

Curriculum News

Column Editor: Robert S. Harnack
School of Education, University of Buffalo
Buffalo, New York

• Every semester many school systems offer in-service courses for the staff. In most instances these courses are planned to meet the needs and interests of the educational staff and offer credit to meet certification requirements, salary barriers, or advanced degrees. Qualified instructors come from the staff itself or from business, industry, government, and the colleges in the areas. Usually members of the curriculum department, or some central office personnel, find out what the staff is interested in. On this basis, a schedule of possible in-service courses is developed; and, if enough people register for any one course, it is offered. The Philadelphia Public Schools give a good example of this program. Each semester this system provides in-service courses for the staff. By listing the titles of the courses, it is possible to realize how these are related to immediate teacher needs and interests in the classroom. Illustrative titles are: Handwriting, Know Industry, Incident Control, Methods in Teaching Elementary Science, You and Your Museum, Blackboard Sketching for Science Teachers, Politics Is Your Business, Enameling on Copper, Africa Today, and American Dilemma.

• Local school newsletters and staff publications serve many useful purposes. Mainly, they strengthen the weak threads of communication that exist between separate buildings and classrooms within

buildings. In some instances they offer specific planning aids to the classroom teacher. In the first issue of *The Staff Reporter*, Wilmington Public Schools, Delaware, the center section of the publication is an annotated guide to community field trips in Wilmington, its environs, Dover, and Philadelphia. Originally prepared by a small group of teachers, it saves valuable time for many teachers interested in planning meaningful field trip experiences. Each item listed provides information such as: contact person; telephone number; size of class group that can be accommodated; how far in advance the appointments must be made; what fee, if any; what supervision is required or provided; literature available; what days of the week and what hours; and how long it will take.

• During the coming school year, nine American secondary schools will take part in an experiment to develop greater international understanding through education. The experiment, known as the Associated Schools Projects, is being sponsored jointly by the National Education Association's Committee on International Relations and the U. S. National Commission for UNESCO. The results of the projects will be disseminated by UNESCO. A total of 104 schools in 32 countries will participate. To facilitate close coordination in this pilot project, the American schools were selected from a limited area ranging from New York to

Virginia and including both small suburban institutions and large city schools. At the first meeting held in September, teachers representing their schools discussed the goals of the experiment and how the resources of mathematics, home economics, music, science, English and social studies can be applied to create better international understanding. The teachers have freedom to participate in this program with no outside interference from the organizations or individuals who are sponsoring it. The Committee on International Relations will provide coordinating and clearinghouse services where required.

- The NEA Citizenship Committee, which during the past few years has concentrated its efforts on the teacher as a political citizen, plans a new leaflet designed to interpret this focus to lay groups such as parent-teacher associations, school boards, civic groups, women's clubs. The leaflet, to be called *We Build a Platform*, will be available early in 1958. Other materials of the Committee, directed to teachers and already available to local clubs on request, include: *Default Is Ours*; *Quick Quiz on Politics*; *A Pocketful of Ideas*; *Two Opinions on Teachers' Participation in Politics*; and an NEA Journal reprint entitled *Teachers Are Citizens*.

- How physically fit are America's youth? How do elementary and high school boys and girls in Oregon compare with their counterparts in Rhode Island or Florida? The American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (AAHPER) hopes to answer these questions with the results of its Youth Fitness Project now under way. Under the project, boys and girls from the fifth grade through the twelfth—on a nationwide basis—are being tested for physical

fitness in order that national norms for the various aspects of fitness can be established. Results will be presented at the 60th AAHPER convention in Kansas City, Mo., March 30-April 3. The test battery to be administered to all children in the selected test areas in the survey does not include all facets of fitness but will serve as a suitable "measuring stick." It will test (a) a softball throw for distance; (b) standing broad jump; (c) 50-yard dash; (d) pull-ups; (e) sit-ups; (f) shuttle-run; (g) run or walk 600 yards; and (h) swimming. Additional data on grade, age, height, and weight will also figure in the test.

- Hundreds of library committee members throughout the country will be very active during the next few weeks completing plans for a comprehensive drive to increase the appetite for the printed word. These activities will reach a climax during National Library Week, March 16-22. The theme of the campaign is "Wake Up and Read." Major emphasis during the campaign will be on the libraries of the U. S. Attention will be focused on the vital importance of the public school library, the college library, and the home library.

- Kappa Delta Pi, national honor society in education, has announced for the third year that applications for the Fellowship in International Education should be completed and sent to Miss Florence B. Stratemeyer, Chairman, Committee on Fellowship in International Education, Box 523, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City before March 1. The \$5000 award for foreign study and travel for a nine-month period will go to some competent person ready to undertake a significant educational study in a country or countries other than the United States.

Copyright © 1958 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.