

ROBERT C. MCKEAN*
BOB L. TAYLOR

New High School Adults

THE NEW Maryland Age of Majority law reduced the age of majority to 18, and it is proving to have a number of ramifications for school policies. Under the law, at 18 a person has the legal right to vote, marry, drink, drive a car, and serve in the military; hence, 18-year-olds are adults by law and should be treated as such by the school system. These high school students are assuming certain decision-making responsibilities previously reserved for parents.

Now, students sign forms which previously required parental signatures, such as report cards, permission slips for field trips, part-time attendance, tutoring, and absence notes, plus excuses from physical education activities. This means that school regulations must be revised. While the law is clear with respect to students' rights, it leaves the school system's responsibility to parents more hazy.

Students are still living at home, and the parents are providing their full financial support. Naturally, the parents wish to be informed when their child wants to transfer from one school to another or has been exposed to an infectious disease. As the law stands, the 18-year-old student would need

to sign a release for his or her parents to receive this kind of information.

The plan which the Montgomery County Public Schools is working on is to have the student inform the school when he or she becomes 18. Then a form letter is sent to the parents informing them of the changes the student's age of majority will have upon school-parent relations. Students could then routinely sign a release for parents to receive these kinds of information. Probably in many situations there will not be any great change of practice, but it is a legal technicality for which school districts must provide.

Sex Biases in P.E. Programs

A study was conducted at the University of Iowa during the spring of 1974 on sex discrimination in the public schools of Iowa in the programs of physical education and interscholastic athletics. Discrimination on the basis of sex was defined as the showing of partiality or favoritism in treatment of members of one sex over members of the other sex.

A sample of 80 schools was selected from the 467 public high schools in Iowa by using a stratified random sample selection procedure so that

each of the four classifications of schools and each of four geographical sections in the state received equal representation.

Some of the findings with respect to selected practices in school physical education programs were:

1. Physical education programs in 96 percent of the schools were separated administratively on the basis of sex.
2. Class procedures and requirements utilized within the separate programs were very similar for both boys and girls.
3. Classes in physical education for boys met on the average of 2.5 times per week while girls' programs met 2.4 times per week.
4. The budget for the separate programs was divided equally between the programs.
5. Coeducational classes in physical education were never offered in 48 percent of the schools.

Findings relating to interscholastic school programs were:

1. 96 percent of the athletic programs were divided into two separate programs for the sexes.
2. 100 percent had a male athletic director administering the two programs.

* Robert C. McKean and Bob L. Taylor; both Professor of Education, University of Colorado, Boulder

3. 98 percent hired men to coach and officiate sports for girls.

4. 59 percent hired women to coach teams for girls and 37 percent to officiate girls' games.

5. 2 percent hired women to coach teams for boys and 10 percent to officiate boys' games.

6. 92 percent used the same salary schedule for coaches of the same sports for both sexes.

7. Coaches of teams for boys were paid more only 8 percent of the time.

While the findings are not particularly surprising based on the history of athletics in the United States, it is expected that as interest in athletics increases among females, the degree of difference between the programs for boys and girls will diminish.

A Bubble School

Last year, for the 145 students at the Mountain School Project in Walker County, Georgia, living in a bubble was a reality and represented the culmination of two years' hard work by their teachers, principal, administrators, and themselves. The bubble consists of twin membranes, each a laminated, vinyl film-nylon, fabric-vinyl film sandwich. Between the two membranes are about eight inches of air. Technically, it is an air support structure, but it is more affectionately known as the bubble. Students and teachers gathered just prior to the 1974-75 school year to "blow up the school." They helped anchor the structure to its concrete foundation with cables and inflate it for the first time.

After a school year of service, the bubble has a carpeted floor, a platform housing the library, lockers, desks, and other equipment. It has survived its first winter and withstood the snows and winds that whipped about on top of Lookout Mountain. When it was decided that a school was needed to serve the high school students of this area, it was

found that the bubble was the cheapest temporary structure that could be put up to serve until a permanent building could be built. Because students helped in the construction of the building from pouring the concrete foundation to blowing up the school, they have a proprietary interest in it. There has been no vandalism, and they have taken an interest in helping to keep the doors set so that the air pressure is maintained. Funds for the experimental building were provided by the TVA which sometimes uses temporary structures to house schools displaced by power projects. Also, the school is in its third year as a federal ESEA Title III project, funded through the Georgia Department of Education, to develop an innovative curriculum.

