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A STUDY OF THE DROP-OUTS FROM THE WATERTOWN
HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES IX THROUGH XII,
DURING THE FIVE SCHOOL YEARS
1946 TO 1951

by

Merton L. Meinicke

A problem submitted to the Faculty of South Dakota
State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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(Plan B)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. PURPOSE	5
III. PROCEDURE	7
IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
V. RESULTS OF THE STUDY	20
Number, age and grade distribution of drop-outs	22
Scholastic ability and success of drop-outs	27
Reasons given for dropping school	33
VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	44
VII. RECOMMENDATIONS	48
VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY	50
IX. APPENDICES	51
A. Letter of Explanation	51
B. Questionnaire used in the study	52

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
I. Distribution of Enrollment by Grades and Years.....	20
II. Distribution of Drop-Outs by Age, Sex, and Year.....	22
III. Percentage, by Sex, Dropping at Each Grade Level.....	24
IV. Age-Grade Distribution of the 209 Drop-Outs	25
V. Comparison of Drop-Outs Average I.Q. with Total Class by Grades for the Five Year Period.....	28
VI. I.Q. Distribution by Number and Percentage.	29
VII. Distribution of Reasons Given for Dropping School.....	33
VIII. Reasons Listed by Drop-Outs for Leaving School.....	37
IX. Distribution of Drop-Outs' Replies to Part II of Questionnaire.....	39
X. Distribution of Drop-Outs' Replies to the Last Four Questions in Part II of the Questionnaire.....	42

INTRODUCTION

The problem of encouraging pupils to remain in high school until graduation is of major importance not only to the schools but the community as well. It has been said that the public schools, and especially the secondary schools, have continued to be highly selective institutions. Adjustments within the school have not, in many cases, kept pace with changing school enrollments. Today we find a widely divergent student body necessitating wider ranges of experience to meet the needs of these individuals if we are to keep them in school until graduation. The schools, charged with the responsibility of preparing youth for citizenship and effective living in this democracy, cannot afford to allow these boys and girls to leave school before they have had the essential minimum of training provided in the twelve years of formal education.

During the several years of teaching in the Watertown Public Schools, the writer has observed the departure of a number of pupils prior to graduation. As an adviser to many of these pupils, the writer gave serious thought to the problem of keeping these pupils in school. Realizing the need for a more thorough knowledge of this problem, the writer conferred with D.W. Tieszen, the high-school principal, concerning the scope and procedures for the study.

It was decided that a study of all accountable pupils withdrawing from school, yet remaining in the community for a period of at least six months, during the last five years

period, September 1946 to June 1951, would give sufficient data for the study. The study includes all pupils dropping school during the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades as well as those pupils remaining to the end of the school year but failing to register at the beginning of the next school term. The study does not include any pupils dropping prior to registration at the ninth-grade level nor those pupils withdrawing from the parochial school within the city.

Pattern of Schools in Watertown

The boundary of the Watertown Independent School District follows very closely that of the city of Watertown. The Independent School System operates upon the K-6-3-3 plan, and is comprised of six ward or grade schools distributed throughout the city, one junior high school, and one senior high school. The junior and senior high school buildings are located on the same city block, being joined by an enclosed passageway, thus allowing for free passage of teachers and pupils from one building to the other. Within the city there is also a parochial school having grades one through nine.

The total enrollment of the Public Independent School System is about 2300 pupils distributed as follows: 1300 in the six grade schools; 500 pupils in the junior high school; and 500 pupils in the senior high school. These figures do not include approximately 200 pupils enrolled at

the kindergarten level. The figures presented above are for the last five-year period. These figures will be somewhat larger when the children born during the years 1947 through 1949 begin to enter kindergarten in 1952.

The administration, supervision, and instructional services of the public schools are served by a superintendent, one senior high school principal, one junior high school principal, one grade school supervisor, six grade school principals, and approximately eighty-five teachers. Of the eighty-five teachers, approximately thirty-eight are teaching in the grade schools, and the remainder are distributed between the junior and senior high schools.

Guidance Organization in Junior and Senior High School

In each of the grades of the junior and senior high schools, the pupils are divided into groups of about twenty to forty pupils under the direction of one of the teachers termed the adviser. The adviser meets with these pupils for thirty minutes per day, four days per week in the junior high school and three days per week in the senior high school. The advisory period is used mainly for the making of administrative announcements, study, and group guidance. It is during this period that the adviser becomes acquainted with the pupils in his advisory group. To facilitate better guidance through the senior high school, the pupils retain their tenth-grade adviser through graduation. The advisers have the responsibility of recording

the six-weeks grades, final grades, scores and pertinent data from I.Q. tests and standardized achievement tests, and all other information asked for in the permanent records of the pupils. These records are kept in the principal's office and are accessible to all teachers when not in use by the adviser. All cumulative records of the pupils are transferred to the permanent record files of the senior high school upon the pupils' completion of the ninth grade or at the time any pupil withdraws from school. Each adviser also has the responsibility for completing the Teachers Annual Report. This report is part of the McAllister-Otis Child Accounting System-Form 8 and is more commonly referred to as the MO-8. It was from the two above records that the data for the major part of this study were obtained.

PURPOSE

The study of drop-outs resolves itself into a number of distinct problems. The records of Watertown High School graduates enrolled in colleges throughout the country indicate that the school has been doing commendable work in preparing graduates to enter schools of higher learning. However, what is the situation at the other end of the scale? How well is the school taking care of the pupils who will never go beyond graduation from high school? How many pupils fail to complete their high school education? What are the important characteristics of these boys and girls who drop out before graduation? The main purpose of this study is to determine the answers to these last two questions.

In order to better understand these boys and girls that withdraw from school before graduation, specific information was sought which would answer the following questions:

- (1) In which grade do we have the most drop-outs?
- (2) What percentage of the boys and girls are leaving school before graduation?
- (3) What is the average scholastic achievement of these pupils dropping school?
- (4) How do the I.Q. scores of these pupils compare with those of the rest of their class?
- (5) To what extent are these pupils overage for their grade at the time of withdrawal?
- (6) Were the pupils doing passing work at the time of withdrawal? In how many subjects?
- (7) What reasons were listed by the advisers for the pupils' withdrawal from school?

(8) What reasons do the pupils give for leaving school?

The facts gathered in this study enabled the class advisers to better understand these pupils and thus reduce the number of drop-outs to as few as possible. The school cannot keep all the pupils in school as many will withdraw because of ill health, financial reasons, and other reasons which are normally beyond the ability of the schools to solve.

PROCEDURE

The information for this study was obtained from three sources. These sources were: The Teachers Annual Report (MO-8); The Permanent-Record Files; and A Questionnaire.

The McAllister-Otis Accounting System-Form 8 is used by the Watertown Schools to keep a record of all pupils enrolled in the public school system. These records are retained in the vault of the senior high school. The following information was obtained from the MO-8: (1) Names of all pupils withdrawing from school during the regular school year; (2) Names of all pupils finishing the school year but failing to return to school in the fall. This was accomplished by checking the enrollments from year-to-year; (3) Age of pupil at time of withdrawal; (4) Grade level at which pupil dropped; (5) Number of years in school; (6) Average scholastic achievement at the time of withdrawal; (7) Reason given by teacher for withdrawal; (8) Total number of pupils enrolled in each advisory group for the five year period; and (9) The median I.Q. score for each advisory group. The permanent-record file supplied the I.Q. score and the number of subjects in which the pupil was doing passing work at the time of withdrawal.

