

## Colleges Go to the Field

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EDGAR M. DRAPER

THE WAR-CREATED problems of teacher shortages and overcrowded schools are being met in the State of Washington with an in-service training program which gives teachers on the job an opportunity to broaden their professional techniques and background.

As has happened throughout the nation, many teachers in Washington have left their posts for service in the armed forces and for more lucrative positions in industry. At the same time candidates for teaching certificates have decreased at an alarming rate in the institutions of higher education, and public schools in communities where new industries or military cantonments were being established have faced the difficulties of serving increased enrollments.

To meet the problems growing out of these conditions, a committee of Washington educators was appointed to study and develop a plan of in-service teacher training for the State. The com-

mittee suggested a program which would follow one or more of three patterns: (1) regular classwork organized in centers convenient to a number of schools; (2) workshops established in a number of schools; and (3) conferences of two days or more in all schools. Endorsed by the State Board of Education, the proposal was first tried in the spring of 1943 and is continuing in operation at this time.

A committee, composed of representatives from the State Department of Public Instruction and each of the institutions of higher education, was appointed to organize and direct the program on a State-wide basis. The State colleges and University were each assigned regions in which to work, and regional committees of administrators, teachers, and representatives from the State Department of Public Instruction and the colleges were given the task of organizing the program in each in-service area. The plan called for members of the faculties of higher educational institutions to spend as much time as possible in the classrooms, teaching, demonstrating, and working with pupils, and teachers. As ultimately worked out, the program is coordinated by State Supt. Pearl A. Wanamaker and is financed jointly by funds from the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and by the institutions whose staff members are participating in the work.

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*Most of our authors this month are exploding myths about education. But here is news of a program of in-service education in the State of Washington which is neither myth nor fetish; it is plain common sense. We include an account of it here because, should there be anyone who believes that training on the job is impractical and unwieldy and can't be carried on effectively, this article will help to set his thinking straight. The part of the University of Washington in developing in-service training in that State is described for us by Edgar M. Draper, Director of the in-service teacher training program at the University.*

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### *How One Program Began*

In April, 1943, the University of Washington was assigned the problem of developing an in-service training program in the southwestern part of the State. The writer was named director of the program for the University of Washington, and available members of the University faculty were organized into an in-service staff. The formation of this staff was made possible by the fact that decreases in enrollment in some departments eased faculty teaching loads.

A preliminary meeting was held with representatives from the State Department of Public Instruction, administrators, county superintendents, and teachers of the area to discuss the needs of the particular schools and the best type of program to initiate in the two months remaining of the school year. Because the program got underway late in the year and many schools were closing early to permit pupils to work on farms and in industry, it was decided to use the conference method. At a later date, the writer visited every school in the region to confer with the

#### THE TEACHERS SAY . . .

"The teachers at Toledo were enthusiastic about the program and spent several profitable hours with the visiting staff member. The feeling of supervision vanished completely when a series of individual conferences with the teachers was instituted. She reflected enthusiasm for her work and this carried over to my faculty."—Supt. E. F. Anderson, Toledo.

"We were very pleased with the three people who worked with us on the conference plan. Personally, I think that it is by far the most desirable way to do any type of in-service training where credit is not involved. I think that some type of class work and of workshop program is very desirable, but I think it should lead to credit in every case. Work for the express purpose of improving classroom procedure is much better done in the classroom. The expert can quickly see the picture of the needs and by spending a little time in the classroom can help with definite procedures for improvement. In addition, we found a great deal of help in the administrative aspect of all these problems."—Supt. Herbert Heath, Woodland.

"The values gained in our first program were more or less of a stimulating effect. As you recall, we selected English as our field for in-service work. I made no attempt to inform my teachers beforehand, but instead desired that the visiting staff member come in and see what was being done without extra preparation on the part of the teacher. The staff member did the very thing I desired in eliminating any idea of supervision. Reading was stressed in a faculty meeting in relation to English improvement instruction, and a bibliography was submitted which I am sure will be of considerable value."—Supt. Morgen Owings, Winlock.

"Although the in-service program was sandwiched into the most crowded part of our school calendar, the good that we all derived from it far exceeded what many of us dared hope for. I wish to particularly thank you for sending such outstanding people to our school. Without exception their helpful suggestions were of very real value. We are all hoping that it will be possible for them to pay us a follow-up visit next fall."—Supt. Carl Johnson, Battle Ground.

administrators and teachers about the organization of the work in various departments of their schools.

