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IN HIGH SCHOOL

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A STUDY OF THE CAUSES FOR PUPIL FAILURE
IN HIGH SCHOOL

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A STUDY OF THE CAUSES FOR PUPIL FAILURE IN HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Need

The concern for causes of pupil failure in high school has assumed increased urgency in recent years. Much emphasis has been placed upon early completion of secondary school in order to facilitate earlier entrance into college or the world of work. The major concern in American education presently is the demand for equal educational opportunities for all American youth and the provision of educational experiences appropriate for and at the level of each individual student. Professional literature on the subject of pupil failure indicates the concern educators have experienced with regard to pupil failure and reveals a continued interest in the reasons why pupils fail and the resultant effect on the individual student and upon the total educational program.

The cost of providing quality education has risen steadily in recent years and just as pupil failure places

an increased burden upon the student it also places an increased burden upon the school. Lafferty said, "Studies of causes which prompt failure in school have occupied a rather stable position in educational research for a long time. Because, as numerous authors have pointed out, failure in school is a costly matter--to the pupil, to the school, and to society at large--it is only proper that this area of investigation be kept open."¹ There is ample cause for educators to be concerned about pupil failures and constant attention and investigation must be given to the problem if it is to be solved or at least reduced to a minor state of importance.

Gardner in studying the cause of pupil failure said, "Most of the studies of failure in high school have been made from the point of view of the teacher The point of view of the pupil must be known if scientific conclusions are to be reached."² If the needs of individual students are to be met satisfactorily then the study of causes for student failure must receive a just status in educational research. Investigation into the causes of failure should give considerable attention to the reasons stated by students as well as by teachers.

¹H. M. Lafferty, "Reasons For Pupil Failure - A Progress Report," American School Board Journal, CXVII (July, 1948), 18.

²C. A. Gardner, "A Study of The Cause of High School Failure," The School Review, XXXV (February, 1927), 108.

It is evident that the student who experiences failure or retention in grade is more likely to drop-out of school before graduation than is the student who experiences success in all subjects and grade levels. Otto and Estes reported that, "The majority of drop-outs have experienced grade or subject failure somewhere in their school careers."¹ The Oklahoma Public School Holding Power Project reported that youth gave academic failure as a reason for dropping out of school. The Project further noted that "Eighty-four percent of drop-outs are retarded at least one year."² An additional finding reported by the Project indicated that approximately 35 percent of the nation's youth drop out before completing high school. Efforts to increase the holding power of American schools must be directed at and give adequate consideration to the reduction of pupil failure.

It is very unlikely that students can be assisted in their learning experiences if there are unrealistic expectations established by the school or teacher with regard to what they should achieve. Cotter commenting on the schools responsibility for pupil failure said:

Several authorities maintain that children fail because of conditions that the school can control, or

¹Henry J. Otto and Dwain M. Estes, "Elimination From Schools," in Encyclopedia of Educational Research, ed. Chester Harris, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1960), pp. 8-9.

²Oklahoma Public School Holding Power Project, "Summary Information on Dropouts," (an unpublished pamphlet of the Oklahoma Public School Holding Power Project.)

for which it is directly responsible. This is a serious accusation, particularly when one considers that large numbers of school failures are of normal and superior intelligence, and that children can be successful in one school but are failures in another. When teachers and administrators talk about school failures, discussion is usually centered on the incompetencies of students. It would be a major contribution to the solution of the problem of school failure if all those charged with the education of children were to examine their own competencies, standards and curricular offerings in order to determine the valid placement of blame.

Another refuge for educators is to place responsibility on "home conditions." Though research offers ample support for this stand, it is also true that the classroom often provides a haven of order, occupation and recognition for children with unalterable difficulties at home. Teachers who ignore this may merely extend the frustrations of the home to the classroom.¹

Teacher expectations with regard to student achievement and progress must be realistic and the real causes of pupil failure must be identified and dealt with if students are to be assisted in their learning experiences.

There is little doubt that research with regard to pupil failure continues to be a necessity in the field of education. Lafferty emphasized that research into the cause of pupil failure is needed but he stated further, "Failure studies which do nothing for the pupil other than reduce him to the status of a statistic serve little purpose."² Investigation into the causes of pupil failure must be concerned with the cause as stated by teachers and

¹Katharine C. Cotter, "Explorations and Discourse on School Failures," The Catholic Educational Review, LXII (March, 1964), 174-75.

²Lafferty, American School Board Journal, CXVII, 20.

as stated by pupils and an attempt should be made to analyze the factors involved. Further consideration of the related factors such as socio-economic level of parents, academic ability of student, teacher expectation, etc. may contribute considerably to the research related to pupil failure.

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to investigate the causes of pupil failure in high school. The investigation was concerned with those reasons given by students as to why they failed one or more subjects in high school and also the causes for pupil failure as seen by teachers. A basic question which the study attempts to answer is, "what are the common reasons, if any, for pupil failure and is there general agreement between teachers and students as to the causes of failure?" Further purposes of the investigation were to: Study the relationship which exists between pupil failure and such other factors as socio-economic level of parents, academic ability of students, and attendance record of student; to analyze the extent to which pupil failure is a result of under-achievement; and to investigate the problem of teacher expectation and its relationship to pupil failure.

It was believed that this study would provide pertinent information with regard to the real causes of pupil failure and that this information would be extremely useful to school administrators and their staff in planning an

educational program which would meet the needs of their student body. School counselors and teachers should find the results of the study helpful in their work with students in their attempts to individualize instruction and to remove barriers to learning which should be evident when the actual causes of failure are known.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze the causes for pupil failure in the high schools of Midwest City and to study the relationship between failure and certain selected factors. More specifically it was intended to:

1. Determine the extent of pupil failure in grades 9-12.
2. Determine the major causes for pupil failure as stated by pupils.
3. Determine the major causes for pupil failure as stated by teachers.
4. Analyze the degree of agreement between causes of failure as stated by students and the causes of pupil failure as stated by teachers.
5. Investigate the relationship between pupil failure and the factors of: (1) Academic ability of student as measured by the California Test of Mental Maturity, (2) Academic achievement as measured by the Iowa Test of Educational Development, (3) Socio-economic level of parents, and (4) Absenteeism.
6. Investigate the extent of previous failure or retention in grade.
7. Investigate the relationship of teacher expectation to pupil failure.
8. Analyze pupil failure in terms of ability to achieve.

Population

The population for the study was composed of all students in grades 9-12 of the Midwest City Independent School District #52 for the 1965-66 school year, who had received a failing grade in one or more subjects for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. There were 450 students falling into this category. From these 450 students a sample of 200 was chosen by a random sampling technique utilizing Fisher's Table of Random Digits so as to give a sample small enough to study in depth and large enough to be representative of the total population with a sampling error of not more than 16 percent with a 95 percent confidence interval.

Delimitations

The study was limited to include only students in grades 9-12 of the Midwest City School System. However, due to the nature of the study this limitation was considered to be an asset to the study rather than a weakness. It was believed that to deal with causes of failure on a very personal basis would yield more reliable data than would be obtained through a broad general survey of a much larger population.

Definition of Terms

The terms used in the study are in rather general use in educational literature; however, for the sake of

clarity the term "failure" as used in the study and as defined by Heck¹ is, "Non-acceptable work in a grade or course in consequence of which it must be repeated." For this study the definition is extended to say that failure is non-acceptable work in a grade or course in consequence of which it must be repeated if credit is desired.

Hypotheses to be Tested

HO₁ There is no statistically significant agreement, other than what might occur by chance, between the causes of failure as stated by pupils and the causes of failure as stated by teachers.

HO₂ There are no common causes of pupil failure as stated by pupils.

HO₃ There are no common causes of pupil failure as stated by teachers.

HO₄ There is no apparent relationship between pupil failure and the factors of: (1) Academic ability as measured by the CTMM, (2) Academic achievement as measured by the ITED, (3) Socio-economic level of parents, and (4) Absenteeism.

HO₅ There is no apparent relationship between pupil failure and previous incidents of failure or retention in grade.

HO₆ Students are achieving at a level equivalent to their ability.

¹Arch O. Heck, Administration of Pupil Personnel (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1929), p. 352.

Treatment of Data

Statistical treatment of data consisted of determining the degree of agreement between the causes of pupil failure as stated by pupils and the causes of pupil failure as stated by teachers utilizing the Coefficient of Concordance (Kendall's W) developed by Kendall for measuring the degree of agreement between two or more sets of data regarding the same subject. Other statistical treatment consisted of application of appropriate Chi-square techniques.

Procedure

The initial step in the investigation was to survey the entire student population (grades 9-12) to determine the extent of pupil failures. A survey form (Appendix A) was developed for this purpose. The survey forms were distributed to the various school sites where they were completed by clerical personnel and returned to the office of the Director of Instruction who supported the study and rendered the support of his office to the collection of data for the study.

The survey revealed a total of 450 students who had failed one or more subjects for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. Of the 450 students who had received a failing grade a random sample of 200 students was selected for further study. It was believed that a smaller group selected randomly would be representative of the total

population and would facilitate the collection of data with regard to failures on a rather personal basis.

The students selected for the study were interviewed on a personal basis, where the purpose of the investigation was explained and students were asked to state the reason or reasons why they failed a particular subject. Likewise, teachers were asked to react to a survey form (Appendix B) identifying the reason or reasons why each student had received a failing grade in their class. In addition approximately 10 percent of teachers who had a high rate of pupil failure and approximately 10 percent who had a low rate of pupil failure were interviewed to obtain reactions as to expectation level and methods used to evaluate students. This procedure was selected on the belief that it would provide a more realistic set of data than would be obtained by using a total population and having teachers and students to react to the causes of pupil failure in general terms. It was believed that a major strength of the study was the fact that the causes of failure were related directly to individual students rather than to students in general.

Other data relating to occupation of parents, educational level of parents, study habits of students, etc., were obtained through personal interview and recorded on an interview form (Appendix C). Necessary data relating to academic ability, attendance, previous failure, etc., were obtained from school records.

Statistical treatment of data consisted primarily of determining the degree of agreement between the causes of failure as stated by pupils and the causes of failure as stated by teachers. Related factors of academic ability, achievement level, absenteeism, etc. were treated by appropriate Chi-square techniques and mathematical analysis.

