AN ANALYSIS OF THE PHILOSOPHY AND TRENDS OF
THE HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE PHILOSOPHY AND TRENDS OF
THE HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

This study is designed to set forth the philosophy and indicate trends in the teaching of commercial education in the high schools of the United States. General recommendations by noted authorities in the field are followed by a justification for an expanded program of guidance. Selected curriculums and objectives are given for illustrative purposes, and suggestions are offered for solving many of the prevalent problems in commercial education.

Justification of the Study

This study has been the outgrowth of two factors. One is the desire for a perspective suitable to a teacher of high school commercial subjects. The other is the intense interest of the writer in the commercial curriculum.

It is possible that the broad nature of the subject may draw its measure of criticism. However, the writer is striving for a broader outlook and deemed this study to be the proper outcome. Quite often thesis writers deny any personal value from their efforts except the fulfillment of degree requirements. In this case, the writer sincerely acclaims
considerable benefit from the research, much of which could not be included in this paper.

It is possible also, that others may need a quick overall view of this broad subject. An extensive use of footnotes gives easy access to further information.

Limitations

This study is confined to the field of high school commercial education. It is not intended to present an historical study, so the history of commercial education is kept at a minimum. This is not an exhaustive study. There is much material still untouched, especially as to periodical literature. In a rapidly changing world, it is impossible for any work of this nature to represent a final opinion. The objectives and curriculums in Chapter IV are given for illustration and there is no attempt to evaluate them individually.

Source of Data

All of the data are from secondary sources, as given in the bibliography. Especially helpful, was The Organization, Administration, and Supervision of Business Education by Earl P. Strong. An extensive bibliography accompanies his book. The curriculum study in Chapter IV was done at the University of Texas, Austin, Texas. The Education Library there contains the famous Henderson Collection of Courses of Study—almost ten thousand, representing practically every subject taught in many of the public schools of the United States.
Treatment of Data

Chapter II contains a discussion of the development of a philosophy of commercial education to its present status. Historical data have been kept to a minimum, using only the vital steps in progression. The ascent is upon what the modern concept of commercial education appears to be.

Chapter III represents recommendations by eminent teachers in the field of commercial education. These opinions are along the special lines of curricular revision, teacher responsibility, community responsibility, and guidance.

Chapter IV is the result of considerable research in the commercial courses of study for high schools included in the Henderson Collection. A selected list of the courses of study from ten cities and ten states is used in this study. These cities and states represent various sizes and geographical locations and indicate what is being done in high school commercial education in the United States. The subjects given in the courses of study do not represent so much what should be done, as what is being done, at least on paper. It is true that recommendations for a curriculum and the actual teaching process is not the same. However, it is very difficult to ascertain when this is so. For the ten states, only the general objectives are given. Tentative courses of study set up by state boards of education indicate the maximum in attainment, and only a few of the largest high schools are able to
reach such heights. Since a course of study for a certain city is usually done by the teachers, quite often under expert supervision and guidance, it is supposed that these objectives and curriculums are a fairly accurate indication of what is actually being done. Consequently, a more detailed study is made of the courses of study for the ten cities. Actually, there are nine cities and a composite curriculum for four large high schools in San Diego County. The plan in each case is as follows: general objectives, business subjects offered, and grade placement, if that is given.

Chapter V deals with the interrelations and responsibilities of the various individuals and agencies in business education.

A summary and conclusions make up Chapter VI and complete the study.
CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PHILOSOPHY OF COMMERCIAL
EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Original Concept of the Philosophy of Education

With the founding of our democracy, the natural conclusion is that the educational theories and practices were reconstructed to conform to the ideals and philosophy of the nation. However, this is not the case. Our educational philosophy was founded on the Aristotelian conception of culture which is an aristocratic one, dividing people into a class of producers and a class of consumers.¹ Over a period of years, our social order has gradually changed until the producers have also become the consumers. With such a heritage, the question poses itself: What is the great task of American education in making the ideal of democracy a power for developing a higher civilization?²

Education has been defined as growing up in the right way,³ and with the tremendous development of civilization, this task has become too exacting to be undertaken by the parents alone. For this purpose, the school and the teaching

¹Paul S. Lomax, Commercial Teaching Problems, pp. 18-19.
²Ibid., p. 15.
³Franklin Bobbitt, How to Make a Curriculum, p. 42.
profession have been created. Within this institution called the school, the business of the teaching profession is to collect, organize, and present proper materials comprising the curriculum for the training of young people.\textsuperscript{4}

Change in Attitude

There has been a considerable change in attitude toward the instructional content of high school curriculums since the social implications of that part of education have been recognized. This has led to a careful analysis of social requirements.\textsuperscript{5}

The value of school learning is the ability of a student to adapt it to life situations.\textsuperscript{6} Out of this concept has grown the now familiar seven cardinal principles of secondary education: health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home-membership, vocation, civic education, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character.\textsuperscript{7}

Since it is presumed that each member of society must render service to society, some of the service will be vocational. For vocational service, training is required, some of which should be in high school. Recognizing this fact,

\textsuperscript{4}Burdette Ross Buckingham, \textit{Research for Teachers}, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{5}Frederick G. Nichols, \textit{Commercial Education in the High School}, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{6}Lomax, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 56.

\textsuperscript{7}Nichols, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 15.
the inclusion of "vocation" has been made in the seven principles.\(^8\) Not only must vocation be considered, but also full economic understanding is needed by everyone, and should be included in the general training of all citizens.\(^9\) Figure 1 on this page, reproduced from Tonne and Tonne, shows graphically how business functions as the integrating element in  

\[ 
\text{Economic Organization} \\
\text{Industry} \rightarrow \text{Business} \leftarrow \text{Professions} \\
\text{Commerce} \rightarrow \text{Management} \leftarrow \text{Clerkships} \\
\text{Trade \\& Marketing} \\
\text{Home} \quad \text{State} \quad \text{School} \quad \text{Church} \quad \text{Organized Recreation} 
\]

**Fig. 1--Business as the integrating element in our economic life**

our economic life.\(^10\) This illustration indicates how business activities have become a part of the daily experiences of every individual, and about these activities gravitates the whole organized life of society. These activities, as

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 10.  
\(^9\)Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 119.  
\(^10\)Herbert A. Tonne and M. Henriette Tonne, Social--Business Education in the Secondary Schools, p. 10.
after World War I. are today, among other functions, basically conditioning the rehabilitation of Europe.\textsuperscript{11}

During the last part of the nineteenth century, commercial education was definitely vocational,\textsuperscript{12} and before that time it was mostly accomplished by means of apprenticeships. The changing pattern of school population from year to year has reflected the change in need and opportunity, and educational theories and practices have had a part in determining the development of commercial education.\textsuperscript{13}

The change in attitude through the years is worthy of note. In 1823, only one business subject was included in the curriculum of the English High School in Boston.\textsuperscript{14} By 1903, the Committee of Nine had recommended a list of subjects worthy of a modern school. The list included penmanship, arithmetic, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, commercial law, commercial geography, shorthand, typewriting, office practice, banking, history of commerce, local history and industries, accounting, commercial English, and advertising.\textsuperscript{15} However, the objectives of educational institutions during the period from 1893 to 1917 were rather indefinite, and through

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11}Lomax, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{12}Tonne and Tonne, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.
  \item \textsuperscript{13}Earl P. Strong, \textit{The Organization, Administration, and Supervision of Business Education}, p. 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 41.
  \item \textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 20.
\end{itemize}
that period, business subjects were taught primarily in private vocational schools, business colleges, and through correspondence courses. The high schools and academies were principally preparatory schools for college entrance. School administrators were not particularly interested in the commercial curriculum because they were too much under the influence of the colleges. However, business subjects were added gradually to the high school curriculum, but there was little organization of the work and it was poorly taught.

Some attempts at organization were made even in 1892, when the first convention of the Business Educators' Association took place. This Association also became a department of the National Education Association at that time.

One of the incidents which gave impetus to commercial courses was an endowment made to the University of Pennsylvania for founding a school of commerce. Then, after extensive study of European methods, a four-year course, instead of the original two-year course was recommended. With this small bit of college leadership, the high school commercial curriculum was enriched, but it still was heavily laden with college preparatory subjects.

After the Committee of Nine recommended the list of subjects as given on page 8 of this study, there was considerable difficulty in presenting the work because of lack of segregation of commercial students. So it can be seen that there was progress through the years but because of
lack of leadership, there was no organized philosophy of business education. The National Education Association Committee of 1915 recognized two lines of specialization. One of these emphasized accounting, and the other emphasized stenography. In the short time following, the need for a broader training in business became apparent. The Committee of 1919 found that economics, salesmanship, store practice, business organization, and advertising were of more importance than stenography and bookkeeping.

Social-Business Concept

Academic education and occupational education are complementary to each other and represent an effective education for society. The school can teach many activities for the improvement of private economic life; such as, to be a better consumer of economic goods; to judge capacity for success in our highly competitive business life; to recognize fraud in using the services of business; to avoid paying usurious rates for the loan of money; and to discriminate between desirable and undesirable advertising and selling pressure.

