

THE LISTENING POST

Washington's Program for the General Certificate

LEGISLATION passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1949 has made possible a new program for teacher training and certification which permits training of both elementary and secondary teachers at all state institutions of higher learning. The program, the details of which are currently being developed by the State Board of Education, further provides for a general certificate permitting teachers to work with both elementary and secondary students. The program provides for the first qualifying general certificate to be issued in 1951.

Previously a sharp line had been drawn between elementary and secondary school teacher preparation and certification. Elementary teachers were trained in one of three colleges of education, and secondary teachers were trained at Washington State College, the University of Washington, or private accredited institutions of higher learning. Now all colleges may train teachers for both levels of work provided they have adjusted their programs to meet the standards required for training teachers at both levels and the programs are approved by the State Board of Education.

The basic consideration in planning the program for the general certificate has been to provide a pattern for the development of teacher education programs in all the colleges which will meet the needs of the public schools. Factors of teacher supply and demand have not been the major consideration, but it is believed that teacher certification under the general certificate will result in a more flexible situation in the profession when these factors change.

In large measure the program of teacher education to meet the requirements of the general certificate is a recognition of the continuous process of education. Understanding of human growth and development and the general knowledges and skills which teachers need to work effectively with one age group are not fundamentally different from those which they

need in order to work with another age group. Every teacher should have sound understanding of the whole cycle of human growth and development and have experience in working with youth at several different age levels between the kindergarten and the twelfth grade.

It is believed that the needs of youth will be served best by providing teachers who are equipped to teach at either level. Continuous improvement of the educational program as a whole from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade should result when there is an increasing number of teachers in the field whose teacher education program has prepared them to work with both elementary and secondary school students. The program of teacher education should provide:

- ♦ General professional education sufficiently broad and inclusive to prepare the prospective teacher for service in several levels of educational work
- ♦ Reasonable concentration of teacher preparation in one or more basic areas common to our public schools, such as language arts and health education
- ♦ A period of one to four years of initial teaching following pre-service education of four years; supervision of initial teaching experience by the pre-service institution and the employing district; and guidance of the student in planning for his fifth year of education.

Students completing four academic years of pre-service education will be issued a qualifying general certificate valid for one year and renewable annually to a total of four years. One continuous year of initial teaching experience is to follow the pre-service education.

A fifth year of teacher education at the graduate level is then required following the initial teaching experience and prior to issuance of a permanent general certificate. This fifth year must begin during

the first year after initial teaching experience either as a full year or as summer school, preferably the former. The student with guidance is expected to use the fifth year to enrich his background and strengthen himself according to his individual needs. He need not return to his pre-service institution for the fifth year nor is he bound by stipulated professional education or subject matter requirements.

The general certificate program as starting in the state of Washington has many details yet to be defined. For several years the successful implementation of the program needs the close working together of teachers, administrators, teacher training institutions, and the State Department of Public Instruction. The implications of the program are interesting challenges for the education profession.—*Frederick J. Simons, Curriculum Director, Puyallup, Washington.*

Summer Workshops

IT'S TIME to make plans to attend summer workshops. To facilitate your planning, a valuable guide has been compiled by W. Theo Dalton, University of Georgia, with information submitted to him by the ASCD Committee of Twelve. This extensive, nation-wide listing of workshops gives information on where, when, who (who is eligible and who sponsors), how much, and what about.

The list is available from the Washington office, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C., for 35 cents a copy.



This new language series for grades one through eight* represents the combined efforts of a distinguished group of authors, artists, editors, designers, and bookmakers. It is the result of more than five years of study and of classroom experimentation, and the texts reflect sound modern practices in helping children to acquire correct habits of observing, speaking, writing, and listening. (*Grades Seven and Eight ready September 1st.)

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