MORE THAN 10,000 TEACHERS:
HOLLIS L. CASWELL AND THE VIRGINIA
CURRICULUM REVISION PROGRAM

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As surely as seasons come and go, educational reforms spring up, blossom, and wither away. Although they may not occur annually, reforms seem to take a cycle that ignores, or blinks at, previous experiences. Each reform not only addresses the perennial questions of who, what, and how to teach but also of how to get teachers to adopt and use materials prepared for the identified who, what, and how. Although we seldom consult past experience as a guide for present practice, examining an early curriculum reform movement that addressed these same issues may provide guidance for contemporary curriculum and school reformers.

Some researchers have called the field of education, and curriculum in particular, ahistorical because the practitioners of the craft do not know about the past. The field is not without history, but the history is often only briefly known, and often poorly understood when known. Since the inception of the Virginia Curriculum Revision Program (hereafter the Virginia Plan), writers of curriculum and educational history have viewed it as a milestone in 20th-century curricular reform efforts. Any textbook on curriculum history generally contains references to the Virginia Plan, some in greater detail than

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The Virginia Plan, a statewide curriculum revision program, was showcased as a model effectively involving teachers, students, and administrators in a program of improving education for all students in public schools. It was widely copied in the other states where Caswell and his students consulted during the late 1930s and early 1940s. The major designers of the Virginia Plan were Hollis L. Caswell, the general curriculum consultant, and Sydney B. Hall, state superintendent of instruction in Virginia. These two men, along

with Doak S. Campbell, Caswell’s colleague at Peabody, directed the efforts of thousands of teachers and administrators during the first years of the Virginia Plan. Many of Caswell’s ideas about curriculum work, both definitions and procedures, found their expression in Virginia.

As the general curriculum consultant, Caswell was intimately involved with conceptualizing the Virginia Plan and unfolding day-to-day procedures as the work progressed. Caswell’s early reputation as a curriculum leader was based largely on his work in Virginia, therefore, he appears as a central figure in this article. Caswell traveled extensively in Virginia, even though he was living and teaching in Tennessee, speaking to civic, educational, and political groups. During the school year, he met with the various division- (county) and state-level committees and, in the summers, conducted workshops at George Peabody for key educators from Virginia and other southern states. Caswell’s contributions to the curriculum field were not confined to his work in Virginia, but his name and the Virginia Plan are so closely aligned that one is seldom mentioned without the other.

The Virginia Plan was an expression of Caswell’s belief that intelligent teachers, when given assistance and guidance, were the best qualified to, the most capable of, and willing to provide the educational experiences best suited for each individual child. Caswell saw the curriculum of schools as more than the course of studies prepared by teachers or curriculum consultants. To him, a curriculum composed of all experiences of children would constantly change, evolving dynamically as children grew in social and educational maturity. The procedures of the Virginia Plan relied heavily on a progressive philosophy that was translated into activities designed to educate students to become active, contributing citizens in a rapidly changing democratic society.

TEACHERS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE VIRGINIA PLAN

As early as the 1910s, teacher acceptance and use of adopted curriculum materials were considered necessary for successful school reform. Mandated use of a curriculum seldom resulted in widespread use, and by the mid-1920s, teachers were increasingly involved in creating curriculum materials. Two notable programs in Denver and St. Louis involved teachers in writing curriculums. The 26th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education included both programs. The next large-scale involvement of teachers in curriculum work was in Virginia in the early 1930s. According to Kliebard,

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Virginia teachers' involvement in the curriculum process "built substantially on the Denver model" used by Jesse Newlon and L. Thomas Hopkins. Kliebard overstates the similarities between the work done in Denver and Virginia. Newlon's program in Denver did affect the Virginia Plan, but the influence was indirect at best.

Caswell was aware of the procedures used in Denver and St. Louis. Newlon was the director of the Lincoln School while Caswell was at Teachers College. Walter Cocking, who had been the assistant superintendent of schools in St. Louis during that city's curriculum revision project, was Caswell's classmate at Teachers College. Caswell and Cocking were members of student committees on several school surveys conducted by George Strayer. Thus, besides reading the reports in the Yearbook, Caswell knew the major participants personally.

