

# Curriculum News

Column Editor: Paul R. Klohr

## The Arts and Intellectual Development

AS WE consider this month's theme, "Education and Intellectual Development," it is especially heartening to note that the arts, all but submerged in the current torrential debate over education, will star in the 1959 convention of the American Association of School Administrators. For the first time in its convention history, AASA, meeting in Atlantic City, February 14-18, will turn its main attention to such fields as music, fine arts, drama, literature, and the dance. This emphasis at the national level may help us all to focus on critical questions related to the role of the arts in achieving balance in the curriculum. Clearly, there is much evidence to support the position that these areas have significant contributions to make to intellectual development.

Seldom do reports of curriculum experimentation, however, reflect a major concern with new developments in the arts. A few notable exceptions come to mind. There is, for example, a continuing concern to make creative experiences an integral part of the elementary curriculum of the Matthew F. Maury Public School in Richmond, Virginia.

George E. Mills, assistant superintendent, reports that the Edsel Ford Senior High School in Dearborn, Michigan, is entering its fourth year of an experi-

mental program in English-humanities. This program, an outgrowth of cooperative staff planning, treats literature, music, and the visual arts as media of communication. Each student has work in this area throughout his senior high school career.

At the University School, Ohio State University, Jeanne Orr, Mary Tolbert, and the arts staff, working with both elementary and secondary school teachers, have conceived of music and related arts as a major component in the design of the total curriculum.

If you are aware of new developments in the arts which have significant curriculum implications, please help us to report them in this column.

If you seek stimulating reading in this field, examine the volume *Aesthetic Form and Education*, edited by Michael F. Andrews, Syracuse University Press, 1958. This is a report of two symposia composed of prominent educators interested in arts education.

• The Michigan Curriculum Program, a cooperative undertaking which involves approximately 575 individuals serving on 25 committees, gives help and direction to curriculum development in schools throughout that state. Typical of its efforts is the work of the newly established Committee on Core and General Educa-

tion. This group, Robert Koopman reports, has completed a survey of core in Michigan and is now engaged in a follow-up study of those schools with block-time classes to discover their needs, problems, and effective operating procedures. During the year, the Committee will work toward the establishment of regional core planning groups.

• A high school faculty interested in initiating a curriculum study may wish to examine the Form for Evaluating General Education Programs in Terms of Behavioral Outcomes. This checklist, included in the report, *Behavioral Goals of General Education in High School*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1957, permits an individual to make a judgment about the importance of certain behavioral outcomes. It also provides for a judgment about the effectiveness of the school in furthering these behaviors. A specific curriculum innovation planned in the light of some such general stocktaking would have, from the outset, some base for evaluation. Thoughtful curriculum workers often find this base missing in many curriculum proposals.

• Sue Bushnell, who teaches a combined English-social studies class in Madison High School, Portland, Oregon, reports that continuous evaluation of this approach to curriculum organization in all ninth grades of the Portland schools, modifies the teaching procedures and the learning experiences that characterize each year's work. These classes, which provide a two-period block of time with one teacher, had their beginnings in experimental classes first taught over ten years ago. They permit students to use a

wide variety of materials in a problem-solving approach to learning. More effective guidance and individualized instruction are also important outcomes, teachers have discovered.

• *The United Nations in the School Program*, a book being produced by the Committee on International Relations of NEA, will be a welcome resource to curriculum planners who recognize the value of learning experiences dealing with United Nations. The volume aims at providing teachers with useful classroom activities about the UN and its specialized agencies. An effort to interest teachers in contributing to the study and in forming study groups and workshops on the United Nations is under way.

## CAPCI News

The recent CAPCI survey on provisions for curriculum individualization has produced a wealth of new information about that aspect of curriculum development in schools throughout the nation. This information has value in the planning of other phases of this action program on the part of ASCD. It will help, for example, to throw light on the problem of how to organize and to channel the many resources of the national organization in order to be of greatest assistance to projects under way at the state and local levels.

Clinics at the 1959 ASCD conference are to be planned around state units' work in the three areas of the Association's Cooperative Action Program for Curriculum Improvement.

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