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BEGINNING with this issue, Robert McKean and Bob Taylor will co-edit this column carrying on the work of Laurel N. Tanner and Daniel Tanner. Readers are invited to send possible items for "News Notes" to: Robert C. McKean or Bob L. Taylor, School of Education, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80302. We are especially interested in descriptions of innovative programs, curricular developments, research reports, new materials, and useful supervisory approaches.

Americans Lack Musical Skills

While Americans can sing familiar songs and maintain simple rhythmic patterns, few can sing on pitch, improvise, or sight read. The results of the National Assessment of Musical Performance, which asked a sample of young people, ages 9, 13, 17, and 26 to 35, to perform elementary musical tasks, have been released. Major findings of this study showed:

1. Most American youth can follow the rhythm of a

familiar song, but many cannot sing on pitch.

2. Most subjects found it difficult to sing one part in a round even when the song was one they knew.

3. About half of those sampled could repeat a rhythmic pattern they had heard only twice.

4. Very few young people were able to repeat melodic or harmonic patterns of unfamiliar musical material.

5. While most subjects could improvise a basic rhythmic accompaniment, few could improvise a harmony.

6. Very few of the young people could sight read even simple lines of music. Respondents were asked to read lines of music that consisted of no more than two or three different notes in a simple arrangement of only six measures. Never more than 12 percent of the subjects in any one group of examinees were able to do this.

In comparisons based on background variables, the greatest differences were with respect to parental education and types of community. Sub-

jects with better educated parents tended to perform better, and those who were from affluent urban communities performed above the national average. Blacks and whites attained about the same success; however, blacks outperformed whites on exercises which involved repeating a rhythm and improvising a rhythmic accompaniment. While females generally did better than males, the differences were not great. Finally, the regional differences in average performance were minimal.

Students Plan Curriculum

In response to a student proposal, one week of regular school time was devoted by Cherry Creek High School (Englewood, Colorado) to the "Wingspread Program" during the spring 1974 semester. A wide variety of experiences was planned to meet the following goals: (a) to exploit

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the curiosity inherent in all humans, (b) to promote better human relations, (c) to develop personal talents, (d) to make greater use of a variety of available resources, and (e) to increase the student's confidence in himself and in the educational process.

Wingspread presented students the opportunity to select freely from one to five activities to occupy 30 hours of their time during five school days in April. More than 300 learning experiences were offered in three basic patterns of (a) one full-week activity of 30 hours, (b) two half-day activities of 15 hours each, or (c) five one-day activities of 6 hours each.

Teachers and interested adults in the community presented courses in the following areas: Concentration—study in depth (for example, tutorial programs in French, remedial work in math, mini-courses in computer programming, karate, movie making, and small appliance repair); Introductions—introduction to areas of study and/or leisure (for example, career shadowing in aviation, law, journalism, and social work—previews of course offerings next year); and Groups and Field—social development through cooperation in a group and/or field experience (for example, Denver area field trips, group off-campus study of another culture, language camps, and winter survival training). A large number of independent study requests were fulfilled (for example, serve as teacher assistant in an elementary school, work in a nursing home, week observation of police activity, study ski patrol activities, research at the University of Colorado, volunteer work at a hospital, assist veteri-

narian, one week of flight instruction, tracking immature golden eagles on Pawnee grasslands, back packing trip, and travel in Peru for one week).

A spokesman for Cherry Creek High School, Lucy Whisenant, Vice Principal for Instruction, reports that the evaluation of the Wingspread program which was carried out by the students clearly indicated strong satisfaction and support by students, parents, and school staff. "This program initiated by students, largely planned and promoted by students, and evaluated by students represents a valuable addition to our total curriculum," she said.

Shop Students Do Civic Project

Many a cattle feeder, chicken house, and summer cottage have been built by shop classes, but the 11th and 12th grade students at Poolesville, Maryland, remodeled the town hall. The community requested that the high school students take on the project and provided the materials. The instructor, Berley Pruitt, stated that the town hall was old and dilapidated, with much wasted space. About 60 boys worked three hours every morning on the turn-of-the-century building which was once a bank. Extensive remodeling was done including extending the upper story the full length of the building to create an enlarged second floor meeting room and building a fire escape for the structure.

School Television Programming

The Agency for Instructional Television has been established to facilitate the development of significant and effective school television pro-

gramming. The AIT, a Canadian-American agency, was created by chief school officers of several states in the United States and provinces in Canada. Its initial cooperative effort, "Bread and Butterflies," is a series of 15-minute color programs on career development for nine to twelve year olds, now ready for classroom use. Information about this and other curriculum projects is available from Edwin G. Cohen, AIT, Box A, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

English as a Second Language

The National Multimedia Center for Adult Education (NMMC) has announced the publication of a selected bibliography listing materials for use in teaching English as a second language. The *ESL Bibliography* is categorized according to reading and grade levels, and includes teacher guides, student texts and workbooks, and other teaching aids. A monthly newsletter is available which features an alerting service on current journal articles and publications of interest to adult educators; it also includes a roster of job openings in adult education and a list of available personnel. For information on obtaining bibliographies, newsletters, and other materials contact: National Multimedia Center, Montclair State College, 848 Valley Rd., Upper Montclair, New Jersey 07043.

"Personal Problems," Major Objective of High School Psychology

In a national survey of high school psychology teaching conducted by Louis Snellgrove, Lambuth College (Tennessee), both teachers and students ranked "Personal

Problems" as the ranking course objective for high school psychology. The questionnaire survey randomly sampled 1,000 teachers selected from the National Science Teachers Association mailing list. The response was 43.8 percent. Only 30 percent of those responding were full-time psychology teachers. For 74 percent of the teachers, the course length was one semester, and only 20 percent of the responding teachers were psychology majors. A copy of the survey results may be ordered from Louis Snellgrove, Lambuth College, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Non-Directive Supervision

"Non-directive supervision is at least as effective as, if not more effective than, directive supervision, and . . . less defensive behavior is apt to be evoked as a harmful side effect," so concludes Thomas H. Weeks of Butler University writing in the *Indiana ASCD News*. Such supervisory behavior utilizes the non-directive counseling approach in order to encourage the teacher to make his own discoveries about needed changes in his teaching and to come to his own decisions about next steps. It is said to be especially useful in conjunction with videotape recording and playback.

Socioeconomic Status Dominant Factor in Achievement

Socioeconomic status appeared to account for 10 to 25 percent of the variation in student achievement scores. This was a finding of a recent study conducted by Westat, Inc., of Rockville, Maryland, for National Assessment of Educational Progress. Westat

analyzed 53 major studies for background factors which affected student achievement. Major conclusions of the study were:

1. Economic background appeared to be the major factor in educational achievement.

2. Sex played some part in academic outcomes, but it seemed to be more important at some ages and in some subject areas than others.

3. Since race was related to economic background, it introduced differences which were not completely explained by economic conditions.

4. While ability did affect achievement, it was influenced by socioeconomic conditions and other background factors.

5. School differences did affect achievement, but since they reflected student background, they were identified as separate influences.

6. Other factors found to influence academic outcomes were family relations, self-concept, ambitions, job attitudes, and plans for additional education.

The Westat report, *Associations Between Educational Outcomes and Background Variables: A Review of Selected Literature*, can be ordered from NAEP, 300 Lincoln Tower, 1860 Lincoln St., Denver, Colorado 80203, for \$4.00.

Help for Foreign-Born Students

The enrollment of foreign-born students in the Seattle Public Schools is growing at a rapid rate. Last fall, nearly a thousand students with limited command of the English language were identified in the system. The dis-

trict provides daily TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Foreign Language) classes in schools where there are enough of these students enrolled. In the system, there are approximately 20 TESOL teachers serving as itinerant instructors or as part of the regular building faculty. When the student leaves the TESOL class, he is pretty much on his own unless regular faculty become involved.

Many teachers have found ways of using these students as resources in their classes as they improve their ability to communicate in the difficult new language of English. For example, one reading teacher found having the foreign students in the reading lab gave her remedial reading students the opportunity to enjoy the ego-boosting which comes from being able to teach someone else. Thus, the ingenious teacher gained a resource rather than added a problem.

Instructional Ideas Supermarket

At least 100 new ideas on how to improve the learning process from kindergarten through high school were the contents of an "Instructional Ideas Supermarket" held last spring on the campus of Southern Oregon College, Ashland. John McCollum, SOC professor, served as coordinator of the display, said to be the first of its kind in Southern Oregon. According to the *Oregon ASCD Newsletter*, curriculum ideas included projects representing almost every instructional area of the school program. Curriculum directors in all the school districts in the region were contacted for possible sources of exhibits.



