

Front Lines in Education

Henry Harap, Editor

Art In General Education. The curriculum department of the Tulsa (Okla.) Public Schools has issued a *Teacher's Guide for Art Education* in the junior high schools which is to be used in the program of general education. The art experiences of boys and girls are organized in terms of problems in various areas of living. Thus, in the area of home living certain problems to which art education may contribute have been suggested. For example, activities have been suggested for improving the appearance and functional use of the child's room and its equipment, for making pleasing flower arrangements; for the proper selection, framing, arranging, and hanging pictures; for distinguishing between good and bad structure and design in furniture; for identifying period-types of furnitures and for other similar informative, appreciative, creative, and technical art experiences. Other areas of living around which art experiences have been organized are: art and the individual, art and the community, art and the school, art and industry, art as an avocation and a vocation, and art in other countries.

Basic Education in College. Basic education at Michigan State "is designed to provide students with a sound foundation on which to build an intelligent interest in personal, family, vocational, social, and civic problems, a better understanding of these problems and a greater ability to cope with them." The program of basic education was established to give them opportunity to explore wide areas of knowledge, with the exception that such exploration would aid them in finding their interests and abilities and would enable them to take a more effective part in a democratic society. All students at Michigan State College are enrolled in the Basic College during their freshman and

sophomore years. They have the opportunity to study in seven comprehensive areas of subject matter, five of which are required. The seven basic courses include Written and Spoken English, Biological Science, Physical Science, Effective Living, Literature and Fine Arts, Social Science, and History of Civilization. Grade and credit for each of these courses is determined by performance on a comprehensive examination, constructed each semester by a Board of Examiners.

Curriculum Committees Outline Plans. The various Evaluating and Planning Committees in the Kansas City (Mo.) Public Schools are now outlining objectives toward which they will work this year. A committee was appointed for the purpose of organizing in bulletin form the information obtained about community resources. The Art Committee continues to direct its attention toward finding the most effective type of art education for boys and girls. The subcommittee on crafts is planning a crafts workshop which will be held in the spring. The Music Committee is studying and evaluating the needs of the students in the ninth grade and planning a music program that will adequately meet those needs.

The Good Elementary School. Virginia is currently engaged in a program that is designed to enable the superintendents, directors of instruction, general supervisors, elementary supervisors, elementary principals, and faculties of teacher training institutions to clarify and state more definitely their conception of the type of elementary school that is needed in Virginia. The supervisors and directors of instruction have considered the characteristics of a good elementary school in a three-day conference which was held at Natural Bridge. It is the expectation that

these supervisors will return to their local divisions and assist their teachers in describing the characteristics of a good elementary school program. Elementary school principals have already given their attention to this topic, and work is under way with faculty groups in various school divisions which should culminate in a better understanding of the function and characteristics of the elementary school program. Arrangements are being made at present to invite division superintendents and the faculties of the various teachers colleges to participate in this statewide program.—R. C. Haydon, *Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction*.

Democracy in a World Setting. *The Institute of Studies of Comparative Government and Education* has been organized at Teachers College, Columbia University to study the relation between education and democracy. The Institute will be under the executive directorship of Professor Boris Mirkin-Guetzevitch, dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Science of l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes and visiting professor at Teachers College. The program of research and instruction was opened with a series of lectures on the United Nations. Special seminars the first and third Thursday of each month will be conducted at Teachers College by eminent authorities from Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and other American universities, as well as by foreign scholars currently in the United States.

Statewide Program. The first official organized direction of the Kansas curriculum wholly within the State Department of Education was inaugurated last year. A statewide curriculum conference under national leaders was held to consider the fundamentals of curriculum development. The curriculum division is developing cooperatively with various groups bulletins containing resource units which are made available to teachers. Zone centers for curriculum study have been set up in four sections of the state and also a study center

on the campus of each of the three state teachers colleges. These study centers begin where the teacher feels the need of assistance. Under competent guidance they will develop and organize source materials and at the same time the teachers will grow in appreciation of the basic principles of education relating to child growth and development. A statewide conference was held in December for the consideration of language arts with emphasis on reading. Each teacher group and every school system is expected to be represented. This is to be followed by a series of institutes devoted to reading during the coming summer in the state teachers colleges. These institutes are a joint responsibility of the state teachers colleges and the state department of education.—Glenn A. DeLay, *Director of Curriculum*.

Weekend Camp Conference. The In-Service Education Committee of Western Michigan College in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction sponsored a curriculum conference at the Clear Lake Camp, which is now an extension of the campus of the college. About 120 teachers, principals, and superintendents attended the conference which opened with a six o'clock dinner on Friday evening and closed with a Sunday noon dinner. At the initial meeting of the conference on Friday evening, random groups were formed for the purpose of identifying problems. The chairmen of these groups acted as a planning committee and set up five discussion groups to work on the selected problems. Chairmen and secretaries were elected who served as a steering committee for the rest of the conference. Much time and thought were given to the problem of whose responsibility it is to initiate and direct curriculum change and to ways of doing this. Discussion groups made noticeable progress toward solving some of the problems introduced. Provisions were made for further work through requests which came for two such conferences each year.—George H. Hilliard, *Director of Student Personnel and Guidance*.

