

**ST. LOUIS PUBLIC
SCHOOLS: ORGANIZATION
AND ADMINISTRATION OF
HIGH SCHOOL COURSES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649444205

St. Louis Public Schools: Organization and Administration of High School Courses by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

VARIOUS

**ST. LOUIS PUBLIC
SCHOOLS: ORGANIZATION
AND ADMINISTRATION OF
HIGH SCHOOL COURSES**

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

ST. LOUIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Organization and Administration

—OF—

High School Courses



EXCERPT FROM ANNUAL REPORT

1907-1908

TO YOUR
ADDITION

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

This pamphlet is an excerpt from the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Instruction of The St. Louis Public Schools for the year 1907-08. The matter is issued in this form for the convenience of teachers, pupils, and other interested citizens.

Respectfully presented by
BEN BLEWETT,
Superintendent of Instruction.

Some five years ago, the Board of Education determined that the same opportunities should be offered to all the youth of the city in a way that would best avoid the false distinctions of intellectual or social value that result from segregating pupils in separate school buildings according to the different lines of work that interest and occupy them. During the last year it approved plans for equipping the Central High School with manual training shops for boys and girls, and thus put all our high schools in accord with the principle it had recognized as the correct one. The practical application of this principle has placed in reasonable proximity to all the pupils a high school offering to those attending it all of the opportunities offered in the other high schools of the city. In each of them, all of the groups of studies are given, and all of the labora-

tories and shops are supplied. In each of them, pupils taking different courses are grouped in the same classes in subjects common to the different courses. The social life of the school knows no distinction because of difference in choice of course of study.

Social institutions are not the *a priori* creations of the philosophers and statesmen, but shape themselves through a slow process of development. • They never can transcend in spirit or in practice the intellectual and moral state of the community of whose social life they are the organs. And thus the history of this institution in the United States shows many instances where temporary conditions or doubtful expediency rather than a carefully considered and comprehensive plan have dictated the organization and administration of the school. There are cases in which individual ambition or narrow local interests have determined the character of a school and the site it was to occupy, and this without due regard to its relation to the whole work or to the needs of the whole city. Thus Commercial High Schools, Technical High Schools for Boys, Technical High Schools for Girls, English High Schools, Classical High Schools, and all the other sorts have risen in their isolation quite as much as monuments to a new thought or to an influential individual, as in evidence of adaptation to a general need.

These apparently unrelated forms which the high schools have taken in the various stages of the development of the institution, while in some instances they have been the result of a too hasty or narrow consideration of the public needs, always and in common have had as their justification the conception of the public need that existed in the minds of those who established them.

The conception of the function of the high school that controls its present organization in St. Louis is that public schools of all grades are supported by the people because of their necessity in the training of the youth to efficient citizenship, and because this efficiency is the very life of social institutions.

To attain to social efficiency, the individual must develop proficiency in some form that will be useful to himself and to others. To attain to high social efficiency, he must be able to adapt his powers to the demands of changing conditions. Above all, his ideals of social relations and obligations must be right if he is to make proper use of his natural powers and acquired skill.

The individual may be trained to great efficiency in a particular occupation, and his work may be so specialized that he becomes a machine, with his faculties responding unconsciously to the accustomed stimulus in much the same way as the parts of a machine respond promptly and regularly and thoughtlessly to the impulse of the motive power. This training makes the best piece man, the man who is most like a machine, and who can most easily be replaced by a machine. His efficiency in his field of work approaches perfection, but in direct ratio to the narrowness of the field. Outside of his special field he may be as unfit for service as a plane would be if used to do the work of an auger.

The other kind of training looks to the bringing of all of the innate and acquired powers under the immediate control of the will. It expects each important action to be determined after reflection and judgment. If the individual is to attain and hold this control, he must not be governed by a habit that has atrophied the will.

The man who does nothing but drill holes becomes after years of such work quite unable to set himself to other work. The man whose occupation is so varied that he must always be able to recognize the new elements in the new situation and to apply his past experience in his handling of the new problem, goes to his work with powers unfettered by a particular habit. To use a homely phrase, he may be spoken of as an all round man.

The highly specialized training given by minute division of labor can not transmute its skill into skill of another kind.

From its very nature the training that gives adaptability can not give the high degree of mechanical skill produced by the training in one narrow occupation.

