

Curriculum News and Bulletins

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THE FUNCTION of this column has been broadened to include news of curriculum happenings in various parts of our country. Please mail to the column editor, at the address above, news of recent curriculum developments, workshops, personnel changes, or techniques or ideas which might be of interest to other ASCD members. Also send along any new curriculum bulletins you would like considered for review in the magazine.

In the October 1954 *Educational Leadership*, this column carried a list of future monthly themes for which special materials were needed. Your cooperation in providing news or bulletins on the special topics will be appreciated. And now for the news. . . .

- School districts in Maine are becoming more concerned with meeting the individual occupational needs of youth in their communities, according to FRANK FOSTER of the University of Maine. For example, the Portland Schools have recently set up a special program that serves the needs of those who follow the sea with courses offered in marine engineering, navigation, and problems of fishing and shipping in and out of the port of Portland.

- According to MILTON GOLD of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Washington, conservation and outdoor education are receiving emphasis in the general curriculum pattern in his state. The Office con-

ducted a program in 1953 which attracted over 75 teachers and administrators interested in developing skills in working with children in outdoor situations. This year four colleges provided workshops in that area with total enrollment of over 150. A number of school districts in the state have been operating outdoor programs and far more have been concerned with conservation. The Office has developed a close relationship with the forest product industries through the newly-formed Washington Education and Forest Industries Committee. This committee has just published a booklet called *Where to Go, Who to Contact!* which lists speakers, plant tours and field trips to forest industries in the State of Washington.

- The California State Department of Education and the University of California at Los Angeles sponsored during the summer a four-week conference on "The Organization and Supervision of the Elementary School." Purpose of the conference, according to BERNARD LONSDALE of the California State Department, was to help persons in supervisory positions increase their competency in managing supervisor-teacher relationships. Observation and supervisory conferences with teachers and evaluation of the conferences by observers was one of the clinic procedures employed at the meeting. HELEN HEFFERNAN of the California

State Department of Education served as director of the conference.

● GRANT McALEXANDER, Richfield, Minnesota, reports the formation last spring by the State Commissioner of Education of a State Committee for the Study and Improvement of Education in Minnesota. Twenty members have been appointed who represent such lay and professional groups as the Citizens' League, School Board Associations, PTA's, colleges and universities, superintendents and principals organizations, and the Minnesota ASCD.

● Word from PRUDENCE BOSTWICK indicates that the Denver Public Schools have been working for the past three years with a Parents' Advisory Committee on Curriculum in the development of a new social studies guide for kindergarten through grade twelve. The over-all Parents' Committee includes the president of each of 93 building associations. The committee asked that it be given a share in the actual building of the guide, so four parents were named as working members of the social studies guide committee where they work along with principals, coordinators, supervisors and classroom teachers. This fall the first part of the guide is to come off the press. Again, the teacher and parent members of the committee will plan ways of introducing the guide to PTA and faculty study groups and will share in carrying out the design.

● The public schools of Newcastle, Indiana, have a vertical planning group consisting of representatives of kindergarten through grade twelve working in the Language Arts area. This group

has been working on analyzing written communications and setting up a content chart which indicates expectations and maintenance programs for various age groups. Staff members, writes PEARL DUNN, are frequently surprised to hear what teachers at other levels are doing. A frequent comment is, "Why, we're working on that, too!"

● For the past two years a twelve-grade program of curriculum improvement has been under way in the school department of Warwick, Rhode Island under the leadership of Superintendent CHARLES B. MACKAY. Techniques have included getting the superintendent, two assistant superintendents, three high school principals, supervisors and some of the elementary principals of the district involved in a seminar in the philosophy and organization of the curriculum. This action on the part of the status people of the district and the hard work they engaged in attracted the attention of the school personnel and gave them incentive to do some work on their own. In succeeding months, teachers and principals were encouraged in action research with Professor J. EDWARD CASEY of the University of Rhode Island retained as a continuing consultant. Subject matter committees were set up which cut across all grade levels. Special workshops for elementary principals and secondary school department heads were organized to develop philosophy and materials. Out of these workshops there developed a district-wide comprehension investigation of reading which resulted in effective recommendations for improvement. Not all teachers in the school system have been involved in the program. The number

is increasing, however, as teachers see their fellow workers involved in an activity that pays off in tangible results in the classroom.

● ARTHUR W. FOSHAY of Ohio State University sends word of the Ohio ASCD-sponsored workshop on action research at Urbana Junior College during the summer. The second successful ASCD workshop held in Ohio, it enrolled 70 participants and was directed by VERA WALTERS of Kent State University assisted by MAX GOODSON and PAUL KLOHR of Ohio State University.

● In the Waterloo, Iowa, Public Schools a study involving 350 third grade youngsters was conducted to determine the effect which a basic phonics program in isolation would have upon reading and spelling skills. The study was carried on over a two-year period by Miss EVELYN PETERSON, director of elementary education. The results were definite and helped teachers arrive at a conviction concerning a basic phonics program.

Recent Curriculum Bulletins

● Fort Smith Public Schools, *A Handbook of Science for Grades One and Two*: Fort Smith, Arkansas, 1954, 47 p. (mimeographed).

This handbook was developed by practitioners with the non-science specialist in mind. It contains suggestions, activities and sources that will be helpful to all teachers. Suggestions are made as to when and how to begin teaching science. The first-grade section especially lists many science activities which are an integral part of the rest of the primary curriculum.

● John J. DeBoer, Paul B. Hale, Esther Landin and Alice Lohrer, *Reading for Living: An Index to Reading Materials for Use in Human Relations Programs in Secondary Schools*. Illinois Curriculum Program Bulletin No. 18, Springfield, Office of the Illinois Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1953, 170 p.

Another of the well-known Illinois curriculum bulletins, this one is designed to promote the development of techniques appropriate to the use of literature in helping youth solve problems of personal adjustment and human relations. Annotations of books and shorter selections dealing with many of the problems faced by youth are included. Although the list of titles is not exhaustive, it is extensive enough to give the secondary teacher many excellent sources to be placed in the hands of youth.

● Portland Public Schools, *Instructional Guide*, Second Revision, Three Sections—Primary, Intermediate, and Upper Grades. Portland, Oregon Public Schools, 1953, 119, 115, 113 p. (multilith).

In very readable form these three guides make available to teachers the purposes, sequence of learning activities, suggested teaching aids, means of evaluation and bibliography for each of the common elementary school subject areas. An outstanding feature of the three guides is a section describing the general characteristics of the children about whom the guide was designed. Three columns headed, "What They Are Like," "What They Need," and "What to Do" are invaluable to the developmental-minded teacher.

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