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THE AVERAGE COST AND THE TIME SPENT
BY THE SCHOOLS OF NEBRASKA IN SELECTED ACTIVITIES
GENERALLY REGARDED AS EXTRA CURRICULAR

by
Ross L. Speece

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The University of Nebraska in the Teachers College
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Education
Department of School Administration

Under the Supervision of
Professor Merle A. Stoneman

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TITLE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem in General Terms	3
Critical Examination and Delimitation	4
Statement and Development of the Hypothesis	5
Investigation of Other Studies in the Field	5
Selecting a Research Procedure	5
Outline of Data Needed.	6
Organization of the Study	6
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.	7
Introduction.	7
School Athletics.	29
Music in the High School.	46
Instrumental Music.	54
Vocal Music	57
The Administration.	60
Dramatics and Debate in the High School	62
Other Extra Curricular Activities in the High School.	67
III. RESULTS OF THE STUDY ON ATHLETICS	69
Introduction.	73
Football.	73
Basketball.	92
Track	109
Summary of the Three Major Sports	126
The Minor Sports.	131
IV. INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL MUSIC.	144
V. DRAMATICS	156

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.	168
Summary	168
The Problem	168
Procedure	169
Conclusions	170
Recommendations	173
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	176
APPENDIX A	
Approximate Location of the Schools That Participated in the Study	181
APPENDIX B	
Letter of Transmittal	183
APPENDIX C	
Follow up Letter of Transmittal	185
APPENDIX D	
Questionnaire	187

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. Number of Writers Recognizing Each Value in Extra Curricular Activities	23
II. Class A Football	76
III. Class B Football	79
IV. Class C Football	82-83
V. Class D Football	86
VI. Football Summary	89
VII. Class A Basketball.	93
VIII. Class B Basketball.	97
IX. Class C Basketball.	100-101
X. Class D Basketball.	104
XI. Basketball Summary.	107
XII. Class A Track	110
XIII. Class B Track	114
XIV. Class C Track	117-118
XV. Class D Track	121
XVI. Track Summary	124
XVII. Class A Baseball, Wrestling, Golf	132
XVIII. Class A Swimming, Gymnastics, Tennis.	135

LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
XIX. Class B Wrestling, Golf, Baseball, Swimming, Gymnastics, Tennis	139
XXI. Number of Class Periods Used For Pep Rallies. . . .	143
XXII. Number of Class Periods Used For Convocations, Student Council or Other Club Activities.	143
XXIII. Class A Music (Instrumental and Vocal).	145
XXIV. Class B Music (Instrumental and Vocal).	147
XXV. Class C Music (Instrumental and Vocal).	149-150
XXVI. Class D Music (Instrumental and Vocal).	151
XXVII. Music Summary	153
XXVIII. Class A Speech, Dramatics and Debate.	157
XXIX. Class B Speech, Dramatics and Debate.	159
XXX. Class C Speech, Dramatics and Debate.	161-162
XXXI. Class D Speech, Dramatics and Debate.	163
XXXII. Speech, Dramatics and Debate Summary.	165

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Lotus D. Coffman, late president of the University of Minnesota, said at a convention of teachers: "The fads and frills have become the fundamentals of education."¹ Although not all educators and laymen accept the implications of that challenging statement, there are many who today do so. A few decades earlier, Herbert Spencer, another noted educator, stated that: "Education is preparation for complete living."² Spencer had reference to a well rounded individual, and he had no intention of limiting education to the three R's.

One of the most generally accepted definitions of the term "curriculum" states: "The curriculum is all the experiences of the learner under the direction of and supervision of the school."³ Many of the most valuable experiences in

¹Tryon Edwards, The New Dictionary of Thoughts, Chicago, Standard Book Company, 1957, p. 169.

²Ibid., p. 173.

³Dr. Galen Saylor - quoted from a lecture at the University of Nebraska, July, 1957.

modern schools result from the pursuit of something different from what was often considered the program of studies of yesterday.

