

Editorial

Today's Challenge to In-Service Education

IN-SERVICE growth is vital to any profession. The rapid acceleration of the phenomenon of change in modern society makes in-service education a more significant and challenging problem than ever before in the history of the teaching profession.

Revolutionary changes in the field of the physical sciences are evident all about us: electronics, harnessing the atom, development of antibiotics, satellite launchings, to name but a few. One development in the physical sciences breeds another. Every day increases the number of points at which new discoveries will inevitably be made. The pure scientist, altho building on past discoveries, never knows where his researches will lead and he cannot control their application.

Scientific developments soon result in technological changes of vast scope and significance. These changes are remaking our way of life. New industries come into being. Jobs develop today which were unknown yesterday. We converse around the world. We see beyond the horizon. We find the answers to counting and mathematical problems formerly impossible. We have the theater at home. We travel by jet—soon perhaps to other planets.

The technological revolution involving the application of scientific discoveries to everyday life is replete with implications for education. The youngster only two or three generations back learned about life from the immediate family circle of parents and grandparents. Now he gets information and conduct signals from the far corners of the globe. Today's teacher must be alert to keep up with the out-of-

school learnings of pupils. At the same time, the revolution in technology and production has provided new tools to be used in teaching such as the motion picture and television.

Scientific development and new knowledge are not confined to the physical sciences, glamorous and noteworthy as they may be. Of equal significance to the teacher is the developing knowledge in such fields as child development, principles of learning, psychology, psychiatry, sociometry, mental health, human relations, sociology, anthropology, and the other sciences dealing with our knowledge of the development, growth, and behavior of human beings. Implications for teaching of expanding knowledge in these fields are of greatest significance. Utilization of this new knowledge in education can undergird the entire school program.

Paralleling these drastic changes in American life, the rest of the world has been changing too. Of most compelling significance to America is the development of the Soviet Union into a world power. Here a small group of leaders control, in large measure, two-fifths of the earth, already dominating nearly a billion people, and on the propaganda-infiltration march to control more people and more resources. As the American people are now painfully aware, the Soviet Union has developed a scientific and productive capacity capable of exploration of outer space.

Equally important but much less understood by the American people is the fact that the Soviets are succeeding in other areas than the physical sciences

and Sputniks. It is in such areas as psychology, propaganda, diplomacy that they have been equally effective. Without a hot war they have extended their ideological control far into Europe and Asia and they are at work in Africa and Central and South America. If the United States is to match the Soviet Union in power, education in mathematics and science are no more important for reconsideration and improvement than are economics, history, philosophy, political science, foreign languages, and the arts which also are fostered by the Soviets. It is clear that education, including in-service education of teachers, must be improved across the entire spectrum of education for our democratic way of life.

Another current change phenomenon is the growth in population. Now numbering 170,000,000, the United States will have 192,000,000 population by 1965 and 208,000,000 by 1970. Population of school age of 5-17 now numbers 40,000,000. By 1956 there may be 48,000,000. Our population for the next few years will be characterized by an unusually heavy proportion of children and older people in relation to the population gainfully employed. In such a time, pressures for manpower are acute and the teaching profession has suffered serious shortages. This makes it of crucial importance that all present teachers serve as effectively as possible.

These vast social changes come at a time when our profession in the United States is maturing. As teaching becomes more of a profession and less of a procession, more teachers are more removed from their preservice training than ever before. The training they received even a decade ago is inadequate today either as to substance or as to methodology. This again underlines the demand for effective in-service education.

Effective In-Service Growth

Thus, it is clear that in-service education is today more important than ever before. It is literally vital to national security. Without it, our schools cannot adequately prepare boys and girls for a dynamic society.

The first step toward effective in-service education rests in preservice teacher education programs. The attitude toward learning, toward change, toward experimentation which is created in the student before he completes his preservice preparation has an important impact upon his attitude toward in-service education and continued growth when he is placed in a job. The fledgling teacher who comes from his teacher preparation well grounded in subject matter and methodology and with a real urge to continue learning and to experiment is already on the way to successful in-service growth.

The second step in the in-service education of the teacher is a friendly, inspiring, and informative orientation program when the teacher moves into his first job. Success at this point can do a great deal to start the young teacher upon the road of growth in his work. This has been an especially important task in recent years when large numbers of new teachers have had to be integrated into school systems of any size each year. Orientation of teachers new to a system but not to teaching also is vital.

