

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AWARD PLAN  
FOR A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

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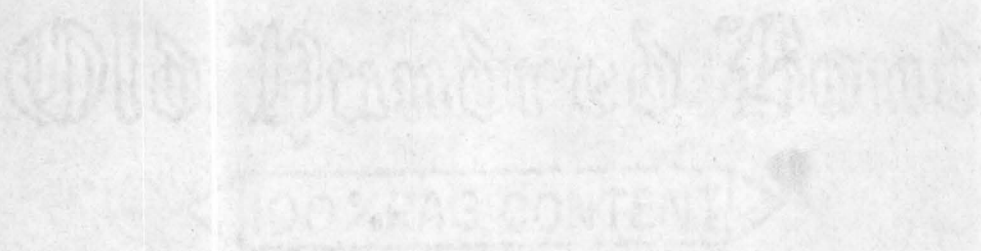
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND METHOD OF PROCEDURE . . . . .	1
Universal use of awards in Secondary Schools . . . . .	1
Motivation as objective in use of awards . . . . .	1
Problems in use of awards . . . . .	2
Method of Procedure . . . . .	3
Sources of Data . . . . .	4
II. OPINIONS CONCERNING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REWARDS. . . . .	6
Three attitudes toward rewards . . . . .	6
Definition of terms . . . . .	7
Thorndike - Influence of rewards on rate of learning. . . . .	8
Wheeler and Perkins - Effect of rewards on learning . . . . .	9
Hartshorne - Doubtful Ultimate value of rewards. . . . .	10
Colburn - Dangers in use of rewards. . . . .	10
Shumaker - Caution in use of rewards . . . . .	11
Thorn - Motivating force of rewards . . . . .	12
Tuttle - Rewards and the law of effect . . . . .	12
Charters - Value of social approval. . . . .	13
Brooks - Use of rewards to initiate action . . . . .	14
Tuttle - Interests made permanent through social approval. . . . .	14
Trow - Praise as an incentive . . . . .	14
Thorndike - Influence of satisfaction . . . . .	15
Grigson - Power of recognition . . . . .	15
Pintner - Extrinsic motivation and intrinsic appeal closely related . . . . .	16
McKown - List of personal rewards . . . . .	17
Balance between extrinsic and intrinsic appeal . . . . .	18
Axtell - Extrinsic rewards in life situations . . . . .	20
Rewards in Boy Scout program . . . . .	21
Judd - Unnatural environment of school justifies use of extrinsic rewards . . . . .	21
Aretz - Gradual decrease in use of rewards as pupil becomes integrated . . . . .	22
Minneapolis Committee report on School Awards. . . . .	22
Tugwell - Hope for future elimination of egoistic motives . . . . .	24
Chapter Summary . . . . .	25

CHAPTER	PAGE
III. MOTIVATION IN SCHOLARSHIP . . . . .	27
Historic aspect of motivation in scholarship. . . . .	27
Honor societies . . . . .	28
Membership in honor societies at	
University of Chicago High School . . . . .	30
Honor roll at Batavia, New York . . . . .	31
Criticism of honor roll . . . . .	31
Unique honor roll plan of Claremont	
Junior High School. . . . .	32
Smith - Artificial rewards justified in	
school work . . . . .	34
Trend toward wide use of rewards in	
motivation of school work . . . . .	34
Chapter Summary . . . . .	35
IV. USE OF AWARDS IN MOTIVATING EXTRACURRICULAR	
ACTIVITIES. . . . .	36
Educational Significance of extracurricular	
activities. . . . .	36
Need for balanced participation . . . . .	36
Millard - educational value of extracurricular	
activities . . . . .	37
Briggs - Plan for securing balanced	
participation . . . . .	38
Point systems of awards . . . . .	40
Johnston - need for stimulating participation . . . . .	40
Extracurricular activities and low	
scholarship . . . . .	41
Johnston - Survey of practices in 145 high	
schools . . . . .	41
Swanson - More need for stimulation than	
limitation. . . . .	42
Terry - Need for stimulation and control	
of participation . . . . .	43
Minnesota plan of school awards . . . . .	43
Wichita plan of school awards . . . . .	44
Awards and character education - Utah plan . . . . .	45
Award plan at Lincoln School. . . . .	46
Duenweg, Mo. plan of awards . . . . .	47
Millard - Questionnaire on awards in	
extracurricular activities. . . . .	48
Johnston - intrinsic value of awards . . . . .	49
Disproportionate emphasis on athletics . . . . .	49
Chapter Summary . . . . .	50

CHAPTER	PAGE
	111
V. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS . . . . .	52
Universal use of awards in secondary schools. . . . .	52
Criticism of awards for superior performance only seems justified . . . . .	52
Need of an award plan that applies to all pupils . . . . .	54
Trend toward point systems of awards . . . . .	55
Guidance and point system of awards. . . . .	55
Awards and motives of social nature . . . . .	56
Character objectives and motivation of extracurricular activities . . . . .	57
Controversial nature of issues involved. . . . .	58
Criteria for developing plan of school awards . . . . .	58
VI. AN AWARD PLAN FOR OREGON CITY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL . . . . .	60
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	70



## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The practice of granting rewards or honors in schools has not only been almost universal but also has had the sanction of long established precedent. Special recognition for outstanding scholarship has been given in a variety of ways. Athletic prowess has been recognized traditionally through the awarding of an emblem which served as a badge of distinction. Gold pins or other awards have been given in recognition of good citizenship.

It has been the accepted principle in the granting of rewards that the objective sought was to provide incentive for superior performance. To the critical observer, however, it has been evident that there have been no uniformity of practices nor any common agreement on the underlying principles pertaining to the educational significance of such procedures.

In spite of the fact that the use of rewards has become almost universal in secondary schools, there have been voiced such strong objections against certain phases of the practice as to raise a question in the minds of many school administrators as to the educational soundness of the procedure. Especially has this been true regarding

the value of any plan that singles out for recognition a very small group who rank as superior according to some criteria used to measure achievement.

Through long experience as a director of high school athletics, the author has come to feel that a system of awards which singles out athletes for honor and acclaim far above that accorded to outstanding performance in other phases of school life is wrong in principle. He had observed cases where undesirable attitudes were developed by athletes who would rank low by any other criteria than that of physical skill. He felt that a spirit of envy toward athletes existed among students who demonstrated superior ability in other school activities.

When he assumed the duties as principal of the Oregon City junior high school, a system of school awards was in use. The plan was based on the traditional belief that superior performance should be rewarded. Separate awards were given in scholarship and in each of the extracurricular activities of the school. Because no provision for limitation of participation had been made, aggressive pupils of superior ability received several awards while a majority of those of average ability received no special recognition. Neither the students nor the faculty were satisfied with the system.

At a meeting of the student council, a request was sent to the faculty for assistance in reorganizing the award plan. A special committee of faculty and students then undertook to study the award systems in use in neighboring schools, to find literature on school award systems, and from the information gained, to work out a scheme that would be more satisfactory than the one in use. While the committee found ready cooperation from other schools and some literature on school awards was discovered, their task proved to be of greater magnitude than could be properly handled by a school group in the time available for committee work. Because the committee felt that their efforts had resulted in discovering new problems rather than in finding solutions to the ones they had set out to solve, they urged that a more thorough study of school awards be made. This research problem was undertaken in response to that request.

This study has logically included three main steps: (1) a survey of the literature dealing with motivation through awards in scholarship, extracurricular activities, character training, and training in citizenship; (2) an analysis of the literature, showing (a) concensus of opinion concerning awards, (b) the ways in which awards have been used, successfully and unsuccessfully; (3) the preparation of a plan for a system of awards for a junior



high school, based on the findings in the literature, local conditions as they apply to a specific school, and educational criteria set up to govern the validity of the program.

Some of the data used were taken from text books on educational psychology, some from books on character education, and others from various treatises on extracurricular activities. Texts on methods of teaching were examined for information on motivation of school work. Official publications of the several departments of the National Education Association were additional sources of data. Much valuable information from periodical literature was located through use of the Wilson Educational Index. In many of the references examined were found citations to additional sources of information.

In Chapter Two it is shown that there are conflicting opinions regarding the psychology underlying rewards. An effort is made to group these opinions according to the extent to which they favor the use of extrinsic rewards as a means of motivation.

The use of rewards in the motivation of scholarship is discussed in the third chapter. A brief account of honor societies is given and methods of using rewards to stimulate better scholarship are shown through description of

plans related in the literature reviewed. In the discussion of extracurricular activities in Chapter Four, trends in methods of motivating participation are described. A general trend toward striving for balanced participation in a variety of activities by all pupils is indicated.

An evaluation of the findings in the study is given in Chapter Five. From opinions on the psychology of awards, together with a subjective evaluation of best practices as they were revealed in the literature reviewed, criteria are set up as a basis for validating a plan of awards.

In Chapter Six, an effort is made to develop a plan of motivation through awards. This plan is based on the evaluation of findings as given in chapter summaries and in Chapter Five, on local conditions as they apply to the school in which it is contemplated that the plan shall be used, and on the educational criteria set up in Chapter Five in an effort to validate the program.

## CHAPTER II

### OPINIONS CONCERNING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REWARDS

The educational literature surveyed in this study has revealed no common ground of agreement among educators on the psychology underlying rewards. Although there was found ample experimental evidence to warrant the conclusion that expectation of extrinsic reward has a positive effect on the speed of learning, there was no uniform acceptance of principles through which the motivating power shown to exist in rewards can be utilized.

