

## In-Service Education and the University

MUCH is said today about the responsibility of public schools in preparing youth to achieve maximum value from collegiate and other educative experiences beyond the high school. In the special sphere of teacher education not enough is being said about the responsibility of the college and university in preparing teachers for life-long learning in the context of their professional and civic tasks as teachers in the public schools. This column offers an occasion to examine some of the more urgent problems and issues facing higher education in its role of preparing teachers who sense the necessity for continuous learning and who can find the basic dimensions for this learning in their emergent responsibilities as educators and as citizens.

### Current Problems

A look at the customary role of colleges and universities in the related concerns of curriculum development and teacher education in service discloses at least four major problems. First, a degree of goal ambiguity is apparent in the scope of activities which pass under the label of in-service education of teachers. The historic development of teacher education has been through its one-year, two-year and now five-year programs,

each providing temporary or provisional certification. This development accorded in-service programs their traditional and almost stigmatic function as remedial or complete education. Even in modern schools where baccalaureate degrees are not involved, local board rules often imply that the teacher who does not regularly engage in some sort of in-service program represents something less than a high degree of professional competence.

In some systems pursuit of advance degrees is encouraged through in-service programs sponsored jointly by universities and schools. Sometimes the variety of specialized certificates which interest candidates makes it difficult to offer a program with unity of purpose and to satisfy the conflicting needs of the staff and the school system. Some of the ambiguity of purpose associated with in-service programs in public schools can be traced to the separateness which attends fifth-year collegiate programs in relation to the four years of preservice preparation.

Assuming that the university's central tasks in relation to the in-service education of teachers could be clearly defined, one can find relatively few institutions claiming an organizational structure that serves adequately those school needs occasioned by dynamic curriculum develop-

ment. The marginal status of the extension division in respect to the total complex of undergraduate colleges and professional schools makes it difficult for school systems to draw on the best resources of the university either for curriculum improvement or the continuous education of their staffs. Not being viewed as integrally related to the main objective of the university, that is, with the instruction of young adults, extension programs often suffer from the lack of adequate staff, funds, and other instructional services. Pressured into operating on an enrollment budget, the division is likely to offer in its off-campus centers those courses which have the greatest potential for registrations, but which may have little relation to local curriculum needs. Preregistration lists and group petitions from teachers are more likely to reflect certification requirements than areas of recognized need within the pub-

lic school program. In order to achieve the greatest value from the excellence and diversity of the university staff, the public school must be serviced through an extension division or comparable unit that is recognized as serving a significant and necessary function of the changing university.

In addition to the problems of goal diffusion and ineffective organization a third block to the university's effective participation in curriculum development derives from the traditional nature of in-service education of teachers. Even though teacher education in service has been viewed primarily as an extension or continuation of the teacher's earlier preparation, it is likely to reflect a narrow emphasis on what is commonly called pedagogical skills and techniques. But despite this tendency, which is reinforced today by programs which concentrate on general education in the undergradu-

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ate years and relegate professional skills to on-the-job training, a defensible sequence in teacher education recognizes values in emphasizing liberal education at all levels including the years devoted to graduate study.

While an obviously strong case can be argued for making liberal studies a part of the continuing education of all adults, the special responsibilities of teachers in curriculum development make this inclusion doubly significant for them. The lack of accent upon broad liberal experiences for teachers in service, coupled with the difficulties of tapping the resources of wide segments of the university staff for pertinent instruction from varied disciplines, complicates the task of improving the curriculum through in-service programs.

A final consideration deals with the nature of the preservice program. Often this program fails to educate teaching

candidates so that they will not only recognize values in working on curriculum problems as part of continuing education but will also possess the skills and understandings commensurate with the task. Regardless of the well-conceived programs established cooperatively by the university and the public schools, their success is dependent in large measure on the attitudes and abilities of teachers for making these efforts productive on the local scene.

### Encouraging Developments

A consideration of current dilemmas has led to fresh approaches to the task of defining the teacher's continuing education in the context of his professional and personal spheres of interest. Cooperative curriculum studies, faculty seminars, summer workshops and improved use of teachers' institutes give evidence

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of changing patterns which may eventually resolve many of the problems thus far identified.

