

**THE GARY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS: PHYSICAL
TRAINING AND PLAY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649369843

The Gary Public Schools: Physical Training and Play by Lee F. Hanmer

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BY
LEE F. HANMER

GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD
61 BROADWAY NEW YORK

1919

W. C. G. 1923, P. 30, A. E. J.

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INTRODUCTION

THE GARY PLAN

In the last few years both laymen and professional educators have engaged in a lively controversy as to the merits and defects, advantages and disadvantages of what has come to be called the Gary idea or the Gary plan. The rapidly increasing literature bearing on the subject is, however, deficient in details and too often partisan in tone. The present study was undertaken by the General Education Board at the request of the Gary school authorities for the purpose of presenting an accurate and comprehensive account of the Gary schools in their significant aspects.

In the several volumes in which the main features of the Gary schools are separately considered, the reader will observe that, after presenting facts, each of the authors discusses or—in technical phrase—attempts to evaluate the Gary plan from the angle of his particular interest. Facts were gathered in a patient, painstaking, and objective fashion; and those who want facts, and facts only, will, it is believed, find them in the descriptive and statistical portions of the respective studies. But the successive volumes will discuss principles, as well as

state facts. That is, the authors will not only describe the Gary schools in the frankest manner, as they found them, but they will also endeavor to interpret them in the light of the large educational movement of which they are part. An educational conception may be sound or unsound; any particular effort to embody an educational conception may be adequate or inadequate, effective or ineffective. The public is interested in knowing whether the Gary schools as now conducted are efficient or inefficient; the public is also interested in knowing whether the plan as such is sound or unsound. The present study tries to do justice to both points.

What is the Gary plan?

Perhaps, in the first instance, the essential features of the Gary plan can be made clear, if, instead of trying to tell what the Gary plan is, we tell what it is not. Except for its recent origin and the unusual situation as respects its foreign population, Gary resembles many other industrial centers that are to be found throughout the country. Now, had Gary provided itself with the type of school commonly found in other small industrial American towns, we should find there half a dozen or more square brick "soap-box" buildings, each accommodating a dozen classes pursuing the usual book studies, a playground, with little or no equipment, perhaps a basement room for manual training, a laboratory, and a cooking room for the girls. Had Gary played safe, this is the sort of school and school equipment that it would now possess. Provided with this conventional school



Emerson School Building