Opinions encountered indicate that there were three attitudes taken toward rewards. There were those who would use rewards freely as a means of stimulating desired responses while others, although they recognized the power of such devices in initiating activity, were cautious in their procedures lest ultimate educational harm be done to pupils. There appeared to be a third group of educators who viewed the use of rewards not only as unnecessary but as positively harmful. This group would depend entirely on the interest inherent in school work, both to initiate activity and to sustain effort. In most instances where this last point of view was encountered, subject matter fields were implied by the writers rather than the whole

scope of school activities. Because many writers viewed the use of rewards as an unsolved problem and have tried to present all implications of the issues involved, it would be difficult to accurately bring together all opinions quoted in mutually exclusive groups.

There was found in the educational literature reviewed a fairly consistent use of the terms, reward and award. Reward may be natural or artificial. Natural reward is interpreted to mean the personal satisfaction that may come as a result of effort. Artificial reward is extrinsic to the activity itself. Praise and social approval are extrinsic rewards because they may be given or withheld. They depend on the attitudes, beliefs, or customs of others. Artificial rewards in school may be through praise, grades, prizes, privileges, tokens or other tangible form.

A school award as interpreted in the literature is a reward in the form of a token which is intended to represent social approval. The presence of criteria and a social group or setting is implied by the term. For the most part, award represents the school letter, badge, cup, pin or other token itself.

A study made by Thorndike and Ferlando <sup>1</sup> shows the

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<sup>1</sup>E. L. Thorndike, and George Ferlando, "The Influence of Increase and Decrease of the Amount of Reward Upon the Rate of Learning," The Journal of Educational Psychology, (September, 1933), 401-11

influence of reward on the rate of learning. In a controlled experiment, these investigators studied the rate of learning of nonsense syllables under normal conditions and then repeated the experiment with promise of a money reward based on amount learned in a given time. This experiment was repeated with rewards of two, four, and eight times the original amount given. The experiment was continued with the rewards being reduced in reverse order.

It was found that learning was more rapid when reward was offered; that doubling the reward increased the rate of learning slightly and that quadrupling the reward increased learning to a measurable degree over the rate with the doubled reward. An increase of reward to eight times that first given showed no increase in rate of learning over that occurring with four times the original reward. The experiment was continued by decreasing the reward to one half, one fourth, and then to one eighth of the largest sum given. It was found that when the reward was reduced the learning rate decreased by approximately the same amount as the rate had increased when the reward had been made greater in each succeeding step of the experiment. Thorndike's general conclusion from this experiment was that reward was a positive influence in increasing the rate of learning.

In discussing the psychology of motivation in relation

to the learning process, Wheeler and Perkins<sup>2</sup> state as part of their summary:

In human learning, movements and thought processes, alike, occur with greater speed, under the greater tension of interest in the task, under competition, anticipation of success, satisfaction at realization of one's progress, desire to please someone, and the thrill of doing something creative. Here, in terms of dynamics, increased tension goes over into greater momentum. Under these conditions difficulties are overridden more easily, distractions are surmounted, and greater persistence is shown when conditions bring about delays in progress. In short, motivation increases the learner's kinetic energy, and therefore his achievement, by bringing the goal dynamically nearer to him.

Wheeler and Perkins have recorded the results of several experiments dealing with the effect of rewards on learning. From these experiments they offer the conclusion that increased motivation would mean increased efficiency or achievement in the regular school curriculum. However, they qualify this statement with a warning that there is grave danger of pupils working for the reward and not for the sake of learning.<sup>3</sup>

Hartshorne<sup>4</sup> seems to share this same fear. Although

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<sup>2</sup>R. H. Wheeler, and F. T. Perkins, Principles of Mental Development (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1932) p. 418

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 308-9

<sup>4</sup>Hugh Hartshorne, Character In Human Relations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 39

he concedes that extrinsic devices have a positive influence in motivating activity and are widely used as a means of initiating interest in school work, he voices his lack of faith in such measures in their final educational effect on the child:

As a means of getting action it is not to be lightly set aside, for it has no doubt started many a boy or girl along the road to high achievement.

Yet there is increasing dissatisfaction with the reward system and less and less dependence upon it for motivation of activities. Beads and cups and merit badges, dear as they are to the heart of a child, are hardly a substantial foundation for the motivation of life's duties, and when a leader deliberately cultivates dependence upon such external awards, even though they have no intrinsic value, he helps to establish those very self-seeking motives which gnaw at the vitals of our social order.

Mary Colburn<sup>5</sup> of the Institute of Child Guidance, New York City, writing in Parents Magazine, voiced strong opposition to rewards as they are often used by parents and teachers. She views many promised rewards as nothing more than bribes which the child weighs against the results that would follow if the suggested mode of action is not chosen. She contends that rewards are often used as a cheap means of securing immediate obedience but that they lack value in building constructive habits of a positive nature.

However, this same-writer admits the value of

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<sup>5</sup>Mary Colburn, "Why Rewards and Bribes are Dangerous", Parents Magazine, (July, 1932) 7-11

recognition as a motivating force. In the matter of habit training, she approves and recommends rewards which are founded on the principle of social approval:

Applause is a great spur to the feeling that one is appreciated and one's work is acceptable...The child who does good work should have definite notice taken of it; comments made on the fitness, efficiency or integrity shown. A person who works on a job for a long time and never receives any words of appreciation begins to feel unnecessary and of no account. Tangible rewards have their place if discreetly used.

Doris Schumaker<sup>6</sup> rather cautiously grants a place to the use of rewards in the process of education when she writes:

Rewards are unquestionably a powerful means of influencing conduct. They operate effectively from the cradle to the grave, if they are interpreted to include all satisfying results of action. At these two extremes of life, however, they differ widely, both in nature and application. In adult life, virtue is supposed to be its own reward. In the life of the child, virtue is, as a rule extrinsically rewarded on the theoretical grounds that by having satisfying results attached to socially approved behavior, the child will gradually learn to distinguish the approved from the disapproved, and to adjust his behavior accordingly.

Douglas A. Thom<sup>7</sup> recognizes the role played by rewards in their effect on conduct. He sees in them a force that cannot be ignored but one that must be dealt with dis-

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<sup>6</sup>Doris Schumaker, "Toward a Wiser Use of Rewards," Child Study, (February, 1930) 138-39

<sup>7</sup>Douglas A. Thom, "Concerning Rewards and Punishments," Child Study, (February, 1930) 131-32



creetly:

Rewards and punishments are dynamic forces which affect conduct. It is of vital importance to those who are charged with the responsibility of stimulating, inhibiting or modifying behavior to recognize the dangers that are entailed in the injudicious use of these forces. Rewards as well as punishments play an important role in the development of personality during childhood and continue to operate more or less persistently during the life time of the individual. It matters not if the reward be in the form of praise, approbation or widespread recognition such as comes from fame, glory, power, or whether it be of more material nature, such as money, treasures, or other tangible assets, which tend to satisfy the longing of our acquisitive tendencies. It satisfies that longing for something--that oftentimes secret desire in the heart of every man, that makes him struggle on to achieve his goal.

Tuttle<sup>8</sup> has devoted much space to a scholarly presentation of the part social approval plays in conduct and in education. He sees social approval, operating through the law of effect, as the most important as well as the most adaptable instrument the teacher possesses. He says in part, "There is little evidence of any act which is not the outcome of some form of satisfaction. At least, as far as the educator is concerned, there is no other means of motivation". He states that it is the satisfaction associated with the result that strengthens the tendency. "It is then, the law of effect and not the law of use, which develops the so-called habit of neatness; and the

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<sup>8</sup>H. S. Tuttle, A Social Basis of Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1934), p. 397

habit itself is no fixed form of response."<sup>9</sup> This same idea he repeats again when he says, "Scarcely any experience in life is free from some degree of feeling; some slight satisfaction or some mild annoyance accompanies essentially every adjustment. Habits are formed not primarily by repetition but by satisfaction."<sup>10</sup>

Charters<sup>11</sup> also states the importance of making the outcomes of approved behavior satisfying as follows:

In achieving the designated aim of education it must not be forgotten that pleasure and pain are essential stimuli to action. It is a psychological truism that action that is pleasurable is likely to be repeated, while the behavior that is unsatisfactory tends to disappear. Similarly, it is a pedagogical truism that good behavior should be reinforced by rewards and bad behavior should be accompanied by penalties. The rewards are, of course, of many kinds and embrace both the lowly and the exalted. The pain may be coarse or subtle. The schools will use both pleasure and pain. They will teach children that in fact to be good is to be happy. They will praise; they will prefer good action on the one hand; and they will censure bad behavior on the other.

Fowler D. Brooks<sup>12</sup> implies the law of effect in the development of interest in desirable situations directly

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 189

<sup>10</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>11</sup>W. W. Charters, "Aims and Methods of Character Training in the Public Schools," Department of Superintendents of the National Education Association, Official Report, June, 1930. p. 6

<sup>12</sup>Fowler D. Brooks, The Psychology of Adolescence (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), p. 306

with the use of extrinsic rewards.

In trying to develop the adolescent's interests in certain things, it is highly important that his contacts be satisfying, so that he will be inclined toward them. Force and compulsion are likely to result in dislike. Often some devices or "tricks of the trade" may be used to get the youth to have some actual experience of the object, situation or activity, upon the assumption that he will like it, if he but sees what it is like.

The educational significance of this principle is clearly stated by Tuttle<sup>13</sup>.