With the increase in the number of schools and with larger school enrollments, with changing needs due to a modified culture brought about largely by technological advancement, with additional experience in education including some experimentation, and with a slowly changing philosophy as to the function of education, the program of the school was evaluated and efforts were made to adjust this program to meet the needs of its pupils. Although most of the attention of those concerned was concentrated on the formal aspects (curriculum) of the school's program, many began to examine more critically the informal (extra curricular) activities that were becoming so common. As a result recognition was given (grudgingly in many instances) to some of these activities. Wrinkle and Gilchrist describe this trend as follows:

Physical education was ushered in by downtown sports enthusiasts who pooled their money and paid the coach to work with boys in out-of-school hours. Music was taught by the private teacher who was one of the leading citizens of the early community. Music education was also provided by the village band. Now, however, physical education, orchestra, band, and chorus are at least semi-respected parts

of the school program although they are still frequently scheduled before or after school hours and are given only fractional credit or no credit at all.¹

Obviously many curriculum changes will be necessary and mandatory in the schools of the future. The same can be said of the extra curricular program. These changes may be effected by a careful evaluation of the existing practices, then retaining those which yield desirable results and discarding those which are obsolete or even harmful. It would seem reasonable that this approach is more likely to result in steady and lasting improvement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL TERMS

The writer of this study has for some time been a member of a committee appointed by the Nebraska Association of School Administrators. The committee's purpose was to report to the Association the amount of money and time spent by schools in the state of Nebraska in some of the activities usually considered extra curricular. It was soon discovered that this study was far too comprehensive for a committee project. At this point the committee was dissolved and the writer took it upon himself to make a study to find the

¹W. L. Wrinkle and R. S. Gilchrist, Secondary Education for American Democracy, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942, p. 339.

average cost and the time spent by schools of Nebraska in selected activities generally regarded as extra curricular activities.

This study will make it possible for each school in the state of Nebraska to evaluate its own program in terms of cost and time as compared to other schools in Nebraska and to determine in some measure as to whether the expenditures and time spent are educationally sound.

The study will also give the Nebraska Association of School Administrators some basis from which they may make recommendations and suggestions to the schools of the State.

CRITICAL EXAMINATION AND DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

The study includes the results of a questionnaire sent to the superintendents of sixty school systems in the state of Nebraska selected by random sample. One Lincoln and one Omaha school was arbitrarily included in this study. All schools in the state of Nebraska were included in the list from which the random sample was secured. No attention was paid to the accreditation standing of the schools involved.

The questionnaire was sent out in September of 1964 in order to get a comparison of the time and money spent by the schools during the 1963-1964 school year.

The questionnaire was divided into three major parts: athletics, music (which included band and chorus), and dramatics and debate, which may be thought of as at least partially out of the regular school day.

STATEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of this study was an attempt to find the average cost and the time spent by the schools of Nebraska in selected activities generally regarded as extra curricular activities.

From this study the Nebraska Association of School Administrators may be able to make recommendations to some of the schools of the State concerning their outside activities.

INVESTIGATION OF OTHER STUDIES IN THE FIELD

Chapter II of the study summarizes an investigation of the available literature in the field of extra curricular activities. From this review it is hoped that schools may re-evaluate their present extra curricular activities and determine whether the amount of money and the time spent is in accord with the best practices now defined by the experts.

SELECTING A RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The ideal solution to this problem would have been for trained personnel to interview each superintendent and the head of each activity in every school in the state of Nebraska.

This could then have been compared to comparable studies in several other states.

From a feasible and practical standpoint, time and money available limit this study to a review of literature and the results of a questionnaire sent to the superintendents of a selected group of schools in Nebraska.

For purposes of this study the two metropolitan centers of Omaha and Lincoln were arbitrarily included in the study. An additional fifty-eight schools were selected throughout the state by use of a table of random numbers.

OUTLINE OF DATA NEEDED

The data for this study were secured by means of questionnaires. Superintendents were asked to use the 1963-1964 school records to answer the questionnaires. For data requested in the questionnaires refer to copy of questionnaire, Appendix D. Sixty questionnaires were sent and sixty results were obtained. The information requested by the questionnaires was to be reported from the 1963-1964 school records.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The remainder of this study is organized as follows:

1. Chapter II will present an analysis of the literature of the accepted authorities so that administrators may

compare their programs with those usually accepted as educationally sound.

2. Chapter III will be concerned with the analysis and interpretation of the data received from the questionnaires pertaining to athletics.

3. Chapter IV will be concerned with the analysis and interpretation of the data received from the questionnaires pertaining to music, both instrumental and vocal.

4. Chapter V will be concerned with the analysis and interpretation of the data received from the questionnaires pertaining to dramatics and debate.

5. Chapter VI will consist of the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

An examination of the literature reveals that the present status of extra curricular activities was reached after a period of many decades of development and that certain well-defined phases are discernible.

Louis Kilzer discusses the first two phases with this example:

Most of the boys in a three-year high school in eastern Nebraska wished to play baseball. They secured their own equipment and began playing this great American game in the inadequate school grounds. Neither the superintendent nor any of the members of his staff paid any attention to them until, as might be expected, a batted ball crashed through a window pane. Thereupon, the superintendent made his appearance to collect from the boys enough money to have the window repaired, but no action was taken to screen the windows; they continued to be broken, and the boys were compelled to spend their money for the damage done. When they could no longer pay these charges, they were prohibited from playing ball on the school grounds. They probably began to play on the highway which was used seldom by automobiles in those days.

