

antees that the internship concept will not be used as a means of hiring a cheap teacher to replace a more expensive but experienced teacher; (8) the selection of teachers for the permanent staff based in part on the way that the candidate adjusts to the particular school and the community in the trial period; and (9) an opportunity for effective observations in sharp contrast to the prevailing practice in which student teachers are required to make varied and numerous observations so early in their professional

work that they cannot see very much.¹

Cooperative supervision must become a vital force in the professional growth of the beginning teacher. Colleges and school systems must realize the necessity of working together in molding that raw material into teachers who will capably assume the responsibility in their trust—the guidance and development of the future citizens of America.

¹ Schorling, Raleigh, in the Twenty-third Yearbook of the National Society of College Teachers of Education, p. 173. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1935.

Help for the Neophyte

H. D. BEHRENS

A variety of ways for follow-up work with graduates is being used by teachers colleges today. H. D. Behrens, chairman, Department of Education, State Teachers College, Geneseo, N. Y., recounts how this institution is experimenting with an Educational Clinic as one part of the follow-up program.

IT IS A MATTER of fairly general agreement in education circles today—on a theoretical basis at least—that there is no specially designated time in the period of teacher education at which the college may call its responsibility completed. In actual practice the majority of teacher-education institutions assume responsibility for placement of graduating students. Too often, however, here responsibility ends. From this point on the beginning teacher either goes it alone or finds her help in the situation where she is teaching.

All institutions of higher learning that have for their purpose the education of teachers and give more than mere lip service to the principle of cooperative planning for all phases of teacher education must certainly assume some responsibility in helping their graduates

adjust to their new positions. The schools into which these neophytes go likewise have a responsibility. Not only the principals and supervisors but also the more experienced teachers must help the beginning teacher become acclimated if she is to realize fully her teaching capacity.

Let us take a look at this beginning teacher. Measured in terms of present standards, the quality of her preparation has been excellent. She has done her practice teaching, that part of her preparation which most nearly approaches the actual teaching situation. Yet, as one talks to her, in the light of the new responsibility, one realizes that pre-service experiences take on new meaning.

The knowledge of human growth and development, which at one time in her

college life seemed rather unimportant, now becomes extremely significant. Those methods of teaching reading, which seemed easy enough to her when she was doing her practice teaching, now take on superhuman aspects. Faced with a real situation over which she has been given complete charge and for which she may have a feeling of inadequacy, she needs guidance.

For several years the members in the Department of Education at the Geneseo State Teachers College had discussed with the seniors ways and means by which beginning teachers could be given aid in the solution of their problems at a time when it would be most profitable to the recipient. During the second semester of 1945 in the Seminar in Elementary Education, the suggestion was made that arrangement be made for all seniors to return for a follow-up conference sometime early in the fall to discuss the vital problems of these students in their new teaching positions.

Seniors Participate in Planning

In working out the details of the Conference several questions arose.

Who should be included in the Conference? It was finally decided to invite all beginning elementary-school teachers, regardless of where they received their preparation.

How soon after school opens in the fall should the Conference be held and how long should it last? It was deemed necessary to wait long enough for the problems to be realized, but not to become crystallized. In discussing the length of the Conference, the problem of substitute teachers arose. And, since teachers were scarce, only a one-day conference was planned to be held early in October.

What is the best way to determine the problems of the beginning teacher? This

was answered by asking each teacher to send to the Department a statement of her most troublesome problem.

What are the most effective ways of helping the beginning teacher solve her problems? From the outset it was realized that several different ways should be employed. The seniors suggested that provision be made for observations, demonstrations, group discussions and personal conferences with individual faculty members according to the problems presented.

What evaluation techniques might be used to determine the effectiveness of the program? The effectiveness of any program is best measured in terms of its functioning in the actual situation. Therefore, it was not possible to make a final evaluation until sometime after the teachers had returned to their classrooms. Those in the seminar suggested that some form of evaluation be made at the close of the conference and that later in the year a follow-up study be made.

In general, then, the conference was to include all beginning elementary-school teachers within commuting distance of the college to meet for the purpose of helping these initiates to solve perplexing problems which had become evident during the first crucial weeks of teaching.

Principals Are Consulted

Early in September letters were sent to all principals who had any Geneseo 1945 graduates explaining in detail the purpose of the conference and the type of program which had been planned. The principals were invited to cooperate by allowing all their beginning teachers to attend and by counseling with them relative to the problems they might submit. Three or four days later letters were sent to all 1945 graduates informing them that the plans for the educa-

tional conference discussed in the spring had now matured and the date for the meeting was set for October 5th. They were also informed that a letter had been sent to the principal which explained the purpose of the conference and suggested that they talk over with him the possibility of attending.

