

*"A process by which educational experience takes on personal meaning for the child. . . ."*

## When Guidance and Curriculum Collaborate

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THE rapid development of guidance services in the elementary school indicates the need for immediate communication between specialists concerned with curriculum and those with guidance in the elementary school. If the child is to be served most adequately, specialists in instruction, curriculum, and guidance must develop a dialogue which helps them to clarify procedures for working more effectively together. The nature of the relationship between these workers should be characterized by one word—collaboration.

Curriculum is primarily concerned with all of the learning experiences of the child under the direction of the school. Guidance is the specific planned effort of the school to meet individual needs and provide for individual differences. Guidance is particularly concerned with the child's attitudes, values, feelings, purposes, and convictions. It is directed at providing opportunities for educational experiences which are appropriate to each child's purposes, needs, and rate of development. It assists in making individualized and personally meaningful instruction a

reality. Guidance is that part of the educational program which emphasizes the individual.

The primary function of guidance is developmental. Elementary school guidance works toward assisting *each* child to maximize his opportunities for learning and personal development. It is concerned, not merely with deviates at either extreme, but with all of the learners. Developmental guidance concerns itself with the average youngster who, because he presents no special problems, frequently receives minimal attention. This type of guidance is concerned with the normal child and the problem succinctly stated by Sachs (1966): "It is as though we were saying because you are normally human there does not seem to be much point in interaction with you on a personal and intimate basis." These are the children who, despite the fact that they comprise the majority, receive the least attention. To be normal does not appear to qualify them for the kind of educational experience which meets unique needs.

Tiedeman suggests: "I believe that

the goal of guidance in education should be to see that children know how to be purposeful. The program of guidance in education tries to get youth to look on the resources of the world and the responsibilities in the world in such a way that they are seeking them" (Landy and Perry, 1964). This type of guidance would seek to engage children regularly in the process of choosing and accepting responsibility for their choices.

### Goal of Guidance

The goal of guidance is to help the child make maximum use of his abilities. As previously indicated, elementary school guidance has meaning only insofar as it is congruent with the educational purposes of the school. Guidance serves to reconcile the uniqueness of the individual with the demands of our society and culture. Thus, it is not crisis-oriented but places its emphasis on the development of competence in the learner. Competence in this sense refers to academic achievement, knowledge, values, skills, attitudes, and feelings which contribute to one's mastery of the process of learning (Grams, 1966).

The philosophy is based upon the assumption that every human being is of value and has a right to optimum development. Any concept of guidance as a separate service which is primarily therapeutic in nature or essentially supplementary to the other parts of the school program is not reconcilable with modern educational thinking. It must be an integral part of the total educational program with its nature and scope cooperatively defined by the entire school staff (Kelly, 1955). In this

sense guidance must be inherent in the teaching process, and guidance and curriculum are inseparable parts of the total educational process. The teacher thus becomes the prime functionnaire in instruction, curriculum, and guidance.

A developmental program of guidance would proceed within the following guidelines:

1. Guidance is an integral part of the educational process and must be consistent in purposes with the philosophy and objectives of the elementary school in which it operates.

2. Guidance is for all children. Each child has a right to guidance services. Focus is not primarily on exceptional children but with typical children with normal developmental problems.

3. The elementary school guidance program is provided for all through the teacher in the classroom and by the counselor who counsels and consults with the child, teacher, and parents.

4. Developmental guidance assists the child to know, understand, and accept himself cognitively and affectively. The purpose is to develop an adequate self-competence to relate effectively to the work and social tasks of life.

5. Guidance may be incidental and informal, but it operates best when it is based upon a planned program. A developmental guidance program provides a continuous sequence of experiences which assists the child to achieve the developmental tasks in both the intellectual and emotional areas.

A classroom guidance program exists when the needs of children are met through the curriculum, instruction is adapted to meet individual differences, planned time is provided for group guidance, and guidance procedures are used by the teacher.

6. Guidance in the elementary school

places emphasis on purposeful and personally meaningful learning experiences. Teacher and pupil goals are aligned.

7. Developmental guidance focuses on assets. It is concerned with finding out what the child can do and concentrates on the encouragement process (Dinkmeyer and Dreikurs, 1963).

8. Developmental guidance puts an emphasis on self-actualization in terms of the full use and exploitation of one's talents, capacities, and potentialities (Maslow, 1954). This approach stresses the importance of perceptual understanding of human behavior in order to maximize the educational process (Combs and Snygg, 1959; ASCD Yearbook, 1962).

9. The guidance program is most effectively activated when it is a cooperative enterprise involving the child, teacher, counselor, parents, administration, and community resources.

## **Guidance and Curriculum**

The counselor plays a significant role by being available to interpret the emotional effect of curricular experiences on the child's concept of self and on his relationships with others. He assists in the development of materials which are sensitive to the needs of children. He plans with teachers ways by which children may approach an understanding of the world of work. (ACES-ASCA Working Paper, 1966).

The counselor, while a regular member of the curriculum committee, cannot be a specialist in methods, new developments, and content. The counselor contributes by viewing instructional practices and curriculum in terms of his understanding of child development and human relations. He would not advise regarding an approach in mathematics but would contribute his understanding

of the effects of this practice on children.

The emphasis is on personalized and personally meaningful educational experiences. It is an obligation of the school to provide each child with teachers who will be concerned and interested in them as individuals and able to establish meaningful interactions. We must never underestimate the importance of the interpersonal relationship (Lewis, Lovell, and Jessee, 1965). It is through the personal relationship that the child develops identification with the educational process and becomes able to make a commitment to learning.

When guidance and curriculum collaborate we observe some of the following results:

1. Provision is made for maximum flexibility in curriculum.

2. Emphasis is placed upon understanding the individual and on permitting each pupil to progress at his own rate.

3. Teaching procedures are individualized.

4. Emphasis is placed upon assets and successes.

5. An enriched curriculum is provided which permits each child to proceed in terms of the greatest acceleration possible for him.

6. The child is helped to realize his greatest potential, and to develop more realistic self-concepts.

7. In most instances there is provision for independent study in areas where the child has a genuine interest.

8. The emphasis is on the ultimate goals of education, and hence on self-discipline.

9. There is genuine concern about enhancing the individual's worth.

## The Guidance Function

We need to recognize that guidance is a function within the process of education. While teaching is frequently a communication of other experiences, data, and conclusions, guidance involves primarily an examination of the individual student's experiences and the procedures of forming conclusions about them (Tiedeman and Field, 1962).

Guidance, then, involves behavioral change and this might be quite different from that which is usually either induced or expected of teaching. This definition helps to clarify why teaching in and of itself may not be education, and why teachers must become familiar with the guidance process. It also emphasizes the importance of collaboration between teacher and counselor.

The teacher's guidance function involves:

1. Developing relationships with students characterized by mutual alignment of goals and purposes
2. Identifying guidance needs
3. Changing attitudes and behavior
4. Collaboration with the counselor in terms of guidance function or procedures.

The counselor is concerned with:

1. Pupil appraisal
2. Counseling of individuals and groups
3. Consultation with teachers and parents
4. Curricular involvement, serving as an agent of change and evaluation, research
5. Coordination of the guidance program.

Guidance, then, is more than a service by the counselor, a contact with the teacher, or a consultation with the parents. Elementary school guidance becomes a process through which the

educational experience takes on personal meaning for the child.

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