Cigarette Smoking Among Washington Students

A joint study conducted by the offices of the State Department of Social and Health Services and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Washington showed that fewer twelfth-grade male students in state high schools were smoking cigarettes.

The survey included sixth, ninth, and twelfth grade students in 1967, 1970, and 1973. In 1973, 31.9 percent of the twelfth-grade boys reported smoking cigarettes which was a six percent drop from 1970. While the twelfth-grade boys dropped, the sixth- and ninth-grade boys smoked at the same rate as in previous years.

On the other hand, smoking increased among girls at all grade levels surveyed since 1967. More girls are reported smoking in the twelfth grade than boys, and almost as many sixth- and ninth-grade girls now smoke as boys in those grades.

Smoking education efforts are increasing in the Wash-

ington schools and communities with some high schools offering smoking clinics for students. Students receive academic credit for attending the clinics which help them understand the smoking habit and how to change it.

Omaha Schools Provide Job Placement Center

A Job Placement Center provided by the Omaha schools is located in Technical High School. The Center operates like an employment agency but does not charge a fee. The primary clients are students in the eleventh and twelfth grades and people of all ages who are out of school. There is no maximum age limit for those who may be helped by the Center, and since the Center has been in operation they have placed two job seekers in their early sixties.

The Center staff makes regular visits to all the Omaha high schools, and the office is kept open 12 months a year. Much of the work in the Center is based on job counseling to explain the world of work or what a specific job involves. There are students looking for work who really have no idea what it is they want to do or how to go about looking for a job. Many local businesses send out regular bulletins on vacancies. Also, the Center regularly sends out letters to businesses and graduates to learn of their employment needs.

Options for H. S. Graduation

In Prince George's County, Maryland, students in high school have several options available to fulfill graduation requirements. These are:

1. Completing diploma requirements in June or August after the junior year or January of senior year with or without attending summer school.

2. Attending the full four years or more than four years on an approved released time pro-

gram and graduating when requirements are met.

3. Graduating from the Prince George's County Evening High School Program.

4. Attending college and high school at the same time during the senior year.

Under State Department of Education regulations, students in the following categories may be considered for a waiver of the four-year, full-time attendance requirement:

1. Students for whom the typical full school day creates or aggravates problems of personal, family, or social adjustment, or of physical health.

2. Students whose financial need requires an early entry into the labor market.

3. Students who have shown a vocational readiness at an early age.

4. Students who have demonstrated by their scholastic achievement an academic precociousness.

In order for a student to be considered for an optional high school program, the parents must meet with the student's guidance counselor along with the student to discuss which of the optional programs, if any, is suitable. Following this initial move, each school has a committee which reviews the applications. If the school committee does not believe that the student is suited for an optional program for graduation, the student and parents may appeal for reconsideration to the Director of Pupil Services.

Metric Is Coming!

As we approach the introduction of the metric system, our feelings range from "This is both expensive and ridiculous" to "It is a simple, logical system which will be better in the long run." An English observer, who has experienced the transition to the metric system, stated that it was simple and easy for both children and teachers and that teachers would have more time to teach new topics after the

metric system becomes common usage. Below are some guidelines from the Spokane Public Schools for teaching the metric measurement system:

1. Give students experience in measuring in order to develop understanding of the metric system.

2. Focus on nonstandard units of measurement and allow the metric system to evolve as one set of standard units of measurement.

3. Immerse students in the metric system without conversion to the customary system or vice versa.

4. Develop the relationship of the metric system to our decimal numeration system.

5. Shift to metric measurement as the measurement system, gradually, during the transition period.

6. Avoid emphasis on vocabulary when teaching the metric system.

7. Introduce only those units and vocabulary needed for a particular measuring situation.

8. Convert from one commonly used metric unit to another commonly used metric unit.

9. Teach students which instruments to select for different measurement purposes.

10. Develop the concept that the result of any measurement is never an exact number. All measurement is approximate.

11. Emphasize estimations, first with nonstandard units and later with standard units.

12. Introduce rough conversions for those adults and students who already know our present measuring system.

13. Utilize the metric system wherever appropriate in all areas of the curriculum.

14. Discourage the use of common fractions when using metric units.

15. Give more emphasis to exponential notation and to scientific notation at the upper elementary level.

Individualized Instruction Through Alternative Programs

The range of differences which exist within the Greenville County School District (South Carolina) is being met by a variety of instructional

programs and available alternative schools. An effort is being made to match the child with an educational environment in which he or she can continue to learn. A number of community agencies have been incorporated into the overall operation, but the commitment is to provide individualized instruction through a variety of alternative programs.

