

# Educating for the World of Work

## —A Team Approach

“ . . . persons of all ages in all communities of the State—those in high school, those who have completed or discontinued their formal education and are preparing to enter the labor market, those who have already entered the labor market but need to upgrade their skills or learn new ones, and those with special educational handicaps . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

—these are the people to be served by the Vocational Education Act of 1963.

Among these people are about 19 and a half million youth who will not seek a college degree and who hope to enter the labor force between 1960 and 1970, and the 13 million now employed<sup>2</sup> who will change jobs, many of whom will need retraining when their jobs disappear because of new technological changes. Also among them will be the increasing number of women who will enter the labor force in the next decade, both young women just out of high school and women past 45 years of age, of whom it is estimated there will be an increase of 30 percent. Women need preparation for wage earning and, in addition, they need skills in home management and child rearing as they as-

<sup>1</sup> P. L. 88-210, The Vocational Act of 1963, Part A, Section 1.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. *Manpower Report of the President*. March 1964. Washington, D. C. p. 243.

sume the dual responsibilities of homemaker and worker outside the home.

School dropouts, potential dropouts, and those with special educational handicaps, all have the particular attention of educators, as new ways are sought to increase the interest of these students in school and in preparing to earn their own livelihood.

The challenge ahead is a large one for those who teach in high school, in area schools, in post-high technical schools and 2-year colleges, and in adult education programs. Vocational educators cannot meet the challenge alone; but as members of an educational team they must plan and work closely with general educators, guidance counselors, community agencies, business and industry, and with parents of the students, as well as try new approaches to programs which combine the different vocational areas.

It is the responsibility of the total school and community to improve the record which at the present time shows that “only one student in ten leaving the educational system without a bachelor’s

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degree has some specific occupational preparation.”<sup>3</sup>

### Academic and Vocational Education

“The activities and concerns of men are by no means limited to a vocation. The individual not only holds a job, but he usually lives in a family, in a community, and in a sovereign State. . . . It is not enough for an individual to be educated only for his vocation.”<sup>4</sup> In preparation for becoming the world citizens of tomorrow, students need greater understanding than ever before of social studies and the humanities.

Family life education is needed to give students models to emulate of stable, secure homes—denied so many young people of the present generation. A good grasp of science, mathematics, and English is essential for the growing numbers entering jobs in the technical fields. In most high schools less than a fourth of the vocational student’s time has been given to vocational subjects, whether separate subjects or taken as a combination, and even less time will be needed as a greater number of post-high school programs develop. Thus, depth in academic subjects, as well as preparation for some vocations, can be attained in a 4-year program.

Even “the basic disciplines can be taught in different ways and at different levels to students who differ widely in both academic aptitude and cultural background.”<sup>5</sup> New ways are being de-

veloped for accomplishing this task.

Changes in the occupational picture are calling for new and different combinations of the vocational subject areas in offering programs to meet various needs. Typical of some of the team approaches being worked out between agricultural education and distributive education is one example in a county post-high school in Massachusetts. In this school, students are being prepared for farm-related occupations such as the operation of businesses selling agricultural supplies and equipment, food manufacturing and supply firms, garden centers, and florists’ shops.

### Cooperation Among Vocational Education Services

If a student had only a small amount of agricultural education in high school, he spends the 13th year in study in this field, and in the 14th year he studies distributive education. If the student has already had three or four years of agriculture while in high school, he then takes only the distributive education program at the post-high school level.

Another typical example is an agribusiness program offered in a rural high school in Montana. Boys who have had two years of agriculture spend two periods of the day in their senior year in a work experience in a farm related occupation under the distributive education coordinator. The superintendent of schools also helps teach salesmanship and the art teacher gives help with displays. The boys in this program are being prepared for jobs elsewhere, since this small community has limited employment opportunities.

In an area school in Kansas, teachers of distributive education, trade and industrial education, and agricultural edu-

<sup>3</sup> Grant Venn. *Man, Education and Work*. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1964. p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Sing-Nan Fen. “Vocational and Liberal Education.” *The School Review* 69:208-09; Summer 1961.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Woodring. “Vocational Education: In High School.” *Saturday Review*, August 15, 1964. p. 48.

cation are working as a team in preparing students for farm implement sales service jobs. Programs of this type are supervised jointly by State staff members representing the appropriate areas of vocational education.

Home economics and distributive education teachers are working together in a school in Colorado. Two class sections of 11th and 12th graders in a home economics course, offering orientation in occupations using home economics knowledge and skills, meet at the same time as two sections of a distributive education course. Joint lessons of the two groups are planned for study of qualities of a good employee, job applications, employer-employee relationships, and consumer economics.

For another part of the course the home economics teacher offers lessons on textiles, furniture, and home appliances to distributive education students; and the distributive education teacher gives instruction on basic clerking skills to home economics students. The remaining part of the course is spent in further study of home economics for those students enrolled in this area, or of distributive education for the other students.

In California, a pilot study has been carried on to find ways for home economics and business education teachers to work together in offering seniors a specialized course in merchandising. Using much advisory help from local store owners and personnel managers, the home economics teachers taught the units on Personal Preparation for Working; the Application Blank and Interviews; Communication; Knowing Your Merchandise; and Advertising, which included much on Consumer Education. The business education teacher taught the units on Fundamental

Processes of Business Arithmetic, Fringe Benefits, Laws, and Selling Is an Art.

