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An Assessment of the Acceptability of Selected Educational Concepts of School Organization and Instructional Approaches Which Enhance Individualization

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ACCEPTABILITY OF SELECTED EDUCATIONAL

CONCEPTS OF SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL

APPROACHES WHICH ENHANCE INDIVIDUALIZATION

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A Field Study

Presented to the

Faculty of the Graduate College

The University of Nebraska at Omaha

———————————

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Specialist in Education

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by

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers are surrounded by educational structures which influence

their thinking, planning, and teaching. Significant among these is the

existing concepts of school and curriculum organization. These educa-

tional concepts assist or restrict teachers. They assist by emphasizing

the significant and relevant; they restrict by emphasizing the insignifi-

cant and irrelevant. It is conceivable that as the organization of the

school and the curriculum influences teaching so does it influence

learning![1]

Patterns of school and curriculum organization cannot be circum-

vented, but they can be changed.[2] Most changes in school organization

have been structured primarily to deal with individual differences among

students and to provide greater flexibility in programs for the

individual.[3]

Educators have been confronted for years with the problem of

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[1]John I. Goodlad, School, Curriculum and the Individual (London: Blaisdell Publishing Company, 1966), p. v.

[2]Ibid., p. v.

[3]John I. Goodlad, "School Organization," The Teacher's Handbook (London: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1971), p. 490.

making the educational system more responsive to individual differences among students.[4]

Many teachers have been using various approaches to working with individual students from the inception of the graded school concept. In fact, many current educational innovations have centered around this problem. Grouping, track systems, project work, independent study programs, nongraded systems, team-teaching, dual-progress plans, and continuous-progress plans, have all been attempts to make the educational system provide more adequately for the education of individuals.[5]

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to assess the acceptability of selected instructional approaches and educational concepts of school organization which might enhance individualization. These concepts and approaches were presented to the principals of the elementary schools of the Omaha, Nebraska Public School District.

Discussion of the Problem

The Omaha Public Schools include approximately seventy-five elementary school buildings. Although every building's philosophy emphasizes quality education numerous instructional approaches can be

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[4] John O. Bolvin and Robert Glaser, "Individualized Instruction," The Teacher's Handbook (London: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1971), p. 270.

[5] Bolvin and Glaser, op. cit., p. 270.

used to achieve this goal. The instructional approaches vary from building to building and include: individualized instruction, programed learning, multi-media centers, parent-teacher conferences, and outdoor education. However, these approaches to individualized instruction are not being utilized in every building.

Innovative programs of individualization have been introduced at an accelerated pace in the last twenty years. These innovative programs have been instrumental in helping to maintain an educational system which is responsive to the individual needs of children.

Resistance to change is more evident when traditional values and established patterns are threatened. It would be wise to initiate change cautiously, but consistently. When changes are introduced without sound planning, or for the sake of change alone, progress is hampered.

THE PROBLEM OF CHANGE

There are some common barriers which stand in the path of change. The fear of change itself has prevented many innovative ideas from becoming innovative practices. These barriers can be overcome in a number of ways. One would be through visitations. If teachers were allowed to visit another school and see new approaches in action they would be more likely to accept the idea. Demonstrations provide another avenue toward change. Teachers and parents must be geared to accept new ideas, and demonstrations provide one way of putting minds at ease. When teachers view an idea in action, they are more apt to relate the situation to their own individual classrooms.

There are many instructional approaches to individualization which are not being used because teachers fear changes which are initiated too quickly. It is important that teachers are able to realize the value of change even when this requires a long period of time. However, many teachers who are convinced of the value of individualized instruction seem to be doing little to implement it. According to Gorton, some additional barriers are:

1. Habit. Habit is the tendency of people to behave in the same way as they always behaved. The challenge of innovation is frequently met with resistance.

2. The bureaucratic structure of the schools. The school as a bureaucratic institution emphasizes the maintenance of order, rationality, and continuity. It does not usually include within its organization an explicit system or mechanism for generating, introducing, and institutionalizing change. Because of the school's hierarchical structure, proposed change may either be diluted before it is finally approved, or rejected because it threatens the stability of the institution.

3. The lack of incentive. Change can be a difficult and frustrating experience for the individuals involved. Although the change agent may be personally convinced of the benefits which will accure if the proposed change is adopted, he can seldom guarantee those benefits or offer incentives to persuade others to adopt the innovation.

4. The nature of the proposed change. Innovations can vary according to complexity, cost, compatibility with the rest of the school's operation, and ease of communicability.

5. Teacher norms. There is evidence which indicates that a teacher may receive disapproval from his colleagues for adopting an innovation, and effects by the administrator to bring about change in a teacher's role or methods may be viewed as a challenge to the teacher's professional autonomy.[6]

PREDICTING CHANGE

Since changes in school organization have been structured to deal primarily with individual differences among students, the quality of education in the elementary schools of Omaha might be improved by utilizing different approaches to individualized instruction.

The year-round school, open-plan building, nongradedness, and team-teaching are educational concepts of school organization which might enhance individualization. The parent-teacher conference and individualized instruction are approaches which are being utilized in districts in Omaha Public Schools on a small scale.

The Delphi technique, which is a research device used as a predictive agent to utilize expertise without creating the need for a roundtable discussion, was used as the information gathering tool. In using this research tool to assess the acceptability of various approaches to individualization, two kinds of data were gathered to assess the principal's knowledge of these concepts and approaches to individualization as well as his posture toward their adaptation.

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[6]Richard A. Gorton, Conflict, Controversy, and Crisis in School Administration and Supervision: Issues, Cases and Concepts for the 70's (Debuque: William C. Grown Company, 1972), p. 154.

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Assumptions

1. Principals perceive the attitudes of their staffs toward educational innovations.

2. Principals who inform themselves of educational concepts and approaches are likely to be those who would implement these ideas in their buildings.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

Individualized instruction. Individualization is instruction that is adapted to individual needs, and this may include grouping, teaching machines, etc. The goal of individualization is to take into account all the differences that exist in body chemistry, background, interests, purposes, personal needs, and learning skills and styles among students. Upon identifying these differences, the teacher attempts to present unique learning experiences to provide for this diversification.

Nongraded systems. Nongrading is a philosophy of teaching and learning which recognizes differences among students and emphasizes continuous progress of the individual at his own rate. Grade labels are replaced by flexible groupings that are designed to eliminate retention of grades. Provision is made for moving from one learning level to another based on performance in different areas. The pace is set by the pupil's readiness, capacity, and interest.

