

lems of teachers in service. One follow-up of the workshop was a two-day consultants' conference three weeks later, which explored informally the problems of consultant service. Finally, workshop findings have been incorporated in programs of the Michigan Secondary Study and the Michigan Secondary School Association.

The Association and the Study are planning to hold another conference in 1945. On the basis of past experience it seems clear that teachers and principals will promptly reserve places and again assemble for an informal, cooperative attack on local school problems. Michigan likes the workshop method!

□ *County workshops for better community living*

## Workshops for Rural Teachers

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M. E. YOUNT

AN EXPERIMENTAL teacher-education program was initiated in 1942 by the Board of Education of Alamance County, North Carolina. The General Education Board, the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, the University of North Carolina, Elon College, a local liberal arts college with a teacher-education department, and state and county health, agriculture, and home demonstration agencies are cooperating with the Board of Education in conducting the experiment.<sup>1</sup>

The program includes in the pre-service education of teachers a period of cadet teaching, usually consisting of a full quarter of the college year, so planned that the cadet teacher receives full college credit for the quarter. The cadet lives in the school community in which she works, she teaches under competent supervision, she studies community problems with proper consultative guidance, and she otherwise learns to adapt herself to school and community life and work.

<sup>1</sup> A companion program similar in all essential respects is being carried on with Negro teachers in the county. The Southern Education Foundation, the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, and the North Carolina College for Negroes, together with other state and county agencies are cooperating.

For teachers who are already in service the program involves individual and group study of community needs and resources, the development of plans which the school may employ to improve the quality of community life, the selection and use of teaching materials with particular reference to the materials and activities supplied by the school environment, and a consideration of good classroom teaching programs.

The general aim is to develop the concept that conditions affecting the health, the economic status, and the religious, social, cultural, and aesthetic aspects of community life must become the concern of the school; to emphasize the idea that one of the basic purposes of the rural school is to assist the people of the community to make use of the school and its facilities for the improvement of their general living conditions. It is expected that a closer relationship will develop between the school and other social and civic agencies, and that ways will be discovered for using community resources for improved instructional practices and for making the school an effective instrument for more profitable community living.

A significant phase of the in-service, teacher-education program is the summer study plan by selected teachers, or teacher groups. In addition to scholarship aid available for teachers chosen to make specific studies and for teachers to attend workshops on college campuses, local summer workshop programs planned by the county school supervisory staff were operated in 1943 and again in 1944. The University of North Carolina cooperated with the county school authorities in carrying on these programs. Teachers were registered in the graduate division of the University. They earned credit for nine quarter hours of work on the graduate level for the six weeks' program.

#### *Learning in a Laboratory Situation*

A children's school in which teachers gave primary consideration to good classroom teaching as it was observable from day to day was operated as an integral part of the workshop program. The school was in session two and one-half hours daily throughout the workshop period. Sixty children, representing the first five years of the elementary school, were taught in three groups. One group was made up of twenty children who had never been to school, another group consisted of twenty children who were second- and third-year pupils, while the third group of twenty children were selected from fourth- and fifth-year pupils. These selections were made so that each group would include children of varying levels of ability approximating as far as possible the normal classroom situation.

In general, all workshop participants observed daily in one of the three classrooms for the entire six weeks' period. A conference period, conducted by the demonstration teacher and participated in by the observing teachers, was a daily

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*A county in North Carolina is using the workshop way of learning in an experimental program aimed at improving community living. Both in- and pre-service teachers are participating in workshops where special emphasis is being placed on the responsibilities of the school in community life. M. E. Yount, superintendent of schools in Alamance County, tells us about the program.*

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feature of the program of the school. The conference centered around the work of the teaching period.

On the first day of the children's school all workshop participants, under the guidance of the directing staff, devoted considerable time to preparation for observing the work in the demonstration school. Suggestions were made that observers should consider their own conduct while observing, that they should consider the physical aspects of the teaching situation, the teaching situation itself, and how the use of materials and activities supplied by the school environment might be directed towards the improvement of living conditions in the school community.

#### *Time for Both General and Special Interests*

The time allotment of the daily schedule made it possible to provide many and varied experiences for the workshop group. The general conference hour, participated in by the entire group, was used to acquaint workshop participants with plans for activities arranged by the planning committee, to hear, to discuss, and to evaluate reports made by special interest groups, and to give opportunities for the directing staff and other workshop personnel to consider matters of interest related to the workshop program. At this period staff members gave helpful suggestions to various work groups, and visiting consultants discussed the nature and needs

of the child, conditions affecting school and community health, the selection and use of materials, and ways and means of using community resources for more profitable living and learning.