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16 Ibid., p. 11.
17 Strong, op. cit., p. 20.
18 Ibid., p. 27.
19 Lomax, op. cit., p. 27.
20 Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 48.
It is desirable that the well-balanced curriculum for the high schools should contain general fundamental business training and specific technical training. 21

The trend in social studies is toward more emphasis upon economic life, just as there has been a similar trend in business education toward more emphasis upon social life. Thus, the philosophies of curriculum making are drawing the social studies and the studies in business into a closer relationship. Best adapted to give this coordination for economic life, are the social-business subjects which partake of the nature of both social studies and business studies. 22 Business leaders have begun to recognize that business education is not merely training for technical ability, but also for a broader understanding of how business helps to integrate our entire social structure. 23 Until recently, there has been too much emphasis on developing skills and not enough emphasis on maintaining a balance between the developing of skills and of attitudes toward and training in the field of general business. 24 Now the trend seems to be to aid students to adjust themselves to a higher stratum of social life than simply the exchange of economic products. 25

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21 Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 51.
22 Ibid., p. 71.
23 Ibid., p. 50.
24 Ibid., p. 57.
25 Ibid., p. 10.
Although the road to higher learning must always be paved for those desiring such education, the prevailing thought now is that it is not desirable for all to attend college. Hence, the high school program has been broadened to benefit the vast number of high school graduates who do not attend college.  

**Vocational Concept**

The national importance of vocational education is expressed by Weersing as follows:

In the past the almost inexhaustible physical resources of our great American continent have made it possible to neglect vocational education, probably without any serious harm. As a result, there has been little necessity for the development of a definite plan of vocational education. Eventually, however, with increased pressure of population, such a plan will become an urgent necessity. Already there is evidence that the demand for vocational education will seek relief through extra-educational channels if the regularly instituted educational authorities do not respond to the need. . . . Even to the casual observer, it is clear that the masses regard education chiefly as an economic weapon in the struggle for existence; hence, the great demand for education of every variety.  

However, the field of commerce is large enough to accommodate individuals of varying abilities and offers useful services to those of ordinary ability, and a challenge to those of superior ability. With modern civilization rapidly becoming industrialized, and the scope and variety of economic

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26 Nichols, op. cit., p. 19.  
27 Frederick J. Weersing, Reorganization of Commercial Education in Public High Schools, p. 2.  
28 Ibid., p. 1.
enterprise constantly expanding, it is easily conceivable that there will be a corresponding demand for commercial education. 29

Influence of Modern Events

Weersing wrote after World War I:

The decade since the World War has brought about certain fundamental changes in education, many of them revolutionary in their effect. The forces operative in bringing about these changes are far too complicated for detailed analysis. Chief among them may be enumerated an amazing demand for education, resulting in unprecedented school enrollments, especially in secondary and higher education. 30

If this were true after World War I, it can be said again after World War II with a great deal more emphasis, as statistics on school enrollments have clearly indicated. Changes in the character and variety of student populations have resulted in the necessity for considerable curriculum revision and differentiation.

Another outcome of the war-time program is the development of mental and aptitude tests through their application to the entire army personnel. Now the use of these tests is almost universal in the schools of this country. The scientific study of education has received a tremendous impetus from the increased interest in education and the development of testing methods, the focal point being a search for more objective methods of curricular revision. 31

29 Ibid., p. 2.
30 Ibid., p. 3.
31 Ibid.
Ideals Not Yet Attained

Although the above-mentioned trend is obvious, there are many who believe that we have still far to go. Harold F. Clark of Teachers College, Columbia University, has said that education today is failing to train individuals for the new economic order.

Public education has an altogether inadequate conception of its possibilities for training people of the new economic order. A continuously replanned system of education will largely equalize earned income and virtually abolish poverty and unemployment.\(^\text{32}\)

As quoted by Tonne and Tonne, Clark continues in the same vein and contends that the changes in the industrial world should be having a profound effect on education, and public education should have some plan for preparing people for every occupation. Without performing this duty, the school is not accepting its duty in the present economic world.\(^\text{33}\) However, Tonne and Tonne, in writing of the social-business subjects, say that so far, more attention has already been given to the vocational type of business education in the public schools, even though the social-business subjects are more important socially and influence a larger number of pupils. To substantiate the statement, they have quoted from an unpublished paper by Paul S. Lomax to the effect that:

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\(^{32}\) Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 66.

\(^{33}\) Ibid.
It is likely that the first type of business education (social-business) will have an increasingly larger place in the business curriculum of our secondary schools, reserving the second type (vocational) more and more to junior colleges and other institutions of higher education.\textsuperscript{34}

With two opinions always present, there is need for critical thinking on the meaning of commercial education. Commercial education is a field that touches almost every other type of education, and because of this characteristic, it should take an increasingly important place as an integrating element in the disorganized divisions of our educational system.\textsuperscript{35}

Purposes of Modern Commercial Education

According to Lomax, the primary role of commercial education is "to cooperate with the rest of American education in the attainment of the democratic ideal whereby every citizen of the American Republic may achieve noblest and fullest self-realization in terms of promoting best social interests and progress."\textsuperscript{36}

The kind of commercial education we want to construct in our American school system is shaped by the kind of business life. \textit{As a social institution with basic inter-relations with the whole range of life experiences, we want to realize.}\textsuperscript{37}

In \textit{Basic Principles and Trends}, Herbert A. Tonne contends that if the purposes of business education are based

\hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{34}Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{36}Lomax, op. cit., p. 26.
\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 15.
upon the entire economic organization that is a phase of the social life, as well as of the economic structure, then business education must include the adjustment of the individual to his environment. The result is that the schools should sponsor education for those phases of business that concern every member of society, and specialized training for business occupations.\textsuperscript{38}

It has just been cited as the opinion of some authorities in the field of commercial education, that the ideal situation is the cooperation within the curriculum between basic information and skill building. There have been times, especially during depressions, when business education had to be justified on more than a vocational basis. This resulted in considerable confusion and a dilution of the business curriculums, endangering the entire program of business subjects. The social-science departments claimed some of the subjects and the mathematics departments claimed others, leaving only the business skill subjects in the actual business education departments.\textsuperscript{39}

Nichols points out repeatedly the dual nature of commercial education; that neither phase should be omitted from a complete program of business education; that the full-time high school curriculums should include courses that may be relied upon to produce marketable skills; and courses that

\textsuperscript{38}Strong, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 71.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid.
are for the purpose of assisting students to understand the
principles of business. However, he thinks that business
educators must determine how a balance is to be maintained
between these purposes in order to prepare students for
initial employment, for advancement, and for producing per-
sonnel who can make adjustments in this day of rapidly chang-
ing techniques in business.\textsuperscript{40}

Nichols believes that since the objectives of business
education are both vocational and prevocational, the latter
division has many elements for its justification:

1. It contains elements that motivate certain forms of
general education.
2. It contains elements of real value from a personal-
use point of view.
3. It contains elements that afford exploratory contacts
in the field of commercial training.
4. It contains elements that build a basis for and stimu-
late an interest in the field of commerce if special
aptitudes for this kind of work appear.
5. It contains elements that are to some extent vocation-
ally useful to those who leave school to go to work
before reaching the point where specialization in com-
merce really should begin.
6. It contributes to social understanding through an ele-
mentary study of that great socially important economic
activity called "business."\textsuperscript{41}

Strong makes three divisions, instead of two in the pur-
poses of business education: basic or general, skilled or
occupational, and social-economic.\textsuperscript{42} He also quotes the ten
objectives as given by McKee Fisk in \textit{National Business Teachers}

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Nichols, op. cit.}, pp. 63-64.
\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Strong, op. cit.}, p. 75.
simple but all-encompassing purposes of the business program:

1. Help students acquire marketable skills, knowledges, and attitudes which will enable them to secure initial positions and make shorter and easier their apprenticeship period in business.

2. Help employees maintain, rehabilitate, extend, and improve their skills, knowledges, and attitudes to enable them to become more efficient workers and to merit promotion.

3. Help students acquire occupational intelligence by securing a general conception of the nature, relationships, and functions of modern business.

4. Develop in the students a personality which will result in effective human relationships in business and in society alike.

5. Encourage students to take advantage of the guidance program offered by the school; to establish contact with prospective employers and to study the advantages and disadvantages of various business occupations within the community.

6. Make provision for students to explore their interests, aptitudes, and abilities in view of the requirements of specific business occupations.

7. Aid the students in the understanding and use of the terminology of business.

8. Assist the students in acquiring business skills and knowledges for personal use.

9. Help the students to develop the will and ability to use business services and facilities essential for intelligent consumer activities.

