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SINCE the state of Michigan enacted a law on August 12, 1969, giving the Michigan Department of Education the mandate to undertake a statewide program for the periodic assessment of educational progress, five reports have been released.

The latest report, *Distribution of Educational Performance*, finds that achievement, generally, is positively related to socioeconomic status. Districts high on socioeconomic indicators tended to produce high scores on pupil achievement measures, while those having low socioeconomic measures obtained significantly lower achievement scores. The report notes that those districts at a high level on the measure of socioeconomic status were also high in instructional expenditures per pupil. Readers of the report are cautioned against drawing cause-and-effect relationships between factors measured in the assessment program.

The Michigan assessment

program involved 320,000 students in 3,200 schools from more than 600 school districts. Since the findings tend to corroborate what is already known as a result of other studies, such as the Coleman Report, the question can be raised as to why such a massive testing program should be undertaken at all. However, the Michigan assessment program will attempt to investigate the relationships among various indices and school achievement through subsequent studies.

Rural Education in Africa

In a recent issue of *Intercultural Education*, published by the International Council for Educational Development, the editors note that "for the past 20 years or so the literary-humanistic, formal education on the European (British-French) model has continued to dominate African educational systems." The editors go on to quote a paper on the problem, delivered at the first

World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, by Ernest Stabler, Dean of Education at the University of Western Ontario:

How can education be adapted, African style, to rural development? Possibly by deciding on a change of emphasis away from formal, institutional schooling for a few towards informal, low-cost, mass education for the many, and a change in priorities from academic secondary and higher education towards instruction that can have immediate, practical application for primary school leavers and adults. . . . a whole network of local leaders and teachers are needed—extension staff, community development experts, functional literacy teachers, good farmers, and cooperative officials—and the most effective settings and (organizational) patterns have to be found.

What Is a Module?

Although the "module" has been used for some years in connection with flexible scheduling in secondary

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schools, in recent months the term "module" has become popular with some college biology instructors. As a result of an \$800,000 National Science Foundation grant to Purdue University for the development of minicourses in biology, efforts are being made to organize the minicourses into a series of modules. Each module, as a self-contained unit of instruction, will have a central focus on concepts or on skill development.

A module has been defined as something that is "longer than a sentence, but shorter than a semester," according to Darrel L. Murray of the Commission on Undergraduate Instruction in the Biological Sciences.

Freedom and Responsibility in Academe

Against a background of recent campus tensions, the American Association of University Professors has prepared a statement on "Freedom and Responsibility," urging that "the expression of dissent not be carried out in ways which injure individuals, or damage institutional facilities, or disrupt the classes of colleagues." The statement calls college and university faculties "to assume a more positive role as guardian of academic values against unjustified assaults from their own members."

Launching the Open Plan School

A report of a symposium on the open plan school has been published by I/D/E/A (Institute for the Development of Educational Activities, Inc.) of the Kettering Foundation. Entitled *The Open Plan School*,

the report presents illustrations of flexible teaching programs and flexible physical arrangements in open plan buildings, and discusses the advantages of nongraded schools, flexible scheduling, individualized instruction, team teaching, and differentiated staffing.

The symposium was originally scheduled to be held in the Kennedy Space Center Vehicle Assembly Building—the largest open plan building in the world. The building comprises so much open space that, without air conditioning, clouds form which actually produce rain. Because of last-minute complexities with the physical facilities, the symposium had to be moved to a nearby school.

Copies of the report can be obtained for \$2 from I/D/E/A, P.O. Box 446, Melbourne, Florida 32901.

Preschool Library Program

The Lincoln Elementary School in Olympia, Washington, has organized a library program for neighborhood preschoolers. One hour a week is scheduled for preschoolers and their mothers to use the library for reading stories and checking out books. A 20-minute story-time is handled by the librarian while the mothers confer and chat over coffee. The objectives of the program are to enrich the lives of preschoolers through books, to place books in the home, and to develop listening skills. Approximately 25 children and their mothers participate each week.

