

HOW FOOLHARDY

ARE WE?

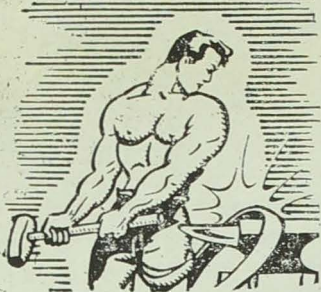
ROMULO Y. MENDOZA

Supervisor of Vocational Education,
Manila

Table I. Estimated Cost of Equipment
for a Class of 25 Students. (Advanced
Courses)¹

1. Auto mechanics		
a. Handtools ...	₱1,724.70	
b. Heavy		
Equipment .	11,107.00	₱12,831.70
2. General Metalwork		
a. Handtools ...	1,875.58	
b. Heavy		
Equipment .	8,500.00	10,375.58
3. Woodward (Furniture Making)		
a. Handtools ...	1,951.20	
b. Heavy		
Equipment .	7,970.50	9,921.70
4. Building Construction		
a. Hand tools ..	2,600.90	
b. Heavy		
Equipment .	1,878.40	4,478.30
5. Electricity		
a. Hand tools ..		4,360.00
b. Heavy Equipment		
6. Retail Merchandising		
(Good for a class of 40)		1,500.00
Total		₱43,428.28

¹ NOTE: These estimates have been based on pre-war conditions. The heavy equipment for woodworking may be used alternately by different groups of students. This is also true for other courses. Each school should have only one set of heavy equipment for each course, but there must be as many sets of handtools as there are classes of the same course having shop work simultaneously. Data used in these tables have been taken from the lists of tools and equipment prepared in the Vocational Division of the Bureau of Education and Courses of Study for the Exploratory Vocational Courses.



It has been observed that the present plan of vocational offerings as embodied in the general letters dated July 6, 1945 and June 10, 1946, could hardly be fulfilled even during normal times. How much harder would it be now to fulfill this order—now that we have hardly any tools and equipment! Before the outbreak of World War II, the City of Manila had spent no less than ₱1,500.00 in equipping each class in exploratory vocational course alone; yet the secondary schools of the City could hardly be said to be adequately provided with such tools. In the Torres High School before the war, the City of Manila spent approximately ₱10,000.00 for the machine equipment and hand tools for the woodwork course, but it was found out that the school could not keep pace with the requirements for equipment in view of its large enrolment. This amount did not include the equipment of the other courses, *viz.*, auto mechanics, general metalwork, electricity and others as well as the supplies needed for the operation of these courses.

All this shows how "foolhardy" we are in starting vocational courses in half-ruined buildings originally intended for academic classes, now with hardly any desk or even teacher's chair. Either the City of Manila does not realize the tremendous expense of equipping vocational courses, or it has ignored the obvious needs and minimum essentials.

To equip each vocational (trade) class of 25 students in the high school the following outlay will be needed:¹

Table II. Estimated Costs of Equipment for a Class of 25 Students in the Exploratory Vocational Courses

1. Auto Mechanics	P1,800.00
2. General Metalwork	1,160.21
3. Woodworking	1,753.96
4. Electricity	769.15
5. Retail Merchandising	810.00
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Total	P6,293.32

To date, not even that amount has been appropriated to equip all classes in all secondary schools of the City of Manila. The City is concentrating its efforts in providing the barest essential in equipment—desks. Even these have not been supplied all classrooms!

Proper housing of vocational courses was another problem before the war, and it is a much more serious problem now since most of the buildings where the vocational courses had been housed were destroyed during the last World War. It would take a long time before we can rebuild these much-needed buildings for vocational work in view of the depleted funds of the City, and perhaps the city may not be able to rebuild these buildings without aid from the national government. The City of Manila is presently maintaining four general secondary schools and one trade school. These five secondary schools have a total enrolment of 11,936 students. To equip and provide adequately these schools with their vocational instruction needs is a big financial problem on the part of the local government maintaining them.

