Teachers for Today's Schools

TO SAY THAT OUR SCHOOLS ARE AS GOOD—or as bad—as our teachers is to be guilty of a truism. Recognition of the central importance of expert teaching comes today not only from the profession but also from the lay public who give evidence of a growing understanding of the significant role that education can play in extending democratic institutions and ideals.

The task of developing and maintaining a corps of well-qualified teachers is the joint responsibility of those who are charged with the pre-service training of teachers and those who are in positions of instructional leadership in the schools. Professional growth is a continuing process and improvements in in-service programs for teachers must be matched with corresponding advance in improved programs of pre-service training in our universities and colleges. It is to the latter aspect of professional development that the authors of this issue of Educational Leadership direct their attention.

These writers bring us descriptions of teacher training programs designed to meet the needs of students for professional training. A group of college juniors and seniors tell about their experiences in “learning to plan by planning.” Another article tells the story of cooperation between a public school system and a college of education in developing an internship program, an encouraging trend in many sections of the country. Three school administrators identify certain competencies they look for in prospective teachers and give clues as to what experiences might be provided for students preparing to teach.

Boyd Bode has been quoted as saying that “A college of education that can't teach is a joke.” The contributors this month present evidence that teacher training institutions are hard at the job of improving their own instructional programs so that their students, in turn, will be better prepared to meet the ever-increasing responsibilities assigned to the schools of our nation.