It should be understood that nongrading is a system of organi-
zation and nothing more.[7]

Team-teaching. Team-teaching is a modification of the inde-
pendent study approach. One assumption of teaming is that certain
types of activities such as lectures, movies, and audio-visual aids can
be carried out by one teacher with a larger number of students, thus
freeing other team members to work with small groups. As with inde-
pendent study, some attempts to carry out this approach have been more
satisfactory than others.[8]

Year-round schools. This is an educational program that offers
instruction during the summer on the same basis that it does during the
traditional nine months. Most common among the plans are the rotating
term, the year-round acceleration approach, the multiple trails
continuous learning program, and the expanded summer school. Both the
rotating term plan and the student acceleration approach have several
variations in calendar. Chief among these are the quadrimester or
quarter system and the trimester system. The quarter plan usually
calls for 12-week quarters with a month free in the summer or for four
12-week periods with one week between each. The most common trimester
arrangement is that of three periods of 16 weeks with a month off in

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[7]Herbert I. Von Haden and Jean Marie King, "The Nongraded
School," Innovations in Education: Their Pros and Cons (Worthington,
Ohio: Charles A. Zones Publishing Company, 1971), p. 13.

[8]Bovin and Glaser, op. cit., p. 271.

the summer. The expanded summer school plan provides for a summer program of up to eight or nine weeks added to the conventional 180 days.[9]

Open-plan building. The one word that would probably best define open-plan buildings is "facilitator." It makes many things possible. It is designed to encourage a more personalized, humanistic approach to learning. It provides a large degree of freedom and a number of choices and options because there are no walls to get in the way. It also follows that it can bring about chaos, confusion, and mass dissatisfaction.[10]

Parent-teacher conferences. A parent-teacher conference is a face-to-face meeting of one or more teachers with one or both of a pupil's parents. It is arranged for the purpose of exchanging information about a child so that the teacher, parents, and school as a whole can work together more effectively in furthering the pupil's educational development.[11]

Although the conference is frequently looked upon as a time when the teacher reports a child's progress to the parents, it should be a mutually beneficial exchange.

Instructional approaches to individualization. Educational innovations and experiments which attempt to make the educational

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[9]Von Haden and King, op. cit., p. 133.

[10]Donna S. McGrady, "Open Space Secondary Schools," Contemporary Education, Vol. XLIV, No. 5 (April, 1973), p. 286.

[11]Von Haden and King, op. cit., p. 25.

system provide more adequately for the education of individuals. Examples include grouping, track systems, project work, and independent study programs.

Educational concepts of school organization. These are various plans of organization which are devised to deal with entire buildings. This would be an administrative task to provide for reorganization, more effective utilization of personnel, curriculum expansion and improvement, more accountability, and individualization.

Acceptability. This is an attitude manifested by teachers who are willing to change to a different instructional approach or educational concept of school organization.

Delphi technique. The Delphi technique is an intuitive methodology for organizing and sharing "expert" forecasts about the future. Delphi has been justified primarily on the grounds that it prevents professional status and high position from forcing judgments in certain directions.

SUMMARY

The process of change and innovation usually has met resistance. This resistance has taken many different forms. One form of resistance is the fear of change itself. Fear can be experienced by the community as well as by teachers. The fear of change is only one of the problems confronting educational systems today.

There are some common barriers which stand in the path of change. These include habit, lack of incentive and the nature of the proposed change.

There must be some basis for change if change is to take place. Procedures must be established and some possibilities outlined. These possibilities provide direction in selecting programs for individual school systems.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF SELECTED RELATED LITERATURE

The process of change and innovation in instruction has been

widely discussed, and is one of the most important issues in education

today. Innovative programs have caused entire school systems to

reorganize, renovation of countless buildings, vast changes in

personnel, new dimensions to be added to the role of the teacher and,

in some situations, a new look at educational philosophies.

Many studies have been devoted to the idea of change and the

problems surrounding change. Change, in itself, can be good or bad,

but the fear of change alone should not be allowed to be an obstacle to

progress. Innovative change, or, the adoption or inventing of new

ideas, must be supported by teachers and the community.

Some authors have chosen to discuss change from a different

viewpoint. John I. Goodlad discusses change as educational reform, and

asserts that this reform in education is essential to rational welfare.[1]

Many of his ideas are included in this study.

Change has been defined by other authors as "making the

educational system more responsive to individual differences among

students."[2] This idea of change is probably supported strongest by

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[1]John I. Goodlad, School, Curriculum and the Individual (London:
Blaisdell Publishing Company, 1966), p. 75.

[2]John O. Bolvin and Robert Glaser, "Individualized Instruction,"
The Teacher's Handbook (London: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1971),
p. 272.

John O. Bolvin and Robert Glaser. They have stated that all programs of instruction must respond to the individual to be effective.

The idea that change implies educational reform or making the system responsive to the individual needs of children, can be viewed as a basis for change and innovation. Some procedures for this change should also be suggested. This study includes this basis for change and some suggested procedures to change. In addition, many innovative changes have been cited.

BASES FOR CHANGE

There is a persistent relationship between changes in school organization and curriculum organization, as well as among the many conditions that produced them, according to Goodlad. He believes that the following observations are used to justify school change.

1. There is an intimate relationship between national welfare and security and the existence of sound educational programs for all children and youth.

2. Fast growing awareness of educational inequalities and inadequacies, particularly with respect to various disadvantaged groups, has brought unrelenting pressure upon educators to create fresh approaches.

3. The American school enterprise has grown to gigantic proportions, entailing the expenditure of billions of dollars annually, involving millions of teachers and students, and creating complex problems of information processing and communicating.

4. As a consequence of (1), (2), and (3) above and other factors, education has come under intense public scrutiny; education news and opinions are high priority items for the news media.

5. The bodies of knowledge available to man and the different ways of inquiring into the unknown surpass the capacity of any one man to encompass them.

6. Increasingly, we are becoming aware of hitherto neglected human traits which, for the sake of both society and the individual, must be identified, developed, and rewarded.

7. We are gaining increased insight into the vast differences among human beings with respect to their ability in and development of any given trait.

8. Tens of thousands of students pass through our schools without adequate diagnosis and remediation of their learning ills.

9. Widely accepted principles of learning such as reinforcement, for example, have not been adequately implemented in school programs.

10. New cultural patterns are rapidly emerging. The new culture rejects the concept of inevitable progression toward an ever-better society, is oriented toward probabilities rather than cer-tainties, and places man and his rationality at the center.

Goodlad believes that these observations represent a cross-section of both societal pressures arising outside of education and substantive pressures arising from advances in knowledge within education itself.

According to Goodlad, broad-scale curriculum reform was seen as essential to national welfare--in fact, to national survival.

He points out a valid generalization to describe what has been happening to and in schools for the last decade as an educational

reform movement.[3]

PROCEDURES FOR CHANGE

Bolvin and Glaser infer that the first consideration in school and curriculum reform is to make the educational system more responsive to individual differences among students.

They suggest that grouping, track systems, project work, independent study programs, dual-progress plans, continuous-progress plans, etc., have all been attempts to make the educational system provide more adequately in educating individuals.