Social approval constantly brought to bear will very early change a temporary motive into a permanent interest. For the school this means that every socially desirable act must be made highly satisfying. Of all motives, none is so powerful as desire for social approval. Life is constantly modified by consideration of social opinion. Approbation is the dominant objective in all choices. Effective discipline must appeal to approval as the reward for desirable conduct.

Trow<sup>14</sup> expresses the same thought with regard to the value of praise as a motivating factor. "The success of praise as an incentive," says Trow, "is to be traced to the satisfaction of the need for social regard and recognition. And here we find one of the most powerful extrinsic motivating factors."

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<sup>13</sup>H. S. Tuttle, A Social Basis of Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1934), p. 397

<sup>14</sup>William Clark Trow, Educational Psychology (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), p. 284

Thorndike<sup>15</sup> recognizes the powerful influence of satisfaction in its effect on human conduct. "There is no other means", he says, "of arousing zeal for a given course of thought or conduct than by connecting satisfaction with it; the mind does not do something for nothing."

W. H. Grigson<sup>16</sup> in a discussion of the psychological aspects of recognition in motivating action, with special application to physical education activities, holds that the individual performs those acts which bring him satisfaction; and that one of the chief sources of satisfaction is recognition of his achievement by his fellows.

"Recognition", he says, "is the completion of the desires and the strivings. Our success and feeling of satisfaction is not complete without recognition." He states that by recognition he means, "Notice--Attention--Praise--Appreciation--Acknowledgment". Grigson claims that this desire for recognition explains why the boy seeks those types of activity that best allow his ability to mark him as superior, be it music, drama, athletics or any other

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<sup>15</sup>E. L. Thorndike, "Educational Psychology," Vol. I, pp. 124, 295, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1913.

<sup>16</sup>W. Herbert Grigson, "Psychological Aspects of Recognition," The Journal of Health and Physical Education, (May, 1934), 8-10

activity, but that his satisfaction is not complete until some recognition is made of his superiority, or some insignia is given to him that will act as a symbol of the same. This, according to Grigson, has been the basis for physical contests since the beginning of recorded history. He goes on to say that school spirit or "esprit de corps" is a feeling which a student body has for a school, because the school had done something for its members.

When a school has no spirit, it is because the students of that school are not getting any recognition for the efforts they are able to make.

The giving of emblems, medals, certificates, school letters, sweaters and other awards are merely forms of recognition.

Pintner<sup>17</sup> recognizes a close relationship between extrinsic motivation and intrinsic appeal. In writing on the factors that condition learning, he says concerning extrinsic motivation:

Learning must often proceed in the absence of intrinsic motivation. Intellectual immaturity and lack of sensitivity to ultimate consequences and ideals may stand in the way of intrinsic appeal. Extrinsic motivation, however, is so called only because it is external to the learning activity itself; it is not in any sense artificial; it must be built upon the foundation of some existing natural response or tendency; it must be intrinsic to the nature of the individual.

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<sup>17</sup>Pintner and Others, An Outline of Educational Psychology, (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1934), pp. 62-3

Psychology has always recognized the existence of such drives or instincts as mastery or dominance, emulation or rivalry, desire for social approval, curiosity, construction, etc. Psychologists disagree whether such tendencies are inherited or acquired, or partly one and partly the other. Instinctive drives are the chief source of spontaneous attention and painless effort. They are enormous resources of potential energy at the disposal of the learner and teacher, and await only judicious employment and direction.

McKown<sup>18</sup> lists a few of the personal rewards which are used to motivate interest. Some of these he says are more artificial than others.

1. Marks, ratings, measurements, and evaluations.
2. Publicity on honor rolls, in publications, in assembly, etc.
3. Badges, ribbons, pins, medals, buttons, colors.
4. Certificates, letters, and cards of commendation.
5. School monogram and insignia; athletic, activity, scholarship, citizenship, service.
6. Social events: picnics, parties, banquets, receptions, hikes, trips, swims.
7. Special privileges in assembly, home room, cafeteria, playground, library, gymnasium, and traffic.
8. Honor positions: guides, ushers, assistants at information desk, in office, in library, in supply or book store, in fire drills and traffic.
9. Commendatory letters and notes to parents.
10. Prizes, scholarships, honors, trophies, and awards.
11. Exemptions from tests, final examinations, homework, etc.
12. Admission to honorary clubs, groups, and organizations.
13. Permission to do extra tasks, work and activities.
14. Eligibility for public performance, interscholastic competition.
15. Electives, special classes, and similar privileges.
16. Honor of entertaining teachers, mothers, and visitors.

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<sup>18</sup> Harry C. McKown, Character Education, (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1935), p. 292

17. Care of flag, cabinet, supplies, trophies, material, exhibits, plants, trees, flowers, shrubs, fish, and birds.

McKown does not take an extreme point of view regarding extrinsic rewards. Following a list of opinions on the subject, expressing varying degrees of approval or disapproval by men well known in the field of education, he writes in partial summary:<sup>19</sup>

While the child is young his actions will be influenced by extraneous devices, but as he becomes older he can more easily be taught to recognize and appreciate the real values of things and experiences on their own merits. Scaffolding is a necessary part of the construction of a house, but to leave it standing after the house is completed would be ridiculous. Scaffolding is just as important in the erection of the pupil's "house", and it would be just as ridiculous if left standing. Not only the utilization of these extrinsic devices, but the gradual removal of them as the pupil is able to get along without them is an important part of any plan of motivation.

Somewhere between the one extreme of motivation based entirely upon intrinsic values and the other extreme of motivation based completely upon extrinsic devices, the practical educator must find his place. This position will depend upon the age, maturity, experience, judgment, and vision of the group. Moreover, he will strive continuously and fairly to conserve natural interests, arouse others, and work to make these functional and valuable without the use of artificial and unrelated measures.

Paul H. Axtell,<sup>20</sup> Supervising Principal of Flemington, New Jersey, sees much of value in stimulation through praise

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 298

<sup>20</sup> Paul H. Axtell, "The Value of 'Well Done'", Journal of Education, CXV, No. 11, (April 18, 1932), 317

or reward and offers and answer to those who advocate the elimination of rewards. The author takes issue with an unnamed writer who, in an educational publication quoted the following lines from Kipling to illustrate his expressed opinion concerning the negative value of awards:

Where no one shall work for money  
And no one shall work for fame  
But each for the joy of working---

Axtell goes on to say that there are awards other than those of intrinsic value which are just as powerful in guiding the conduct of men. He then quotes the complete stanza by Kipling from which the three lines in the excerpt above had been taken:

For only the Master shall praise us  
And only the Master shall blame,  
For no one shall work for money  
And no one shall work for fame  
But each for the joy of working  
And each in his separate star  
Shall paint the thing as he sees it  
For the God of things as they are.

Axtell then asks, "Is there anyone who would deny that to many, the hope of a reward in the words, 'Well done, good and faithful', from the Master has been a shining light in the development of character through the ages".

Smith<sup>21</sup> vigorously defends rewards as a means of motivation if the rewards are judiciously used. He sees

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<sup>21</sup>Walter Robinson Smith, Constructive School Discipline, (New York: American Book Company, 1924), pp. 198-99



a sound psychological foundation for their use in the similarity of conditions under which pupils work in school and life situations which they must face as adults. He clearly sets forth his position in the following paragraphs:

All effort on the part of children as well as older people is put forth to avoid penalty or secure some reward, either direct or indirect, present or future. People work for wages, play for the inherent pleasure that play affords, cultivate the fine arts to vary and enrich life, and render civic, religious, philanthropic, and other service for the joy obtained through exercise of the higher sentiments. Even the struggle for distant goals, such as life beyond the grave, does not overlook the idea of reward. Ordinary rewards may be either natural or artificial. Natural rewards are those which inevitably follow our thoughts, words, and deeds. Artificial rewards are those invented and enforced by society to make more evident, or more effective, the appeals to wholesome conduct. They are made necessary by the facts that results of behavior are not always easily discoverable. This is particularly true of children who are less able than older people to see distant and indirect compensations and hence more in need of artificial rewards to stimulate present effort.

Why, then, should we question the soundness and permanence of a well-conceived system of rewards? If mature people do more and better work when the returns appear large, certain, and especially desirable, why should we not expect the same of children? It is futile to talk of rounded development, of remote success in life as the only motives to be used in appealing to children when artificial stimuli are needed among adults to produce conspicuous civic or other institutional attainments. The actual problem, therefore, is not to eliminate artificial rewards but so to devise and administer them as to appeal to the higher motives of pupils in seeking rewards. A sanely planned and well-thought-out system of special incentives should not only inspire intense effort but should be educative in a larger sense.

An illustration of this principle applied on a large

scale is found in the work of the Boy Scouts of America. The educational program of this organization which has been given wide support by both parents and educators has been motivated through a comprehensive system of awards. These are progressive in nature and apply to wide variety of activities. The activities of the Campfire Girls are also motivated through a similar system of honors or awards.

In discussing Herbert Spencer's theory of natural rewards and punishments as a means of controlling conduct, Judd<sup>22</sup> says that the school is an unnatural environment in which effort is made to shield and protect pupils from the too severe consequences of their own unguided conduct. He contends that because the school is to a degree an artificial situation where natural rewards and punishments are greatly modified, artificial rewards and punishments must be substituted.