Organization of the Study

The problem of this study is presented in Chapter I. Chapter II is devoted to a review of pertinent literature related to the study. A detailed description of the procedure and collection of data is presented in Chapter III. Presentation and analysis of the data are contained in Chapter IV. The analysis of data includes the statistical treatment and acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses. Chapter V contains a summary of the study, the conclusions based on the findings of the study, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Studies of the causes of pupil failure have occupied a rather important position in educational research for a long time. These studies have not all been concerned with failure at the secondary level, but, have also dealt rather consistently with failure and nonpromotion at the elementary level where failure and nonpromotion are generally synonymous. However, in the highly departmentalized secondary schools failure is quite unrelated to nonpromotion. Failure studies have consistently regarded failure at the secondary level to be nonacceptable work in a course which must be made up if credit is desired.

The review of literature as presented in this study was intended to deal more directly with studies related to pupil failure in the secondary school. The review of literature therefore, was organized into several categories to correspond to the various major aspects of this study and to present the findings of past research in terms of the degree to which these studies appeared to be related to the present investigation.

Origins of the Condition

Probably the most complete review and evaluation of studies relating to pupil failure which is recorded in professional literature was a study by Lafferty.¹ In this review Lafferty reported on eleven studies completed during the decade 1935-45 and compared the results of these studies with the results of sixteen studies regarding pupil failure which were completed during the decade 1925-35.² In the latest survey of studies related to pupil failure Lafferty said, "In bringing the study of pupil failure up to date it was evident early that concern for this problem in pupil personnel accounting continues to be considerable."³

A survey of the professional literature revealed that the problem of pupil failure has plagued educators perhaps from the very beginning of formal classroom instruction. Davis⁴ discussed the problem of pupil failure and the relationship of the educational program to the individual student and his progress in school. He emphasized the absence in many schools of adequate programs to serve all students, pointing out, that most schools have a program

¹Lafferty, American School Board Journal, CXVII, 18-20.

²H. M. Lafferty, "A Study of the Reasons For Pupil Failure in School," Educational Administration and Supervision, XXIV (May, 1938), 360-67.

³Lafferty, American School Board Journal, CXVII, 18.

⁴Frank G. Davis, Pupil Personnel Service (Scranton, Pennsylvania: The International Textbook Company, 1948), pp. 205-207.

designed to prepare students for college. But, for a large portion of students, Davis said, "they can only stand back and gaze at the unattainable and wonder what it is all about."¹ Then he continued to argue that because of programs not designed to meet their needs a few students rebel and drop out of school, or perhaps worse they remain in school but quit work, and develop habits of indolence and uselessness, and failure is inevitable.

Newlun considered the problem of pupil failure as essentially emerging out of the grade system of organization of public schools.² The early schools taught only such learnings as were considered universally needed. Newlun said, "Each child was kept at any given portion of such instruction until the teacher considered he had mastered it."³

Further discussion by this author emphasized that the task of providing individual instruction was time consuming and resulted in the system of dividing schools into grade levels to facilitate the task of serving more and more youngsters. As Newlun stated:

The grade system of organization spread gradually until by the early 1900's it was in use in virtually all United States public schools housed in more than one room. By about 1910 or 1912 most states had done their best to classify pupils in one-room schools into grades.

¹Ibid., p. 206.

²Chester O. Newlun, "Who Fails in Your Schools?" American School Board Journal, CXXII (August, 1951), 13.

³Ibid.

With the grade system came a number of characteristic problems and administrative headaches. Age-grade tables constantly revealed too many overage pupils in school, too many failures, too much waste of money on repeaters, and too many pupils dropping out of schools. Overage pupils made internal problems in graderooms. Parents of children considered failure a social stigma, and sometimes blamed the teachers. The charge of prejudice and unfairness often was made. In the United States, one major educational problem of the first third of this century was the problem of reducing or eliminating failures in the grades and in the secondary schools.¹

Extent of Failure

The extent of pupil failure as reported in professional literature has not been consistent. Heck reported on the extent of pupil failure in a survey of 25 city schools that the rate of failure ranged from 4 percent to 17 percent, the median being 9.1 percent.² Other studies such as those by: Newlun,³ Watts,⁴ and Cotter⁵ reported failure rates as high as 20 percent to 50 percent.

The NEA Research Division reported that exact figures regarding the extent of pupil failure are difficult to obtain but that while early studies of the rate of pupil failure in secondary school showed a range of from 2 percent to 80

¹Ibid., pp. 13-14.

²Heck, p. 357.

³Newlun, American School Board Journal, CXXII, 14.

⁴Yvonne C. Watts, "A Study of High School Failures," National Association of Secondary-School Principals Bulletin, XLIII (October, 1959), 69-75.

⁵Cotter, The Catholic Educational Review, LXII, 169-82.

percent a more recent study showed a range from 0.02 percent to 10.6 percent.¹

Otto and Estes also reported, "The extent of school failure is difficult to determine."² They further stated that there is considerable lack of uniformity in reporting failures and that failure is generally reported as less than the actual percent. The reasons for the inconsistency in reporting of failures were found to be such things as: (1) students being conditionally promoted and (2) students who drop out when faced with failure but again are not reported as failures. They found failure rates as high as 80 percent and as low as 2 percent.

Causes of Pupil Failure From the Viewpoint of Teachers

Studies regarding the causes of pupil failure have generally been those which attempted to determine or evaluate the causes of pupil failure as seen by teachers. As Gardner emphasized, "there has been too little consideration given to the causes of failure from the viewpoint of the pupil."³

Reasons given for pupil failure have been rather consistent as reported in studies regarding pupil failure.

¹"Pupil Failure and Nonpromotion," National Education Association Research Bulletin, XXXVII, No. 1 (February, 1959), 16-17.

²Otto and Estes, Encyclopedia of Educational Research, pp. 8-10.

³Gardner, The School Review, XXXV, 108.

An early study by Maddocks found results very similar to those of other researchers in ranking the causes of pupil failure as seen by teachers as follows: (1) low mentality, (2) laziness, (3) faulty preparation, (4) irregular attendance-absence, (5) social activities, (6) home conditions, (7) poor attitude, (8) lack of school provision for individual differences, (9) lack of purpose-vocational, (10) lack of home cooperation, (11) irregular attendance-sickness, and (12) crowded school conditions.¹ There are, however, at least two differences very apparent in this study as opposed to other studies. The reasons given as lack of provision for individual differences and crowded conditions are definitely conditions which are the direct responsibility of the school. However, as in other studies the major reasons given are aimed at placing the burden upon the student.

Maddocks concluded from his study that: (1) it is evident that there is a high correlation between mentality of a pupil and the quality and amount of school work he will perform, and (2) failure in school work indicates a low type of mentality.²

Lafferty did considerable research regarding pupil failure and concluded that the reasons given for pupil

¹Carl W. Maddocks, "The Factor of Intelligence in School Failure," The School Review, XXXV (October, 1927), 602-11.

²Ibid., p. 610.

failure as reported in the research have not changed to any marked degree. He made a comparison of the twelve most frequently mentioned reasons for failure as reported in studies made in two succeeding decades as follows: The causes listed are in rank order from most frequently mentioned cause down to least frequently mentioned cause.

1925-35 (16 studies)	1935-45 (11 studies)
1. Irregular attendance	1. Irregular attendance
2. Poor health and physical defects	2. Low mentality
3. Poor home conditions	3. Lack of interest
4. Low mentality	4. Poor health and physical defects
5. Lack of interest	5. Poor effort
6. Poor effort	6. Poor home conditions
7. Laziness	7. Poor foundation
8. Poor foundation	8. Outside work
9. Teacher inabilities	9. Incomplete work
10. Lack of home study	10. Outside interests
11. Dislike of teacher	11. Laziness
12. Social activities	12. Failure on tests ¹

Obviously there was not a very significant change in the reasons given for pupil failure during the period reviewed. The reasons were quite similar but changed somewhat in the order of most frequently mentioned causes of pupil failure.

Carrothers reported on the causes of pupil failure from his vantage point as a high school examiner. He felt that the reasons commonly given for pupil failure were too narrow in view and that the studies did not really concern themselves with the total educational development of youth.

¹Lafferty, American School Board Journal, CXVII, 18-20.

The reasons contributing to pupil failure which he listed were:

1. Heavy load carried by teachers, both in and out of school.
2. Lack of interest on the part of the pupil.
3. Lack of understanding of pupils on the part of the teacher.
4. Indifference and unconcern on the part of the teacher.
5. Inability of youth to do the work expected.
6. Parental unconcern for the education of boys and girls.
7. Community misunderstanding or lack of understanding of what real education consists.
8. Inability of educators to measure educational growth and the consequent inability to show the pupil and the public the extent to which growth has been made.
9. Spoon feeding in home, school, and community.
10. Rigidity of school curriculum and school requirements for both pupils and teachers.¹

There was a noticeable tendency among teachers in all studies reviewed to place the burden for pupil failure upon the student. In discussing the problem of pupil failure Cotter reasoned that some school authorities maintain that children fail because of conditions that the school can control, or for which it is directly responsible.² She further indicated that too often when teachers and administrators get together to talk about school failures, discussion is generally centered around the incompetencies of students and that too little thought is given to the schools responsibility in reducing pupil failure.

¹George E. Carrothers, "Why Do High School Pupils Fail?" National Association of Secondary-School Principals Bulletin, XXX (March, 1946), 29-36.

²Cotter, The Catholic Educational Review, LXII, 174.

Causes of Pupil Failure From the Viewpoint of the Pupil

Research studies which endeavored to get at student reactions to the reason for pupil failure found that the reasons given by pupils were quite different from the reasons given by teachers. Student reactions generally tend to lay the burden for failure upon the school and the teachers.

Gardner conducted an early investigation into the causes of pupil failure and concluded that the opinions of teachers and pupils as to the causes of failure conflict at many points.¹ Among the numerous reasons for failure as stated by pupils he found lack of home study, dislike of subject, too little study, and discouragement to be the most frequently reported causes.

