

Schooling As It Might Be

Robert R. Leeper

EDUCATION today may be at one of history's great watersheds. Hopefully we are entering an era of healing and of constructive advance which lies beyond the period of abrasive confrontation through which we have passed. From the vantage point of the present, let us concern ourselves with the question: Will it be school as usual or as it might be? This question is especially critical in relation to supervision and to the improvement of the instructional program. Through some means which may not yet have been discovered, we must find a way to use the best available experience and insight so that the direction of flow may be turned away from "school as usual" and toward "schooling as it might be."

Such a definitive change of flow will tax the very being of those who engage in supervisory activity and in the improvement of instruction and curriculum.

Certain trends in education today have placed great difficulty in the way of democratic supervision and of cooperative curriculum planning and improvement. The role of the curriculum worker and the supervisor, always somewhat tenuous and sometimes badly interpreted in practice, has become con-

fused and uncertain. Processes once used successfully in curriculum development and in supervision are now questioned. Often these processes are viewed in negative ways. Modern advances in improving supervisory techniques have yet to attract understanding and sympathetic acceptance either by school people or the general public. Many curricular innovations are still largely untried and unutilized in schools and schooling.

Such developments should be of crucial interest to all persons who work directly in developing and improving the instructional program in schools, whether they are in the elementary or secondary classroom or are engaged in preservice or in-service work in education.

In the exploration of the new watershed that may now lie before us, we must divest ourselves of many of the concepts and practices that supervisors and curriculum workers have used in the past. In their place, we must find or create new concepts and initiate new practices. Only so can the willing allegiance of the profession and of the general public be won and thus make schooling become what it might be. The emergent role of the curriculum worker and the super-

visor must be clarified. Their selection, recruitment, and preparation must be critically examined in light of this role. It is essential that an adequate conception of such service functions be made evident.

If, as we believe, the curriculum worker and the supervisor are to continue to be key persons, initiating, anticipating, and participating in change, then new and more effective techniques for supporting and maintaining these functions must be developed. The supervisor and the curriculum worker must consciously seek a meaningful grasp of the old as well as the new processes of supervision and curriculum development. They must attain confident mastery of the means for democratic involvement of all persons affected by change from its very inception.

They also need to be able to bring into the instructional program many of the findings and insights of the scholarly disciplines. Though many persons in the fifties and sixties labored mightily to express in suitable instructional terms and to incorporate into the curriculum the work of the disciplines, much remains to be done in this field. Perhaps if the supervisory and the curriculum development staffs of schools had been involved at an early point in these studies, the effectiveness of these efforts might have been greatly enhanced.

The curriculum worker and the supervisor must also be extremely sensitive to the findings and implications of the affective domain in schooling. They must introduce and champion and sustain a humane approach at all levels and in all aspects of education.

Educational Leadership in this new year will help to influence the flow of ideas and practices in this great watershed. The issues are designed to clarify, illustrate, and interpret trends, techniques, and developments that should "make a difference" in schooling.

Issues for 1972-73

● *Beyond Confrontation* is the topic for October. Writers here take into account many of the lessons, some positive and some

negative, which persons in school work have learned in the climate of protest and conflict which has prevailed in our institutions and society in recent years. By taking these lessons into account, these contributors may help our readers gain insight into the needs and opportunities of the new era of healing and progress which lies before us.

● *Resource Use at the Local Level* will be featured in November. Long a basic interest of ASCD, "resource use" is now receiving renewed emphasis, prompted by ecological concerns. Writers in this issue will identify many resources, some valued and some neglected, which are generally available at the local level for use by school people. The focus of these writers will be upon the need for alertness in recognizing the hidden value in the resource and also the need for inventiveness and flexibility in its utilization, especially at the local school level.

● *Education for Career Development* is the December theme. Traditional concepts of the school's role in preparing young people for the world of work are changing. Instead of being an identifiable segment of the school program, career education is being viewed as an integral part of the whole educational program, beginning in the primary grades as a broad introduction and extending to a more specific career orientation in later grades. Urgent needs in this area have brought about new concepts of career development, new research and planning efforts, and an entirely new set of priorities. This issue will deal with some of these factors.

● *Curriculum Management: A Panacea?* is the topic for January. New techniques for planning, describing, and evaluating curricula are being made available to school systems. It is important that our readers become aware of many aspects of these new techniques, such as their promises, their problems, and their current status on the American educational scene. This issue will attempt to examine some of the underlying influences of "curriculum management."

● *Shifts in University/School Role* will be explored in February. Why are colleges

and universities today under such widespread attack? Is it because of any inherent "goodness" or "badness" in the institutions themselves or simply because of the urgent needs arising through the rapidly changing nature of society? In a positive way, universities in many respects, today, are conceptualizing new means of fulfilling what appear to be legitimate ends. Yet the question remains: What are appropriate shifts in the role of the university as it strives to relate to the schools and the society of our present day?

Writers in this issue will attempt to consider what ought to be high priority goals of the university. Then each will explore certain areas of the university's program and how these areas might be modified in light of what is happening in other segments of education and society.

● *Innovation: An Ongoing Process* is the topic for March. Education, whether as process or as institution, is a highly complex phenomenon. Because education relates so intimately both to living in the present and to "preparation for the future," constant vigilance must be maintained so that schooling is exquisitely responsive to the needs of the individual and of the society.

Because of the complexity of the phenomenon of education, the initiation and maintenance of innovative instructional programs require a thorough understanding by school people of several components of such an approach. An examination of these several factors will be made by the March contributors.

● *Whatever Happened to Curriculum Content Revision?* Post-Sputnik concerns led to massive federally- and foundation-funded efforts at curriculum revision. Concentrated efforts by a host of scholars resulted in new programs such as PSSC, a "new" math, and new approaches in social studies, language arts, and foreign language. These reorganizations of skill and content fields gave promise of significantly improving American education. What has happened to these efforts? Writers for the April issue are being asked to look at the current status

of some of these efforts and to draw implications from them for schools of today. These programs should be put in historical perspective, bringing them up to date. The articles should be informative and should point out implications of new trends and skills.

● *Methods Can Make a Difference* will be the topic for May. Contributors will focus on teaching methods that have been successful in improving learning. We have so often in the past presented innovative programs for improving teaching and learning, yet usually we have failed to place emphasis upon the method which has tended to make the program "successful" in the best sense of the word. Writers in this issue will attempt to identify some of the methods that have left their mark upon the "experiencing and undergoing" which have always characterized successful teaching and learning.

In beginning this 1972-73 "watershed" year, we would like to comment upon an innovation that is now being tried. The themes for the eight issues for this year were publicized in the journal last spring. An open invitation was included for any would-be contributors on these topics to send in their papers for consideration and possible use.

The response to this open invitation has been phenomenal. Numerous manuscripts have been read and the very best of these are under final consideration for the issues this year. For the present we will continue our policy of inviting a few writers for each issue. Along with these articles, however, will be included a choice selection of the "unsolicited" materials.

This is another way in which the Publications Committee is attempting to make the journal and other aspects of the publications program of ASCD more closely responsive to and identified with the needs, interests, and concerns of the Association's membership and subscribers. Again we look forward confidently to the excitement and the inspiration of a good publication year.

—ROBERT R. LEEPER, Editor, *Educational Leadership*.

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