

Significant Books in Review

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Educational Leadership and the Elementary School Principal. By Charles R. Spain, Harold D. Drummond and John I. Goodlad. New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1956.

Two dimensions of the role of the elementary school principal have been receiving the increased attention of educators during the past several years. These are the principal's responsibility for providing instructional leadership for the staff of his school and his responsibility for establishing good liaison and effective working relations with parents and interested community members. Both of these elements of the principal's job are treated very effectively in *Educational Leadership and the Elementary School Principal* by Spain, Drummond and Goodlad. The book is particularly helpful in its continued emphasis on effective instruction as the central concern around which the varied responsibilities and routines of the elementary school principal need to be organized.

Curriculum workers at the central staff level—supervisors, directors of elementary education, assistant superintendents and others—who have come to acknowledge and support the key role which the individual school principal plays in providing leadership for the instructional program in his school, will be especially pleased with this new book. It shows the supervisor or other central staff member assigned instructional responsibilities as best discharging his duties when he re-

lates to the administrative head of the school and through him to the individual staff members. Although supervisors or central staff members concerned with instruction may support this position as a sound one in theoretical terms, many of them express doubts regarding the ability of principals to exercise such leadership adequately. Their concern stems largely from the belief that the college and professional work backgrounds of the principal have emphasized mechanical and technical administrative aspects of the job rather than curricular and instructional aspects. These curriculum workers, as well as the many elementary principals who wish to extend their own professional competence, will find *Educational Leadership and the Elementary School Principal* an important resource. With its unifying theme, the leadership role of the elementary principal, the book gives major attention to the responsibilities which relate to instructional improvement.

Well written, readable sections of the book deal with curriculum planning and program development, effective school organization, pupil personnel policies, special school services, record keeping, and reporting to parents and pupils. The great strength of this book results from its consideration of all of these topics in a context which places the quality of the educational experience of each child at the apex of the value system by which the principal's effectiveness is assessed. For example, rather than dealing with

school organization or with record keeping as discrete (and rather inert) elements of the principal's routine, this book discusses these topics in relation to the instructional objectives of the total school program. The wide experience of the authors in both administration and instruction is readily apparent in the book's combination of sound principles of instruction with specific and practical helps for implementing these principles.

The book will provide both experienced administrators and those in training with an extremely valuable discussion of the role of the elementary principal. It should find wide use in college classes devoted to the education of elementary principals, as well as in in-service libraries of many systems concerned with the fuller realization of the leadership potential of their principals. For some time many educational writers have been telling elementary principals what they ought to be doing in order to provide effective leadership for the instructional programs of their schools. Here is a book which makes significant inroads into the translation of these "oughts" into practical behavior.

—Reviewed by GEORGE W. DENEMARK,
assistant dean, College of Education,
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Patterns of Educational Leadership.
By *Vivienne Anderson and Daniel R. Davies*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955.

Another new book concerned with leadership problems of school people is *Patterns of Educational Leadership*. Based on the assumption that there is great need for providing increased education in the improvement of human relations in the preservice and in-service training of educational administrators,

this interesting volume has attempted to meet this need by extensive use of case studies that illustrate typical human relations problems. These case studies depict situations which occur frequently in the daily lives of administrators, teachers, parents, community representatives and pupils.

Each chapter includes an initial presentation of several incidents which pose problems related to a phase of the school administrator's daily work. These case studies are followed by a series of discussion questions and then a body of text material designed to identify some of the basic principles relevant to the incidents given.

Incidents range from planning faculty meetings to planning a new school building and from changing the curriculum to changing the system of reporting pupil progress. The college instructor of administration or curriculum courses will find in these incidents an extremely valuable source of realistic, plausible problem situations which can be used as jumping off points for group discussions. Similarly, persons responsible for planning faculty meetings or in-service education programs may find in these incidents a stimulus for making their meetings reality-centered rather than dull recitations of principles isolated from practice.

Use of case studies and of discussion questions at the outset of each chapter rather than at the end helps to avoid leaving the impression that the volume is a "cookbook" of recipes for educational leaders. The text which follows in each chapter, while helpful in its summarization of relevant experience and research, promotes the view that the answers to these problems will come through cooperative study and discussion of these matters rather than from this or any book.

An especially interesting portion of the book is devoted to a description of the elements of administrative leadership. Particular reference is made to a study entitled "A Developing Concept of the Superintendency," reported by the New York State Education Department. Three dimensions of administrative leadership are identified: the job description, the man, and the social matrix. Discussion of the social matrix dimension makes clear the need of administrators to understand the impact of all the pressures and forces within society which operate to shape and influence the school. The discussion concludes by observing that "unless an administrator can recognize and understand the variety of intellectual, moral and spiritual values the people hold dear, he will not be able to make the sound educational judgments required of him, for the school system is the natural focus and often the battleground when such deeply held values come into conflict."

A problem area of concern to many administrators which was omitted from the book is that of implementing the recent Supreme Court decisions relative to racial segregation in the public schools. It is to be hoped that many of the techniques and procedures suggested by this volume may be applied to the integration-segregation area with the greatest creativity and imagination. The method of intelligent group discussion which *Patterns of Educational Leadership* seeks to promote and extend is particularly needed in this issue area, charged as it is with deep-seated feelings which, in some instances, are supported, and in other instances challenged, by social custom.

The book might have been even more useful had it deliberately directed attention to the forked road situations which

many educational leaders face as they choose between assuming the role of advocate or moderator in relation to an issue. Also, some attention to the question of whether a leader is simply to reflect community value patterns after he has come to understand these or whether he is to become an active agent in the reappraisal and possible reshaping of the value patterns would have been helpful. All in all, however, the discussion is a valuable one and should serve to encourage administrative leaders to look earnestly at the effects of their leadership on schools and community.

—Reviewed by GEORGE W. DENEMARK.

Other Current Books

STUDENT TEACHING. Harold Adams and Frank Dickey have, in *Principles of Student Teaching* (American Book, 1956), compiled useful information for undergraduates, which is smoothly written and well fortified with suggested activities and selected references. The new edition of *Student Teaching in Secondary Schools* (McGraw-Hill, 1956), by Raleigh Schorling and H. T. Batchelder, is certain to extend for many years the use of this popular book.

MISCELLANEOUS. Some twenty years ago, Lowry W. Harding began to collect humorous educational writings. Some of his collected poems appeared in his *Anthology in Educology* a few years ago. Now he has produced a collection of amusing short stories with a sharp point to each in *Essays in Educology* (Dubuque: W. C. Brown, 1956).

A. E. Florio and G. T. Stafford have done a useful piece of work in *Safety Education* (McGraw-Hill, 1956), which codifies material previously unavailable.

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