The information listed above was obtained for all pupils dropping school after entering the ninth grade of the junior high school in the fall of 1946-1950 inclusive. All pupils transferring into the ninth grade or any above grade during the five year period were included in the study. About forty

pupils per year enter the ninth grade of the junior high school from the country schools surrounding Watertown. The number of pupils transferring from the parochial school to the tenth grade number about thirty per year.

In order to receive opinions from a number of pupils who had withdrawn from school, a letter of introduction accompanied by a questionnaire was sent to sixty of the 206 pupils who had dropped school during the period covered by this study. Twenty-one of these pupils returned the questionnaires.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many communities in our country have become more conscious of the large number of pupils who fail to finish high school, and a considerable amount of material has been written in the last few years concerning the study of drop-outs in the various school systems throughout the country. More and more emphasis is being placed upon individual guidance in our school systems and as a result the schools are becoming more conscious of the need for a better understanding of these boys and girls who are potential school leavers.

During the years 1945-48, the National Child Labor Committee, under the direction of Harold J. Dillon, made a representative sampling of early school leavers in several communities.¹ The communities selected for study were: The small towns of Jackson County, Michigan; Lansing, Michigan; Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio; and Indianapolis, Indiana. Evidence which would help to determine what measures the school might take to increase their holding power was the primary objective of the study. The following questions are quoted from Dillon's study:

(1) As a result of careful study of the school records, information from teachers and from the individuals themselves, do recognizable trouble signs emerge that will be helpful in detecting vulnerability to early school leaving?

1. Harold J. Dillon, Early School Leavers, New York 16, N.Y., National Child Labor Committee, 1948.

- (2) How may cumulative records be more effectively used in detecting maladjustment or failure patterns among the potential school leavers?
- (3) Among early school leavers is there a significant number who could profit from further education?
- (4) What counseling services may be needed for effective results in holding youth in school?
- (5) At what grade level should counseling services begin if they are to be more effective in keeping youth in school?
- (6) Is an adequate system of clearance provided for sharing the information about a student obtained by teachers, counselors, attendance workers, work-permit issuing officers and the school nurse?
- (7) Are explanations for dropping out of school, given by the youth and appearing on the school records, the real reasons or merely excuses for leaving school?
- (8) Does changing from one environment to another influence decisions to leave school?
- (9) What process does the youth go through in severing his connection with the school?
- (10) What curriculum and/ or instructional reorganization may be needed to provide the types of experiences adapted to interests and abilities of individual students?
- (11) In what ways may more adequate occupational information become effective?

The young people included in this study were limited to those who left school for reasons within their own control. With the exception of Lansing, where those who left school in 1944-45 and 1945-46 were included, only young people who left during the year 1945-46 were studied. A complete card file was made from the school records of all former students to be studied. From this card file a ten per cent sampling was taken for detailed study. In all

1,360 individual school leavers are represented in the study. The school records, subjective opinions of the teachers, and a personal interview were used to obtain the data for the study. The following is a summary of Dillon's findings:

(1) Approximately 70% of the school leavers came from homes where they lived with both parents. Parents of the school leavers seemed to be typical of the average wage earner. Factory work, restaurant work, clerking and selling were the most frequent occupations of parents listed.

(2) Ninety-one per cent of the school leavers attended the elementary school in the system from which they later withdrew and 79% entered the school system in the first grade. The majority of those who did not enter the first grade of the school system entered at the third-grade level.

(3) It was found that 54% of the school leavers terminated their education at the age of sixteen and an additional 26% at seventeen years. Boys constituted 54% and girls 46% of the early school leavers.

(4) Two-thirds of the students had three or more transfers, exclusive of normal progress transfers, and 17% had five or more transfers during their educational program. There appeared to be little provision for orientation programs to help youth entering new schools for the first time.

(5) Three-fourths of the school leavers were in attendance 90% of the time school was in session while they were in elementary school. This record dropped in junior high school where only 60% of the school leavers were found to be in attendance 90% of the time school was in session. In senior high school, the attendance record dropped to about 40% in attendance 90% of the time.

(6) Approximately 40% of those for whom intelligence data were obtainable had I.Q.'s above 95, and approximately 20% were above 105.

(7) Of the youth studied, 52% repeated one or more grades and in 70% of the cases there was grade repetition on the elementary school level. Only a few of them repeated more than two grades, although this was the result, in many instances, of administrative policy and did not necessarily mean that the student successfully passed the grades he repeated.

(8) The findings also showed that approximately three out of four school leavers failed subjects on either the junior or senior high school level, and nearly half of these failed in three or more subjects.

(9) It was found that the first, third, and fourth grades were the ones most frequently repeated on the elementary level; and ninth grade on the junior high level, and the tenth on the senior high level.

(10) Of those early school leavers who repeated grades, 58% had I.Q.'s below 95, though there were about 40% in this I.Q. range who did not repeat any grades. About 30% of the grade repeaters had I.Q.'s of 95 or above and approximately 11% had I.Q.'s over 105.

(11) The courses taken by the school leavers were representative of those taken by the average school student. General and shop courses were first and second in importance and business education was third. Shop courses included those in industrial arts, auto mechanics, general and electrical shops.

(12) Of the school leavers, 36% gave preference for work to school as a reason for leaving school. The second most important reason, given by 15%, was need of money to buy clothes and help at home. The third most frequent reason, given by 11%, was lack of interest in school work. Other reasons given for leaving school were: could not learn and was discouraged, 7%; was failing and didn't want to repeat grade, 6%; disliked a certain teacher, 5%; disliked a certain subject, 3%; ill health, 5%; friends had left school, 3%; and parents wanted youth to leave school, 2%.

(13) The findings indicate that the majority, 59%, made the decision to leave school without consulting anyone in the school. About 20% had consulted their teacher; 13% had consulted their counselor; and 8% had discussed their decision with both teacher and counselor.

The Junior Placement Office of the Department of Public Schools of the city of Providence, Rhode Island² made a study of the drop-outs from their Senior High School for the school

2. "Drop-Outs of Senior High Schools", Junior Placement Office, Department of Public Schools, Providence, R.I.

year June 1949-September 1950. It was found that the sixteen-year-old group accounted roughly for about two-thirds of the total withdrawals. The seventeen-year-old group accounted for 22 per cent of the total dropping. In the eighteen-year-old group the loss was 8.7 per cent, and for the nineteen-year-old group and the twenty-plus group the loss was 2.2 per cent for each group. A study of the grade distribution for this group revealed that about 70.7 per cent of the group left before completing grade ten. Of this number, 34.8 per cent dropped out between the close of school in June and the opening of school in September. Of the total number withdrawing, 18 per cent were in grade eleven, 4.1 per cent in grade twelve, and 7 per cent of the number were in special classes. Of the total number withdrawing for the school year 1949-50, 64.4 per cent of the group could have been expected to successfully complete high school. Twenty-eight per cent of the group were below average and 6.7 per cent of the students had no I.Q. rating listed. The month which took the greatest toll was September. About one-third of the number withdrawing left school during the month of September. The remaining two-thirds of the group were quite evenly distributed during the remaining months with June having the low of 3.4 per cent. The significant reasons given for leaving school are quoted as follows:

- (1) Preferred to go to work, 31.4 per cent;
- (2) Preferred to look for work, 18 per cent;
- (3) Not interested in school, 12.3 per cent;
- (4) Forced to go to work, 16 per cent;
- (5) Forced to look for

work, 3.8 per cent; (6) Requested to leave, 0.7 per cent; (7) Personal illness, 6.2 per cent; (8) Illness in the family, 3.0 per cent; (9) Discouraged and failing, 1.9 per cent; (10) Armed forces, 1.6 per cent; (11) To be married, 0.9 per cent; (12) Needed at home, 0.8 per cent; (13) Other schools, 0.4 per cent, and (14) Not given, 2.6 per cent.