Caswell recalled he had used some of the Denver procedures in Alabama and later had modified them as he consulted in Florida. On reflection, however, he remembered the procedures were ineffective in getting many teachers to change their ways of teaching, so he abandoned them when he began his work in Virginia. The accepted procedure of having selected teachers and consultants write curriculum documents for other teachers to use often resulted in better documents, but these documents still found their way to shelves to gather dust. By the time he began his work in Virginia in 1931, Caswell had ceased to concentrate solely on improving the courses of study (his focus in Alabama) and had refocused on the goal of changing how teachers taught.

Most authors, in writing about the work in Virginia, cite the many teachers involved in the curriculum work. Their participation was unlike that found in earlier curriculum projects, even the one in Denver, and the difference lies in form and magnitude.

Unlike the Denver program where teachers were released from their classes and paid extra for their work on the curriculum committees, Virginia teachers were required to study and write lessons after school and on weekends. Superintendent Hall did not have funds to pay the teachers for their work, and Caswell saw little need to do so because he believed teachers should study to improve their teaching anyway. Caswell and Hall saw the study program and curriculum work as ways of helping teachers as they prepared themselves to do a better job of teaching:

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8Ibid.
The primary job of the teacher is to make the curriculum. This important task cannot be done successfully without careful planning and it is reasonable to expect each teacher so to plan. The greatest possible assistance that can be rendered a teacher in planning is a properly organized curriculum. . . Duties of lesser importance may be discontinued and teachers may devote Saturday forenoon to such work. Teachers are paid for full-time work, and there seems to be no good reason why they should not spend five and one-half days a week on the job.9

All teachers in Virginia were expected to participate in the general education study course as preparation for curriculum work. In Denver, only the teachers involved in writing the curriculum materials had undertaken a study program.

The Study Course for the Virginia State Curriculum Program (hereafter the Study Course) was published less than six months after Caswell, Campbell, and Hall met in August 1931.10 The Study Course was largely the work of Caswell (which Hall acknowledges in the Foreword11), as a comparison of its study topics and the topics from Caswell’s course syllabus shows.12 The Study Course listed seven topics for teachers to study:

1. What Is the Curriculum?
2. Developments Which Have Resulted in a Need for Curriculum Revision
3. What Is the Place of Subject Matter in Education?
4. Determining Educational Objectives
5. Organizing Instruction
6. Selecting Subject Matter
7. Measuring Outcomes of Instruction13

For each topic, Caswell listed questions for discussion and included references taken from the bibliography. Teachers met weekly or biweekly during spring 1932 to read and discuss the topics. Caswell considered the work done with the Study Course preparation for both producing curriculum materials and installing the materials produced.

The number of teachers participating in the study program is difficult to say for certain. The figure most commonly cited is 10,000. This number is probably a fairly good approximation, but in terms of testing and actual usage, the figure probably misrepresents reality. From the beginning, participation in the Virginia Plan was voluntary. Although all teachers were encouraged to read and discuss the lessons, not all did. The degree of participation varied, ranging from faithful to attendance only when other teaching demands did

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10 Virginia State Board of Education, Study Course for Virginia State Curriculum Program (Richmond: Division of Purchase and Printing, 1932).
11 Ibid., p. 4.
not take precedence. Attending to the nature of participation when citing figures explains much of the variance in the number of teachers taking part.

Caswell himself gave the following numbers: "An example of general participation is seen in the Virginia state program, where 10,000 teachers participated in the first phase of their program,"14 and "More than 18,000 teachers participated in organized study groups directed by trained leaders."15

According to Galen Saylor, one of Caswell's students at Teachers College, 8,450 white teachers participated, and this number was approximate because "some of these figures were 'estimated,' probably by State Department officials, for some divisions."16 Seguel wrote that "16,000 teachers and administrators in Virginia were invited . . . to take part in a general study and discussion of issues in the curriculum" and that "6,000 teachers did not take part at first."17 The Virginia Plan was a popular topic of analysis in the late 1930s and early 1940s. More than 50 master's theses and doctoral dissertations were written on various phases of the Virginia Plan between 1935 and 1945.18