Overcoming certain internal rigidities, universities have structured new field courses along broad and flexible lines which encourage wide participation within specific school systems on studies related to curriculum improvement. Unlike the more formal curriculum classes characterized by random enrollment, the new field class is likely to include teachers and administrators from a given county, district or municipal unit. Emphasis in study usually follows lines determined by educational problems identified locally by staff committees or a curriculum council. Where enrollments are sufficient to provide a budget for supplementary staff, the university consultant or coordinator may call on specialists in allied disciplines of psychology or sociology to assist in the study. In some situations a

team of instructors may deal with various aspects of the study and participants earn university credit in the departments of their special interests, or, where appropriate, they may receive interdepartmental credit.

A variation of the cooperative approach is seen in the educational seminar to which the local school administration invites a series of scholars to share the contributions of their respective disciplines to the solution of significant school problems. Before the Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Community Schools shifted from a 6 - 2 - 4 organization of grades to a 6 - 3 - 3 pattern, the central administrative staff conducted a seminar on adolescent needs to which college instructors in the fields of anthropology, psychology, sociology and education were invited as guest lecturers. In using the lectures and subsequent seminars as a point of departure for further discussion, the ad-

ministrative staff provided teachers a background for a two-year curriculum planning program focused primarily on the proposed new junior high schools.

In many localities summer workshops provide excellent opportunities for schools and universities to work out co-operative arrangements for making curriculum development an integral aspect of teacher education in service. Increasing support from the federal government and private foundations, even though it is often directed toward particular areas of the curriculum, may in the long run point up the possibility of engaging teachers in professional pursuits during summer months.

The teachers institute, for many years the symbol of the schools' best aspirations for in-service education, has undergone changes that have rendered it a more effective instrument of curriculum development. No longer conceived as an in-

spirational "shot in the arm," the institute for many teachers today provides the time for planning long-range approaches to curriculum revision as well as the opportunity to concentrate on specific problems of significance. Although operating largely outside the formal credit pattern of the university, the institute nevertheless often provides an avenue whereby the university and the schools meet their mutual responsibilities for continuing education.

Within the universities there is encouraging evidence to suggest that the fifth year of teacher education is being perceived as one devoted primarily to developing the master teacher rather than the specialist in administration, supervision or guidance. By restoring some unity of purpose to the program for the master's degree, it should be possible to attack from clearer perspectives the problem

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With continued emphasis upon the concept that improved teaching depends primarily upon teachers' ability and willingness to look at themselves, the last chapter of the pamphlet presents a simple, step-by-step program of self-improvement. One can only wish that the author might have given more attention to the important topic of developing a readiness for improvement.

Although developed for use with teachers in service, *Are You a Good Teacher?* has much to offer those interested in preservice education. In addition, the simplicity of the presentation will make the publication extremely valuable to lay people interested in a clearer concept of what is involved in good teaching.

*Teaching Study Habits and Skills* "is concerned with the problem of how teachers can help young people from early childhood through college to develop four crucial requirements of study: (a) interest in learning; (b) self-discipline in study; (c) skill in gathering and assimilating information; (d) a good memory for mastering material studied."

Mr. Preston's belief that the individual should learn something about each of these requirements of study at each stage in his development is reflected in the format of the publication. Each of the requirements is considered at the preschool and kindergarten level, the elementary school level, and the high school and college level. However, the somewhat limited treatment given to the preschool and kindergarten level suggests that teachers working with children of this age may find the booklet helpful as an introduction.

A major portion of the publication is devoted to suggestions for developing skill in gathering information. The

author presents some simple techniques designed to help pupils observe accurately, to provide the poor reader with practice in getting information, to teach good listening habits, and to prod pupils into becoming more careful readers. This section is particularly helpful to high school teachers since it provides a series of suggestions that fit into the framework of existing practices.

In a concluding statement, the author carefully notes that he is not proposing the ". . . teaching of mere tricks of the trade. The fundamental purpose of all instruction in study techniques is to bring about in students a renewed respect for intellectual life, scholarship, and for books, and a fresh regard for the serious obligations of their role as students. Any school or college seriously devoted to teaching the attitudes, skills and habits discussed in this pamphlet can expect eventually to experience a renaissance of scholarship within its halls."

—A. J. PERRELLI, *assistant superintendent for instruction, Public Schools, Hinsdale, Illinois.*

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of building a five-year program of teacher education which fosters rather than thwarts the creative relationships between curriculum development and inservice education. This development, strengthened by the exciting attempts in higher education to develop interdisciplinary studies significant to teacher preparation, may add in the next decade a new dimension to the teacher's experience in lifelong learning.

—VICTOR B. LAWHEAD, *professor of education, Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana.*

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