The third step in in-service education is to make it possible, thru a regular, carefully planned program, to help teachers on the job keep up-to-date as to subject matter, teaching methods and tools, knowledge of children and young people, our changing society, and to do their part in pushing back the frontiers of knowledge thru research and experi-

mentation. One of the most urgent responsibilities of administrators, supervisors and curriculum directors is to create a climate that will stimulate in-service teacher growth and actual assistance in programming that will facilitate it. Both teacher and administrator should utilize all available facilities—local staff, community resources, state departments of education, teachers colleges and universities, and professional organizations. A planned program of in-service education will be greatly facilitated if administrative and supervisory personnel are themselves growing on the job.

A fourth step in in-service education is for school systems to develop policies which encourage the individual teacher to improve himself. This may be done indirectly thru a salary schedule which enables the teacher to buy books or go to summer school or to travel. It may be done thru sabbaticals. It may be thru the release of teachers from time to time for special work on the curriculum, attendance at conferences, participation in special workshops. While programmed in-service education activities are vital, the individual approach is significant and should be encouraged.

Good in-service education, like good public relations, is a year around task. We may highlight a public relations program during American Education Week. We may give special stress to in-service education in a particular workshop or other intensive experience. What counts most is the integrated total of cooperative, meaningful growth experiences which teachers share the year around.

The articles in this issue of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP point up many of the fundamentals of effective in-service education. They suggest some of the principles, procedures and resources in-

involved if good work is to be done even tho there is no one sure-fire formula. Each school system must approach the task creatively in terms of its present staff, its needs and its facilities.

A program of in-service education costs money but, if it is carefully planned, it probably is the most fruitful investment a board of education can make. No industry can survive without experimentation and the development of its personnel. No school system can be as effective as these times of national crisis demand unless there is a definite policy of updating and strengthening personnel.

Investment Is Needed

How much should a school system invest in a program of in-service education? Berge, Russell, and Waldren in *Inservice Education* (National Society for the Study of Education, 1957) gathered data on a sampling of 145 school systems. Of school systems having centrally coordinated in-service programs, nine state that they spend nothing for in-service education; fifty percent of this group (18 systems) spent \$200 or less; one spent \$3500. Systems having decentralized in-service plans and a staff of 300 or less showed a median expenditure of about \$500.

Let us assume a faculty of 200 and a national average salary of \$4300. This indicates a salary budget of \$860,000. The sum of \$500 is only .0006 percent of the salary budget. While it is true that much of the effort of administrative personnel and teaching staff goes into in-service education in one form or another, such data reveals one or probably both of these things: (a) a grossly inadequate conception of the role of in-service education at any time and if continued in the face of the present international situation a literal peril to national security;

(b) the necessity, real or assumed, that communities will not support a program labeled "in-service education" and therefore this program is submerged in the budget and bootlegged out when time and occasion demand.

Will the urgencies of the present period inspire local administrators, boards and taxpayers to step up work in this area? To what extent should the inertia of local school units in this area be allowed to hold back a service needed in the national interest? Can and will local school systems do the job that needs to be done? To what extent can state departments become more effective thru consultant and other services? To what extent can the Florida pattern of a month's extra pay being granted for in-service education be developed in other states? How universal can state curriculum programs as in Illinois be devel-

oped? How can professional organizations—local, state and national—improve their services in this area? What kinds of services in this field should be developed by the Office of Education? Is the kind of assistance provided by the National Science Foundation any less needed in other subjects?

The answers to such questions may be complex but to find the right directions and *act* is urgently needed in the national interest. Some systems have excellent in-service programs. All need such programs *now*. The time may be shorter than we think even now in the shadow of Sputnik. It's time to get some rocket power into in-service education. For immediacy of results, there is no substitute.

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A LOOK AT CONTINUITY IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Prepared by the 1958 Yearbook Committee of ASCD

Esther J. Swenson, Chairman

\$4.00

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This question was answered by 3000 school children—kindergarten through high school. Children and young people told of their problems and successes in moving to new communities and to new school levels; in regard to promotion and retention, teaching methods and teacher behavior; and concerning subject matter, grading and extracurricular activities.

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