Because of the artificial character of punishments and rewards, many school administrators have come to believe that it is better to carry on the work of the school without the aid of these incentives. Such a negative disposition of the case assumes that the school has succeeded in setting up intellectual motives strong enough to keep pupils at work without the use of relatively artificial but very immediate incentives. This assumption is by no means easy to defend in most schools. The immature character of the pupils and their limited ability to look far into the future seem to justify a reasonable use of rewards and punishments. Even when these are somewhat arbitrary, they express in a very

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<sup>22</sup>Charles Hubbard Judd, Psychology of Secondary Education, (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1927), pp. 472-73

emphatic way society's approval or disapproval.

C. W. Aretz,<sup>23</sup> director of teacher training in the city of Philadelphia, in commenting on the philosophy of awards, states that any scheme of motivation used is limited by the inspirational power and teaching ability of the teacher. In his summary dealing with the length we feel justified in going to secure motivation through rewards he writes:

A real difficulty in administering a system of awards is to determine just what method may be sanctioned. There is no scientific way yet available to solve the problem. So much depends upon factors that are variable, the child, the situation, the teacher, and the goal to be attained. In the final analysis, we shall probably never get beyond the teacher's understanding of children and her inspirational and teaching power. Perhaps a reasonable conclusion is that no award should be given until every other human method of securing results in an amicable fashion on the basis of genuine interest has been tried....The necessity for employment of concrete rewards diminishes with the increase in innate power of an individual to respond to motives, purposes, and ideals.

One of the most thorough investigations of the status of awards found in this study was recounted in the report of a faculty committee from the Wendell Phillips Junior high school, Minneapolis. The phases of the problem to which the committee turned its attention were (1) the status of awards in its own school; (2) the opinions of educational leaders as far as ascertainable through periodical literature, books,

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<sup>23</sup>C. W. Aretz, "Philosophy of Awards," Mind and Body, January, 1926, pp. 233-7

and personal interviews: (3) practices in senior high schools generally; (4) practices in junior high schools outside Minneapolis; (5) opinions of pupils and faculty of the committee's school on relative values of certain awards in use; (6) the basic principles involved.

The committee admitted the controversial nature of the whole question, indicating that many leading educators would abolish the use of awards but that in practice they were almost universally used. Following are the principles on which the committee arrived at agreement:<sup>24</sup>

- A. That awards are not in themselves harmful; that they have positive values as incentives; that a school would be pursuing a negative policy which punished for undesirable action without calling attention in some way to desirable pupil activities; and that the dangers which attend awards as at present prevalent can be eliminated or at least minimized. . .
- B. That awards should have value only as a token or symbol of achievement or good quality for which they serve as the school's recognition. . .
- C. That there should be a balance between competitive and non competitive awards. . .
- D. That there should be a balance between individual and group awards. . .
- E. That there should be some thought given to the problem of awards available to all, as opposed to awards available only to those who by nature are the better endowed, whether physical attributes or mental qualities are involved. . .

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<sup>24</sup>"Committee Report on School Awards," School Review, February, 1936, pp. 81-3

- F. That a sufficient strength of appeal must be created and maintained for any award to insure its usefulness. ...The committee believes that present awards, taken on the whole, have a positive desirable influence in the school.

Many of the authors whose writings have been read in preparation of this study have expressed the opinion that extrinsic devices may serve a good purpose in initiating activity or in motivating continued effort in worth while educational endeavor where interest might otherwise decline. However, many of these writers have expressed the belief that learning should be conducted under conditions where pupil activity was motivated through genuine interest in the task itself. They have voiced the hope that there be a gradual transition from personal egoistic aims to more social motives. Rexford Tugwell<sup>25</sup> very clearly expresses this point of view:

The new social philosophy gives us ground to believe that the thrill of doing one's part in a larger task may be made as powerful a motive for work as doing the whole of a job better than someone else. . .The school system should gradually get rid of the whole artificial organization of egoistic motivations which have had a long traditional use amongst us, displacing them one by one as the profession learns how to use stimulations and rewards which are social rather than individual, therefore personally more enduring and satisfying. The aim is not to make school an isolated haven of perfect social motives which would unfit its human products to live in an imperfect social world from which a sensitive

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<sup>25</sup>Rexford Tugwell and Leon H. Keyserling, Redirecting Education, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934), p. 97

soul would finally seek to escape. The aim is a new relative emphasis, the gradual displacement of a poor motive by a good one, the gradual substitution of a good citizen for a bad or indifferent one.

The foregoing opinions expressing varying points of view concerning motivation reveal a general agreement that satisfaction is the principal force in control of human conduct. The source of satisfaction may vary greatly with different individuals and from time to time with the same individual but, as Thorndike would say, the law of effect seems to be the controlling factor in the learning process.

Satisfaction may come through personal interest inherent in an activity or it may come through social approval applied to the results achieved. In either case, the reward is the consequence of achievement.

Writers on methods of teaching were found quite generally to express the view that motivation in school work should ideally be achieved through interest inherent in the work itself. This was particularly true of recent writers dealing with methods in the so-called progressive schools. Some writers, however, viewed this situation as a theoretical ideal, impossible of attainment under normal classroom conditions. They contended that as long as teachers were not perfect in training, temperament, and insight, and as long as pupil interest depended on widely varying backgrounds that often were far from ideal, school work could not of

itself be made to intrigue the active interest of all children all of the time.

Many educators feel that the school situation is to a considerable extent an artificial setting in which rewards of action are poorly understood by pupils or are greatly modified in their functioning by the restrictions of classroom organization. To those who take this point of view, tangible extrinsic rewards have their place as a means of giving as near uniform and equitable expression of social approval as possible.

## CHAPTER III

### MOTIVATION IN SCHOLARSHIP

Motivation of achievement through honors, rewards or public acclaim is as old as education. The Greeks gave recognition to winning contestants in athletics, music, art, and poetry. The Olympic games were founded on the spirit of competition with the laurel wreath as a symbol or token of victory. The honor and prestige accorded to the winners served as powerful motivating forces until Greek military power was supplanted by the Roman legion.

The Chinese plan of education was built on a system of competitive examinations in which the students receiving highest ranking were rewarded by appointment to public office.

The early Jesuite secondary schools in France awarded honors fortnightly on the basis of competitive examinations. The honor society has played a leading role in recognition of scholastic achievement in the modern school. Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest of the academic honor societies, was organized at William and Mary College in 1776. While good fellowship and perpetuation of high ideals of moral worth were the objectives sought by the original founders, outstanding scholastic attainment soon became a prerequisite among candidates who were considered for membership.



With the expansion of the college curriculum, there have been developed professional or honor societies in many of the specialized fields of learning. Chapters of many of these societies are found on most college campuses today. Many of these organizations maintain an active program in later professional life.

The secondary school followed the example of the colleges by honoring superior scholastic achievement through public acclaim at commencement time, by the honor roll, and by the organization of honor societies. There have been many such honor societies of local scope formed in secondary schools. Some of these have spread to other schools and to other states. The most influential among these is the National Honor Society<sup>26</sup> which was founded in 1921 through the activities of a committee from the department of Secondary School Principals of the National Education Association. The society has been extended to the junior high school through an affiliated branch known as the National Junior Honor Society. There were in March, 1936, a total of 1,928 chapters of the two organizations with a combined membership of over 200,000 boys and girls.<sup>27</sup> The objectives

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<sup>26</sup> Harry C. McKown, Character Education, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1934), p. 88

<sup>27</sup> M. R. McDaniel, "The National Honor Society an Essential," Quarterly Bulletin of the Department of Secondary School Principals of the National Education Association, Number 60, March, 1936. pp. 11-15

of these organizations as officially stated are: "To create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character."<sup>28</sup>

The list of available emblems includes gold pins, membership cards, membership certificates, and seals to be affixed to diplomas.<sup>29</sup>

The National Honor societies, of which there are several chapters in the state, have been given official approval by the Oregon High School Principals Association.<sup>30</sup>

In commenting on the value of honor societies, McKown has written, "No one can deny that these various organizations help to motivate work and are useful."<sup>31</sup> He concluded his discussion of the society by saying, "It is doing much to define and set the standards of the ideal high school student. A chapter of it should be in every recognized secondary school."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Quarterly Bulletin of the Department of Secondary School Principals, Number 57, May, 1935. p. 53

<sup>29</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 42

<sup>31</sup>Harry C. McKown, Extracurricular Activities, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931), p. 433

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 454

William G. Reavis,<sup>33</sup> in commenting on the growth of the National Honor Society, finds fault with the method recommended by the governing committee for selecting members of the organization. This plan provides that the principal of the school shall send to the faculty or faculty committee, the names of the upper one half of the senior and junior classes in scholarship ranking. From this group, the faculty is to select not to exceed 15 per cent of the senior class and 5 per cent of the junior class on the criteria of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. This limits the organization to about ten per cent of the total number of students in the junior and senior classes. After expressing the belief that this method of selection would bar many desirable students, Reavis explained the plan used for selecting members for the chapter at the University of Chicago High School.

The method of determining the rank of pupils is based on composite scores derived from course marks, ratings by faculty on intellectual interests, ratings by faculty on school citizenship, and ratings by the pupil's classmates on school citizenship. Second, a committee consisting of all members of the faculty who have served the school for four or more years elect not more than ten per cent of the total membership of the Junior and Senior classes on the basis of the highest third in composite scores.

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<sup>33</sup>William G. Reavis, "The Method of Selecting the Members to the National Honor Society," The School Review, June, 1928. 423-30

The honor roll as a means of motivating scholarship through public recognition is a scheme that is very widely used in secondary schools.