In another study, a special committee working for the Public Schools of Chicago, Illinois spent a year in a study of, "Why students drop out of high schools, and what can the high schools do about it?"³ The study used the high school period from 1946-1950 as a four year term from freshman entrance to graduation day. During this period of the 17,592 freshmen who entered high school, only 10,415 received diplomas, while 7,177 dropped out. This represents a 41 per cent drop out. Three hundred seventy nine "drop-out" cases were reviewed. Talks with parents, teachers, students, and employers furnished many phases of the inquiry. Of the drop-outs, 20 per cent left high school during the freshman year; 40 per cent during the second year; 30 per cent during the third year, and 10 per cent in the final year. Schools in the underprivileged areas reported that 73 per cent of the drop-outs were frequently absent or truant prior to school leaving; approximately 35 per cent were chronic absentees and more than 50 per cent had truancy records. Of the drop-outs interviewed, only 19 per cent had a fair record of scholarship at the time of leaving, the others were failing in many or all subjects. The health records available indicated many cases of faulty vision,

3. John F. Delaney, "That Vacant High School Seat", American School Board Journal, CXXI, (November, 1950), pp. 22-23.

hearing defects, and other types of health factors responsible for retardation. Of the drop-outs interviewed, 46 per cent were rated on mental tests as having average or better than average ability. Some, however, showed handicaps to such an extent that regular courses were definitely beyond their ability to understand. The number reporting employment as a reason for school leaving was so small that it is considered negligible. In only 10 per cent of the cases was part-time daily work indicated and in but 7 per cent of the cases was there Saturday employment. Home situations were reported as contributing factors to many of the drop-outs. Included among the conditions indicated were over-crowding, broken family ties, guardianship by other than parents, financial problems, and disordered homes because of working mothers. In many cases where financial needs in the home caused the student to leave school, he at once made plans to continue his education in evening school.

Another survey of drop-outs carried out with the aid of classroom teachers in the Austin, Texas High Schools,⁴ for the fall semester of 1949 provides the following information: The one hundred thirty-five students who withdrew from school of their own volition constituted 5.2 per cent of the total enrollment, not counting those who withdrew to get married or to move to another city. Two-thirds of the drop-outs were boys. Test scores of these students who

4. Weldon Brewer, "Why Did They Quit?", The Education Digest, XVI, (November 1950), pp. 54-55.

withdrew showed a non-language I.Q. of 98 and a language I.Q. of 94. The graduates had a language I.Q. of 111.1 and a non-language I.Q. of 108. Reading scores made by these students who later withdrew showed them at least a year's achievement behind those students who later graduated from high school. Another significant part of this study showed that 10 per cent of the high school's total enrollment is made up of students from Latin-American families, yet only 4 per cent of the graduating class came from such families. Eighteen per cent of the fall withdrawals had come from the Latin-American families. By making an intensive case study of withdrawing students who passed through the counseling offices, the exit-interviewers found the following factors among drop-outs, in approximate order of incidence: (1) broken homes; (2) financial needs; (3) low test scores; (4) discouragement over academic progress; and (5) a feeling of "not belonging".

One of the research activities of the teachers of Basic Living courses in the Battle Creek High School⁵ was the study of the drop-outs in the tenth grade of their school system. A brief summary of the findings of this study to date follows: Practically all the tenth-grade drop-outs are in the general curriculum. The number of tenth-grade boys who left school exceeded the number of girls in each of the three years covering the study. These drop-outs in the tenth grade constituted about 48 per cent of the school's total drop-outs in 1946-47 and 43 per cent in 1948-49.

5. Hubert M. Evans, "Battle Creek Learns About Drop-Outs", The Education Digest, XVI, (October, 1950), pp. 20-23.

About 42 per cent of the drop-outs had an I.Q. of 90 or less. The reading ability of about 45 per cent of the tenth-grade drop-outs were below seventh-grade level as compared to 48 per cent in 1947-48 and 31 per cent in 1946-47. The scholastic records of the tenth-grade drop-outs over the past three years showed that 50 per cent or more of grades received by the girls were C or better, while from 28 to 56 per cent of the grades received by the boys were C or better, although the drop-outs received a higher percentage of failing grades than the tenth graders who remained in school. It was found that the potential drop-out student was less likely to participate in out-of-class school activities than the average student. About 20 per cent of the drop-outs took part in such activities. The two most common reasons given by tenth-grade students for leaving school were work and lack of interest in school subjects. The tenth-graders who leave school to go to work, do so either because they prefer work to school or because they need money. Forty-four per cent gave work as the major reason for quitting school, and in the same three years 23 to 28 per cent gave lack of interest in school subjects as their major reason for leaving school. The next two most common reasons given for leaving school were marriage and health. The remainder of the tenth-grade drop-outs gave a variety of reasons for quitting school, the most important ones were: asked by the school authorities to leave; military service; and illness in the home.

A study of pupils dropping out of high school was made

in Morris, Indiana⁶ during the school year of 1942-43 in an attempt to determine the causes for such action and to compare the types of pupils who dropped out in that year with the numbers in previous years. The results of the study show that the pupils who dropped school during the three years represented 8 per cent of the student body in 1940-41, 8 per cent in 1941-42, and 13 per cent in 1942-43. About 36 per cent of the 1942-43 drop-outs were sixteen years old and 25 per cent were fifteen years old. The results also showed that about 85 per cent of the drop-outs came from families in the lower socio-economic status. The average I.Q. for the drop-outs was 105; for all high school pupils, 107. The reasons given for dropping school included the following: wanted to earn some money; general dissatisfaction with school; trouble at home; and desire to enter the armed forces.

During the school year 1939-40, the high school faculty at Richmond, Indiana⁷, under the direction of W. H. Bates, superintendent of schools, conducted a rather extensive study of high-school withdrawals in order to find out what became of these students. The results of the study showed that the typical or average age of the withdrawal was sixteen years of age. The boy is either at the tenth-grade level, or he is a special pupil who has completed the offering of the special group in the junior high school. The reasons given for with-

6. C. B. Smith, "A Study of Pupils Dropping Out of a Mid-Western High School", The School Review, LII, (March 1944), pp. 151-156.

7. W. G. Bruce, "A Study of Withdrawals in Richmond, Indiana", The American School Board Journal, CII, (February 1941), p. 66.

drawal were: age; employment; health; marriage; lack of interest; lack of success in school subjects; and poor home conditions.

During the fall semester of 1945-46, the Research Division of the Board of Education of Syracuse, New York⁸ carried out a study of the drop-outs from grades seven through twelve during that semester and six subsequent semesters. A sampling of this group, one hundred ninety-four in number, were personally interviewed by counselors, school administrators and visiting teachers. The main object of this study was to discover the reasons as to why boys and girls drop school. The results showed that 61 per cent of the reasons given for leaving school related to the schools directly and 39 per cent were personal. The reasons, in descending order of frequency, were: dissatisfaction with school; inability to discern the relationship between school subjects and future occupations; over-age for the grade; inability to get along with teachers; inability to learn; failure of the school to offer suitable subjects; and lack of sufficient credits for graduation.

