

post office, fire hall. Other places are too far.

I have been passing low I.Q. children. We are experimenting with different types of activities.

I try to arouse interest the best I can, but still fail in many cases.

I am trying to stress workshop methods, especially in senior English.

The first "sounding" brought into focus a large number of problems which were being faced by the school system

and the curriculum department. It was evident that the attitude of the teachers could have been expressed as, "Here are the problems—and there are many. We can't do much about it."

This wasn't true in the second "sounding." Teacher participation in course-of-study construction, policymaking, purchase of materials, and experimental programs has afforded opportunities for developing staff initiative.

Raising the Level of Consultant Service

MARCELLA R. LAWLER

The changing concepts of consultant service are reviewed by Marcella Lawler, research assistant, Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation of Teachers College, Columbia University. In her previous position with the State Department of Education in Washington, Miss Lawler served in a consultant capacity to many schools in that state. She brings first-hand experience to her discussion on planning for consultant service.

AUTOMOBILES SERVICED! Train reservations made! Plane tickets purchased! Thousands of miles are being traveled each month in the United States by consultants working in the public schools. Reports written! National and regional conferences held! Workshops planned! Colleges, universities, state departments of education, and foundations are developing programs of consultant service.

Twenty-five years ago the educational consultant was almost unknown. At that time we had the visitor, the *expert* who was brought into the school for a speech or a very short period of time. During his brief stay he was expected to give *the* answer. He frequently left the school feeling completely frustrated, knowing his help had been inadequate.

The school personnel in attempting

to put *the* answer into effect met serious obstacles. Usually the solution brought in from the outside, not considered in terms of the local situation, did not remedy all the ills. If, perchance, the suggested solution did have merit, often teachers, children, and parents who had not worked through the problem were reluctant to accept this answer.

Changing Practices Emerge

Gradually a new way of working developed. In programs such as the Eight Year Study and the Stanford Language Arts Investigation, "specialists" went into communities at intervals over a period of time to work with school personnel on educational problems in the local setting. The method of working was quite different from that already described. While in both the studies mentioned the problems had been recognized as ones significant to education nationally, local districts too recognized them as local problems. The significant point here is that the problem was *studied* cooperatively in the school community by the consultant, the school personnel, children, and parents.

Experimentation Is Widespread

Over a period of time a variety of ways have been tried in attempts to develop consultant service for on-going, continuous programs of curriculum study. Currently, educational research, significant to educators and laymen, is being carried on by such organizations as the Citizenship Education Group working in the Detroit public schools and the Inter-Group Education Study of the American Council on Education working in Wilmington, Delaware;

Newark, New Jersey; Hartford, Connecticut; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; South Bend, Indiana; St. Louis, Missouri; Hinsdale, Illinois; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Denver, Colorado. The Sloan Foundation is carrying on research in the areas of food, shelter, and clothing in the schools of Kentucky, Vermont, and Florida. The Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation of Teachers College, Columbia University, is engaged in cooperative research in the areas of health, human relations, cooperative planning, general education, children's interests, persistent life situations of children, and the community in the schools of Denver, Colorado; Kansas City and Springfield, Missouri; Battle Creek, Michigan; Glencoe, Illinois; Bucks County, Pennsylvania; Montgomery County, Maryland; Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama; and New York City, Public Schools 94, 44, the Brooklyn School for Home-making, and Walton High School.

We hear much of the kind of continuing work being done in the in-service growth of teachers by such universities as those of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maine, and Alabama through furnishing on-going consultant service to the schools of their states in the development of programs of curriculum improvement.

Typical of forward-looking state department of education programs providing consultant service to the schools are those found in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Washington. Washington's program, which has developed over a period of six years, is a cooperative endeavor between the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction

and the five state teacher training institutions—Central, Eastern, and Western Washington Colleges of Education, the University of Washington, and Washington State College.

