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A REPORT by the Task Force on High School Redesign of the New York City Schools presents recommendations and suggestions for bringing about the redesign of the high school through various innovations. Entitled *Toward the 21st Century*, the report presents an extensive description of innovations geared to major educational problem areas. For example, under the problem area of "humanization and involvement," it is suggested that interdisciplinary teams of teachers be organized, with each team assigned from 30 to 150 students working together in a flexible time block in which English, social studies, and other subjects might be combined. The interdisciplinary team and the students would be able to function as a "sub-school," with the team being responsible for guidance as well as instructional activities.

Another suggestion calls for organizing the curriculum around problems rather than specific subject areas, with teams of students and teachers designing research projects

with credit offered in one or more subject fields. Other suggestions call for combining classroom study with supervised learning experiences in community agencies, allocating more time to free teachers for developing curriculum materials, and focusing more attention on the processes of learning rather than on the specifics of informational learning.

Toward the 21st Century was developed through a grant from the U.S. Office of Education by a committee composed of administrators, teachers, parents, and students under the chairmanship of Oscar Dombrow, Assistant Superintendent, Office of High Schools, New York City Board of Education.

Journalism Scholarship Guide

An 88-page booklet listing more than \$2 million available in scholarships for college students studying journalism is available free of charge to students, teachers, counselors, and parents from The Newspaper Fund, a foun-

dation which encourages young people to consider careers in journalism.

The *Journalism Scholarship Guide* may be ordered from The Newspaper Fund, P. O. Box 300, Princeton, N.J. 08540.

Performance Contracting in the 19th Century

During the late 19th century, teachers' salaries in England were determined according to a system of "payment by results." Under this system, a proportion of each teacher's salary was dependent upon the results of an annual external examination conducted by H. M. School Inspectors.

In reviewing the history of school reform in England, the "Plowden Report," which stimulated new educational reforms in the United States as well as in England when it was released a few years ago, notes that the "system of payment by results" was detrimental to education. According to the "Plowden Report," when a school reform law abolished

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this system in 1898, teachers were freed from the constraining influences which prevented them from developing the curriculum and methods of teaching best suited to the particular needs and conditions of the school.

Students Want More Than the Disciplines

Results of a recent survey of students at three Montgomery County, Maryland, high schools indicate that students want to learn more about: the pacifist movement—civil disobedience, and what is the place of violence in the world today?; forms of government—communism (not American propaganda) and socialism; sex—the physical and emotional aspects, methods of contraception, and effects of pornography; black history and histories of other minority groups; religions of the world (Buddhism, Confucianism, etc.); drugs; interpersonal relationships—male-female and family (generation gap); ecology; philosophy; and dream interpretation.

Students at Walter Johnson, John F. Kennedy, and Richard Montgomery High Schools were chosen for the survey in an effort to get an overview of student attitudes toward the curriculum.

Steering Committee on High Schools

A committee charged with "developing a generic proposal for pilot off campus programs" has been established by Boston's Superintendent William T. Ohrenberger. The Steering Committee on High Schools, which includes representatives from all major groups within the school system, will also

provide direction in clarifying student responsibilities and rights, effecting greater student and parental involvement in school operations, and ensuring the availability of a "relevant" curriculum.

The scope of the task facing the new committee was indicated by Superintendent Ohrenberger in the first sentence of his report, which began: "High schools, particularly those in the urban centers, are faced today with the challenge of responding to a number of issues. . . ."

Museum Provides Classroom Setting

First graders at the Agassiz School in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, spend one morning a week at the nearby Children's Museum, where the pupils explore and learn in the Workshop of Things.

The program provides the use of varied material in an activity-centered classroom and gives the Workshop staff an opportunity to evaluate its offerings.

District Acquires Philosophy

How does a school district acquire a philosophy? This question has recently been answered for the Boise Public Schools. A special district committee read old and new philosophies, studied books, and compared adaptations of over 50 different school districts of comparable size. None stated what they had in mind, so committee members developed one to suit the district's needs. This philosophy emphasizes the need to "provide each student with the skills necessary for cumulative learning, a sense of worth

leading to emotional maturity, and the means to develop a sound set of moral and ethical values."