The studies cited in this section, although not a complete listing of all studies concerning drop-outs, are representative of the studies which have been made and are being made in various sections of our country dealing with the problem of drop-outs in the junior and senior high schools.

8. Harold A. Anderson, "Another Study of Drop-Outs", The School Review, LVIII, (September 1950), pp. 318-19.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Total Enrollment

In the Watertown Schools, about 80 per cent of the enrollment at each grade level is composed of pupils living within the boundary of the independent school district, the remaining 20 per cent coming from the farm population surrounding the city. The school has made no effort to compete with any of the surrounding towns for these boys and girls graduating from the eighth grade of the country or rural schools. Approximately thirty to forty pupils from the rural area enroll in the ninth grade each year. In 1946 the school added a four-year course in Smith-Hughes Agriculture to its curriculum for those boys primarily interested in agriculture. This course has done much to encourage the farm youth to attend high school and remain in school until graduation. Table I shows the enroll-

TABLE I. DISTRIBUTION OF ENROLLMENTS BY GRADES AND YEARS

GRADE	1946-47		1947-48		1948-49		1949-50		1950-51		TOTALS		
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	BOTH
9	86	74	103	102	93	85	88	101	91	104	461	466	927
10	86	93	91	93	92	112	106	83	91	107	466	488	954
11	73	82	71	83	75	87	87	99	80	77	386	419	805
12	40	86	70	75	69	74	71	73	77	93	327	401	728
TOTAL	285	335	335	353	329	349	352	356	339	381	1640	1744	3414
TOTAL	620		688		678		708		720		3414		

ment, by sex and grades, for the five year period from 1946-1951. A study of the table also shows a gradual increase in the total enrollment during the last five years period from 620 in 1946 to 720 in 1950. An increase in the population of the city, combined with an increase in the birth rate during the period following the depression years, probably accounts for this increase in enrollment. The present enrollment in the grade schools also indicates a future enrollment above the 1950-51 level.

The ninth-grade class of 1946-47 of 160 pupils has increased to 184 in 1947-48 due mainly to the transfer of pupils from the parochial school. In 1948-49, this enrollment dropped to 153, and in 1949-50, their year of graduation, to 144. The ninth grade class of 1947-48 with 205 registered pupils drops to 204 pupils in the tenth grade which includes the transfer of about thirty pupils to that grade from the parochial school. These 204 pupils drop to 186 in the eleventh grade and 170 pupils in the twelfth of 1950-51, and of these 165 received diplomas.

A study of any series, beginning with the tenth grade, shows a similar pattern of high enrollments in the tenth grade dropping to about 75 per cent of this number in the twelfth. A study of the table also shows the total number of girls exceeding the total number of boys registered at each grade level; the upper three grades showing the greater differences. Some of the fluctuation in enrollments from year to year are undoubtedly due to grade failures.

Distribution of Drop-Outs

The distribution of drop-outs was studied according to the following: (1) The number and percentages of boys and girls dropping at each grade level for the five year period, and (2) The age distribution of boys and girls dropping at each grade level for the five year period.

The compulsory attendance laws of the State of South Dakota require the attendance of every boy and girl, physically and mentally capable, until they have either completed the eighth grade or until they reach their sixteenth birthday. This study does not include those boys and girls who have dropped school at any time prior to the entry into the ninth grade. Table II shows the distribution by number of the drop-outs during the five year period under study according to grade and sex. A study of Table II shows a reduction in

TABLE II. DISTRIBUTION OF DROP-OUTS BY GRADE AND SEX

	1946-47		1947-48		1948-49		1949-50		1950-51		Totals			
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	BOTH	
GRADE														
9	11	3	13	9	9	7	5	6	7	2	45	27	72	
10	13	7	8	6	3	5	13	6	5	3	42	27	69	
11	5	8	4	7	3	5	4	7	2	5	18	32	50	
12	3	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	2	1	7	8	15	
TOTAL	32	21	26	22	16	18	22	22	16	11	112	94	206	
TOTAL	53		48		34		44		27		206			

the total number of pupils dropping school at each grade level, the greatest drop being shown between grades eleven and twelve. the total number of boys dropping during the first two years of high school exceed the number of girls dropping while at the eleventh and twelfth grade levels, we find the girls exceeding the boys in total number of drop-outs.

The seventy-two drop-outs in the ninth grade combined with the sixty-nine dropping at the tenth grade level account for about 69 per cent of the total drop-outs during the five year period. We find about 24 per cent dropping out at the eleventh grade level and the remaining seven per cent dropping out at the twelfth grade level.

The boys at the ninth and tenth-grade levels can many times find odd jobs about town and also on the farms, but the girls cannot find such opportunities and during these years we find the boys exceeding the girls in the number of drop-outs. The girls, upon reaching the ages of sixteen or seventeen, find more opportunities in work and marriage and many take these opportunities as a means of withdrawing from school work which may seem very dull and uninteresting to them.

The extreme reduction in drop-outs at the twelfth-grade level may possibly be attributed to a number of reasons, but two reasons appear outstanding. A pupil who reaches the twelfth grade has the strong urge to remain in school and graduate with his class. Also, the number of pupils who are more or less easily persuaded to quit school have withdrawn before reaching the twelfth-grade level.

Table III shows a distribution of the 206 school leavers by numbers, percentage, and sex at each of the four grade levels. The last column in Table III shows a comparison, by

TABLE III. PERCENTAGE, BY SEX, DROPPING AT EACH GRADE LEVEL

GRADE	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL		PER-CENT OF ENROLLMENT
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	
9	45	40	27	29	72	35	7.8
10	42	38	27	29	69	34	7.3
11	18	16	32	34	50	24	6.2
12	7	6	8	8	15	7	2.1
TOTAL	112	100	94	100	206	100	

percentage, of the total number of drop-outs with the total number enrolled at each grade level as given in the totals of Table I. These percentages show the ninth and tenth grades leading the others in percentage of losses by dropping school. The study also shows the percentage of girls dropping during the eleventh grade slightly more than double that for the boys of the corresponding grade. The small percentage dropping at the twelfth grade level probably indicates that those registering at the twelfth-grade level are very apt to remain to the end of the year in an attempt to graduate. As has been mentioned before, there are other reasons for the lower number of withdrawals during the twelfth grade of school.

Age and Grade Distribution

The age-grade distribution of drop-outs is shown in Table IV. The age distribution shows that about 70 per cent terminated their education by the time they reached sixteen

TABLE IV. AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF THE 206 DROP-OUTS

Age	Grade 9		Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Both
13	5								5		5
14	10	11							10	11	21
15	18	13	15	12					33	25	58
16	9	3	15	11	5	16			29	30	59
17	2	0	6	2	9	10	2	6	19	18	37
18-over	1	0	6	2	4	6	5	2	16	10	26
TOTAL	45	27	42	27	18	32	7	8	112	94	206

years of age. Assuming that youth normally enter the first grade at six years of age and progress at the regular rate, they would be in the ninth grade at age fourteen, the tenth at age fifteen, the eleventh at age sixteen, and the twelfth at age seventeen. A study of Table IV shows a wide range in the ages of the pupils dropping out at the ninth-grade level. When these figures for the ninth grade are combined with the fact that forty-eight of the seventy-two drop-outs are in their tenth year or more of schooling we find that over sixty per cent of these pupils were most likely to be above the average

age of their class. Table IV also shows the ages at the beginning of the school year, therefore many of the drop-outs were actually one year older than is indicated in the table at the time they dropped school. The range of ages for the tenth grade is about the same as for the ninth, the limits being about two years above that for the ninth. If we combine the data showing forty-two of the tenth graders as being sixteen years of age or older with the fact that thirty of these drop-outs were in their eleventh year or more of schooling, we find that over forty per cent of these pupils were above the normal age of their class at the time they withdrew from school.

