

Front Lines in Education

Henry Harap, Editor

Secondary Curriculum Revision Center. The Montana State Department of Public Instruction is embarking on an extensive program of curriculum revision for secondary schools. The Department will cooperate with the University of Montana in setting up a center for the preparation of tentative courses of study during the coming summer session. The teachers' guides in the several subject fields will be used on an experimental basis during the following year. About a hundred teachers, many of them coming at the expense of their school systems, will attend the Secondary Curriculum Revision Center. The project will be directed by Walter A. Anderson, dean of Montana State University, and J. A. Woodard, state high school supervisor.

Topics for Building America. In response to a request sent by the Editorial Board of *Building America*, members of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development returned 800 suggested titles. The final selection of eight for the year beginning in the fall of 1945 will be made from the following topics: China, public health, human unity through education, plans for peace, metropolitan planning, glass, oil, American regionalism, savings and insurance, public opinion, machinery for foreign relations, and polls and pressure groups.

In-Service Training Program. The addition of Spanish to the program of the elementary schools in Fort Worth, Tex., caused a mixture of emotions among the staff. Teachers who were thoroughly interested in inter-American cooperation welcomed the language as a major aid in achieving understanding and appreciation of Pan-American problems. The same persons, however, vigorously requested in-service assistance because they feared that best results could not be obtained with their poor backgrounds in Spanish. Teacher-training classes have been organized on three levels—first year, second year, and

third year—and are being taught by an elementary teacher, a junior high teacher, and a senior high teacher. One hundred sixty-eight teachers are registered. Many teachers who do not teach Spanish have enrolled, and several visitors from surrounding school districts come regularly.—David Sellars, *Coordinator of Instruction*.

Inter-Group Relations. Anticipating a post-war need, the Council on Cooperation in Teacher Education is sponsoring a project designed to discover the possibilities of improving relations between groups of different race, religion, and nationality. Several teacher-educating institutions will be selected as experimental centers. Lloyd A. Cook, professor of sociology at Ohio State University, will serve as director of the study. He will conduct a workshop for representatives of the cooperating colleges during the coming summer at Teachers College, Columbia University. Consultative services will be made available in the fall.

Pupils Campaign for Constitutional Reform. Following an intensive study of the new constitution for the state of Missouri and of the history and procedure of constitution making, St. Louis pupils in the seventh and eighth grades and in the high schools made a vigorous campaign for the adoption of the new charter. Pupils in both elementary and high schools distributed literature and solicited signed pledges from people favoring its adoption. The signers of the cards distributed by the schools as well as those circulated by numerous community agencies were contacted by the elementary school pupils and teachers on election day, and the people who had signed them were urged to go to the polls and vote yes. The high school pupils and teachers helped increase the vote by contacting every registered voter on election day with the help of the precinct registration lists. Student electioneering was done on a purely

voluntary basis. About 10,000 pupils were given time off, although classes were not dismissed. Superintendent Philip J. Hickey stated that practical politics served a double purpose in this case: the experience was a lesson in how democracy works; the adoption of the new constitution will improve the educational system.

The Bill of Rights. A recent national poll found that 77 out of every 100 Americans do not know what the Bill of Rights is. Alarmed by this state of affairs, the teachers of Highland Park, Mich., working through committees, prepared a Bill of Rights syllabus geared to four age levels ranging from kindergarten to junior college. Recordings, films, and pamphlets were used to supply background, information, and stimulation to students in their school and community activities. School activities consisted of auditorium programs, classroom discussions, junior town meetings, and other projects designed to emphasize the application of the Bill of Rights in today's living. Community awareness of the Bill of Rights was furthered by a series of various sized "package programs"—movies, records, student-speaker teams, student-discussions, singly or in combination—offered to more than one hundred community groups as program material for their weekly or monthly meetings, all equipment and personnel being supplied by the schools.—Roy E. Robinson, *Administrative Assistant*.

Detroit Citizenship Education Study. A five-year study of citizenship education in the Detroit Public Schools has been made possible by a grant of \$425,000 from the William Volker Charities Fund, Kansas City, Mo. The purpose of this project is to study ways of increasing the interest, competence, and participation of boys and girls in the activities of good citizens and to develop them eventually into good adult citizens.—Warren E. Bow, *Superintendent of Schools*.