Eva Vaughn, a principal in southern Virginia, wrote that "approximately 11,000 teachers and school officials in 86 of the 112 school divisions participated to some degree in this phase of the program."19 When she wrote about her teachers' participation, she reported that 12 teachers had engaged in the study program, 17 had produced something for the second year's work, and 4 had participated in the tryout phase in the third year. One 1st grade teacher quit shortly after the program began because of the extra work involved.20 Other authors cite a similar number of teachers using the materials.21

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19 Eva Inez Vaughn, "Installation of the Virginia Course of Study" (doctoral dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1936), p. 5. Vaughn was the principal of an elementary school in Pulaski, Virginia. She served as chair of the Elementary Science State Production Committee. She completed her doctoral dissertation at George Peabody College for Teachers in 1936. Hollis Caswell was her major professor, Fremont P. Wirth was her minor professor. Her dissertation recorded her experiences as she installed the Virginia Plan in her school.
20 Ibid., pp. 40–42.
Most likely, the figure of 10,000 does represent the number of teachers who participated in reading and studying to prepare for the curriculum work, but many fewer probably actually participated in developing and using the resulting Tentative Course of Study. Buck provides some additional figures on teacher participation in the tryout phase of the Virginia Plan:

The experimental edition of the elementary course of study was used by 250 selected teachers in schools in various parts of the state. . . . The first experimental high school course of study was tried out by 200 selected teachers.\(^3\)

Thus, 2 to 3 percent of the teachers served as pilots and screens for the more than 16,000 teachers in Virginia. Although 10,000 is an accurate approximation that justifies calling the Virginia Plan a statewide curriculum revision program, we must consider the nature of the participation and the requirements placed on teachers in any discussion assessing the effect and usage of the Virginia Plan as a model of curriculum reform.

STATE-LEVEL COMMITTEES AND CURRICULUM REVISION

Regardless of the numbers involved in the Virginia Plan, someone or some group of people had to direct the work. Caswell, Campbell, and Hall, each with other responsibilities, could not be everywhere in Virginia directing the work being done. State and division-level committees directed the teachers’ daily activities. Who determined the makeup of the committees, and what did they use to guide their decision making? Caswell’s Study Course was not designed to provide all the direction for the work, only to prepare teachers and administrators to begin the work.

While the many teachers of the state were reading, studying, and answering questions on Caswell’s seven topics, a small group—the Aims Committee—was writing the document that would guide its own work and the work of Virginia teachers for the next 20 years. Headed by Fred M. Alexander, principal of Newport News High School, Newport News, the Aims Committee consisted of Henry G. Ellis, Petersburg; Mrs. Thomas H. Stiff, Norfolk; Mrs. Brancis P. Ford, Roanoke, Miss Charlotte Stoakley, Richmond, H. C. Houchens, Richmond; and Miss Mary D. Pierce, Farmville.\(^3\)

In their recent book, Tanner and Tanner cite the work of this committee under the heading “Lay Participation” and label them a “professional committee.”\(^3\) Were these seven people responsible for the “Tentative Statement of


Aims” that was taken to the business and social leaders of Virginia in November 1932? Obviously, a discrepancy exists, and the answer to this question is unclear. Chapter 1, the introduction to the Procedures bulletin, states:

The chairman of the Aims Committee and six chairmen of State Production Committees, together with the Director of the Curriculum Program, spent the greater part of the summer of 1932 in the curriculum laboratory at George Peabody College in developing these reports under the direction of Dr. H. L. Caswell. Two Production Committee chairmen spent the summer on this work in the curriculum laboratory at the University of Virginia and one in the curriculum laboratory at William and Mary College.

The question about membership on the Aims Committee arises because, of the six names listed as committee members, only three are identified as Production Committee chairs (Stiff, Houchens, and Ford). Perhaps we will discover who the actual members of the Aims Committee were if and when we uncover less public documents. Whatever the actual makeup of the committee, however, this small number of teachers and principals chose the guiding principles for the Virginia Plan. This reality does not downplay the committee’s work. Under Caswell’s direction, the members read a massive amount of literature during summer 1932 (see the Appendix) and produced a lengthy list of attitudes, appreciations, and skills for children in Virginia to develop.

