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A 151-PAGE report, *Barriers to Higher Education*, published by the College Entrance Examination Board, examines the problems of disadvantaged minority youth in gaining access to higher education. The report contains 13 colloquium papers on various aspects of accessibility to higher education.

Writing on the "Uses and Abuses of Scholastic Achievement Tests," B. Alden Thresher, MIT Director of Admissions Emeritus, offered these criticisms:

... there can be many ways of carrying out assessment besides the current, almost universal employment of psychometrically oriented, mass administered, multiple choice, normative, adversarial, secure, speeded, pencil-and-paper tests.

... But in a meritocratic culture ruled by a philosophy of logical positivism and based on behavioristic assumptions, such possibilities are little explored.

Granted the initial premises on which it (the standardized test) is based, its development is a triumph of logical and mathematical per-

fection. But not enough is known about the learning process, the structure of knowledge, or the nature of cognition to support any confidence that the testing process yields more than a superficial, empirical body of data.

... the psychometric basis of testing seems to erect a formidable structure of mathematical logic on a foundation of psychological assumptions that are of uncertain validity.

Thresher characterizes the standardized test as "an engineering success but a scientific failure," and notes that "there is real danger that the College Board, as a leading exponent and exemplar of the standardized test device, may fall into a kind of automatic defensive attitude toward critics."

Other papers deal with such topics as educational opportunity and the organization of higher education, open admissions, predicting college success of disadvantaged students, personal and institutional assessment, and programs and practices for minority group youth.

The report may be or-

dered at \$3.50 per copy from the College Entrance Examination Board, Box 592, Princeton, N.J. 08540.

Teacher Evaluation Studied

A recent study of how teachers perceive the evaluation of their performance has been conducted by the Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching. The investigators concluded that the teachers surveyed were "very dissatisfied" with current approaches to evaluation. About half the teachers had no idea of what criteria were being used to evaluate them.

Teachers rated evaluation as less helpful than their previous training. Although they do not want other teachers to evaluate them, they do want to play a more important role in determining the bases for evaluation.

Studies being conducted by the center will provide the basis for an in-service manual for improving teacher evaluation.

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Unseen Dimensions of the "Taxpayers' Revolt"

Two recent studies of voter attitudes reveal a hidden side to the so-called "taxpayers' revolt." Conducted at opposite ends of the country, the studies indicate that much of the negative vote at school elections is due to factors other than displeasure over the size of taxes.

A study of school budget elections in New York State districts by the Policy Institute of the Syracuse University Research Corporation found that one-half of the voter dissent could not be traced to fiscal considerations. The Syracuse report concluded that the school budget election had become for some voters "a referendum on the effectiveness of the schools in general."

A study of voter attitudes on school operating levies conducted by the Washington State Temporary Levy Study Commission revealed that "a sizeable proportion of the electorate feel alienated from the school system, unable to get information from it or to influence its decisions." The favorable voters, on the other hand, found it easy to get school information.

Indian Education

The Dartmouth Medical School has initiated a program to recruit Indian Americans for the study of medicine and to help improve medical care on Indian reservations.

A recent unanimous decision by the Dartmouth medical faculty to provide tutorial support and curricular flexibility for promising minority group students made establishment of the new program

possible. Although the course sequence and time requirements may differ from the norm, these students will have to meet all academic standards and requirements for a Dartmouth medical degree.

The medical program will be coordinated with efforts to provide undergraduate education for Indian Americans at Dartmouth College.

Student Legal Counseling

Students in eight Kansas City, Missouri, high schools now have the help of a lawyer who need this service available to them. Eight lawyers in private practice have volunteered two hours biweekly to provide students with individual legal counsel on campus during school hours. Where the need for legal action is indicated, the lawyer either handles the case on a non-fee-paying basis or refers it to the local lawyer referral service or legal aid.

Experiment Leads to Curriculum Change

In Fort Worth, Texas, a noncredit summer enrichment course in creative writing is now being offered for credit during the regular school year. Students do all of their writing in class. With the 80-minute classes recently instituted in Fort Worth high schools as part of the trimester plan, they have plenty of time to do so.

Various activities are pursued to inspire the students. They listen to music, look at paintings, read the work of professional writers, and share their work with others in the class. Some students are so interested in writing that they also have taken journalism and are staff members of the

student newspaper. Others have never written before, except in English class.

Creative writing is a half-credit semester course.

San Antonio Offers Data Processing

For the first time this fall, about 120 San Antonio Independent School District students are learning the technical world of computer operations. Available to all high school juniors, the two-year data processing course is held at San Antonio College.

Explains Henry Young, director of the course: "At this moment there is a shortage of over 200,000 people who are knowledgeable in data processing, so the demand is there. By beginning his training in high school, a student can cut his eventual training time by two years."

Upon completion of the high school program, a student will be qualified as a programmer trainee or operator on the IBM System-3 computer. Should he wish to continue in the data processing field and if he enrolls in the four-year data course at San Antonio College, the student will receive college credit for the data courses he took in high school.

Media and the Schools

A recent poll of registered voters in the San Antonio Independent School District showed that 56.9 percent of the respondents got most of their information about the schools from newspapers. While only 7.6 percent of the respondents indicated that television was their chief source of school information and 3.3

percent chose the radio, persons filling out questionnaires said they were regular television viewers and radio listeners.

"Educational Experience" for Parents

To help parents learn about innovations in curriculum and teaching, the staff and students of Bethesda Elementary School in Montgomery County, Maryland, recently presented a "learning fair." Entitled an "Educational Experience," the tape-slide show presented an overview of the entire curriculum. Teachers used three adjoining screens to show how a concept is presented at three different grade levels.

The program was shown four times during the evening. Parents were encouraged to view it before visiting the classrooms where displays showed how different techniques and activities can be used to present a single concept or skill.

According to principal Richard Stevenson, the goal was to avoid the feeling of a staged performance. "We wanted an honest representation of what our school is usually like," he said. Apparently, this goal was achieved. Letters of commendation and many more questions are still coming in from appreciative and interested parents.

New Program in Baltimore

Four new secondary schools opened this fall in Baltimore. Since they are air-conditioned, these schools will be open all year long—the school year is divided into four semesters, enabling students

to attend school for three or four semesters.

Among the benefits of this new program are: (a) a wider choice of courses is available, (b) graduation is possible in three years, (c) a failure can be made up immediately, and (d) students have the chance to take off a winter quarter when finding a job may be easier.

The schools are Northern Parkway Junior High, Lake Clifton Senior High, Southwestern Junior-Senior High, and Walbrook Senior High.

Sign of Hope

Chicago's vocational high schools are about 78 percent black, yet their combined dropout rate is 8.5 percent, compared with 10.4 percent for the general high schools. Furthermore, their dropout rate has been declining steadily for ten years, in contrast to the rising rate in the regular high schools.

Lindbloom Technical High School on the South Side was 80 percent white in 1963 when it was a general and technical high school. Lindbloom is now 94 percent black. The dropout rate there has decreased from 9.1 percent in 1966 to 2.1 percent in 1970. Lindbloom's citywide showing is second only to all-white Mather (general) High School with a dropout rate of 1.2 percent—about the same as that of New Trier High School in Winnetka.

Oldest High School Observes Birthday

Boston's English High School, the oldest general high school in the United States, is observing its 150th birthday year. English High was

founded in 1821, one year before the Town of Boston became a city. The idea, as put by the Boston School Committee, was to "recognize the importance of providing a school of higher grade to afford the youth of the town who did not intend to enter a college an opportunity for pursuing advanced courses of study."

The college preparation of the time was provided by Boston Latin School, the oldest free public school in America, founded in 1635.

English High School was created because, as the School Committee wrote: "The branches of knowledge that are taught at our English grammar schools are not sufficiently extensive . . . to qualify a youth . . . to fill many of those stations, mercantile or mechanical, in which he may be placed."

New Courses in Salable Skills

Several new programs in occupational education and the development of salable skills began this year in four Boston high schools. A total of 160 seniors from the Jeremiah E. Burke, Hyde Park, and Dorchester High Schools are participating in clerical training at the Tufts New England Medical Center with the objective of becoming qualified as hospital assistants and medical secretaries. Twenty seniors from English High School are being trained as dental technicians at the Tufts Dental School.

These programs are a preview of the functions of the new \$27 million Occupational Resource Center, scheduled to be ready by September 1973. Thereafter, up to 80 percent of

all Boston high school graduates are expected to be equipped with a salable skill of their own choosing in addition to their general education.

"IAP" at MIT

The recess before the beginning of the spring term at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was extended in the 1970-71 school year to a full month to allow for an "Independent Activities Period" (IAP) in which students and faculty jointly designed and participated in some 500 activities for "general intellectual enjoyment." Participation in IAP was voluntary and without grades or credits. Students were free to take a vacation or catch up on their fall term "incompletes" if they wished. However, many students chose to participate in such varied activities as glassblowing, interviewing senior diplomats and studying the activities at the United Nations, working with the press and television stations in Eastern cities, studying photography, investigating the chemistry of the solar system, and learning about the engine designs of racing cars.

An evaluation of last year's IAP has been made by a joint faculty-student committee to seek ways of improving the program this year. It has been agreed that IAP will be offered for at least three years pending the outcomes of the evaluations.

Reading Problems Decreasing in Tacoma

District-wide tests in Tacoma, Washington, indicate that the number of pupils in

grades 3 through 6 needing special help in reading has dropped in recent years. About 15 percent of the pupils needed help in 1970-71—down from 18 percent in 1967-68. (A child is considered as needing special help if he is one year below grade level achievement in the third grade, one and one-half years behind in the fourth grade, and two years behind in the fifth and sixth grades.)

Since research has consistently shown that what the teacher does is a more important factor in learning than the kind of reading program he uses, the district has not adopted one district-wide reading program for every classroom. Each teacher selects a program on the basis of what he feels will work most effectively with his children.

Another possible factor in the reduction in the number of children needing special help is the enthusiastic response of Tacoma teachers to seminars on reading and summer workshops. For five years the district's Summer Diagnostic Reading Workshop has helped 25 to 30 teachers to develop new ways of working with children who have reading problems. Teachers learn by actually working with children who need reading help.

Expansion

In 1965-66 there were 3,681 Seattle students registered in vocational and career education classes. In 1970-71 the number more than tripled to 11,735. Among the new courses are advertising and production, marine engine maintenance and repair, data processing, construction technology, radio

communications, visual communications, cosmetology, jewelry, carpentry, business and graphics, and computer mathematics.

Arizona Begins Kindergarten

The Arizona State Legislature has passed a law enabling school districts to enroll children in kindergarten and receive state financial aid for each child.

Master Plan for In-Service Training

A five-year in-service education program for Duval County, Florida, teachers has been approved by a visiting committee from the State Department of Education. Input for the program was based on individual requests from schools for specific in-service training, priority needs as identified by a survey of teachers, and feedback from the visiting committee.

Fighting First Grade Failure

In 1970, almost 6 percent of the first graders in Dade County, Florida, failed. Not only did they fail, but they established a pattern of failure. That is why the Early Childhood Preventive Curriculum Project was begun in the fall of 1970. Pupils who have been identified by kindergarten teachers as having the kinds of problems which disable children in the classroom are tested to determine how they learn best. Test results are keyed to resource material so the project teacher knows exactly what activities to prescribe for each child. The idea is to help the child use the skills he can handle to learn

the skills that are giving him trouble.

By using a controlled classroom situation, project personnel are testing methods and materials which can be introduced into conventional classrooms to prevent first grade failure. The three-year project is funded under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Curriculum Improvement Project

The Minneapolis Public Schools have been awarded an \$8.6 million grant to improve the curriculum in five schools. The main objectives of the five-year Experimental Schools project are to provide a wider variety of educational experiences and to involve children and youth in the choice of their learning experiences.

In-Service Training Project

A project designed to help teachers relate to disadvantaged children has begun in Louisville, Kentucky. Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade teachers and principals in five inner city elementary schools participated in a one-week communications skills lab a week before school opened in the fall. In addition to six Saturday workshops, two-hour sessions are being held weekly during the 1971-72 school year for the purpose of critiquing classroom methods.

Funded by a \$60,000 grant from the Kentucky Crime Commission, the project is being conducted cooperatively by the Louisville Public Schools and the College of Education at Western Kentucky University. The five elementary

schools are Dolfinger, Lincoln, Parkland, Booker T. Washington, and Brandeis.

Look! Look!

Yes, yes, Dick, Jane, and Spot are gone. Scott, Foresman has announced the elimination of its reading texts and workbooks for the primary grades. Its new reading series consists of linguistic blocks, alphabet cards, games and puzzles, work cards, storybooks with cassettes or records, picture cards, and special practice books.

At the time of their demise, Dick, Jane, and Spot were each 40 years old.

High Schoolers Learn About Preschoolers

Hamilton High School students in Sussex, Wisconsin, who are enrolled in the Child Guidance program, spend eight weeks learning about art, music, literature, and play for the preschool child and ten weeks working with a nursery playgroup. In addition to presenting lessons to the preschoolers, each student observes one of the children, determining his interests, level of performance, and general development over the ten-week period.

The response from students, parents, and preschoolers has been enthusiastic and the program is expected to become a permanent part of the high school curriculum.

Art for All Ages

Staff members at Meadow Heights Elementary School in San Mateo, California, have combined their time and talents to create a community art lab. On Tuesday evenings and

all day on Saturdays, parents and pupils can work together on pottery, clay sculpture, leather, yarn, silk-screening, collage, and wood sculpture. Parents contribute funds and materials. The lab is open during the school day to regular classes.

Consumer Education

The social studies department in Buffalo's East High School is providing students with a consumer education elective that recognizes the importance of being smart in the marketplace.

The program is team taught; a social studies teacher, a home economics teacher, and a business education teacher are attempting to show the interrelatedness of the three courses. Subjects covered are general principles of purchasing, consumer law, automobile insurance, taxation, home purchase, life insurance, budgeting, and consumer fraud.

Also featured in the program are a number of visiting lecturers and field trips to businesses and other agencies. The elective is offered for interested seniors.

The Law and Pupil Activities

A monograph entitled *Legal Aspects of Control of Student Activities* has been prepared by Professor E. Edmund Reutter, Jr., of Teachers College, Columbia University, for the National Organization on Legal Problems of Education. The monograph analyzes the law relevant to such topics as rights of students and parents, rules of conduct in schools, dress and appearance, secret societies, married

students and mothers, expression of opinion, and discipline.

Reutter notes that we are in an "era of questioning of authority in general," and that "the attitude of resistance to authority is being focused increasingly on the schools." While Reutter observes that some of the actual and threatened court actions against school authorities are "encouraged or manufactured," he also emphasizes that some school officials have insisted on "prerogatives of authority more fitted to a military operation than to an educational endeavor."

The 54-page monograph may be ordered for \$3.50 from the National Organization on Legal Problems of Education, 825 Western Avenue, Topeka, Kans. 66606.

Cooking in Kindergarten

Eleven kindergartens in Tulsa now have roasters and electric skillets. Teachers introduce reading, writing, and numbers through picture reci-

pes, measuring cups, and spoons. According to Dr. Beth Lamb, supervisor of kindergarten education, the cooking centers "also give teachers an opportunity to prepare morning and afternoon snacks for the youngsters."

Out of the Past

At hearings on "Science and Education for National Defense," conducted by the U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in January 1958 (three months after Sputnik I), Senator Wayne Morse made these comments in response to the severe criticisms leveled at our schools by Committee witnesses:

... I think there is great need for a strong defender of America's educational system. It is superior under almost any standard with which you want to test it. ... I think it is a great mistake for some people, and I think some leaders in education, to give the impression that the American educational system has suffered a great decline. ...

I think we ought to stop making American educators the whipping boys of local and state and national leaders, because those leaders have not given to the educational facilities and processes the support to which they are entitled.

... I think that the time has come when a few politicians ought to stand up on their hind legs and give to the American educators the credit that is due them. I get a little weary of seeing the American teacher depreciated. The American teacher is doing a magnificent job in the face of great handicaps that the American politicians have thrown in the way.

Designing Instructional Materials

A 24-page booklet, *Designing Instructional Materials for Urban Youth*, may be ordered from the Council of the Great City Schools, 1819 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. The publication includes a report on current practices and guidelines for selecting instructional materials for urban youth. □

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