

News Notes

BY ROBERT MCKEAN AND BOB L. TAYLOR

■ SECURITY DEPARTMENTS are a fact of life in large school systems. Of the six school systems with the largest student enrollments, each has a security department whose main function is to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It is estimated that 1 percent of their budget goes to finance this security. These are the districts with the size of their student enrollments and the number on their security forces are: New York—1,037,578 students and 1,000 security force; Los Angeles—555,768 students and 528 security force; Chicago—493,200 students and 886 security force; Miami/Dade—233,000 students and 40 security force; Philadelphia—212,426 students and 150 security force; and Detroit—224,000 students and 255 security force.

To use an example, over \$4 million of the Detroit Public Schools' 1980-81 budget was designated to provide for security. The department was first organized in 1969 as a product of the social upheaval of the late 1960s. The force operates around the clock in 66 school buildings which are scattered over 139 square miles. They average 30 calls a day. Chief of Security Blount of the Detroit Schools states that his department has encountered almost every major and minor crime against persons and property.

Detroit Security Department personnel complete six weeks of formal classroom training at the Criminal Justice Institute and receive a total of 232 hours of instruction. The training covers six general areas: administration, investigation, legal studies, general security techniques, physical training, special studies, and academic improvement. The security forces deal primarily with crimes against property—burglary, larceny, and malicious destruction. During 1978-79, there were 1,719 reports of theft and damage incidents in the Detroit Public Schools, 1,999 reports of undesirable incidents such as physical and verbal assaults on students and staff, destruction of school prop-

erty and fires, and 320 assaults involving weapons. The Security Department personnel do not make arrests; they are trained to hold suspects for the Detroit Police and to act as complainants in cases where School Board property is involved.

■ FOR THREE YEARS GIFTED students in New Jersey have participated in an interscholastic program known as "the Olympics of the Mind." Originally a program for junior and senior high school students in New Jersey, this year the program expanded to include grades K-12 and students in other states.

On May 30, 1980, approximately 400 students in grades K-12 from nine states converged on Glassboro State College, Glassboro, New Jersey, for the first "World Olympics of the Mind." The states involved in the competition were Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Ohio, Oklahoma, and Montana.

The program challenges students to "invent" solutions to unique problems. One problem required students to design a robot for under \$10 which would do the following: (1) move six feet across the floor, (2) remove a cigarette from a dummy's mouth, (3) put the cigarette in a can, (4) pour water on the cigarette, (5) speak to the dummy, and (6) proceed across the floor to a predesignated spot. Other problems required the students to: (1) remove wooden fish from a "pond" without using a fishing pole, line, or hook, (2) play a selection of tunes by a band which does not use musical instruments, (3) create a vehicle which is powered by five pounds of sand, and (4) create a structure from ½ ounce of balsawood which will support as much weight as possible.

When the student teams come to a competition they bring their solutions and test them out to see which is the best. Sometimes the solutions exceed the expectations of the competition. For example, the sand powered vehicle which won the New Jersey State

Contest traveled further than the "track" set up for the event. The balsawood structure created by the students from Briarcliff, New York, held 787 pounds before the tournament ran out of weights. The structure never broke.

For more information, contact Theodore J. Gourley, Director of Gifted and Talented Education, Branch of Special Education, New Jersey Department of Education, Trenton, NJ 08625.

■ "I THINK THE PRIMARY PURPOSE of the school district is to furnish the student with an educational opportunity," says Art Goers, president of the Del Norte (Colorado) School Board. According to an article in the *Colorado School Board Bulletin*, problems associated with sports programs in the schools could be solved through the use of separately funded recreation districts operating independent of the schools.

Recreation districts would furnish year-round programs for all age groups as they contracted for their own facilities, hired their own coaches, and administered their own athletics programs. Adults with or without children in school could also participate in competitive sports and would feel that they are funding recreation districts for their own enjoyment rather than supporting school athletics for someone else's kids.

Goers feels that budget limitations, declining enrollments, and higher energy costs will encourage schools to support such a concept. "Budget tightening by the school districts could force a cut down the line in their own programs," he said. "When the pinch comes, sports programs could be the first to be cut."