A study of the age distribution of the drop-outs at the eleventh-grade level shows more than fifty per cent of the drop-outs as being seventeen or more years of age at the time of withdrawal. The fact that only fifteen of these pupils were beginning their twelfth year or more of schooling shows that probably no more than thirty per cent of these pupils were above the normal age of the class at the time they dropped from school. Of the seven drop-outs indicated as being eighteen years of age or over in the twelfth grade, four of these were actually nineteen years or older. Combining the above with the fact that two of these pupils in the eighteen-year-old group were beginning their thirteenth year of schooling shows that about forty per cent of this group of drop-outs were above the normal age of their group at the time they withdrew from school. The data presented

in Table IV, combined with the fact that about fifty per cent of all the drop-outs were retarded one or more grades, indicates that over-age, as a result of failure in one or more of the lower grades, is a symptom of these pupils withdrawing from school prior to graduation.

Scholastic Ability of Drop-Outs

A study of drop-outs would not be complete without a study of the mental ability of the drop-outs in comparison with their class; their average grade achievement at time of dropping; and the number of subjects in which the drop-out was doing passing work at the time of withdrawal.

The first part of this section will deal with the comparison of the average intelligence quotient of the drop-outs with the average of their grade. The average I.Q. of the class was obtained by first taking the median I.Q. of each advisory group in the grade and multiplying this median by the number of pupils in that advisory group. The sum of these five or six products, depending on the number of advisory groups in that grade, was then divided by the total number in the grade to obtain the average I.Q. for that grade. The median of each advisory group was obtained from the permanent records, MO-8's. The average I.Q. for each drop-out group was obtained by dividing the sum of the individual I.Q. scores by the number in each group giving the mean for each group. The distribution thus obtained

is presented in Table V. This table shows the average I.Q. of every drop-out group in the first three grades below the average of their group except for the eleventh grade of 1950-51. Three of the seven drop-outs of this group had I.Q. scores of 111, 123, and 132 thus giving a high mean for the

TABLE V. COMPARISON, BY GRADES, OF DROP-OUTS AVERAGE I.Q. WITH TOTAL CLASS

Grade	1946-47		1947-48		1948-49		1949-50		1950-51	
	Drop Outs	Total Class	Drop Outs	Total Class	Drop Outs	Total Class	Drop Outs	Total Class	Drop Outs	Total Class
9	102	108	97	108	97	109	97	103	93	105
10	101	103	98	109	99	105	104	107	102	108
11	98	105	101	105	103	107	101	105	110	108
12	107	108	110	106	108	105	101	108	100	107

group. The few dropping out at the twelfth grade level makes it difficult to compare their averages with that of the class. The study revealed that six of the fifteen drop-outs in the twelfth grade had I.Q.'s of 110 or above and five others had I.Q. scores between 100 and 105. The remaining five had I.Q. scores of 98 or less.

When one thinks about drop-outs, he usually thinks that the drop-out pupil has a relatively low I.Q. as compared to the class in which he is found. The table does not appear to verify such a supposition. The study actually showed that about 23 per cent of the total drop-outs had I.Q. scores of 90 or less.

Table VI shows the distribution of I.Q.'s for the drop-outs in the study. It shows that at least 40 per cent of the drop-outs had the ability, according to their I.Q. scores, to

TABLE VI. I.Q. DISTRIBUTION, BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE, OF THE 206 DROP-OUTS

I.Q.	90-Less	91-100	101-110	111-Above	TOTAL
NUMBER	47	70	64	25	206
PERCENTAGE	23	34	31	12	100

do passing work had they had the desire to do so. The records of the graduating class of 1950-51 show at least eight pupils having I.Q.'s of 90 or less.

The scores used in the above section were obtained from the results of the Terman Group Test of Mental Maturity which was administered to them in the seventh grade. The results from the California Test of Mental Maturity given to several pupils in the ninth grade were used as they did not have the Terman test.

Relative Scholastic Achievement of Drop-Outs

This section of the chapter will be concerned with the results of the study showing the average grades made by the drop-outs from the time they entered the seventh grade until they dropped school. The average grade of each pupil was obtained by assigning values of 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 to each of the five school marks of F, D, C, B, and A which are used

in the marking system of the school. These scores were assigned to each of the final marks given to the student in each subject completed. The mean of these scores determined the average grade earned.

The results of this study show that over 60 per cent of the drop-outs had an average mark of D on their permanent records at the time of dropping school. About 30 per cent of the drop-outs had an average mark of C and the remaining drop-outs were about equally divided at 5 per cent each with averages of B or F. There were no drop-outs with any grades approaching an average of A at the time they withdrew from school. Most of the drop-outs having an average grade of F were in the ninth grade at the time of withdrawal. Many of these pupils had been conditioned into the ninth grade or were failing two or more subjects at the end of the eighth grade. About 63 per cent of all the ninth grade drop-outs had an average grade of D at the time they withdrew from school. About 70 per cent of all the drop-outs at the tenth-grade level had an average grade of D at the time they withdrew. About half of those at the eleventh and twelfth-grade levels also had an average grade of D at the time of withdrawal.

Success of Drop-Outs at Time of Withdrawal

All pupils carry four subjects as a normal load unless they have been given special permission by the principal to do otherwise. All but three of the drop-outs were carrying

the normal load at the time of withdrawal. About 12 per cent of the pupils withdrew within the first six weeks period and as a result no grades were available for these people in the permanent records. Forty-three per cent of the drop-outs were doing D work or above in all four subjects at the time they withdrew. Another 22 per cent were doing passing work in three of their four subjects at the time of withdrawal. Thirteen per cent were passing in only two subjects and 7 per cent were passing in only one subject at they time they withdrew. Only 3 per cent were not passing in any of their four subjects at the time of withdrawal.

Curriculum Offered by the School

The school has been making a real effort to adapt its curriculum to the general levels of ability and interest of the pupils in the community. The last few years has found the school offering General Mathematics I to pupils in the ninth grade in addition to the Algebra formula required of all pupils in that grade. General Mathematics II is also being offered in the tenth grade in addition to the regular course in Geometry. A course in Civics is also being offered in the ninth grade in addition to the regular course in World History. All pupils in the ninth grade must complete the same course of study in English I but have a choice of any of the following subjects to complete their normal load: General Science; Latin; Spanish; Practical Arts (one semester of mechanical drawing and one semester of wood shop); Home-

making I; and Smith-Hughes Agriculture. A boy must be from the farm or engaged in summer farm work in order to participate in the Smith-Hughes agriculture program.

The school is offering such subjects as Practical Arts I, II, and III; Homemaking I, II, III; Senior Science; General Metal; Sheet Metal; Stenography I, II, III; Advanced Typing; Bookkeeping; Trades and Industries; Commercial Arithmetic (one semester); Commercial Law (one semester); and Physiology (one semester), in addition to the regular courses offered, to provide for the interests of many of the pupils that will not be going on to college. At the present time all pupils have to complete four years of English as well as one year of laboratory science which is usually fulfilled by taking the biology course in the tenth grade. The other laboratory science courses fulfilling this requirement are physics and chemistry. One year of American History in the tenth grade is required of all pupils as well as one semester of American Government and one semester of Social Relations required in the twelfth grade. Many of the slower pupils seem to find many of the required subjects rather difficult to pass.

