

Front Lines in Education

Galen Saylor

Two School Survey Reports Released. Reports on two comprehensive school surveys have been published recently: *A Report on a Survey of Public Education in the State of Washington*, released by Governor Mon C. Wallgren and *A Cooperative Study of the Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska*, published by the Board of Education of Lincoln.

These surveys represent interesting contrasts in approach and method. The Washington state survey, directed by George D. Strayer, follows the usual survey pattern of evaluation by a staff of experts on the basis of information and data gathered by them and on their observation and study of current practices. The Lincoln survey, directed by Clyde Hill and S. M. Brownell was a cooperative study and evaluation project which involved both the local people and a survey staff.

The Washington survey is, of course, broad in scope since it concerns itself with educational provisions for an entire state. Most of the report deals with educational administration and curriculum planning at the state level. Current practices are analyzed and recommendations are made for changes and improvements. The sections on elementary and secondary education stress the desirability of developing a curriculum that serves the needs of pupils, with suggestions included for better achieving this goal. In the main, the recommendations are in terms of the traditional subject pattern, although some attention is given to possibilities for a more integrated type of curriculum design. The report condemns the authoritarian and committee types of organization for curriculum development and favors a cooperative approach which involves all teachers and also pupils. The recommendations relative to junior colleges and extended secondary schools and

adult education are especially forward looking. The report urges that Washington make the thirteenth and fourteenth years of schooling an integral and effective part of the common school system. The chapter on adult education envisages a nine-fold program which would be much broader than the opportunities for adults that exist in most communities.

In the Lincoln cooperative survey, the local school staff decided what aspects of the educational program were to be studied and how the problems were to be attacked. Committees of teachers were then selected to gather facts about the present situation and make specific recommendations for improvement. In a number of instances these committees prepared preliminary survey reports for their respective areas. The survey directors appointed a resident assistant who spent the school year in the community. He worked with the committees, secured opinions from parents and the public, and aided in gathering factual information. The directors and some of the ten outside consultants also worked with various committees—helping them plan and carry forward the study of their respective areas, and finally evaluating the soundness and adequacy of the committees' preliminary reports. The entire study report was then actually reviewed by the survey staff, consultants, committee chairman, and a lay committee. The directors believe that this cooperative approach to a survey results in better understanding among the entire school staff and in unifying the staff, rather than increasing tensions and further dividing it.

Informing Patrons and Teachers About Their Schools. The increasing tempo of serious-minded interest in schools on the part of parents and the public in general is evident from the attention given

school problems by the public press and radio. Our national professional organizations, especially the National Education Association, have been instrumental for much of this discussion at the national level. Similarly, at the local level, many school systems are aiding in these efforts to develop a better understanding by citizens of the schools and their programs and problems. Illustrative of material distributed to patrons as a part of the interpretative program are informational circulars published by the Waco (Tex.) and the Port Huron (Mich.) public school systems. The Waco news sheet, initiated this year, is entitled *The Waco Public Schools*. It describes current developments in curriculum and administration, and interprets findings of a recent survey of the Waco schools. The Port Huron publication is called *News of the Port Huron Public Schools*. A recent issue presents information and charts on the shortage of teachers, revenues and expenditures of the Port Huron schools, and expected enrollments in the kindergarten through 1950. Superintendent Howard D. Crull believes that informational circulars of this type, issued periodically, are more effective than an annual report. One of the most interesting efforts to inform citizens about school developments is the weekly news release of the Georgia State Department of Education. Luke Greene, supervisor of records, reports, and information prepares the release. It is distributed to all the newspapers of Georgia, and may be used for publication or as a basis for editorial comment.

A number of school systems are publishing regularly news letters for teachers. Some which have come to the editor's attention are: *Newsletter of the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania*, now in its third year; *Curriculum News and Views*, issued by the curriculum office of the Philadelphia schools; *Monthly Bulletin*, published by the Kansas State Department of Public Instruction; *News Letter of the Arizona State Department of Education*, and *Official Bulletin*, issued by the New Mexico

State Department of Education. All of these publications give attention to curriculum projects under way, announce new publications, and discuss administrative problems. Doubtless similar publications are issued by many state and local systems.