The Consultant as a Peer

A person of importance in all these programs is the consultant. Whether he is from a state department, a university, or a research group his chief role is that of a resource person. He is an individual who has had rich and varied experience and training. His insights may have been deepened by rare opportunities of working in certain situations. He has some particular ability which is being shared with the school.

His procedure is to study the problem under consideration in light of the needs of the community, the facilities available, and the personnel. He assists the group in developing methods of study and action suitable to their needs. He is not *the* seer with *the* answer, but a fellow professional worker.

The consultant often assists the group in selecting and defining its problems. Much of the success of the remainder of the program depends upon this step. During the definition of the problem, he not only opens avenues for consideration, but establishes relationships which have lasting implications.

In programs of cooperative research there is the additional professional responsibility to report findings so that educators throughout the country may share the benefit of the work. The consultant carries this part of the program ahead, gathering data and planning with those working in the project for its best utilization for the improvement of education, generally.

Problems Confronting the Resource Person

In developing the on-going programs in the field there are many problems of consultant service which might be considered in this discussion. Individuals in this capacity, when discussing their mutual problems, invariably ask, "How was the problem defined in your situation?" "When was it defined?" "Is communication good between the central office and the teachers?" "How is communication between the school and the community?" "Does the school system expect *the* answers from you or can you operate as a resource person?" "What pre-planning did the district do for your visit?"

Without Pre-Planning, In-Service Breaks Down

Stories are legend of the consultants who have gone into schools to work with teachers, only to be told, "Oh, we're not ready for you. We thought you were scheduled for next week."

Not long ago a consultant in physical education was heard to complain that she thought she was going into a system to begin the study of health, physical education, and recreation problems. She learned upon arrival that she was scheduled to teach four demonstration lessons the first day of her stay. Being a good trouper, she gave the demonstrations in a gym suit that was too large and shoes that were too small.

Such an account gives added support to the contention that the consultant's visit should be planned cooperatively by all those involved—pupils, teachers, and administrators. In a large city system this may be done by the personnel or a group within a school. In a small

district, where the total program is involved, the preliminary planning may be done by the whole faculty.

The invitation or the letter developing plans then goes to the consultant as representative of the thinking of the total group, not as a plan developed in the central office with little concern for the thinking of the staff with which the consultant will be working.

The communication should contain specific suggestions on the problems which the consultant will be asked to consider and ways the local people wish to see the consultant working—classroom visitations; small groups of teachers working within the school day; committees of teachers and parents or teachers, pupils, and parents; committees of teachers and administrators. It is only in this way that the consultant knows on what problem he is expected to work and may raise pertinent questions prior to his actual visit.

If the visit is an initial one, it is important that the coordinator of the program and the administration work with the teachers so that everyone has as broad an understanding of his relationship to the program as possible. When this is done, teachers will see many ramifications of the situation in light of the original problem. They will be ready to gain the most help from the consultant, rather than asking, "What do you want me to do?"

Teachers should be encouraged to state their individual problems and needs in terms of the original questions so that additional information may be sent the consultant on the needs of individual teachers. The whole group should also be kept informed of progress and changes in the plans so that

they are genuinely a part of the program.

Children Have an Important Role

It is important that children have a part in the pre-planning that is done for the consultant's visit. The reason for this is three-fold. It is important when the consultant arrives in the school that the children know who he is and why he is there. Recently a research worker on an initial visit was following a particular child's schedule so that she might see what a day's work for a student was. She sensed very soon that the children were apprehensive. At the end of the second period she began talking with some of the pupils. One girl asked, "Who are you trailin'? Who's in trouble?"

It must also be remembered that children are important participants in the planning procedures for the school and will have excellent suggestions on points which should be brought to the attention of the consultant on ways he may work. Finally, children represent the first and most valuable link in the community's awareness of the plan for the consultant's work in the school and the reason for his being there.

The Community Plays Its Part

If lay representation has had no part in the planning which suggested the help of a resource person, the administration and teaching staff need to give thought to the introduction of the consultant and his work to the community. Often an announcement of the program being developed may be made to PTA groups.