As a result of these meetings, a schedule was worked out for the entire area. The subject-matter fields treated in the in-service conferences included English—with emphasis on reading—social studies and Washington State history, physical education, health, and first aid, art, commercial studies, guidance, music, remedial reading, and pre-induction training.

The visiting staff members from the University represented a cross-section

of the academic departments in the College of Education as well as instructors from the Department of Education. All staff members approached the problems in each school system through preliminary conferences with teachers and administrators.

### *No One "Supervises"*

In this way procedures were developed which readily dispelled any feeling on the part of the teachers that they were being supervised or that critical reports would be formulated as a result of the work in the schools. Staff members

#### THE CONSULTANTS SAY . . .

"The visitations which I have made to several of the communities in which our in-service program is operating leads to the inevitable conclusion that the service program contains extremely potent possibilities not only for streamlining wartime secondary education but for permanently modifying our teacher-training program. . . . It is a vehicle of immense possibilities for making our teacher-training more practical and for post-placement, follow-up work. . . ."—Francis F. Powers, Dean of the College of Education.

"I think much is to be gained by arranging visits of two or three days duration—long enough for visitant and teachers to get acquainted. At Longview we met the staff informally the night before, talked over the problems of mutual interest, and broke the ice generally. The visits to class the next day were robbed of much of the teacher-inspector relationship which always makes for embarrassment and awkwardness. . . ."—Professor Charles Gates, Department of History.

"It was a source of great pleasure to work in the in-service music program. . . . Each day I gave from five to eight demonstrations as I felt that more could be gained by teachers from seeing actual teaching than through talking about procedures. . . ."—Prof. Helen Hall, Department of Music.

"After the adoption of the in-service training program by the State Board of Education, the University of Washington immediately set up its program in the area designated for its work. The speed and efficiency of the plans proposed by the University was indeed gratifying inasmuch as the time element was an important factor in presenting the program to the teachers before the close of school. I found a fine professional attitude in the schools and among the members of the University faculty who served the area. The program, being new, was, of course, not completely understood at first, but as soon as the possibilities were apparent to the teachers, they readily went to work and took full advantage of the high type of professional service being given them by the University. Every report that has reached this office from the field has been enthusiastic in commendation of this service."—Pearl A. Wanamaker, State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

were assigned to schools only upon the request of the schools for assistance in certain subject-matter areas. They worked in cooperation with the teachers in formulating plans for the in-service activities, and their reports were made to the teachers in each department at the conclusion of the program.

In order that the University might improve its organization of the in-service program, school administrators, members of the State Department of Public Instruction, and staff members from the University were asked to evaluate the work and to offer suggestions regarding future programs. In general, it can be said that the State Department of Public Instruction and the school administrators were enthusiastic about the work, while the staff members from the University were appreciative of the opportunity to cooperate with the teachers of the public schools. Both the University representatives and the public school people profited greatly from the experience. The writer is confident that teacher training in the College of Education will be benefited through the experiences gained in the in-service program.

#### *In-Service Training Goes Into New Areas This Year*

Specific areas in which the University has developed a program during the present school year are Grays Harbor County, where in-service work was initiated in the autumn quarter, and King County, where the program was begun this spring. With twenty-one large high schools in King County, it is necessary to serve more than one hundred and fifty departments and hundreds of teachers. Approximately fifty-

five members of the regular faculty of the College of Education are participating in the work.

Regular evening conferences have been developed for both the administrators and teachers in Grays Harbor and King Counties. Attendance is optional and the topics cover such fields as administration, guidance, language arts, physical education, and other areas of the high school curriculum. The University staff members serve on a panel and the problems from the field are considered in an informal discussion.

#### *Program Ties in With Efforts to Improve Curricula*

The program appears to present possibilities for correlating the in-service work with the curriculum improvement activities in the State, and the teacher-training activities of the institutions of higher education. It will be interesting, as the work continues, to ascertain to what extent these cooperative activities in the public schools will stimulate interest on the part of the teachers in the State curriculum improvement program which is being developed by the State Department of Public Instruction. Since staff members from institutions of higher learning are participating in both the in-service work and the curriculum improvement program, it is anticipated that present teacher-training activities will be carefully scrutinized as a result of these off-campus responsibilities.

The ultimate possibilities of in-service training and ways of putting it into operation are still in the process of development, but the successful beginning of the Washington program bodes well for the future of in-service education throughout the country.

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