A number of alternative programs have been developed to provide for individual needs. Reading laboratories have been organized to provide for students with reading problems. A youth study center is operated for students who have adjustment or psychological problems. A districtwide fine arts center provides for artistically talented students, and three centers offer special preparation in the vocations. Among the alternatives for teen-age mothers is a special center which can be attended during pregnancy. Orthopedically handicapped students are provided for at the Shriner's Hospital while students who are moderately physically and mentally handicapped are given learning opportunities in a special center. Many of these students are placed in jobs for a portion of the school day.

These special programs have been instituted to extend the opportunities available to the total school population. Through alternative programs, the school district has identified and accepted the responsibility to provide for each child.

Talking Bus a Proven Success

Back in 1968, the Nicholas County School District (West Virginia) with Title I decided to put a 38 passenger bus on the road equipped with a listening station at each seat. A multi-channel console was installed behind the driver's seat enabling a teacher to play planned programs correlated

with classroom activities. Students who wanted to catch up could utilize their bus time by listening to the tapes, and every morning they were able to hear the morning news from the local radio station before they arrived at school.

Students volunteer for the approximately half-hour ride to and from schools, and most of the time there is a waiting list of students who prefer the "talking bus." Studies have shown that the riders of the bus improve in their school performance.

The bus is used for extended field trips and on education tours. Many subjects including remedial reading have been taught on the road via the earphones. A recording studio in the high school helps in preparing tapes and materials for routine and special assignments. Other tapes are bought or borrowed. In addition, during the school day, the electrically heated bus is parked alongside the high school and is utilized as a special listening classroom.

Back in 1968, the bus was one of three in the country, but now it is no longer a novelty. However, it is good to know that an innovation of this kind has stood the test of time and that it is a functioning part of a school program.

Supervisor's Exchange

A new newsletter, *Supervisor's Exchange*, grew out of a Special Session held at the ASCD Annual Conference in New Orleans last March. This newsletter is for practicing student teacher supervisors in ASCD, and it is projected for three issues a year. Those who would like copies of the newsletter and plans for additional meetings of the supervisors at ASCD conferences, send \$1.00 to Dr. Gerald Ponder or Dr. Walter Doyle, Department of Education, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203.

New Materials for Curriculum Workers

Some new materials for curriculum workers have come to our attention. These will be summarized here with a short description, plus addresses for additional information.

- A *Topical Index to Elementary Social Studies Materials* is available from Social Studies Consultant, Area IX Educational Resources Center, 2604 W. Locust, Davenport, Iowa 52804.

- Research for Better Schools, Inc., has developed a number of instructional packages aimed at providing educators with a framework of

practical strategies and techniques which would help in such tasks as: assessing district capabilities, clarifying district goals, and evaluating programs. Further information is available from Office of Public Information, Research for Better Schools, Inc., Suite 1700, 1700 Market St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103.

- Oregon ASCD has published a number of Curriculum Bulletins. Of particular interest is *Heritage of America's Youth* which is a source book for teachers on the Bicentennial. Information about these publications is available from Oregon ASCD Curriculum Bulletin, P.O. Box 421, Salem, Oregon 97308.

- Jonka Enterprises, P.O. Box 19002, Oakland, California, has brought out some new publications by Kathrynne Favors on human rights.

- The University of North Carolina at Greensboro Humanistic Education Project has produced a number of occasional papers concerned with the social studies. Inquiries should be directed to Dr. Dale L. Brubaker or Dr. James B. Macdonald, 103 Curry Hall, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina 27412. □

Index to Advertisers

American Bar Association	74	Harper & Row, Publishers	64
Area Vo-Tech Institute	72	Houghton Mifflin Company	62
Center for Grading / Learning Alternatives .	70	J. B. Lippincott Company	68
Continental Press	56	The Psychological Corporation	Cover 2
Education Commission of the States	66	The University of Chicago Press, <i>School Review</i>	76

Copyright © 1975 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.