high attendance at meetings and indicates that citizens appreciate a chance to help in planning for the future of their city. Many problems are unfamiliar to a large majority of the people. When well-considered solutions can be presented for some of these problems, proposals will be put before the public in as forceful a way as possible.

On many subjects a widespread public education program must be put into effect before necessary public support can be obtained. The chances of the success of such a program are excellent. Hardly a day goes by without an invitation from some civic group to discuss the work of the Association. The citizens of Louisville by their interest and cooperation have proven that they are alert to the present and impending problems of the community.

The Association’s program is not intended as a make-work program—its purpose first and foremost is to determine the essential needs of the community and to provide an instrument for democratic community planning. By encouraging the business and industry which will make the Louisville area more prosperous and by furthering needed projects and programs the Association hopes to make Louisville a better place in which to work and live. When men and materials are available, many plans and blueprints will be ready, and the citizens of the area will have determined their own comprehensive plan for the future in which all individuals, organizations, and groups can participate.

TOP-HEAVY LEADERSHIP
Is yours a "Do it my way or else" School?

C. A. WEBER

A community’s voice in education is expressed through the local board of education. Yet, in many cases, boards do not follow the progress of a school beyond the point of electing a staff. They delegate dictatorial powers to the administrative heads with little thought to the need for cooperative action among all members of the faculty. C. A. Weber points out why cooperative planning has been so strenuously opposed. Mr. Weber is associate professor of education at the University of Connecticut.

BOARDS OF EDUCATION are usually elected by the people, in conformity with our democratic ideals, for the purpose of expressing the people’s judgment in the operation of the schools and for the purpose of guaranteeing to the people that the program of public education in the community will meet the needs of democratic living and democratic control. The most important responsibility of the board of education is the selection of a competent, healthy, creative, well-educated, growing staff of teachers to provide the type of teaching-learning situation which will result in the maximum of growth for all those engaged in the teaching-learning experience.

In most cases, the board of education is primarily a legislative and not an administrative body. Whether elected or ap-
pointed, the members of the board are expected to represent the people as a whole. Boards of education are usually assumed to have been elected on a non-partisan, non-sectarian basis, representing no special interest, and guarding the schools from interference on the part of individuals or groups who wish to promote their own selfish interests.

The generally approved procedure is to have the board select the best-qualified administrator it can afford, concentrate all authority and responsibility for educational results in him, and expect him to initiate and carry into execution all policies and legislative acts of the board of education. The administrator is expected to furnish expert professional leadership, and the board is expected to furnish lay control. These principles seem to have the general support of commercial and industrial organizations which have adopted them because they are "efficient."

**Growth for All**

The place of the professional staff in the school system has been left largely to the administrator, and teacher participation has received scant consideration by boards of education and by those who have studied the problem of school administration. In general, the administrative head of a school has been looked upon as the individual whose clear vision, mature judgment, and enthusiasm give a definite trend to the thinking and to the behavior of every staff member.

A recent study of administrative practices reveals a fundamental fallacy in this point of view and practice. This fallacy lies in the fact that one of the chief responsibilities of the board of education, namely, to provide a situation which is conducive to the maximum amount of growth for all those engaged in the teaching-learning experience, is not achieved by the concentration of power and authority in the administrative head of the school. On the contrary, the greatest growth is likely to occur in those situations in which teachers themselves have a very definite part in planning, inquiry, determination of policy, and in devising plans of action to achieve purposes arising out of mutual cooperation.

Thus the chief function of a board of education is to select an educational leader as administrative head who is capable of bringing about coordinated, cooperative thinking and planning by teachers, pupils, parents, and board members; who substitutes leadership for authority; who encourages deliberation on the part of his teachers in matters of policy and planning; and who, when such deliberations are concluded, sees to it that the agreements reached by the staff are executed with effectiveness and intelligent understanding.

Boards of education should select administrators who are willing and capable of being servants rather than masters of their colleagues in the sense that they are continuous sources of stimulation toward growth. Boards should select men and women who conceive of their tasks as being that of coordinators of the ideas and procedures initiated by the staff through cooperative effort. They should select administrators who can and will come to the board of education with proposals which are the results of the consensus of the best judgment of the entire teaching staff rather than select men who will come to the board with proposals which are the suggestions of the administrators only.

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The one most important criterion by which a board of education should judge the work of an administrator is found in this question: “Have the teachers and children who have been associated with him grown?”