It is well for consultants also to have

opportunities to meet the people of the community. Parent groups and lay advisory committees as well as PTA groups may be involved in actual lay participation at the right time and place in the program.

Through this kind of planning everything about the visit will be easy and normal. If the community knows the consultant's work is a part of an on-going program for the improvement of the instruction, no one will think the school is being "rated" or "inspected."

In keeping with acceptable procedure the local school board will be informed of the forthcoming visit of a resource person in the district. It will be told of the teachers' request for help and the planning which is underway. If the board is meeting at the time the consultant is in the district, it may be advantageous for him to meet the board members. Much progress has been made in situations where this kind of thorough planning has been done.

The Consultant Plans, Too

From the time the invitation for the visit comes to the consultant, he does as much as possible to move the pre-planning in the local district ahead. Much of the success of his own work and his acceptance by the group will be affected by these first contacts. It is important that each step be carefully considered and that each suggestion be made in such a way that no offense can be taken. It is unwise to introduce action which has not been planned cooperatively with the district.

He may further the program of preparation in the school for his visit by suggesting that he would appreciate

having special questions from the teachers on which they would like help or materials. A conference with some of the administration and/or staff prior to the visit is always an advantage. In cases where great distances are not a factor, a long-distance telephone call establishes a friendly contact and serves either to initiate pre-planning or clarifies details as planning proceeds. A "face to face" contact, or some variation of it, is many times more productive than correspondence alone.

Informal contacts with groups during, prior to, and following the time the consultant is working with them are advisable. If the faculty is in the habit of having a "tea hour," it is well for the consultant to plan time to drop in as one of the group. Lunch time in the teachers' cafeteria affords another opportunity for informal conversation. Following a visit a consultant may further his relationships and his work with a school faculty by sending materials he has found which he knows a particular teacher would appreciate having, or by writing a letter to see how the work is progressing. The time thus spent implements the work of the consultant immeasurably.

Principles Continue to Hold True

Suggestions thus far have been directed to the situation where the consultant is being invited into the school district for the first time. After the plan for working is formulated and the consultant's service is a part of an on-going program the same principles pertain.

- The planning for the use of the consultant will be more effective if it is done cooperatively by all those concerned—

- administrators, teachers, pupils, parents, and the consultant
- Effective communication between the school and the consultant and all groups within the school-community is essential
 - All those concerned should have the goals to be achieved clearly in mind, and may need help in seeing their job and problems in relation to the total program
 - The on-going curriculum program needs to have expert coordination.

If this kind of cooperative pre-planning is done in the district teachers will know that:

- The consultant is a resource person who will look at problems with them and give the best guidance at his command
- The consultant is coming to work with them on a significant problem
- This opportunity to study a professional problem with an experienced individual gives further opportunity to improve their unique contribution to the children of the community
- The educational program of the district will be improved by their work and suggestions
- The work they are doing is significant and appreciated.

Summer Conference News

The second annual Summer Regional Conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA will be held on the University of Oregon campus at Eugene, July 5 to 9 inclusive. Featured in the five-day conference are: Howard Anderson, social studies specialist of the U.S. Office of Education; Robert S. Gilchrist, assistant superintendent of schools, Minneapolis, Minn.; James Logsdon, principal, Shorewood High School, Shorewood, Wis.; Paul Eiserer, University of Chicago; Gertrude Hankamp, executive secretary, ASCD.

Addresses and discussion group topics will deal with problems of supervision and curriculum development of interest to teachers, supervisors, and administrators.

The ASCD summer conferences rotate among the northwestern states. Last year's conference was held at Washington State College, Pullman; next year's conference will be held at the University of Washington, Seattle. For further information, or to be put on the mailing list, write: Hugh B. Wood, professor of education, University of Oregon, Eugene.

Watch your News Exchange and May issue of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP for news of other conferences to be sponsored jointly by ASCD. It is possible such conferences will be held in Wyoming, Kansas, and New York state.

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