The basis for selecting those whose names are to appear on the honor roll often varies according to the educational philosophy of the school principal. The Junior-Senior High School,<sup>34</sup> at Batavia, New York, not only uses the traditional honor roll but follows the practice of mailing a special card or letter of commendation to the parents of all students who have received grades averaging 65 or more in all subjects. A pupil who has been on the honor roll four of the six possible periods in a year is presented with an emblem to wear.

A possible educational weakness of the entire scholarship honors plan was voiced by the Superintendent of Schools of Waupun, Wisconsin, when he stated:

Honor rolls, as many schools are determining them are based largely upon scholarship. The pupil whose scholastic average excels that of his fellow students attains the distinction of being listed on the school honor roll for a given period of time. Planning in such a way, upon such a basis, relatively few people can hope to achieve such distinction. The average pupil looks upon such requirements as an unattainable goal. The stimulus, if any exists, for honest effort and work as well as for those qualities that make for building of character

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<sup>34</sup> Howard D. Weber, "Ways of Improving Scholarship in the School," The Nation's Schools, September, 1929. pp.43-6

apparently is lacking under such conditions.<sup>35</sup>

A constructive effort to meet this criticism comes from Claremont Junior High School, Oakland, California. Principal Massey<sup>36</sup> writes that the teachers of his school had at frequent intervals discussed in faculty meetings the value of the honor roll or honor society as a factor in influencing character development. The conclusion was reached by the group that an honor society inspiring only the upper 5 or 10% of the pupils of the school was of little value, if not indeed actually harmful to the democratic spirit of the school. As a result of faculty study, this school formulated a plan which included these honor groups instead of one.

The plan, based on the appeal of Ivanhoe to adolescents, was intended to stimulate all members of the school. The combined groups were called the Legion of Honor. Points were awarded on a graduated scale for scholarship taken from quarterly averages. The three groups of students composed of those who had averages three or above and who had no failing grades, were called respectively, Knights of Honor, Honored Squires, and Honorable Heralds. Satisfactory marks in citizenship were required for membership in the groups.

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<sup>35</sup>H. C. Wagner, "The High School Honor Roll," The Journal of Educational Method, June, 1929. pp. 515-18

<sup>36</sup>Herbert N. Massey, "An Honor Roll Which Inspires All Pupils of the School," California Journal of Secondary Education, January, 1929. pp. 143-5

An assembly was held each quarter for the purpose of announcing the honor roll. The home room having the highest per cent of its members in a group was awarded a shield to be kept on display during the next quarter. No student who was not a member of the Legion of Honor was permitted to represent his school in athletics or any other activity.

Principal Massey offered the following conclusion reached by his faculty to show that the plan was effectively accomplishing the ends sought in his school.<sup>37</sup>

1. It inspired all pupils in our school.
2. It is the popular thing in our school to belong to the Legion.
3. Since members of the three groups enjoy equal privileges, the pupil who could not make either group I or group II is happy in his achievement of success as a member of group III. In addition, a pupil making group III is inspired to try to make group II and if he has the ability, he usually tries to promote himself.
4. The moral tone of the school has been greatly elevated.
5. The standard of scholarship has been gradually raised in the past two years from 35 per cent to 84 per cent on the honor roll.

Smith<sup>38</sup> believes that our school work should be organized to take advantage of existing motives. He contends that if teachers could be made to recognize that pupils demand real living here and now instead of working for distant goals, the problem of motivation would be simplified. Concerning

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 144-45

<sup>38</sup> Walter Robinson Smith, Constructive School Discipline, (New York: American Book Company, 1924), pp. 201-2

the place of rewards in a scheme of education based on a better mutual understanding between pupils and teachers, he has this to say:

The foundational problem in dealing with rewards, then, is to see that all phases of school work are adequately motivated. Wherever native interest on the part of children cannot be aroused by the inherent appeal of subject matter, artificial rewards should be devised to supplement it. School life should be so arranged that emulation, self esteem, the joy of competition, the instinct of workmanship, and the craving for appreciation by teachers and fellow pupils can be effectively utilized. Proper use of these special appeals has the triple function of stimulating intensity of effort, serving as a selective agency for discovering the ambitious and gifted, and training pupils to respond to the sort of compensations society will later offer them. The variety in type ranges all the way from sympathetic appreciation to the conspicuous awarding of individual or group distinctions.

Concrete examples of efforts to take advantage of these existing motives have been described in recent educational literature and revealed through efforts of research students. A very extensive study of existing practices was made by Edgar Johnston<sup>39</sup> who reports that there is a significant trend toward extending the use of awards to a much higher per cent of the pupils in the schools. He has, through the medium of a questionnaire, collected data which indicates a marked increase in adoption of a general award, based on achievement in scholarship, citizenship, and school activities. This type of award is treated in detail in Chapter IV.

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<sup>39</sup> Edgar G. Johnston, Point Systems of Awards, (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1930), p. 72.

Although it has been shown that scholastic honor societies have had a phenomenal growth in secondary schools during the past few years, there have been enough criticisms against them to bring about several modifications in their organization and scope. While these organizations were originally honor groups whose purpose was to motivate high scholastic attainment, and this only, pressure of criticism has brought about the recognition of such personal qualities as leadership, character, and service as criteria of equal weight with scholarship in selecting candidates for membership in the organizations. There has been a tendency to place the minimum scholarship requirement at a much lower level.

Some psychologists have questioned the soundness of granting awards for outstanding scholarship in secondary schools for the same reason that they condemn the offering of prizes where only the one best can win. They express the fear that many of those who do not win prizes or whose work falls below the minimum level required for honors might feel that they had failed. Many school administrators have shared this same belief which is in keeping with the principle that some degree of success is necessary to personal satisfaction and mental health.



## CHAPTER IV

### USE OF REWARDS IN MOTIVATING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A survey of the educational literature dealing with extracurricular activities in secondary schools reveals the general belief among school men that these activities play a major part in character training and training in citizenship. Current writings indicate a marked trend toward utilizing the extracurricular program in building attitudes and habits which educators hope will function favorably in later life situations. Many teachers believe that such activities are closer to life situations than are any other parts of the educational program.

Although the literature dealing with extracurricular activities indicates that certain educational values in secondary schools are widely recognized, there are also revealed certain problems that have been but partially solved. The most frequently mentioned obstacle to achievement of these values is the problem of extent of participation by students in the activity opportunities offered. There is shown to be a tendency for some students to participate in too many activities and others in too few. Significant efforts have been made in many schools to carry the educational values believed to function through the extracurricular activities program to all students through schemes intended to secure

balanced participation. Methods have been sought to stimulate participation by various motivation schemes or devices. In other cases it has been found desirable to limit too extensive participation on the part of enthusiastic individuals.

That the aim of the extracurricular activities is substantially the same as the aim of general education is indicated by Millard<sup>40</sup> when he defines them as "those activities which have been developed in the schools to supplement the curricular program, for the purpose of bringing about a more complete realization of the objectives of education".

Among the specific educational values ascribed to extracurricular activities by this author are:<sup>41</sup>

- a. They aid in the advancement of the cardinal principles of secondary education.
- b. They teach citizenship through methods of participation.
- c. They develop school morale of a desirable type.
- d. They create situations that demand leadership.
- e. They teach morals without preaching.
- f. They check school morality by providing situations that develop individual interests that would not exist without such a program.

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<sup>40</sup>Cecil V. Millard, The Organization and Administration of Extracurricular Activities, (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1930), p. 4

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 14-15

Briggs<sup>42</sup> in outlining his philosophy of extracurricular activities has cited plans developed to aid in securing a more uniform participation. He has accorded to these activities the best opportunity under the control of the school to develop in pupils, according to their abilities, those qualities of initiative, leadership, cooperation, and respect for authority which will help them take their places in organized society. He would see these activities organized, within the school time, under the sponsorship of the teachers who are qualified to direct special phases of the program. His platform of principles calls for democracy in organization in order that all pupils may be included in the activities where their talents or interests would lead them to find profit. By this principle, he implies that there should be equality of opportunity within the extracurricular program. Briggs recommends a scheme for controlling participation by use of a point system, both in the interest of distributing opportunity and of balancing the load carried by individual pupils. Briggs concludes his final principle of organization by recommending a plan of motivation to cover the extracurricular field. Regarding special efforts to meet these problems he writes:

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<sup>42</sup>Thomas H. Briggs, "Extracurricular Activities in Junior High Schools," Educational Administration and Supervision, (January, 1922), pp. 1-9

For many years it has been common practice to award the school letter for 'merit' and 'distinguished service' in athletics. We believe that awards and insignia of merit should not be confined to athletics alone. At the Speyer School, the 'S' is awarded when 280 points have been earned out of a possible 430, consisting of at least 70 points in each of the following: Physical Efficiency, Social Efficiency, Mental Efficiency, and Moral Efficiency. This plans to develop the all-around boy, rather than a lop-sided one. The Blewett school has a plan whereby a pupil may win a 'B' in Scholarship, Citizenship, and Extracurricular school activities.<sup>43</sup>

A unique feature of the Speyer school system of awards is the provision that a pupil is not required to earn all the points necessary for a letter in a single school year. If a pupil fails to earn the required number of points for an award in one year, the points earned are carried over as a balance on the pupil's record to begin the next term. Three awards, a bronze pin, a silver pin, and a school letter are to be worked for in that order. This departure from traditional practice is intended to make it possible for the slower pupil to earn an award but at the same time to provide motivation for the more capable or more aggressive pupils.

This plan briefly outlined by Briggs illustrates a general trend revealed in this study, to include in the procedure for regulating extracurricular activities, provision for limiting participation on the part of

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<sup>43</sup>Loc. cit.

aggressive pupils and stimulating participation by all pupils, through a single method of control known as a point system.

