

ber, showed directly opposing attitudes. One person "felt good" despite the presence of reticent people. At the other extreme was a strong feeling of dissatisfaction. Logs for December and January recorded a favorable note. The person who expressed grave doubt in November declared that "the group has seen the light and there will be definite accomplishments." Another member reported a marked improvement in some persons. A low point seemed to have been reached in February as evidenced by a feeling that the projects were too generalized, and that very little progress had been made. One member discerned three kinds of attitudes:

- Hopeful for results later
- Loyal but hardly hopeful
- Pessimistic.

#### THE SUMMING UP

At the close of the year there was evidence of greater tolerance toward the slowness of the process. One person

recognized that great benefit had resulted from the projects, and stated he had already made use of similar techniques in his classes. Another who thought in April that the project had been lost, now believed that it "was really shaping up." A sober note was the expression that the study project had been a worthwhile though grueling experience.

Although members of the Status Leadership Study Group were obviously discouraged from time to time during their year's study together, there was evidenced, nevertheless, a willingness and a determination to go beyond the scope of their own study. This conviction, held also by the administrative staff, resulted in the planning of a second year's work. Two consultants were made available through Wayne University, and a group of about sixty teachers and administrators began work in September, 1949.

## *Meeting the Elementary Teacher Shortage*

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GEORGE W. EBEBY

This article describes the plan developed in Portland, Oregon, for "transitioning" competent secondary teaching candidates into much-needed elementary teachers. George W. Ebey is assistant superintendent of the Portland public schools.

OUR PROFESSION is confronted with a grim reality. In a year when the shortage of elementary teachers will be increasingly grave, many prospective secondary teachers will fail to find employment in positions for which they have prepared. Why does the problem

exist? How is it being met in various parts of the nation?

The problem is simply one of arithmetic. Our teacher education institutions are producing one elementary teacher where three or more are needed. At the same time they are preparing

three or more secondary teachers for every vacancy. Last year 25,000 elementary teachers were certificated for 76,000 positions; in various secondary school subjects 63,000 teachers were certificated for 13,300 positions.<sup>1</sup>

Last year the over-supply of secondary teachers did not become acutely critical only because:

☐ There was a war-created backlog of 29,000 secondary-school positions filled by emergency teachers, many of whom probably were replaced with qualified candidates

☐ Secondary-trained teachers accepted elementary positions on an emergency basis, either with or without additional training

☐ Some students, particularly veterans under the G.I. Bill, continued their preparation this year in hope of improved opportunities.

This year the imbalance in the teacher supply and demand will increase. A greater number of elementary teachers will be needed, and the supply continues seriously inadequate. Though there will be even fewer secondary positions, indications are that colleges and universities may be training even larger numbers of secondary teachers. In addition, the backlog of positions filled by emergency secondary teachers should be appreciably smaller. And the benefits of the G.I. Bill are beginning to run out. The grumblings of discontent which began last year will grow among prospective secondary teachers who feel they have been deluded into believing a general teacher shortage existed. If it

weren't tragic, it would be interesting to hear the explanations of academic advisers and placement officers.

Whether or not we like the prospect, secondary teacher candidates will be employed in elementary schools next fall on an emergency basis, either with or without benefit of additional preparation. In Portland, Oregon, we believe even a summer session of orientation to elementary education, preferably including experience with elementary children, is more desirable than no orientation. We developed our plans accordingly.

There have been other plans. Last year the National Commission on Teacher Education produced a brochure on post-baccalaureate programs for the preparation of elementary teachers.<sup>2</sup> The basic principles of the Commission can be summarized briefly:

1. The program should be of sufficient length to assure teacher competence.
2. Only students with four years of college should be considered as candidates for the program.
3. The program should be carefully organized as to curricular sequence, supervision, and follow-up in the field.
4. Flexibility for each candidate should be provided in terms of previous preparation. In general, the program should cover a training period of one to one and one-half years.
5. Candidates should be carefully selected for admission to the program.
6. Cooperative planning by professional and interested lay groups is essential.
7. Only institutions approved for preparation of elementary teachers should be permitted to participate in the program.
8. Post-baccalaureate program, in general, should be conducted on under-

<sup>1</sup> National Education Association, Research Division, *Teachers in the Public Schools*, Research Bulletin, Volume XXVII, No. 4, December, 1949. Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1949, p. 136; and Stinnett, T. M., "Wanted: One and One Half Million New Teachers," *The School Executive*, May 1949, pp. 11-14.

<sup>2</sup> National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, *Post-Baccalaureate Programs for the Preparation of Elementary Teachers*. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1949.

graduate basis, except when satisfactory standards of graduate instruction have been met, in which case the work may appropriately be recognized toward master's degree.

9. The program preferably should be completed in one institution.

In its brochure the Commission outlined recently inaugurated state plans for Connecticut, New Jersey, and Ohio, as well as the fifth-year program of the University of Minnesota.

Though the basic principles of the Commission are laudable, the local situation should be considered in their application. It is difficult to understand, for example, how a full post-baccalaureate year in elementary education for which only undergraduate credit is allowed will induce many talented people to enter the program, particularly in the twenty-seven states still certifying elementary teachers on one, two, or three years of college preparation. More defensible is the program at Ohio State University, which recognizes a substantial part of the post-baccalaureate program for credit toward a graduate degree. To do less is to under-value general education in the professional preparation of teachers.