One study reported the results of student interviews regarding the causes of pupil failure as follows:

1. Ignorance of methods of attacking different subjects.
2. Dislike for school-forced by parents to stay.
3. Poor physical conditions of classroom - light, etc.
4. Too much home work, especially written.
5. Difficulty in concentration at home because of noise and improper study conditions.
6. Too much diversion and late hours.
7. Acquire "failure complex."
8. Cramming.
9. Copying homework.
10. Dislike of teacher.
11. Poor teaching - sarcasm, partiality, digression from subject, too many substitutes, etc.
12. "Cutting" class.²

¹Gardner, The School Review, XXXV, 111.

²"Causes of Failure in High School," The School Review, XXXVI (December, 1928), 734-35.

Farnsworth and Casper reported that: (1) lack of interest, (2) improper home conditions, (3) insufficient study, (4) dislike for the subject, and (5) incomplete work were the most common reasons given by pupils for pupil failure.¹ A more recent investigation by Watts found similar results in reporting dislike for school, did not study, and did not understand the material to be the most frequently reported reason for failure as stated by pupils.²

Classification of Causes of Pupil Failure

In investigating pupil failure, Heck, analyzed the causes of pupil failure in terms of the origin of the cause. He classified failure in terms of failure due to the child, failure due to the teacher, failure due to the school, and failure due to out-of-school environment.³ He emphasized that in speaking of failure as sometimes due to the child it was not to imply a responsibility on the part of the child to remove the cause of failure, since this might sometimes be an impossibility. Obviously, if the cause is something for which the student is solely responsible and can alter, then, he would be expected to do so. However, he argues, many causes attributed to the student can not be

¹Burton K. Farnsworth and Jesse B. Casper, "A Study of Pupil Failure in High School," The School Review, XLIX (May, 1941), 380-83.

²Watts, NASSP Bulletin, XLIII, 70.

³Heck, pp. 366-70.

removed, i.e., low mentality, but the school must provide a program on the pupil's level, thus removing the cause of failure.

Lafferty also categorized the causes of pupil failure in terms of areas of responsibility. A brief summary of his classification scheme follows:

- Teacher-school responsibility
 - Irregular attendance
 - Lack of fundamental training
 - Lack of interest
 - Poor reader
- Pupil responsibility
 - Low intelligence
 - Lack of application or effort
 - Out of school interests
 - Laziness
- Home responsibility
 - Outside work
 - Home conditions
- Home-school responsibility
 - Physical defects
 - Emotional disturbance¹

Effects of School Failure on the Individual

Studies which attempted to determine the effect which failure in school has on the individual reported results which were highly derogatory to the welfare of the individual. Arkola and Jensen concluded that school failure is a real threat to total life adjustment.² They reasoned that the real reasons why some students fail in school is because of personal difficulties which make it difficult

¹Lafferty, American School Board Journal, CXVII, 19.

²Audrey Arkola and Reynold A. Jensen, "The Cost of Failure," Educational Leadership, VI (May, 1949), 495.

for them to achieve. These difficulties they said are related in one way or another to the school situation and if not handled properly can be very detrimental to the individual. The difficulties cited by Arkola and Jensen were: (1) the intellectual borderline--the individual who just simply does not have the mental capacity to compete on a highly academic level, (2) a variety of physical handicaps, (3) reading difficulty, (4) inability to face adjustments, and (5) the adult responsibility--learning to live in an adult world.¹

Davis discussed the issue of failure as a means of motivation and declared, "Teachers have frequently urged the necessity of failure as a means of stimulating greater effort and higher achievement. The results have not justified the method."² He further insisted that failure might arouse the bright student who has been loafing; but, that it can hardly arouse the slow child who already is facing tasks that are beyond his capacity and finally, he said, "It appears that repeated failures gradually cause a loss of self-confidence, destroy initiative, and reduce the will to try."³

Likewise, the major findings of a report by Otto suggested that there may be little reason to believe that

¹Ibid., pp. 495-99.

²Davis, p. 224.

³Ibid.

the failing of students either increases their chances of academic achievement or contributes to the raising of standards.¹ Contrary to the belief of many who argue that pupils should be failed because high standards must be maintained the study reported that higher standards were maintained in schools having the lowest rate of failure. The problem with regard to maintaining high standards does not appear to be as closely related to high levels of expectation as it is to the provision for meeting individual differences in the classroom. Holding students back and demanding that all students meet the same standards has the effect of lowering the achievement level because of the added frustration of those who fail and are unable to meet the standards.

Reporting on a study designed to determine the effect of failure on future efforts in school Brundage commented that students with good mental ability who are retained are often benefited, but, that retention of students with low academic ability is seldom beneficial.² He further reported that failing a grade was a severe emotional experience for the student in which he often lost self-confidence and initiative. It was recommended that teachers think very

¹Henry J. Otto, "Grading and Promotion Policies," National Education Association Journal, XL (February, 1951), 128-29.

²Erven Brundage, "A Staff Study of Student Failures," Educational Administration and Supervision, XLII (1956), 434-35.

carefully before failing a student.

Recently, in an article on pupil failure and non-promotion the following analysis was presented:

Symptoms of social and emotional maladjustment are more prevalent among pupils who have experienced failure in school than among those who have not . . . moreover nonpromotion does not always achieve desired academic aims. Pupils threatened with failure did no better than those who were told they would pass no matter what their achievement Another study showed that seventh-grade and eighth-grade pupils who were not promoted averaged no better a second time in subjects they had failed.¹

Jacobson, Reavis, and Logsdon discussed the problem of pupil failure and summarized the effect which failure has on the pupil as follows:

When a student is adjudged a failure and compelled to repeat a grade or subject in school, both he and society are the losers. The student loses the chance to benefit from the new experiences which repetition denies him. Society's most immediate loss is in terms of the money it costs to have students repeat their work. More significant and costly losses occur when individuals fail to make the most of their abilities and, in extreme cases, turn as a result to unsocial behavior and delinquency A youngster in school can understand and overcome his failure to learn to spell a particular word, but failure for the semester or the year is a disaster that he probably does not understand and, therefore, does not know how to remedy The child who fails almost inevitably learns to dread school and to react against it in whatever way is open to him.²

Standards, Teacher Expectations, and Evaluation

The literature is replete with studies and writings

¹ "Pupil Failure and Nonpromotion," National Education Association Research Bulletin, XXXVII, 16.

² Paul B. Jacobson, William C. Reavis, and James D. Logsdon, The Effective School Principal (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 182-83.

which point out the fallacies of grading and the unreliability of teachers marks. Liggitt¹ related some of the major fallacies and explained that the unreliability of marks stem partly from two factors:

1. A mark may represent an almost unlimited number of variable factors.
2. A mark is often based on class achievement and therefore, the basis changes with the composition of the class.

Pitkanen² further explored the idea of standards by discussing the problem of failure in terms of the inability of the individual to measure up to standards which have been established by various methods. The argument is presented that predetermined standards inhibit learning because students are not motivated to develop their own individual abilities to whatever level they are capable irrespective of standards. He contended that teachers should be aware of individual differences and alert to the needs of each student, otherwise the teacher contributes to poor learning conditions.

A study of teacher-pupil attitudes as related to nonpromotion reported the following major findings which supported the idea that the attitude of the teacher is a

¹William A. Liggitt, "Are There Better Ways of Evaluating, Recording, and Reporting Pupil Progress in the Junior and Senior High Schools?" National Association of Secondary-School Principals Bulletin, XXXIV (March, 1950), 84.

²Allan M. Pitkanen, "Antidotes for Failure," The Educational Forum, XIX (January, 1955), 237-40.

major factor in pupil failure.

1. Failure rates of teachers can not be interpreted in terms of age of the teacher.
2. Failure rate is not significantly related to sex of the teacher or the subject taught.
3. The high school teacher with undesirable teacher-pupil relations, who creates an atmosphere of fear and tension, and thinks in terms of the subject matter to be covered rather than in terms of what pupils need, feel, know, and can do, is more likely to fail pupils than a teacher who is able to maintain harmonious relations with his pupils and who is interested in pupils as pupils.¹

Ludeman further introduced the idea of evaluation of pupil achievement and gave it proper status by saying that there are three major elements of school instruction: (1) the curriculum, (2) the methodology, and (3) the testing and evaluation procedures.² He emphasized that evaluation should have as its purposes the measuring of pupil progress, testing of teacher efficiency, and motivation of pupils to learn. Two points were emphasized regarding evaluation and marking: (1) overmarking may cause a student to acquire a false sense of his own worth which could result in a let down in study, and (2) undermarking may cause several reactions the worst of which is the loss of self-confidence and the development of personality conflicts and frustrations. He further contended that nothing cuts so deeply

¹Patrick D. Rocchio and Nolan C. Kearney, "Teacher-Pupil Attitudes As Related to Nonpromotion of Secondary School Pupils," Educational and Psychological Measurement, XVI, No. 2 (1956), 251.

²W. W. Ludeman, "Overhauling School Evaluation," The American School Board Journal, CXL (February, 1960), 37.

into personality make-up as a sense of failure.

That standards are relative is made clear by the findings of a study¹ regarding pupil failure which reported that teachers fail and grade low because they do not agree on the performance criteria for a grade, and they do not have consistent guidelines for looking at their grading practices.

Ebel insisted that marks are necessary but that much care must be given by teachers to insure that marks are truly representative of the level of progress and achievement attained. He said, "To serve effectively the purpose of stimulating, directing, and rewarding student efforts to learn, marks must be valid."² To emphasize that teacher marks are very subjective and very relative he reported on research where several teachers were asked to evaluate a student's paper with the result that the individual teacher evaluations of a single paper differed widely.

Related Factors and Pupil Failure

Studies regarding pupil failure such as those by Maddocks,³ by Arkola and Jensen,⁴ and research as reported

¹"How To Make Grading Make Sense," School Management, IX (March, 1965), 86.

²Robert L. Ebel, Measuring Educational Achievement (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), pp. 400-403.

³Maddocks, The School Review, XXXV, 602-11.

⁴Arkola and Jensen, Educational Leadership, VI, 495.

by Goldberg¹ generally agree that the student with average or high mental ability is less likely to receive failing grades in school.

Several writers reported on the relationship of socio-economic status to school achievement. McDonald summarized research regarding socio-economic status and observed that "much ambiguity prevails in this field of study."² He reported on research which had found a positive relationship between socio-economic status and achievement and on the other hand he reviewed research which found no relationship between socio-economic status and achievement in school. He observed that the difficulty probably lies in obtaining an accurate measure of socio-economic status.