Home Economics for Army Wives. Fort Benning, being adjacent to Columbus, Ga., has many army wives living in the community. In response to requests for help, special meetings of the home economics staff were called by the supervisor. Units of work based upon life problems grew out of these meetings. How to prepare food in a limited space

or use a kitchen with several families were typical problems. Instruction in clothing was based upon the needs of a group of expectant mothers. Maternity dresses and layettes were planned and made. For the group with children, there was a unit on "around-the-clock with the child," including what the child should eat and preparation of the food, what it should wear and how to make the garment, play and sleep habits, and social adaptation to family and friends. For years there has been an adult program in Columbus, but the one in practice now seems to do a more thorough job of meeting actual life problems as they arise from day to day.—Mabel Bryan, *Supervisor of Home Economics*.

In-Service Education. The in-service education of the teachers in the schools of Polk County, Florida, was started four years ago with a county workshop on the local campus under the auspices of the Florida State College for Women. The instructors were outstanding state and local leaders in their respective fields. New teachers, and others seeking in-service aid, were enabled to study their own problems and to improve their individual teaching. The County Curriculum Committee developed teaching aids, after having found the outstanding weaknesses. Later, ten weekly faculty meetings were held for the study of local teaching problems with the combined faculties of the area in attendance. The meetings were held on Saturday to enable teachers to devote their full energy and undivided thought to their individual professional growth. Participation in the study projects was accepted for purposes of meeting local requirements for salary increments.—F. E. Brigham, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*.

Supervisory Guidance. The teachers of Topeka, Kans., are revising the social studies guide in the light of last year's teaching and learning experiences. The original draft was prepared by eighteen teachers and their supervisors at a workshop held at Columbia University during 1943 under the direction of Herbert Bruner. The guide was completed the next year under the leadership of the teachers who had had the workshop experience. The guide is a suggested rather than a prescribed program. The pupils are en-

couraged to enter the community and members of the community go into the schools. Groups of children go freely from one building to another sharing plays, culminating activities, or other functions. An activity room has been fitted in each school building—fitted for art, cooking, and shop work. The teachers are being trained in puppet making, clay modeling, working with papier mache, beautifying schoolrooms, using tools, cooking, and sewing.—Dorothy E. Cooke, *General Supervisor*.

Teachers Study Intercultural Relations. A group of Kalamazoo, Mich., elementary teachers have organized themselves to study methods of bringing about a broader and clearer understanding of interracial problems. They study the contributions of the cultures of different ethnic groups, chiefly of those represented in the school community. For some time, the director of elementary education has been encouraging this phase of the department's social studies program. The Teachers' Club recently brought Langston Hughes to Kalamazoo for an entire day, at which time, he met several groups of students, both elementary and secondary. He also met a large number of the teachers. A dinner was held in his honor in the evening which was attended by a large mixed audience. The dinner was followed by a lecture by Mr. Hughes, attended by the general public. A radio broadcast by elementary children, in which they discussed the values they derived from the visit of Mr. Hughes, was conducted a few days after his appearance. The children prepared for his coming by studying his poetry and other writings in their classroom work.—Loy Norrix, *Superintendent*.

Revision of Secondary Curriculum. In October 1944 steering committees for the junior high school curriculum and the senior high school curriculum were appointed by the superintendent of the Davenport (Iowa) Public Schools on nomination of the principals. These committees have been meeting regularly. The junior high school program will contain some rearrangements of the time allotted to subject matter. The senior high school program will provide a greater core than was previously provided. After the steering committees have completed their

work, subject-matter committees will be set up. The Board of Education has provided funds to furnish consultants, both to the steering committees and the subject-matter committees.—P. B. Jacobson, *Superintendent*.

