

Front Lines in Education

Henry Harap, Editor

DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION IN SAN DIEGO. In order to encourage as wide participation of the staff as possible, administrative and curricular organizations are conducted through committees. The Central Curriculum Council, the Steering Committees under this Council, and the Conferences of Elementary and Secondary Principals work with the Instructional Division on all phases of the instructional program. Agreement on administrative policies is reached through another group of committees which work with the superintendent and central administrative officers. The Classroom Teachers Council is a group of seventeen representatives nominated by classroom teachers in seventeen areas of the city. Each classroom teacher on the Council represents from two to five or six schools. The Council meetings, which are held six times a year with the superintendent as chairman, provide opportunities for individual staff members to bring their problems, criticisms, and suggestions directly to the superintendent.



AKRON CURRICULUM STUDY GROUP. In Akron, the Curriculum Study Group is limited to thirty-six persons, including high school teachers, chosen from each school on the basis of school enrollment, and all high school principals. However, all members of the staff are included in a series of three or more

general meetings; and indirectly, all teachers participate. A committee on techniques is exploring the value and use of discussion, dramatization, recordings, and visual aids. A committee on curriculum adjustment is considering community and school relations, evaluation, and new courses. Any teacher on the staff who is interested may become a member of one of these special groups. If the outcome is sufficiently valuable, the material will be made available to all teachers through some type of publication.—A. J. Dillehay, *Director of Curriculum and Instruction.*



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN CINCINNATI HIGH SCHOOLS. Plans for the further development of the high school curriculum in Cincinnati include preparing or completing course of study materials for several subjects in the fields of social studies, mathematics, science, English, business education, household arts, industrial arts, and music. The present course of study in world history provides for an alternative procedure for developing the subject, either chronologically or topically from the beginning down to the present. Some attention is also being given to the correlation between American history and third-year English, with more emphasis on historical fiction. In further revision of the course of study in American problems, special attention

will be given to increasing the activities suggested for the various units. A committee is organizing a try-out course of study for consumer education for which there is now no teacher's guide available. The instructional manual for aeronautics and navigation, now in try-out form, is to be put into more definite form during this school year. The try-out course of study in chemistry will be further refined, with more complete provision made for the class section in practical chemistry.

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN OKLAHOMA CITY. Herbert B. Bruner, who became Superintendent of the Oklahoma City Schools this fall, has initiated a program of curriculum improvement, operating on a completely democratic basis. Teachers choose the committee on which they would like to work. The directors of instruction in the central office are designated as coordinators. Their functions have been made advisory with considerable responsibility for organizing cooperative effort of self-improvement among the teachers. Arrangements have been made for consultative service with faculty members at several of the nearby colleges and universities.

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LOUISIANA WILL STRESS IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING. The Louisiana State Department of Education is working on a plan to give the proper emphasis to statewide problems of illiteracy, disease, and standard of living. This program will involve teaching the children better ways of living; teaching adults how to raise their living standards; teaching a wider utilization of Louisiana's re-

sources and a greater appreciation of her cultural background; and placing more stress on the form and functions of State and local governments. Instructional materials along these lines are now being prepared and will be available for use this school year.

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WHAT'S WRONG WITH ACTIVITY UNITS? In 1932, J. L. Meriam, as joint author, helped to compile a very useful index to activity units published up to that date. Recently he has brought this up to 1939 in a volume entitled *Activities, Projects, Units of Work Cataloged for 1932-1939*, published by the University of California Press. In a provocative preface, Mr. Meriam points out that nearly all of the 8,823 activity units were designed as means of motivating the learning of the conventional school subjects. He denounces this use of extrinsic activities and finds them positively dangerous. However, he goes on to say that there has been a marked increase in the last decade in intrinsic activities, that is, *life activities of people*.

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OUTSTANDING COURSES OF STUDY. A faculty committee at Teachers College, Columbia University, of which L. Thomas Hopkins is the chairman, has decided to continue the preparation of an annual list of outstanding curriculum bulletins and courses of study. This list was formerly prepared by Herbert B. Bruner, now Superintendent of Schools at Oklahoma City, and his associates; it has appeared from time to time in the *Curriculum Journal*. A request will soon be made to school systems to send their publications to the Curriculum Labora-

tory at Teachers College, Columbia University. The latest list which includes bulletins received from January, 1941, to March, 1942, may be obtained from the Curriculum Laboratory at Teachers College.



