READERS of Educational Leadership do not have to be convinced of the need for the continuous in-service education and development of all public school professional personnel—teachers, principals, supervisors, directors of instruction, and superintendents. Much has been written on this subject and all curriculum workers recognize that few educators have acquired skills adequate for even a decade of service. Changing times require new competencies.

While most of us agree that continuous improvement on the job is necessary, we sometimes find it difficult to obtain information regarding the ways in which this objective is implemented in various school systems through the means which are necessary to achieve it. Any school community which desires to provide for the continuous in-service education of all school personnel should provide the necessary time and the necessary funds for achieving this goal.

In Arlington County, Virginia, we are attempting to deal with both of these problems. During the current school year the school budget has provided substantial sums of money to support released time for teachers so that the Teachers Council on Instruction and various curriculum committees might work on school time and thus make this curriculum work an accepted part of the teacher's job. Planned visits of teachers to other classrooms have been made possible whenever permission to make such visits has been requested.

Fifteen Arlington teachers, in addition to supervisors and principals, attended the Boston annual conference of the ASCD. Similar numbers of Arlington teachers, in addition to principals and supervisors, will attend the Philadelphia meeting of the Association for Childhood Education International, as well as the New York University Junior High School Conference and the Fifth United Nations Institute. Arlington teachers have been represented at national professional meetings in various other areas as well.

The Arlington budget which provides funds for curriculum improvement also provides for the support of local summer workshops, the purchase of professional curriculum materials, salaries for summer employment of teachers on curriculum projects and the employment of outside curriculum consultants when they are needed for local workshops during the school year. The availability of funds for all of these in-service education activities has been of great assistance in all of this work during 1951-52.

Workshops Foster Continuous Growth

During the current year, however, the Arlington staff has experienced some dissatisfaction because it felt a need throughout the school year for regularly held in-service education workshops. We have felt that this activity should be a recognized part of the teacher's professional job and that all teachers should have some regular time provided for this activity. The

Educational Leadership
Arlington staff has also felt that it was important that we recognize that learning distributed over a period of time generally brings about more improvement than does learning restricted to a specific period. In terms of these dissatisfactions we have attempted to design a school calendar for 1952-53 which would recognize both the need for time for in-service education on the part of all teachers and the desirability of spacing these periods of time throughout the school year. The Arlington school calendar, which has been adopted for next year by the Arlington School Board, provides for six workshops spaced throughout the year. First of these will be the summer workshop, which will be held August 5-14, 1952. Attendance at this workshop will be voluntary and credit may be obtained from nearby institutions for participation in it.

Second of the six workshops will be held August 18-22 when all teachers new to Arlington in the school year 1952-53 will report for a week of orientation activities. The third workshop, August 25-29, will include all Arlington teachers; they will engage in a week of in-service education and preparation for the job to begin with boys and girls the following week.

None of these pre-school activities is unique, since new teacher orientation activities, summer workshops, and pre-session workshops are becoming accepted practices in many school systems. It is at this point, however, at which the Arlington staff felt that the job was not complete unless similar professional growth periods might be spaced throughout the school year. In keeping with this, the fourth workshop will be held in Arlington on November 24-26, 1952 immediately preceding the Thanksgiving holiday. This calendar arrangement means that all children will be out of school during the entire week in which Thanksgiving occurs. This provides an opportunity for all Arlington teachers to engage in professional growth activities at a time when they have met their new pupils and know the problems of instruction which they face, and while there is still time during the school year to do a great deal about these problems.

The fifth of the six workshops will be held January 29 and 30, 1953 at what constitutes the middle of the school year. Boys and girls will be dismissed for these days while all Arlington teachers again engage in in-service education activities which they have selected. The sixth and last in-service education workshop will occur April 1-2, 1953 immediately preceding the Easter holiday. This provides an extended Easter holiday for children and an opportunity for all teachers to again engage in professional planning for a two day period.

This calendar arrangement seemed to the Arlington staff to respect the need for continuing opportunity to engage in the important activities of curriculum planning in a manner which respects the need to deal with problems throughout the school year. The August workshops will be the take-off, the planning period for the development of a year-round program of in-service education. The November, January and April workshops provide time for involving all teachers in this program throughout the year. In providing the funds and the time for in-service growth of all of its staff, Arlington feels that it has taken important steps toward providing the means for continuous curriculum improvement.—C. Glen Hass, associate superintendent and director of instruction, Arlington County Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia.

May, 1952