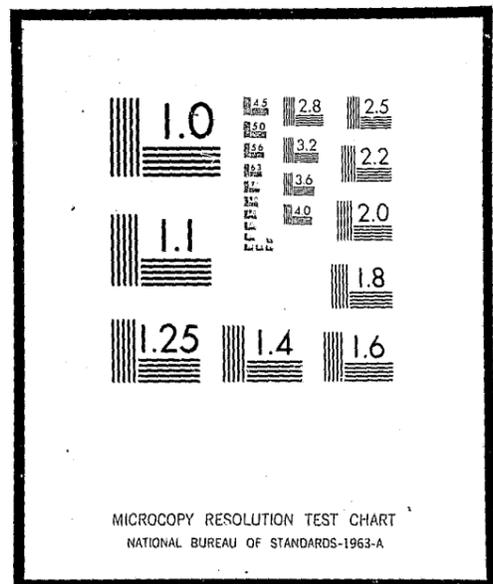


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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Tioga Community Youth Council -
PH-74-C-C4-5-255

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TIOGA COMMUNITY YOUTH COUNCIL

The basic goal of the TCYC program was to provide an alternative educational experience for one hundred students from Gratz High School who were classed as disruptive students. This goal was met with the assistance of Title III funding provided by the School District of Philadelphia. As of the date of this report, funds to replace the now expired Title III funds have not been found. Negotiations with the School District have been discontinued by the TCYC staff. **

In addition to the goal of providing an alternative educational experience, TCYC conducted an after-school program of formal and informal workshops, counseling programs, and recreational activities. Since the date of the re-funding report in late February, most of the after-school programs declined in activity level due to a shortage of operating funds. One new program, a food catering service, was initiated in this period and continued to function until the close of school.

Of the twenty-three enrolled Seniors in the Tioga Specialized Learning Center, twenty graduated. As of June 30, 1975, four of the twenty were employed; three were planning to continue their education in college in the Fall.

For the school year, average daily attendance was 73%. Combining the daily attendance rates and the cutting rates results in an estimate of "in class" attendance at about 55 to 65 students at any given time. This estimate correlates well with attendance observed by EMA evaluators on observation days.

Attendance data was collected from TCYC records. The reported attendance rates measure students' appearance at school in the morning; subsequent non-attendance at classes is, therefore, not reflected in the attendance rate. While individual TCYC staff members record cutting, there are no cumulative records. Cutting is estimated to vary from ten to fifteen percent of class enrollment. During the year eighteen students were dropped from the rolls as chronic non-attenders and replaced by new referrals from Gratz.

** Arrangements are now concluded with the Columbia School to assume administrative responsibility for the school program instead of the School District of Philadelphia.

The drop in attendance rates from last year's 79% and continued chronic cutting of classes may be an indication of students' attitude about a lack of continually stimulating class presentations and/or teaching-leadership style. Assuming that replacement funding is found for the Title III funds from the School District, TCYC staff members must consider a means to make the program meet more nearly the needs of the students, in order to reduce chronic cutting and absenteeism.

It is evident from observation and discussion with staff members, that the educational philosophy on which the program is based includes the belief that "disruptive, Black, teenage youths" need a strong authority figure in their lives and that the school can provide such a model.

By virtue of his formal position within the school organization and his personality, the Executive Director is looked upon by both staff and students as the authority figure. The first and most obvious result is that he has become the controller of activity and behavior. Staff members depend on him to fill this role particularly with respect to maintaining order in school and student discipline. More importantly, students also look to him to provide the authority figure need. When he is not in the building, there has often been no other person present to adequately fill this role. The result has often been considerable disruption to the day's activities and we believe this contributes to absenteeism and chronic cutting. As a result, the Executive Director feels that he is indispensable to the program. We believe that he is indispensable; however, question the heavy emphasis on the authority role at the expense of other activities which might be developed more fully.

A second aspect of the centralized authority structure, is that students tend to depend on external authority to tell them what to do (i. e. they exhibit behaviors suggestive of individuals with an external "locus of control"). Little independence and initiative is shown by the students in their class work or in developing a sense of themselves as capable individuals. They can do only what they are told and/or are directed to do by a strong authority figure. This is potentially dysfunctional in terms of predicted success in adult life, according to recent research on the effects of educational programming.

The dilemma which must be faced by the TCYC Board and staff is where and how to draw the line in establishing an authoritarian presence in the school without unduly relieving the individual students of responsibility for his or her own behavior. We urge that specific attention be directed to this issue before the start of the new school term.

It would be unfortunate if the preceding comments were considered to be entirely adverse. Such is not the case. The results for the year are quite positive and these remarks are made in the interest of improving an already good program. An indication of the success of the program can be seen in the change in attendance patterns for newly enrolled students. Thirty-nine new sophomores and juniors were enrolled at TCYC during the term. Thirty-four had complete attendance and school records available for review. The typical pattern for these students showed a drop in attendance of more than five percent (5%) during their freshman year at Gratz after transfer from a Junior High School. In contrast, enrollment at TCYC resulted in a significant increase in attendance from their experience at Gratz and often better than their record prior to Gratz.

Attendance Rates for Sophomore and Juniors at TCYC

% of Days Present	Students Transferring in 1974-75	Students Enrolled at TCYC in 1974-75
0 - 10	0	0
10 - 20	1	0
20 - 30	5	0
30 - 40	1	0
40 - 50	0	0
50 - 60	3	0
60 - 70	3	2
70 - 80	2	4
80 - 90	10	7
90 - 100	16	18

Source: TCYC Attendance records.

