

1132 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

7. The availability of Federal funds for the employment of low income non-professionals in education, through such sources as O.E.O., M.D.T.A., and Title I of the E.S.E.A.

The Office of Economic Opportunity, alert to this critical situation, requested Bank Street College of Education to conduct a study of auxiliary personnel in education. This study, exploratory and developmental in nature, has three specific areas of inquiry: role development, training, and institutionalization of auxiliaries in school systems. One component of the study was the coordination and analysis of 15 demonstration training programs, 11 of which were conducted during the summer of 1966. The other four started in the fall of 1966. In these programs professionals and nonprofessionals studied and worked together to increase the effectiveness of auxiliary personnel in various school situations.

The auxiliaries learned specific skills and gained some basic understandings needed to operate in a school setting. The teacher-trainees learned in a reality situation—a practicum—how to utilize and relate to other adults in a classroom.

The auxiliary trainees in the Summer Institutes included Navaho Indians from a reservation; low income whites from Appalachia; Mexican-Americans, Negroes and others in California; predominantly Negroes in Gary, Ind., in Jackson, Mississippi, and in Detroit; mothers receiving aid to dependent children in Maine; Puerto Ricans, Negroes and others in East Harlem; Puerto Ricans in disadvantaged sections of Metropolitan San Juan; and a cross-cultural, cross-class group of trainees in Boston.

The varied experiences of the demonstration programs will be described and analyzed in some depth in the final report of the study which is due early in 1967. Meantime, this brochure considers what seems to help or harm effective utilization of auxiliary personnel in education. It offers: (1) rationale for the use of auxiliaries in school systems; (2) some difficulties which might be encountered; and (3) some recommendations for coping with these difficulties, based on the experience thus far in the demonstration training programs.

It is expected that the demonstration programs may have some relevance to other school situations where auxiliary personnel are employed or are about to be employed. Further this report may elicit comments and countersuggestions which will contribute to the exploration of a new and promising development in education.

RATIONALE FOR THE UTILIZATION OF AUXILIARY PERSONNEL IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS

The question is often asked: "Should the school system be required to solve all the social problems of our time?" This leads to a second question: "Is the utilization of low income workers as auxiliary school personnel aimed primarily at creating jobs for the poor, at coping with acute manpower shortage, or at helping to meet the needs of pupils?"

To those who conducted demonstration training programs during the summer of 1966 the answer appeared to be that the essential criterion of any innovation in education is whether it helps to meet the learning and developmental needs of children and youth. However, they believed that the learning-teaching process can be truly effective only in relation to the totality of the child's experience. The school, like every other institution, operates within a social context, not in isolation.

The sponsors of the demonstration programs believed that even if there were no shortage of teachers, the introduction of more adults into the classroom would enhance the quality of education—adults selected on the basis of their concern for children and their potential as supportive personnel rather than primarily on the basis of previous training. They saw, too, great possibilities in the professional-nonprofessional team in enabling the teacher to differentiate the learning-teaching process to meet the individual needs of pupils, as diagnosed by the teacher. They saw, too, in this multi-level team approach escape from rigid structuring in the classroom—for example, more freedom of movement, more small groupings, more independent activities than would be feasible for one person often operating under difficult teaching conditions. In fact, the teacher might, with this assistance, be able to experiment with innovative techniques which he had long been wanting to inaugurate.

These values are universal—that is to say, they might be realized through the effective utilization of auxiliaries in any classroom regardless of the composi-