

# Report on Manzanar school discipline

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Community Services Division  
Manzanar, California

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## INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

Memo to: Mr. Wells

Date: April 21, 1943

From: Genevieve W. Carter

Subject: Report on Manzanar school discipline

Mr. High gave me your report on Manzanar school discipline to read. I must congratulate you on two factors: (1) having the individual interest and initiative to analyze a practical local problem, and (2) writing a paper that evidences good thinking and common sense analysis.

My comments:

- (1) I certainly agree that discipline consists of general school morale and specific classroom situation. Within these two are also individual guidance needs. The number of individuals who are unadjusted should be a very small percentage of a total population. As we all know, at the beginning of school our population was 99% unadjusted.
- (2) I do think that teachers can do a lot in interpretation and point out very specifically to children that revenge against teachers or classroom or school property does not satisfy this drive for revenge they feel against the government. The older pupils particularly can be told this very frankly.
- (3) I certainly agree with your suggestions for uniform standards as to what constitutes tardiness and other items such as you mention—detentions, absence, and excuses. I have often wondered what happened to the Manzanar school handbook that you Senior Problems class was developing. This aid would be invaluable to place such interpretations and definitions in the hands of pupils. This could also include standards of politeness and manners such as wearing of caps in the classroom, etc.

- (4) I do not think it wise to draw an imaginary line between the wiggly junior high and the more mature high school students in the study hall situation. Quiet wiggling is not going to interfere with the studying. We have to expect so much of it from children of that age.
- (5) It seems that the Block 7 latrine situation could be one of the first of the problems turned over to the student council group as it is formed. With proper encouragement and leadership they should be able to alleviate that eyesore as far as misuse of the latrine goes.
- (6) We have requested again from Public Works sufficient drinking fountains. If we do not get a response this time I intend to make an appointment between Mr. Merritt, Dr. Little, and myself, and present the matter on a health basis.
- (7) I agree with you that some teachers allow their feeling of service and sympathy to degenerate to pity toward the Japanese pupils. This, of course, produces an unhealthy relationship between pupil and teacher. On the other hand, there are very few who are obviously here just for the salary and their disinterest in these pupils as people is obvious. The only kind of control this teacher could have would be enforced compliance from the pupils. Most of us would agree on a healthy middle-of-the-ground road for this situation, but the problem is how can we get teachers to look at themselves with any objective insight to analyze their attitude toward the Japanese.

On your recommendations my comments are these:

- (1) I would prefer the school rules to come out of the handbook produced by the students following a policy set up by the principal. Until that time it is probably necessary to make available in writing, certain school regulations signed by the principal.
- (2) I agree with you that there is need for more parent contact. Parents could be called in to the home room teacher or to the high school office. Parents should certainly be advised when their children are making up detention periods. They should know when to expect them late at home and that they have violated school regulations. Your #5 could be worked out by using assistant storehouse clerk as messenger to take the notice around to each teacher. As it is read, the teacher could cross off the name.

I would enjoy a memorandum later from you advising me as to what action and improvement you were able to bring about on the Manzanar school discipline problems.

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Genevieve W. Carter  
Superintendent of Education