Little was written about the basis for choosing Aims Committee members other than the comment that, administratively, membership on the committee was important to the success of the Production Committees’ work. The director of instruction, who recommended people for the Aims Committee, was instructed that the “committee should have in its personnel the most capable students of education in the entire State.” Caswell probably had a hand in selecting the committee members as he traveled around Virginia talking and working with teachers and the public. The work of this small committee certainly influenced what the Tentative Course of Study included.

The end result of the summer’s work was a “Tentative Statement of Aims,” consisting of 62 statements listing “understandings,” “attitudes,” “appreciations,” and “automatic responses” that the children of Virginia would be learning. These statements were later revised, some added, and others renamed or expanded. What were first called “understandings” were later termed “generalizations” in 1934, “automatic responses” became “special abilities,” and “appreciations” were subsumed under “emotionalized attitudes.” Caswell remembered that the “Aims” had been presented to lay and

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27Ibid., pp. 17–19.
educational leaders before being sent out to the teachers and that few changes were made. Five abilities from the 1934 list do not appear on the 1932 list:

- The Ability to Follow Instructions
- The Ability to Respond to Situations Requiring Neuro-muscular Skills
- The Ability to Sing and Appreciate Music
- The Ability to Develop the Power of Creative Expression and Use the Techniques Needed for Free Expression
- The Ability to Recognize and Use the Natural Phenomena, Plants, and Animals of the Environment

According to Caswell, once the "Aims" had been approved, teachers were invited to identify activities that they believed would help students develop one or more of the understandings, appreciations, or abilities. The activities or lessons were submitted to the Division (county or school district) Production Committee, which reviewed the materials before they were sent on to the State Production Committee. Nothing has been written on the acceptance rate of the teacher-submitted units, but Caswell and Hall both reported that thousands of units were examined, revised, and tested before being included in the Tentative Course of Study.

Regardless of the numbers submitted, all documents were funneled through the State Reviewing and Unifying Committee, whose purpose was "to review, upon the request of the Director, materials submitted by State Production Committees and make such changes as are necessary to unify these materials." The State Reviewing and Unifying Committee was to consist of 10 to 12 of the most capable classroom teachers and supervisors in the state. Thus, the Aims Committee's work had limited the range of areas for teachers to focus on, and again the lessons and units that the teachers had submitted went through several screenings.

Having only a few people make decisions for the whole state was not an unprecedented policy. Writers of courses of study were usually few in number, and from an administrative point of view, small groups often work better than large groups. From another point of view, the policy may not have been a concern—Virginia's stated intention was not to write a course of study, as was the case with Caswell's work in Alabama; it was to improve the education of

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29 Hollis L. Caswell, interview by O. L. Davis, Jr., 17-18 October 1977 (audiotape recording, Oral History Collection, Center for the History of Education, University of Texas at Austin).
Virginia's children. The course of study was only one means to that improvement. Teachers were the real key, and their habits needed to change.

One question that we may never answer is how much these committees shaped the Tentative Course of Study. Obviously they did, but the query lingers. What lessons were eliminated, which ideas were rejected, and what procedures were deemed not appropriate for the new Virginia Plan? It is highly unlikely that the committee members saved any of the rejected materials. Even though teachers are notorious pack rats, the number of documents involved probably precluded saving anything considered unsuitable. If any rejected materials were saved, they will be discovered only by chance, when someone stumbles across them in a search for something else. A larger group of people in Virginia also had a hand in screening the materials—the tryout teachers.

When evaluating the influence of the Virginia Plan, we have seriously overlooked the work of the division- and state-level committees. We need to understand the work of the many teachers as a significant source from which the final document was drawn. Although the Tentative Course of Study includes many thousands of suggestions and units, each was generated in response to the aims thought important by the nine members of the Aims Committee, and each had the approval of the Division and State Reviewing and Unifying Committees.

INSTALLATION OF THE TENTATIVE COURSE OF STUDY

A recurring problem, even today, is getting teachers to adopt and use developed curriculum documents and materials. Even those with little historical memory can remember the attempts of teachers to implement the curricular reforms of the early 1960s (e.g., the “new math,” MACOS, SMSG, ESS, and BSCS). The problem of adoption was real in Virginia, and Caswell and his colleagues chose a new, much more comprehensive approach, one unlike those tried in Denver or Alabama and Florida.