Naturally, the boys wished to schedule some games with other schools. Lacking a coach, they selected a manager and a captain, largely on the basis of who had the most and best baseball equipment that would be made available to the team. Then a game was scheduled with a small college in the county-seat town eight miles away. Of course it had to be played on Saturday, because the school time could not be taken for "extra curricular activities", nor could it be scheduled on Sunday, because that day was to be kept holy. A team of horses and an old spring wagon were secured for

the long trip to the city. After the game, these small-town boys wanted to see the sights of the county-seat metropolis. Time passed so rapidly that it was quite late in the night when at long last the homeward trip was completed. Then came condemnation and finally prohibition by the parents, superintendent, and the board of education.

Having been deprived of the opportunity to engage in baseball, the boys proceeded to rent an abandoned carpenter shop a few blocks from the school grounds. In a real sense this group formed a secret society, with secret passwords, grips, and rights. The State University, only eighteen miles away, contributed an old mat and a few sets of altogether-too-thin boxing gloves. Thus began an unsupervised program of wrestling and boxing, as well as the disturbing epidemic of infected knees and elbows and a series of broken noses. Neither the parents, the superintendent, nor the members of the board of education could gain admission--they knew neither the password nor the secret grip. Finally the town marshall was called upon to disband this organization.¹

This example helps to illustrate the first two phases in the development of extra curricular activities.

Activities were disregarded, ignored, or tolerated. In this stage or phase it was felt that the activities were entirely "extra" but were perhaps not pernicious. A hands-off policy was utilized, but it was found to be ineffective.

¹Louis R. Kilzer, Harold H. Stephenson and H. Orville Nordberg, Allied Activities in the Secondary School, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956, pp. 2-3.

The second phase was that in which activities were opposed--first condemned and then prohibited. When condemnation proved futile, prohibition was resorted to. No constructive program was offered to replace that which was eliminated, and so the pupils simply found still other unapproved activities in which to engage.¹

The third phase, and that which most schools are engaged in today, is that in which activities are encouraged under supervision. This stage has been reached in many secondary schools. It implies that we now believe it to be the duty of the school to teach pupils to do better the acceptable things they will do anyway and to reveal to them higher types of activities that natural human growth leads them to desire. By the time this phase was reached, the teachers, administrators, and patrons had learned by experience that it is unwise to attempt to thwart completely the urges or drives of pupils. On the other hand, it was decided to direct and utilize such tendencies in a positive and approved plan of educating the whole child.²

Much is being said today about general education for high-school pupils. It is significant, therefore, to notice

¹Ibid., p. 3

²Ibid., p. 4

that the contribution of extra curricular activities to general education is emphasized by Unruh as follows.

A theory has been advanced recently by students of education that perhaps the school's activity program comes more nearly supplying the basic educational needs to students than does the regular academic course. The various elements of general education which are intended as the core of our educational program are well served and developed in the activity program.

The program is no longer regarded as extra. It probably provides the best experiences in the entire curriculum from the viewpoint of training boys and girls in the techniques of getting along with one another. Many important, interesting lessons of lasting value are learned in extra curricular activities.¹

Another claim for school activities was posited by Shanon when he said:

Extra curricular activities can be defended adequately on the same traditional grounds as curricular ones ... but when education is conceived as personality development, school activities find their best support, for they, more than formal classes, are conducive to leading pupils out in ways which make their personality attractive.²

No informed person will deny that schools are in the spotlight today. The American educational system is one of the most commonly discussed topics of the present time.

¹Adolph Unruh, "Some Criteria for Evaluating a Program of Activities", School Activities, September, 1949, 21:3.

²J.R. Shanon, "School Activities and Personality Development," School Activities (May, 1949), 20:275.