10. Gain an awareness of socio-economic problems and develop a desire to bring about an improvement in existing conditions.\textsuperscript{43}

It may be well at this point to summarize by saying that there are two general types of business education which are desirable: training in those phases of commercial education which concern every member of organized society; and specialized commercial education for those desiring to prepare for wage earning in those occupations for which training can be given in the schools.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 76.  
\textsuperscript{44}Tonne and Tonne, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 11.
Need of Revision and Bases for a Commercial Curriculum

According to Nichols, the needs of the business community must be taken into consideration if the obligations of business education are to be successfully met. However, the fundamental principles of business organization and essential practices of sound management are similar throughout the entire country. That is, in communities of comparable size, the duties performed by commercial personnel do not vary to any great extent. Workers in the field are fairly transient and find a ready market for their abilities. Thus, extensive community surveys as to number and kinds of positions are unnecessary for determining a commercial curriculum. Also to be taken into consideration is that the type of jobs for which high school students can be trained are usually of the stepping-stone nature, and the same jobs are to be filled time after time.\(^4^5\)

In setting up a commercial curriculum, a reliable guide is the reports of surveys put out periodically by the United States Bureau of Education. One criticism observed in these reports is that high school commercial curriculums are too narrow. Usually shorthand, typewriting, bookkeeping, business arithmetic, and business writing comprise the programs. Very little office practice is given, non-stenographic skill

subjects are neglected, and few schools offer training for initial store positions. In short, there is a lack of opportunity for those students who do not wish to prepare for stenographic work. ⁴⁶

In small schools, full preparation for office employment should not be attempted. The curriculum here should be limited to prevocational commercial education. In large schools, there should be no hesitancy in setting up programs for prevocational, vocational, and promotional kinds of business education. In the large school there can usually be complete specialization in the different fields, using teachers who have had both professional training and business experience in these fields. In the small school, if too full a program is attempted, each teacher is forced to cover too many fields, usually to the detriment of all concerned. ⁴⁷

Before going further into the nature of the business curriculum, the question arises as to whether present commercial education can be socially justified; and whether out of the vast number of experiences that characterize business endeavor, the ones are included that seem to be of greatest consequence to American youth. ⁴⁸

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 140.
⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 118-120.
The curriculum has been slow to respond to the changing statements of the aims of education. It is often said that a change in the curriculum usually runs about ten years behind the advocacy of a change in objectives. This is due to several causes. Those formulating the aims of education have laid stress merely upon ideals from which a curriculum can be derived, rather than upon the activities in which individuals indulge. Then, there has been the theory that a student should be given an over-all view of knowledge of the world, rather than an abridgement of useful information. Another reason for the lack of progress is that when the curriculum is criticised for lack of being practical, the school administrators have taken refuge in the doctrines of formal discipline and the transfer of training. Within the past few years, there has been some improvement in this respect.49

Even though extensive surveys are thought to be unnecessary by some authorities, the results of community and occupational surveys have indicated that the old idea of training all business students to be stenographers and bookkeepers is ill founded. There are many other office and store occupations for which to train if the schools are to fulfill their duty of serving the community.50


Granting that the high schools are greatly in need of extensive revision, very few of the critics in the field are willing to submit hypothetical plans for what might seem to be practicable and desirable changes in objectives. The hesitancy may be justified when one realizes the danger in setting up a curriculum that has been hastily or carelessly prepared. All available research must of necessity be used. No program should be established without taking into consideration three fundamental factors: the people to be trained; the conditions under which the training must be done; and the objectives of such training.

It is easy to make changes, and there are always some who think that any sort of change is progress. The mere shifting of position is not progress; there must be guiding principles which lead with certainty to the right conclusions.

Quite often writers on the curriculum have begun with the statement of aim and progressed to subject matter without giving the principles for progression. According to Charters, there should be a statement of aim in terms of both ideals and activities, thus bridging the gap between the aim as stated, and the curriculum derived from the statement.

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55 Charters, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
Those of long experience within the curriculum field are conscious of some uncertainty relative to innumerable factors, but ideas are stated with positiveness for the sake of definiteness even though the statements are tentative. There is always some uncertainty because social changes cause education to shift in fundamental ways and it must perform functions not before attempted and discontinue those functions which are no longer serviceable.\textsuperscript{56}

In writing of the approach to the problems of curriculum improvement in Los Angeles, Bobbitt says that there were two purposes. The minor one was that only a small amount of revision of courses is advisable at any one time. The major purpose was the inauguration of curriculum improvement which will require a generation or more for its consummation. The first step was the broad survey of all of the factors and the preliminary laying-out of the general route.\textsuperscript{57}

A part of the preliminary procedure in building a commercial curriculum might be questionnaires, and job and activity analyses. The job analysis was first used in the vocations as a device in large employment offices of organizations to aid the employment officer in becoming familiar with the duties of all the jobs within the organization.

\textsuperscript{56}Bobbitt, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 3-7.

\textsuperscript{57}Ibid., p. 1.
Its use has spread rapidly and has had considerable publicity in connection with the Army during both World Wars. It is valuable in connection with training programs.58

Surveys which ascertain the business skills and knowledges needed in everyday life, aid business education and business in responding to the present demand for the education of consumers; and they are also beneficial in the selection of points of emphasis in social-business training which will aid all students, vocational and non-vocational.59

The questionnaire method must be used with a certain amount of caution. These questionnaires cannot be wholly depended upon because certain fundamental considerations are purely local. It is quite possible that this is the cause of the similarity which pervades nearly all high school commercial curriculums. Even though the principles underlying these curriculums are the same, the practices and procedures should not be the same in all communities.60 For the same reason, the transplanting of curriculums is not a good procedure. Curriculum surveys have a tendency to promote such transplanting and should be used sparingly and critically.61

58Charters, op. cit., p. 2.
59Haynes and Graham, op. cit., p. 68.
60Nichols, op. cit., pp. ix-x.
61Ibid., p. 117.
Scope of Commercial Education

Commercial education represents the largest field of special training in the country today. Table 1 shows the estimated enrollment in commercial courses in the United States in 1936, 1938, and 1940, according to Table 1

ESTIMATED STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN BUSINESS SUBJECTS FOR 1936-1940 IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1936</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1940</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment b</td>
<td>5,974,537</td>
<td>6,226,934</td>
<td>6,713,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping</td>
<td>588,492</td>
<td>613,353</td>
<td>661,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthand</td>
<td>537,111</td>
<td>598,014</td>
<td>603,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typewriting</td>
<td>995,358</td>
<td>1,037,407</td>
<td>1,118,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Arithmetic</td>
<td>293,350</td>
<td>305,742</td>
<td>329,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Law</td>
<td>191,783</td>
<td>199,885</td>
<td>215,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Geography</td>
<td>237,189</td>
<td>247,209</td>
<td>266,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial History</td>
<td>11,352</td>
<td>11,831</td>
<td>12,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penmanship</td>
<td>15,534</td>
<td>16,190</td>
<td>17,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Practice</td>
<td>95,593</td>
<td>99,631</td>
<td>107,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Business Training</td>
<td>356,642</td>
<td>381,088</td>
<td>410,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesmanship</td>
<td>37,639</td>
<td>39,296</td>
<td>42,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business English</td>
<td>27,482</td>
<td>28,643</td>
<td>32,284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a The subject enrollment estimates are based upon 1934 subject enrollment per cent of total enrollment.
b Total enrollment is the actual number of students in the high schools.

to reports from the Office of Education as given by Strong. The fundamental importance of a subject cannot be expressed

62 Ibid., p. v. 63 Strong, op. cit., p. 44.
in terms of enrollment, but the fact that a million and a quarter course enrollments for commercial courses in the secondary schools is significant. The commercial department with elective subjects outranks all other departments of training except English, which is compulsory. Of whatever significance this may be, it does show the trend in popular demand.

Commercial education is a type of training which plays a part both in the achievement of the general aims of education and in preparation for a business career. Nichols poses such questions as these:

Is this training worth while? Is the public and individual benefit commensurate with the cost? Are the training needs of boys and girls being met? Are the demands for economic service being met? Has commercial education kept pace with the needs of business for training personnel? Can a functioning type of vocational business training be given successfully in a public high school? Can a truly functioning type of vocational commercial education be consistent with the accepted aims of secondary education? Is tradition a barrier in the way of further improvement in this department of commercial education? If so, how can it be broken down? 64

Nichols immediately answers his own questions about tradition by saying that academic traditions no longer need interfere with commercial education. The sort of tradition that is of the most detriment is that which has grown up within commercial education itself. The following list presents material for contemplation: all commercial students must study shorthand and typewriting; emphasis on typing speed rather than an all-inclusive typing ability;

64 Nichols, op. cit., pp. 3-4.
the assumption that ability to write shorthand, typewrite, and file letters constitutes stenographic training; business procedure can be taught most effectively through bookkeeping; typewriting and shorthand should be placed in the schedule synonymously; ability to take dictation and stenographic ability are the same; all wishing to enter business must prepare for office work; and some jobs have promotional prospects beyond other jobs.

In regard to the preparation for jobs with opportunities for promotion, Nichols makes this statement: "In a rapidly changing economic order, nothing can be more futile than business education that prepares for immediate service only."

Neither should preparation for initial employment be denied those who need and desire it. In justice to those individuals, to society, and to business, both types of training should be included in the high school business curriculum. In order to put into the curriculum all of the things that appear necessary, it is an obligation and a responsibility not to be taken lightly. Many other questions to be considered by this obligation are:

Should high school business training be given through a single curriculum, or through a program of constants and variables? Should all boys and girls of high school age pursue the same commercial subjects and in the same sequence? Should the door to college be kept open to commercial pupils by including a certain amount of required college entrance work? Or is the cosmopolitan character of high school pupils such that the college entrance objective may be safely ignored or minimized in setting up high school commercial curriculums?

