
Guidance toward College Preparation: Start Early, Include Parents

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Source: *The Clearing House*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Sep., 1952), p. 49

Published by: [Taylor & Francis, Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30179645>

Accessed: 10/12/2013 13:18

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youngsters' laughter and tradition. We can still keep our premises inviting and clean. There is a certain pride in gazing at our corridor picture galleries, and even though we have an auditorium badly in need of renovation and redecoration, we cannot forget the fine programs, the great teachers, and the wonderful memories that the school assemblies have inspired through the years.

One of the principals at the new school's open-house was heard to exclaim: "Yes, it's fine and beautiful—just like a new baby in the home, and just as thrilling! But they are in the diaper stage here now. Gradually

they'll age and mature. This building will be 'old' in fifty years just as mine is now. But that doesn't mean I'm not proud of ours, or that my students don't take pride in it, too. No sir, the years will make a great difference, but age does not necessarily mean loss of a building's usefulness."

And I'm inclined to believe that my friend was right. School buildings and new equipment are both designed for utmost use. If they do not become worn over the years, they are not truly schools but museums.



Guidance Toward College Preparation: Start Early, Include Parents

The starting point in . . . guidance [toward college preparation] is of great importance. In a situation where guidance is informal and unorganized, it is not unusual for a young person to reach the sophomore year or junior year of high school, or even the senior year, before either he, or those who are presumably responsible for advising him, give a great deal of serious thought to his further education. This is much too late in his educational career for well-conceived guidance toward college to begin. Such guidance should by all means be initiated by the end of grade 6 or the beginning of the junior high school, and, in many cases, certain aspects of it may be undertaken, without the knowledge of the child, even in the primary grades.

This does not mean, of course, that one should begin shaping the educational experiences of the child in the direction of college at such a tender age nor that even in the junior high school there need be specialization of curriculums leading toward college. A common educational experience in the early years of school, a broad sampling of our educational heritage, is a part of the democratic process of which the school is the nation's major instrument.

It is not a matter of kind, but rather of degree. For a wise guidance program will call for the early assessment of the general intelligence of each child, particularly as it is manifested in verbal situations, and for cooperation with teachers in providing a school climate for each individual which will en-

courage maximum development of mental power. Thus, the amount of school work undertaken will be allowed to vary with the individual child, and through an increased number of educational experiences, particularly reading experiences, the pupils whose verbal intelligence makes them potential candidates for college will early, and in a natural way, begin to acquire the foundation for college work. For, to a larger degree than we sometimes realize, this foundation rests upon the basic skills of reading, number facility and understanding, spelling, and language expression.

It should be understood at the outset that the guidance of an individual child toward college preparation calls for cooperative effort—that it is a joint venture between the home and the school. Ideally, there should be free exchange of information in conferences long enough and frequent enough so that parents and teachers and counselors will learn to talk the same language. The home and the school should follow the development of the child together and plan *with* the child as a team.

This is an ideal not always realized in present-day guidance programs. But even where this kind of cooperation is not possible, the school counselor should always endeavor to do a large share of his counseling with the parents. For, not infrequently in the working out of college plans for a young person, the parents are in greater need of guidance than the young person.—ARTHUR E. TRAXLER in *School and Society*.