Bolvin and Glaser go on to state that most of the current programs that emphasize the individualization of instruction use at least some of the following procedures for providing for individual differences. The procedures which are emphasized within a given program depend on the subject matter to be included, the level of education for which the program is developed, and the latest stage of development for the particular program. These procedures include:

1. Allowing students to study the same curriculum with the same basic materials but at their own individual pace;

2. Allowing students to study the same curriculum but with differing materials and at their own individual pace;

3. Allowing students to study the same curriculum but assigning students to different teachers, based upon an analysis of personal-social characteristics;

4. Allowing students to study the same curriculum while

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[3]John I. Goodlad, op. cit., p. 75-76.

allowing for varying degrees of proficiency for some objectives.

    5. Varying the curriculum objectives for different students while varying materials and resources; and

    6. A combination of all of the other five procedures.

In conclusion, Bolvin and Glaser suggest that as the number of individualized programs increases, the goals of individualization are becoming more clearly stated. These goals seem to be related to the concept of effectiveness of instructional programs.[4]

DeCarlo and Madon have emphasized that school districts are utilizing various approaches to individualized instruction. Some are commercially prepared programs designed and distributed through outside corporations, while others are developed by the local districts. Supporters of the individualized approach to education feel that it offers the greatest opportunity for the unique growth of the individual student.[5]

There are many examples of individualized instruction which are available for evaluation and examination. Many of these programs are designed with the individual needs of children as the main emphasis, and are concepts of school organization which enhance individualized instruction, and their main emphasis is organizational.

There are some innovative changes which promote individualization and loom on the immediate horizon for the Omaha Public Schools. These particular changes are being adopted into surrounding school

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[4]John O. Bolvin and Robert Glaser, op. cit., p. 270.

[5]Julia DeCarlo and Constant Madon, Innovations in Education For the Seventies: Selected Readings (New York: Behavioral Publications, 1973), p. 175.

systems and would be accepted more readily in the Omaha Schools.

All of these innovative changes have been discussed at length by countless experts. Two writers discuss change and innovation in a way which relates to the Omaha Public Schools. Herbert I. Von Haden and Jean Marie King describe in detail, individualized instruction as it relates to individual needs, performance, improving the curriculum, and improving personnel.[6]

POSSIBLE CHANGES WHICH PROMOTE INDIVIDUALIZATION

There are many programs of individualizing learning which are directly pupil-oriented. The child is always the main objective. Von Haden and King have presented some of these programs as:

1. Individualized Instruction, now being utilized in Decatur, Georgia; Duluth, Minnesota; Palo Alto, California; and Cypress, Texas.

2. Multi-Media Centers, in operation in Athens, Tennessee; Buffalo, New York; Hattiesburg, Mississippi; Grand Island, Nebraska; and Summit, New Jersey.

3. Programmed Learning, used in Deerfield, Illinois; Kansas City, Missouri; New Orleans, Louisiana; Oak Park, Illinois.

4. Parent-Teacher Conferences, used in Gilfor, New Hampshire; Grerce, New York; Hooker, Oklahoma; Oxford, Ohio; and Racine, Wisconsin.

Von Haden and King go on to present approaches to individualization which provide ways to account for responsibility in areas of performance. These include:

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[6]Herbert I. Von Haden and Jean M. King, Innovations in Education: Their Pros and Cons (Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones Publishing Company, 1971), pp. vii-viii.

1. Accountability

2. Planning, Programming, Budgeting System (PPBS), is currently utilized in Dade County, Florida; Darien, Connecticut; Hyde Park, New York; Peoria, Illinois; and Skokie, Illinois.

3. Behavioral Objectives, now in use in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Edina, Minnesota; Portland, Oregon; University of Nebraska; and University of Illinois.

4. Performance Contracting, used in Dallas, Texas; Duluth, Minnesota; Gary, Indiana; Texarkana, Arkansas; and the State of Virginia.

5. National Assessment

6. Voucher System, used in Hartford, Connecticut; Kansas City, Missouri; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Oakland, California; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In discussing approaches to individualized instruction which necessitate the expansion and improvement of the curriculum, Von Haden and King cited:

1. Creativity Development, used in Centerville, Ohio; Lansing, Michigan; University of Connecticut; Wayne, Nebraska; and Warwick, Rhode Island.

2. Montessori Method, established in Baltimore, Maryland; Cincinnati, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Omaha, Nebraska.

3. Outdoor Education, operating in Antioch College, McPherson, Kansas; Oregon, Illinois; Seattle, Washington; Toledo, Ohio; and Mansfield, Ohio.

4. Simulation, currently used in Baltimore, Maryland; New York,

New York; South Bend, Indiana; and at the University of Wisconsin.

5. <u>Community Resources</u>, used in Butler, Pennsylvania; Hickory, North Carolina; Kokomo, Indiana; Tacoma, Washington; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

6. <u>Sex Education and Family Living</u>, used in Anaheim, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Dallas, Texas; St. Louis, Missouri; and Flint, Michigan.

7. <u>Perceptual-Motor Learning</u>, adapted in Columbus, Ohio; Dayton, Ohio; St. Paul, Minnesota; Seattle, Washington; and Tucson, Arizona.

Better learning situations can be gained through reorganization according to Von Haden and King. They presented:

1. <u>Community Schools</u>, used in Alpena, Michigan; Atlanta, Georgia; Dade County, Florida; Flint, Michigan; and New Haven, Connecticut.

2. <u>Middle Schools</u>, operating in Amory, Mississippi; Beloit, Wisconsin; Boulder, Colorado; Goshen, New York; and Tiburon, California.

3. <u>Preschool Education</u>, operating in Jackson, Mississippi; Lincoln, Nebraska; Ypsilanti, Michigan; and Waterloo, Iowa.

4. <u>Flexible Scheduling</u>, used in Anaheim, California; Newton, Massachusetts; Poway, California; and Skokie, Illinois.

5. <u>Occupational Education</u>, operating in Jackson, Mississippi; Dayton, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; and at the University of Minnesota.

Some approaches provide for improvement of, and a better utilization of school personnel. Von Haden and King reported these to be:

1. <u>Collective Negotiations</u>

2. <u>Differentiated Staffing</u>, used in Beaverton, Oregon; Dade

County, Florida; Cherry Creek, Colorado; Greenwich, Connecticut; and

Sarasota, Florida.

     3.   Teacher Aides, used in Bay City, Michigan; Duluth,

Minnesota; Fairfield, Connecticut; Newton, Massachusetts; and Trenton,

New Jersey.

     4.   Interaction Analysis, used in Claremont, California; Prouo,

Utah; Temple University; and Whitman College.

     5.   Microteaching, used in Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan;

Johns Hopkins University; and the University of Maryland.[7]

     Most schools do not have the financial or community support to

utilize more than a few of these approaches on a district wide scale.

