

Front Lines in Education

Henry Harap, Editor

International Curriculum Service. Under the direction of Gordon R. Mirick of Teachers College, Columbia University, the International Curriculum Service Bureau has recently been incorporated. It is the purpose of this organization to engage in and promote fundamental research for international study, to develop teaching material in these fields for use in the elementary and secondary schools, and to stimulate interest in the general field of international problems.

Field Workshops. Each summer since 1939 Mankato (Minn.) State Teachers College has maintained workshops for rural teachers. At first they were held on the campus. As the shortage of teachers became greater, more housewives with family, garden, and farm responsibilities returned to the classroom. Relaxation of certification requirements, combined with the pull of home duties, reduced summer school attendance, especially at some distance from home. Therefore, workshops were established off campus. During the past two summers, thirteen such workshops were organized. Each one was in session three full days each week for six weeks. Customarily, each corps of staff members worked in two centers, spending three days a week in each. In all, more than 400 rural teachers received additional in-service education through the medium of these workshops.—Grace Armstrong, *Mankato State Teachers College*.

Wisconsin Cooperative Program. At the beginning of the present school year, Wisconsin launched the Wisconsin Cooperative Educational Planning Program originally suggested by the Wisconsin Education Association, working in cooperation with the State Department of Public Instruction. The expenses for the first year's activity will be provided by the Wisconsin Education Association. The main emphasis of the program for the present will be in the curriculum area. The major

purposes of the program are: (1) encouraging and fostering of continuous programs of curriculum development in the various cities and counties of the state; (2) the development of curriculum guides for the entire elementary and secondary school program. Local liaison curriculum committees are being organized in cities and counties interested in participating. The committees are now operating in 100 of the 196 counties and cities of the state. Statewide subject area committees are being appointed to develop curriculum guides for the whole period of public schooling. A curriculum staff of approximately 100 is being organized to render counseling service to local schools.—Gordon N. Mackenzie, *Curriculum Coordinator*.

Council Studies Curriculum Problems. A curriculum council composed of two high school principals and four elementary school principals has been organized in Indianapolis. It will consider such problems as: what general principles should govern the proper balance between general education and specialized training; what are the essential elements of a sound program for health and physical education; what evaluation techniques can be used to determine whether the pupil is being challenged to do his best work.

Nutrition in the Elementary School. The report of the Terre Haute Workshop on nutrition education at the elementary school level does not mark the end of the project. The U. S. Office of Education plans to supplement the written report with some photographic charts available for loan, on payment of cost of transportation. These should be available within several months. It is planned that in the spring of 1945, workshop participants will be asked to send in a description of their nutrition activities of the current year, which can be assembled and made available in printed form to persons interested in the nutrition program at the

elementary school level. Further information may be secured from Helen K. Mackintosh, senior specialist in elementary education, U. S. Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C.

Continuity of Curriculum. A program of curriculum revision is now in progress in Springfield, Mass., on all levels. Courses of study which were written a few years ago are being revised and brought up to date to reflect recent trends in aims, content, and grouping. Heretofore in any subject, such as English, there have been separate courses in elementary, junior high, and senior high English. In the present program of revision the junior and senior high school courses in common and continuing subjects are being merged into secondary courses, grades seven to twelve. As a part of the general revision of the school program increased emphasis is being placed on education for citizenship, both through the development of curriculum units and through providing opportunities for children to live and learn together in the democratic community of the school.—John Granrud, *Superintendent of Schools*.

Vocational Education Extended Downward. Industrial training for junior high school pupils is being made available in the immediate future in Paterson, N. J., in buildings which otherwise would have been abandoned. This will take care of large numbers of pupils now forced by the compulsory education laws to attend school and take courses in which many have no interest. The vocational courses will include practical nursing, laundry work, domestic service, power machine operation, and others. This program will supplement the already available vocational training for more skilled industrial occupations.

Improvement of Reading. In order to improve reading in Birmingham, Ala., a series of conferences of small groups of teachers and principals was held. Each meeting began with the observation of the teaching of reading and was followed by a discussion of the procedure in which the demonstration teacher participated. Particular attention was paid to probable causes of strengths and weaknesses and to plans for improving instruction. Each school was urged to form remedial reading

classes and to further individualize instruction.