As pointed out by Johnston,<sup>44</sup> "Any values which are claimed or which in the future may be demonstrated for extracurricular activities are certainly not achieved by those who do not participate in them".

This same thought is expressed by Fretwell<sup>45</sup>.

Membership in activities must be open to all on a basis as objective as possible. This requires that there be a wide variety of activities. . . . At the same time it recognizes that there is need, through a point system or otherwise, for stimulating, guiding, and if necessary, limiting, the extent of participation of any one pupil at a given time. No matter what the value of extracurricular activities, these values are not realized if pupils do not participate or if their participation is not wisely balanced.

Gallagher,<sup>46</sup> in commenting on the varied attitudes toward curricular and extracurricular activities, says:

The naming of these activities is further complicated by the fundamentally different conceptions of the school curriculum as held by various educators. For example, one group of curriculum makers considers that the curriculum is made up of those studies for which definite courses of study exist or can be written out by school authorities. Another group of educators

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<sup>44</sup>Edgar S. Johnston, Point Systems of Awards, (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1930), p. vi

<sup>45</sup>Elbert K. Fretwell, Extracurricular Activities in Secondary Schools, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931), p. 14

<sup>46</sup>O. C. Gallagher, Chairman, "Report of Evaluation of Extracurriculum Activities," Sixth Yearbook of Department of Superintendents of the National Education Association, 1928, p. 271

At this point arises the question of participation on the part of pupils with low scholastic standing. Shall participation in activities be dependent upon success in classroom work, or is extracurricular participation itself an educational opportunity which may be of particular value to a pupil, independent of subjects in the curricular organization?

After recording data on this subject obtained from a survey of practices in 145 high schools, Johnston<sup>47</sup> offers as his conclusions:

While a consideration of fundamental principles of democratic education leads to the conclusion that no pupil should be debarred entirely from extracurricular activities, it does not follow that the same amount of participation should be permitted of all. One of the most important developments in educational theory in recent years has been the increasing attention paid to differences in capacities, interests, and aptitudes of individual pupils. This principle obviously applies to the extracurricular program with no less force than to the curricular.

The amount of participation in extracurricular activities which is desirable for each pupil, is to be determined in relation to his entire school program. The pupil who has carried his scholastic work with an "A" has demonstrated his capacity for a more extensive program or more advanced work than a pupil whose average has been "C". Classroom and study-hour load and extracurricular activities should be considered in the adjustment of pursuits to abilities. Determination of the most desirable program of school experience for an individual pupil is a problem in educational guidance. As such it should take into account such variable factors

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<sup>47</sup>Edgar G. Johnston, Point Systems of Awards, (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1930), pp. 30-31

as abilities, past experience, and future expectations. Differential limitation of student activity on the basis of marks attained, appears to be both justifiable and desirable.

A research study conducted by A. M. Swanson<sup>48</sup> concerning the effect of participation in extracurricular activities on high school scholarship points to the inference that there is more need of stimulation than limitation of participation in these activities among pupils of less than average intelligence. This survey which included 398 cases, taken from various high schools of Kansas City, indicated that there was no drop in scholarship during participation in extracurricular activities. Swanson offers as a conclusion, "On the whole, the evidence adduced from this investigation points to the thesis that high school pupils of somewhat more than average intelligence participate in extracurricular activities".

The records of this investigation did not give any information regarding the use of extrinsic rewards as a means of motivation in the extracurricular program of activities in Kansas City high schools. If awards were given only to the few who could reach a level of superior performance, the part such a scheme might have played in bringing about the conditions recorded could not be learned.

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<sup>48</sup>A. M. Swanson, "The Effect on High School Scholarship of Participation in Extracurricular Activities," The School Review, October, 1924, pp. 611-26

Terry<sup>49</sup> also sees the need for some method of stimulating and controlling participation. In recommending a point system as the best method of meeting these problems, he comments on the adaptability of the scheme in taking into account various levels of ability as well as achievement.

A desirable amount of participation, no more and no less than is good for each individual, cannot be brought about without effort. . . Point systems provide a very systematic means of stimulating participation in that they take account of all activities and of different degrees of achievement in precise quantitative terms.

Many local plans attacking some phase of the problem of awards have been given publicity through the educational literature. Perhaps the departure from traditional procedure that affected the largest number of pupils is the plan of high school awards adopted in Minnesota. Their plan is the outgrowth of an effort to standardize regulation for awarding athletic letters in the high schools of the state. Through a committee of the state high school principals association, a plan was developed to motivate or reward other activities of the school by the same type of recognition given to athletics. The eight activities selected were: clubs, debate, declamation, leadership, music, publications, scholarship, and athletics. The same eligibility qualifications as

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<sup>49</sup>Paul W. Terry, Supervising Extra-Curricular Activities, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Incorporated, 1930), pp. 300-01



had been in effect for athletic participation were adopted for all activities. Awards were to be in the form of school letters, all of the same size but each was to include a distinguishing symbol to mark the activity through which it was awarded. The plan was reported to be meeting with full support from the high schools of the state.<sup>50</sup>

Wichita has inaugurated a very complete physical education program of intra-mural sports and individual skills, motivated through a point system of awards which is intended to stimulate participating in a wide variety of contests and activities.<sup>51</sup> Their plan includes awards from the intermediate grades through the high school and includes both boys and girls.

The Wichita plan of school awards is intended to minimize the award for interscholastic competition and to stimulate participation in worth-while physical education or recreational activities on the part of all students. In explaining the plan Hinman says:

The awarding of letters to athletes in our high school has been done away with and in place of this a small honor key of sterling silver is given them. In interscholastic athletics, these are won on the same basis as was done in

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<sup>50</sup>I. T. Simley, "Letter Awards, Athletic and Non-Athletic," School Executives Magazine, November, 1931, p. 129

<sup>51</sup>Strong Hinman, "Point Systems of Awards - Wichita Public Schools," American Physical Education Review, Sep<sup>r</sup> 1929, p. 415

earning the athletic letter. In intra-mural sports and in individual tests the pupil has to earn the required number of points as shown in the schedule. In the intermediate school there is no competition between schools and the athletic work is confined entirely to intra-mural competition. Last year there were 6,128 more boys and girls participating in this intra-mural program than had ever participated before. This point system of awards for the intermediate schools has been worked out so that a pupil by earning 100 points may receive an award.<sup>52</sup>

Hinman goes on to say that points are cumulative so that an award, if not received in one year, may be received at a later time.

The Utah state course of study in character education which has been rated by educators as one of the best state courses in this field, urges participation in extracurricular activities as one of the major forces in character training and recommends the use of awards as a means of motivation. The authors of this course see in such devices, an administrative expedient which is useful in initiating interest and in stimulating continued participation in these activities, to the end that all pupils will take some part in this phase of the school program. The authors say in defense of this point of view:<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>53</sup>Character Education Supplement to the Utah State Course of Study, State Department of Education, Salt Lake, Utah. Revised Edition.

One device for encouraging participation quite generally used in our schools is that of presenting awards for participation. These should not be elaborate or expensive tokens, but simply some recognition of accomplishment. The student should be made to feel that participation has merit in itself and does not necessarily require material reward.

These are merely suggestive devices to serve in the administration of extra-curricular life in the school--mere means to the end that all students find a place in the program of extra-curricular activities.

McKown<sup>54</sup> describes at length the plan of awards used at the Lincoln School of Teachers College. The Lincoln school awards separate insignia in recognition of high achievement in either scholarship, citizenship, or athletics. These awards are in the form of pins which are presented during the third quarter of the school year. To be eligible for one of these awards, a student must rank in the upper fifteen per cent of his group in that phase of school life. A student who has earned two of the awards may receive the third by being ranked in the upper twenty-five per cent of the student body in that activity.

The method of determining who constitute the upper fifteen per cent in citizenship rating is computed from the results of a secret ballot taken, in which each pupil rates all other pupils in his class. The items on the citizenship

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<sup>54</sup>Harry C. McKown, Extracurricular Activities, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931), pp. 203-6

ballot have previously been determined by selecting those items which have received a majority vote of the student body in a special balloting held for the purpose.

Tests drawn up by the instructors of athletics are used as a means of selecting those who rank in the upper fifteen per cent in athletics. These tests are progressive in nature and are given periodically during the year.

Superintendent Williams<sup>55</sup> of Duenweg consolidated schools, Duenweg, Mo., tells of the efforts of a small high school with one-hundred pupils, in developing an extra-curricular program. His scheme is based on three principal features: (1) a division of the school into small groups; (2) a system of sought-after merit points; (3) a smooth-functioning student council. A feature of their organization provides for participation of every pupil in each group in all activities for which the individual is physically qualified. The merit point or award scheme is perhaps the most unique feature of the plan. Each individual is awarded points for participation in activities, for scholarship and for citizenship. In addition, all members of the group to which an individual belongs received a lesser number of

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<sup>55</sup>S. Joe Williams, "Littleberg Solves for 'X' in the Extracurricular Program," Junior - Senior High School Clearing House, April, 1934, 490-93

points. For instance, a member of a team winning a contest might receive 100 points while each member of the group the team was representing might receive 25 points. In explaining this plan Williams says, "An effort is made to encourage group morale, since the success of a member means returns for every member of the group". After viewing the plan in operation, Williams writes regarding merit points as a means of motivation:

The Superintendent is ever mindful of the fact that to be effective, merit points must be sought after. . . . No amount of personal urging or pushing can hope to accomplish what the bestowal of a few merit points will do without effort. Merit points are the springs which motivate the whole plan and the power which keeps the wheels moving.