Adjusting to Changing Conditions. Terre Haute (Ind.) schools are engaged in a project of evaluating and revitalizing the social studies curriculum. Committees working upon this program are not making detailed, "cut and dried" courses, but are setting up a flexible framework based upon the following premises: 1. The over-all objective of the social studies curriculum is the understanding of the meaning, development, purposes, and procedures of democracy. 2. At present every course is overloaded, yet certain areas are practically ignored. The revision problem is not merely one of adding or subtracting units, but (a) choosing content that contributes most to the understanding of the contemporary world, (b) making greater use of community resources, (c) placing greater stress upon choosing and adapting content and materials to individual differences, and (d) adjusting the content and methods used to changing social conditions and new concepts, e.g., the shrinkage of the world, growing interdependence of peoples.—George C. Caroll, *Superintendent of Schools*.

Child Study. The Caddo Parish (La.) schools have begun a program of child study using Daniel A. Prescott, of the University of Chicago, and the Child Development Laboratory staff as consultants in developing the program. More than thirty groups of teachers have been organized in twenty-nine schools. Each group of ten to twenty members selects a leader from among its own membership. Each member of the group selects one child for specific study during the school year. Groups meet once each two weeks. At each meeting a member of the group is responsible for a discussion of the child that member is studying. The entire program is under the supervision of Elizabeth Taylor, assistant superintendent in the administrative office. Consultants from the University of Chicago visit the Parish three times a year for work with these groups in an advisory capacity. It is planned to broaden the program to include supervision, curricu-

lum development, reports, discipline, public relations, parent education, and other phases of the work of the public schools as the child study project develops.—Roscoe H. White, *Superintendent*.

Curriculum Activities. The Glendale (Calif.) Public Schools have concerned themselves this year with numerous activities pertaining to curriculum. At the elementary level a revision of the social studies and of the time allotment schedule has just been completed. A body mechanics program, preventive rather than remedial in purpose, is being introduced and a stronger plan for the teaching of health is being developed. A study of character education is also being initiated. The junior high schools are working on specific courses in all the major areas, and the senior high schools are making especially fine contributions in senior problems and in the general field of better intercultural understandings and attitudes concerning minority groups. At the secondary levels certain difficulties of correlation are of primary concern. As a junior-senior high school problem these manifest themselves in the fields of foreign languages, particularly Spanish, and in home economics.—Frances Hall Adams, *Director of Curriculum*.

Rural Electrification After the War. The electrification of rural areas is increasing at a rapid rate. In the seven years ending in 1944, the per cent of electrified farms increased from 11 to 43 per cent. When materials are released and labor again becomes plentiful we may expect almost all the farms of the nation to be served with electricity within ten years after the war. Electric irons, radios, washing machines, water pumps, and other power machinery will be used more commonly in the home, in the barn, in producing crops, and in the preparation and storage of

food for the market. No matter what their present situation is, our young people are destined to use more electrical appliances in the future. They will need to know more about the simple usable facts of electricity, how to wire electric outlets, how to repair an electric iron, how to care for a washing machine, how to maintain an electric pump, how to make simple electrical repairs, how to check bills for electric current, and so on.

In Brief. The 1947 Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators will deal with the postwar curriculum. Claude V. Courier, superintendent of Cincinnati Schools is chairman of the Yearbook Committee.

The Roanoke (Va.) Public Schools will conduct a summer workshop in 1945 under the general supervision of D. E. McTuilkin, superintendent of schools, for the purpose of improving the course of study.

Committees in the Charleston (S.C.) Public Schools are revising the curriculum with a view to adding a twelfth year to the school program. At the same time an effort will be made to bring the whole curriculum up to date.

The Nebraska Department of Public Instruction, with the cooperation of the Nebraska State Education Association, conducted a regional conference in twenty centers on wartime and postwar problems confronting Nebraska high schools.

The Health Education Department of the Seattle Public Schools, in cooperation with the science, home economics, and physical education departments, is experimenting in three schools with a course in personal and social relations in grades seven and eight.

Charles R. Spain who is on leave from the State Teachers College at Florence, Ala., has been assigned to the Curriculum Section of the Bureau of Naval Personnel and is located in Washington, D. C.

Your Help Is Needed

All DSCD members have been sent a check-list of suggested topics to be discussed in the 1945-46 issues of *EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP*. If you have not already done so, we hope you will check the subjects in which you are most interested and return this list to DSCD at 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Your help is needed and will be greatly appreciated. Topics for next year's journal will be based on your suggestions.

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