

Similar to a small calendar, each of the other two bulletins can be tacked to a wall so that useful information for parents is readily accessible. Each category, such as "Health and Safety," and "Registration and Attendance," is cleverly indexed on varicolored pages.

►Grand Rapids Public Schools. *Your Child, Your School and You*. (Publication of the Board of Education, Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 1948, 23 p.)

Your Child of Six to Eight. (Publication of the Board of Education, Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 1949, 23 p.)

Your Child of Eight to Twelve. (Publication of the Board of Education, Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 1950, 30 p.)

These are the first three bulletins of a proposed series explaining the program of the Grand Rapids Public Schools to parents in this city. Various sections of the bulletins present the characteristics and needs of children in these age groups, the school program during these years, special school services, suggestions of ways in which the home and the school can work together, and community services to the child. Also, it is interesting to note that preparation of these bulletins by the teachers in the community indicates an example of school staffs involved in an examination and review of the curriculum.

The Listening Post

Column Editor: Fred T. Wilhelms
Contributor: Ward I. Miller

Cooperative Curriculum Planning in Wilmington

WHOSE responsibility is it to develop the policies which govern curriculum planning, methods and procedures of instruction, and selection of teaching materials? Through what means may differences of opinion be resolved, basic principles be formulated, experimentation initiated, and integration and articulation provided for?

Through the activities of its Educational Council, Wilmington is finding answers to these questions. Established as one of the important results of a survey completed in 1948, the council is beginning its third year of service. It is comprised of sixteen members of the instructional staff. Eleven of these members are elected by their associates in each assignment group such as classroom teachers, supervisors, principals and department chairmen. One mem-

ber each is allotted to supervisors; chairmen: elementary, junior high and senior high school principals. Three teachers are selected by the elementary staff, three from the junior and senior high schools. The remaining five are *ex officio* members and include the directors of secondary, elementary and vocational education, the director of curriculum, and the director of child development and guidance. The director of secondary education, an assistant superintendent, serves as chairman. The superintendent is not a member, but usually attends meetings and participates in discussions.

Agreement Through Consensus

Meetings are held during school time for one entire day each month. Substitute teachers are employed so that

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teacher members may participate. Secretarial service is provided also. The council has neither constitution nor by-laws, but meets each procedural question as it arises. Two important decisions have governed its activities from the first. An individual does *not* come to a meeting, participate in consideration of questions under discussion, nor reach a conclusion as the *representative* of the group which elected him. Rather he is expected to express a point of view, to explain the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal, and to support recommendations as a competent member of the educational profession, one in whom his associates have confidence and assurance that he will seek betterment of the school system as a whole. As a result of this attitude, membership in the council has become an honor, and persons of high ability have been selected.

The second decision governs the method used by the council in arriving at conclusions and in making its recommendations. All action is taken on the basis of *consensus*, not by formal voting and majority rule. Discussion and study are continued until all members agree on what is to be done. This practice probably slows up decisions, but it assures that each councilman approves and is ready to support personally all measures recommended.

Council Affects Policy

Recommendations of the council are made to the superintendent, who in turn refers them to all other members of the staff concerned. If serious objections on the part of staff members result, the question is returned to the council for reconsideration. If, however, the proposal is generally supported, the superintendent places it before the

board of education. When approved by that body, the policy is put into effect.

The director of curriculum serves as consultant to the council. Also working closely with this body is the Committee on Professional Growth—the group which plans the in-service education program. Few standing committees have been appointed but three may be mentioned: Articulation, Common Learnings, and Materials of Instruction. The last mentioned is directly concerned with the new curriculum materials center just established in the administration building. With the aid of a private grant, this center has been set up as a clearing house for groups, committees and individuals interested in curriculum planning and research. Committees may include non-council individuals.

It should be emphasized that the council deals only with important matters of basic policy and general procedure. Within the framework set up by the council, other groups plan the details of classroom activities, outline courses of study and develop building and sectional workshops. On the agenda for this year are the following topics: lay participation in curriculum planning, problems of the curriculum arising from the critical national situation, evaluation of the life adjustment education program, the place of television in the curriculum, and a progress report on secondary school drop-outs.

The work of the council is becoming increasingly important as it studies basic problems in curriculum development.—*Ward I. Miller*, Superintendent of Schools, Wilmington, Delaware.

Glenn E. Smith

Chief, Guidance Services Division, State Department of Public Instruction, Lansing, Michigan; President of the National Association of Guidance Supervisors for two years.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF THE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

This book is designed to provide teachers and beginning counselors with the fundamental skills needed for functioning as guidance workers. It traces the growth of guidance services briefly and then describes the activities and services of the guidance program. In addition to helping in the development of basic skills in the field of guidance, the book provides a foundation for further training in the field. Coming in May.

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