Cecil Millard<sup>56</sup> by use of a questionnaire makes a classification or summary of extracurricular activities most frequently mentioned by high school principals.

- a. Group organization in which all pupils are included; such as home rooms, class organizations, athletic association, or any other organization in which membership is offered or required of all pupils.
- b. Academic or departmental; those organizations which grow from the curricular program, such as literary societies, debating, music, and athletic activities.
- c. Student government organizations; as council, senate, court or monitorial system.
- d. Clubs; those organizations which are closely related to departmental activities but may include interest or hobby groups.
- e. Assembly programs; arranged or participated in by the pupils.

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<sup>56</sup>Cecil Millard, op. cit., p. 8

- f. Cooperative organizations; such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Hi-Y.
- g. Social activities such as parties and dances.
- h. Entertainments given by classes or by special groups; such as plays, concerts or lyceums given by outside talent but planned by the school pupils.
- i. Honorary organizations in which membership is restricted by meeting certain requirements such as honor societies and letter clubs.

Edgar Johnston,<sup>57</sup> in commenting on the school letter or emblem as a form of recognition or means of motivation, calls attention to the point of view taken by some that rewards of intrinsic value in themselves tended to center the interest directly in the awards and not in the attainments which they symbolized. He notes the official action taken by the state athletic associations of Iowa, Michigan, Montana, Oregon, Washington and West Virginia which have clauses in their constitutions prohibiting the acceptance of a sweater as an athletic award from any one.

Johnston, however, states that much of the criticism against awards in high school is directed against the disproportionate amount of emphasis given to athletics. He points out that many schools have extended their award system to include achievement in other student activities.

The results of this study would indicate that in secondary schools, rewards are used most widely as a means of motivation in the field of the extracurriculum. Many

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<sup>57</sup> Edgar Johnston, op. cit., p. 60-61

educators justify this practice because they believe these activities furnish the best means under control of the school for the advancement of worthy character education objectives.

There is shown a trend to minimize the reward that has been traditionally given for competition in interscholastic athletics. Some educators express the belief that intrinsic interest in competition is strong enough to motivate participation without placing a premium of prestige on interscholastic athletic participation by granting the major school award only to those few who, through natural physical superiority, are fortunate enough to be so honored. There is shown to be a distinct trend toward rewarding outstanding achievement in other activities of the school on a level comparable to the reward given for athletic competition. There has been discovered within the athletic program itself a marked trend to motivate through a scheme of awards, athletic activities intended to produce personal physical development and efficiency. From schools where this type of athletic program is in use, reports regarding increased participation on the part of boys and girls who are not physically qualified to take part in competitive interscholastic athletics show that the idea is meeting with approval.

Several writers, in advocating awards as a means of motivation for the extracurricular offerings of the school, state that the values widely believed to inhere in these activities can be obtained only by those who participate in the program. Much literature which was reviewed on this problem advocates what is called a point system as a means of stimulating participation on the part of all as well as limiting the participation of over-ambitious or aggressive pupils.

Although there is shown to be an increase in the number of schools that give separate awards for participation in a variety of activities, the greater trend is toward a general award based on a minimum number of points accumulated through creditable participation in both the scholastic and extracurricular programs. There is shown to be a distinct trend toward rewarding good citizenship by means of an award or by granting points toward the total necessary for an award. Unique cases were found where schools have designed award systems so that any student who will put forth a reasonable amount of effort can in time earn an award.

In the educational literature surveyed in preparation of this study, no record was found of a secondary school that gave no awards of any nature.



## CHAPTER V

### EVALUATION OF FINDINGS

Although the use of awards as a means of motivation seems to be universal in American secondary schools, there appear to be no uniform principles guiding the practice. This lack of a clear understanding on the part of school administrators regarding the psychological implications connected with extrinsic rewards has, perhaps, been responsible for the great divergence in systems of awards now in use.

Psychologists point out that satisfaction, operating through the law of effect, is the motivating force in learning. If this be true, it seems reasonable to assume that some measure of satisfaction should come to all if all are to properly learn. If extrinsic motivating devices are so designed or administered that they can bring satisfaction to but a few, criticism against their use would seem justified.

The honor roll composed of the highest ten of fifteen per cent of the student body, is criticised as a motivating scheme because, regardless of the effort made by students, a change in the personnel of the roll from time to time is all that can be accomplished. Psychologically, this type of reward is criticised because it is believed that many of those who have tried to reach the scholastic standard necess-

ary to be included will feel that they have failed. Many teachers believe that there is a negative reaction on the part of those who are not able to do work of a superior quality in competition with an entire class or student body.

The same criticism which is made against the honor roll has been voiced against awards in athletics. In highly competitive interscholastic sports, it is obvious that only those who are by natural physical endowment superior to their fellows, will receive the acclaim that is accorded the athlete. As far as interscholastic sports are concerned, there appears to be no injustice to others inherent in the fact that the physically superior are selected for competition. The principal criticisms are that comparable achievements in other worthy phases of school life have not been proportionately rewarded and that physical activities on the part of those who are not already physically superior are neglected.

The efforts made by many schools to correct this situation have in some cases merely applied the same principles governing awards in athletics to other activities. The Minnesota state plan of school awards which provides for a uniform award in each of eight activities, still recognizes superior achievement as the basis of award. Although the Lincoln school of Teachers College has modified its award plan to include awards for scholarship and citizenship in

addition to athletics, these honors are granted only to those who rank in the upper fifteen per cent of the student body in each particular activity.

This traditional tendency to reward superior attainment on the theory that such a procedure would motivate better performance on the part of all, seems to be at the heart of the criticism voiced against awards as motivating devices. Many who disapprove of such schemes believe that the satisfaction accompanying the social approval represented by a school award can have no positive motivating force on those who do not feel capable of competing with students of superior ability. If, as psychologists tell us, some degree of success is necessary to satisfaction and to mental health, those who strive for awards and fail may also be subjected to a negative educational influence.

If the influence of social approval is to be used as a motivating force by attaching satisfaction to extrinsic reward, it seems reasonable to assume that the plan should apply to all. This means that the objective sought should be attainable by all. Because the ideal situation where the objectives sought are reached by all is never attained in classroom work, it is not likely that objectives sought through awards can be reached by all. However, if awards are used, they should be attainable by a high percentage of the pupils.

That this theory of awards is emerging from the vast number of conflicting practices is evidenced by the trend of some of the point systems of awards reviewed in this study. The point systems which take into account all activities of a school offer a better chance to the pupil with ability ranking of average or below because they recognize any special ability that could not, in the more traditional scheme of awards, be rewarded. Also, effort such as the pupil is capable of making, could raise the general level of all work to a measurable degree while superior work such as has been traditionally rewarded would not be possible.

An additional feature intended to make awards attainable by a much larger percentage of the pupils has been noted in a few schools. This is a special adaptation of a point system through which certain points are cumulative from one year to the next so that the slower pupil may obtain an award by taking more time. This feature is defended through the principle that it is in keeping with life conditions where some will achieve more than others but where a reasonable measure of success is within the reach of all who will make a proportionate amount of effort.

One of the principal values that has been ascribed to a point system of awards is that it affords a medium through which a guidance approach can be made. In an award plan

where points are given for satisfactory participation in all curricular and extracurricular activities of the school, as well as for qualities of good citizenship, the desirability and advantages of balanced participation and achievement can be pointed out. In the educational opportunity afforded here, proponents of the plan see one of the chief values of the scheme.

One of the main objections raised against the use of rewards was based on the fear that the pupil would work solely for the reward and lose sight of the educational value of the medium through which he was working. While there may be some basis for this fear, no objective evidence to substantiate it was discovered. The point was brought out, however, that the working for objectives inherent in school work itself depended on the skill and teaching methods used by the teacher. There was discovered no evidence to support the belief that this inherent interest would be lessened by extrinsically rewarding effort.

Another phase of this same objection to reward is that the pupil, in working for extrinsic reward, will not develop the higher motives of a social nature which the school is trying to teach. Here, the trend toward use of a point system of awards, would place emphasis on balanced participation. If the motives tending toward altruistic social conduct are

inherent in the social setting of these activities when they are properly administered, there is no evidence to support the belief that there would be a lessening of the value in social education because the activities were extrinsically rewarded.

Evidence has been offered to show that but few secondary schools have any organized plan in character training. In most schools, the school administrators trust to concomitant learning, principally through the extracurricular field, to achieve character education objectives. If this heavy responsibility is to be carried by this phase of the school program, there should be some participation on the part of all pupils of the school. It is an accepted principle that this participation should be spontaneous and voluntary. The effort to motivate the program through rewarding superior performance has a strong influence on the more capable pupils but seems to be ineffective with those of lesser ability. More recently, the point system of awards is proving to be a useful means of stimulating participation on the part of all pupils. Here the reward is intended to initiate participation and to stimulate continued effort where effort might not otherwise be put forth, rather than serve as an end in itself. The belief is held by proponents of the plan that the naturalness of the life-like situation under which extracurricular

experiences are carried on will build motives which are social in nature. They have no fear that these motives will be lessened because the activities are initiated by a promise of reward.

The controversial nature of the issues involved, together with the wide variety of opinions and practices encountered in this study would make the formulating of conclusions a hazardous undertaking. However, the school administrator is faced with the alternative of either eliminating the use of school awards or of developing certain principles upon which to build a plan that he can justify. There is no precedent for the complete elimination of extrinsic rewards. There remains then the necessity of using discrimination in seeking among opinions and practices in an effort to establish criteria by which a system of awards can be evaluated.