Summary of Review of Literature

A review of the professional literature regarding pupil failure in school determined that the origin of the problem of pupil failure appeared to be related to the emergence of "mass education." Because of the effort to educate all youth there appeared to have been a strong tendency among educators to stereotype students and to disregard differences among individuals. There is evidence

¹Miriam L. Goldberg, "Research on the Gifted," Working With Superior Students, ed. Bruce Shertzer, (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1960), p. 41.

²Keith Henry McDonald, "An Investigation Into The Relationship of Socio-Economic Status to an Objective Measure of Motivation--The Michigan M-Scales," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1962.

that instruction and evaluation methods are inconsistent with the philosophy of meeting individual needs and the recognition of individual differences among pupils.

Pupil failure rates reported ranged from 2 percent to 80 percent in early investigations and from 0.02 percent to 10.6 percent in more recent investigations. Although, most investigations reported rather consistent findings regarding the causes of pupil failure there continued to be much disagreement between the reasons given by teachers for pupil failure and the reasons given by pupils for failure in school.

Research findings supported the contention that failure in school is almost always harmful to the individual and that a high rate of failure does not raise standards of achievement or levels of motivation. Contrariwise, research supported the idea that failure in school has a decidedly negative effect on the individual with those students who experience failure in school being more likely to drop out before graduation or before completing a program of studies or training.

The degree to which such related factors as socioeconomic status and mental ability are related to failure in school has not been consistently reported in professional literature. A large proportion of school failures occur among those of low mental ability but failure has not been confined to this group alone. Likewise, low socio-economic

status appeared to have a definite bearing upon school progress but was not reported as being a major contributing factor to pupil failure in school since a large number of pupils from families of high socio-economic status also failed in school.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

Design of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the problem of pupil failure in high school. It was believed that a study of this nature would contribute, at least in a minor degree, to a better understanding of this significant concern in education.

As revealed by the review of professional literature regarding pupil failure, there has been a very pronounced interest in the problem of pupil failure in school. Attempts have been made to isolate common reasons for pupil failure and to suggest possible alternatives for alleviating the problem of pupil failure in school. However, it is most obvious to all concerned that countless students are continuing to fail in school and that there continues to be a need for studying the problem of pupil failure. Lafferty,¹ expressed the need for continued interest in the problem of pupil failure and emphasized the need for investigations which treat the problem of pupil failure from

¹Lafferty, American School Board Journal, CXVII, 18-20.

a personal viewpoint rather than to reduce the pupil to the status of a statistic.

A major consideration in the design of the study was that of determining the manner in which the data were acquired. It was believed that for a study regarding pupil failure to be contributive it would need to gather data from both pupils and teachers on a personal basis. That is, the study should endeavor to relate the data to be collected directly to specific pupils, teachers, and courses, rather than to collect data with regard to failure in more general terms.

Consequently, the study was designed to secure information from students as to the reason why they felt they had failed a specific course. Likewise, teachers were asked to identify the reason or reasons why a specific student had failed a particular course.

A second consideration regarding the design of the study involved a decision affecting the delimitation of the study and the selection of the group of pupils from whom data would be collected. It became very obvious that some limitation must be placed upon the population to be included in the study. Therefore, the population of pupils for the study was limited to those students in grades 9-12 of the Midwest City Public School District #52 who had received a failing grade in one or more subjects for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. Limiting the population to the group described appeared to be best suited to this type

of study and the specific availability of the pupils involved since most were still enrolled in the Midwest City School System at the time of the completion of the investigation.

The selection of a sample group as opposed to utilizing the total population was also considered advisable and necessary because of the number of pupils comprising the total population and also because the technique to be employed in the collection of data placed a limitation upon the number of individuals which could be dealt with satisfactorily. The decision was made to utilize a random sampling technique to select a group of pupils from whom data regarding the causes of pupil failure would be collected.

The sample was drawn from the population utilizing accepted methods for selecting random samples as described by Van Dalen.¹ The size of sample necessary to assure representativeness of sample was determined according to procedures as outlined by Cella.² To secure a sample large enough to be representative of the population with a 95 percent confidence interval and a sampling error no greater than 16 percent, a maximum sample of 151 pupils was required.

¹Deobold B. Van Dalen, Understanding Educational Research (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962), pp. 249-54.

²Francis R. Cella, Sampling Statistics In Business and Economics (Norman, Oklahoma: Bureau of Business Research, University of Oklahoma, 1950), pp. 160-63.

One very obvious question had to be dealt with at this point. To secure the desired data from 100 percent of the sample would be impossible for various reasons. As a result a sample of 200 pupils was drawn from the population utilizing a table of random numbers developed by Fisher and Yates.¹ From the sample a total of 142 were interviewed, 9 had dropped out of school, and 49 were not available to be interviewed. The major reason for the unavailability for interview was absence from school. However, it was felt that the 142 students interviewed were more than adequate for the present investigation and that while true representativeness had not been accomplished, the group was a random group and would be reasonably representative of the total population since the desired sample size was a maximum rather than a minimum required for representativeness and had no relationship to the randomness of the selection.

No attempt was made to select teachers at random. The only criteria for the selection of teachers in the study was that they had failed one or more of the students selected for inclusion in the investigation. This arrangement was in keeping with the desire to collect data regarding pupil failure on a personal rather than on a generalized basis.

The personal interview technique was utilized in collecting data from pupils regarding the reason why they

¹Ronald A. Fisher and Frank Yates, Statistical Tables For Biological, Agricultural and Medical Research (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, Inc., 1953), pp. 114-19.

had failed in specific subjects. Since it was not considered feasible to interview both students and teachers because of the numbers involved it was necessary to collect some data from teachers by A Teacher Report of Reason For Pupil Failure (Appendix B). However, this information was supplemented by personal interviews with approximately 10 percent of the teachers who had a high rate of pupil failure and also approximately 10 percent of the teachers having a low rate of pupil failure.

Data secured from school records which were utilized in the study consisted of: (1) composite score on the California Test of Mental Maturity, (2) composite score on the Iowa Test of Educational Development, and (3) number of days absent from school.

The choice of an objective measure of family socioeconomic status (SES) presented a problem rather difficult to handle. The manner of determining family socioeconomic status has been almost as varied as the number of studies which have used such an index. However, for the purpose of this study a socio-economic status index as used by Gunderson and Nelson was computed for each pupil using the three factors of: (1) father's occupation trichotomized into white collar (professional, clerical, sales or services), skilled labor or farming, and unskilled or unknown, (2) father's education trichotomized into high school graduate and above, incomplete high school, and no high school. (3) mother's education trichotomized into high school grad-

uate and above, incomplete high school, and no high school.¹ A sum of the three trichotomized variables was then obtained; the range of these SES scores was from zero to six.

The treatment of data consisted primarily of determining the degree of agreement between the causes of pupil failure as seen by students and the causes of pupil failure as reported by teachers. Kendall's² Coefficient of Concordance as described by Kerlinger³ was the technique employed. Other statistics employed consisted of appropriate Chi-square techniques and mathematical analysis.

Procedure of the Study

The study was concerned only with those students in grades 9-12 of Midwest City School District #52 who had received a failing grade in one or more subjects for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. Permission to conduct the study was granted by the administrative staff of the Midwest City School District. The study was supported by all administrative personnel both at the central and individual school level. It was believed that the profes-

¹E. K. Eric Gunderson and Paul D. Nelson, "Socio-economic Status and Navy Occupations," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLIV (November, 1965), 263-66.

²Maurice G. Kendall, Rank Correlation Methods (London: Charles Griffin and Company Limited, 1962), pp. 94-100.

³Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964), pp. 267-70.

sional attitude and cooperation exemplified by the various staff members involved in some way with the conduct of the study was a contributing factor to the validity of the investigation.

The initial step in collecting data was to determine the extent of failure among the students comprising grades 9-12. Therefore, forms developed for this purpose (Appendix A) were distributed to each school for completion and return to the office of the Director of Instruction for the Midwest City Schools. Emphasis was placed on the manner in which the various aspects of the study were to be carried out and the cooperation of the central office staff, especially that of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Instruction was present throughout the study.

The survey of the extent of pupil failure in grades 9-12 of the Midwest City Schools revealed that a total of 450 students had received a failing grade in at least one subject for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. In accordance with the design of the study a random sample of 200 pupils was selected for further study. Students were selected from all secondary schools comprising the Midwest City School System on a proportional basis in terms of the ratio between the number of pupils failed in each school and the enrollment of that school. Van Dalen¹ described this process and recommended its use for insuring

¹Van Dalen, p. 252.

greater representativeness when selecting a sample from a population consisting of several individual elements.

After the sample was selected A Teacher Report of Reason For Pupil Failure (Appendix B) under a cover letter (Appendix D) was delivered to the teachers involved. As a result of personal contact with the teachers involved a 100 percent return was realized on this aspect of the study. The objective of this phase of the study was to get teacher reactions regarding the causes of pupil failure.

This phase of the investigation was supplemented by personal interviews with approximately 20 percent of the teachers involved. A Teacher Interview Form was developed (Appendix E) to serve as a guide for the interview; however, an unstructured interview was desired so that teachers would not be hesitant to discuss the problem of pupil failure. The teacher interviews proved to be highly successful and contributive and a number of interesting ideas regarding pupil failure were gleaned from the teacher interviews.

The student interviews were by far the most time consuming and were in many respects the most difficult to achieve. In the design of the study, the decision to do personal interviews was recognized as a decision which would require considerable effort on the part of the investigator; however, it was believed that greater validity could be achieved by making personal contact with students rather than utilizing a less personal technique.

The student interview was rather highly structured. A Student Interview and Data Form was developed (Appendix C) for use in recording student responses. Other information some of which was obtained during the course of the interview and some of which was obtained from school records was also recorded on this form.

Two techniques were employed in conducting the student interviews. One technique was that of interviewing students on a one-to-one basis. This method was satisfactory but very time consuming. A second technique, and one which proved very successful was to meet with small groups of from two to fifteen pupils where rapport was established, the purpose of the interview explained and students were asked to react to the questions on the interview form. This was followed by a conversation with each student on an individual basis in order to clarify any points not clear and to gather additional reactions when possible.