Workshop Followed Up. After participating in a summer workshop on community improvement at the University of Virginia, seven high school principals, one county agent, two welfare superintendents and two staff members of the Extension Division spent ten days visiting community projects of various types. These included food preservation centers, recreation programs, libraries, public health and medical care programs, rural cooperatives, and school-centered community programs. Preliminary study of each project and meetings with local leaders were provided for. The entire group then returned to the University for four days of analyzing what they had seen and considering possible application to their own situations. A detailed report of the trip entitled, "We Went to See for Ourselves" may be secured without charge from the Extension Division of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

Refresher Course for Substitutes. Supt. Hobar M. Corning of Omaha, Nebr., reports satisfactory results with a refresher course for sixty substitute teachers. Fifteen successive meetings were held on Saturday morning with discussions dealing specifically with problems of classroom teaching. The course was directed by members of the administrative staff, supervisory corps, and several elementary-school principals. The University of Omaha allowed two credits for this work and twenty-six of the teachers took it for university credit.

Committee Studies Community Needs. For the past three years the Knoxville City Schools have been conducting an extensive experimental program using nine schools as "curriculum centers." The directors and other curriculum leaders now feel that the school system is in a position to move forward on a general revision program and this latter was started in November, 1944. A seventeen-member curriculum council has been selected and has begun work. Unlike previous efforts, this one does not contemplate the using or even the examination of courses of study or outlines or guides from other school systems. It will be based entirely upon the needs of Knoxville—educational, physical, emotional,

economic and others. The committee is planning to spend a period of at least a year on the study of these needs before attempting to set up any objectives at all. It is felt that as a result of this approach, a sound elementary curriculum should emerge—one which will be of maximum benefit to the children.—Tom C. Prince, *Superintendent of Schools*.

Demonstration Conference. In the Baltimore elementary schools during recent years, emphasis has been placed upon child growth rather than subject matter as the basis for planning and guiding the educational program. Of material aid in this respect has been a series of opportunities provided for experienced teachers and principals for the observation of the learning activities of children at various grade levels. Such observation is followed by a group conference with the principal and teacher. During the conference consideration is given such problems as the flexible handling of the daily schedule, the provision of first-hand experiences, the characteristics of individual pupils in the class, and the recognition of these traits in the educational program. Usually two or three of these demonstrations are made available each month in various schools of Baltimore. Teachers and principals have used these opportunities for observation enthusiastically.—Mary A. Adams, *Assistant Superintendent*.

Social Hygiene. The teachers of Dayton, Ohio, with the help of H. L. Boda, assistant superintendent in charge of curriculum, have developed a plan of studying venereal diseases as a phase of communicable diseases. A pamphlet published by the American Social Hygiene Association is used as a basis for the informational content. The topic is considered in several courses now taught in the schools. The social and moral aspects are given special emphasis in the course in Social Problems for Grade XII.

Radio and the Child. Through children's interests in popular radio programs, the teachers of Reading, Pa., are attempting to widen horizons and satisfy the need for realism, humor, fantasy, and legend. Using present taste as a basis, the pupils evaluated the mystery thriller, the humorous sketch, and the adventure serial in terms of the purpose and objectives for which the program was cre-

ated. At first they contended that the fantastic adventure was good because it helped the individual to identify himself with a magically powerful figure. Later they learned that legend and myth were sources of better-written tales of supermen. Material carefully selected for good story content, action, suspense, and live characterization is gradually directing children in the selection of better radio programs.—Helen M. Cleaver, *Supervisor of Intermediate Grades*.

Supervision Merged with Teacher Training. In October 1942, St. Louis merged its system of supervision with teacher training. Formerly the grade and subject specialist went into schools from the central office, visiting classrooms, laying out projects, prescribing procedures, and evaluating results. This staff now belongs to the college faculties of Harris Teachers College and Stowe Teachers College, both of which exist for the exclusive purpose of training teachers for St. Louis schools. The supervisors, known now as consultants, hold conferences with teachers; they visit classrooms upon request; they keep the schools informed of the latest and best advancements in teaching; they conduct workshops; they issue bulletins of information; and they pursue such other activities as may be helpful in the improvement of teaching.—George R. Johnson, *Principal, Gardenville-Busch Elementary School Unit*.