65Ibid., p. 63.  
66Ibid., p. 7.
Lomax suggests that what is taught in commercial education should be determined by what is needed in order to function as a social agent in business enterprise. It will be noticed that while Nichols is primarily interested in vocational training, Lomax never lets it be forgotten that commercial education must represent both the kind of education concerned with all economic enterprise, which concerns every student; and vocational training which is limited to a certain group of students. Either kind of commercial education does not reach its peak in educational value until it is united with the whole field of education. This quality of being unified into a proper whole is further enhanced by the thought that no school subject is entirely a skill subject and no school subject is entirely a reflective-thinking subject. Both procedures are involved in every commercial subject even though the amount of each varies with the particular subject concerned.

Obligations of the Teaching Profession

In formulating a proper curriculum, the educational profession should utilize all experience regardless of its source. This is especially true of vocations where these specialized groups in a community can assist in their particular field. It is quite in order for separate communities to check with one another after working independently to

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67 Lomax, op. cit., p. 12. 68 Ibid., p. 27.
formulate its own objectives. This makes for professional progress. However, it is doubtful if any one community has progressed sufficiently to serve as a model for others, differences in basic needs notwithstanding.69

While the materials to be presented in an educational institution are of vital importance, of equal importance is the manner in which they are presented. Experts in the various fields may assist in compiling the curriculum, but the teacher is responsible for directing the learning process to insure the proper outcomes. The teacher is also responsible for teaching his particular subject in its relation to other subjects of the curriculum. The relationship within the department of commercial education should be given proper attention to insure a thorough understanding of the larger aspects of the field.

Need for Supervision

A more unified program of commercial education would be possible through proper supervision. The cases of agricultural, vocational, and distributive education may be cited as examples of unified programs carried out under supervision of city, county, state, and national authorities. Distributive education is sometimes classed with commercial education, and at other times is given a niche of its own. There are thirty-eight states having supervisors of distributive education, exclusively. Only seven states have supervisors in the

broader field of business education. California, Michigan, New York, and Pennsylvania include distributive education in the province of their state supervisors. Connecticut, Louisiana, and New Jersey do not include distributive education in their state supervision of business education. Table 2 on this page shows the twenty-three cities which have local supervision of business education, and indicates state supervision if that is also present. The small list

**TABLE 2**

**CITIES HAVING DIRECTORS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION**

- Baltimore, Maryland
- *Bridgeport, Connecticut*
- *Buffalo, New York*
- Chicago, Illinois
- Des Moines, Iowa
- *Detroit, Michigan*
- *Elizabeth, New Jersey*
- *Flint, Michigan*
- Fort Wayne, Indiana
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Joliet, Illinois
- *Los Angeles, California*

*Cities having state as well as local supervision

of cities having supervisors, and the still smaller number of cities with the addition of state supervision, can be viewed with alarm. However, the trail has been blazed by these progressive ones, and it is hoped that soon others may become sufficiently far-sighted to promulgate their own plans. The list given in Table 2 was compiled by Strong and represents available statistics up to 1940.70

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70 Strong, op. cit., pp. 270-279.
CHAPTER III

NEED FOR REVISION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN COMMERCIAL EDUCATION

Principal Criticisms

It has been apparent for some time and pointed out by such business teachers as Lomax, Weersing, Shields, Belding, Marshall, and Lyon that there is need for the reorganization of high school business education. The type of training offered is too narrow in character. One of the ways suggested to overcome this particular difficulty is to secure recognition of the broader outcomes of business education.¹ Weersing calls attention to the confusion often experienced by administrators in setting up a program. There is considerable opposition in certain cases to the substitution of a practical arts course in the place of the traditional academic subjects. The fact that commercial education is both vocational and general makes it difficult to provide a program, particularly in small high schools, whereby those students having different aims can be segregated. In most cases, the administration of commercial courses has been made in such a way that they contain mechanical skills with very little educational content.

¹Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 59.
Considerable value would be added if a background of historical, social, and economic knowledge in this field could be offered.² Those responsible for commercial training should realize that one of the criticisms of the students from the business world has been that they were lacking in knowledge of modern office methods and procedures, and in correct habits of thought and action.³ Another criticism is that there has been a "self-perpetuating curricular cycle" of both good and bad practices established without regard for local conditions.⁴

Factors for Consideration in Making Changes

Whenever handicaps are discovered, improvements should be made, but changes should be made slowly and with caution. Availability of teachers for the certain subjects and the size of the school should have a bearing on the offerings, rather than to try to imitate other schools where local conditions may differ.⁵ The following paragraph from Nichols sums up the foregoing:

Such factors as kind and size of school; adequacy of equipment available or purchasable; needs of the community for certain types of training; attitude of members of the school board, administrative officers, and other department heads, all have a bearing on what can be done in any particular school. The degree in

²Weersing, op. cit., pp. 1-3.
⁴Ibid., pp. 98-99.
⁵Ibid., pp. 126-127.
which modern educational theories or principles have been, or can be accepted and put into effect has even more to do with the degree of success that will attend efforts to establish and maintain a truly functioning program of modern commercial education.\textsuperscript{6}

Need for Equipment

Nichols mentions equipment in the preceding paragraph. This has been a difficulty in many schools. Some would like to expand existing clerical practice courses, and others would like to institute that work. Lack of financial support and understanding by business men on the typical city school board has been quite a stumbling block.\textsuperscript{7} Although the schools should offer more than clerical courses, students should be given some idea of the operation of the more common types of office equipment.

Some Progress Made

It has already been stated that most authorities agree that a broadened commercial curriculum is desirable. Some schools have at least made a beginning by offering training in service for the community, for social activity, and for the orientation of the student to business as a whole. It is becoming more and more popular to espouse the cause of vocational education, accenting both skill and understanding of the fundamental principles of business, so further progress is probably in the near future.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid., p. 116.

\textsuperscript{7}Ibid., p. 155.
Need for Business Training Indicated Years Ago

It is interesting to note how many of the recommendations of the Committee of 1919 are now only beginning to be recognized. This Committee saw the need for the addition of economics, business correspondence, business customs, and business law to the training offered for secretaries. To training in actual salesmanship, the Committee suggested a broader training in business, merchandising, and the cultivation of taste. To sum up the recommendations of similar needs, the Committee is quoted by Strong from the writings of Cheesman A. Herrick, "Business Education in Secondary Schools," Department of the Interior, Bulletin, 1919, No. 55, pages 14-19.

Such subjects as economics, business organization, advertising, salesmanship, and store practice are relatively new, and yet in their entirety they made a new purpose of business education comparable with, if not more important than, stenography or bookkeeping. Young people trained for the broader and more professional aspects of commercial life have every prospect of finding for themselves highly useful places in business as they demonstrate their fitness for more responsible duties.8

No Factor Overlooked

In seeking methods for improvement, everything that affects the outcomes of work done by secondary school commercial students should be recognized and considered.9 Some of these items may be: selecting students as to

9 Nichols, op. cit., p. 111.
aptitudes, better teaching methods, integration with other subjects, and a more careful selection of subject content. In observing the possibilities for reorganization, the resultant benefits to young people in school are of prime importance. General and special education up to the point of enrolling in a commercial department, local conditions that affect the students and the subject matter selection must be points of departure for improvement.\textsuperscript{10}

A more specific example of items to be considered is contained in the report by Weersing after a study of the organization and administration of commercial education in Minnesota.\textsuperscript{11} He found the state administration skeptical as to the value of commercial education as it was constituted at the time, but the local administrators realized the need of broad practical courses as a part of general education. The latter were at a loss as to know where to begin, thus proving the need for adequate leadership such as a state director and a city director of commercial education. Weersing found such courses as junior business training, business organization, advertising, and salesmanship occurring infrequently in Minnesota. The subjects for the training of students in personal business affairs were also rare. In general, the type of training was of the clerical type.

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 109-110.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Weersing, op. cit.}, pp. 61, 62, 127.
Duplication in Curriculums

What Weersing found true in Minnesota might not be true at all in some other state. This instance was cited to show some of the findings by one investigator. There should be more originality and less imitation in setting up commercial curriculums. The complexity of business education is such that no single curriculum will properly suffice for all kinds of pupils, in all localities, for achieving the varying aims of the field as a whole, and of the particular aims of each subject.12 Academic and vocational pupils have a different point of view, and local conditions which make mixing the groups necessary, adds to the problem of the curriculum-maker.13 Very little is to be gained by attempting the impossible. The small school is especially confronted by the fact of non-segregation, as well as a multiple-subject curriculum. Some subjects can be taught in alternate years or semesters, but only that which can be done well should be attempted.14

Keep Objectives Foremost

Nichols presents a concrete suggestion that can be helpful in curriculum construction. This is to keep in mind the extent to which technical skills should be developed so as to conform with modern office methods. The classroom should

13 Ibid., p. 128.
14 Weersing, op. cit., p. 142.
be regarded as a business office efficiently managed.\textsuperscript{15} The Teachers should have personal characteristics and the occupational intelligence to cope with such an arrangement.\textsuperscript{16}

Although the nation is progressive and there never will be occupational stability, it is the obligation of those responsible for business education to be familiar with local commerce and industry. Local employment conditions should be studied and weighed. Social conditions affecting the ability to pay for and to enjoy business education are of equal importance.\textsuperscript{17}

Means for Accomplishment—Vocational

Possible sources of the foregoing information should be considered. There are such means as community and occupational surveys for the purpose of determining how many and the kinds of jobs there are for which to train, and whether these jobs are of initial-employment or promotional types. The sex and desired amount of training of employees and whether these people are migratory, should be determined.\textsuperscript{18} A job analysis is not the answer to what should be done to improve business education, because it indicates what is done on the job instead of what should be done.\textsuperscript{19} However, such an

\textsuperscript{15}Nichols, op. cit., p. 144.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., pp. 161-162.
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 94.
\textsuperscript{18}Haynes and Graham, op. cit., p. 101.
\textsuperscript{19}Lomax, op. cit., p. 78.
analysis is supposed to show what traits and duties are required for various occupations and could be given some weight if used with care.