If by any means a high degree of specialized skill can be combined with adaptability, we have attained the efficiency in the individual that will be of most value to himself and to the state. Can this be done? This combination can be effected through the ideals that are created in acquiring the specialized skill.

Though skill in one occupation will not necessarily function in another occupation, still the ideal that has formed in connection with the acquisition of skill in one particular, will act as a powerful stimulus and guide in the shaping of habit in a new work. To take up the figure used before, skill in the use of the plane will not function as skill in the use of an auger. But if skill with the plane has set up the ideals of exactness and industry, these ideals will demand exactness and industry in the use of the auger. Adaptability is thus not an objective but a subjective condition, a condition in which the will faces new demands and deals with them as its ideals suggest. It is thus the highest type of efficiency, and ideals, next to will, are its most essential element.

Ideals are the outcome of experience and consequently expand in their scope with the expansion of experience. A youth living in the simple environment of the country or the village must necessarily have a different conception of the demands of life from that the city youth would have. This difference between the country youth and the city youth has its counterpart in the difference between youths coming from the varied conditions of life in the same city. If ideals are to be broad, they must be the outcome of broad experience.

The school, which dominates the formative period of the youth's physical and spritual life is naturally, in its organization and activities, an epitome of the adult life. It should bring before him in type at least the many things that engage the interest and activity of men in different walks of life. Its

life should show these interests and activities working together in mutual regard and in harmony. Its ideals in school work should expand into the ideals of morality. The exactness that requires a neat joint in the shops or an idiomatic translation in a language, should grow into the exactness in morals called honesty. Its ideals in school life should expand into those of a social democracy, which regards man finally not so much for the kind of things he does as for his motives and manner of doing it.

The specialized high school does not approach so nearly the conditions of society, as does the high school in which all of the courses are offered. It does not so well exemplify the complex life of the community or fit for responsible participation in that life. It does not give the best opportunity to observe and compare before making a choice of the work to be followed in after life. It gives false notions of other school work and other school people and lays the foundation of class distinctions that have no proper place in our republic. The high school that gives all the courses of study, by its very nature, best gives this breadth of experience and expansion of ideals. In such a school, the manual training or commercial boy sees in the boy digging in classic literature something that he admires and respects, and he himself gets hints of the value of interests beyond those that are immediately concerning him. The girl whose home management has kept her from the realm of the kitchen or from contact with the cares of the housekeeper until she has come to regard these things as of another world than her own, gets some new ideas of life by association with the girls of the domestic science course, whom she comes to know through her school. And the domestic science girl by her school associations learns to better appreciate the civilizing graces of literature and art. This kind of high school meets best the ultimate aim of the public schools. It gives the best training for social efficiency, because its training for special skill is accurate and still is not cramping, and because the varied experience it gives through its many-sided associations creates more comprehensive ideals, ideals

that serve best as aids to the will when action under new conditions is to be determined. This varied experience, moreover, gives, in addition to subjective adaptability, a better idea of the constitution of the social order and the rights and obligations of the individual in that order.

There are other arguments of a very practical nature in favor of this kind of high school. It is the plan most economical to the individual, 1. because, nearer to his home, he can have the kind of course he wants; 2. because a transfer from one course to another is made with less loss, should trial prove that he made a mistake in his first choice of a course of study. If equal opportunity is offered to pupils in all parts of a city, it will be more economical to the city to place all of the work in fewer large buildings, than in the larger number of small buildings that would be required were specialized schools erected in each of the high school districts of the city.

COURSE OF STUDY—NEED OF NEW COURSE.

The development of the work in the High Schools has kept pace with the increase in numbers and the provision of buildings and equipment. It is, therefore, not only fitting but urgent that the course of study pursued in the system of High Schools should be printed for the information of teachers, pupils, and all interested citizens. With this thought in mind, there was devised the past year a plan for the formulation of such a course of study as would represent the actual practice and such improvements as were desired by a majority of the teachers of the several subjects and approved by the principals later in conference and finally by the Superintendent of Instruction and the Board of Education.

PLAN OF PRODUCTION.

In each High School the teachers of each subject met for conference and discussion as often as was necessary to reach an agreement upon a statement for their subject, satisfactory to the majority. Later these statements were presented for revision by committees of three, consisting of delegates, one from each of the three High Schools, appointed by their