Caswell proposed a radically different approach to influencing teacher practice, one based not on the installation of curriculum materials but on invitation and cooperation aimed at improving instruction and learning. This model did not rely on the previously used method of mandates and coercion. As important a place as installation seems to have played in the literature written about the Virginia Plan, Caswell and Campbell included little about installation in their book, Curriculum Development. In his address to principals and supervisors in Virginia at their annual conference in 1934, however,

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34 J. Galen Saylor, Who Planned the Curriculum? (West Lafayette, IN. Kappa Delta Pi, 1982)
Caswell articulated his ideas on installation. The half-page found in *Curriculum Development* is a condensation of his speech.

Caswell described the process adopted in Virginia in this manner:

The status of the curriculum program may be reviewed. The general concepts and controls of the program may be evaluated. Upon this review and evaluation a flexible program of installation may be developed.

Caswell believed that their invitational model of installation had many advantages over the direct-imposition model.

The two most significant advantages, perhaps, are that through this type of procedure it is possible to discover the shortcomings of the work carried on heretofore and to provide for overcoming them. It is possible to adapt the work to the requirements of the local conditions. This is extremely important in connection with the Virginia program inasmuch as the extent and participation in the program up-to-date in various local units has differed widely, and also because other factors in the local schools, which condition effective use of new materials, vary greatly.

Besides these advantages, the invitational model exemplified one belief driving the curriculum revision program—the belief in the goodness of democracy in government and schools. The belief was one criterion used in selecting the aims of education included in the *Tentative Course of Study*. "the aim should be democratizing, that is, it should lead to the cooperation of individuals within groups, and to [the] cooperation of groups with other groups."

How did Caswell develop this model of installing a curriculum revision program?

Caswell was an insightful observer of school practice. He didn't say whether this ability came from his upbringing in western Kansas and was sharpened by his work with Strayer or whether it developed as a result of his work with Strayer in the school surveys. He didn't say when his concerns over the use of courses of study first came to his attention, but he remarked that, because of his work in Alabama and Florida from 1929 to 1931, he learned that teachers seldom used courses of study. He knew, if he and others attempting to change school practice were going to rely on the course of study as the basis of change, that they would be less than successful.

An integral part of his plan for Virginia was the local adaptation of a structured program for installing the newly revised course of study.

The curriculum developers allowed for the variance in local conditions by asking teachers from across the state to submit lessons and units that they

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*Hollis L. Caswell, interview by O L. Davis, Jr., 17–18 October 1977 (audiotape recording, Oral History Collection, Center for the History of Education, University of Texas at Austin).*
found useful with their students to the Division Production Committees for inclusion in the *Course of Study*. The printed *Tentative Course of Study* offered numerous suggested activities that teachers could choose from and adapt in response to local conditions.

The installation of the first version of the curriculum materials that were developed and made available for all teachers in fall 1934 had actually begun several years earlier when Caswell, Hall, and Campbell met in 1931. The three of them, in concert with businessmen from across the state, had done the evaluation part of the installation process and found that teachers in Virginia were ill-prepared to undertake a curriculum revision program. In response to this identified shortcoming, Caswell immediately began to write the *Study Course* published in January 1932. As Caswell told the principals and supervisors, an initial and necessary part of any installation process was an analysis of the current status of education. In Virginia, the *Study Course* made teachers recognize the need to improve instruction and how the *Tentative Course of Study* could help them in their work of choosing and developing better experiences for children.

Two factors deeply affected the success of the Virginia Plan: the teachers’ willingness to accept and adopt the new curriculum framework and their educational level. The *Study Course* and the many materials and activities suggested in the *Tentative Course of Study* enhanced teachers’ acceptance of the new program. A select group of teachers field-tested each suggested activity in the *Tentative Course of Study*.