Social surveys link schools with society by training students in those business activities that are engaged in by adults as determined by a survey. The opinions of thoughtful graduates can be used to some extent to determine what needs to be taught in the school and what can be left to on-the-job training. The results of this method should be tempered with judgment because if the training has been given, the graduate may not know how difficult a task might have been; or conversely, if the training had not been given, the graduate may not know how much this training could expedite the work.

Means for Accomplishment--Social

In preceding paragraphs, commercial education and its vocational outcomes have been discussed. This is only a part of the obligation that should be assumed by the schools. According to Nichols, every individual, without disability, should produce as much as he consumes. The key word there is "consumes." Consumer knowledge should be one of the outcomes of business education. Tonne and Tonne say:

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20 Haynes and Graham, op. cit., p. 110.
21 Lomax, op. cit., p. 87.
22 Nichols, op. cit., p. 6.
Our economic knowledge is hampered because in this day of specialization it is difficult to see the economic process as a whole. Most of us for the most part see only small segments of it.²³

The whole field of production, marketing, financing, and consumption should be used by business education to assist in training for the well-being of the people. When over a billion dollars a year is spent in national advertising, and high-pressure advertising and selling flourish without restraint, it is an obligation that the schools train our future citizens of the communities to cope with these influences. As a matter of fact, more emphasis has been placed so far on efficiency in production than on efficient marketing.²⁴

Along with efficient marketing, it would be well that students have a better economic understanding. This country is famed for its efficiency in production, but wastefulness abounds everywhere. Students should be made to realize that the consequences of this waste will eventually be felt by everyone.²⁵ The weaknesses of the economic system should be pointed out, but considerably more in the way of suggesting means of altering the situation can be taught.

It [the school system] must build up an emotional urge to better our economic life. It must make every school child and every adult feel a personal obligation to improve the typical human lot. It must create a crusading spirit in the almost thirty million citizens

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²³ Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 30.
²⁴ Ibid., pp. 30-41.
²⁵ Nichols, op. cit., p. 61.
now under the control of the American school. Unless this attitude can be developed concomitant to the knowledge of what to do, the effort will in all probability be largely futile.26

Objectives for Economic Efficiency

Wastefulness has been discussed above in a national sense. Starting on a smaller scale, and building up from personal competency, to family, and then community economic stability is probably the proper approach. Ability to save and invest is as important as ability to earn. It is appropriate here to list the objectives for economic efficiency as set forth by the Educational Policies Commission. This list is taken from "The Purposes of Education in American Democracy," page 90, as quoted by Strong.

Objectives for Economic Efficiency:

Work. The educated producer knows the satisfaction of good workmanship.

Occupational Information. The educated producer understands the requirements and opportunities for various jobs.

Occupational Choice. The educated producer has selected his occupation.

Occupational Efficiency. The educated producer succeeds in his chosen vocation.

Occupational Adjustment. The educated producer maintains and improves his efficiency.

Occupational Appreciation. The educated producer appreciates the social value of his work.

Personal Economics. The educated consumer plans the economics of his own life.

Consumer Judgment. The educated consumer develops standards for guiding his expenditures.

26 Tonne and Tonne, op. cit., p. 48
Efficiency in Buying. The educated consumer is an informed and skillful buyer.

Consumer Protection. The educated consumer takes appropriate measures to safeguard his interests.27

From these objectives alone, one can see how important public education is, and what a great part commercial education has, or can have. The large enrollment in commercial courses shows the popularity with both students and parents, and that commercial education is "dynamic and expansive."28 Since secondary education is becoming more and more democratic, there is little doubt that the enrollment will continue to increase. With recognition of the broad scope of the purposes of commercial education, the curriculums will expand to include a larger variety of courses. This will bring commercial education to a heretofore unattained level and responsibility.29

Strong doubts the necessity of the addition of new courses to accomplish the new objectives, and divides the objectives into four general groups: prevocational, vocational, personal-use, and social-economic education.30

Integration is Essential

To divide the purposes of commercial education into groups for greater understanding, is all very well. The division into many separately organized subject units within the field of

27 Strong, op. cit., p. 74.
28 Weersing, op. cit., p. 25.
29 Ibid.
30 Strong, op. cit., p. 76.
commercial education is not without danger. Teachers must never lose sight of the fact that to maintain an appreciation and understanding, while indulging in their specialization, is vital. They must remember that their particular subjects must be integrated with others in the same field, and with secondary education as a whole.

Regarding integration, Lomax quotes from Alexander Inglis in his Principles of Secondary Education, page 378:

The integrating function must at all times be conceived as correlated with the differentiating function of secondary education, and the relation between the two functions must be considered as supplemental rather than conflicting, the supplemental relation being necessitated by the relation of the two factors of integration and differentiation in the process of social evolution.31

Guidance a Necessity in Modern Education

One of the general trends in high school education today is toward an increasing program of organized guidance. Every student is entitled to a certain amount of formal or informal guidance to complete his program of education. That educational authorities are cognizant of the fact, is evidenced in almost all of their writings in the past few years. Readers are impressed by the frequent reference to guidance in books and articles written by those in the business field. Guidance, either expressed or implied, is a thunderous undertone that should not be ignored by administrators and teachers.

It has already been noted that while high school attendance is increasing rapidly, the study programs have not been

correspondingly expanded to meet the needs of the vast number of boys and girls whose interests and abilities vary so widely. As a result, many students choose commercial courses to complete their electives, or because there is nothing else they particularly desire, or their abilities are not sufficient for other courses. This condition will continue until training in other fields is provided for them. It is a huge task for the business departments to fulfill the needs of these students without lowering the standards for those wishing to prepare for vocational occupations.\footnote{Nichols, op. cit., p. 67.} A possible solution of the problem is to expand the single-curriculum commercial program in such a way as to conform to individual differences. Some students will do better in accounting; some, in sales work; others, in stenographic work; or work of the simple clerical type.\footnote{Ibid., p. 10.}

Vocational Guidance

The vocational function of business education has sometimes been minimized in order to satisfy the criticisms of the cultural-minded, and also to obtain wider recognition for business education.\footnote{Strong, op. cit., p. 69.} As a result, the curriculum has been heavily laden with college preparatory subjects. The recognition of individual differences has brought about a change in ideas. Many students should not attempt college training
Nichols assures us that there should be no hesitancy in providing training, either wholly or in part, for commercial positions. For many students, economic necessity causes them to enroll in courses which will provide training for initial positions. To properly serve those having different requirements, it is important that commercial education dispense with many practices that have only tradition as the foundation.

It is unfortunate that some piece of national legislation has not provided assistance to the commercial program. The Smith-Hughes Act has provided unity in agriculture, industry, and home-making. This has been done in the face of the fact that there are more students enrolled in commercial education than in these three combined. The George-Dean Act, in addition to providing additional appropriation for the further development of agriculture, home economics, and trades and industries, made a special provision for distributive education. This is provision for only a minor portion of the business education program.

Without national assistance, it is still the responsibility of those in charge of curriculum construction to meet

35 Nichols, op. cit., p. 19.
36 Ibid., p. 15.
37 Ibid., p. 9.
38 Ibid., p. 75.
39 Strong, op. cit., p. 94.
the needs of pupils of varying mental equipment. One probable solution is the provision of more clerical training courses and less emphasis on stenographic training.\textsuperscript{40}

To recognize individual differences and provide suitable training programs is insufficient. There should be a definite program of guidance so that students will be able to select vocations suitable to their abilities, and training courses suitable for the vocations. "Everything that is done to assist them in selecting wisely is guidance."\textsuperscript{41} Every effort should be made to inform students as to the opportunities and the limitations of any vocational field, and as to the aims and purposes of each course in the curriculum.\textsuperscript{42}

Testing as an Aid in Guidance

The various types of intelligence and aptitude tests are an excellent means of guiding students in subject selection in accordance with mental abilities and mental readiness. There are limitations in the use of these tests, and until further advancement is made, it may be necessary to confine high school training to the preparation for initial-contact positions.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40}Nichols, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 113.

\textsuperscript{41}Weersing, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 142.

\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 143.