REASONS GIVEN FOR DROPPING SCHOOL

Reasons Given in Records

This section of the study is divided into two parts. The first part will be concerned with a study of the reasons as given by the advisers in the yearly report and permanent records for the pupils withdrawal from school. The second part will deal with the reasons actually given by twenty of the drop-outs that were contacted through the use of a questionnaire.

Table VII shows the distribution, by sex, according to the reasons listed in the yearly report or in the permanent

TABLE VII. DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS GIVEN FOR DROPPING SCHOOL

Reasons	9		10		11		12		Total		Both	Per Cent
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G		
Dislike for school	35	15	20	13	8	18	4	2	67	48	115	55.8
Economic reasons	2	5	6	1	6	0	2	0	16	6	22	10.7
Failing in work	6	4	7	2	0	2	0	0	13	8	21	10.2
Marriage	0	0	0	5	0	7	0	3	0	15	15	7.3
Personal illness	0	1	2	1	0	3	0	0	2	5	7	3.4
Illness in family	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	3	4	1.9
Miscellaneous	2	2	7	3	4	1	0	3	13	9	22	10.7
Total	45	27	42	27	18	32	7	8	112	94	206	100.0

records of the pupil. The yearly report, MO-8, lists seven reasons for leaving school. Each adviser checks one of these reasons for every child that drops school during the year. "Leaving School District" is one of the reasons listed in the yearly report, but is not included in Table VII as this study does not include those pupils leaving the school district. Marriage, which is not included in the yearly report, has been substituted for "Leaving School District" because of the high frequency listed in the permanent records of the pupil.

A study of Table VII shows "Dislike for school" as the main reason listed, by the adviser, for leaving school. This reason accounts for 55 per cent of the total reasons given for leaving school. Twenty-two, or about 10 per cent, dropped school because of economic reasons. Almost three times as many boys are listed as dropping for this reason than are listed for the girls. Failing in work is given, about 10 per cent of the time, as a reason for dropping school. Most of these drop-outs occur at the ninth and tenth-grade levels. Personal illness and illness in family account for about 5 per cent of the total drop-outs. The school can not do much to keep many of these pupils from leaving school, however, there is little doubt that something may be done to keep some of these people in school until they graduate.

Marriage was given by the advisers as a reason for fifteen of the girls leaving school while no boys were listed for leaving because of this reason. Most of these girls left during their tenth or eleventh year. While many girls marry

shortly after graduation, most girls, upon reaching the twelfth grade, seem to postpone marriage until after graduation. A number of reasons for dropping school were listed under 'miscellaneous'. Some of these reasons were: Enlistment in the armed service; Absences resulted in inability to catch up with the rest of the class; and Social acceptance by their group. The advisers usually checked this column of miscellaneous when they were in doubt as to the reason for the pupil dropping. Most pupils, when they dropped, gave no reason or reasons for leaving, and they usually had some other pupil check them out of school.

It appears that it would have been much better if the advisers could have broken down each major reason for leaving school into more definite reasons. Why did the pupil dislike school? Did the pupil dislike a certain teacher or several teachers? If so, why did he dislike this or that teacher? Did he dislike a certain subject he was required to take? If so, what subject or subjects? Did he dislike being in a certain advisory group? If the school really knew why the pupil disliked school it would be somewhat easier, if possible, for the school to try and correct the fault. It would be better if the advisers would make a special effort to give more definite reasons for the pupils dropping school. The only way this can be secured is from the pupil leaving and this should be done at the time the pupils drop out of school.

If one could really secure the confidence of the pupils who are dropping school, we would probably find the pupil

giving a major reason for leaving school followed by several minor reasons all working together to convince the pupil that he was doing the right thing by dropping. Only through proper guidance are we going to be able to help this pupil work out for himself some solution to these problems which seem unsurmountable and important to him. A feeling of real confidence must be built up between the pupil and the principal and between the pupil and the adviser. Some teachers, having large classes or advisory groups, may feel that one more leaving is just one less to worry about and as a result, little, if any, guidance may actually take place in that group. Most of the teachers must serve in the capacity as advisers, but many of them do not have the adequate training required to be good counselors. Most of the pupils dropping school made little, if any, effort to discuss their problems with either the teacher, adviser, or principal before checking out of school.

Results of Questionnaire

What reason or reasons do the pupil dropping school give for dropping? Did they feel that the school was helping them to remain in school? What is their present attitude toward having left school before graduation? A letter of explanation (Appendix A), a questionnaire designed to cover all necessary information (Appendix B), along with a self addressed envelope were mailed to sixty of these people covered in the study. Twenty-one or 34 per cent

returned the questionnaire. The pupils were asked not to sign their names in order to get a more valid response from the questionnaire.

The response to Part I of the questionnaire is shown in Table VIII. Nine of the drop-outs listed only one reason for dropping school; eight listed two of the listed reasons

TABLE VIII. REASONS LISTED BY DROP-OUTS FOR LEAVING SCHOOL

Reasons	Frequency
1. Didn't get along with teacher or teachers.	8
2. Family problems made it necessary to quit.	8
3. Failing in my subjects.	6
4. Didn't like the subjects I was taking.	6
5. Lack of pocket money for common expenses.	2
6. Lack of money for more expensive items.	1
7. Didn't get along with the other pupils.	1
8. Personal problems, such as health.	1
9. Other students looked down on me.	1
10. Other reason or reasons not listed.	2
Total	36

for dropping; and three gave three of the above reasons for dropping. One pupil did not check any of the reasons listed in the questionnaire for dropping school. The above table also shows that "Dislike of Teacher", and "Home problems" were given most frequently as reasons for dropping. Five of these drop-outs listed "Dislike for teacher" as a reason, also listed "Failing in work" as a second reason for dropping school. The other three giving "Dislike for teacher" as a reason for dropping gave "Dislike for subject" as another reason for dropping school. Of the eight drop-outs listing

"family problems at home" as a reason for dropping, four gave this as their only reason; one gave this reason along with item one; one gave this reason with item nine; one gave this this reason with items one and two; and the last gave this reason with items six and seven. Marriage was given as "Other reasons not listed" by two of the drop-outs returning the questionnaire.

The subjects listed under item nine of the questionnaire which dealt with the subjects disliked were: General metal (1); Sheet metal (1); English (2); Physical Education (1); Speech (1); Algebra (1); Literature (1); Bookkeeping (1); and Geometry (1).

The following statements were written on the margin of several of the questionnaires returned:

1. "Really didn't care for education, but am very sorry now".
2. "Some of the teachers suggested to me that if I didn't want to buckle-down, I might just as well quit".
3. "Some of the kids in the school were too much of a big wheel".
4. "Couldn't get interested in school was my whole trouble".
5. "The young teachers didn't know any more than the students did".
6. "I had no interest in school".

These opinions were written by the drop-outs and give an idea as to how some of them actually felt toward school.

Part II of the questionnaire does not deal directly with the reasons for leaving school, however it gives an idea as to how the drop-outs felt toward the help given them by the faculty and the administration. The results

of this section are shown in Table IX.