Environmental Education

The Tacoma, Washington, Public Schools are providing week-long environmental

education experiences for sixth graders at camp sites in the Tacoma area. The major learning areas in the program are forestry, ferns, plants and shrubs, marine biology, wildlife, salmon and hatcheries, rocks, minerals and soil, first aid, water and fire, and conservation. Specialists in each area come to the camp.

Each sixth grade teacher accompanies his class for the week. In addition, two full-time camp coordinators reside at the camp. Meals are prepared by cooks from the Tacoma Schools' lunchroom program. Each student participating pays \$12 to cover food, transportation, and other program expenses, plus 25¢ for insurance.

Curriculum Improvement Projects

A new guide to curriculum improvement projects supported by the National Science Foundation has been published by the U.S. Government Printing Office. Entitled "Course and Curriculum Improvement Projects," the guide lists 72 projects for various elementary and secondary grade levels. The guide contains a description of the aims and scope of each project, along with information for obtaining various curricular materials.

Of the 72 NSF projects listed in the guide, only two are classified as interdisciplinary. Seven projects are listed in the social sciences, of which four are in anthropology—while geography, sociology, and history have one project each.

The guide is available for 60¢ per copy from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Law Project in Dallas High Schools

A new course aimed at helping students develop positive attitudes toward the law is being offered this spring at six Dallas high schools. Titled "Law in American Society," the project is being financed with a \$78,990 grant from the Texas Criminal Justice Council. The school district will receive an additional \$120,000 in 1971-72 and 1972-73.

The project is being guided by a committee composed of a law professor, three attorneys representing the Dallas Bar Association, and four staff members from the school district. Materials to be used in the course this spring will be from the Law in American Society Foundation in Chicago. During the summer of 1971, Dallas social studies teachers will begin to develop the district's own curriculum materials.

Observed Superintendent Nolan Estes:

The course is being offered at a time when statistics point to the negative attitude of students toward the law and a crime rate among juveniles that continues to soar. All of this occurs while students are showing more political awareness than ever before. We feel that it is the responsibility of the schools to use this awareness on the part of the students to develop positive attitudes toward the role of the law.

New Courses

Starting in the 1971-72 school year, "Home Management," a course dealing with the use of family financial resources, will be offered at each Springfield, Missouri, high school. The course description states: "This course enables

the pupil to understand marketing practices, to learn sources of consumer information and protection, and to gain skill in the choice, utilization, and care of purchases." "Home Management" will meet five hours a week for a semester for one-half credit.

Two new areas of instruction will be available to vocational students. "Food Management and Service" will provide training for entrance level employment in various food service occupations, and "Merchandising and Sales Management" is designed to qualify a student for an entry job in retailing. Both courses require 15 hours a week for two semesters and offer three credits.

Teachers Reimbursed for Tuition

Duval County, Florida, teachers are reimbursed for taking university courses if they take them in the fields of reading, linguistics, mathematics, science, or industrial arts—and if they receive a grade of "C" or better. The school system's professional development staff is in the process of developing a master plan for the in-service education of teachers.

Health-Science-Ecology Course

A new program for San Mateo, California, fifth graders has the goal of "helping children learn to value and respect their bodies and to provide them with data that will lead them to intelligent decisions regarding their future health behavior." The focus of the concentrated nine-week study period is on the causes and prevention of respiratory dis-

eases and the effects of drugs on the nervous system. Guest speakers, experiments, films, and slides demonstrate the effects of air pollution and self-pollution caused by smoking, glue sniffing, and marijuana.

To prepare for the district-wide program, teachers and school nurses enrolled in a three-month workshop. Parents are also actively involved in the project on parent nights, when films are previewed and experiments demonstrated.

Teacher-Level Research Encouraged

The Torrance, California, Unified School District has established a \$50,000 research and development fund for the use of interested faculty. Proposals for funding will be submitted to a staff review committee which will recommend proposals for approval or rejection by the Board of Education. If the present program is successful, the R and D fund may be expanded in the 1971-72 school year. The district has 41 schools and 1,500 teachers.

Desegregation in Pasadena

As a part of a desegregation plan, Pasadena schools have been reorganized into 16 primary (grades K-3), 11 elementary (grades 4-6), 5 junior high (grades 7-8), and 4 senior high (grades 9-12) schools. No school has more than 50 percent of any minority enrolled, and every school staff has minorities represented in similar ratios. Approximately 50 percent of the pupil population is able to walk to school for a part of their elementary education. Almost all teachers

have participated in workshops to prepare themselves to work with children of varying socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities.

"Family" Grouping in White Plains School

Following an intensive study of approaches to individualization, the staff of the Church Street Elementary School in White Plains, New York, has developed a new program. Among the approaches and techniques being tried for the first time this year at Church Street is family grouping. Each child has been assigned to a home station of three teachers who are responsible for 75 children with an age spread of two to four years. Home stations also serve as resource centers for social studies, science, and the expressive arts. Church Street is continuing to group children by level of achievement in reading and mathematics.

New Doctoral Program in Urban Education

The Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University, has developed a new doctoral program in the area of curriculum and teaching in urban education. The new program focuses on the preparation of professionals who are primarily concerned with instruction in urban settings, whether in schools or in other educational environments. While the program deals with the many facets of the urban scene, the primary focus is on the creation and development of conditions for optimal learning.

The program is designed

to prepare individuals for a variety of leadership roles as curriculum developers, teacher educators, supervisors, evaluation specialists, planners, and administrators. Students in the program will take courses in research and theory, and in the analysis of programs and practices—coupled with appropriate field experiences in a variety of urban settings, and field-oriented research.

For further information, write to Professor A. Harry Passow, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027.

Student Tutors

At the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, Ohio, with an enrollment of 600 students in grades K-12, a tutoring program has been in operation for many years. Twelfth graders at the Academy are assigned on a voluntary basis to work with elementary and junior high students. The tutoring service is available during the first half hour of the day and for longer periods after school. Student tutors meet regularly with the classroom teacher to receive assignments and to obtain feedback concerning pupil progress. Students selected as tutors must rank in the top third of their class.

Students Included in Complaint Body

Students at Meadowdale High School in Dayton who have a grievance will find the Administrative-Faculty-Student Senate ready to listen to their complaints. The A-F-S Senate serves as an adjunct to the student and faculty councils. Its two major objectives are to

make recommendations concerning the education and well-being of Meadowdale students and teachers and to assist in resolving problems arising between the student and faculty councils. The group is comprised of 10 students elected by the student body, 10 teachers elected by the faculty, and one administrative coordinator.

Vision Center Sends Newsletter to Parents

"The Visionary," a monthly newsletter published by Toledo Public Schools' Vision Center, provides information concerning education of the visually impaired. Copies are sent to parents of visually impaired children and to the principals of elementary and high schools in which such pupils are enrolled.

New Developments in Louisville

Nine elementary and four junior high schools in the Louisville system are undergoing major reorganizations of curricular and instructional approaches, pupil grouping, and staffing design. The schools, all in poverty areas, have assigned groups of from 100 to 125 students to six- to ten-member teams of teachers, interns, paraprofessionals, and volunteers.

Much of the curriculum in the junior high schools is organized around centers of interest such as social issues, interpersonal development skills, and career opportunities. Students are being involved in the solution of community problems.

Twelve Louisville schools have been awarded planning grants by the U.S. Office of

Education for development of their own innovative programs.

Saturday Art Classes for Philadelphia Pupils

Talented artists in the Philadelphia schools have an opportunity to develop their skills in the School Art League classes on Saturday morning throughout the school year. Classes for pupils in grades 5 to 12 are held in 10 centers throughout the city. Students recommended for the program by their teacher, principal, or counselor can be registered at the center nearest their homes each Saturday.

Drug Education Project

A pilot program on drug education for fifth and sixth graders has been developed at the Samuel Everitt School in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. For a description of the program, which includes problems for study, resources, and questions asked by children who were involved in the program, write to: Bernard G. Hoffman, Elementary Supervisor, Samuel Everitt School, Forsythia Drive South, Levittown, Pa. 19056.

Continuation School in Tulsa

Project "12," a federally funded program of continuation education for school dropouts ages 14-21, is in its first year of operation at Johnson School in Tulsa. In order to meet the individual needs of students, class groupings are not highly structured. Students do not receive grades; they work under the direction of the teacher on different learning tasks to be performed to the satisfaction of the teacher.

It is hoped that through

the project, each student will be able to earn a high school diploma, improve his self-concept through the utilization of counseling services and identification with staff members, and become a productive member of society.

Work-Study

What can a big city school system do about its high school dropouts? Boston's answer to this challenge is a unique work-study program at Boston High School, a school designed for actual or potential dropouts. The program is partially funded through Title I.

Boston High attracts the dropout by offering him a daily schedule of a little over three hours in the classroom, plus a guaranteed minimum of four hours of work at a learning-oriented job in business or industry. The jobs carry over through vacation times and summers. The average annual salary for Boston High's 420 students from September 1969 through August 1970 was \$2,900 per student.

Seventy-seven students, all of whom had dropped out of high school previously or had strong inclinations to drop out, graduated from Boston High School in 1970, each either with a guaranteed job or an opportunity to go on to higher education.

There is a constant waiting list of up to 200 students for admission to Boston High School.

Newspaper Coverage of Chicago Schools

The Chicago Public Schools publish a bulletin containing reprints of school news stories which have appeared

in the local press each month. The stories are arranged by date and are presented in the bulletin without comment.

Learning Center Program

Nineteen Richmond, Virginia, elementary schools in which the racial minority is 10 percent or less are participating in a learning center program designed for curriculum enrichment. The program is an integral part of the district's new desegregation plan.

Upper elementary children travel to one of the centers once each week. Primary children go every two weeks. A class from each predominantly white school is paired with two other classes, each from a predominantly Negro school.

Center learning activities are in social studies and the fine arts. Teachers accompany their classes to the center and work with the staffs there.

Being used for the learning centers are Brook Hill, Arents, and Westhampton Schools. Establishment of the centers was assisted by a \$140,000 federal grant.

Humanities Program Brings Scholars to Schools

A program which is bringing humanities scholars to work in the Richmond Public Schools is now under way. Scholar designates represent such fields as cultural history, urban education, art, music, and literature. Each spends 20 days working with teachers and students. The program is being made possible by a grant from the National Humanities Faculty, whose objective is "to help American secondary

schools refocus their teaching about Man: his achievements and problems, his past and present, in order to awaken greater awareness of human values."

Robert D. Cross, president of Swarthmore College, was the first visiting scholar. His topic was "A Sense of the Present."

Problem Inventory

Currently under way in the Norfolk, Virginia, Public Schools is an investigation of system-wide and individual school problems. According to an opinionnaire given to all educational personnel, the most acute problems are in the areas of reading and supplemental services.

Good News

The Information Office of the Montgomery County, Maryland, Public Schools has installed a tape recorded message system that can be reached by

telephone. Each night a staff member records a 2- to 3-minute news brief concerning new or different educational programs, student-initiated service projects, or forthcoming student events. Area radio stations can phone in between 5:30 p.m. and 8 a.m. either to record the message and use it as is—or to pick up the information and have an announcer rebroadcast it.

Station WINX is now using briefs each night as part of its 6:30 news. Several other radio stations also regularly broadcast the recorded messages. There are 187 schools in the Montgomery County system.

School Library Standards in South Carolina

In order to meet state standards, an elementary school library in South Carolina must have a minimum of ten books for each child. High schools must have at least six books per pupil. The

percentage of elementary schools in the Charleston County School District meeting this standard rose from 51 percent in the 1967-68 school year to 60 percent in 1969-70. With the exception of two new schools and one which lost its library in a fire, every Charleston County high school meets state standards.

Teachers Get Free Courses

The in-service training program for Charleston County, South Carolina, teachers provides them with an opportunity to take courses at the College of Charleston tuition free. Offered by the college are courses dealing with such instructional problems as teaching reading in the secondary school and the diagnosis and correction of reading difficulty. The college is now offering a total of 10 courses both during the school year and in the summer. Each course carries three hours of credit. □

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