As can be seen from the above distribution, continuing attendance at TCYC in the second year seems likely to result in increased school attendance. We view this as a positive indication and a fact likely to reduce the probability of subsequent criminal involvement by students who complete the full three years at TCYC.

Median Rates of Increase in Attendance at TCYC, 1974 - 1975

Median Rates of Increase over School Attendance in 1973 - 1974 for Students not previously enrolled at TCYC	6.25%
Median Rate of Increase over School Attendance at Gratz for Transferred students during 1974 - 1975	20.0%

Median Rate of Increase over School Attendance in 1973 - 1974 for Students previously enrolled at TCYC 1.42%

Source: TCYC and Gratz Attendance records.

These data clearly suggest the importance of TCYC as an alternative educational experience for the potential school dropout, particularly those having difficulty at Gratz. The major gain in attendance is clearly upon initial admission from Gratz and, although not statistically significant, the continuing increase in attendance rate for previously enrolled TCYC students is gratifying as an indication of a basically sound program. It should be noted that an increase in the latter figure is harder to attain because of the relatively higher base rate with which one must work, as indicated by the first table on the preceding page.

In accordance with the evaluation plan, a mail questionnaire survey of parents, students, and community members was undertaken in May 1975. (Student questionnaires were actually completed at the school). The number of responses is shown below.

	Number Administered	Number Reporting	Response Rate
Students	50	46	92%
Parents	25	20	80%
Community	25	7	28%

Since the pattern of response between parents and members of the community did not vary significantly, the questionnaire responses for these two groups were combined for the analysis reported below.

Attitude About Community.

Two-thirds of the students and three quarters of the adults reported that they have given no consideration to moving out of the community within the last three months. Of those who reported an interest in moving (6 adults, 11 students) the reason most frequently cited was Crime (4 adults, 2 students), followed by housing (2 + 3), and Schools (2 + 2).

Despite the evident perception of crime as a dominant factor, the victimization rate was not particularly high. Students reported 4% had been victims; adults reported that 11.5% had been victimized within the last three months (3 out of 26). Of the reported crimes (5), three were reported to the Police (60%).

In response to the question in which persons were asked to indicate who they thought committed most crimes in their community, the reported responses were as follows:

Crimes Committed by:	Responses by:	
	Adults	Students
Youths (age 18 or under)	11	30
Young Adults (19 - 26)	12	21
Adults (over 26)	1	13
Gang Members	12	34
Males	15	27
Females	2	18
Drug Involved Persons	13	21
Persons Living in the TCYC Community	5	13

On balance these results indicate the importance of a program, such as TCYC, working with school age youths. It is interesting to note that the students weight the influence of gangs somewhat more heavily than do the adults, but rate the drug factor somewhat less important than does the older group.

Recognition of the Program.

This section was intended to elicit information about how well known the program was within the area. In general, the results were consistent between the two groups with most responses indicating that the program was quite well known. The adults did indicate that although most of the respondents knew about the program, they felt that many of their neighbors did not. This suggests the need for a somewhat broader community relations approach.

Responses were uniformly favorable with respect to the adequacy of the facilities and the effectiveness of the staff.

Project Impact.

Again, the responses were mainly favorable, with respondents reporting favorably on helpfulness of staff, effectiveness of materials used, availability of staff, and program activities consistent with needs. With respect to the reduction of crime, 83% of the adults reporting believe the program is effective in reducing crime in the area; whereas, only 37% of students hold that belief.

Evaluation.

Respondents reported belief that the program was definitely needed in that community and that there was little duplication of effort by other agencies. The adults gave a mixed response on the issue of program organization, the community was equally divided on whether or not the program could have been better organized; the students reported being favorably disposed. Most of the people in both groups recognized that the Center was experiencing a resource shortage.

Demographic Information.

	Persons Responding	
	Adults	Students
Male	5	15
Female	21	31
Employed	16	-
Own Home	20	-

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- 1) In order to clarify the educational philosophy of the school, a step which we believe is needed in order to more accurately plan activities and administrative style consistent with goals, we urge the administration to schedule a series of meetings in the early Fall at which this will be the sole topic of discussion. A representative of the evaluator and the Columbia School administration should be invited.
- 2) With respect to attendance, we suggest that attendance requirements be clarified with each individual student and more responsibility be shifted to the student. An attendance contract negotiated with the student, with attendant sanctions and rewards related to performance, or a similar approach should be considered.
- 3) We recommend the use of more formal diagnostic testing at the start of the school year for the complete student body, in at least reading level and math level. Cooperation between the teachers with respect to the selection and administration of diagnostic testing would minimize the work.
- 4) Following the diagnostic testing, the results of the testing should be discussed within the staff and a consistent educational program planned out with each student. This should result in the setting of certain educational goals by each student with the assistance of the staff. These goals could then be used as a basis for periodic review of progress, not only by the staff, but more importantly by the students themselves.

- 5) We recommend that overall level of achievement be measured at the end of the year using similar diagnostic procedures to those used in the Fall. An end of term conference with each student should then be scheduled for the purpose of discussing progress and setting goals for future work, including summer work for those interested.
- 6) We recommend that a measure of student self-concept, such as Rotter's "locus of control" questionnaire, be administered in the Fall and late Spring, as a further measure of progress and effect of the program upon individual students.
- 7) We recommend that the TCYC administration college longitudinal data on graduates with respect to employment and/or post-secondary education.

Additional data on employment and post-secondary school attendance by graduates will be appended to this report as soon as it is available.

END