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The "supermarket" hours were planned from 2 to 3:30 p.m. for shopping for ideas and from 3:30 to 6 p.m. for in-depth presentations by project demonstrators to those especially interested.

Educational Expectations Linked to Delinquency

This was a conclusion of a recent analysis of juvenile delinquency done by the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. The study was based on interviews with a sample of 837 male adolescents from a high delinquency area of Chicago. According to this report, the inner-city delinquent has little confidence in his chances for succeeding in society. He expects failure in the conventional pursuits of life. From an investigation of over 120 factors, it was found that youth in trouble with the law contrasted with others in two significant ways. First, they were more pessimistic than others with respect to their chances of finishing high school. Young males who believed that their chances of finishing school were limited committed nearly three times as many delinquent acts as those youths who believed

their chances of finishing were good.

Second, the more delinquent youth expected to take jobs with low status and prestige in adult life. Here, a link was made between pessimism and delinquency. The study revealed that this pessimistic attitude toward the completion of high school was prevalent as early as age 10. Boys of 10 to 12 who believed that they had little chance of completing high school were significantly more delinquent than other youth. Of great importance was the finding that in measuring attitudes of the youth over a two-year period, the delinquents' pessimism about their educational futures preceded their later law breaking rather than the reverse.

Wastebasket Archaeology

Sixth graders in Goleta, California, dug up a wastebasket buried in the school yard and examined its contents (candy wrappers, pop cans, erasers). Their teachers, students from Dos Pueblos High School, then had them develop a picture of the civilization which left the artifacts behind.

Cross-age teaching is a

technique used in the Dos Pueblos archaeology course. The high school instructor believes that by teaching others, his high school students gain an opportunity to apply what they themselves have learned.

Minnesota ASCD Uses Systems Approach To Set Goals

Culminating a systematic, year-long process involving a formal needs assessment among state membership, a series of workshop sessions, and subsequent formulation of goal statements, the Minnesota ASCD Executive Board formally adopted a set of goals for the organization. These goals have been translated into ten indicators which promise to provide impetus, direction, and substance to the activities of the association during coming years. The complete description of the goal development process including rationale, organization, and procedures is available in *Organizational Planning: A Systems Approach* by Charles Speiker and Anthony Buhl for \$2.75 a copy. Write to Dwight Lindbloom, Principal, Oak Grove Junior High School, Bloomington Public Schools, 1300 West 106th St., Bloomington, Minnesota 55431.

Local History Syllabus

A strong belief that local history contributes to reality in dealing with a larger history led V. L. Fairfield more than a decade ago to develop, test, and revise a module dealing with local history for use in the required American History course in Bloomington High School. According to the *Illinois ASCD Newsletter*, the most recent edition (17 pp., paperback), *Syllabus of Local History*, may be purchased by

writing Mr. Fairfield, Bloomington High School, Bloomington, Illinois 61701.

Women's Studies—A High School Course

Women's Studies, a senior high school seminar, will be offered at Hamilton High School, Milwaukee, in the fall 1974. The seminar will focus on women in history, on woman today—here and abroad, and on the changing roles of both men and women in our society. The overall

objectives for the seminar are broader. Stereotyping of students has been a problem in our society; this has been especially true for women. This sexism of the school curriculum needs to be counteracted and altered. Both boys and girls need to understand and appreciate their own roles, the roles of the opposite sex, and the interdependence between them. Every student should have the opportunity to develop to the optimal potential. □

Index to Advertisers

Allyn and Bacon, Inc.	72
CAM Dissemination/Title III	68
CIDOC	56
The Continental Press	44
The Gryphon Press	76
Harper & Row, Publishers	60
Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.	66
Houghton Mifflin Company	Cover 4
Imperial International Learning	74
J. B. Lippincott Company	58
McKnight Publishing Company	64
National Instructional TV Center	50
The Psychological Corporation	Cover 2
Quickhand	78
Scholastic Book Services	70
Scott, Foresman and Company	54
University of California, Los Angeles	42
University of Florida Press	62
The Viking Press	52
Xerox University Microfilms	48

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