Personal interviews were held with counselors in all schools to determine to what extent failing students made use of the available guidance services and to gather counselor reactions as to what could be done to help reduce the extent of pupil failure.

After all data was collected and tabulated the results were treated statistically where this would contribute to a better understanding of the data. However, in many cases a descriptive analysis of what was found was considered to be more appropriate than a strictly statistical analysis.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The problem of this study was to analyze the causes for pupil failure in the high schools of Midwest City and to study the relationship between failure and certain selected factors. In agreement with the design and procedures outlined in Chapter III the data were collected and tabulated for presentation in this chapter.

Extent of Pupil Failure

The extent of pupil failure in Midwest City School District #52 is indicated by analyzing Table 1. The figures include all those pupils who received a failing grade in one or more subjects for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. They do not include pupils who may have received a conditional or incomplete grade although a minor portion of these will later become failures; however, they were not reported as failure on the "FAILURE REPORT For First Semester 1965-66" (Appendix A). No attempt was made to follow up on conditional and/or incomplete grades to determine the number of pupils later receiving a failing grade.

TABLE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF PUPILS FAILED BY GRADE LEVEL
FOR THE FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66

Item	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Boys	111	97	72	56	336
Girls	31	43	27	13	114
Total	142	140	99	69	450

As the figures indicate the greatest number of failures occurred in grades 9 and 10 with the failure rate among boys being much higher than among girls at all grade levels. Table 2 converts the figures given in Table 1 into percentages which lend themselves more readily to comparisons.

TABLE 2

FAILURE RATE EXPRESSED AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL FAILURES
FOR THE FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66

Item	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Boys	24.7	21.6	16.0	12.4	74.7
Girls	6.9	9.6	6.0	2.9	25.3
Total	31.6	31.1	22.0	15.3	100.0

Note:

Percents were computed to nearest tenth, therefore figures in rows and/or columns when added may not equal totals exactly.

The data in Table 3 represents the total class membership figures at the close of the first semester of the 1965-66 school year expressed in actual numbers. Table 4 converts the membership figures into percents for ease of comparison. Tables 3 and 4 show that the number of boys attending school was not significantly different from the number of girls attending. Therefore, the greater number of failures among boys can not be attributed to a greater number of boys being enrolled in school since only 52 percent of the student population was boys, but, 74.7 percent of school failures were boys. Likewise, the figures in Table 4 indicate that the enrollment figures by grade level are not varied enough to account for the higher rate of failure among students in grades 9 and 10 than was found among students in grades 11 and 12. Only 52.9 percent of the student population was enrolled in grades 9 and 10, however, 62.7 percent of all failures occurred at these grade levels.

TABLE 3

MEMBERSHIP AT CLOSE OF THE FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66

Item	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Boys	639	588	551	592	2370
Girls	609	574	497	512	2192
Total	1248	1162	1048	1104	4562

TABLE 4

MEMBERSHIP AT CLOSE OF THE FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66
EXPRESSED AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

Item	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Boys	14.0	12.9	12.1	13.0	52.0
Girls	13.3	12.6	10.9	11.2	48.0
Total	27.4	25.5	23.0	24.2	100.0

Note:

Percents were computed to nearest tenth, therefore figures in rows and/or columns when added may not equal totals exactly.

Table 5 expresses the rate of pupil failure as a percent of the total membership. These figures are more appropriate for expressing the rate of pupil failure than are those in Table 2. Both are expressed as percents but the figures in Table 5 indicate the failure rate in terms of the total student population. The failure rate for all grade levels combined was 9.9 percent but the failure rate for grades 9 and 10 was the highest and the rate of failure for boys was considerably higher than that for girls at all grade levels. And, even when computed in terms of a percent of total membership the ratio of failing boys to failing girls remained constant. Lower failure rates among students in grades 11 and 12 may be attributed in part to the fact that many of those pupils failing in grades 9 and 10 had dropped out of school prior to reaching grades 11 and 12.

TABLE 5

FAILURE RATE EXPRESSED AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
FOR THE FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66

Item	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Boys	2.4	2.1	1.6	1.2	7.4
Girls	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.3	2.5
Total	3.1	3.1	2.2	1.5	9.9

Extent of Pupil Failure by Subjects

Data regarding the extent of pupil failure by school subjects or courses was summarized in Table 6 which reports failures by subjects arranged in rank order from the most frequently failed subject down to the least frequently failed subject. The figures in Table 6 refer to the number and percent of pupil failures by subjects. As reported in Table 1 there were a total of 450 pupils who failed one or more subjects; obviously, there were more than 450 failures by subjects since a number of pupils failed more than one subject.

A composite list of all courses available for pupil enrollment for the 1965-66 school year is reported in Appendix F. As indicated by the list of courses there were a total of 126 courses available for pupil enrollment. Of the 126 courses comprising the total curricular offering 11 of these courses may be classified as courses normally taken to satisfy requirements for graduation from high school.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF FAILURES BY SUBJECTS FOR THE FIRST
SEMESTER 1965-66 ARRANGED IN ORDER OF
FREQUENCY OF FAILURES

Subject	Rank	Number of Failures	Percent of Total Failures
American History	1	64	11.20
General Math	2	46	8.05
English I	3	45	7.88
Biology	4	34	5.95
English II	5	33	5.77
French I	6	28	4.90
English IV	7	26	4.55
Algebra I	8.5	20	3.50
Geometry	8.5	20	3.50
Oklahoma History	10	19	3.32
Spanish I	11	18	3.15
English III	12	17	2.97
Algebra II	13.5	15	2.62
General Science	13.5	15	2.62
Ancient History	15	14	2.45
French II	16.5	13	2.27
Spanish II	16.5	13	2.27
Speech	18	12	2.10
High School Math	19.5	10	1.75
Typing I	19.5	10	1.75
Physical Education	22	9	1.57

TABLE 6--Continued

Subject	Rank	Number of Failures	Percent of Total Failures
World History	22	9	1.57
Chemistry	22	9	1.57
Art	24.5	7	1.22
Trigonometry	24.5	7	1.22
Shorthand I	26	6	1.05
Bookkeeping	29	5	0.87
General Business	29	5	0.87
General Shop	29	5	0.87
German I	29	5	0.87
Reading and Spelling	29	5	0.87
Home Economics	32.5	4	0.70
Latin I	32.5	4	0.70
Drivers Education	34	3	0.52
Drama	36.5	2	0.35
Business Law	36.5	2	0.35
Business Machines	36.5	2	0.35
Mechanical Drawing	36.5	2	0.35
Band	42.5	1	0.17
Distributive Educ.	42.5	1	0.17
Math Analysis	42.5	1	0.17
Music	42.5	1	0.17
Physics	42.5	1	0.17
Sociology	42.5	1	0.17

TABLE 6--Continued

Subject	Rank	Number of Failures	Percent of Total Failures
Woodwork	42.5	1	0.17
Vocational School	42.5	1	0.17

The courses required for graduation for the 1965-66 school year are shown in Appendix F. Careful analysis of Table 6 and Appendix F revealed that of the courses normally taken to satisfy graduation requirements all but two were included in the twelve most frequently failed subjects and all were included in the twenty most frequently failed subjects. Further analysis revealed that of the twelve most frequently failed subjects nine were courses normally taken to satisfy graduation requirements. The five most frequently failed subjects were all required courses.

Perhaps, a more appropriate method of comparing pupil failure by subjects can be accomplished by analyzing the figures presented in Table 7. The subjects were arranged in descending rank order in terms of the percent of pupil failure which occurred in each subject based upon the number of pupils enrolled in each specific subject.

Obviously, the rank order of subjects presented in Table 7 differ considerably from the rank order of subjects presented in Table 6. Only two courses normally taken by students to satisfy graduation requirements were included in

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF FAILURES BY SUBJECT ENROLLMENT FOR
THE FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66 ARRANGED IN ORDER
OF PERCENTAGE OF FAILURES IN EACH SUBJECT

Subject	Rank	Number Enrolled	Number Failed	Percent Failed
German I	1	34	5	14.70
General Math	2	353	46	13.03
French I	3	274	28	10.21
French II	4	137	13	9.48
World History	5	124	9	7.25
Reading and Spelling	6	88	5	5.68
Trigonometry	7	133	7	5.26
Latin I	8	77	4	5.19
High School Math	9	206	10	4.85
Ancient History	10	315	14	4.44
Spanish II	11	303	13	4.29
Spanish I	12	460	18	3.91
Biology	13	874	34	3.89
American History	14.5	1774	64	3.60
English I	14.5	1250	45	3.60
Algebra II	16	439	15	3.41
Chemistry	17	285	9	3.15
English II	18	1102	33	2.99
Business Law	19	67	2	2.98
Speech	20	423	12	2.83
Geometry	21	748	20	2.67

TABLE 7--Continued

Subject	Rank	Number Enrolled	Number Failed	Percent Failed
Shorthand I	22	225	6	2.66
English IV	23	1091	26	2.38
Bookkeeping	24	221	5	2.26
Oklahoma History	25	845	19	2.24
Algebra I	26	952	20	2.10
General Business	27	270	5	1.85
General Shop	28	327	5	1.52
English III	29	1160	17	1.46
Art	30	551	7	1.27
Woodwork	31	80	1	1.25
General Science	32	1217	15	1.23
Mechanical Drawing	33	164	2	1.21
Typing I	34	861	10	1.16
Drama	35	183	2	1.09
Drivers Education	36	276	3	1.08
Physical Education	37	958	9	0.93
Physics	38	111	1	0.90
Math Analysis	39	120	1	0.83
Distributive Educ.	40	147	1	0.68
Business Machines	41	341	2	0.58
Home Economics	42	774	4	0.51
Vocational School	43	350	1	0.28
Band	44	488	1	0.20

TABLE 7-² Continued

Subject	Rank	Number Enrolled	Number Failed	Percent Failed
Music	45	512	1	0.19
Sociology	46	531	1	0.18

the twelve courses having the highest rate of failure and only six courses were included in the twenty courses having the highest rate of failure. However, nine courses normally taken by pupils to meet general education requirements, those courses required of all students for graduation from high school, had a failure rate above 2 percent.