STUDIES OF NEEDED CURRICULUM EXTENSION. Studies are being started in a few selected regions of New York State to discover the kind of educational program which should be provided for pupils who drop out before completing high school. Only 52 per cent of the number of pupils enrolled in the ninth grade in New York State towns and villages in 1934, 1935, and 1936 were graduated from high school four years later. Two lines of approach are being followed to gather basic data: (1) An effort is being made to ascertain the educational needs of the pupils by studying the educational accomplishments of those who have dropped out of school and the nature of their subsequent occupational history. (2) Parallel with this approach to the problem, an effort is also being made to ascertain the occupational opportunities available to these youth and the nature of the vocational preparation necessary.



DO WE NEED MORE DRILL? Samuel J. McLaughlin of Cornell College, Iowa, sends us a mimeographed publication for students and graduates of the Cornell department of education. In a news column over his initials he says, "The fact that the war has disclosed the products of the public schools to have a poor grasp of the so-called skill subjects is no surprise to intelligent educators. . . . English, for example, taught

for twelve years through academic, classroom drill and workbook experiences, produces little in the way of competence. The remedy is not more drill and academic exercises. . . . The work must be more meaningful, more functional, intensified at intervals, and put to use in real situations."



BULLETINS AND JOURNALS STIMULATE INTEREST IN INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT. Several school organizations issue periodical bulletins primarily devoted to curriculum improvement. Among these are the following: the *Washington Curriculum Journal*, published by the Washington State Department of Education; *Curriculum Digest*, San Diego City Schools; *Better Teaching*, Cincinnati Public Schools; *Curriculum Progress*, Public Schools of the District of Columbia.



COMMUNITY STUDY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS. Under the direction of William M. Alexander of the University of Tennessee, now a lieutenant (j.g.) in the Navy Reserve, a group of students in a course in school-community relations prepared a directory of field-work opportunities in Knoxville. For each organization in the community, the following information was included: the director, how to reach the organization, how it is supported, a brief description of activities, and how the students may be of service.



WARTIME CHANGES IN PHOENIX CURRICULUM. The first major change was the setting up of the pre-aviation cur-

riculum in which the requirements emphasize science, mathematics, and varying shop activities as well as the customary English and social studies. Meteorology and aeronautics were added to the science offerings, and aircraft instruments and aircraft construction, service, and repair were added to the regular high school shop program. The second important curricular change was the requirement of certain pre-induction courses for senior boys, including machines and electricity, fundamentals of gas engines, and fundamentals of radio. The instructors in physics, in auto mechanics, and in radio have undertaken the work of organizing and presenting these new courses. The commercial teachers have modified the exercise material in typing to include more work in tabulation and more typing of numbers in order to train students in the preparation of payrolls and order forms.—A. F. Olney, *Curriculum Coordinator, Phoenix Union High Schools*.



BRIEF ITEMS. Syracuse University has indicated a willingness to provide eleventh- and twelfth-year (junior and senior high school) courses for war veterans if the New York State Department of Education requests it to render such service. . . . Clifford P. Archer of the University of Minnesota, now a Major in the Special Service Section of the U. S. Army Service Forces, has visited Australian schools and has spent some time with Australian educational authorities. He is back in the United States and is now stationed in San Francisco. . . . The Curriculum Council of the Kansas City Schools has approved a plan for the production of an

outline course of study for the elementary schools. . . . The Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development will hold a meeting in connection with the annual N.E.A. business session in Pittsburgh, Pa., on July 4, 1944.



NEW CURRICULUM BULLETINS

Bathurst, Effie G., and Mackintosh, Helen K.—*Inter-American Education, a Curriculum Guide*. Bulletin 1943, No. 2. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office. 1943. 66 p. Paper covers. 15 cents.

Meriam, Junius L.—*Activities, Projects, Units of Work Cataloged for 1932-1939*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, Calif.: University of California Press. 1943. 270 p. Paper covers. \$1.50.

Living and Learning in the Elementary Grades. An Intimate Study of the P. K. Yonge Laboratory School. Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida, College of Education. 1943. 91 p. Paper covers. 75 cents.

New York City Public Schools—*Curriculum Development in the Social Studies Kindergarten 9B*. Progress Report. Brooklyn 2, N. Y.: Board of Education of the City of New York, 110 Livingston Street. 1943. 120 p. Paper covers. 20 cents.

New Rochelle Public Schools—*Report of the Creative Arts Committee for Elementary Schools. Grades 1-7*. New Rochelle, N. Y.: Public Schools. 1943. 83 p. Mimeographed. Free.

Seattle Public Schools—*Mathematics as Learned and Used in the Seattle Public Schools*. Seattle, Wash.: Seattle Public Schools. 1943. 89 p. Paper covers. \$1.75.

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