But, many of them can be tailored to fit specific programs.

     There are many educational concepts and approaches which might

enhance individualization. The objective of most school systems should

be to identify and select those which will be most beneficial in their

own situation. This identification and selection process can be

accomplished in many ways. One of the most important would be through

visitation. This visitation group should include board members,

central office personnel, teachers, parents and students. They should

be an informed group so that each person will have some objectives in

mind, and therefore be able to make knowledgeable contributions.

POSSIBLE CHANGES FOR THE OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

     There are many approaches to individualization in the Omaha

district. Some have been adopted recently, while others have been

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[7]Herbert I. Von Haden and Jean M. King, op. cit., pp. vii-viii.

utilized for years. The following educational concepts and approaches
to individualization are indicative of innovations in the Omaha area.
While some are not used in an Omaha Public School District building,
the approach is familiar to most teachers due to its utilization in an
adjoining school.

An educational concept of school organization which has been
considered for years in the Omaha area is the year-round school. This
concept has also been referred to as the extended school year.
Von Haden and King state that this program has gained support from
economy-minded patrons of the school who are sincerely concerned about
having expensive school plants idle for a quarter of a year. They see
the traditional nine-month program as a stereotype persisting from
agrarian days, when young people were needed for work on the farm.
Another advantage cited by Von Haden and King is that this provides for
an expanded curriculum and can reshape methodology to make them more
relevant to modern day youth. This concept also is being considered
for adoption, or being used in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Atlanta, Georgia;
Romeville, Illinois; and Utica, Michigan.[8] Therefore, it seems that
this concept of organization has gained firm support nationwide.

The open-plan building has gained wide acceptance both in the
Omaha schools and neighboring cities.

Cadoret, in support of the open classroom, insists that "it is
the place where the teacher can be most effective."[9] McGrady asserts

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[8]Von Haden and King, op. cit., p. 133.

[9]Joyce Cadoret, "In Support of the Open Classroom," Contemporary
Education (Vol. XLIV, 1972), p. 104.

that "they are the physical response to changing realities in education."[10]

According to McGrady, the one word that best describes open space is "facilitator." It is designed to encourage a more personalized, humanistic approach to learning. It provides a large degree of freedom and a number of choices and options because there are no walls to get in the way.

She reports that open-plan buildings have enjoyed a success accorded to few other educational innovations.[11]

The nongraded program is most common in the primary unit. Von Haden and King presented these advantages:

1. Pupils develop better attitudes toward school, learning, and their teachers.

2. The problem of different rates of forgetting, particularly during vacation periods, is minimized.

3. The greatest advantage of nongradedness is individualization of teaching and learning and the resultant increased achievement.

This innovation is also used in Boston, Massachusetts; Cedar Falls, Iowa; Joplin, Missouri; Plainview, New York; and Tampa, Florida.[12] (For a definition, see page 7 of Chapter 1.)

The concept of team-teaching has gained support because it allows for better utilization of personnel, space, materials, and

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[10] Donna S. McGrady, "Open Space Secondary Schools," Contemporary Education, Vol. XLIV (1973), p. 286.

[11] Donna McGrady, op. cit., p. 286.

[12] Von Haden and King, op. cit., p. 13.

equipment, as Von Haden and King contend. They also suggest that it provides a laboratory for planning and testing other innovations, provides for one-to-one instruction, and promotes self-reliance in the students.

This concept is also being used in Auburn, Maine; Carmel, California; Melbourne, Florida; and Norwalk, Connecticut.[13]

The parent-teacher conference approach to individualization is used extensively in the Omaha area schools. After a conference, the development of the "whole-child" often takes on a new meaning, according to Von Haden and King. One reason they give for its acceptance is that "the regard of the parents for the school and teachers is often enhanced."[14]

Another approach that has gained wide acceptance in a neighboring school district is individualized instruction. This is a procedure that attempts to provide a unique program for each child. Among the advantages cited by Von Haden and King are:

1. It reduces the tendency to categorize students according to intelligence, socioeconomic status, or other factors.

2. It takes into account variations in learning styles as well as ability and background.

3. The close association humanizes teaching and learning.[15]

These educational concepts and approaches to individualization have gained wide acceptance in neighboring districts and are familiar to teachers in the Omaha Elementary Schools.

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[13]Ibid., p. 157.   [14]Ibid., p. 25.

[15]Ibid., p. 3.

This area has proved to be conservative and change is initiated cautiously. The concepts and approaches to individualization accepted in this area will prove to be the ones which have been tried for a number of years.

The four educational concepts of school organization, team-teaching, nongradedness, year-round schools, and open-plan buildings, and the two instructional approaches; individualized instruction and parent-teacher conferences, have been utilized on a small scale over a long period of time. Therefore, they are quite familiar to most teachers. This eliminates one barrier to change, that of the fear of the unknown, immediately.

Change, for the sake of change alone, does not always prove constructive. Innovative change can be very constructive when the basis for that change is making the educational system more responsive to the individual needs of children.

In making changes, some procedures should be followed. These procedures should include the latest stage of development for the program, the level of education and should depend on the subject matter to be included.

There are many programs of individualizing learning which could be considered by the Omaha School System. But there are some which loom on the immediate horizon because of their utilization in neighboring districts. These have met with a large degree of success, and have been used for a number of years.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES FOR THE GATHERING AND THE PRESENTATION
AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

General Design

If the Omaha Public School District is to increase the amount

of individualization, it may want to call on a variety of approaches.

One of the major objectives of this study is to survey many

instructional approaches to individualization, and present some of them

to the principals of the seventy-five elementary schools. There are

many approaches to individualization which lend themselves to the

educational philosophies of these schools. It is valuable to know the

direction in which a school system should take beforehand if a change

in organization is to be made.

PRESENTATION TECHNIQUES

The times are continuing to change for our schools. While most

of these changes are curricular in nature, some cities are adapting

changes which demand total reorganization of schools.

It is important to be prepared for change. Sometimes the

preparation is being able to predict educational changes by utilizing

the expertise of many educators.

There are many ways of presenting information to educators.

One would include having principals and teachers meet in a seminar and

exchange ideas. Another would be to have an assembly of principals

meet in small groups and then present their ideas to the group at large.

For the purposes of this study, principals were presented with a series of questionnaires. They were asked to give their opinion of their staffs' readiness in accepting different instructional approaches to individualization. (See Delphi Technique--Chapter 3.)

The results of the first questionnaire were tabulated and presented to the principals along with a second questionnaire. This second questionnaire was identical to the first except it listed previous results and gave the principals the opportunity to make changes in light of the additional information.

The second questionnaire was presented after sixty percent of the first questionnaires were returned. Both questionnaires were compared in the final tabulation, and the results were made available to the principals.