The fact that the rate of pupil failure in courses normally taken to satisfy general education requirements for graduation from high school was generally found to be lower than among more highly specialized courses was considered to be a desirable condition. However, caution must be exercised by school administrators and teachers when making interpretations on the basis of this information.

Required courses are generally justified on the basis of their contribution to the general education needs of all pupils. The fact that a lower rate of failure occurred in general education courses than in some other courses does not in itself justify acceptance of present conditions. The very nature of general education and the philosophy of universal education designed to serve all youth and to provide

educational opportunities at the level of all youth demands that school administrators and teachers exercise every precaution to insure the steady progress of every pupil in school and the elimination of pupil failure however infrequently it may be reported.

Results of Teacher and Pupil Interviews

Several significant contributions accrued to the study as a result of interviews with both teachers and pupils. The problem of pupil failure in required courses, which may be termed "general education" was discussed with teachers through personal interviews. Teachers expressed rather general concern with the problem and indicated that inadequate curriculum and lack of provisions for meeting individual differences were the major causes for pupil failure in required courses.

The curriculum was considered to be inadequate in many instances because it was too rigid. Students are expected to spend a specified period of time, usually one school year, in the study of a subject and then to enroll the following school year in a more advanced class regardless of whether or not they have developed adequate foundation for more advanced study of a specific subject.

Large classes was the factor which teachers felt to be the greatest hindrance to the recognition of individual differences and the adjustment of instruction to meet the needs of all pupils. Students were asked if they

received individual help from the teacher and 72 percent reported that they did not. Various reasons were given by pupils as to why they received no individual help but the most frequently mentioned reasons were that the teacher just didn't have time to help them or that the teacher was unwilling to go back to their level of achievement. Results reported by pupils agreed with teacher observations relative to large classes and their inability to meet the needs of all pupils.

When asked why they enrolled in a particular course 51 percent of the pupils said they took the course because it was required and 27 percent said they took the course because they had an interest in the subject. Twelve percent reported they took the course in preparation for college, 6 percent because parents insisted and the remaining 4 percent reported taking the course in which they failed either because they were advised to do so or they just needed a "filler subject" to complete their program for the school day.

Likewise, teachers expressed concern over the fact that students enroll in courses without really having an interest in the subject or the ability to complete the course in a satisfactory manner. The implications for the school and the teacher are quite clear in this situation. If the subject is required of pupils then every effort must be made to provide instruction appropriate for and at the level of every pupil. If the subject is not required but students enroll in the course by choice, then, appropriate counseling

in terms of educational placement must be made available to all pupils in order to help them make wise choices and to recognize their maximum potential.

Teachers indicated that they believe in universal education and equality of educational opportunity, but from the reasons which they reported as to the causes of pupil failure it was evident that this belief was not practiced to the full extent otherwise they would have evaluated pupils in terms of their level of ability and performance instead of on a competitive basis with other pupils. Reasons reported for pupil failure tended to place the responsibility for pupil failure upon the individual pupil rather than upon the school and the educational program.

Other significant contributions of the teacher and pupil interviews were reported in those sections of the study to which they were most related and to which they would make the greatest contribution in terms of the overall purpose of the study.

Causes of Pupil Failure

A major purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of pupil failure from the viewpoint of teachers and also from the viewpoint of students. As reported in Chapter III the study was designed to collect data regarding pupil failure on a personal basis, that is, teachers were asked to report the causes of failure for specific pupils and likewise pupils were asked to indicate the reason why they

had failed a specific course.

The causes of pupil failure as reported by teachers were summarized in Table 8. Figures in the table report the frequency that each cause was reported and rank the causes from most frequently mentioned cause down to the least frequently mentioned cause of pupil failure as reported by teachers.

A summary of the causes of pupil failure as reported by pupils is provided in Table 9. Figures in this table indicate the causes of pupil failure arranged in terms of most frequently mentioned causes down to the least frequently mentioned causes with corresponding rank order assigned to each cause reported.

It was possible to categorize the causes for pupil failure as reported by teachers under twenty-one statements or causes. The causes of pupil failure as reported by pupils were categorized under twenty statements. Fourteen similar causes were reported by both teachers and pupils as follows: (1) Poor effort, (2) Laziness, (3) Lack of interest, (4) Low mental ability, (5) Poor attitude, (6) Lack of study, (7) Failure on tests, (8) Incomplete class work, (9) Poor scholastic background, (10) Irregular attendance (11) Outside work, (12) Parental pressure, (13) Poor health and physical defects, and (14) No provision for individual differences. However, the significance which teachers and pupils attached to the various causes of pupil failure were quite different.

TABLE 8

CAUSES OF PUPIL FAILURE AS REPORTED BY TEACHERS

Cause	Frequency Reported	Rank
Poor effort	49	1
Laziness	40	2
Lack of interest	28	3
Low mental ability	25	4
Poor attitude	24	5
Poor study habits	23	6
Failure on tests	21	7
Incomplete work	20	8
Poor scholastic background	18	9
Irregular attendance	17	10
Lack of home study	16	11
Cannot read well	14	12
Emotional maladjustment	9	13
Poor home conditions	6	14
Outside interests	5	15.5
Outside work	5	15.5
Dislike of subject	4	17
Parental pressure	3	18
Poor health and physical defects	2	19
Dishonest	1	20.5
No provision for individual differences	1	20.5

TABLE 9

CAUSES OF PUPIL FAILURE AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS

Cause	Frequency Reported	Rank
Lack of interest in subject	37	1
Lack of study	35	2
Work too difficult	20	3
No provision for individual differences	17	4
Dislike of teacher	15	5.5
Teacher did not explain work well enough	15	5.5
Insufficient effort	12	7
Insufficient class work completed	8	8
Tests are too hard	7	9
Irregular attendance	6	10
Laziness	5	11
Became discouraged	4	12
Outside work	3	14.5
Parental pressure	3	14.5
Poor attitude	3	14.5
Teacher attitude	3	14.5
Poor health and physical defects	2	18.5
Poor concentration	2	18.5
Poor scholastic background	2	18.5
Teacher graded too low	2	18.5

The most frequently reported cause of failure from the pupil's viewpoint was "lack of interest in the subject." Teachers ranked "lack of interest" third. Therefore, both pupils and teachers reported lack of interest to be a major cause for pupil failure. However, there was a much different connotation attached to this cause by pupils than by teachers. By reporting "lack of interest" teachers placed the responsibility for failure upon the pupil, however, the pupil in reporting the same cause placed the responsibility upon the teacher and the school. Pupils indicated by reporting lack of interest that classes were boring and that they were not motivated to learn while many teachers apparently thought lack of interest occurred because students did not want to learn.

Likewise there was a very different interpretation given to the cause listed by teachers as "low mental ability" and by students as "work too difficult." This cause from the viewpoint of the student is closely related to "lack of provision for individual differences" which students ranked fourth and teachers ranked as inconsequential. It was previously reported that in individual conferences with teachers it was agreed that a number of pupils failed because the classroom situation was such that adequate individual assistance could not be provided to every student as needed.

It was believed that the reason why so few teachers reported "lack of provision for individual differences" as

a cause of pupil failure was that they felt it would reflect upon their adequacy as a teacher. However, through the personal interview they were willing to admit this weakness which they blamed on the organizational arrangement of the school, i.e., classes too large, inadequate facilities, etc.

Only twenty-nine percent of the pupils reported that they felt the teacher expected too much from them. However, even this low figure is misleading when considering the comments made by the other 71 percent who said teachers did not expect too much. A general consensus of comments made by pupils was that the teacher expected the same from every student. Teachers also reported equal standards of expectation from all pupils, equating equal expectations with fairness and equal opportunity. The difficulty of expecting the same from all students is obvious, individual differences can not be recognized and individual needs met by treating all students alike since all students are different, with varying abilities, interests, needs and backgrounds.

Only 28 percent of the pupils reported receiving individual help from the teacher and only 36 percent reported talking with the teacher regarding their progress in class either before or after receiving a failing grade. A very significant teacher comment was that many students are not known well by anyone.

A check with school counselors revealed that while most counselors made some effort to see pupils who failed in

school there was very little personal contact between failing students and either counselors or teachers. A large majority of pupils reported concern over the fact that they had failed. Most comments reported by pupils regarding how they felt about failing indicated that they felt their failing was a reflection on themselves or their parents and that they experienced a certain amount of loss of self respect as a result of failing in school. Thirty-seven percent said they felt left-out of the class because they were unable to compete with other class members. Most reported they felt they were capable of doing better and the grades which they reported they were capable of earning agreed very closely with those reported by teachers for the group as a whole.

The majority of teachers interviewed indicated that they did not feel that pupil failure increased the motivation level of the student. If a subject is not a required subject the students generally either drop out of the class before completion or remain in and continue to do poor work with no effort to learn. If the class is a required course they generally remain in the class hoping to develop an adequate foundation to satisfactorily complete the course at a later time. However, there was little evidence that teachers generally made any effort to adjust instruction and evaluation methods to meet the needs of failing students.

Testing the Hypotheses

Data regarding causes for pupil failure, mental

ability, achievement level, absentees, and socio-economic status were tabulated for all students comprising the sample of pupils included in the study. A composite list of objective data for all pupils was recorded in Table 10 (Appendix G). The data were prepared for proper statistical treatment and the hypotheses were tested as indicated below:

Hypothesis 1 was: There is no statistically significant agreement, other than what might occur by chance, between the causes of failure as stated by pupils and the causes of failure as stated by teachers. The data regarding the causes of pupil failure were organized in an appropriate manner to be tested by Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (Kendall's W). The value for Kendall's W was 0.50. To be significant at the .05 level of confidence a value of 18.307 was necessary. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted since the computed value did not justify rejection of the hypothesis. It was concluded that the causes reported by teachers regarding pupil failure differ considerably from the causes reported by pupils and that pupil failure may be due in part to the disagreement between pupils and teachers regarding the reason for lack of pupil progress in school.

Hypothesis 2 was: There are no common causes of pupil failure as stated by pupils. On the basis of the results presented in Table 9 it was believed that the major causes given by pupils regarding the reason for their failure were sufficiently defined and therefore the hypothesis

was rejected. No effort was made to specify common causes, however, it was obvious that the most frequently mentioned causes were the more common causes for pupil failure as reported by pupils.