Georgia Extends Educational Program to Twelve Grades. Georgia is currently in the process of making a transition to a twelve-grade system and educators are planning an extensive reorganization of the entire school curriculum from kindergarten to the last year of high school. Early in 1947 the General Assembly of Georgia passed a law making it permissible for high schools in Georgia to go to a twelve-year system. It is estimated that during the coming year seventy-five percent of the state's high schools will either have a twelve-year program or be making the transition. Led by State Superintendent of Schools M. D. Collins, the school planners are moving cautiously, urging that schools begin the transition with the eighth grade and gradually move into the new system rather than merely add another grade at the end of the present eleven-year system. Mr. Collins has appointed a twelfth grade coordinator, Mr. H. S. Shearouse, who is working closely with a state executive committee, consultants, advisory committees, and district committees in bringing about the reorganization. A state-wide consultants' conference was held the latter part of the summer to crystallize the thinking of those who will have a big part in advising the schools concerning reorganization. Local initiative is being stressed in the curriculum change, with leadership and guidance supplied by members of the State Department of Education.

Kansas City Studies Cooperative Planning. The Kansas City (Mo.) schools, as an aspect of their participation in the experimental program of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute for School Experimentation, have been engaged for the past two years in a study of cooperative planning. One outcome of the study has been the production of an educational film on co-

operative planning, soon to be released through the Institute. The film depicts a project in beautification carried forward as an all-school activity in one of the city's elementary schools.

A. W. Gilbert, director of curriculum and research, states that the script for the film was prepared by a teacher who was released from classroom duties for a period of time, with photography by the director of visual instruction. The film should be helpful to other systems expanding efforts in cooperative planning and to teacher education institutions.

Kansas City is also providing its teachers with some excellent resource material on the city itself. The schools have already published four volumes in a series entitled *The Story of Kansas City*. Three of the volumes are for use in grades three, four, and five respectively, and the fourth volume, released in July, is for use by ninth grade civic classes. Along the same line, a well-illustrated booklet on the various public services of Kansas City was published this fall entitled *Our Public Services and How They Work*. Social studies and science classes will find it a helpful guide for study and for excursions.

Effects of an Extended Work Day. Educators who are students of social problems, and that includes about all of us, will be interested in conclusions reached by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics on the effects on output of long work schedules during the war. The report, published in the *Labor Information Bulletin* for August, 1947, states that "preference for the eight-hour day and forty-hour week in the country's manufacturing industries appears to be well-founded." Physical demands of the work and the extent to which the worker can control the pace of operation do, however, influence efficiency, so that no single optimum work schedule can be determined for all workers.

The survey found that as a rule "the lengthening of daily hours to nine or ten, with weekly hours ranging between fifty to sixty, brought about two additional hours of output for every three additional

hours worked in light and operator-paced work. For heavy operator-paced work, only one hour's additional output was realized for every two additional hours worked when schedules exceeded forty-eight or fifty per week." As long as the work day remained at eight hours, a sixth day of eight hours could be added without significant loss of efficiency, but when the daily hours were raised to nine or more for weekly schedules of fifty-four hours or more, efficiency dropped sharply.

Perhaps educators would do well to study the efficiency of teachers' conferences and meetings held after the close of an exhausting day of work with twenty-five to forty youngsters or teaching five secondary classes, each with about thirty active young adolescents.

Seattle Conducts Workshops. Seattle public schools conducted two workshops, one for principals and one for elementary teachers, for a period of two weeks last summer. Sixty-eight principals and supervisors participated in the principals' workshop. William C. Reavis of the University of Chicago served as leader. The group considered problems that had been submitted in advance by Seattle principals.

One hundred teachers from the primary and intermediate grades participated in an arts and crafts workshop, conducted in cooperation with the Western Washington College of Education. Over two hundred and fifty teachers applied for admission. Teachers not only engaged in creative activities themselves, but discussed various topics on art and crafts education.

New Curriculum Publications

Illinois State Department of Public Instruction—*Geography for High Schools With Elementary Supplement*. Springfield, The Department. 1946. 81 p.

Mississippi State Department of Education—*Manual of Administration*. Jackson, The Department. 1946. 103 p.

New York City Board of Education—*Safety Education in the Elementary and Junior High School Grades*. Curriculum Bulletin 1946-47 Series, No. 4, Board of Education of the City of New York. 86 p.

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