AREA OF CONCENTRATION

Traditionally, school reorganization has been an administrative task. However, teachers can play a role in that task. Teachers who keep abreast of innovations, and have an up-to-date understanding of how children learn, can be one of the strongest forces for change in any school.

The Omaha School District is surrounded by neighboring districts which are utilizing various approaches to individualization. While many schools in the Omaha District are using similar approaches, very few have adopted a concept of school organization which would necessitate total reorganization.

This study was designed to present some selected educational concepts of school organization to principals, which enhance individualization. These principals were considered to be a "panel of experts," and included the fifty-nine principals and sixteen assistant principals in the seventy-five elementary schools in the Omaha School District. The concepts were presented to determine which ones would find acceptance and included:

1. Year-round schools—seriously considered by the Papillion School District.

2. Nongraded Systems—used in some of the Westside Community Schools.

3. Team-teaching—utilized on s small scale in the Omaha Public Schools and the Westside Community Schools.

4. Open-plan buildings—used in the Millard Public Schools.

By presenting these concepts which are being used in neighboring areas, it was assumed that principals would be most familiar with them.

RESPONSE PATTERNS

Several patterns emerged from the comments of principals regarding the instructional approaches and educational concepts which were presented.

The concept of the year-round school would not find acceptance in the Omaha district according to the principals. It seems that the concept received very little support because it had recently been defeated in an election. Principals were also concerned about vacations and teachers who attend summer classes.

The biggest objection to the concept of nongradedness is that

parents in the local district where this concept is now being used have voiced strong opposition to this plan. Many of the principals mentioned this opposition.

Principals felt that the open plan building and team-teaching concepts were fine. The problem is in the space utilization for such concepts to be implemented.

Most principals felt that parent-teacher conferences and individualized instruction were already accepted by their staffs.

The first questionnaire was presented to seventy-five principals and returned by fifty-three, or seventy-one percent. Forty-seven of the principals, or sixty-three percent returned the second questionnaire.

Population and Sample

The population was all of the seventy-five elementary principals and assistant principlas in the Omaha Public School District during the year 1973-74.

The concept of the Delphi panel was broadened to include the entire group of principals. After the principals were selected, they were asked to respond to a series of questionnaires.

Each principal was chosen because he represented a significant segment of the power structure relating to his staff. Usually, the principal's opinion of what will happen is a good indication of what will actually occur.

Data and Instrumentation

To forecast the acceptability of the educational concepts and approaches of individualization, the Delphi technique was used.

This technique is comparatively new to education. It is used

chiefly as a predictive agent and is designed to utilize expertise without creating the need for a round-table discussion. The intention is to assure that judgments and opinions will not be forced upon others as it frequently happens when panels or seminars meet.

The Delphi technique provided the degree of acceptability, the probable dates of occurrence and the desirability and the degree of awareness of educational concepts which enhance individualization.

Treatment of Data

Data from the questionnaires were analyzed in several ways, and a summary was distributed to the principals. Primary interest centered around the concepts and approaches that received the highest degree of acceptability from the experts. The data were also inspected to determine differences in the awareness of educational concepts of school organization by participants, as well as their varying tendencies toward change.

Each concept and approach had a five point grid for indicating the acceptability, desirability and predicting the time of occurrence. There was space for "additional comments." The comments were summarized and presented as "general responses" on the second questionnaire. Principals were given the chance to re-rate the plans in light of the additional information. If they wished to remain outside of the consensus, they were asked to state their primary reason for assuming the position.

Principals were asked to indicate the acceptability of the instructional approaches and educational concepts by checking a five point grid. This grid included: "Now_____ 1-3 years _____ 4-6 years _____ 7-10 years_____ and a slot for "don't know _____." Principals who

answered, "never" or "undecided" were placed in the "don't know" category.

RESPONSES TO THE YEAR-ROUND CONCEPT

The year-round concept of school organization was selected for presentation on the basis of the consideration it received from the Papillion School District. This concept would necessitate a total reorganization of the school calendar. Students would be able to attend extra sessions of classes and could receive extra help, therefore resulting in more individualization.

There would be more utilization of the physical plants also. This idea of year-round utilization was presented to the parents of a local district, and was voted down. This defeat probably influenced the principals responses. The year-round concept will not find acceptance in the Omaha School District based on the information in the following table.

Table 1

Responses of Principals Regarding the Acceptability
Of the Year-Round School

	Now	1-3 Yr.	4-6 Yr.	7-10 Yr.	Don't Know
First Round	9.43	16.98	15.09	9.43	49.05
Second Round	0	14.89	25.53	19.14	40.42

Nine percent of the respondents felt that their staffs were ready to accept the year-round school concept immediately. However, when presented with the overall results, these respondents changed their

minds. Approximately seventeen percent felt that their staffs would be ready in 1-3 years and fifteen percent stated that their staffs would accept the year-round school idea in 4-6 years. About nine percent figured 7-10 years while the greatest number of principals, forty-nine percent, felt that their staffs would probably never accept the year-round school.

In the second presentation, fifteen percent of the principals thought that their teachers would accept the year-round school in 1-3 years. Approximately twenty-five and one-half percent felt acceptance would come in 4-6 years, nineteen percent stated 7-10 years and forty percent of the principals still insisted that the year-round school would never be accepted in Omaha.

It would seem that the principals who thought that their staffs would accept the year-round school idea were highly impressed by the responses of their colleagues during the first round and changed their opinions during the second round. These principals seemed to agree to a 4-10 year period rather than throwing out the idea completely.

RESPONSES TO THE OPEN-PLAN CONCEPT

The open-plan building concept can probably be best described as a facilitator. It provides a large degree of freedom and lots of choices and options.

This concept was selected for presentation because it is now being utilized in the Millard Public Schools. Buildings in the Millard district are newer than those in the Omaha district, however, the open-plan idea was still presented to the principals because there was a span of years allowed for possible implementation into the Omaha district.

Table 2

Responses of Principals Regarding the Acceptability
Of the Open-Plan Building Concept

	Now	1-3 Yr.	4-6 Yr.	7-10 Yr.	Don't Know
First round	22.64	22.64	7.54	3.77	43.39
Second round	4.25	38.29	21.27	14.89	21.27

In the first round presentation, almost twenty-three percent of the principals felt that the open-plan concept would be accepted immediately or within the next three years. Very few principals, less than twelve percent, felt that the open-plan concept would be accepted in the next 4-10 years. The highest number of principals, forty-three percent, felt that their staffs were not ready for this innovation.

In the second round presentation, opinions were spread more evenly. There was an eighteen percent change of opinion for those principals who originally felt that the open-plan concept was acceptable immediately. After receiving the results of the first questionnaire, thirty-eight percent felt that this concept would be acceptable in 1-3 years, as opposed to twenty-three percent during the first round. While less than twelve percent indicated acceptance in 4-10 years during the first round, more than thirty-five percent predicted the 4-10 year date for the second round. Many principals either changed their minds during the second round or were influenced by their colleague's predictions of the first round. Forty-three percent of the principals indicated that they "did not know" during the first round and only twenty-one percent took this position during the second round for a difference of twenty-two percent.