TABLE IX. DISTRIBUTION OF DROP-OUTS REPLY TO
PART II OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Item	Yes	No
1. Did your adviser help or persuade you in any way to remain in school as long as you did?.....	9	12
2. Did any teacher, other than your adviser, help or persuade you in any way to remain in school as long as you did?.....	10	11
3. Did your principal help or persuade you in any way to remain in school as long as you did?.....	6	15
4. Do you think that a general discussion of the above problems, listed in Part I, during your advisory period might have helped you to remain in school?.....	10	11
5. Do you think that a well trained guidance counselor might have helped you to better understand your problems at that time and thus arrive at a better solution than the dropping out of school?.....	13	8
6. Do you think a more favorable attitude on the part of your teachers would have helped you to remain in school?.....	12	9
7. Did any of your extra-curricular subjects help in any way to keep you in school?...	8	13
8. Could the school have done anything to keep you in school at the time you dropped?4	4	17

A study of Table IX shows nine of the twenty-one drop-outs felt that the adviser helped them to remain in school. Two of those listing "no" to this question expressed the fact that they left school to get married and they stayed in school as long as they did because they liked school. The drop-outs are about equally divided as to whether or not any teacher, other than their adviser, helped them to remain in school. Six of the nine replying

to question one also said they were helped by a teacher, other than their adviser, to remain in school as long as they did.

Five of the six listing "yes" to item three, also listed "yes" to either items one or two. Fifteen of the drop-outs felt that the principal did not help to persuade them to remain in school. Nine of the ten drop-outs replying "yes" to item four also answered "yes" to item five indicating that the pupils felt they were not receiving much guidance from either their teacher or adviser. Six of those replying "no" to question four indicated that the adviser had helped to persuade them to remain in school as long as they did. Four of the remaining five replying "no" to question four indicated that a well trained guidance counselor might have helped them to remain in school. These pupils may have felt that their teachers and advisers were not capable of giving adequate or useful guidance. Eight of the twelve replying "yes" to item six also listed "dislike for teacher" as a reason for dropping school. Six of these drop-outs listing "yes" to item six also listed "yes" to item two indicating that at least one teacher helped to persuade them to remain in school as long as they did. The thirteen pupils listing "no" to item seven did not engage in any of the extra-curricular activities of the school.

Listed below are the four statements listed by the drop-outs listing "yes" to item eight: (1) "If the school wouldn't drop one out of class even if it is a bit over-

crowded."; (2) "Make me understand what wrong I was doing by quitting."; (3) "Help you as well as the so-called pets."; (4) "If I could have gotten part time school; so I could have worked the other time to help support my mother and two little brothers."

Replies to Part III of Questionnaire

The main objectives of this part of the questionnaire were to find out what subjects the drop-outs actually felt were doing them the most good; the least good; and answers to several other questions which could not be included in other parts of the questionnaire.

There were a number of answers given to the question, "What subject or activity in school helped you most after you left school?". The answers given to this question, according to frequency, were: Mathematics (9); English (4); Homemaking (4); Practical Arts (3); Retailing (1); and Civics (1). The answers given to the second part of the question, "What subject or subjects helped you the least since dropping school?", are listed as follows: History (6); Biology (4); Science (3); English (2); Shorthand (1); Typing (1); and Spanish (1). One must remember that the majority of these people replying to the questionnaire have been out of school for only a short time.

The answers to question two, "What subject or subjects did the school fail to teach which you now feel you would have liked to have taken?", were only two in number. The

subjects, "Spelling" and "Art" were the only subjects listed by the drop-outs in answer to question two. Spelling is not taught as a subject above grade six, but vocabulary and spelling are both stressed in all English courses above grade six. Art is now given as a one credit course, but is open to only the juniors and the seniors. The answers to the last four questions are shown in Table X.

TABLE X. DISTRIBUTION OF REPLIES TO THE LAST FOUR QUESTIONS IN PART III OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Question	Yes	No
3. Were you ever really "sold" on the future values of an education while in school?	15	6
4. Do you think that the lack of a high school education has hindered your chances for advancement in your work?	10	9
5. Do you think you did the right thing by dropping school?	4	15
6. Would you like to go back and continue your high school education?	13	7

Fifteen of the twenty-one drop-outs returning the questionnaire report they were really "sold" on the future values of an education, yet quit school prior to their graduation. Six of the fifteen pupils replying "yes" to this question also gave "family problems at home" or "personal illness", as one of their main reasons for dropping school. Ten of the nineteen drop-outs, answering the question, "Do you think that the lack of a high school education has

hindered your chances for advancement in your work?", felt that they were actually reducing their chances for advancement by not having completed high school. Nine of the remaining replies felt they were not being held back by the lack of a high school education. Three of these nine replying "no" to this question were married girls; one was a girl staying at home; three were boys not regularly employed; and one was working steady at a wholesale house.

Only four of the nineteen replying to question five, "do you think you did the right thing by dropping school?", felt that they were doing the right thing by dropping school. Two of the four are girls who are married; the third is a girl planning on returning to school next year; and the fourth was a boy who died this year.

Thirteen of the twenty replying to question six, "would you like to go back and continue your high school education?", replied that they would like to go back and continue their education. This is an indication that many of these boys and girls who dropped school would re-enter school if someone in school would show a real interest in them and their problems. The survey also showed that many of these pupils could do the required school work if imbued with the proper attitudes and ideals. The fact that there has been a considerable turnover in teaching personnel in the junior high school during the war years may have something to do with the feeling of loneliness and insecurity felt by many of the poorer and failing pupils.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study the writer studied the school records of 206 pupils who dropped school between September 1946 and June 1951 along with a questionnaire returned by twenty-one of these people dropping school to better understand them and their problems which lead to their withdrawal from school.

The fact that the enrollment of the school has increased by about 16 per cent over the last five-year period and will continue to do so for the next several years is bringing more pupils into a school system already filled to overflowing. If the present school reorganization plan is carried out we may find more pupils coming into the school system than is normally found. The increasing size of the classes; a poorly organized guidance personnel; and with very little constructive leadership in many homes has left many with unanswered personal questions. Many of these pupils dropped school rather than attempt to solve many of these problems which they encountered at home and at school.

We find the ninth grade having the greatest number of drop-outs numbering seventy-two followed closely by the tenth grade with sixty-nine drop-outs. A total of fifty dropped out at the eleventh-grade level and only fifteen dropped out at the twelfth-grade level. About 65 per cent more boys than girls dropped out at both the ninth and tenth-grade levels, while 80 per cent more girls than boys dropped out at the eleventh-grade level. The number of boys and girls dropping at the twelfth grade level was about even, being seven and

eight respectively.

The study showed fifty-nine drop-outs being fifteen years of age, and fifty-eight being sixteen years old at the time they dropped school. These two ages account for 57 per cent of all the drop-outs. The study also showed 46 per cent of the drop-outs having repeated at least one grade and thus were overage for their class. Two-thirds of the drop-outs at the ninth grade level had repeated at least one grade at the time they dropped as had three-fourths of those dropping at the tenth-grade level. Overage seems to be a characteristic of those pupils dropping out at the ninth and tenth-grade levels.

The study shows the average I.Q. of the drop-outs in the ninth and tenth-grade classes below the average for their group. The average I.Q. of all classes in the tenth grade, except one, were also below the average for their group.

Over 60 per cent of the drop-outs had an average grade of "D" at the time they dropped school. This shows that many of the drop-outs were probably working somewhat near their mental ability. About two-thirds of all the drop-outs were doing passing work in at least three subjects at the time they withdrew from school. Seven per cent were passing in one subject only at the time they withdrew. Failure in school work does not seem to be an immediate reason for the majority of these pupils dropping school.

