

News Notes

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Study of Teacher Effectiveness

A report of Research for Better Schools compared research studies in teacher effectiveness. An effective teacher, whose students showed significant gains on reading and mathematics achievement tests, chose instructional strategies fitted to the students' socioeconomic status, grade level, and the content being taught.

Some of the conclusions identified from the research were:

- A teacher producing good achievement gains is probably producing a healthy attitude toward school and a better self-concept on the part of students.
- A negative classroom climate may be undesirable, but a positive climate does not necessarily mean students are learning. The best achievement gains occur where the climate is neutral.
- Teachers getting higher student achievement scores devote more class time to task-related activities.
- Effective teachers run orderly, task-oriented classes.
- Effective teachers individualize assignments and spend more time actively involved with students in small groups. On the other hand, students who work independently or in small groups a lot do not achieve as much and do not particularly like school.
- Students achieve best in classrooms where teachers use only a moderate amount of any one teaching procedure balanced between student self-direction and teacher control of the learning activities.
- A student's socioeconomic status is an important variable in determining which teaching strategy works best.
- In high socioeconomic status classes, the good teacher is more likely to either call on a student and then ask a question or ask a question and then call on a student who wishes to answer. The teacher frequently follows the student's answer with additional comments.
- In low socioeconomic classes,

the teacher receives the best results by asking a question and then calling on a child who has not indicated any desire to respond.

- High socioeconomic status students seem to need less individual attention and low socioeconomic status students need more.

A copy of the study may be obtained by writing for the Spring 1979, issue of *Educational R & D Report*, CEDAR, 1518 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005, (202) 638-3193. The original study was compiled by Ullik Rouk of Research for Better Schools.

Productivity in IGE Schools

"How do elementary schools using Individually Guided Education (IGE) compare to non-IGE schools in terms of costs, resource utilization, and productivity?" This question led to a study of a random sample of 41 IGE schools and a comparison of 15 matched pairs of IGE and non-IGE schools by researchers at the Wisconsin R & D Center.

Preliminary answers are reported in a new monograph titled, *Resource Utilization and Productivity in IGE Schools*, written by a team under the direction of Richard Rossmiller, co-director of the Center and professor of Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The study found that instructional expenditures in IGE schools were not significantly different from those in non-IGE schools. However, IGE teachers devoted more time to teaching generally and to one-to-one instruction specifically, especially in reading and math. Teachers in IGE schools also spent more time planning, testing, record keeping, and attending inservice training sessions. They spent less time supervising pupils and performing clerical tasks.

According to the *Wisconsin R & D Center News*, the monograph also describes research that sought links between student achievement and more than 100 variables in the school

setting. Among variables found to be consistently related to student achievement in reading or math were: (a) teacher involvement in a degree program; (b) years of teaching experience; (c) sex of teacher; (d) student social maturity; (e) student social confidence; (f) teacher perception of the principal's leadership; (g) teacher job satisfaction; and (h) teacher involvement in decision making.

Inservice Councils Recommended

"Staff concern for the subject and the cooperativeness engendered by the inservice program will determine its yield," says E. Gayle McGovern, director of Curriculum and Pupil Personnel Services in the Wilmington (Ohio) Schools. Writing in the *OASCD Journal*, McGovern offers two criteria considered essential to any inservice education program in Wilmington. First, the competent classroom teacher is a growing teacher, seeking opportunities for continuous growth. Second, inservice education is not aimed solely at the classroom teacher. A primary goal of the inservice program is to change the curriculum.

"Ideally speaking," McGovern says, "an inservice council should define the areas of study from teachers' recommendations." The administration, of course, should be involved in the council and in the focusing of the program but democratic leadership is essential to its success.

McGovern, who runs her inservice program with an annual budget of only \$1,000, believes there is a good reason for the increase in popularity of inservice councils. Inservice councils "provide a high degree of interaction among diverse individuals who participate in decisions which can impact upon the quality of education offered in the district if their job is done conscientiously."

The 60-page paperback report is available from the Center Document Service, 1025 West Johnson Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706. A check or purchase order for \$6.50 per copy must accompany each order. *EL*

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