Most principals expressed a degree of acceptance to the open-plan school concept being utilized on a small scale. However, it seemed that this concept would be tolerated but not totally accepted.

RESPONSES TO THE CONCEPT OF NONGRADEDNESS

Nongrading is merely a philosophy of teaching. As such, it does not require mass physical plant changes. It does require replacing grade labels with flexible groupings that are designed to eliminate retention of grades.

This concept was selected for presentation because it is being used in the Westside Community Schools. Principals were asked to indicate the time nongradedness would be accepted into the Omaha Public Schools.

Table 3

Responses of Principals Regarding the Acceptability
Of the Nongradedness Concept

	Now	1-3 Yr.	4-6 Yr.	7-10 Yr.	Don't Know
First round	33.96	28.30	5.66	5.66	26.41
Second round	27.65	31.91	17.02	12.76	10.63

Thirty-four percent of the principals indicated that nongrading would find immediate acceptance, twenty-eight percent indicated it would find acceptance in 1-3 years. That produces a majority of sixty-two percent who felt that nongradedness is in the immediate horizon for Omaha. About twelve percent were doubtful, indicating acceptance in

4-10 years and twenty-six percent stated that they were undecided.

In the second round, sixty percent of the principals contended that nongradedness is here, while those who indicated acceptance in 4-10 years, previously less than twelve percent, gained support as seven percent of the undecided joined their ranks. Only ten percent insisted that nongradedness was a passing innovative fad.

Principals who commented stated that nongradedness worked fine in the primary grades but their intermediate teachers did not like the idea. Parents were not totally convinced either as most seemed to insist upon "knowing what grade my child is in."

RESPONSES TO THE CONCEPT OF TEAM-TEACHING

Team-teaching involves two or more teachers who plan, execute, and evaluate the learning experiences of a group of students. Most teams include teachers who are specialists in one or more areas and teachers who concern themselves with the conventional learning situations.

This concept was selected for presentation because it is being utilized on a small scale in most of the local school systems. As the table shows, this concept was well received by the principals.

In the first round eighty-two percent of the respondents indicated that team-teaching has been accepted. Twenty percent or less felt that their staffs were not willing to use this concept.

In the second round six percent of the principals changed their minds. None indicated the 4-10 year span and twenty-six percent felt undecided as compared to thirteen percent on the first round.

Table 4

Responses of Principals Regarding the Concept
Of Team-Teaching

	Now	1-3 Yr.	4-6 Yr.	7-10 Yr.	Don't Know
First round	56.60	24.52	3.77	1.88	13.20
Second round	63.82	12.76	0	0	25.53

Team-teaching is being utilized on a very small scale in the Omaha Public Schools and this is the basis of its acceptance. Principals felt that this concept is fine and has proved workable as long as it remains on a small scale.

POSSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

It can be assumed that principals weighed questionnaire II with a deeper assessment. Time had elapsed and they had an opportunity to think with more conviction which resulted in making a more stable judgment. This thinking through process is proven by the differences shown between the percentages of round one and round two of the questionnaires.

The year-round concept shows little likelihood of being implemented into the Omaha system as evidenced in Table 1 (see Table 1 page 28). While nine percent indicated immediate acceptance on the first round, zero percent indicated acceptance immediately on the second round. Regarding acceptance in 1-3 years, almost seventeen percent in the first round dropping to fifteen percent.

However, a number of principals expressed support for the year-round school concept in the next ten years. While forty-nine percent were undecided during the first round, almost nine percent indicated an earlier acceptance on the second presentation.

The open-plan building concept has about the same chances for implementation as the year-round school. Although eighteen percent of the principals changed their minds about immediate acceptance, twenty-two percent who were confident the open-plan would never happen also indicated that it could be implemented in the next ten years.

Nongradedness has been received as well as most innovations. There are some who doubt the claims made by those educators who support its implementation. The respondents in this study indicated on both questionnaires that they thought nongradedness would be around to stay. Most principals felt that nongradedness on the primary level would be well accepted.

Team-teaching has proven to be acceptable when utilized on a small scale. Most principals strongly felt that their staffs would accept this concept. However, several principals noted the difficulty of finding compatible teachers who could, and would work together for several years. One principal also mentioned the problem of teacher mobility as a threat to team coordination.

RESPONSES TO INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

Instruction that is adapted to the individual needs of children has been one of the main demands from educators. The objective is to take into account all of the differences that exist in the individual and present learning experiences which will provide for this diversification.

This instructional approach to individualization was selected for presentation because it is the most important objective for educators today. Principals believe this to be so as shown on the following table.

Table 5

Responses of Principals Regarding the Acceptability
Of Individualized Instruction

	Now	1-3 Yr.	4-6 Yr.	7-10 Yr.	Don't Know
First round	67.92	20.75	1.88	1.88	7.54
Second round	65.95	17.02	4.25	0	14.89

Approximately eighty-eight percent of the principals indicated that individualization is acceptable now and will continue to be for years to come. Less than twelve percent doubted its acceptance during the first round. Most educators will agree to popular innovations when first approached. During the second round, opinions changed. There were not any significant changes as the table shows, but more principals were undecided after the first round. Seven percent of them changed their minds.

RESPONSES TO PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

A parent-teacher conference is a face-to-face meeting of one or more teachers with one or both of a pupil's parents. The result of this arrangement is to further the child's educational development.

Most schools hold conferences regularly, however, this approach requires periodical conferences as a regular ingredient in the child's educational prescription.

This instructional approach was selected because it is utilized in most school systems.

Table 6

Responses of Principals to the Parent-Teacher
Conference Approach

	Now	1-3 Yr.	4-6 Yr.	7-10 Yr.	Don't Know
First round	92.45	0	0	0	7.54
Second round	91.48	0	0	0	8.51

The preceding table proves that every principal realizes the importance of working with a child's parents in the child's educational development. Approximately ninety-two percent of the principals in the first round, and about ninety-one percent in the second round predicted that their staffs are involved in parent-teacher conferences, and accept the approach as one of necessary importance to maintaining an effective home-school relationship.

Approximately eight percent of the principals held reservations about the parent-teacher approach on both occasions, however this was due to the "required number" of conferences. All agreed that it was an essential ingredient in education.

These instructional approaches, individualized instruction and parent-teacher conferences, have both been implemented into the Omaha

Public Schools. Their acceptance has been system wide and nationwide.