\textsuperscript{43}Nichols, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 114-115.
Lomax gives the following list of the uses of educational tests:

1. To enable a student to know his individual learning achievement by comparison with other members of the class, and especially with the student's own previous learning achievement.
2. To diagnose strong points and weak places in the student's achievement on which to construct a program of remedial instruction.
3. To set up standards of student achievement.
4. To provide data on which to determine promotion.
5. To establish admission to high school or college.
6. To ascertain the efficiency of a teacher's instruction.
7. To provide data for educational and vocational guidance.
8. To help check the comparative efficiency of a school organization with other school organizations. 44

Other Bases for Guidance

Not only is it essential to consider individual differences in setting up a training program, it is also of importance to recognize the significance of local differences in the personnel of commercial classes. Personal traits and physical appearance should influence the choice of an occupation and the training for it. However, these characteristics cannot have much bearing on the organization of a curriculum unless certain characteristics are present or lacking in most of the students. After a multiple-training program has been set up, these things will have an influence in the guidance program. 45

44 Lomax, op. cit., pp. 171-172.
Personal Traits Developed

Natural endowment will influence the extent of development of certain desirable business traits. However, it is believed that business ethics, character, honesty, accuracy, industry, initiative, dependability, loyalty, and ambition can be developed to some extent in all pupils. All of these are important in counselling, and the development of the traits should be shared by all teachers, regardless of departments or subjects.  

Scope of Vocational Guidance

The problem of recognizing innate abilities and developing desirable traits is large enough within itself. Guidance counsellors must not only do these things, but also recommend training in a field where requirements run the gamut of from the manual manipulative skills to those of high scholastic ability. There must also be noted that initial-contact positions differ in requirements from ultimate-goal positions.  

The routing of poor students into the commercial departments has been a practice which proper vocational guidance can overcome. Some students should not enroll in this department, while others need to be discouraged from the stenographic field. Most girls in the business departments enroll

\[46\] Ibid. p. 158.

\[47\] Ibid. p. 128-129.
for shorthand in spite of the fact that eighty-nine per cent of office work is clerical. Such practices result in personal discouragement and economic loss. 48

Business education for vocational use should be provided only for those qualified to use it. This selective factor in commercial education will tend to have more and more significance as business occupations become more specialized. 49 When those in charge of employing office personnel fully realize that many more than the traditional skills are used by their staffs, they will demand that the newer skills be taught in the schools. This can be done by a modification of existing commercial curriculums without sacrificing general education. In this way, the needs of students, society, and business can be met. 50

High School Mortality

In connection with student needs, it is appropriate to mention high school mortality. The drop-outs range from thirty to forty per cent each year. Originally, it was thought that economic pressure was the underlying factor. Now it is conceded to be mostly social pressure--freedom from parental restraint and more personal funds. It has

48 Nichols, op. cit., p. 92.
49 Ibid., p. 65.
50 Ibid., p. 156.
been proved that there is greater benefit to the student to attend school than in early employment, at least until there is actual economic pressure.\textsuperscript{51}

The problem of high school mortality is not the entire responsibility of the commercial department, but with properly organized curricular offerings, it should have an influence to keep students in school for longer periods. This will be a benefit to both the students themselves and the quality of work they can perform when they do actually leave school.\textsuperscript{52}

Responsibility of the Commercial Department

The responsibility of the commercial department is two-fold. It must provide a suitable training program and vocational guidance. This guidance should precede enrollment and continue during the training period.\textsuperscript{53} The adjustment of young people to modern conditions of living "cannot be left to the unguided forces of immediate environment."\textsuperscript{54}

The growing organism, in order to qualify in highly developed modern life, must be subjected to impressions beyond the scope of its senses. . . . It must draw from the past the best that has been said and done. It must come into the possession of its inheritance.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{53}Ibid., p. 92.
\textsuperscript{54}Buckingham, op. cit., p. 1.
\textsuperscript{55}Ibid., p. 2.
CHAPTER IV

CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF OBJECTIVES AND CURRICULAR
OFFERINGS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

Introduction

This chapter is for the purpose of determining two things: first, whether or not school administrators and teachers are cognizant of the philosophies and trends in business education; and second, is there conformation of these findings in the curricular offerings.

Bulletins from ten state departments of education were selected, and a brief statement of the philosophy of high school business education in each of the states is given here. Likewise, courses of study from nine selected cities and one county (comprising four schools) were used as a basis to indicate what are the objectives of business education in city high schools, and what are the courses offered in order to achieve those objectives.

Objectives in Ten States

Arkansas.—The State Department of Education is aware that business education should provide both training in skill subjects for initial employment, and training in general business that will aid the student in conducting his own affairs. So far as a vocational career is concerned,
it is not believed that full training can be given in the high schools, but it is thought that the amount of training that is offered should be conducive to better prospects for ultimate success. Three curriculums are suggested for the larger high schools: one is for retail sales people, another is for secretaries, and the third is for bookkeepers and clerical workers.

**Florida.**—In order to conform to the objectives of secondary education, it is necessary that a program of studies be offered in both general and special education, in keeping with the age and ability of the learner so that he may make a satisfactory contribution to personal and social life. Business education is integrated with general education because it provides for the understanding of business agencies, services, methods, practices, principles, and organizations. Another phase of the program is to provide vocational skills for initial employment and ultimate advancement.

**Indiana.**—The emphasis in high school business education has been changed from development of skills to a broader field of instruction to direct students toward a more satisfactory personal and social life. The demand for occupational efficiency is not to be disregarded in spite of this change in emphasis.

**Kansas.**—The emphasis is on understanding rather than the development of vocational skills. Given special attention are: understanding of economic problems, developing desirable personal and business traits; consumer education; and vocational
guidance. However, training is also given for the development of knowledges and skills for business positions.

**Louisiana.**—The teacher is the dynamic factor in an educational program, but the curriculum is important in determining the successful functioning of the school. The school must be critical of the content of the curriculum and teaching procedures. Nothing is mentioned about the commercial curriculum in particular, but the above information is followed by a tentative sequence of commercial courses.

**Mississippi.**—The value of vocational education is well-known, but there is a difference of opinion concerning what agencies shall provide it. There should be a modification of prevailing practices in the secondary schools in order for students to be trained for flexible vocational capabilities. The program should provide skill training and broad knowledge of related fields.

**North Carolina.**—Business education, integrated with other parts of secondary education, has the responsibility of making a large social contribution to a democracy. Business education should contribute to the life of the individual so that he has knowledge of economic affairs.

**Oregon.**—Vocational skills and broad business education are both emphasized. Business education in the high schools should offer three related fields: consumer education, pre-vocational training, and vocational skills.
Texas.—The emphasis is on broad training rather than skills. Of particular note are the following: developing an understanding of basic business affairs for personal and social use; and vocational guidance.

Virginia.—Business is so important in the lives of everyone today that some business education should be included in a liberal education. Business education has possibilities for both general educational development, and the acquisition of skills and knowledges for vocational use.

Objectives and Curricula in Ten Cities

Austin, Texas.—The entire curriculum of this city was thoroughly revised in anticipation of the change in the school system of the state from an eleven- to a twelve-year plan in 1940. "The various curriculum committees sought to develop courses of study in which the emphasis would be on understanding and utilization rather than the mere remembering of facts."1 The business training teachers, under the guidance of the curriculum director, developed the following course of study with grade placement:

- Exploratory business training, 8a and 8b
- Business training, 9a and 9b
- Typewriting, 9a and 9b (four semesters offered)
- Commercial arithmetic, 10a
- Business letter writing, 11b
- Commercial law, 11b
- Commercial geography, 11a
- Salesmanship, 11a

1Texas, Austin, Public Schools, *Course of Study in Business, Junior Level*, June, 1940, Introduction.
Bookkeeping, 11a, 11b, 12a, 12b  
Shorthand, 11a, 11b, 12a, 12b  
Office training and placement (secretarial practice)  
Marketing (probably to be begun in 1939-40, in line with general trends)

Berkeley, California.--The board of education of this city offers vocational and non-vocational objectives. The business education platform is as follows:

Recognizing that the end of all education is to prepare for a socially valuable, personally satisfactory life with an ability to meet its problems, and recognizing the obligation of business education to further these objectives and also to prepare students for entrance into or rehabilitation in commercial employment with resultant success, a business curriculum of senior high school and upper secondary grade should meet the demands of society and business by offering a flexible program. In such a program of training, business techniques, skills, knowledge, and attitudes should be inculcated and desirable personality traits such as neatness, punctuality, dependability, honesty, courtesy, etc., should be fostered.

Continuous guidance, with classroom teachers participating, should be the focal point of the business program. Through prognostic testing and guidance, able students should be directed toward entrance into occupational preparation classes. Less able students should be directed to the non-vocational business or remedial courses. 2

The following subjects are listed as comprising the commercial program:

| Advertising | Economic geography, 1 and 2 |
| Banking | Filing |
| Bookkeeping, 1 and 2 | Machine calculation, 1, 2, 3, |
| Bookkeeping, machine | Office practice, 1 and 2 |
| Bookkeeping, applied | Office practice, applied |
| Business English | Salesmanship, 1 and 2 |
| Business law | Cooperative selling |
| Business mathematics | Stenography, 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| Commerce, 1 and 2 | Typewriting, 1, 2, 3, 4 |

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This is an unusually full program of studies. It is to be recalled from the list on page 30, that California is one of the few states having a director of business education.