Analysis of Programs in American Government

Just completed by the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development is a book that compares and contrasts nine major American government programs for secondary schools: *Thinking Reflectively About Public Issues*, *American Political Behavior*, *Episodes in Social Inquiry*, *Public Issues Series*, *Comparative Political Systems*, *LFC Secondary Social Studies*, *Justice in Urban America*, *The Price of Freedom*, and *The Amherst Project*. The developers of these curricula include James Shaver, Howard Mehlinger, Robert Angell, Donald Oliver, Edwin Fenton, John Gibson, Robert Ratcliffe, Raymond English, and Richard Brown.

Entitled *American Government Information Unit*, the book features an oversize chart that reviews the major characteristics of each program. The oversize paperbound book is available at \$7.95 per copy from Inserve, P. O. Box 504, Sunnyside, California 94088.

Teacher Exchange Program in Spokane

An Inter-School Teacher Exchange program has been initiated on a one-year pilot basis in Spokane. It is believed by the district's Central Curriculum Council that the exchange of ideas and methods will be an enriching experience for the participating teachers. Exchanges have been developed so that teachers are work-

ing on different grade levels and in differing socioeconomic areas. The exchanges were initiated by teachers. However, the approval of the principals involved was required.

The duration of the teacher exchange is for the full school year in elementary schools, and for at least one semester in the secondary schools. An evaluation of the program will be conducted at the end of the 1971-72 school year.

New Physical Education Course

Franklin High School in Seattle is offering a new course in mountain climbing as part of its physical education program. Students begin by learning the technical aspects of climbing and conditioning through weight lifting and track. The course includes snow and ice climbing, and students practice crevasse rescues on Nisqually Glacier. Much of the instruction takes place on weekends.

Carry-Over Sports

At Hayfield Secondary School in Fairfax County, Virginia, students are involved in a physical education program in which activities are completely elective. The program is based on two principles, learning carry-over (lifetime) sports and developing in the student an awareness of the qualities of his own body.

Activity units are offered each 4½ weeks. The faculty (five men and four women) meet with students signed up for a particular period of the day in advance of each elective interval. Each teacher has the opportunity to "sell" the unit he or she will offer.

Electives offered at Hayfield include track and field, touch football, football appreciation (for girls), badminton and table tennis, golf, archery, modern dance, fencing, gymnastics, weight training, coed volleyball, and recreational activities such as cribbage, chess, and bridge.

Learning Center Opens in San Antonio

The Learning Center, a diagnostic clinic designed to help children with reading and other learning problems, has begun operation in the San Antonio Independent School District. Staffed with reading specialists, psychologists, social workers, a neurologist, a general practitioner, and a pediatrician, the Center investigates the "whole child" to discover why he has a particular problem.

While the primary function of the Center is to serve the needs of children, it is also a training ground for teachers. As Dr. Betty Davis, who heads the staff, emphasizes:

Teacher training and involvement are essential to the success of the Center. Unless the teacher understands the child's problems and can transfer the work accomplished in the center to the classroom, the child will not truly be helped.

Three Schools in One

The new \$21 million Skyline Center in Dallas is an educational complex covering 13 acres. It is a multipurpose facility, housing the Center for Career Development, Skyline High School, and the Center for Community Services.

The Center for Career Development is an extension

of all Dallas high schools, offering the student enrolled in its programs the opportunity to learn a salable skill that can mean immediate employment. Skyline High School is a comprehensive high school for about 1,400 students living within its attendance zone. The Center for Community Services is a continuing education center, offering both day and night courses for adults.

Transportation is provided from all schools in the district to the Center.

Dropout Rate Declines in Dallas

The dropout rate among Dallas junior and senior high school students decreased from 2.35 percent in 1969-70 to 1.53 percent in 1970-71. Some of the reasons suggested for the decline include the Metropolitan Learning Center, where more than 140 dropout students are working toward graduation, and the district's community guidance centers which emphasize the importance of school attendance.

Mobile Museum

What is a Texan? In an attempt to answer this question, a mobile museum, housed in two station wagons, is making the rounds of all second grades in the San Antonio Independent School District. Each station wagon is manned with a teacher and a driver and contains artifacts from the various cultures which have influenced present-day Texas.

Although most of the artifacts are on loan to the district, the Institute of Texas Cultures has made replicas of one set of objects so that each

station wagon has the same items.

The first unit of study was "The Texas Indian." Outfitted in a buckskin shirt and toting a travois (a stretcher-like carrier), the teacher took into the classroom such items as bows and arrows, sewing kits, flint knives, and dolls.

The glass barrier of a display case has disappeared because children are encouraged to use all their senses in observing the artifacts. Costumes are tried on, bows are flexed, and flutes are played by the children.

In pointing out the goals of the museum, Dr. Paul Kantz, associate superintendent, said: "Acceptance of others is dependent on the development of knowledge and understanding of people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds."

Parents Comment on School Reporting

Parents of children attending Hamilton District Schools in Wisconsin were recently surveyed in regard to grading and reporting procedures. The following comments were made by respondents:

"Children need to know where they stand, not in comparison with others, but with their own personal development."

"I think our present system is too vague and leaves much for the imagination of the person receiving the grade."

"Perhaps a phone center could be set up for just the purpose of phone conferences between parents and teachers."

"While the present system is trying to prevent the student from feeling failure, it seems to me that the better students are being pulled down because they

don't feel as if they are being given credit for their work."

"Why have grades at all? Children should be rated according to their own ability. A written progress report seems most satisfactory."

"Report cards should be mailed and signature required; (parents) don't always see the cards."

"I would like to be told ways to promote learning at home."

Fathers Tutor Pupils

In Milwaukee, fathers of Green Bay Avenue Elementary School pupils have organized a tutoring program, assisting pupils who need extra help one hour each week. In addition to working with children on specific learning tasks, the men seek to build positive attitudes toward school. Currently, 17 fathers are involved in the program. Some tutor in the evening because their work schedules do not permit them to help during the day.

Exam Offered for Early Admission to First Grade

The School District of Philadelphia provides for the examination of exceptionally gifted five-year-olds to determine if they can bypass kindergarten and enroll directly in the first grade. The examinations are given by school psychologists.

Only two to three children per hundred meet the rigid specifications set by Pennsylvania law.

School Volunteer Program in Buffalo

Approximately 300 parents have discovered an opportunity for involvement in

school affairs by participating in the school volunteer program of the Buffalo Public Schools.

One of the most successful groups has been the Buffalo Chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, which has focused on improving library service in elementary schools. The group has established or reorganized libraries in Schools 17, 28, 29, 32, 39, and 70. The women work closely with the supervisor of library science.

At School 64, school volunteers are working with school officials in the formation of special clubs and activity groups.

Haircut, Anyone?

Gideons Elementary School in Atlanta has a barber chair—for instructional purposes. Approximately 20 sixth and seventh grade boys work with a barber weekly during a two-hour visit—five each half-hour. While the barber cuts the hair of one boy, the other four observe his techniques. Then he supervises those interested in learning his skill.

The program is staffed by barbers in the community. Its main objective is to create an awareness of good grooming and personal hygiene. The chair was donated after teachers, pupils, and parents developed the idea.

Live Projects

Students at the Atlanta Area Technical School are involved in live projects as well as laboratory work. For example, in the bricklaying course, by working on actual projects students become qualified as advanced apprentices.

Minneapolis To Study Student Evaluation

An \$11,500 grant under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will support a Minneapolis Public Schools project entitled "Development of an Experimental Student Evaluation System."

The objective of the project is the development of an evaluation system that does not give students a sense of failure. The new system will also be concerned with evaluating students' interests, attitudes, and values, as well as their relationships with others.

Grants for Students and Teachers

The Oakland, California, Unified School District is offering grants for new programs suggested by students and teachers. Superintendent Marcus A. Foster has announced a "New Notions for Excellence" fund of \$100,000 for improving schools and their programs. The fund provides \$60,000 for schoolwide proposals, \$30,000 for teacher grants, and \$10,000 for programs designed, organized, and carried out by students.

Equality of Opportunity

More than half (58 percent) of those interviewed in a recent survey of Tucson residents felt that all school children in the district have the same opportunity for a good education. Among parents, 61 percent termed educational opportunity "the same for all children."

While 58 percent of the Anglos and 56 percent of the Mexican Americans agreed

that all children have the same opportunity, 56 percent of the Negro respondents shared the view that some children have a better chance.

Forty-six percent of the Negroes interviewed felt that the "less opportunity child" is the Negro child, while only 17 percent of the Mexican Americans identified children of their own ethnic group as the "less opportunity child."

Establishing a Learning Resource Center

A monograph which suggests ways of establishing a learning resource center is now available from the University of Missouri. Among the topics included in the publication are: the LRC and the Library, Philosophy, Personnel, Operation, Students, and Curricular Application. Copies of *A Functional Learning Resource Center for an Elementary School* may be ordered at \$.50 each from Publications, B-9 Whitten Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri 65201.

Aquatic Program in Springfield

Since the Springfield, Missouri, Public Schools Swimming Pool opened in November 1969, more than 3,000 fourth graders have taken a 13-hour course in swimming and water safety skills. Approximately two-thirds were not able to swim at least 45 feet when they started instruction. At the end of the course, one-half of this group were no longer classified as non-swimmers. Fourth graders involved in the program are transported from their schools to the pool for daily sessions.

Evening Call-In

Adams High School in Portland, Oregon, has found a new way for administrators to talk with parents and residents. A "Call-Your-Administrator" night gives school patrons an opportunity to ask questions about the high school, to voice problems or concerns, or to talk about the school system in general. During the evening call-in, phones are in operation from 7 to 10 p.m. An operator refers callers to the appropriate administrator.

Career Resource Center

Washington High School in Portland, Oregon, has a new career resource center, created by enlarging the vocational counseling offices. The offices have been transformed into an informal area where students can relax and browse among material on career opportunities.

Washington High School has about 200 of its students in the work experience program of the Portland schools. Students work part-time and learn on the job. They receive wages for their work and earn high school credit for the training.

Beyond the Structured Music Program

Each school in Wilmington, Delaware, has at least one participating music group—be it band, orchestra, or chorus. The board of education supports these programs with uniforms and instruments. These voluntary programs involve from 10 to 15 percent of the student body in each school.

With the financial sup-

port of interested citizens, groups of students attend the concerts of the Philadelphia and Wilmington Symphony Orchestras every week.

Work Experience Program for Handicapped Students

Because of the Omaha Public Schools Work Experience Program, handicapped or slow learners 16 years or older can earn a high school diploma and look forward to a brighter future. Students work half days and attend special education classes half days. Boys may learn such skills as electrical fixture and appliance repair, furniture finishing and repair, shoe repair, upholstery, and building maintenance. Among the fields open to girls are health services, file clerk, dietary aide, clothing repair and sewing, and food services. The program is being conducted cooperatively with Nebraska Goodwill Industries and Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

In the original plans for the program, the IQ require-

ment for participants was from 50 to 85, as measured by the Wechsler Intelligence Scale. Follow-up studies show the average IQ to be about 74.5. Diagnostic tests are given by a certified school psychologist.

At the end of the 1970-71 school year, 125 on-the-job students had earned \$159,550.

Learning Project

For fourth graders at Saunders School in Omaha, learning about pollution involved speaking, writing, and art skills as well as science. They discussed with others the dangers of pollution and wrote letters to obtain further information. One part of the project included the canvassing of their immediate neighborhoods and talking with people about ways of avoiding pollution. In addition to distributing handout sheets to interested citizens, the class made posters which were placed in local stores. This project has made the children aware of a serious problem

and their responsibility in helping to correct it.

Self-Inventory for Science Teachers

Believing that the self-inventory approach is very effective in the improvement of science teaching, the National Science Teachers Association has prepared such an inventory. *Annual Self-Inventory for Science Teachers* is available for \$1.00 each, with a substantial discount on quantity orders, from National Science Teachers Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. □

Readers are invited to submit items for the NEWS NOTES column to: Professor Laurel N. Tanner, College of Education, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122. Of particular interest to our readers are items concerning innovative programs and research.

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