Since the purpose of the conference was to talk over her problems with the beginning teacher and to think through together desirable ways of meeting them, it was necessary that those in charge of arrangements know what problems these teachers were facing. Therefore, the teachers were asked to send in those which they wished to have discussed sometime during the program. Those planning to attend, were also given an opportunity to schedule personal conferences with individual faculty members.

Problems submitted by this group of beginning teachers came under such headings as: (1) How to handle children who have the ability but lack the desire to use it; (2) How to develop interest in and liking for reading at the sixth-grade level; (3) How to teach beginning reading; (4) What arithmetic to teach first-grade children; (5) The marking system for the kindergarten; (6) Seatwork and reading groups in the lower grades; (7) Longterm planning in the middle grades; (8) The problem of teaching reading to slow-learning children.

Problems Suggest Clinic Procedures

It was felt that some of the problems suggested could be dealt with more adequately through demonstration and discussion of a lesson by one of the supervisors in the School of Practice. The

needs of the students as expressed in other problems might be met more effectively through small round-table discussions. Therefore, demonstrations were scheduled in the morning, after which the children were dismissed and the group remained in each room for discussion. In the afternoon small group discussions were held. Since a number of general problems in the field of elementary science were included in the original list submitted, the head of the college science department spoke to the entire group at luncheon on "Community Resources for Teaching Science."

Evaluation Brings Suggestions

It was felt that if the Clinic were to continue to serve effectively the beginning teachers, an evaluation of the program was essential. The more permanent values could be measured only after those in attendance had an opportunity to put the suggestions into use in their classrooms. It was desirous, however, to get an immediate expression of the values derived from the Clinic. Therefore, at the closing session a questionnaire on the strengths and weaknesses of the conference was submitted to the group. Also, at this time, there was a discussion by the entire group of the values of the Clinic and the advisability of holding a second such conference in 1946.

The opinion of those attending this first Educational Clinic seemed to be that they received ideas for the solution of their own problems. They felt that they had obtained suggestions for dealing with their specific problems, and new ideas for planning better school programs for children. Longer discus-

sion periods were favored for clarifying problems and receiving suggestions for their solution. Also, more time was desired for personal conferences with individual faculty members. The teachers felt they had profited from demonstrations designed to illustrate the problems met in the classrooms.

It was extremely gratifying to learn from those in attendance that their principals were enthusiastic about the Clinic. Many of the supervisors made valuable suggestions to these beginning teachers as to problems and topics to be discussed at the Clinic. Even the crucial problem of finding substitutes kept only a few of the teachers away. Some were unable to attend because of the distance from the college and lack of transportation.

The follow-up study made late in the spring on the more permanent outcomes of the Clinic indicated that most of the problems presented had been solved or that the causes of the difficulties had been discovered and therefore could be prevented another year. Because of the small percentage of

questionnaires returned and the lack of controls, one cannot attribute, with any degree of assurance, this achievement to the help given at the Clinic.

Planning for the Future

On the basis of the statements made at the close of the Clinic and the letters received afterwards, it was felt that the project was sufficiently worthwhile to continue another year. Not only all the beginning teachers in this area will be invited but also all the principals and elementary-school supervisors. The teachers and administrators will meet together for the opening and closing sessions and for luncheon. It is hoped that by bringing these two groups together a more wholesome understanding will emerge.

It seems quite within the realm of possibility that similar conferences may eventually be held in all the schools at which time experts in the field of elementary education may be invited to discuss the crucial problems. Through this cooperative enterprise both the schools and the colleges should benefit.

Make Them Feel at Home

WALTER TROTT AND ADELENE E. HOWLAND

Orientation of the beginning college student to his new environment is, at present, a well-established practice in most institutions. A similar orientation of the beginning teacher in his new working situation is, too frequently, completely overlooked by school systems. Des Moines, Iowa has experimented in past years with such a procedure. Walter Trott, director of elementary education, and Adelene E. Howland, assistant director of elementary education, tell how one phase of this type of program is planned and carried through.

A SERIES of group meetings planned to continue over a three-year period is only one part of the Des Moines induction program for beginning elementary

teachers. The total induction program provides for guidance in various phases of social, personal, and professional adjustment. The group meetings are a sig-

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