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DESPITE the favorable claims made for performance contracting, the results tend to be inconclusive since the school districts that have adopted the "payment-by-results" system typically have failed to evaluate the learning outcomes through rigorous experimental and control-group comparisons. A common practice on the part of school districts has been to contract with a profit-seeking firm, rather than with a university, to evaluate the work of the performance-contracting company.

In Gary, Indiana, it was discovered that in order to raise achievement scores in reading and math, the performance-contracting firm had neglected to include instruction in social studies, science, art, and music during most of the first semester of the initial year.

In Jacksonville, Florida, youngsters in the performance-contracting program attend classes in rooms that are air conditioned, carpeted, and draped—while the comparison groups are in rooms devoid

of such amenities. In Wichita, Kansas, the performance contract provides a salary bonus of up to 6 percent of base salary for teachers in the program, while the teachers of the control classes receive no such bonus.

Of the more than 14,000 pupils who participated in the performance-contracting program in the Philadelphia schools last year, fewer than 5,000 youngsters gained at least a year's progress. Although such gains might have occurred by chance, the performance contractor was paid over \$284,000. Commenting on the results, Superintendent of Schools Mark R. Shedd called them "encouraging and disappointing."

### **They Did It Without Performance Contracting**

Among the school systems reporting that special efforts to improve achievement in reading are paying dividends are Dayton and Atlanta. In Dayton, the schools achieved the objective of increasing the proportion of

pupils who made a month's progress in reading for each month in the classroom. The average gain for third graders was in excess of one year, while first and second graders gained an average of nine months. The board of education expressed gratitude to those teachers whose dedication and skill contributed to the success of the program.

In Atlanta, improvement in average reading scores can be seen in almost every school in grades 1, 2, and 3. Although not every child reads at grade level, test scores show a significant gain in reading comprehension. In grade 1, a readiness test given in the fall of 1970 showed that only about 80 percent of the children were ready to begin reading. Yet the standardized achievement test given in the spring of 1971 showed that these children were very near grade level. In grades 2 and 3, pupils scored a gain of a month of reading achievement for each month of instruction. The schools on which the district's Comprehensive Instruction Program (CIP) focused

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attention achieved the greatest gains in reading. These schools are ones in which traditionally achievement has been very low.

What is the secret of Atlanta's success? At the beginning of the 1970-71 school year, 19 reading resource teachers were assigned to provide direct assistance in the classroom. Three in-service courses in reading were conducted which focused on the teaching of reading skills most in need of attention, as identified by CIP resource teachers in daily contact with classroom teachers and pupils. Approximately 500 teachers participated in these courses. In addition, a diagnostic reading test developed by CIP resource teachers and the University of Georgia reading staff was administered to all first, second, and third graders in the Atlanta schools—approximately 30,000 pupils—to determine individual needs.

There were no performance contracts involved in either Dayton or Atlanta—only skilled diagnostic work and effective teaching.

#### **"Others" Need Not Apply**

The Ford Foundation is offering fellowships in 33 fields to Black Americans, American Indians, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans who plan to pursue the doctorate on a full-time basis during the 1972-73 academic year. Whites and Orientals are not eligible for these restricted fellowships.

#### **Adolescents Like High School**

Contemporary critics of the schools commonly maintain that adolescents dislike school. A national study con-

ducted by the Center for Human Resource Research of The Ohio State University, under contract with the U.S. Department of Labor, revealed that only a very small proportion of high school youth report a dislike for their high school experience. Among Negro youth, two percent indicated a dislike for school, as compared with seven percent of the white youth.

#### **Still Trying**

New York City continues to operate a system of specialized academic and vocational high schools despite the fact that in 1965 the board of education announced that most of the specialized high schools would be converted to the comprehensive type. Today New York City operates 67 academic and 24 vocational high schools with a total enrollment of 280,000 students. Recently, New York City's school chancellor (sic), Harvey B. Scribner, proposed to the board of education, in what he described as a "declaration of intent," that most of the city's separate academic and vocational units be converted into comprehensive high schools "with all possible speed."