Only time will tell how widely these educational concepts and approaches will be accepted and implemented. It is extremely important that each be weighed and evaluated in light of the educational experiences which would meet the individual needs of the children served by the Omaha Public Schools.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY, GENERALIZATIONS, CONCLUSION
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Statement of Summary

This study was developed to assess the acceptability of selected
educational concepts and selected instructional approaches of individ-
ualization. These concepts and approaches were presented to the
principals of the seventy-five elementary schools in the Omaha Public
Schools.

Principals were asked to indicate the time that they felt their
staffs would accept different educational concepts and instructional
approaches of individualization. The data were obtained through a
series of questionnaires presented to the principals.

Generalizations

1. Programs of individualized instruction which are being
utilized in neighboring districts prove to be more acceptable to the
teachers in the Omaha Public Schools.

2. Comments by principals indicate that most innovative
programs would be acceptable if instituted on a small scale.

3. Many teachers (according to the principals) feel that there
must be major physical plant changes if individualization is to be
effective, especially if the selected concepts presented in this study
were to be implemented.

Conclusion

From the data in the study and the comments from the principals, one can conclude that the Omaha Public Schools are willing to accept justifiable innovative changes dealing with individualized instruction. However, changes have come only after cautious piloting in small scale situations.

Recommendations

As a result of the study, the following is recommended:

1. That teachers and administrators be required to attend more extensive in-service programs to learn about innovative changes in curriculum. Comments by principals indicated that many teachers fear change in itself.

2. Teachers should be allowed to visit schools in other areas (including out-of-state) to see innovative programs of individualization in action periodically.

3. That there be further study regarding the reasons why teachers fear change in itself.

4. That there be further study as to why individualized instruction exists in differing degrees of implementation in the schools of this district.

5. That there be further study involving the genesis of change in particular schools.

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APPENDIX

Dear Principal:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a study being made to determine
what a specialized group thinks of some educational concepts of school
organization which enhance individualization. The survey group consists
of principals who lead the elementary schools in the Omaha, Nebraska
School District.

As a principal you are one of a small, but influential group of opinion
leaders. Therefore, the opinions you hold of different educational
concepts are important. It is believed that your school staff will
benefit by examining responses to studies of this kind. Such a study
will give some indication of the degree of acceptability of selected
educational concepts and also forecast the time of their acceptance.

This questionnaire is the first of two. The results will be summarized,
tabulated, and enclosed along with the second questionnaire. You will
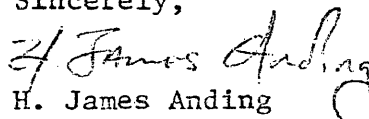then have the opportunity to make additional comments.

This study is based upon the assumption that principals perceive the
attitudes of their staffs toward selected educational concepts of school
organization which individualization.

The value of this study will be greatly increased if respondents provide:

      1.   A candid answer to every question or statement;

      2.   and, prompt consideration.

I would appreciate your giving the questionnaire your considered judgment
and returning it to me by school mail as soon as possible.

                       Sincerely,

                       H. James Anding

May 16, 1974

Mr. James Anding
Saratoga Elementary School
2504 Meredith Avenue
Omaha, Nebraska 68111

Dear Jim:

This is to confirm our conversation of May 15, during which we discussed your revised proposal for a research project to be conducted on the Omaha Public Schools. I have had an opportunity to review your proposed project and procedures, and believe that your study has merit. It is with pleasure I am able to inform you that permission is hereby granted to proceed with your project as outlined.
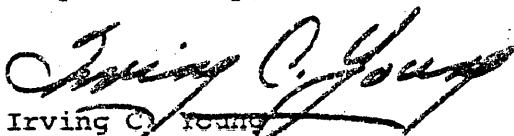
As I understand, the study will involve the administration of a brief closed end questionnaire to elementary principals on two occasions. The subject will concern educational concepts of school organization, and the administrator's own opinion of staff readiness to accept prevailing plans.

It is also understood that you will contact principals directly, and will coordinate your efforts with them; and that their specific schools will not be identified.

As always in the case of such studies, the principal reserves the final right to approve or disapprove participation.

May I take this opportunity to wish you every success in your project. If I may be of further assistance, please call.

Very Sincerely,

Irving C. Young
Coordinator of Research

ICY/mab

Presented below are four selected educational concepts of school organization which enhance individualization. Please indicate the time in which you feel that _your present staff_ would be likely to accept the plan.

Year-round schools. This is an educational plan that offers instruction during the summer on the same basis that it does during the traditional nine months. Most common among the plans are the rotating term, the year-round acceleration approach, the multiple trails continuous learning program, and the expanded summer school. Both the rotating term plan and the student acceleration approach have several variations in the calendar. Chief among these are the quadrimester or quarter system and the trimester system.

This educational concept is currently being considered by the Papillion School District.

_____now _____in 1-3 years _____in 4-6 years

_____in 7-10 years _____don't know

Additional Comments:

Open-plan buildings. The one word that would probably best define open-plan buildings is facilitator. It makes many things possible. It is designed to encourage a more personalized approach to learning. It provides a large degree of freedom and a number of choices and options because there are no walls to get in the way. This educational concept is currently being utilized in the Millard Public Schools.

_____now _____in 1-3 years _____in 4-6 years

_____in 7-10 years _____don't know

Additional Comments:

Nongraded systems. Nongrading is a philosophy of teaching and learning which recognizes differences among students and emphasizes continuous progress of the individual at his own rate. Grade labels are replaced by flexible groupings that are designed to eliminate retention of grades. Promotion is based on performance but the pace is set by the pupils' readiness, capacity, and interest.

This educational concept is currently being utilized in the Westside Public Schools.

_____ now   _____ in 1-3 years   _____ in 4-6 years

_____ in 7-10 years   _____ don't know

Additional comments:

Team-teaching. This is a plan involving two or more teachers who work together in planning, carrying out, and evaluating the learning experiences of a group of students usually the size of two to four conventional classes. Students work as one large group, in small groups, or as individuals. Some teams are made up of teachers from closely related fields who work in a vertical basis with students in several grades. Others are composed of teachers who work on a horizontal level with students of the same grade. Basically it is a philosophy of learning designed to vitalize the curriculum, develop more competent teachers, and individualize instruction.

_____ now   _____ in 1-3 years   _____ in 4-6 years

_____ in 7-10 years   _____ don't know

Additional comments:

Presented below are two instructional approaches of individualization. Please indicate the time in which you feel your present staff would be likely to accept the plan.

Individualized Instruction. This is instruction that is adapted to individual needs, and may include grouping, teaching machines, etc. The objective of individualization is to take into account all of the differences that exist in body chemistry, background, interests, purposes, personal needs, and learning skills and styles among children. Once these differences are identified, the teacher attempts to present unique learning experiences to provide for this diversification.

