with the College Board gives it an unfair advantage. While it is true that the Educational Testing Service was created by the College Board (and two other educational organizations) specifically to take the burden of testing off those bodies, ETS is totally independent of them, and, Mr. Turnbull responds, the College Board "could decide at any time" to give its contract to another firm. Competition is very keen, Mr. Turnbull also pointed out, in other areas, such as research, where ETS is in a field with universities and independent groups that want to secure

contracts for themselves. Also, ETS has only a relatively minor share in pre-high school testing, and, while ETS exclusively administers many tests, ACT also has certain exams that ETS does not. The most prominent of these is perhaps the Medical College Admissions Test.

The MCAT is particularly important because it figures in the Allan Bakke case, a suit in which Mr. Bakke accuses the medical school of the University of California at Davis of turning him down in favor of a minority applicant with lower grades and test scores. The Bakke case concerns Mr. Turnbull, who says that a decision for Allan Bakke could be interpreted by schools as meaning "that they have less discretion in the use of other factors than test scores." This would increase the tendency, as he sees it, of some to "place too much faith in the combination of test scores and grades." He feels that tests like the SAT are victims of exaggerated importance because of their high visibility and because of the feeling that an SAT is an "event to gear up to."

System not foolproof

Despite these statements, the SAT test is especially important to many school systems across the United States, which are viewing with increasing alarm the national decline in SAT scores over the past fourteen years. They are looking for ways to improve their scores within the schools themselves. Also, several outside preparation programs are offered yearly. Apparently, however, one program, in Englewood, New Jersey, was somewhat too helpful. It used sample questions that actually turned out to be part of the May 1978 Scholastic Aptitude Test. ETS could nullify the results of that test and is in court now over the matter. Mr. Castello says the incident proves that the system is fallible and believes it supports the Harrington bill. ETS has no comment while the litigation is in progress.

Thus do matters stand. Mr. Turnbull is confident of the future of standardized testing and sees it expanding as more and more professional groups try to devise methods of evaluating their peers. The Harrington bill is far from becoming law, and, despite institutions like Chatham and Bowdoin, thousands of colleges and universities across the country require standardized exams, many of them administered by the Educational Testing Service.

BIOS: What is graduation?

"What is Graduation, Daddy," asked my tousle-haired four-year old son one bright Sunday morning.

"Graduation, my son," I replied, "ah, it's so many things. Graduation is a soft June evening, a gentle breeze in the moonlight, and a gift-wrapped portable Smith-Corona. Graduation is a cap, a gown, a cap and gown, a stain on the gown, and a \$45 cleaning bill. It is the Grand March from Aida, Pomp and Circumstance, and Ruffles and Flourishes, all with a disco beat. It is sixty-five sets of parents with inner peace, outer joy, full hearts, and empty bank balances.

"But the true meaning of Graduation is more than just some scribbles on sheepskin—it is something that can't be begged, borrowed, or stolen (although a \$250,000 endowment occasionally can do the trick).

"And don't ever let your friends tell you there's no such thing as Graduation. No Graduation? Why, there might as well be no Santa Claus.

Or no Virginia. Or no West Virginia for that matter.

"Yes, my boy, Graduation is the Class of '78, the Summer of '42, and the House of Ill Repute. It's valedic-

torians, salutariorians, summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and corned beef cum cabbage. To me, Graduation is all of these things, and if you don't lie it, kid, lump it."

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