

The Open School Door

A Series of Articles on Clinton County
Schools and Their Problems

By JAMES EGAN, Principal

DeWitt High School

What good is guidance testing? How does a testing program benefit the school system and, more important, the children?

The school testing programs have received nation-wide interest during recent months. The National Defense Education Act of 1958, under title V, has emphasized the importance of the testing program in a school system. Testing to identify students with outstanding abilities is in accordance with the purpose of the Federal legislation.

The Act is concerned not with the size of the school system, but rather with finding and encouraging talent, with the improving of ways and means of teaching, and the furthering of knowledge itself.

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THE OBJECTIVES of a testing program are outlined as follows:

1. The gathering of test data concerning the student that would enable the counselor and teacher to sharpen and clarify their judgements.

2. A testing program would help identify the exceptional child at both ends of the academic ladder. This is significant, especially if the school system wishes to group homogeneously.

3. A testing program can help to analyze the learning difficulties and problems of each student. Failing students, disciplinary problems, emotional and personality difficulties, all can be provided for when sufficient data have been collected.

4. A testing program could be used to develop the curriculum needed in a school system. Recognition of individual differences have been identified.

Implementation of a good testing program is not enough. Continuous appraisal of the program is absolutely essential to check accomplishments. Without following up to see that aims and needs are well met, even the most elaborate and expensive program will degenerate.

The above statements about a testing program could apply to any Clinton county testing program, just as the above ideas are part of our policy concerning our testing program at DeWitt.

ANY SCHOOL system must discover at what point of development each student is before it can logically establish a plan to help him arrive at his fullest possible intellectual growth. "Adapting the curriculum to the learning potentials of individual students means careful study by the teacher (counselor) of the aptitudes of this pupils for school work."

In order to obtain a true profile of a student's mental ability, he should be tested once at each of the four levels—primary, intermediate, junior high school, and senior high school.

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CONTINUING evaluation of the testing program is important. Satisfaction with the im-

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