_____ now   _____ in 1-3 years   _____ in 4-6 years

_____ in 7-10 years   _____ don't know

Additional comments:

Parent-teacher conferences. A parent-teacher conference is a face-to-face meeting of one or more teachers with one or both of a pupil's parents. It is arranged for the purpose of exchanging information about a child so that the teacher, parents, and school as a whole can work together more effectively in furthering the pupil's educational development.

One important aspect of this approach is that periodical conferences are required. Most schools use this approach, however, conferences are held less often.

_____ now   _____ in 1-3 years   _____ in 4-6 years

_____ in 7-10 years   _____ don't know

Additional comments:

1. Are you familiar with all of the plans?

   Yes_____   No_____

   If no, how many? _____

2. Have you discussed any of these plans with your staff?

   Yes_____   No_____

3. How many of the plans had you not read about?

   All   _____   Three _____

   Five   _____   Two   _____

   Four   _____   One   _____

4. Have you received any special training to help you develop insight dealing with school reorganization, including clinics, workshops, institutes, classes or professional conventions outside of Omaha Public Schools?

   Yes_____   No_____

Dear Principal:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a study being made to determine what a specialized group thinks of some educational concepts of school organization which enhance individualization. The survey group consists of principals who lead the elementary schools in the Omaha, Nebraska School District.
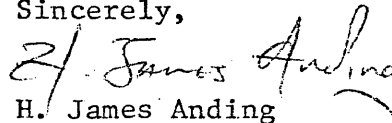
If you did not respond to the first questionnaire, please do so and return it along with this one. The results of the first questionnaire have been tabulated. All of the numbers given are percentages, and may not add up to one hundred. If you wish to remain outside of the general consensus, please state your primary reason for doing so.

The value of this study will be greatly increased if respondents provide:

        1. A candid answer to every question or statement;

        2. and, prompt consideration.

I would appreciate your giving the questionnaire your considered judgment and returning it to me by school mail as soon as possible.

                          Sincerely,

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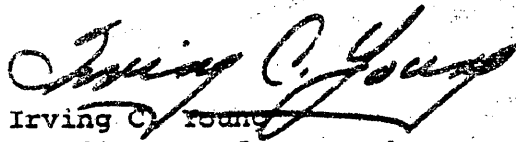
As I understand, the study will involve the administration of a brief closed end questionnaire to elementary principals on two occasions. The subject will concern educational concepts of school organization, and the administrator's own opinion of staff readiness to accept prevailing plans.

It is also understood that you will contact principals directly, and will coordinate your efforts with them; and that their specific schools will not be identified.

As always in the case of such studies, the principal reserves the final right to approve or disapprove participation.

May I take this opportunity to wish you every success in your project. If I may be of further assistance, please call.

Very Sincerely,

Irving C. Young
Coordinator of Research

ICY/mab

Please re-rate all items in light of the additional information concerning group feeling.

Presented below are four selected educational concepts of school organization which enhance individualization. Please indicate the time in which you feel that your present staff would be likely to accept the plan.

Year-round schools. This is an educational plan that offers instruction during the summer on the same basis that it does during the traditional nine months. Most common among the plans are the rotating term, the year-round acceleration approach, the multiple trails continuous learning program, and the expanded summer school. Both the rotating term plan and the student acceleration approach have several variations in the calendar. Chief among these are teh quadrimester or quarter system and the trimester system.

General Response: Comments by the group usually indicated that this concept would be very unlikely to find acceptance.

Now (4.5)   1-3 (19)   4-6 (16)   7-10 (4.5)   don't know (56)

_____ now   _____ 1-3 years   _____ 4-6 years   _____ 7-10 years

_____ don't know

Additional comments:

Open-plan buildings. The one word that would probably best define open-plan buildings is facilitator. It makes many things possible. It is designed to encourage a more personalized approach to learning. It provides a large degree of freedom and a number of choices and options because there are no walls to get in the way.

General Response: Comments by the group indicated that most staffs would be willing, although the present physical plants would prevent utilization.

Now (23)   1-3 (23)   4-6 (11)   7-10 (0)   don't know (43)

_____ now   _____ 1-3   _____ 4-6   _____ 7-10   _____ don't know

Additional comments:

Nongraded systems. Nongrading is a philosophy of teaching and learning which recognizes differences among students and emphasizes continuous progress of the individual at his own rate. Grade labels are replaced by flexible groupings that are designed to eliminate retention of grades. Promotion is based on performance but the pace is set by the pupil's readiness, capacity, and interest.

General response: Comments by the group usually indicated that this concept would work in the primary grades.

Now __(36)__   1-3 __(32)__   4-6 __(4)__   7-10 __(4)__

don't know __(23)__

_____ now   _____ 1-3   _____ 4-6   _____ 7-10

_____ don't know

Additional comments:

Team-teaching. This is a plan involving two or more teachers who work together in planning, carrying out, and evaluating the learning experiences of a gorup of students usually the size of two or four conventional classes. Students work as one large group, in small groups, or as individuals. Some teams are made up of teachers from closely related fields who work on a vertical basis with students in several grades. Others are composed of teachers who work on a horizontal level with students of the same grade. Basically it is a philosophy of learning designed to vitalize the curriculum, develop more competent teachers, and individualize instruction.

General response: Comments by the group usually indicated that this concept would be used best on a small scale within individual buildings in particular subject areas.

now __(66)__   1-3 __(18)__   4-6 __(2)__   7-10 __(0)__

don't know __(14)__

_____ now   _____ 1-3   _____ 4-6   _____ 7-10

_____ don't know

Additional comments:

Please re-rate all items in light of the additional information concerning group feeling.

Presented below are two instructional approaches of individualization. Please indicate the time in which you feel your present staff would be likely to accept the plan.

Individualized Instruction. This is instruction that is adapted to individual needs, and may include groupings, teaching machines, etc. The objective of individualization is to take into account all of the differences that exist in body chemistry, background, interests, purposes, personal needs, and learning skills and styles among children. Once these differences are identified, the teacher attempts to present unique learning experiences to provide for this diversification.

General response: Comments by the group usually indicated that this concept is finding acceptance in the majority of the buildings.

now __(68)__   1-3 __(20)__   4-6 __(0)__   7-10 __(2)__   don't know __(9)__

_____ now   _____ 1-3   _____ 4-6   _____ 7-10   _____ don't

know

Additional comments:

Parent-teacher conferences. A parent-teacher conference is a face-to-face meeting of one or more teachers with one or both of a pupil's parents. It is arranged for the purpose of exchanging information about a child so that the teacher, parents, and school as a whole can work together more effectively in furthering the pupil's educational development.

One important aspect of this approach is that periodical conferences are required. Most schools use this approach, however, conferences are held less often.

General response: Comments by the group usually indicated that this concept is currently being used in most buildings.

now __(91)__   1-3 __(0)__   4-6 __(0)__   7-10 __(0)__   don't know __(9)__

_____ now   1-3 _____   4-6 _____   7-10 _____   don't know _____

Additional comments: