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IN ITS ambitious four-year capital improvement program, the Baltimore, Maryland, public school system is highlighting three lines of development. The first is the expenditure of \$9 million for 268 prefabricated classrooms to relieve double sessions and provide for needed expansion. These classrooms, carpeted and air-conditioned, will be combined on sites with corridors and other common facilities.

A second thrust is in the direction of the middle school, which will relinquish the ninth grade to the high school and add the sixth to the seventh and eighth grades.

The third is the development of what Baltimore is calling its "career-oriented" high school programs. Plans call for the construction of a new Dunbar High School that will initiate, in cooperation with nearby medical centers, a program aimed at preparing young people for medical and paramedical careers.

### Guidelines to Home Visits

The Austin, Texas, public schools have provided teachers with a set of guidelines for

home visits that includes these suggestions:

Always make an appointment with the parents.

Do not ask questions they may interpret as prying.

Do not overdress.

Take along something positive to discuss about the child.

Do not stay too long. A short visit, about 20 minutes, is best.

### New Needletrades School

The Arizona School for Industrial Needletrades, in Tucson, was opened this school year to provide a program of training to meet the specific needs of the area's apparel industry.

### "Conflict Intervention" Project

The Palm Springs, California, public schools are cooperating with a Ford Foundation project in interracial understanding entitled "Conflict Intervention," home-based at the University of Michigan. The 35 Palm Springs high school students involved engage in sensitivity training ses-

sions, role playing, discussion, and visitation of meetings of minority groups.

### Appreciation of Afro-American Contributions

The Cincinnati, Ohio, public schools are trying out three new curriculum outlines developed last summer that place greater emphasis on the contributions of Afro-Americans.

At the elementary level, *Building Cultural Understandings*, as the new bulletin is called, presents a sample unit from the regular program of each grade level, redeveloped in the direction of giving more attention to the role of minorities, especially Afro-Americans.

The eleventh-grade American History and Government guide has been completely revised, with attention in each unit to the specific contributions of Afro-Americans. Supplementary materials to the guide include a chronology of Negro history, a calendar of events in Negro history, a list of Negroes noted in Cincinnati history, and significant U.S. Supreme Court decisions related to civil rights.

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A new elective course, Black Culture, has been developed for grade 12, with these six units:

African Origins  
Exploration and Independence, 1450-1781

A New Nation and Liberty and Justice for All, 1781-1865

Years of Hope and Years of Accommodation, 1865-1920

The Awakening, 1920-1945

A New Day, 1945-1968.

The course is meant to help the Negro youth toward identity and the white toward greater awareness.

### Three-Year Study of i/t/a in Tulsa

A study of the use of i/t/a (Initial Teaching Alphabet) conducted in Tulsa over a three-year period has been reported by Paul I. McCloud in the *Tulsa School Review* for October 1968.

Compared with matched groups using a well-defined phonics program, the four groups that had been taught i/t/a did not sustain beginning gains through a three-year period of evaluation although they excelled in several aspects at the end of grade 1.

"The use of i/t/a with all beginning readers in all schools is not encouraged," McCloud concludes, "since the advantages do not justify the retraining of great numbers of teachers and the purchase of new materials." The fears sometimes expressed about i/t/a, such as that the transition to t.o. (traditional orthography) would prove difficult and that spelling might be affected, were not sustained. Use of i/t/a for students in schools where other methods do not appear to succeed is something to be considered; however, it is

recommended that if a school decides to use i/t/a, the system be put into effect in all first grades. Use of i/t/a is also recommended for remedial use with pupils who have failed to respond to other ways of teaching beginning reading.

### Decentralization in Denver

Following the recommendations of a recent school survey, the Denver, Colorado, public schools have moved toward modifications of their organization in terms of the proposition "that authority and decision making should be delegated to the lowest possible level." What this means in practice is spelled out as follows in a recent bulletin from the school system (*Denver Public Schools: Facts and Figures, 1968*):

The local schools given more autonomy in the administration of their instructional programs

Each school authorized, within guidelines established by the central administration, to develop a program to meet the unique needs of the neighborhood it serves

Individual teachers encouraged and assisted in developing an instructional program within their classrooms which will meet the needs and abilities of each child.

### Prospects for a New Day in Texas

After a three-year study, the Governor's Committee on Public School Education in Texas has issued its recommendations for the upgrading of the schools of the state (*The Challenge and the Change*. Sam Houston State Office Building, Austin, Texas: The Committee, 1968). These include:

State support for kindergartens, summer instruction, and adult education up to high school graduation

Increase in state support to 75-80 percent of school costs

Increase in ratio of non-teaching to teaching personnel from present 3.5 to 1,000 to 10 to 1,000; addition of new ratio of 10 nonprofessionals to 1,000 professionals

Allowance of \$5 per pupil for instructional aids (none now)

Setting up of district offices of Texas Education Agency to replace present service centers

Phasing out of county school offices

Consolidation of small districts toward 2,600-pupil minimum (with some exceptions)

Bonus decentralization within metropolitan districts to sub-districts of 10,000 pupils

Three-level certification program for teachers.

### "The Black American"

Under a federal subsidy, the Madison, Wisconsin, public schools have developed "The Black American," a kit composed of a film, a tape, and slides, for use in junior high social studies classes.

### Migrant Education in Washington

Nearly 6,800 children of migrant workers participated last year in 35 special programs provided by the state of Washington. The state operates two centers that help in program development.

The Center for the Study of Migrant and Indian Education (at Toppenish) serves the Yakima Valley, preparing curriculum materials, providing consultant services in education and health, conducting training programs for lay aides,

and supervising the placement of student teachers in the migrant program.

The Migrant Instructional Materials Center (Moses Lake), in addition to providing a wide variety of resources for teaching, is developing special materials and programs for prekindergarten and social studies.

### **Community School in Ellensburg**

Plans are under way to keep most schools in Ellensburg, Washington, open after school hours for use by many kinds of community groups and programs. Tryout of the idea of full community use was made last year at Morgan Junior High. Organized classes and clubs provided a range of activities—knitting, mechanics, judo, upholstery, and local history, among them—and the school served as a meeting place for Blue Birds, 4-H, and the like.

### **Third Annual Conference for NCSEA**

The National Community School Education Association (headquarters: 923 East Kearsley Street, Flint, Michigan 48503) held its third annual conference in Atlanta, Georgia, during December. The Association now issues a monthly newsletter, *NCSEA News*.

### **Let's Look at Ourselves**

The 300-member staff of the Georgia State Department of Education held a three-day conference last fall with the theme "To See Ourselves as Others See Us." The program provided for reactions to the state department image and activities from the viewpoints

of the federal government, the state press, the state education association, superintendents of schools, and business and industry.

### **Children of the Fields**

A report on migrant education in Michigan, *Children of the Fields*, focuses on the story of a Mexican-American boy as it reviews present programs of education, health, and supportive services in the state (issued by Printing and Mailing Section, Michigan Department of Education, Lansing 48902).

### **Teacher Visitation as Substitute for Institute**

Teachers in the elementary schools of Greenwich, Connecticut, were given a choice last year between visiting other schools and attending the traditional type of institute held since 1959. Most chose visitation, journeying to schools in Maine, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, as well as in their own state. Favored choices for what to see included nongraded programs, multi-age grouping, team teaching, individualized instruction, and the Montessori plan.

### **Visiting Scientist Program in Oklahoma**

Both natural and social scientists are involved in a new program of high school visitation planned this year under the sponsorship of the Oklahoma State Department of Education and allied state organizations. The scholars are donating their time, with expenses being paid by their home organizations.

### **Philosophy from Des Moines**

A new statement of philosophy has been issued by the Des Moines, Iowa, public schools which emphasizes, among other provisions, that the school curriculum must provide for:

Encouraging appreciation for the strength of united effort for the general welfare

Acquainting students with worldwide economic, social, and political problems and our nation's role as a world leader

Training students to think for themselves but to act with and for others

Training students in decision making based on gathering all pertinent information and evaluating it against value judgments which are socially acceptable and personally satisfying

Stimulating in students a sensitivity to evil conditions and courage to fight such conditions.

### **Nova Transplanted to California**

A continuous progress program, modeled after the Nova School (Florida) curriculum, has been installed with this year's freshmen in the Hughson, California, Union High School District. Learning activity packages (or LAPS) carry the program, through which students may move at their own pace, "testing out" of each package when ready. When completed, the Nova program will include 1,500 packages, with the average student completing about 400 during his four years in high school.

The Hughson faculty spent the summer in preparation for entry into the program, with their study including a week at the Florida school. □

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