■ "EACH YEAR for the past seven years my sixth-grade students have participated in a young author's project; and the results were extremely positive," says Jack I. Wayne, writing in *Focus*, a newsletter published by the Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum De-

velopment. This involves sixth graders writing books for younger children and may include a Young Author's Tea at which time the older students present the younger children with the books.

Wayne offers the following outline to assist other teachers who may wish to try this project. The suggested steps involve the following sort of activities:

—Promotion of the idea among teachers, students

—Pre-planning by the two classroom teachers

—The initial meeting between the two classes

—Writing the book: teachers should supervise stages of rough draft, final copy, illustration, binding and making cover.

—Social committee for planning tea

—The Young Author's Tea with presentation of books

—The follow-up where younger children visit other classroom

—Evaluation by students where both sets of students write about their feelings

—Evaluation by teachers

Dora V. Smith used to say that essential elements of writing include (1) having something to say, (2) having someone to say it to, and (3) knowing how to say it; and the first two are the most vital. It would seem that this Young Author's Project clearly provides the necessary ingredients for a productive writing experience.

Education for Pluralism

CARL GRANT AND
MAX ROSENBERG

■ ALL EDUCATORS SHOULD be well-informed about civil rights. At the national level, one set of tools available to citizens is the reports of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Early in 1980 the Commission published *The State of Civil Rights: 1979*. This report documents major

developments in education, housing, and employment. The section on education summarizes key decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, and actions taken by Congress, HEW, and the new Department of Education.

The education section of the report begins and ends with these thoughts: "In 1979 equal educational opportunity for all children remained an unrealized goal . . . nearly half of the Nation's minority children remain in racially isolated schools." "Equal educational opportunity can only become a reality if all three Federal branches—the courts, the Congress, and the executive—work in concert with state and local governments and community leaders throughout the Nation towards that goal." The report is available free from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1121 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C.

■ THE PROJECT ON EQUAL Education Rights (PEER) has launched a new series of occasional papers on significant sex-equity-in-education issues. The first of these occasional papers—called "PEER Reports"—is titled *Ties that Bind: The Price of Pursuing the Male Mystique*. The paper, written by Robin Gordon, describes various aspects of the traditional male stereotype and the toll it exacts.

"Educators," it is noted, "have a tremendous opportunity to help students of both sexes expand their concept of what it means to be a man, what it means to be a woman."

Men as well as women need to be shaken free from the traditional stereotypes. In Gordon's words, "Women's struggle to break out of old expectations offers men a chance to break free too."

To get a copy of *Ties that Bind*, send \$1 to: PEER, 1112 13th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005.

■ THE COMMUNITY Relations Service (CRS) of the U.S. Department of Justice has published a summary report describing a joint project with the Syracuse (New York) school system. It is titled *Human Relations: A Guide for Leadership Training in the Public Schools*.

In 1977 Syracuse school officials requested CRS assistance in connection with desegregation of the city's elementary schools. The CRS devel-

oped a human relations training program which it states, "has enhanced the prospect of maintaining a quality public education system sensitive to all groups in the Syracuse population."

The report notes that specific steps were taken to improve human relations, increase parental involvement, promote better staff and student understanding of other cultures, and facilitate the integration process.

The Syracuse experience has become a model for a number of other communities. The report is available from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

■ THE AMERICAN Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) has published *Multicultural Teacher Education: Preparing Educators to Provide Educational Equity* (1980), the first of a four-volume set, all dealing with multicultural teacher education. The editors are H. Prentice Baptiste, Mira L. Baptiste, and Donna M. Gollnick.

The book, a collection of nine papers, addresses strategies in the area of multicultural teacher training. To purchase, contact AACTE, One Dupont Circle, Suite 610, Washington, D.C. 20036. Cost: \$6.50.

Information Resources

FRED ROSENAU

■ TEACHER CENTERS are the main topic of the Spring 1980 issue of *Action in Teacher Education* (II, 2). You'll find articles by Allen Schmieder and Chuck Lovett of the federal Teacher Center Program, Roy Edelfelt, Sam Yarger, Kathleen Devaney, and many others. Special sections include promising practices and research summaries. If your resource center doesn't have a copy, the price is \$4 from the Association of Teacher Educators, Suite 1201, 1701 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006.

You may also want to send for the new *Teachers' Centers Exchange Directory* (Summer 1980) and a free listing of all the other publications

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