The workshop program attempted to meet individual teacher needs and interests as far as possible. This effort resulted in the formation of special interest study groups in which both principals and classroom teachers considered matters of particular concern to several members of the group, or to one or more of the schools in the county system. In a few instances teachers worked individually, having interests that could not be made to fit into the work of any of the established groups. These groups met daily for as long a period as was required for them to accomplish the specific group purposes for the day. Considerable additional time was spent in the library, and in other research activities by all members of the several groups. An unusually comprehensive professional library has been provided for teachers by the County Board of Education.

#### *Good Ideas Are Shared*

Plans have been perfected to continue through the academic year the study begun by one of the special interest groups. The work of this group involves intensive study of the reading materials available for children; the principles and methods of book selection, and the tools and book selection aids available; and story telling, including the selection of stories suitable for various age levels. A specialist from the State Department of Public Instruction will serve as director and consultant in charge of the study.

The studies made by these groups were recorded, carefully edited and prepared for publication. This material is being published in mimeograph form by the of-

fice of the county superintendent of public instruction. It will be made available for the use of all teachers in the schools of the county. In addition, the discussions by the teachers, staff members, and special consultants in the general conference programs were summarized and arranged for publication in the same bulletin. In like manner each of the groups observing in the children's school compiled a report for inclusion as a part of the complete record.

#### *Workshoppers Try Handcrafts*

In addition to the activities mentioned the program of work was planned so that the entire workshop group had practical experiences with art and craft materials daily. Some of the activities in which they engaged were block printing, work with clay including the preparation of the clay for use, weaving on looms built by workshoppers, dyeing fabrics, using natural materials for making the dyes, experiences in mixing and using paints, both oil paints and water colors, woodwork, using many kinds of hand tools, such as hand saws, coping saws, planes, squares, hammers, wood rasps, and other simple tools.

All groups working in arts and crafts made use of local materials when possible. In addition to having practical experiences with these materials, workshop participants investigated some of the principles that should apply when considering an arts and crafts program for children of different age levels, as these principles relate to design, to work with clay, to work with paints, to work with wood, to lettering, and to other art experiences.

In addition to the usual daily activities the group visited a number of school communities and industrial plants in the county, and made periodic trips to the University campus. School and community leaders cooperated to make these visits mutually profitable. One day was

spent in a joint meeting with a workshop group on the University campus.

### *Who Comes to the Workshop and How It's Run*

Enrollment in the workshop program was voluntary on the part of teachers and principals. Those whose homes are in the county commuted daily; others lived near the school in which the program was conducted. Only one school in the county system was not represented. Seven of the ten high school principals attended. A mid-day lunch was served in the school cafeteria. This period was used to provide many social and recreational experiences.

The workshop functioned with its own administrative organization, consisting of a general chairman, two general secretaries, a planning committee, an exhibit committee, and an editing committee. A directing staff, consisting of a coordinator, an assistant coordinator, an administrative assistant, a librarian, an instructor in arts and crafts, an instructor in music, and three observation school instructors, served in an advisory capacity and as general consultants for the several study groups. The members of this staff, no one of whom was a member of the regular school administrative or supervisory staff, were specialists in their fields. The coordinator and the assistant coordinator were visiting instructors on the summer school faculty of the University of North Carolina, selected for and assigned to this work

specifically. Many special consultants were brought in to guide groups in their investigations.

The project was begun with the assumption that the viewpoint of teachers, generally speaking, has been restricted too exclusively to the immediate academic phases of the school program, with too little consideration for problems of community living. The children's school was not included as a part of the plan originally. When organizational plans were being formulated the possibilities of adding such a school to the contemplated program seemed desirable. Making the school an integral part of the program resulted in shifting the emphasis somewhat from a study of community living problems to a study of how to use subject-matter avenues in leading the child to better living.

It is the conviction of the county school supervisory staff that a cooperative program of teacher education participated in by teacher-training institutions, by the State Department of Public Instruction, by the county school system, and by other interested agencies will result in the development of a school and community program designed to conserve and to promote individual and community welfare. Summer workshop programs with an ever-increasing number of teachers participating, closely coordinated with the program of supervision and in-service teacher education programs during the regular school year, will tend to achieve this result.

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DSCD IS COOPERATING with the Institute for Democratic Education in the preparation of a series of thirteen broadcasts designed to help children of elementary-school age understand democracy. The series will be produced next fall. If you know teacher groups who would be interested in cooperating in the preparation of outlines for scripts, please send names to Executive Secretary, DSCD, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

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