The lessons surviving the rigorous screening process by the Division and State Production Committees were assembled in loose-leaf notebooks that the selected teachers used during the 1933–34 school year. Behind each lesson, the teachers found evaluation and suggestion forms asking for their opinions on the lessons. The number of teachers chosen was small—somewhere between 250 and 317 elementary teachers. According to Vaughn, a principal in southern Virginia and the chair of the State Science Production Committee, teachers in schools where the principal was involved in developing the Virginia Plan were most often chosen as tryout teachers. Six teachers in Vaughn’s school initially began as tryout teachers, but the 1st grade teacher quit shortly into the program because of the extra work involved. If all principals chose their teachers as carefully as Vaughn did, the program had a fair tryout. Vaughn chose at least one teacher from each grade level to represent a variety of teacher and student abilities:

The teachers selected were well trained, interested in their work, and interested in children. All had had several years’ experience in teaching and one or more years

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with the present principal. All of them had participated in the study program and in the production of materials the previous two years.

Since the writer wished to see the effect of the use of these materials upon different types of children, she made an effort to select groups of varying ability and still have every grade represented.42

Thus, in comparison with the earlier Denver program, more teachers in Virginia were involved in creating the lessons. But, as in Denver where a few teachers actually wrote and produced the curriculum materials, the small, selected group of committee members passed final judgment on which activities to include in the Tentative Course of Study.

Caswell and Hall knew that many Virginia teachers had only a limited educational background and that they would need help in adopting the new program. For example, statewide in Virginia in 1931, only 21.5 percent of the teachers had 4 or more years of college or university work; in the county systems, only 18.9 percent of the teachers had 4 or more years of higher education. In these same county systems, more than one-half of the teachers (51.3 percent) had 1 year or less of collegiate preparation for teaching.43

In Vaughn's school, 7 of 20 teachers had B.S. degrees, 12 had between 2 and 4 years of training but did not have a B.S. degree, and 1 had only a single year of professional training, 7 of the nondegree teachers (including the teacher with only 1 year of training) were engaged in additional work toward a higher level of certification. None of the teachers had less than 4 years of teaching experience, the teacher with only 1 year of training had been teaching for 12 years.44 Vaughn did not indicate whether she encouraged her teachers to continue their education, but her teachers—better educated and more active in professional development—were not representative of teachers across Virginia. If the Virginia Plan was going to succeed anywhere, Vaughn's elementary school in Pulaski was the place.

Not only were teachers' educational levels generally low, but the revised curriculum program asked teachers to plan lessons for students in an unfamiliar manner, and the increased activity was to take place in schools lacking enrichment resources and often basic supplies. To address the needs of resource identification, each activity and aspect from the core curriculum matrix listed books for students and teachers, films, and government materials available. The State Board of Education made available matching funds for purchasing library books. The amount spent on library materials in Virginia between 1933 and 1938 increased from $33,246 to $170,647—an increase

of more than 500 percent. The expenditures for library materials in high schools increased about 300 percent, at the elementary level, the increase was almost 13-fold.45

Some teachers’ lack of educational expertise was addressed in several ways. To assist teachers in their educational growth and ability to use the newly suggested activities, two avenues were adopted. The first was offering courses in curriculum work at the various state institutions of higher education. Between 1935 and 1943, many teachers and principals who worked on the Virginia Plan at the division and state levels went on to receive master’s and doctoral degrees. According to Buck, the number of courses in curriculum offered at various institutions increased greatly during the same period.46 Further research of course enrollment records and teaching assignments is needed before we can say anything about the numbers of classroom teachers who enrolled in the courses offered at the universities and colleges.

The second means to help teachers adopt the new course of study was through the use of an intensive, ongoing inservice training program, a continuation of the work begun with the Study Course of 1932. Principals were the key figures in this installation process. After a review of the literature on installation, Vaughn wrote:

From the evidence set forth it seems that the safest plan, one that promises the best results, for installation within a school is that whereby the principal has the entire responsibility for the work in his particular school.... This would mean that the principal would have charge not only of the administration but the supervision of the work.47

Principals, if they did not lead, selected the teachers to lead the early study programs, chose the teachers to participate in the tryout stage of development, and served as models and coaches for all teachers after the program was in place. Vaughn, in her doctoral dissertation supervised by Caswell, described in detail the installation process in her school, complete with her evaluation of its success and suggestions for improvement.