Hypothesis 3 was: There are no common causes of pupil failure as stated by teachers. On the basis of the results presented in Table 8 it was believed that the major causes given by teachers regarding the reason for pupil failure were sufficiently defined and therefore the hypothesis was rejected. No effort was made to specify common causes, however, it was obvious that the most frequently mentioned causes were the more common causes for pupil failure as reported by teachers.

Hypothesis 4 was: There is no apparent relationship between pupil failure and the factors of: (1) Academic ability as measured by the CTMM, (2) Academic achievement as measure by the ITED, (3) Socio-economic level of parents, and (4) Absenteeism. The hypothesis was intended to determine the relationship between failure and factors of:

(1) Academic ability as measured by the CTMM. Composite percentiles for the CTMM were categorized into three groups representing the lower quartile, middle two quartiles, (interquartile range) and upper quartile of academic ability as measured by the CTMM. The observed results were tested against the expected results on the hypothesis of a normal distribution. A Chi-square value of .6625 with two degrees of freedom was not sufficient at the .05 level of confidence

to justify rejection of the hypothesis. Therefore, for the population studied the ability of pupils did not differ significantly from that of a normal distribution and mental ability as measured by the CTMM was not found to be a major contributing factor in pupil failure.

(2) Academic achievement as measured by the ITED. Composite percentiles for the ITED were categorized into three groups representing the lower quartile, middle two quartiles, (interquartile range), and upper quartile of academic achievement as measured by the ITED. The observed results were tested against the expected results on the hypothesis of a normal distribution. A Chi-square of 7.067 with two degrees of freedom was significant at the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, the population studied does differ significantly from a normal distribution in academic achievement. Since the achievement level of the population studied was significantly below that of a normal population it was concluded that there is a relationship between pupil failure and achievement as measured by the ITED. The hypothesis was rejected.

(3) Socio-economic level of parents. The socio-economic status index was categorized into three groups by trichotomizing the total range of SES scores. The observed results were tested against the expected results on the hypothesis of equal probability. A Chi-square value of 220.755 with two degrees of freedom was highly significant

at the .01 level and the distribution of socio-economic status indices for the group studied was significantly higher than would be expected if socio-economic status were evenly distributed among the population. The hypothesis was rejected. It was concluded that low socio-economic status as defined in this investigation was not a major contributing factor in pupil failure of the group studied.

The relationship existing between pupil failure and family socio-economic status was considered to be sufficient to justify the conclusion that low socio-economic status was not a major contributing factor to pupil failure in the population studied. However, since a large majority of pupils comprising the population came from homes in the middle or upper socio-economic levels it was not possible to establish a significant relationship between pupil failure and socio-economic status in terms of it being a contributing factor to pupil failure in school.

(4) Absenteeism. The number of days that each pupil was absent from school were obtained from official school records. Sixty-two percent of the pupils included in the investigation were absent less than five days. Twenty-three percent were absent between 6 and 10 days. Thirteen percent were absent between 11 and 15 days and only one percent was absent 16 or more days. These figures were based on a possible attendance of 90 days therefore the absentee rate was not considered to be extremely high and the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 5 was: There is no apparent relationship between pupil failure and previous incidents of failure or retention in grade. Forty-one percent of pupils reported that they had been retained in elementary school. Since the average rate of failure for all pupils in the school system was according to Table 5 only 9.9 percent it was believed that a figure as high as 47 percent was sufficient to justify rejection of the hypothesis and to conclude that pupil failure is related to previous incidents of failure or retention.

Hypothesis 6 was: Students are achieving at a level equivalent to their ability. On the basis of the findings of part (1) and (2) of hypothesis 4 it was determined that the range of ability, as measured by the CTMM, among the pupils comprising the sample was not significantly different from a normal distribution, however, the achievement level as measured by the ITED was significantly different from a normal distribution and the achievement level was lower than what would be expected in a normal distribution. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the problem of pupil failure in high school. Numerous studies have attempted to determine the major causes of pupil failure but these studies have dealt mainly with the causes of pupil failure from the point of view of the teacher. It was believed that more consideration should be given to the causes of pupil failure from the point of view of the pupil.

Consequently, the study was designed to secure information from both teachers and pupils regarding the causes of pupil failure in high school. An effort was made to collect data from both teachers and pupils on a personal basis, that is, teachers were asked to indicate the reason why a particular pupil failed in a specific subject and likewise students were asked why they had failed in a specific subject.

Interviews with both students and teachers sought to investigate several factors such as teacher expectation of pupil achievement, the presence of classroom provisions

for meeting individual differences, pupil-teacher relationship, etc., and to evaluate these factors in terms of their effect on pupil failure.

Relationships between mental ability, achievement, socio-economic status of parents and absenteeism were sought. In addition to the causes of pupil failure the study sought to determine the extent of pupil failure by grade level and school subject. Further investigation was concerned with the effect of failure upon later progress in school and the effect of failure upon the pupil.

A review of professional literature revealed no available studies which endeavored to establish the agreement between causes of failure as reported by pupils and the causes of failure as reported by teachers. The present investigation sought to determine this relationship.

Findings of the Study

The major reasons for pupil failure as reported by pupils were in rank order: (1) lack of interest in subject, (2) lack of study, (3) work too difficult, (4) no provision for individual differences, (5) dislike of teacher, (6) teacher did not explain work well enough, and (7) insufficient effort.

The major reasons for pupil failure as reported by teachers were in rank order: (1) poor effort, (2) laziness, (3) lack of interest, (4) low mental ability, (5) poor attitude, (6) poor study habits, (7) failure on tests, (8) incomplete work, (9) poor scholastic background, (10)

irregular attendance, (11) lack of home study, and (12) can not read well.

There was no statistically significant agreement at the .05 level between the causes of pupil failure as reported by teachers and the causes of failure as reported by pupils.

There was no statistically significant difference at the .05 level between the mental ability, as measured by the CTMM, of the group studied and that of a normal distribution. However, a statistically significant difference at the .05 level was found between the achievement level of the group studied and that of a normal distribution and the achievement level of the group studied was below that of a normal distribution.

Neither socio-economic status of parents or absenteeism was found to be a major contributing factor to pupil failure. However, previous incidents of failure in school were found to be directly related to subsequent school failure.

Conclusions

From the findings of the study the following conclusions were formulated:

1. While both teachers and pupils reported several specific reasons for pupil failure the most significant cause of pupil failure in school was failure on the part of the school staff to provide for individual difference and needs of students. There was ample reason to believe that if

learning opportunities had been provided at the level of each pupil the failure rate would have been drastically reduced.

2. It was concluded that a major contributing factor in pupil failure was unrealistic teacher expectations in the sense that all pupils were expected to perform at the same level of achievement. Consequently, evaluation methods discriminated against many students since they were compared with other members of their class on achievement rather than being evaluated in terms of their own individual progress.

3. A significant contributing factor to pupil failure was the absence of a direct personal contact between failing students and members of the school staff. Too many failing students are not well known by any teacher and do not discuss their progress in school with either teacher or school counselors under conditions which will assist the pupil in his educational endeavor and which provide a set of conditions under which the pupil is assisted in assessing his potential and adjusting to the program available for him.

4. It was concluded that a real need exists for more adequate counseling services to assist all pupils and particularly the student experiencing a lag in his educational endeavor to more adequately cope with his environment and to adjust his behavior to meet the demands of the classroom situation. Likewise, teachers need to be assisted in accurate assessment of the capability of their pupils and to adjust instruction to the individual needs of every pupil.

5. It was finally concluded that any effort to reduce the rate of pupil failure in school must first be directed at the development of a set of conditions wherein pupils can be permitted to recognize their individual potential and to experience progress on a level equivalent with their ability. The development of a curriculum suitable to the needs of all pupils is a must, but, more importantly there must be developed within the total framework of the school system a general philosophy of recognition of individual differences and the establishment of standards of expectation based on the individual capability of each pupil.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that measures be taken to provide counseling services to those pupils experiencing difficulty in their educational progress. While it is understood that counseling services are available to all pupils it is emphasized by this recommendation that a very concentrated effort should be made to reduce pupil failure by providing adequate counseling services before, as well as, after students experience failure in school.

2. It is further recommended that school officials provide for and take measures to insure adequate participation among faculty members in inservice education programs designed to develop an awareness among teachers of the need for adjusting instruction and evaluation methods to the needs of individuals. The human relations dimension is

perhaps the most significant area in which teachers and school administrators need re-education.

3. It is recommended that further research be conducted on a continuing basis to define the causes of pupil failure and specifically to determine the reason why the rate of failure among boys is so much higher than the rate of failure among girls. Further, when findings are made subsequent action should be taken to effect change necessary to bring about better conditions.

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APPENDIX A

(Date)

NOTE: Place an asterisk to the left of students name if student is not presently enrolled in your school.

[illegible]

William D. Anderson, Jr.
Director of Instruction

WDA/bh

APPENDIX B

School records indicate that _____ received a failing grade in _____ for the first semester of 1965-66. Please indicate the major reason for this failure by checking the appropriate space below. It is understood that there are often many related causes for pupil failure but you should be as specific as possible in completing this report. Check one or not more than two reasons when this is possible.

<u> </u> Irregular attendance	<u> </u> Laziness
<u> </u> Low mental ability	<u> </u> Failure on tests
<u> </u> Lack of interest	<u> </u> Cannot read well
<u> </u> Poor health and physical defects	<u> </u> No provision for individual differences
<u> </u> Poor effort	<u> </u> Poor attitude
<u> </u> Poor home conditions	<u> </u> Lack of home study
<u> </u> Poor scholastic background	<u> </u> Dislike of subject
<u> </u> Outside work	<u> </u> Poor study habits
<u> </u> Incomplete work	<u> </u> Emotional Maladjustment
<u> </u> Outside interests	<u> </u> Other (please specify)

Very weak	Below average	Average	Above average	Very capable
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A horizontal number line with five vertical tick marks. Below the line, the points are labeled A, B, C, D, and F from left to right. Point A is at the first tick mark, B at the second, C at the third, D at the fourth, and F at the fifth.

Low	Average	High
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APPENDIX C

STUDENT INTERVIEW AND DATA FORM

 (Name of Student) (Name of School)
 Grade Level _____ CTMM _____ ITED _____
 Parents Educational Level: Father's _____ Mother's _____
 Occupation: Father's _____ Mother's _____

SUBJECTS FAILED FIRST SEMESTER 1965-66		
Subject	Teacher	Reason for Failure

Interview Questions

1. Why did you fail (specify subject or subjects)?
2. Did you care that you failed?
3. How did you feel about failing?
4. Did you talk to your teacher about your work prior to failing?
5. Did you talk to your teacher after failing?
6. Have you ever failed a subject before?
7. Were you ever retained in the elementary school? _____
If so, what grade level?
8. Why did you take the subject which you failed?
9. Are you capable of doing better than failing work?
10. What grade should you have made in the subject which you failed?
11. Does the teacher expect too much from you?
12. Did you receive individual help from the teacher?
13. How much do you study per day outside of school?
14. Do you have a place to study at home?

STUDENT INTERVIEW AND DATA FORM
(Page Two)

15. What is your impression of the teacher?
16. How much were you absent from school?
17. Do you feel that your being absent from school had any effect on your failing?
18. In what activities do you participate?
19. Did you feel that you were a part of the class in which you failed?

APPENDIX D

To: All Secondary Principals, Counselors and Teachers

Re: A Study of the Causes For Pupil Failure in High School

Lloyd Coppedge, who is the Administrative Intern in the Midwest City School System, is in the process of writing his dissertation which is entitled, "A Study of the Causes For Pupil Failure in High School." He will want to talk with some of those students who failed at least one subject the first semester of this school year. He may also want to talk with a few of the teachers regarding causes of pupil failure.

As with the two previous interns, Lloyd's study is related directly to the Midwest City School System, and the results should be of interest to all school personnel.

I feel that the research done by the interns is a vital part of their intern program and I encourage all school personnel to cooperate with Lloyd as he completes this study.

It is hoped that the results of the study will prove helpful in providing for an educational program which will better meet the needs of students in the Midwest City School System.

J. E. SUTTON
Deputy Superintendent

APPENDIX E

TEACHER INTERVIEW FORM

The teacher interview will be structured around certain rather general areas which appear to have some relevance to the problem of pupil failure. The "Teacher Report of Reasons For Pupil Failure" will serve as a basis for initiating the interview. The major purposes of the teacher interview will be to explore the reasons for pupil failure, to examine the general area of teacher expectation and evaluation of pupil achievement, to gather data with regard to teacher attitude toward the effect of pupil failure upon future achievement, and investigate the teachers philosophy with regard to individualization of instruction and equality of educational opportunity.

Interview Questions

1. Why do students fail?
2. Does failure increase the students motivation to learn subsequent to failure?
3. Are our schools hard enough on students? Should higher standards be expected?
4. What are standards? Who determines standards?
5. Does a high rate of failure indicate the existence of high standards?
6. Should all students be permitted to attend school?
7. Do you believe in compulsory attendance? Could standards be higher without compulsory attendance laws which force all students to attend even if they don't want to?
8. What do you think is meant by equality of educational opportunity?

TEACHER INTERVIEW FORM
(Page Two)

9. How do you as a teacher meet individual differences in the classroom?
10. How do you evaluate student achievement? Do you know if they have made individual progress or are they evaluated in terms of previously determined standards or teacher expectations?
11. To what degree is your grading or evaluation system based on student competition?
12. Do you think instructional standards should vary according to the ability and achievement level of the student?

APPENDIX F

COMPOSITE CURRICULUM FOR
MIDWEST CITY SCHOOLS (GRADES 9-12)
1965-1966

Subject Matter Area

Mathematics	General Math Algebra I Algebra II Math Analysis	Geometry H.S. Arith Trig/Solid
Science	Biology Biology (BSCS) General Science Physical Science	Chemistry Physics Earth Science
Foreign Language	Latin I Latin II Latin III Latin IV Spanish I Spanish II Spanish III Spanish IV	French I French II French III French IV German I
Language Arts	English I English II English III English IV Debate I Debate II Journalism I Journalism II	Speech I Speech II Speech III Drama I Drama II
Social Studies	American History Ancient History World History European History Okla. History H.S. Geography Problems of Democracy	Psychology Sociology Economics Government Foreign Affairs
Business	Typing I Typing II Personal Typing Notehand Shorthand I	Bookkeeping General Business Business Machines Business Law Business English
Activities (1 credit only)	Yearbook Stagecraft Drivers Education Physical Education	Library Science Audio Visual

Composite Curriculum 1965-1966, Continued

Vocational Education	Home Economics I	Cosmetology I
	Home Economics II	Cosmetology II
	Home Economics III	Home & Family
	Home Economics IV	Nursing (LPN)
	Agriculture I	
	Agriculture II	
	Agriculture III	
	Agriculture IV	
	Distributive Education I - II	
	Diversified Occupations I - II	
	Cooperative Business	
Industrial Education	Woodwork I	General Shop
	Woodwork II	
	Woodwork III	
	Woodwork IV	
	Mechanical Drawing I - II	
Fine Arts	Art I	Crafts
	Art II	Ceramics
	Art III	Photography
	Art IV	Glee Club
	Music Appreciation	Vocal Music
	Music Theory	Mixed Choir
	Band (Plus Sections	
	Woodwinds	
	Percussion	
	Brass)	
Special Education	Special Education	
Vocational Education	<u>Courses offered at Vocational School</u>	
	Auto Body I	Printing I
	Auto Body II	Printing II
	Auto Mechanics I	Welding I
	Auto Mechanics II	Welding II
	Electronics I	A/C Engines I
	Electronics II	A/C Engines II
	Upholstery I	Finish Carpentry
	Upholstery II	
	Air Cond. & Refrig. I - II	

Required Courses
1965-1966

<u>Course</u>	<u>Units</u>
English	4
Laboratory Science	1
Math	1½
U.S. History	1½
Okla. History	½

APPENDIX G

TABLE 10

A SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVE DATA FOR THE PUPILS
INCLUDED IN THE INVESTIGATION

Student	Number of Days Absent	Composite Percentiles		Socio-economic Status Index
		CTMM	ITED	
1	12	18	29	6
2	7	85	95	6
3	1	20	35	3
4	6	18	18	1
5	2	12	18	3
6	12	--	61	2
7	1	31	35	6
8	3	69	42	4
9	1	94	48	6
10	1	63	77	6
11	3	37	18	6
12	2	75	61	6
13	1	--	85	6
14	5	86	85	6
15	1	89	61	5
16	3	48	48	6
17	13	--	18	5
18	10	33	48	6
19	0	94	81	5
20	1	27	13	5
21	7	52	42	5
22	21	--	61	4
23	0	27	48	2
24	1	37	23	5
25	5	--	--	5
26	11	15	13	2
27	8	60	23	5
28	10	--	18	5
29	12	84	77	6
30	10	9	13	2
31	9	18	23	5
32	15	63	23	3
33	1	84	88	4
34	10	27	23	3
35	2	20	61	6
36	4	37	23	5
37	5	86	67	2
38	0	16	--	5
39	6	75	--	4
40	11	--	18	2
41	15	8	13	6

TABLE 10--Continued

Student	Number of Days Absent	Composite Percentiles		Socio-economic Status Index
		CTMM	ITED	
42	4	73	55	5
43	6	13	55	2
44	11	44	35	4
45	3	53	29	3
46	4	23	48	4
47	5	--	23	4
48	8	--	35	3
49	13	10	29	5
50	1	50	55	5
51	3	27	29	2
52	2	48	23	5
53	11	--	5	1
54	8	84	81	6
55	2	80	61	3
56	3	--	--	4
57	7	45	63	1
58	3	--	--	6
59	3	62	49	5
60	2	34	60	6
61	2	69	35	2
62	2	29	42	6
63	2	77	67	6
64	2	38	46	6
65	4	50	85	6
66	0	85	67	3
67	3	65	71	2
68	14	--	--	1
69	6	--	--	4
70	4	42	29	3
71	2	12	18	5
72	6	--	18	4
73	2	18	29	3
74	2	54	42	5
75	2	31	35	6
76	0	--	--	6
77	7	23	--	6
78	14	--	--	6
79	3	--	61	6
80	2	55	61	3
81	12	88	91	2
82	5	27	55	6
83	13	--	44	6
84	10	69	49	5

TABLE 10--Continued

Student	Number of Days Absent	Composite Percentiles		Socio-economic Status Index
		CTMM	ITED	
85	0	--	--	6
86	8	98	95	3
87	8	38	48	6
88	3	31	29	5
89	0	88	85	5
90	3	16	61	2
91	3	57	55	4
92	0	50	--	6
93	0	87	85	6
94	3	--	--	6
95	10	50	35	5
96	6	85	68	6
97	5	27	23	3
98	0	38	13	6
99	2	67	82	6
100	0	--	--	6
101	2	29	78	3
102	15	--	29	5
103	6	78	42	6
104	5	82	35	3
105	2	48	7	5
106	0	--	--	6
107	0	--	--	6
108	13	10	24	4
109	3	--	--	4
110	1	21	48	6
111	8	45	13	1
112	2	--	--	4
113	0	--	--	4
114	0	--	--	4
115	5	--	--	5
116	4	--	--	6
117	8	--	--	4
118	8	88	72	3
119	10	57	42	6
120	1	79	67	5
121	10	--	--	6
122	5	--	--	6
123	14	--	--	4
124	1	--	--	5
125	16	90	85	6
126	0	--	--	6
127	8	78	61	6

TABLE 10--Continued

Student	Number of Days Absent	Composite Percentiles		Socio-economic Status Index
		CTMM	ITED	
128	9	69	68	5
129	4	25	29	5
130	2	--	--	5
131	5	20	42	5
132	1	86	61	5
133	1	50	35	6
134	3	3	10	3
135	3	--	--	5
136	11	--	--	6
137	1	66	55	2
138	8	48	55	4
139	6	71	68	5
140	3	78	61	5
141	9	60	55	6
142	5	--	--	1

Note:

Number of days absent is for the first semester of the 1965-66 school year.

CTMM means California Test of Mental Maturity.

ITED means Iowa Test of Educational Development.