#### **School-Community Relations**

School District 14, a community school district in Brooklyn, New York, publishes a magazine, *District 14 Reports*, designed to improve communication between the schools and the community. Issued five times a year, the publication contains articles in English and Spanish on federal and state educational programs, district events, and

school innovations and activities. The magazine has a circulation of 20,000. For further information write to Audrey M. Galligen, Editor, *District 14 Reports*, 310 South 1st Street, Brooklyn, New York 11211.

#### **Life-Relevant Reading**

Under a Title I ESEA grant, teachers in Public School 19 of Yonkers, New York, produced their own 200-page reader which contains stories and photographs based upon the actual experiences of their pupils. Almost half of the school's fifth and sixth graders are reading two or more years below grade level. By using reading materials that are directly relevant to the life experiences of disadvantaged inner city children, it is hoped that serious reading deficiencies will be overcome. Parents and paraprofessionals, as well as teachers and pupils, were involved in producing the illustrated reader. The project will be evaluated at the end of the current school year according to the reading gains made by the participating pupils.

#### **Bussing and Learning**

The bussing of pupils has to be considered in most aspects of educational planning in Richmond, Virginia. Richmond teachers, therefore, are also attempting to use bussing to an advantage, pedagogically speaking, by making traveling from one side of the city to another an enriching experience. Some classes are engaged in making maps of the route which indicate important landmarks. Pupils carry their maps with them and

identify the landmarks as they pass them. Questions by the teacher, such as "Why do people live in one part of town and work in another part of town?" sharpen pupil skills in observation and improve their understanding of the community.

As observed by C. Fred Bateman, principal of Richmond's Northside Middle School:

When part of a child's day is spent on a bus, it is already an important time for him. We need only to use our imagination just a bit to make it also one of the most meaningful times of the day.

#### **Gallup Poll on Driver Education**

A Gallup survey has found that 83 percent of persons 18 years of age and older are in favor of legislation that would require the successful completion of a driver education course in order to graduate from high school.

#### **National Assessment**

A list of free publications describing the National Assessment of Educational Progress project may be obtained by writing to National Assessment, 201A Huron Towers, 2222 Fuller Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105.

#### **Teachers See Themselves as Children See Them**

Nashville teachers who want to improve their teaching are using the videotape self-appraisal approach. Participation is voluntary—no one but the teacher sees the tapes. The idea is for the teacher to

change as he sees the need for change. Elbert Brooks, director of the Nashville-Davidson County Schools, characterizes the self-appraisal technique as "the professional approach to improving instruction."

#### **A Stitch in Time**

A program which aims to redirect the child with a minor problem before the problem has time to "snowball" began this year in the Nashville-Davidson County Schools. Consultants from the Tennessee Child and Youth Development Institute are working with first grade teachers at the Glendale and Westmeade schools in dealing with behavioral and learning problems. A variety of approaches are being used in the Prevention-Intervention Program, including group processes and parent education. The objective is to develop a model to be used in first grade classrooms.

To orient teachers involved in the program, a prevention-intervention workshop was held prior to the opening of school this year. Funds for the project are being provided under Title III of the Emergency School Assistance Act.

#### **"Program Improvements" Program**

"Program Improvements," a systematic search for innovative instructional approaches, is now well under way in Milwaukee. In the current school year, a total of 69 experimental efforts to improve the school program are being funded by the Milwaukee Board of School Directors for a fixed period of time. Each project will be evaluated

at the end of the period. The purpose of "Program Improvements" is to enable an urban school system to meet more effectively the needs of pupils who represent a wide variety of cultural and social backgrounds.

Proposals for program improvements are initiated by teachers, curriculum specialists, and school-community representatives.

#### **School Farm**

Milwaukee pupils can see field cultivation practices and baby animals at Oak Ridge Farm, a new field-trip facility located near Eagle, Wisconsin. The farm is a cooperative venture of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Milwaukee Public Schools.

#### **Desegregation in Dallas**

A number of activities designed to help students, parents, and teachers during the process of desegregation are in progress this year in the Dallas Public Schools. Special activities for students include counseling—counselors are available via telephone every day from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.; an employment center which matches up students and jobs; special youth advisers who serve as an extension of the counseling and principals' offices, make home visitations, and encourage attendance; and a Student Human Relations Council in each school to develop school loyalty, pride, and spirit.

For parents there is an expanded volunteer program with a multi-cultural representation at each school; parent dialog groups to discuss

concerns and work out solutions; and rumor control centers to stop rumors before they become destructive.

Teacher advisers have been assisting new faculty members in a smooth transition from their old school to the new school by answering questions concerning curriculum, classroom methods, and extracurricular programs. To further expand communications with teachers, special teacher dialogue sessions have been held with the superintendent and his administrative staff. Human Resource Centers have been established in schools in various parts of the city. The centers contain materials and cultural exhibits designed to help teachers develop a genuine understanding of people with an ethnic background different from their own.

#### **New Dimensions in Zoo Education**

The Fort Worth Zoo is publishing a "monthly reader" dealing with zoo animals and zoo procedures. Entitled *Zebra Tales*, the booklet is issued without charge to subscribing teachers for distribution to their third, fourth, and fifth graders. Some purposes of *Zebra Tales* are: (a) to develop a sense of humane treatment toward animals, (b) to create an understanding of the habits and characteristics of animals and ecological relationships, and (c) to stimulate questions for further study.

#### **Outdoor Learning Center**

Plans for a center where Fort Worth pupils can engage in environmental studies projects are now under way. The

site for the center is an area of approximately 230 acres located 25 miles from Fort Worth on a lake. Fifth graders will use the center first, spending several days at the site during the school year. Other grades will be added as a curriculum is developed for them.

Made possible by a \$200,000 grant from the H. Ross Perot Foundation, to be matched with \$100,000 from the schools and various community groups, the Outdoor Learning Center will be operational by September 1972.

#### **Uneasy Transition**

A recent survey of 2,354 middle schools (with an 87 percent return from the questionnaire) found that 75 percent of the respondents have complete departmentalization and few schools have made an effort to ease the pupils' transition into the departmentalized program. Conclude the researchers: "This group of pupils is probably worse off than if they had remained in their home elementary schools, since they seem to be 'betwixt the devil and the deep.'"

#### **It's Elementary!**

Thirty-two Laurence Radiation Laboratory scientists are working with teachers at the Emerson Elementary School in Oakland, California, in presenting experiments in the fields of biology, physics, electricity, magnetism, and applied science.

The twice-a-week, five-hour-a-day program is described by Benjamin Jefferson, Emerson's principal, as "one in which the efforts of the scientific community are joined

with the teaching profession to spark the interest of third to fifth grade children—it's a magnificent learning experience for our teachers and students alike."

The scientists call their program "What Did You Learn in Science Today?"

#### **Curriculum Changes**

This is a year for changes in the junior high curriculum of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina. A semester of guidance has been introduced in grade 7; health is now taught as a separate semester course in grades 7 and 8 and includes sex education; vocational education is taught for one semester in grade 8; occupational economics is taught in grade 9; and the language arts-social studies block in grades 7 and 8 has been reduced from three periods to two periods.

According to Robert C. Hanes, assistant superintendent for secondary education, the changes are intended to help provide the student with: (a) general education experiences he needs to live an effective and purposeful life, (b) the specialized education to prepare him for his next step vocationally, and (c) opportunities to pursue individual interests. The vocational education course will permit students to select two or three occupational laboratories: business, trades, and helping professions.

#### **Civil Rights for Retarded**

A federal court has ordered Pennsylvania to provide all its retarded children between the ages of 6 and 21 with a free public education.

The ruling was the outcome of a suit against the state by the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children. The Association charged that Pennsylvania discriminated against retarded children by permitting school psychologists to determine whether a child was educable—if a child was found to be “uneducable and untrainable,” the school was, by Pennsylvania law, freed of its obligation to educate him. Pennsylvania must begin teaching, no later than September 1, 1972, every retarded child not now in school.

### **School Volunteer Program in Pittsburgh**

Fifty-two public elementary schools in Pittsburgh now have school volunteer programs with the number of volunteers per school varying from two to 46. At its inception in 1966, the Pittsburgh School Volunteer Association (SVA) focused on training reading and math tutors for work with children on a one-to-one basis outside the classroom. Since then, however, many additional kinds of service have developed to meet the needs of individual schools. They include: library aides, kindergarten aides, poetry readers, high school tutors, and aides in good grooming and creative dramatics.

No two schools have identical programs.

### **New Department in Tucson Schools**

A Department of Learning Development has been established by the Tucson Public Schools. The department will attempt to discover and make available infor-

mation concerning learning theory and its implementation. In addition, the department will coordinate in-service education pertaining to learning.

### **Behavioral Objectives**

Nearly 4,000 behavioral objectives and over 25,000 test items based on the objectives have been written by teachers in 30 suburban Chicago school districts. The objectives and items are in elementary and secondary language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics. They have recently been published and are available at cost to interested teachers and schools. Information on the publications can be obtained from the Institute for Educational Research, 1400 West Maple Avenue, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515.

### **Innovative Program**

In the past three years, two studies of the Lincolnwood, Illinois, Schools have been completed, a self-evaluation and a survey by the Midwest Educational Consultant Service. Both studies recommended further examination of the concept of individualized instruction. The Midwest Consultants in their closing summary stated:

Individualized instruction is more than a simple tutoring procedure. It means instruction that is designed for the individual rather than the entire class. At times the individual will receive personal attention from the teacher, at other times he may be a member of a large group.

The Midwest Consultants commended Lincolnwood for its fine educational program, but suggested that differentiated staffing and variable student grouping were innova-

tive ideas with “considerable promise” for individualizing instruction.

The foregoing is the background for Project Lima (Lincolnwood Individualized Learning by Multi-Age Grouping) involving 153 randomly selected Rutledge Hall pupils subdivided into three groups containing 17 eight-year-olds, 17 nine-year-olds, and 17 ten-year-olds. Each of the groups has two teachers, a student teacher, and a teacher aide. Art, physical education, and music teachers work with the groups on a common time basis, freeing the Project staff for a common planning period each day.

In addition to the main objective of developing an individualized learning program, other Project Lima goals are to foster a cooperative attitude toward learning and to increase professional competency in the field of education. Evaluation of the project will be in the areas of academic achievement, pupil attitudes, attendance, parents' feelings about the school, and professional competency.

### **Nursery-Kindergarten Curriculum Guide**

In Wilmette, Illinois, where there has been a two-year nursery-kindergarten program for many years, teachers and the administrative staff have developed a new curriculum guide based on recent research on how young children learn. The guide is organized around five major goals—the development of self-concept, perceptual skills, language skills, conceptual skills, and motor skills. Activities, resources, and achievement levels are included for

each goal. The 128-page *Nursery Kindergarten Curriculum Guide* may be ordered for \$5.00 from the Department of Instructional Services, Wilmette Public Schools, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

#### All-Day Kindergarten

Of the 9,766 U.S. school systems offering kindergarten, nearly 1,300 have full-day sessions. Hawaii has had full-day sessions since 1955.

#### Action Line

A special telephone has been installed at the administration building of the Atlanta Public Schools for citizens to call for information about the school system. The Atlanta Urban League is cooperating with the schools in their effort

toward improved school-community communication.

#### Workbenches Big Hit in Kindergarten

Workbenches, tools, and wood have been installed in kindergarten rooms in the Minneapolis Public Schools. In addition to providing an excellent learning activity for children, and one to which they react with obvious delight, the workbench project has been a cooperative venture between elementary and secondary schools; vocational high school students remodeled 40 old high school benches for the kindergartens.

#### What's Playing at the Movies?

Three Atlanta movie theaters have a new policy of scheduling special student per-

formances of films that teachers identify as having value in connection with ongoing learning activities. Performances are limited to students and teachers and there is a special student price.

A film may be either one currently playing at one of the theaters or a special film requested by a teacher or teachers.

#### Out of the Past

In the Report of the President's Commission on National Goals for the 1960's, John W. Gardner, then President of the Carnegie Corporation, wrote that "there should be various forms of grouping by ability from the earliest years of school," and that "every school should have a testing program beginning in grade one if not before." □

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