

B'ham, Hills School Systems Match Conant Report's 10 Primary Recommendations

By SAVILLA SLOAN
Special Writer

Americans who are concerned about the education of this nation's children have read with interest the recommendations made in the recently released Conant report, "The American High School Today."

The Birmingham Eccentric felt that its

readers would be interested to learn how their own schools measure up to the standards suggested by former Harvard president, Dr. James Conant.

We therefore present this point-for-point comparison of Dr. Conant's ten major points with statements of Birmingham school Supt. Eugene L. Johnson, Dwight B. Ireland and Bloomfield Hills School

Supt. Eugene L. Johnson.

Dr. Conant's highly important report was sponsored by Carnegie corporation. It included detailed interviews with 3,000 teachers and 1,000 students across the United States. Begun long before the educational furor set off by Sputnik, it is the most extensive high school survey ever made.

These Are Dr. Conant's 10 Recommendations:

1. A school must fit the needs of its individual community.

I have known Dr. Conant for a number of years, and our philosophy of education is quite similar.

I have long felt that there is no such thing as a typical high school, for each school should differ to fit the needs of its own community. Here at Birmingham we attempt to have as varied a curriculum as possible and fit it to each child's particular need.

I have seen a system "which attempted to divide students in its community into vocational, industrial, general and college preparatory schools and it was a dismal failure."

2. Vocational courses should be offered students not going to college.

To meet the needs of students not going on to college, Birmingham offers commercial, industrial arts, auto mechanics, home economics and retailing courses. In retailing students get "on the job" training with local merchants. Several graduates are now in managerial positions in retail businesses.

For the 75% of our students who attend college, we are constantly modifying our curriculum to measure up to college demands.

3. All students should have to complete four years of English and at least three years of social studies, including history.

All our graduates have four years of English and three years of social studies. We call this a general education background for the child in assuming citizenship responsibilities.

We also require all graduates to complete one year of science and one of math.

5. Superior students should be offered, and encouraged to take, four years of math and science.

I am particularly proud of the math courses offered superior students. Students selected for the stiffer of three accelerated math courses take accelerated arithmetic in the seventh grade, algebra I and II in the eighth and ninth grades, plane and solid geometry in the tenth, college algebra and trigonometry in the eleventh, and analytical geometry and calculus in their senior year.

These students are selected on the basis of an IQ of 120 or more, for pupil interest, performance in arithmetic, teacher recommendation, information available to counselors and parental permission.

6. Superior students should have four years of a single language.

Birmingham offers four years of Latin to students. At present it has two years of German (which will be expanded to three) and three years of French and Spanish. However, students have been advised that if enough want a fourth year of these languages, it will be offered. In the eighth grade the junior high schools offer a course, introduction to language, which is a test of a child's linguistic ability.

7. Gifted students should have the opportunity to do some college level work.

Students at Birmingham have a chance to do college level studying. For selected students, we have an English course in 100 great books. These books are read in full and discussed in groups of four or five students.

"Our English college section, which is made up of children going to college, reads complete classics, writes term papers and learns to use the library as a tool.

8. Superior students should be assigned 15 or 20 hours of homework a week.

As to homework required of superior students, they have a lot of homework. I don't feel they think of high school as a place to glide through. In particular, those taking the advanced math program have to dig in heavily.

9. To be economically feasible, a high school should have a graduating class of at least 100 students.

Birmingham has 450 students in its graduating class. I am proud of the fact that in 1945, this community accepted my recommendation that five outlying school areas be consolidated with the Birmingham school district, thus forming a community school district that would be economically sound. In Michigan, we need to eliminate our small school districts and consolidate them.

10. There should be a counselor for every 250 to 300 students in the high school.

Birmingham high school has six counselors for its 2,000 students (an average of 333 per counselor). Every student is scheduled through a counselor who gives vocational, social and educational advice.

Because we test students all through the elementary grades—using the Iowa achievement test—the natural ability and classroom achievement of a child is already established for us by the time he reaches high school.

We also use the science research association (SRA) tests. "In addition to these tests, we each year have a meeting with all parents on a grade level—all ninth grade parents, for instance. Decisions reached concerning a child are explained. Parents are allowed to review these decisions and come for individual conferences if they have objections.

So, although we don't quite meet Dr. Conant's ratio of counselor per child, we think we are giving adequate counseling.

Each year our counseling staff meets with our students who are now in college and with some of their professors to discuss what's been done well for them in high school and what's been missed. Then we determine through faculty committees what changes should be made in all areas. This way we keep our current students prepared to assume college

Dwight B. Ireland,
B'ham Supt. of Schools,
Makes This Comparison:

Eugene L. Johnson,
B'field Hills School Supt.,
Gives This Evaluation:

Bloomfield Hills school system is adapted to fit the community it serves.

Because 85 per cent of our graduating class go on to college, we emphasize college preparatory courses at the high school. We offer courses to enable them to meet entrance requirements at any college of their choice.