Decisions by Consensus

Boards of education should adopt policies which provide for cooperative efforts at curriculum development, which promote the pooling of the best judgments of the teaching staff, provide for experimentation by teachers, encourage teachers as well as administrators to participate in planning the school budget, determining educational policies, selection of materials of instruction, planning new school buildings, and evaluation of existing practices.

Stoddard, discussing this problem, writes:

“It is a well-known psychological fact that the best growth takes place when the individual joins as a participant in initiating and planning the conditions that inspire growth and continues in all its processes. It is not enough that the program be of and by someone else, even though for the teachers, but teachers themselves should participate in the whole program from one end to the other. The whole school program should be conducted on a participatory basis. The problems of curriculum development, administration, supervision and classroom teaching should all be dealt with through cooperative endeavor.”

The contrasts between school systems which are administered by men or women who tell their workers what to do and those in which decisions are made by consensus are marked, marked in teachers’ attitudes, in their own sense of personal worth, in their conception of the professional role and in their readiness to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children. It seems inevitable that persons who are denied a voice in decision-making will either lose interest in the process or sabotage its workings, or try to use it for selfish reasons. On the contrary, when teachers and administrators pool the results of their experience, the resultant is usually a more practical and a broadened outlook for both. Certainly the practice of cooperative planning is the very essence of personal satisfaction and democratic living.

“I Object!” Cry Some

It will be discovered that in many cases administrators will object to the proposals which have been made above, and these objections usually fall into one of six classifications.

—“I’m held responsible”

The first objection most usually offered is that administrators, not teachers, are held responsible by the board of education. This objection is based upon the assumption that boards employ the administrator for the purpose of initiating plans of action and policies. If this were true, the board of education virtually takes the position that it is merely a “rubber stamping” body. If, on the other hand, the board does not take the position assumed in the objection, it means that the board expects cooperative planning on the part of the administrator and the board. The objector, then, is in a dilemma. He finds himself supporting the “rubber stamping” theory, or he finds himself admitting that boards desire cooperative planning.

The nub of the objection is this: Administrators who make this first objection have not clarified their own thinking on the question of responsibility. Boards should hold the administrator responsible.
for executing plans and policies, but it is seldom that a board would be willing to admit that the power to make plans be likewise lodged in one person. If it should not be lodged in one person, who should participate? The administrator who goes to his board of education with a plan of action based upon the deliberation of his entire staff goes to the board with a far more effective and powerful instrument than the administrator who goes to the board with his own private plan of action.

It would appear, then, that the chief cause of this first objection is, in reality, fear on the part of the administrator that his own status might be questioned, that his own ability to mobilize the intelligence of his staff in the devising of plans of action is somewhat in doubt, that his faith in the ability of his staff to attack school problems is weak. Thus, the objection becomes a defense mechanism and an expose of the administrator’s lack of faith in his fellow workers. Neither of these is valuable from the point of view of teacher growth, child growth, democratic ideals, or effectiveness in administration.

—“mine is the broad view”

The second objection is that the administrator should set up the goals because he can “view the problems from the broad point of view.” This smug sort of an attitude has little argument in its favor. It simply cannot stand under the scrutiny of facts. To take such a position is to assume qualities of intelligence which border upon the supernatural. Further evidence than the fact that administrators differ as widely as teachers both as to desirable goals and to desirable procedures is not needed. To take the position implied by the second objection is to say that the point of view of the administrator should be accepted by all the workers. Such procedure eventually leads to dissatisfaction, distrust, dulling of intelligence, and deep-rooted emotional conflicts.

If, on the other hand, the administrator admits emerging teacher growth is a common goal of all those who are engaged in directing learning, he is forced to admit that experience and participation in discovering goals, devising plans of action, and setting up programs to evaluate plans is a right to which every participant is entitled.

Objection two is based on a feeling of superiority which is rooted deeply in the desire to maintain status.

—“I’m more efficient”

A third objection is that efficiency is imperiled by cooperation. The basic assumption here is that efficiency is a universal value of an absolute nature. If efficiency is expressed in terms of promoting growth, however, it assumes an emergent aspect. The schools are primarily agencies to produce growth. Growth in the area of use of intelligence to solve problems necessitates participation in the solution of problems. If the administrator assumes that he can visualize the final goals, that he can reorganize the curriculum, that his plans must be enforced—intelligence of workers plays a negligible part. Teachers who are reluctant to follow would have to be “fired,” new ones who would conform have to be selected, and the effect is likely to be disastrous for our democratic value of the use of intelligence as a basis for problem-solving.