Subjective opinion formulated from what were believed to be the best practices discovered in this study, together with the psychological principles involved, have led to the establishment of the following criteria for the development of a system of school awards.

1. The aims of a system of awards should be in keeping with the aims of general education.
2. An award plan should apply to a wide variety of activities.

3. Awards, to be effective, should be attainable by a majority of the pupils.
4. Awards should have little or no intrinsic value.
5. An award plan should lend itself readily to the guidance program.
6. The plan should be easily administered.



## CHAPTER VI

### A SCHOOL AWARD PLAN

This plan for a system of school awards is designed for use in the junior high school in Oregon City. It is based on local conditions as they have developed in the school, on the findings of this study, and the criteria established as basic for any such plan.

The theory that if awards are offered, they should be attainable by a majority of the pupils, is in keeping with the principles outlined by Hopkins<sup>58</sup> in his discussion of aims in education. Concerning this philosophy of aims, Hopkins has written as follows:

One of the major reasons for setting up an aim in any subject is to define the end of action in order to let pupils and teachers know when they have arrived at the designated point. This means that the aim should be attained by the pupils. Stated in another form, no aim should be set up which cannot be attained by the pupils. This underlying assumption is that the end should be reached by all pupils but such a condition is entirely impossible under the present organization of the school system. The suggestion is made, therefore, that the end should be attained by a majority of pupils. While this is far from ideal and is to an extent a compromise, it offers a standard which is so much higher than any which is now being attained that it will suffice for an end under present conditions.

Guided by this principle, an award plan has been

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<sup>58</sup>Levi Thomas Hopkins, Curriculum Principles and Practices, (Chicago: Ben H. Sanborn and Company, 1919), pp. 106-07

developed, using the tentative scheme worked out at Oregon City junior high school as a structural framework and the findings of this study as modifying factors. The plan provides for an award in the form of a school letter to be presented to all pupils who earn through a special point system, a minimum of 125 points during a school year. Points are granted for scholarship, citizenship, participation in extracurricular activities, service, and on the basis of character ratings. Points are to be recorded on individual pupil record forms kept by home room teachers who are responsible for maintaining up to date activity records of all pupils in the home room.

A schedule of activities for which points are to be granted is posted in each home room. The number of points listed after each activity is the maximum amount that can be earned in the activity and is the number granted for satisfactory performance. A lesser number may be given for a quality of achievement that is considered to be below what the sponsor of the activity feels should be expected from the pupil. This last provision applies only to extracurricular activities. The general outline of activities with the schedule of points is as follows:

#### Scholarship

Points are recorded for scholarship at the end of

each six week grading period and are taken from the report cards.

Each grade of 1	4 points
Each grade of 2	3 points
Each grade of 3	2 points
Raising total grades	1 point

(This means that for each point the sum of all marks is raised above the total for the previous grading period, one point will be given. This provision is included to serve as a motivating force with pupils of low scholastic standing.)

### Citizenship

Points for attitude, industry, and attendance are taken from report cards at the end of each six week marking period.

#### Attitude

Grade of 1	4 points
Grade of 2	3 points
Grade of 3	2 points

#### Industry

Grade of 1	4 points
Grade of 2	3 points
Grade of 3	2 points

#### Attendance

No absence for six weeks	2 points
No tardiness for six weeks	2 points

### Boy Scout and Campfire work

For each rank advanced during school year	8 points
For each merit badge or honor	2 points

### Service

#### Student body

President .....	40	points
Vice-president.....	25	"
Secretary.....	15	"
Treasurer.....	15	"
Editor of school paper.....	30	"
Assistant to editor of annual.....	25	"
Manager of school paper.....	25	"
Manager of athletics .....	25	"
Cheer leader.....	15	"
Song leader.....	15	"
Minute Men.....	10	"
Student body nominating committee...	3	"

#### Girls' and Boys' Leagues

President.....	20	points
Vice-President.....	10	"
Secretary.....	10	"
Standing committees.....	6	"

#### Home Rooms

(Officers elected for one semester)

President.....	8	points
Vice-president.....	5	"
Secretary.....	5	"
Representative to student council...	5	"

#### Clubs

Points to be in proportion to number of meetings held and type of service rendered.

#### Miscellaneous service

Lunch room duty.....	Six weeks	...8	points
Hall duty.....	" "	...8	"

Traffic squad.....Six weeks ...	8	points
Traffic sign in street.. " " ...	8	"
Library assistant..... " " ...	8	"
Lawn patrol..... " " ...	8	"
Checking temperatures... " " ...	8	"
Collecting absence slips " " ...	8	"
Checking class roll..... " " ...	4	"
Major part in student body play.....	10	"
Minor part in play, from.....	2	"
Public appearance with band.....	2	"
Public appearance with glee club.....	2	"
Public appearance with orchestra.....	2	"
Stage manager for play, up to.....	10	"
Appearance in assembly program, from.	2	"
Appearance in home room program, " .	1	"
Article published in school paper...1-3		"
Securing membership of parent in PTA.	5	"
Attendance of parent at PTA.....	1	"

Points may be awarded by the student council for any activity not listed, upon the recommendation of the faculty sponsor of the activity.

### Athletics

Playing one third of time, first team games.....	25	points
Playing less than one third of time in first team games but finishing season on squad.....	15	"
Playing one third of time on teams competing in grade school league.....	15	"
Playing less than one third of time on teams competing in grade school league but finishing season on squad.....	9	"
Playing one third of time on home room team.....	5	"
Earning 50 points in the Oregon High School Athletic Association physical education program for girls	25	"

### Character

Character rating is checked once each semester. Maximum points for each trait is five.

Cooperation.....	5	points
Courtesy.....	5	"
Reliability.....	5	"
Self control.....	5	"

These character traits have been selected upon recommendation of the faculty of the Oregon City junior high school because it was felt that they were objective in their manifestations and that they would lend themselves well to guidance discussion, both with groups and in individual conferences where problems of discipline had developed. In general, this group did not feel competent to exercise subjective judgment in the field of character rating.

At the first home room meeting of the school year, teachers are to explain the point system of awards with special emphasis on the desirability for balanced participation. The teachers will then assume that all members of the student body will wish to be assigned service tasks. The assignable tasks such as traffic duty, checking of roll, library help, lawn patrol, and all other duties that are not an outgrowth of a class or school club, are to be distributed in such a way that no pupil will receive a second assignment until all have been given one service task. This will be facilitated by a system of service application slips which must be checked by the home room teacher before a duty is assigned. This is done to prevent some pupils from receiving assignments from both the home room and class room teachers during the same six week period.

All service assignments which are of a continuous or

daily nature are to be made arbitrarily to all pupils, beginning with the first of the alphabet in the home rooms and the last of the alphabet in the class rooms. Special incidental assignments are to be distributed equitably, to pupils who have had no previous opportunity for service where this is possible.

The individual pupil record form is so designed that notation is to be made at the time a duty is assigned to the pupil. When each service task is completed, the pupil is held responsible for securing a report from the teacher for whom the service was performed, on the special slip provided for the purpose, and for taking the slip to the home room teacher who will transfer the report to the final record.

Except for participation in interscholastic athletics where eligibility regulations are a matter of inter school agreement, and for certain elective offices for which scholastic requirements are established by the student body constitution, there shall be no eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities. Service assignments are not to be considered as a reward for good conduct or scholarship, but rather as an educational opportunity that should be open to all. A pupil is to be relieved of a service assignment only for inefficiency.

The student body constitution provides that no pupil may hold more than one student body office. This provision includes the student council and the Boys' and Girls' Leagues. No restriction is placed on holding offices in the home room.

Character ratings are to be taken early in the third and sixth six week periods of the school year. The average of ratings by all teachers with whom the pupil comes in contact shall be used as the final rating.

Home room teachers shall record points for scholarship and citizenship on individual pupil record forms at the end of each six week period. They shall also record points for character rating as soon as averages are available.

In addition to the school letter, superior performance in scholarship, service, and athletics is to be recognized at the final assembly at which awards are given, by presentation of stars for each of these activities. These special awards are to be given only to those pupils who have earned the number of points required for a school letter. An average mark of two for five grading periods is required for the scholarship star. Twenty service points are required for the service award. In athletics, boys must earn 25 points as listed in the scale. Girls must earn 50 points in the Oregon high school athletic program for girls. These last points



are from a scale using a different evaluation than that used for boys and represent a total achievement of approximately equal rank.

The most important phase of this award system, and the feature on which its success depends, is the role played by the teacher in administering the plan. If the theory of motivation through awards is sound, teachers can through individual guidance, stimulate balanced participation and effort in the curricular and extracurricular offerings of the school. A pupil whose service record is good may be low in scholarship or citizenship. In meeting this situation, the teacher should make a positive approach by commenting on the best feature of the pupil's record. In problem cases it is possible to give special service assignments in order to build a service record as a foundation for guidance in other features of the school program.

This award plan is based on the assumption that some measure of success is necessary for the proper adjustment of the pupil. Tuttle<sup>59</sup> has well expressed this philosophy. "Trial and success is the only means by which adjustments can be perfected, whether to a physical or to a social environment." The hope is here expressed that this effort

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<sup>59</sup>H. S. Tuttle, A Social Basis of Education, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1934), p. 175

to perfect a more democratic system of school awards may bring the force of social approval to bear upon a much higher percentage of the pupils in the school where the plan will be placed on trial.

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