Because of the heavy demand of a college prep course, we hold summer school sessions to allow students to be able to take an enriched program including art and music, and to get in typing and driver education.

In a lesser way, our transportation system and hot lunch program are a part of fitting the school to public needs, for we serve a decentralized area in which children cannot easily get back and forth from school to home.

Because this is a community of adults who still are interested in further education, we also offer a strong adult education program at the high school.

Our students who are not going on to college are not overlooked.

We have a well rounded program for them which includes home economics, shop, mechanical drawing, business education and journalism.

All graduates, irrespective of their goals, are required to take four years of English and four years of social studies, including history.

All graduates must have had two years of math and one year of a laboratory science.

At present about 40 per cent of Bloomfield high students are taking four years of math and 25 per cent take chemistry, biology and physics during their high school years. A course in general science is offered ninth grade students.

Our percentage taking four years of math and three of science is high because many of our students are interested in engineering and related subjects. We feel we have a number of students who classify as superior and they are encouraged to take these subjects.

Four years of French and Spanish are offered high school students, and these are in addition to introductory classes in the two languages offered in the eighth grade. Two years of German and Latin are included in the curriculum. A third year of Latin has been offered, but not enough students have been interested in taking it.

In several areas, gifted Bloomfield students have a chance to do college level work. Our college preparatory English class gives our students a chance to work on a college level. In addition this year we participated in a program with the U. of M. in which a Michigan professor taught two English classes, assigned themes which were corrected at the university and then the professor returned to explain the corrections.

Gifted students in math, physics and chemistry are furnished college text books for outside reading.

Our senior high school is definitely geared to require at least 15 hours a week for average students and 20 or more hours for talented students with a particularly stiff schedule.

Bloomfield Hills high has 158 students in its graduating class.

There is one fulltime counselor and two part time counselors for the almost 600 students in the high school.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Thursday, February 26, 1959

BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN
SECTION B

Go GRAND TRUNK

SAVE UP TO \$12.05

on round trip fare
TO CHICAGO

Go GRAND TRUNK

COMPARE THE FARE

Round trip to Chicago, tax included

GRAND TRUNK	FIRST CLASS \$32.34 ROOMETTES \$18.70	+\$1.04
OTHER RAILROADS	FIRST CLASS \$40.65 ROOMETTES \$22.44	\$63.09
YOU SAVE \$12.05		
<p>"The La Salle" Lv. Detroit 11:45 p.m. EST Lv. Royal Oak 11:45 p.m. EST Lv. Birmingham 12:30 a.m. EST Lv. Pontiac 12:30 a.m. EST Arr. Chicago 6:00 a.m. CST Arr. Chicago 6:30 a.m. CST</p> <p>"Inter-City Limited" Lv. Chicago 10:00 p.m. CST Lv. Chicago (Lans.) 10:00 p.m. CST Arr. Pontiac 6:34 a.m. EST Arr. Birmingham 6:30 a.m. EST Arr. Royal Oak 7:05 a.m. EST Arr. Detroit 7:35 a.m. EST</p>		

FOR INFORMATION OR RESERVATIONS

*** your local Grand Trunk ticket agent or contact: ***
 Wm. Warner, Ticket Agent
 Grand Trunk Passenger Station
 Birmingham, Michigan • Midwest 4-7618



Go in luxury... newest type coaches, bedrooms, roomettes.
 Rental cars available on arrival. Ask about our family fare plan for additional savings.



BIRMINGHAM



by AL WARNER, Manager



If you are a member of a legal women's club and looking for a program for one of your meetings, we may have the answer to your problem.

Janieve Marsh, of our Birmingham Business Office, gives a talk on telephone usage which has been very popular with women's groups. We think she does a very fine job.

Just call our local business office, Midwest 4-9900, and we will be glad to make arrangements for her to appear before your group.

WILL MOM MAKE IT? Will she be able to rush from the shower downstairs to the phone before it stops ringing? Will she slip or trip on the way? And afterwards, when the panic has died down, will you perhaps decide that Mom deserves a special gift—an extension phone in her bedroom, handy to the bathroom, so that she never has to rush again. Call the Business Office, Michigan Bell Telephone Company, for details.



TALKING OF bedroom extensions, we've just heard of a man who sprained his thumb when he stumbled, on his way downstairs to answer a nighttime phone call. Shortly after, he had a bedside extension installed. But guess what happened the very next time he had a late phone call—he was all the way downstairs and groping for switches and muttering to himself before he realized that there was now no need to stir from bed!



WITH ALASKA—ONE OF "us," a lot of flag makers are going to be busy with needles, thread and extra stars. Talking of flags, did you know that the world's largest belongs to Michigan—or more exactly, to the J. L. Hudson Company in Detroit. Its vital statistics—height 104 feet, width 235 feet, weight 3 1/2 tons. The oldest existing American flag can be seen at the museum in Old Bennington, Vt. The first flag to use the stars and stripes design was made by Betsy Ross in her cottage in Philadelphia (now a national shrine). The design was approved on June 4, 1777