### Teamwork with Potential Employers

Effective vocational education programs cannot be developed without close communication between the persons planning the programs, and the agencies, businesses, and industries which will employ the workers. A few examples are given of joint efforts between a number of groups:

Trade and industrial educators have worked with the Atomic Energy Commission in developing a series of curriculum guides for preparing firemen and other public service personnel who are responsible for the prevention of radiation hazards. These guides have been used in training programs in almost every State. Curriculum materials and educational programs have also been developed in cooperation with the Atomic Energy Commission for radiographers employed in industries which manufacture isotopes.

Distributive educators work with business groups such as the National Association of Wholesalers and the American Petroleum Institute, in developing educational programs for workers in the field of distribution. Professional workers in technical education work with many groups in developing curriculum guides for programs to prepare various types of technicians. The guides for chemical technology, for instance, have been worked out with advisory help from representatives of the American Chemical Society, and the Manufacturing Chemists' Association, and from employers of chemical technicians.

Such specialized programs as prepara-

tion for dental assistants are being developed in cooperation with the counterparts in the professions, which, in this case, is the American Dental Association. In Kansas, the State Association has helped to make the decision that, for the present, one area school in the State will be adequate for preparing the dental assistants needed in the State. It has also advised in relation to curriculum, facilities, and teacher qualifications.

The program for practical nursing has been successful because of the close association with the professional nursing organizations when duties of practical nurses were defined, curriculum materials developed, and licensing standards set up. Home economics educators are using similar procedures, and, at the present time, new occupations utilizing home economics knowledge and skills are being identified with the close cooperation of the professional organizations and agencies who will accept the subprofessionals prepared in their fields.

For instance, home economics educators in the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, have been working with other home economists in the Department from the Public Health Service, the Bureau of Family Services, and the Children's Bureau, in identifying such subprofessional-level jobs as child day-care assistants and child day-care workers, and deciding on the competencies needed for the jobs and the kinds of programs necessary to prepare for them. Job responsibilities are being defined and student and teacher qualifications agreed upon, and plans are under way for developing curriculums as a basis for initiating programs in which various professional groups will work together.

Among the other kinds of jobs related

to home economics are those of food service supervisors and food service workers in such group care situations as children's homes, homes for the aging, nursing homes, and school lunch programs.

Supervised work experience in the field for which one is being prepared has been a part of vocational education programs since they were first offered. In order that students have good opportunities to try out what they have learned, in practical work situations similar to those in which they will be employed, the cooperation of community agencies, businesses, and industries is needed. Students are placed under the supervision of the employer and the vocational education coordinator during the last part of the period of preparation, and they receive individual attention in gaining the competencies required in the jobs for which they are being prepared.

The foregoing examples are but a few of the many which could be given showing the cooperation of vocational educators with groups outside the school, and which help in developing programs to meet the needs of students and the expectations of those who will employ them.

### Cooperation with Other Groups

Under the new vocational education legislation, the public employment service system of the United States is asked to make continuously available to schools occupational information regarding reasonable present and future prospects for employment in the community and elsewhere. This information is essential if schools are to provide the types of offerings which will give students a degree of assurance of placement after they

have completed a specific vocational program.

School guidance and counseling staffs are also asked to assist in more ways than ever before. Through them, students should be able to secure up-to-date information about employment opportunities, as well as counseling help in relation to their own vocational choices. In turn, the guidance and counseling staffs are being asked to provide local public employment offices with information regarding the qualifications of persons completing vocational education programs.

Parents of youth who are enrolled in vocational education programs are important members of the team in motivating, advising, and helping youth make wise career choices, and in helping them become established in an occupation that will challenge and give satisfaction. Father-son cooperation has been essential over the years in helping young men studying vocational agriculture to become established in farming. Likewise, mothers and daughters working together have formed the foundation for preparation of successful homemakers—the major emphasis of the programs in vocational home economics in the past.

Programs in home economics will continue to prepare for the vocation of homemaking and vocational agriculture programs for those who choose to assume the increasingly complicated role of the modern farmer. In addition, new aspects of these programs are developing as preparation is also being offered for occupations using home economics knowledge and skills. In vocational agriculture, preparation for farm-related occupations will also be offered.

Whatever the program in education of youth for the world of work, parents

must be a part of the team, since it is in the home that children first form attitudes toward work and gain ideas on the status of different occupations. All types of work must be treated with respect if our nation is able to fill the the employment needs of the future.

“By 1970, the American labor force—those working or seeking work at any time during the year—will total 86 million people.”<sup>6</sup> There will be 64 million families<sup>7</sup> in which homemakers are engaged in the work of the home, and among these families there will be 16.5 million women who will carry both the responsibility of homemaking and a job.<sup>8</sup> Truly, a team approach is necessary to prepare those needed to fill the many positions to the satisfaction of all concerned—a team approach in which general educators, vocational educators, community agencies, organizations, business, industry, employment services, guidance personnel and parents all are members of the team.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. *Manpower Report of the President*. March 1964. Washington, D. C. p. 242.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Series P-20-123. “Interim Revised Projections—Households and Families, 1965-1980.” April 1963. Washington, D. C.

<sup>8</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor; October 1964.

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