At the time the Commission was writing its proposals, the administration of the Portland public schools was working with the State Department of Education and the State System of Higher Education on a plan for transitioning competent secondary teaching candidates into much-needed elementary teachers. Parenthetically, it should be explained that the term "transition" was borrowed from the Air Force, which during the war transitioned single-engine pilots into twin-engine pilots and twin-engine into four-engine

pilots as the need for pilots of heavier craft developed. Such a training program provided the Air Force great flexibility. In a period of emergency, it was reasoned, why should education not manifest similar ingenuity?

The Oregon State Board of Education was cooperative. It approved the recommendations of the State Advisory Commission on Teacher Education which made it possible:

¶ For an individual with a baccalaureate degree and seventeen quarter hours in education to receive an elementary emergency certificate upon the completion of twelve additional quarter hours in undergraduate elementary education, including three quarter hours of supervised teaching with elementary children, and

¶ For this individual to obtain a regular elementary certificate after teaching one year successfully in an elementary school on an Oregon emergency certificate and upon completing twelve additional quarter hours in elementary education, either graduate or undergraduate.

On this basis the transitioner obtaining his regular elementary certificate would have a bachelor's degree and twenty-four additional quarter hours in elementary education (limited to specified courses), one year of successful elementary teaching, and a total of forty-one quarter hours in education. In a state granting elementary certificates on three years of college preparation, this pattern seemed reasonable.

Under these provisions the Portland public schools last spring employed thirty-eight well-qualified prospective secondary teachers. Since competent leaders in education concur that inexperienced secondary teachers are more



Portland administrators and supervisors acted as leaders and resource persons in the workshop program and in the supervised teaching on the second, third, fifth, and seventh grade levels. Four outstanding Portland teachers were in charge of the children in the supervised teaching groups. The courses in child development and teaching of reading were taught by two Portland elementary principals. The experiences were varied, meaningful, practical.

#### Accelerated Learning

General George Marshall recognized the importance of purpose in learning

amenable to successful transitioning than those with secondary teaching experience, the Portland transitioners were selected almost exclusively from inexperienced secondary teacher candidates. In cooperation with the Portland public schools, the Portland extension center of the Oregon State System of Higher Education developed a summer program of eight weeks for this group. To focus their attention upon preparation for fall teaching, transitioners were assigned to their elementary grade levels before beginning the summer program, which included:



*Portland Dept. of Visual Ed.*

#### Transitioners learn to work with children and equipment

when, during the recent war, he remarked that soldiers learn very fast under combat conditions. Leaders associated with the first summer of the transition program were impressed with the interest of the thirty-eight transitioners preparing for their fall teaching in a highly motivated situation. The transitioners learned much more rapidly than the typical pre-service trainee. Several

#### *First four weeks*

Primary education or intermediate education workshop.....3 hours  
 Supervised teaching (extending into second four weeks).....3 hours

#### *Second four weeks*

Child development.....3 hours  
 Improvement of instruction in reading .....3 hours

principals requested that one or more be assigned to their buildings.

The ideal assignment was not always achieved, but every effort was made to place each trainee under a principal in sympathy with the program and in a building with a superior experienced teacher on the same grade level. Since almost all Portland schools have supervising principals, trainees found themselves in situations conducive to excellent growth their first teaching year.

What do principals think of the transitioners? The chart below contains the answer. The personnel division visits school prior to February first to discuss personnel problems with principals and obtain their informal estimates of first, second, and third year probationary teachers.

The data in the table below summarize the principals' estimates obtained on these visits. The competence indexes were computed by assigning a weighting for each teacher: 4 for excellent, 3 for good, 2 for fair, 1 for poor. They provide a rough approximation of how well the transitioners were doing in relation to other first-year teachers. Experienced elementary teachers tended to be considered best by their principals.<sup>3</sup> The transitioners were doing as well as inexperienced elementary-trained

<sup>3</sup> Data treated statistically using analysis of variance. F ratio (3.135) indicates significance at .05 level but not .01 level.

teachers. Since the transitioners are only part way through their training, their teaching competence should be higher next fall, after the transition program has been completed.

#### Continuing Programs—New Emphasis

Plans are now being formulated with the Portland extension center for the second summer of training for this group of transitioners. The details of this program are not complete. The experiences provided will be determined by the needs of the transitioners themselves. Undoubtedly, heavy emphasis will be placed upon an improved understanding of children, and upon methods, techniques, and materials required to guide learning experiences more effectively in the fundamental processes and in art, music, and health and physical education. At the same time a new group of first-year transitioners will be undergoing pre-service training.

The Oregon program is a step in the right direction. It is not on the large scale of the Connecticut program, implemented with a biennium appropriation of \$250,000. Nor is it designed as a long-range program to supplant regular sources of elementary teachers. For Portland the transition program constitutes an effective approach to providing competent teachers for elementary children during an emergency period in American education.

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS' ESTIMATES OF THEIR FIRST YEAR PROBATIONARY TEACHERS

<i>Background of Training</i>	<i>Principals' Estimates</i>				<i>Total</i>	<i>Average Competence Index</i>
	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>		
Transitioners.....	10	19	8	1	38	3.0
Inexperienced Elementary Trained....	13	40	8	4	65	2.95
Experienced Elementary Trained.....	37	40	9	3	89	3.25
	60	99	25	8	192	3.1

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