

News Notes

by Robert C. McKean and Bob L. Taylor

Are Women Principals More Effective?

In an investigation of 189 elementary schools, Neal Gross, University of Pennsylvania, and Anne B. Trask, Educational Testing Service, found that pupil and teacher performance is usually higher in schools having women principals. They decided that the longer teaching experience of the women principals was the major reason for the superior performance.

The study found that women exerted greater control over faculty members; expressed greater concern for individual differences among students; and put greater emphasis on social growth. More than twice as many men as women have become principals before the age of 36, and four times as many men have been appointed to principalships within 10 years after becoming teachers.

The percentage of women principals has declined in the past 50 years. In 1928, women accounted for 55 percent of the elementary school administrators, but by 1971 only 21 percent of these administrators were women.

For further information: *The Sex Factor and the Management of Schools*, John Wiley & Sons, 605 Third Ave., New York, New York 10016.

Student Rights Handbook

The Leon County School System, Tallahassee, Florida,

has prepared a "Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook." Its guidelines for student behavior have been developed at a time when there is considerable concern regarding discipline in the schools, and when the state and federal courts are advising that students are citizens with full legal rights to due process. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school board members participated in the joint school-community effort.

The project culminated in a series of special public hearings and workshops involving school and community personnel before the handbook was adopted by the school system. The handbook was field-tested on students, parents, and instructional staff before final printing to ensure that the content was readable, understandable, and of interest to the targeted population.

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How To Use a Consultant

Most schools find no shortage of consultants willing to offer assistance of many kinds. However, the problem of how to best use the consultant persists. *Promising Practices in Oregon Education*, a publication of the Oregon Department of Education, has updated and reprinted a set of guidelines first prepared by the Oregon Asso-

ciation for Supervision and Curriculum Development in 1958. They are:

1. Before employing a curriculum consultant, the local school administrator must determine that a genuine need for the services of a consultant exists and that the attitude of the administration and teachers, and the climate of the community are such that the results of curriculum study and improvement can be evaluated and implemented.

2. After the need for curriculum study has been established and the problem defined to the extent that it is apparent that a consultant's services would be of value, some decisions need to be reached as to the exact role the consultant is to play.

3. The administrator should ascertain that the group with whom the consultant is to work has an understanding of the consultant's role and relationship to them. Data should be prepared which will provide, as briefly as possible, background information about the school and community which may assist the consultant.

4. The consultant should be told specifically what is expected by the staff. He or she will need to know the specific goals, philosophy, plans worked out for consultant participation with various groups of teachers, how much time the groups will

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have to work on curriculum, and when they will work. Background information about the key teacher leaders may be of help.

5. The consultant's time should not be scheduled so tightly that he or she is under tension. A consultant's services should be arranged only by the chief administrator of the school district or the person to whom the responsibility has been delegated.

6. A consultant cannot be expected to build a new curriculum for a school system, impose personal solutions upon the group, handle problems which are outside his or her area of specialization, or be so completely informed that he or she can be considered to have all the answers. The use of a consultant who has authoritarian solutions for all problems is of questionable value.

7. Avoid asking a consultant to come into a district and "put on" or direct a program. Unless there is considerable local planning preceding a consultant's visit, there may be little relationship between what the consultant does and what the school needs and, inevitably, little or no modification in the educational program.

Outline for Involving the Principal

R. Kim Driggers, writing in the *Illinois ASCD Newsletter*,

presents an outline for involving the principal in curriculum development. The author, who is a curriculum director in Centralia, Illinois, offers the following as food for thought to curriculum workers seeking to maximize the contributions of principals to the educational team.

I. Introduction

A. Plan of action in district must be determined

1. Chain of command
2. Use of staff
 - a. Principals
 - b. Teachers
 - c. Consultants
 - d. Other resource people

B. Era of changing roles

1. Roles of all staff members must be established
2. Attitudes must be determined

C. Resource and talent unlimited

1. Intelligence
2. Creativity
3. Knowledge
4. Contact
5. Power to persuade
6. Freedom of movement

II. Educational leadership

(to establish and ensure)

A. Direct involvement

1. Chairmanship
2. Helps develop philosophy
3. Close working relationship with staff
4. Reports to other principals
5. Community relationships
6. In-service training
7. Resource to central administration
8. Information to board of education

B. Indirect involvement

1. Understanding the workings of other committees
2. Receives reports from staff

members on other committees

3. Available as resource to other committees

4. Encouragement to staff

III. Successes

A. Invaluable working relationship with many groups

1. Pupils
2. Community
3. Staff
4. Principals
5. Central administration

B. Programs

1. Educationally sound
2. Innovative
3. Interdisciplinary

C. Outcomes

1. Guides
2. Outlines
3. Developmental learner objectives
4. Other final products

Core Helps with Desegregation

In the fall of 1976, the Omaha Public Schools began a desegregation plan mandated by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals. Dee W. Rosekrans, writing in *The Core Teacher*, states that the core classes are playing an important role in the success of the process, primarily because of the philosophies on which the core program is based.

Core classes seek to offer learning experiences and situations that develop basic skills and, at the same time, integrate content areas, clarify democratic values, and help meet the student's personal/social needs. In the Omaha Public Schools, the program objectives of the core classes include the following:

1. To provide articulation between the student-centered elementary classroom and the highly specialized subject-centered high school curriculum.

2. To ensure a stabilizing factor in the student's school day by furnishing a longer block of time with one teacher who knows the student well.

3. To provide effective guidance opportunities by observing the student's behavior patterns in many types of situations during the block of time.

4. To allow for individual differences by observing more than one subject area in which a child manifests weaknesses or strengths.

5. To provide opportunity for correlation of subject matter so the student sees learning as a "whole" rather than in fragmented parts.

6. To teach skills in context rather than for their sake alone.

7. To provide flexibility so the teacher may grasp the teachable moment and pursue a subject at students' interest peaks, unhampered by regimented time schedule and period changes.

8. To develop democratic attitudes and attributes through teacher-student planning.

9. To give higher priority to the development of learning skills and competencies, rather

than mere acquisition of specific information in subject matter areas.

10. To provide the student with decision-making experiences that will lead to clarification of his/her values.

Rosekrans concludes: "The ideas promoted by the desegregation plan in the Omaha Public Schools are nothing new to the core classroom. Helping people accept themselves and others has always been an integral part of core."

EVE Helps Students Explore Careers

Clover Park School District (Pierce County, Washington State) has developed an innovative program called EVE, "Exploring Vocational Education," for high school students. This program is a flexible project designed to give youths an actual look at several careers, and the methods of becoming a

skilled craftsman or paraprofessional.

According to *Your Public Schools*, published by the Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction, students may choose one of five groups of related vocations or "career clusters" to explore during a trimester. This is in contrast to the brief encounter typically provided in most programs that offer some information about but little real feel for possible career occupations.

Career clusters include transportation; health; communications and graphics; marketing/merchandising; and manufacturing/equipment operation and repair. Within each cluster, six to eight specific training programs will be open to in-depth study by the student. Each student will be actively involved in handling tools and equipment, working on realistic training projects, and participating with the fulltime students in as many facets of the course as time allows. *FL*

Call for Photos

Give the readers of *Educational Leadership* a glimpse of programs in *your* school district! How? Through photos that show *your* students actively engaged in exciting, innovative learning situations. Send prints (black and white glossies preferred)—complete with suggested captions and credit lines—to Editor, *Educational Leadership*, Suite 1100, 1701 K St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

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