Vaughn chose the 6 teachers to be tryout teachers using the first materials, 12 of her teachers had participated in the study course, 17 had produced some piece of work for the Production Committee during the second year, and 4 participated in the tryout (1 teacher Vaughn selected as a tryout teacher taught in another school whose principal was not interested in supervising a tryout teacher). Only 1 of the tryout teachers had not participated in the study course.48

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48Ibid., pp. 40–42.
Vaughn identified the six steps she used in the installation process in her school:

1. Establishing a desirable viewpoint on the part of all teachers;
2. Explaining and interpreting the course of study to the teachers;
3. Detailed study of the course of study by all teachers;
4. Direct supervision of teachers actually using the materials in classroom instruction;
5. Securing additional equipment and instructional materials, including library facilities for teachers' and pupils' use;
6. Explaining and interpreting to parents and to the public the changes in the curriculum.

Several innovative ideas helped achieve the goals of these steps. As a way of securing additional reading materials, "every teacher became a member of the State Teacher's Association, which gave her the official journal of that organization." Some teachers banded together to share the cost of subscriptions to journals that principals recommended. Principals helped teachers with their planning and, when confident, demonstrated the principles of the new instructional methods.

In reviewing her four years of work with the Virginia Plan, Vaughn identified several procedures that were not carried out as planned. She believed that these failures contributed to teachers' reluctance to adopt the new program. One area of difficulty was the demonstration of teaching strategies. Neither principals nor the tryout teachers, where available, felt prepared to teach other teachers. One resolution to this problem was cooperative planning and teaching followed by reflection.

Lack of funds hampered two steps in the installation process. With no money for substitutes, teachers could not leave their classrooms to observe other teachers. Also, funds were not available to pay for travel to other schools where teachers might have been using the new techniques. Space and financial constraints hampered the collection and storage of the materials the new lessons required. This observation is interesting because one requirement of the Virginia Plan was that lessons chosen for use be based on local availability of materials.

In spite of all the difficulties principals and teachers encountered in the installation process, Vaughn saw the Virginia Plan as an effective way to better children's education:

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the course of study upon children, teachers, and the community was based on teachers' judgment as revealed in evaluation records and interviews, children's own reactions as revealed in letters and conversations; principal's judgment based upon observations and interviews with teachers, children, and people in the community. These records present evidence of decided growth on the part of children and teachers along desirable lines which are compatible with the aims of education as set up in the course of study. Records also reveal a favorable reaction from the community.

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49 Ibid., p. 70.
50 Ibid., p. 74.
51 Ibid., pp. 158-159.
The Virginia Plan was not solely an elementary program. Beginning in 1934, as the first printed version of the Tentative Course of Study for Virginia Elementary Schools, Grades I–VII was being distributed, work began on the courses of study for the secondary grades. Over the next five years, courses of study were written for grades 8 through 11 and for some special areas. A Tentative Course of Study was published in 1941 for the 12th grade. Installation at the secondary level was more difficult. Evidently some lessons had been learned from the elementary and early attempts at the secondary level.

In 1939 the State Board of Education found that aid was needed for secondary-school people interested in using the core program. It was this realization that led to the appointment of four "high-school curriculum counselors." These counselors were selected because of their successful work with the core program. The counselors were selected originally to work on a trial basis for a three-year period. During the period each counselor was asked to work as a special assistant for 30 or 35 schoolteachers interested in the core program.

Macklin was one of the four counselors chosen to assist teachers. His Ohio State University dissertation is an account of his "work in all of the accredited secondary schools for Negroes in Virginia." In his second year as a counselor, Macklin worked with 78 teachers and principals responsible for 2,392 students in 15 schools (one per county) in Virginia. He cited his responsibility for all the accredited schools for Negroes in Virginia as one factor that prevented him from gathering and analyzing data in greater depth.

