

us know what we are going to do next!"

Beth added to her notes. . . .

#### Step 5—CALENDAR:

Working schedule of goals and activities.'

Jack, pushing back his chair, remarked, "Well, as I said, there's nothing like coffee and cigarettes. . . ."

Beth, straightening up from her notes, added, "And the five C's of a good group meeting!"

Her notes passed quickly from Paul to Sue to Jack, who spoke for all of them as he said, "The five C's! Census. Consider. Consensus. Cooperation. Calendar. That does it! Anybody have time for more of the sixth C—coffee?"

## Curriculum Research

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### Three Studies Useful in Curriculum Revision

IN recent months writers in the curriculum field, noting the scarcity of basic information, have called for organized research. They have urged the development of cooperative efforts at the local, state or regional levels in promoting curriculum development and change. Recent contributors to this column have suggested among other things that one very essential step in advancing curricular knowledge would be the collecting of data on the core curriculum on a nation-wide basis in order to "identify possible centers for more intensive study."<sup>1</sup> Curriculum workers in many sections of the country have pondered the influences upon curriculums of regional customs and attitudes, of income level, social status, race, and so on. From many local areas have come calls for assistance by faculty groups embarked upon the improvement of curricular offerings in their schools.

How may the research findings that

do exist be best used by local groups? Where may such groups gain the necessary perspective, find the definite assistance which they need in meeting and solving the local problems? Three recent publications fill some of the gaps and a thoughtful consideration of these may prove rewarding. The first study, *Core Curriculum in Public High Schools: An Inquiry into Practices, 1949* (U. S. Office of Ed., Bul. 1950, No. 5, p. 15), by Grace S. Wright, was reviewed in the January 1951 issue of *Educational Leadership* (Vol. VIII, No. 4, p. 257). The value of this study lies in its appeal to local groups engaged in curriculum work. It provides data on the distribution of schools in which core programs are being carried on; tells of the types of schools, the grades in which the core programs are provided, the subject combinations represented by the cores reported and time allotments for cores; and presents comments by principals in the reporting schools. Study of the data reveals that some definite local and state patterns are discernible. These patterns appear to emerge

<sup>1</sup> William M. Alexander and J. Galen Saylor, "Needed: Organized Research in General Education," *Educational Leadership*, Vol. VIII, Oct. 1950, p. 53.

because the core idea is again catching on. In one community, for example, the core has come as a culmination of widespread study and planning within the community. In another, the success of a given program may have led others to seek similar favorable outcomes.

A second study of the Office of Education, *Where Children Live Affects Curriculum* (U. S. Office of Ed., Bul. 1950, No. 7, p. iv), by Effie G. Bathurst, shows "that the curricular activities in which children engage in solving real-life problems are often different in different regions, communities and neighborhoods where the children live." It includes sample activities drawn from school curriculums in thirty states—activities which were so developed because of the nature of the community, the homes, the geographical location or the culture. This study is not an attempt to analyze the social scene; it is aimed at curriculum improvement. Reports are grouped according to ways in which curriculums vary within four areas of living: "Use and improvement of environment, health and nutrition, social and civic service and human understanding, and home and family living."

A local group will find much of value in this bulletin, for it answers to some extent the question of how curriculums are built to fit children's ways of life in different places. It does this by suggesting definite leads that may be used to provide suitable experiences for children. These are included under such heads as: "Leads to Curriculum Are Found in Children's Personal Needs," "Guideposts Are Found in Community Life," and "Learning Materials Are Being Made More Suitable."

*Curriculum Improvement by a Secondary School Faculty* (Commonwealth of Pa., Bul. 243, 1950, Harrisburg, Pa., Dept. of Public Instruction, p. xi) is a

bulletin on "local curriculum improvement that is a guide to assist those who use it to define their own problems, to study, to plan and to act." Using the "ten imperative needs of youth" as a basis, Pennsylvania curriculum committees in the fields of English, social studies, science, mathematics, modern languages and geography developed an inquiry form and surveyed statements elicited from 1150 twelfth-grade students in fourteen high schools in the state. Survey results focused attention upon the need for a "program for the greater attainment of human values." To provide such a program certain issues had to be met and solved by individuals and cooperating groups, since these "issues when resolved become the basis for local curriculum improvement." The issues are: First, is factual teaching sufficient? Second, must there be a wide range of learning activities? Third, are social attitudes and behaviors developed by their actual practice? Fourth, does learning organized by wholes or units make more sense to learners? Fifth, should learners help in planning what they do? Sixth, need an education for life lower the standards of college preparatory education?

Much of the bulletin is devoted to suggestions which should give practical help and guidance in attaining satisfactory answers to these questions. In adapting the suggestions or in developing similar programs for use in the local situation, the faculty group bent upon improving the curriculum will find encouragement and assistance as it works toward its objectives.

These three publications can be used to advantage by local groups. They are good because they give perspective and indicate trends, they point differences and delineate influences, and they offer aid through practical suggestions.—*Walter J. Moore, University of Chicago.*

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