El Paso, Texas.--"It is recognized that curriculum construction must be a continuous process, since the schools are under the necessity of making adaptations and changes in curriculum materials and in classroom procedures." After this general statement, the courses are listed with objectives for each. The emphasis is vocational or personal-use, depending on the subject. For instance, Commercial English is designed for those not going to college; and Everyday Business is to aid in planning the individual's life in the home and in the school, and lays a foundation for contacts in the financial and professional world. The subjects are listed below with grade placement, if given:

Advertising
Bookkeeping, 1b, 1a, 2b, 2a
Business English, 3b, 3a, 4b, 4a
Commercial arithmetic, 1b, 1a
Commercial geography

Evansville, Indiana.--Before giving a list of the commercial offerings, it is interesting to note the bases for construction. The thoroughness of the plan is noteworthy and the method of attack is quoted in outline form as given:

I. A study of what other cities are doing
   1. A study of recently revised business curricula of other cities
   2. A study of syllabuses of commercial subjects of city and state departments of education

3Texas, El Paso, School Board of the Public Schools, Course of Study in High School Commercial Subjects, 1936, p.2.
II. A study of what "frontier thinkers" are saying
   1. Published books by leaders in the field of business education
   2. Magazine articles
   3. Personal conferences with leaders in business education

III. A study of what organizations interested in business training are finding and planning
   1. Research studies prepared by commercial teacher training institutions
   2. Reports of commercial conferences
   3. Statements of the NEA
   4. Commercial arts course of study for Indiana schools, Bulletin No. 100G, 1932

IV. A job opportunity survey of store and office positions in Evansville

The conclusion in the Job Survey was to give to both vocational and non-vocational students general business information.

The curriculum decided upon is listed below by grades:

Ninth
   Business, 1, 2
Tenth
   Personal typing
   Economic geography
   Introductory bookkeeping
Eleventh
   Bookkeeping, 2
   Store sales
   Typewriting, 2, 3
   Shorthand, 1, 2

Twelfth
   Store management
   Store practice
   Business, 3, 4
   Clerical practice
   Shorthand, 3
   Secretarial training

Flint, Michigan.--It is regretted that the entire commercial program of this city was not available as it is one of the few having both city and state directors. However, courses of study were available in several subjects. General Business Information is offered in the Junior High School as a means of general education and as a preparation for more

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intensive study in the commercial curriculum in the Senior High School. Two years of shorthand and typewriting are offered, with the typewriting being taught for both vocational and personal use. Economics and economic geography are emphasized in the Senior High School. In these courses, special attention is given to consumer education since wise buying is necessary to maintain and improve our standards of living.

Fort Worth, Texas.--All of the teachers, administrators, and supervisors of the schools in this city, under the guidance of a curriculum director, formulated certain general principles for curriculum construction.

The public schools of a dynamic society are charged with the difficult responsibility of serving as a conscious agent for social improvement. Satisfactory assumption of this responsibility requires that the public schools proceed in such a manner that two major objectives will be accomplished. The first of these is that of making it possible for each boy and girl to acquire an understanding of the present social order. . . . The second is that of making it possible for each boy and girl to achieve the maximum of his or her potential ability to contribute to and live in a better social order.5

Special committees of teachers formulated the objectives for various study divisions. The committee for developing a commercial curriculum were endeavoring to change that field of study to conform with present-day needs. The bases for the change is given as follows:

Demands for the education and protection of the consumer, for the promotion of a better understanding of sound economic and business principles, and for a more general knowledge of our contemporary, social-economic problems are finding a response in the development of new social-business education.6

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6Ibid., p. 1.
The following subjects with the special emphasis of each is given below:

**Bookkeeping, 1, 2, 3, 4**
- Social-economic, personal-use, vocational
**Business arithmetic**
  - For meeting business situations and preparation for bookkeeping
**Business economic problems**
  - A non-vocational, non-technical course stressing present-day economic problems from a practical point of view
**Business law**
**Everyday business**
  - An introduction to business
**Secretarial training**
  - Advanced shorthand and typewriting
**Shorthand, 1, 2, 3**
  - Vocational objectives
**Typewriting, 1, 2, 3**
  - For vocational and personal use

**Little Rock, Arkansas.**—When nineteen members of the high school faculty met at the University of Texas in the summer of 1945, the following philosophy of business education was developed:

> The philosophy of business education places first the needs of the pupil and develops him as richly as possible for life in a democratic system. It is not something apart from the other phases of the school program, but it is an integral part of the whole, since making a living is one of the major aspects of life.7

The following list is the commercial course of study with grade placement:

- Typewriting, 9a, 9b
- General business training, 9a, 9b
- Commercial arithmetic 10b
- Economic geography 10b
- Typewriting, 10a
- Shorthand, 10a

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7Arkansas, Little Rock, Curriculum Material for the High School, August, 1945, Foreword.
Typewriting, 11b
Shorthand, 11b
Bookkeeping, 11b
Typewriting, 11a
Shorthand, 11a
Bookkeeping, 11a
Stenography, 12b
Bookkeeping, 12b
Salesmanship, 12b
Secretarial practice, 12a
Machine bookkeeping, 12a
Commercial law, 12a
Business English, 12a

Lubbock, Texas.--No general statement of objectives was available. The courses offered, with grade placement and objectives for each, are given below:

Grade 9
Commercial arithmetic
to develop fundamental processes and for understanding of ordinary business papers
General business training
to learn how to manage personal affairs, to secure a position, to major in commercial work, and for intelligent buying, and consumership.

Grades 10 and 11
Bookkeeping, 41, 42
personal, club, and business records
Typewriting, 31, 32
personal or vocational

Grade 11
Business English, 41
grammar, vocabulary, letters, books, magazines, for a better understanding of the business world
Salesmanship non-vocational
Shorthand vocational

Sacramento, California.--No statement of aims was given in the outline of courses of study. The following courses, with grade placement, were given:

Grade 9
Junior business training, 1, 2

Grade 10
Typewriting, 1, 2
Bookkeeping, 1, 2
Business fundamentals, 1

Grade 11
Typewriting, 3, 4
Shorthand 1, 2
Bookkeeping, 3, 4
Grade 12
Special accounting, one semester
Shorthand and transcription, 3, 4
Correspondence, one semester
Commercial law
Retail selling, one semester
Cooperative training, practical application in
shorthand, bookkeeping, and clerical work
Office practice

San Diego County, California.—The monograph of the cur-
riculum of San Diego County is unlike others in this study.
For the preceding curriculums, the work was in one city.
This study concerns a composite program in large secondary
schools and was chosen for its interest and unique make-up.
It is a program for Grossmont Union High School and Sweetwater
Union High School District. The latter is composed of four
high schools: Sweetwater Union, Chula Vista Junior, National
Junior, and Sweetwater Junior.

The subjects offered with grade placement are as follows:

General business, 9
Typewriting, 9
Typewriting, 10, 11, or 12 (one unit)
Shorthand, 11, 12
Business English, 11 or 12
Bookkeeping, 11, 12
Commercial law, 11
Advanced business training, 11
Office training, 12 (secretarial practice)

In order to get a clearer view of the results of this
study, the material has been compiled in Table 3 on page 61.
The first column lists, in alphabetical order, the subjects
offered in nine of the ten schools surveyed. (It will be re-
membered that one school bulletin gave the philosophy but not
the course of study.) The second column gives the number of
schools offering each course, and the third column gives the
### TABLE 3

FREQUENCY OF COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS OFFERED IN NINE CITIES COMPARED WITH THOSE OFFERED IN ONE HUNDRED CITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>No. of Schools in 9 Cities Offering Each Subject</th>
<th>% of Schools in 9 Cities Offering Each Subject&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>% of Schools in 100 Cities Offering Each Subject&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping, Machine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55.55</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Fundamentals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Letter Writing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Training, Advanced Calculating Machines</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Arithmetic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Geography</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55.55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Law</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77.77</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Business Training</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>88.88</td>
<td>Not Included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Practice</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesmanship</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial Training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling, Cooperative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling, Retail</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthand</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store Practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typewriting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>From survey in Chapter IV

<sup>b</sup>From Walter's survey
percentage of schools offering each course. It is possible that the small number of schools surveyed does not present a true picture of the subjects taught in the average high school. Therefore, the fourth column has been added for comparative purposes. The calculations were made from a report of curricular offerings in one hundred high schools by Walters.\(^8\) The cities represented by these one hundred schools range in size from 2,500 inhabitants to a population of over two million. A school from practically every section of the United States is included in his survey. It will be noticed that the percentages in the third and fourth columns are similar in the most commonly offered subjects. In the less frequently offered courses, the difference is great in most cases.

One particularly difficult point in making subject comparisons is the fact that some courses of similar content have a variety of names. It seems to be a good suggestion at this time that some uniformity in nomenclature within the field of business education might be helpful. Otherwise, it is doubtful if a true picture can be given in surveys of large or small proportions.