Educators generally hold that democracy depends more on the quality of its schools than on the educational contribution of any other single social agency with the possible exception of the home. Miller, Moyer and Patrick in their book Planning Student Activities, suggest that scores of books on education are being printed each year; magazines are devoting more and more space to educational problems, issues, and practices; radio and television are reflecting the ever-increasing interest in education and schools; politicians and statesmen no longer dare ignore this important aspect of society; and the discussion of the problem of education with neighbors and friends is becoming commonplace. People are interested in and concerned about their schools and few are satisfied with the schools as they are.¹

When asked what changes should be made, some people reply with aroused emotion that there must be a return to the fundamentals commonly referred to as the three R's; others insist with equal conviction that to insure progress education must be dynamic in ever moving toward new frontiers; still others recommend a middle-of-the-road approach to change; and a

¹Franklin A. Miller, James H. Moyer and Robert B. Patrick, Planning Student Activities, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956, p. 1.

few admit that they are confused by the whole problem. In short, there seems to be no commonly accepted pattern of thought or action.¹

It is apparent that Americans are not satisfied with their schools even though they are considered the best in the world today. In spite of the expressed dissatisfaction concerning the contribution of these schools--and much of it deserved--there is growing faith in educational institutions, evidenced in recent years by rapidly increasing enrollments and by vastly expanding school programs.²

Educationally speaking, the present is an exciting and thought-provoking era. Ideas and counter-ideas are flowing freely. Changes are taking place--some good and some bad. The entire educational system is going through a period of renaissance. Phenomenal technological advancement, new patterns of living, and evolving philosophies in the rapidly changing world have forced a revision of thinking about education. Whether it is believed that schools should lead in the promotion of change or that they should merely interpret change, development and expansion of current educational concepts

¹Ibid., p. 2

²Ibid., p. 3

and practices at an accelerated pace is inevitable.¹

Miller, Moyer and Patrick feel that the year 1920 was the approximate beginning of a rapidly changing attitude toward the development of the extra curricular field. One of the more significant changes since 1920 was the change in philosophy toward the activities field.² Anderson, Grimm, and Gruhn summarize this change in point of view as follows:

In the last twenty-five years a considerable change has taken place in our point of view concerning "extra curricular" activities. More and more we have come to see that these activities have a significant contribution to make in the educational growth of the child. For instance, the child may make far more growth in effective speech skills through participation in debate than an English class; the school band may contribute more to growth in music appreciation than the more formal music class; the school paper may give much more opportunity to develop writing skills than the English class; and growth in certain citizenship qualities may result from school clubs as well as from social studies class.

The realization that these activities have significant educational values has encouraged educators to attach greater importance to them. It is now believed that these activities should not be considered as "extra", but that they should form a well-integrated part of the school curriculum. This principle is in harmony with the present thinking that the curriculum includes all the educational

¹Ibid., pp. 2-8.

²Ibid., p. 9.

activities provided under the supervision of the school.¹

Before it can be determined whether these programs do act as a well integrated part of the school program certain objectives must be met. Many lists of objectives of extra curricular activities can be found in educational periodicals and textbooks dealing with this phase of the offerings of the schools.

One of the best is adopted from McKown as follows:

1. To capitalize, for educational profit, important fundamental drives.
2. To prepare the pupil for active life in a democracy.
3. To make the pupil increasingly self-directive.
4. To teach social cooperation,
5. To increase the interest of the pupil in the school.
6. To develop school morale.
7. To foster sentiments of law and order.
8. To discover and develop special qualities and abilities.²

Miller, Moyer and Patrick list a more comprehensive set of objectives as follows:

1. To provide opportunities for the pursuit of established interests and development of new interests.
2. To educate for citizenship through experiences and insights that stress leadership, fellowship, cooperation, and independent action.

¹V.E. Anderson, P.R. Grimm, and W.T. Gruhn, Principles and Practices of Secondary Education, the Ronald Press Co., New York, 1951, p. 212.

²Harry C. McKown, Extra Curricular Activities, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1952, pp. 13-16.

3. To develop school spirit and morale.
4. To provide opportunities for satisfying the gregarious urge of children and youth.
5. To encourage morale and spiritual development.
6. To strengthen the mental and physical health of students.
7. To provide for a well rounded social development of students.
8. to widen student contacts.
9. To provide opportunities for students to exercise their creative capacities more fully.
10. To supplement or enrich classroom experiences.
11. To explore new learning experiences which may ultimately be incorporated into the curriculum.
12. To provide additional opportunity for individual and group guidance.
13. To motivate classroom instruction.
14. To foster more effective team work between students, faculty, and administrative and supervisory personnel.
15. To integrate more closely the several divisions of the school system.
16. To provide less restricted opportunities designed to assist youth in the worth-while utilization of their spare time.
17. To enable teachers to better understand the forces that motivate pupils to react as they do to many of the problematic situations with which they are confronted.
18. To promote better school and community relations.
19. To encourage greater community interest in and support of the school.¹

After having arrived at a set of objectives, it is necessary that a set of guiding principles for the implementation of the objectives be formulated and utilized. Kilzer, Stevenson, and Nordberg suggest the following list:

¹Franklin A. Miller, James H. Moyer, Robert B. Patrick, op. cit., pp. 13-19.