Advisers checked "Dislike for school" as a major reason

for 55 per cent of the drop-outs leaving school. "Economic reasons"; "Failing in work"; and "Marriage" were the next three reasons checked by the advisers for pupils leaving school. These three together accounted for 28 per cent of the reasons listed for dropping school. "Personal illness" and "Illness in family" were the two other reasons listed for leaving school. Fifteen of the girls married shortly after leaving school while none of the boys left school for this reason.

The results of the questionnaire showed more definite reasons for quitting than those listed in the MO-8 and checked by the advisers. Eight pupils checked "Didn't get along with teacher or teachers" as a reason for dropping school. The same number also checked "Family problems at home" as a reason for dropping school. "Didn't like the subjects I was taking" and "Failing in my subjects" were each listed by six drop-outs answering the questionnaire. "Lack of pocket money for common expenses"; "Didn't get along with the other pupils"; "Personal problems, such as health"; and "Other students looked down on me" were each listed once as a reason for leaving school.

A study of the responses to the questionnaire combined with conferences which the writer has conducted with several boys and girls prior to their leaving school indicates that there are usually a combination of several reasons leading to the pupil's decision to leave school. Many pupils faced with such problems as broken homes; parents or guardians

who have no real interest in secondary education; moderate or extreme poverty in the home; difficulty in keeping up with the rest of the class; and teachers who are not interested in the slower pupils find it very difficult to convince themselves that the continuance of their education is really worthwhile. The guidance personnel of the school must learn to recognize the common symptoms of these pupils who may be potential drop-outs and make every effort to help the pupils to understand their problems and aid them in their solution of these problems. Such problems as personal illness; illness in the family; and need to work to help support the family are seemingly beyond the ability of either the pupil nor the school to solve, but in this school system we find very few of the 206 drop-outs quitting for any of these reasons. The school must make, however, every effort to keep these boys and girls in school until graduation. Teachers must constantly remind themselves that the public schools are founded, maintained, and supported by the community in which they are located primarily for the youth of that community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer, realizing a real need for a constructive program, would like to make the following recommendations for schools which have a serious drop-out problem. These recommendations are divided into two parts; those for the advisers and teachers, and several for the general administration of the school.

Teachers and Advisers

1. The advisers and teachers should know the pupil's family background, previous school records, interests, activities, abilities, and extra-curricular school work. This information should be entered into the pupil's personal record folder and made readily available to all teachers.
2. The schedules of teachers and advisers should be arranged to allow them adequate time to show their interest in students and to obtain their confidence through individual conferences on personal or educational problems. The parents interest and cooperation should be obtained and fostered throughout the student's school days.
3. The advisers and teachers must become better trained in the study of human behavior, mental hygiene, and special and general techniques of guidance. This can be brought about through summer school attendance or through a well planned in-service training program of the school.
4. The advisers and teachers must help students to select the right courses according to the youth's needs, interests, and abilities. The advisers must understand and make full use of the extensive testing program carried out by the school.
5. The advisers and teachers must learn to recognize signs of trouble. Every effort must be made to recognize symptoms of maladjustment which may lead to premature school leaving. Youth who are failing or are irregular in attendance, or exhibit little interest in school, are in need of counsel and guidance.
6. The advisers should keep the personal records of the pupil up to date and every effort should be made to obtain

the real reason or reasons as to why pupils withdraw from school. Talks with the parents may be necessary to obtain the basic reasons for the pupil's desire to drop school.

School Administration

1. The size of the classes should be small enough to allow the teachers and advisers the opportunity to really know their pupils. Classes should not exceed more than thirty in number.

2. Pupils having very low mental abilities should not be required to enroll in courses which are beyond their ability to comprehend. This does not mean lowering of standards, however, it does mean that steps should be taken to provide greater variety and flexibility in programs, and to redirect the courses given and methods of instruction.

3. Provisions should be made for types of social experiences which will help to overcome feeling of insecurity. These should be various forms of extra-curricular activities, and would include not only the usual sports and social activities, but other types of social experiences as well, such as participation in student government; school plays; school safety patrols; assembly programs; hobby clubs and the like.

4. A good record system must be established which will make available pertinent data about each individual student. The records should contain all information needed by the teachers and advisers for effective work. This would include family background (with current notations of changes such as marital status of parents, deaths, births, specific nature of parent's work and job changes); scholastic ability and achievement; attendance data; health information; extra-curricular participation; outside work; and any other information which will be needed for adequate guidance. These records should pass on from year to year and be readily available to both teachers and advisers.

5. The school must continue, and if possible expand, the courses which allow pupils to capitalize upon their specific skills and aptitudes. Smith-Hughes Agriculture; shop courses; homemaking courses; art; and the on-the-job training courses open to seniors provide excellent opportunities for pupils to exhibit their skills and aptitudes.

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APPENDIX A

Letter of Transmittal

Watertown High School
March 24, 1951

Dear Friend:

The purpose of this letter is to make a study as to the reasons why students drop school. Will you help us by answering and returning the enclosed survey sheet. Answers to these questions will help us improve our school and will make it easier to help boys and girls who are now in school.

Sincerely,

Merton Meinicke

Dear Friend:

The school is very interested in this survey and would appreciate your prompt reply to the enclosed questionnaire. Please do not sign your name to the questionnaire unless you desire to do so. Place the completed questionnaire in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope and mail today.

Sincerely,

D. W. Tieszen

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I. FROM THE FOLLOWING CHECK THE REASON OR REASONS FOR YOUR DROPPING SCHOOL.

1. () Lack of spending money for shows, refreshments, school activities and such common expenses.
2. () Lack of spending money for such items as fancy clothing, treats for the gang and more expensive items.
3. () Didn't get along with the teacher or teachers.
4. () Didn't get along with the other students.
5. () Family problems at home made it necessary to drop school.
6. () Personal problems, such as health, made it necessary to drop.
7. () Failing in my subjects.
8. () Other students looked down on me.
9. () Didn't like the subjects I was taking, such as:
1. _____ 2. _____
10. () Other reason or reasons not listed. (Please describe) 1. _____
2. _____

PART II. ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY UNDERLINING THE WORD YES OR NO.

1. Did your adviser help or persuade you in any way to remain in school as long as you did? (yes or no)
2. Did any teacher, other than your adviser, help or persuade you in any way to remain in school as long as you did? (yes or no)
3. Did your principal help or persuade you in any way to remain in school as long as you did? (yes or no)
4. Do you think that a general discussion of the above problems listed in Part I during the advisory period might have helped you to remain in school? (Yes or no)
5. Do you think that a well trained guidance counselor might have helped you to better understand your problems at that time and thus arrive at a better solution than the dropping out of school? (yes or no)

PART II. Continued

6. Do you think that a more favorable attitude on the part of your teachers would have helped you to remain in school? (yes or no)
7. Did any of your extra-curricular subjects, such as athletics, band, orchestra, glee club, science club, etc., help in any way to keep you in school? (yes or no)
8. Could the school have done anything to keep you in school at the time you dropped? (yes or no)
If so, what? _____

PART III. ANSWER THE FOLLOWING AS INDICATED.

1. What subject or activity in school helped you most after you left school? _____ What subject or subjects taken in school have helped you the least since dropping school? _____
2. What subject or subjects did the school fail to teach which you now feel you would liked to have taken? _____
3. Were you ever really "sold" on the future values of an education while in school? (yes or no)
4. Do you think that the lack of a high school education has hindered your chances for advancement in your work? (yes or no)
5. Do you think you did the right thing by dropping out of school? (yes or no)
6. Would you like to go back and continue your high school education? (yes or no)