—“I’m an expert”

A fourth objection is that the administrator is a specialist and an expert and that his judgment is much more likely to be valid. The question, of course, is: “In what area is the administrator an expert?”

December, 1944
Is he an expert executive? If so, let him execute the plans of action devised by the staff and his expertness will be used. Is he an expert in public relations? If so, let him utilize this expertness in acquainting the public with the worthwhileness of the plans devised by the staff. Is he an expert at curriculum reorganization? Let him act as a source agent for his staff in devising plans. Is he an expert in budgetary procedure? Let him act as the resource person to utilize his staff’s intelligence in the financial areas of school operation.

Unquestionably, administrators have become, by and large, more able to attack many educational problems than some classroom teachers. But the basic cause of this lies in the fact that they have participated more; they had more opportunities to share ideas with other educators; they have been given greater and more numerous opportunities to attend professional meetings; they belong to more organizations where decisions are made by consensus; they have engaged in cooperative planning with boards of education. In fact, if they are experts, it is quite likely that they ARE experts because of the techniques of cooperative participation which they would deny to those who work with them.

“What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander” (or vice versa). If the administrator becomes expert because of participation in planning, teachers, by the same token, will become more expert by the use of the same techniques.

The real basis of this objection lies in the feeling on the part of administrators that somehow their own status would be in danger if teachers were as expert as they.

It is an old trick of autocratic rule to keep the ruled in ignorance. It is no new device to “get ’em young, treat ’em rough, and tell ’em nothing.” Neither is it within the framework of democracy. Use of intelligence demands that all participants be given the opportunity to become more expert.

—“nothing left for me”

The fifth objection which has been offered is that when cooperative planning is the basis of policy-making there is really nothing left for the administrator to do. This objection is without basis. Administration connotes carrying out plans of action. Effective administration, based upon cooperative teacher planning, would require that administrators were needed to execute plans growing out of study by the staff. The trouble is that administrators who make this objection are not satisfied with merely administering plans of action, they want to devise them as well. If the administrator fears cooperative planning, he is, in reality, admitting a lack of confidence in his own ability to execute plans, for when he devises the plan himself no one but himself is aware of its failure, while if others share in the development of plans they will watch with keen interest the execution of them.

—“that’s bureaucracy.”

The sixth objection is that cooperative planning leads to bureaucracy rather than to democratic action. This objection is merely a matter of words and meanings. If the objectors have conceived of cooperative planning as mere division of labor, the objection might be sustained. If, on the other hand, cooperative planning is more than division of labor, and includes pooling of the thinking of smaller groups in the solution of problems, the objection is overruled. If a teacher committee functions as an autonomous unit, there might develop a form of bureaucracy.

Educational Leadership
challenges education anew. The ways of democracy are being threatened and will be perpetuated only if they prove their effectiveness. Persons in administrative and supervisory positions have it within their power to exemplify the basic democratic processes for those who are guiding children. Their great privilege is to enlist the creative abilities of teachers that teachers may know and, in turn, want children to know the joy of group accomplishment. Since genuine interest and concern for the welfare of the group is one great need of America today, supervision and administration has a direct contribution to make in extending to others the possible satisfactions inherent in cooperative enterprise. One needs only to remember that cooperative enterprise involves joint planning, joint execution, and joint sharing of returns.

Books on the Road

The experience of two counties in western Kentucky provides an example of what can happen when school and community join forces to solve their problems. Rubie E. Smith, critic teacher in Murray State Teachers College, describes for us here how an enterprising community brought, not only books, but also pictures, charts, maps, and dioramas to the rural sections.

Murray State Teachers College serves its area through a regional library

RUBIE E. SMITH

LITTLE DOES the prospective teacher, while she is still on the campus of the teacher-training institution, realize how great will be her need of materials when she begins her work with children. Finding a way to meet this need is one of the greatest problems of rural teachers today. The lack of materials impoverishes the educational opportunity of children and denies them the varied experiences they might have if they were surrounded by a wealth of enriching materials.

Murray State Teachers College is attempting to meet this need through its Regional Library Service, which was established in collaboration with the Tennessee Valley Authority and the State Library Extension Division in 1939.

From its headquarters on the college campus the Regional Library serves elementary and high schools in two counties of western Kentucky—Calloway and Marshall. These counties support the library program from public money appropriated by the county court, by the county board of education, or by both. In one county December, 1944