Macklin's study showed that the schools where the curriculum counselors had been working made progress:

These improvements included the development of greater interest on the part of the faculty as a whole in understanding the cooperative solution of common problems, a better understanding of and respect for the principles and practices recommended in the Virginia Program for Improving Instruction, an improved point of view on the part

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Ibid., p. 17.
Ibid., p. 126.
of teachers concerning the responsibility of the school for promoting the development of the whole individual, increased emphasis by teachers on individualized instruction, and the provision by all teachers of more integrating educational experiences for high school students.\textsuperscript{58}

Vaughn had previously identified some early problems associated with installing the program at the elementary level. Macklin deemed the counselor program a success in helping to install the new curriculum program. Did the method of assisting teachers in adopting the elementary program improve in the years after Vaughn wrote her dissertation? The answer probably lies in some of the dissertations and theses written in Virginia between 1936 and 1945. The \textit{Tentative Course of Study for Virginia Elementary Schools} was reissued in 1943, and Buck reported in 1952 that teachers were still getting together in the summers to rework lessons from the Virginia Plan.\textsuperscript{59}

\textbf{SUMMARY}

This article has addressed three aspects of the Virginia Curriculum Revision Program that educational writers have insufficiently analyzed. An enhanced view of these aspects provides another way to assess the influence of a program that many people already consider an exemplar of curricular reform. The three aspects discussed—the number of teachers and the level of their involvement, the influence of the state-level committees on the direction and content of the various courses of study, and the provisions made for installing the new program—illustrate how one statewide curriculum revision program addressed the questions of how to involve teachers, who would make decisions, and how a program of reform would move from rhetoric to practice. Although the Virginia Plan was implemented more than 50 years ago, the problems encountered have changed little in the ensuing years. Curricular reformers, if they would develop a historical understanding of current problems, can benefit from examining past practice, from looking at details and evaluations rather than relying on generalizations that provide a view of the big picture but omit significant details. The form of the Virginia Plan may have changed between 1932 and 1952, but the program's continuation for such a period indicates that some of its aspects might be useful to curricular reformers today. In the light of the contemporary calls for curricular reform, the program and its installation, which resulted in more than 20 years of use, may warrant further investigation not just for its historical interest but also for its lessons.

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., p. 197.

Appendix

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE AIMS COMMITTEE

Editor's Note. What follows is taken from Virginia State Board of Education, Procedures for Virginia State Curriculum Program (Richmond Division of Purchase and Printing, 1932), pp. 42-47.

The following sources were carefully examined in the development of the preceding report on "Aims."

SPECIAL STUDIES

"The Aims of Education as Stated by Specialists in Education" Unpublished manuscript, Curriculum Laboratory, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1932.


Pendleton, C. S. The Social Objectives of School English Nashville Published by the author, 1925

Yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education

Guy Montrose Whipple, Editor

Public School Publishing, Bloomington, IL

M. A. Burgess and others Part II, Report of the Society's Committee on Silent Reading 20th Yearbook, 1921.


A. H. Edgerton and others. Part II, Vocational Guidance and Vocational Education for Industries 23rd Yearbook, 1924.

W. S. Gray, chairman. Part I, Report of the National Committee on Reading 24th Yearbook, 1925


Yearbooks of the Department of Superintendent of the National Education Association, Washington, DC

Research in Constructing the Elementary School Curriculum 3rd Yearbook, 1925

The Nation at Work on the Public School Curriculum. 4th Yearbook, 1926.

The Junior High School Curriculum. 5th Yearbook, 1927.

The Development of the High School Curriculum. 6th Yearbook, 1928.

The Articulation of the Units of American Education. 7th Yearbook, 1929.

The Superintendent Surveys Supervision. 8th Yearbook, 1930.
**State Courses of Study**

The aims of education as stated in the courses of study or manuals of administration of the following states:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Massachusetts
- Maine
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin

**City Courses of Study**

The aims of education as stated in the courses of study of the following cities:

- Baltimore, MD
- Denver, CO
- Houston, TX
- Long Beach, CA
- New York City
- St. Louis, MO

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Broening, Angela M. *Developing Appreciation through Teaching Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1929.


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- Smith, C. Alphonso. *What Can Literature Do for Me?* New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1913

**PHILOSOPHY**

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This text sets forth a view of critical reflection on teachers' ideas of curriculum development that unifies research and action. It ties together a broad range of contemporary ideas from philosophy, psychology, and sociology. It critiques the technical approach to curriculum planning and offers a new model of the process rooted in testing problem solutions. Other chapters discuss change, curriculum evaluation, and the future of curriculum.