Future Teachers Study Community. The State Teachers College at Oneonta, N. Y., tries to relate its work to the community. Each year a meeting of those who work with children is held in cooperation with other social agencies. Practice teaching now includes nine weeks of directed experience in a school and community away from the campus. Excursions and field trips are a recognized feature of the college program. In 1941 the faculty planned a two-week community study. The major purposes of the study were: (1) to develop some techniques in using the community as a laboratory of learning; (2) to become sensitive to the social problems of the community in order that guidance of young people might be wise and intelligent; (3) to identify school personnel with those aspects of community living in which individual members of the group had personal and abiding interests. This study was

reported in "Teachers as Learners" published by the College. Since that time a number of similar studies have been made for shorter periods by students directed by the staff.

Intercultural Relations. The Seattle Public Schools have recently set up a new Committee on Democratic Education. The purposes of the committee are: first, to prepare an overall statement of the policy of the Seattle Public Schools with reference to the handling of problems arising from differences in race, color, and creed; second, to formulate a positive program of action based upon the statement of policy; third, to serve as the liaison organization between the school system and the local, state, and national organizations concerned with the problem. The committee believes that the school should broaden the individual's understanding of the contribution that every group makes to a richer life; that the academic and social life of the school should provide equal opportunities for all its young citizens; that vocational opportunities should be based upon individual competence.

Veteran's Education. A committee of Minneapolis educators recently submitted a program for veterans' education. The committee reports that seventy-five returned service men are now enrolled in Minneapolis schools. The specific recommendations of the committee include the following: assign one person in the public school system to coordinate and direct the educational program for veterans; make Miller Vocational High School the center for developing veterans' educational and the community institute; organize separate vocational courses for veterans as rapidly as enrollment permits; attempt to make contracts with the Veterans Administration which will provide sufficient funds for tuition and equipment to cover costs of the educational program, including counseling and administration.

In Brief. In cooperation with a committee of the Ohio Educational Association, Edgar Dale of Ohio State University made a study of significant wartime changes which may be used to advantage in the peacetime curriculum. A report is in preparation.

Recent appointments to the California State Curriculum Commission include: C. C. Tril-

ingham, county superintendent of schools of Los Angeles County; Ray B. Dean, principal, David Lubin Elementary School, Sacramento; A. H. Horrall, city superintendent of schools, San Mateo; Peter Spencer, professor of education, Claremont College.

A committee on curriculums for the Institutes of Applied Arts and Sciences, appointed by New York State Commissioner of Education George D. Stoddard, is developing courses of study for the proposed new state institutions. The chairman of the committee is J. Cayce Morrison, assistant commissioner for research.

An Indianapolis study of boys who dropped out of high school since Pearl Harbor indicates that in all probability the returning high school veterans will want and will need vocational training, and at the same time they will want high school diplomas or equivalent standing in institutions other than the regular day high school.

Charlotte (N.C.) City School System has accepted an invitation from the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University, to participate with ten other schools from other sections of the United States in a project for research and curriculum design.

New Curriculum Bulletins

- Anniston Public Schools—*A Guide for Guarding the Health of the Pupils*. Anniston, Ala.: Anniston Public Schools. 1944. 25 p. Mimeographed. 25 cents.
- Kansas City (Mo.) Public Schools—*Principles of Nursery School Education, A Handbook*. Kansas City, Mo.: Kansas City (Mo.) Public Schools. 1944. 63 p. Mimeographed. 50 cents.
- Nashville City Schools—*Going Our Way. A Suggested Plan for the Development of Ethical Character*. Nashville, Tenn.: Nashville City Schools. 1944. 93 p. Mimeographed. 50 cents.
- Sacramento City Unified School District—*Occupational Education Plan*. Sacramento 14, Calif.: Sacramento City Unified School District. 1944. 19 p. Paper covers. \$1.
- Wells High School—*Ten Years of School-Community Action*. Chicago 22, Ill.: Wells High School. 1944. 32 p. Paper covers. 25 cents.

Copyright © 1945 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.