In a perusal of the present general secondary and secondary trade curricula, it is felt that the vocational offerings of the former are similar if not the same as those offered by the latter. This is particularly true in the so-called "specialization" courses in the

second, third and fourth years of the general secondary curriculum. The prescribed vocational (Trade) courses are almost identical except that in the the general secondary curriculum, these courses are given on a double-period-a-day time allotment, while in the trade curriculum these vocational courses are given on a three-hour time allotment. It is believed that unless our general high schools offering the so-called specialized trade, agricultural, or commercial courses could be equipped adequately to insure efficient vocational instruction, advanced vocational offerings in the third and fourth year should be abandoned, leaving only the exploratory vocational courses in the first and second years. Furthermore, it is believed that the general secondary vocational offerings should be limited to the first two years—that is, required practical arts instruction in the junior high school and the last two years of the senior high school may be devoted to college preparation and broad cultural training as silently clamored by parents. To effect economy in the operation and maintenance of these proposed practical arts courses, they should be organized on the basis of the general shop organization.² Students who desire to follow a certain trade or vocation may be advised to go to a trade school or farm school or commercial high school where they could be provided with real vocational training.

For the general high schools to attempt to accomplish two great things (vocational and college preparation) simultaneously is too ambitious and may result in much harm. Two years of intensive general vocational work in a

² For a more detailed discussion of the subject see, *The General Shop*, by Newkirk and Stoddard.

high school is long enough to provide each student adequate vocational and educational guidance, and semi-vocational preparation as is being attempted now. It is in this way that we may be able to economize in spending public funds and conserve as well as utilize human resources to the best advantage.

The sad lack of tools and equipment and poor housing facilities have been creating distaste and dislike for vocational instruction among students instead of arousing interest in and liking for it. This condition now obtaining in Manila possibly exists also in other divisions. Vocational competence can not be acquired and developed without the desired tools and equipment as well as a suitable place to work in. This is particularly true in the vocational (industrial) courses where such tools and equipment are essentially necessary.

In view of the reasons stated above, it is recommended that in the revision of the general secondary curriculum, the following be considered:

The vocational offerings in the general high schools should be limited to the first and second years. These courses should be called practical arts, similar to courses in industrial arts offered in the junior high schools in the United States. It is believed that it is only in this way that the government may be able to equip adequately and house properly vocational classes in our vocational schools and general high schools. The average second-year student is rather too young to start specialization in any trade or vocation. The mind of the average student of this age is still very changeable and therefore is not capable of making a genuine choice of a vocation to be followed in later years. Under the new plan, exploration and guidance work is continued up to the second year only. This plan gives the student greater opportunity to study himself and the various occupations, before making a final choice for a vocational study.

The third and fourth years in the general high school should be devoted exclusively to college preparation and greater cultural development of students. Students who after finishing the second year in the general high schools desire to become auto mechanics, cabinet makers, building contractors, house painters and draftsmen, stenographers and typists, retailers, and wholesalers, bookkeepers, agriculturists, florists, horticulturists, and the like, should be encouraged to enroll in vocational high schools offering such vocational courses. All these should be done under competent vocational guidance service to be sure that the student is rightly placed.

In order that adequate and competent vocational guidance service may be given to students, provision should be made for the employment in each secondary school (both vocational and general) with at least an enrolment of 100 to 500 students, a full-time vocational counsellor. In order that the vocational counsellors of the schools may be able to discharge fully and faithfully their duties as such, they should have no other assignments than the counselling and adjustments of students. Qualifications of this type of teachers should be prescribed by the Bureau of Education.

The local governments have been finding it extremely difficult to finance the operation and maintenance of the vocational and home-economics courses in the general high schools since this type of secondary schools is not entitled to receive vocational aids from the national government. For this reason, an additional amount, say P5 to P10, be charged against each student seeking admission into the high schools, for the operation and maintenance of the vocational courses of the said high schools, and the budgeting which should be left to the discretion of the Superintendent concerned.