Statewide Committees. The North Dakota State Department of Public Instruction has several committees engaged in preparing and revising the outlines for the different high school subjects. These committees are made up of representatives from the state department and the teachers of the subjects in the high schools and colleges. Two of the committees engaged in the preparation of the bulletins have completed their work and it is hoped that these bulletins will be published soon. These two bulletins deal with the high school courses in the social sciences and music. Another committee is planning a course of study for aviation education in the schools. This committee has tentative plans to publish a bulletin which will explain the methods through which aviation education can be introduced in the curriculum of the schools. Plans are also being made to make the necessary changes and revisions in the course of study for the elementary schools first published in 1945.—Erich Selke, *University of North Dakota*.

Curriculum Director. The Sioux Falls (S. Dak.) Public Schools have employed Herbert E. Hartshorn as curriculum director for the elementary grades. It will be his duty to unify the curriculum and to bring it up to date. The teachers and principals have been organized into several committees to study such phases as, social studies, the slow-learning child, arithmetic, and reading in primary grades. The high school teachers are cooperating in the experimental use of the state course of study in English. The local high school teachers were also cooperating with a state committee which is in the process of developing a course of study in social studies for the high schools of the state.—L. M. Fort, *Superintendent of Schools*.

Curriculum Planning. Curriculum Bulletin No. 1, *A Guide for Better Instruction in Minnesota Schools*, prepared by committees of educators selected on a statewide basis, has been issued by the State Department of Education. The publication serves as a study-discussion guide on

a number of pertinent problems, such as formulating a philosophy of education, determining the needs of children, providing for individual differences, practicing democratic living in the classroom, teaching by units, and utilizing community resources. Six subcommittees have been appointed to prepare materials in the learning areas on the elementary school level. Each committee includes one or more consultants from the University of Minnesota or the state teachers colleges, a chairman, and from nine to twelve committee members chosen on a statewide basis. The bulletins to be prepared by these committees will serve as guides for local curriculum discussion groups and workshop centers. Six selected school systems are now in their fourth year of intensive curriculum study, as a cooperative project between the University of Minnesota and the State Department of Education.—Walter A. Andrews, Director, *Graded Elementary and Secondary Schools*.

Learning Through School Service. Last spring the juniors of the New School, a division of Evanston (Ill.) Township High School, agreed to give the school some voluntary service which would offer the student a chance to learn as well as to serve. Within a month after the opening of school all the seniors were placed in jobs which took one period per day for a whole semester. It was felt that less than a semester would be unfair to their employers since they must devote considerable time in training the student for his job. The jobs which the students are doing range from that of head librarian of the home room to that of manual labor or the groundkeeper's assistant. One boy is the auto-shop foreman, another is librarian for the music department; two assist with the audio-visual program; three girls take care of the costume chest for the director of dramatics; four are employed by the college library; four students aid in the testing and guidance program. Several serve as assistants to the director of intramurals, mathematics, biology, and art departments. Some students are doing actual teaching;

some in their spare time learn along with the class by taking up the same projects.—Charles M. MacConnell and Ralph Potter, *New School*.

Tertiary Education. Two years of research including studies of curriculum development have preceded the establishment of five institutes of applied arts and sciences by New York State. The curriculums planned represent a new conception in post-high school, tertiary education which prepares for immediate employment upon the completion of the two-year programs. The aim is to advance the overall competence of each individual student and at the same time to prepare him for a group or cluster of technical occupations. General courses are regarded as parts of a single pattern in which general and technical courses are closely woven together. The supervision of instruction is the immediate responsibility of a newly appointed associate commissioner of education. An occupational survey conducted by the state education department established need for the preparation of technicians. From the needs evidenced, general curriculum patterns were determined. The content of curriculums is being determined by job analysis within industries and communities. Through this process it is believed that within a few years there will evolve a series of functional curriculums in which technical and general education blend into a single process.—L. L. Jarvie, *Associate Commissioner*.

A County Cooperative Program. All teachers of Randolph County in Missouri have the opportunity of participating in a program of in-service growth on a county-wide basis. This is a cooperative program, sponsored by the Kirksville State Teachers College, State Department of Education, county and city superintendents, teachers, and the County School Board Association. Meetings are held regularly each month at a central location in the county. Teaching problems arising in the field are discussed along with methods and techniques involving the courses of

study and units of work taught. The first meeting of this countywide program was concerned with the objectives and the general procedure of the year. The program included divisional meetings and small group discussions for teachers with common problems. Specialists in the different fields of subject matter were invited to work with the various groups of teachers. The unique feature of this program is that it is organized to care for all teachers of the county which includes high school, elementary, and rural teachers.—Arthur L. Summers, *State Director of Supervision*.

Social Studies. The Department of Education of the State of New Jersey has issued a bulletin on social studies in the elementary school which is the product of several years of collaboration between the staff of the state department, teachers, parents, and laymen. Some of its best features lie in the emphasis upon flexibility of content, fusion of history and geography, and pupil participation. About one-half of the bulletin deals with concrete illustrative materials. Many challenging ideas are contained. It points out that poor reading need be no obstacle to full participation in a social studies unit. It takes the position that standard tests in social studies may be harmful evaluating devices. The bulletin has caused considerable interest and discussion among New Jersey teachers and salutary evidence of its influence in classrooms have already been reported.—Ralph C. Preston, *University of Pennsylvania*.

Brief Notes

The annual report of the superintendent of Seattle Public Schools features the activities of the staff responsible for the improvement of the curriculum.

The Oklahoma City Board of Education maintains a graduate study center which is staffed jointly by the University of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. These opportunities for professional growth are arranged by the Division of Instruction with Theodore D. Rice serving as coordinator.

Copyright © 1947 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.