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CHAPTER V

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUALS AND AGENCIES

IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

Introduction

Up to this point, most of the discussion has been concerned with philosophy, but there is always a dividing line between theory and practice. Perhaps, there is a series of steps in progression between the two points, rather than a real division. Businessmen who scoff at educational theory should remember that the ideas of today become the realities of tomorrow. Neither can business teachers afford to ignore the practical suggestions from businessmen. After all, the business teacher is not formulating a beautiful theory for itself alone. It is a means to an end. The goal is to aid students to become citizens with adaptability to constant changes, and knowledges and skills for productivity. In other words, there can be no dissolution of the partnership between educational theory and practical application.

Several groups of people and several agencies are involved in the steps of progression from theory to practical application. The student, the teaching profession, the world of business, the administration, the school plant, and the parents are all of vital importance. Figure 2, on
page 64, illustrates the interrelation of individuals and agencies in the scheme of business education. The cycle

![Diagram showing the interrelation of individuals and agencies in business education.]

begins and ends with the youth of the nation. The parts of the cycle are so closely interwoven, it matters little for present purposes which intermediate point is discussed first. Concerning the initial point, there can be no doubt.

The Student

The student is the basic element in a school. The student is the reason why the school was established. The school must be made to serve his needs. In a democracy, is it too far-fetched to encourage the student to realize his need and express a desire for its fulfillment? Development of initiative is sufficient reason for encouragement in solving problems. Insist that students, individually
and collectively, express needs and as a group work out means for attainment. It is surprising how the modern generation has its feet on the ground; what excellent ideas can be brought to light if the proper encouragement is given.

A class or a commercial club can accomplish a great deal whether the problem is simple or complex; whether it is merely "what are the duties of a mail clerk," or the whole field of occupational guidance; whether it is the operation of a mimeograph, or means for acquiring more machines for the department. Young people must be guided, of course. Letting them assist in their own salvation will be a lesson not soon forgotten.

The Teaching Profession

The opportunities and responsibilities of the teaching profession are great. How much greater those opportunities and responsibilities are to the teachers of business education depends on one's viewpoint. The business teachers do feel that perhaps theirs is the heavier burden with its corresponding possibilities. As individuals, the business education teachers in high schools are sincere and hard-working. As a group, it is doubtful if there is sufficient cooperation. If a school is large, group consultations are essential for concerted effort in setting up objectives and working out means for achieving those objectives. The same procedure for a city school system would save time and effort and turn out better products.
For this purpose, a number of cities and states have employed directors of business education. If a school does not have such an official, there is no reason to wait for administrative wheels to turn. Teachers themselves, can take the initiative and work together for the common good of all. Working with others is one of the objectives in teaching business. Let the teachers themselves set the example.

There are still a number of commercial teachers who were thrust into the department years ago because of necessity. Most of these have done a good job, especially in their subject fields. However, it is doubtful if they have the broad business outlook that is now being fostered increasingly in teacher-training institutions. For that reason, there may be disagreements as to objectives among teachers in a certain group. To clarify any doubts as to objectives, a closer contact with business will be helpful. Employment in a business office is the best way to accomplish this. If such an arrangement is impossible, as many observations in various types of business offices, and consultations with workers and executives will leave no doubt as to business needs.

The final pages of Chapter III were devoted to the importance of both general and vocational guidance. How can a teacher be an effective counsellor unless his experience and knowledge are adequate and up to date? Some schools have a definite guidance program. This is excellent if there is trained personnel and not too much attention given to the compilation of records. Records are necessary, but guidance
is for the benefit of the students and not for producing an orderly card file. Guidance is not necessarily confined to the counselling room. Often, incidental guidance is better than the formal type, so teachers of business should be alert to their opportunities. A part of the opportunity might be to assist counsellors who may be efficient but lack modern vocational information. It is sad, indeed, to stand by helplessly when a charming and intelligent student comes by after graduation and says she has to work but does not know how to do anything. Guidance missed a cue somewhere when such a student was allowed to graduate without sufficient skills and basic business knowledge. Shorthand and typewriting scheduled for the senior year does little to alleviate the needs of a student who has never been one of the college preparatory group. With only 20 to 30 per cent of the students going to college, schools need not be ashamed to offer vocational guidance for initial employment and courses for vocational use.

The World of Business

Those who have daily contact with business, whether as a worker or as an executive, should know the various requirements for business success. They also hold the key to information to be included in the broad programs of knowledges for both vocational and non-vocational students. A closer contact between business and business teachers can result in advantages for everyone. The teacher will be certain that
the methods and materials are of recent vintage; the student will receive instructions with confidence and inspiration; and business will benefit from increased efficiency of new workers. Contacts between schools and business can be made individually and through organizations. In some communities, the National Office Managers Association has taken the initiative in attempts to produce better relations between schools and business. Other organizations of a civic nature can be interested if the resultant benefit to business, business teachers, students, and the community can be pointed out to them.

The School Plant

While the dynamic force in a school is the teacher, the school plant can either expand or limit the activities of the teacher. Courses aimed at development of broad knowledges can be taught with a minimum of equipment. Materials from business establishments which sell goods or services can supplement textbooks. Teaching skill subjects is in another category. Equipment in the way of machines and proper furniture are imperative. The close contact with business can be helpful in indicating what skills can be taught in the high school, and which should be left to on-the-job training. If it can be proved to businessmen that teaching certain skills in school can be of benefit to them, the necessary equipment will be provided. School boards have often refused funds for machines because the cost seems prohibitive. There are usually a
sufficient number of businessmen on such a board to help secure the equipment if the value of the idea has previously been proved to them.

The Administration

It is the duty of administrators to view the entire school system as a whole and do what is best for all concerned. Each department must realize this and not have a sense of defeat when requests are not granted. However, if well-defined recommendations are made by an entire group in a business-like manner, they will be given a hearing. Some administrators, like some business teachers, need orientation in modern business practices. This is a difficult, but not insurmountable obstacle to progress.

The Parents

Occupational guidance for parents would solve many problems of student-subject incompatibility. Parents should be thoroughly informed as to possibilities in the various vocational fields. Parents should likewise be informed as to the student's school progress in the subject fields and the results of prognostic tests. If parents can see job possibilities in relation to the abilities of their own child, then that child is well on the way to a successful life. Studying shorthand because some relative has a good secretarial position is a common, but certainly not a recommended, procedure in subject selection. Occupational guidance for parents will solve many unhappy situations.
The Cycle Completed

The cycle comprising the steps of progression from theory to practice began with the student. The cycle is finished when the steps lead back to the student. Among other educational agencies, the school must influence the student in developing proper character traits, give him both general and economic backgrounds, develop in him skills for making a living, and assist him in becoming a happy and useful citizen—such is education in a democracy.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of an educational philosophy in our democracy has been a long and painful one because of conflicting elements. The original concept was based on the aristocratic division of producers and consumers. The modern concept is that the producers are also the consumers. In order to fulfill its obligation to society, the school should provide training in knowledges and skills for production, and training in knowledges for intelligent consumption.

A need has to be recognized before means can be employed for the alleviation of the necessity. For this reason, the school only approximates, but never quite fulfills, the needs of society. Two World Wars precipitated changes that would have taken years to accomplish under normal progress. As a result, the school is lagging more than is customary.

The division in the school which seems best adapted to provide training in both economic knowledges and skill-training for employment, is the commercial department. That the public believes this to be true, is indicated in the large enrollment in commercial subjects. It is a challenge to all educators in the commercial field to adjust the curriculum content to socially desirable business practices. The cost in professional preparation and sociological research is
great, but the possibilities are also great for making commercial education, representative of a program of economic education, into a power for the unification of all education.

A study of the philosophy of commercial education as presented in the bulletins of ten state departments of education and ten city courses of study, reveals that educators are cognizant of the needs of modern society. However, the curriculums presented in the city courses of study do not provide sufficient training to realize the objectives.

The principal criticisms of the existing commercial program are given in the following paragraphs.

1. The curriculum is too narrow, and emphasizes mechanical skills, with very little educational content.

2. There is too much duplication in curriculums regardless of basically different physical factors.

3. Many students enroll for skill-building subjects when their capabilities are not sufficient to indicate success in these vocational fields.

4. An insufficient number of students enroll for training in subjects dealing with economic knowledges which concern every member of society.

Various means of alleviating the difficulties have been presented by eminent teachers in the field of commercial education. These are listed in subsequent paragraphs.

1. There should be a broadening of the commercial curriculum by the addition of courses, the enrichment of the content of present courses, or both.
2. The extent of the commercial offerings should be determined by the needs of the special community, the particular groups to be taught, the size and equipment of the school plant, and the teaching staff.

3. A sufficient program of formal or informal guidance should be inaugurated in every school. This is to direct the students into the various courses of study according to individual needs and abilities. Otherwise, students cannot realize the utmost in accomplishment for personal use, or for satisfying the needs of society.

4. Cooperation within each school, within each state, and within the nation, will insure a clarification of objectives and provide, not duplication, but unification in the commercial program for the betterment of individuals and society.

5. The following individuals and agencies have a responsibility in the scheme of business education: the business student, the parents, the teaching profession, the school administration, and the business world.

In spite of the size of the problems of commercial education, and its importance in the school program, there are many who believe there is cause for optimism. With research discovering new ways to solve the problems, and with many opportunities in the teaching field, perhaps there is room for optimism. We shall hope that "the very magnitude of the task is inspiring."1

1Weersing, op. cit., p. 3.
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