

1260 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

tuitous circumstances remains to be seen, but the fact that some shift in attitudes and self-perception appears to be possible under laboratory conditions encourages further effort to achieve these outcomes.

PROFILE OF ORIENTATION-TRAINING PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS AND TEACHER AIDES WORKING IN THE 1966 SUMMER HEAD START PROJECT

(Sponsored by Office of Economic Opportunity Training and Development Center, California State Colleges: San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles, Long Beach Calif.)

INTRODUCTION

The O.E.O. Training and Development Center is a tri-college training facility representing San Fernando Valley State College, California State College at Long Beach, and California State College at Los Angeles. In September, 1965, the Center was funded by a direct grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C., to provide for the training of personnel, both professional and paraprofessional, to work in poverty areas.

Since its inception, the Center has trained 3,000 adults to work in poverty areas of Southern California. Two-thirds of this population were paraprofessionals. The values which guided the Center's work were two-fold:

- (1) Highest professional competence possible must be employed to train personnel to make the poverty program as effective as possible.
- (2) There must be a commitment to the maximum feasible participation of community people.

The Center has stressed co-planning with trainees and has had a profound trust and faith in their latent skills and abilities.

Training paraprofessionals for Head Start project

Neighborhood residents, especially mothers of pre-school children, can become excellent teacher-assistants if they are carefully selected. Assistant teachers should have all of the human qualities that a teacher has, plus a willingness to learn and expand their horizons. They work directly with the young children and must have strengths to bring to these children. . . .

Using neighborhood residents, especially mothers, pays off in two ways. By working with children under the direction of a skilled teacher, these teacher-assistants become more skilled with their own children and more knowledgeable about ways of enriching the life of their own children. There is not a better course in child development than working directly with children under good guidance. But neighborhood residents will also bring many assets to their job—they will be giving as well as getting. They may have a special feeling for the qualities and strengths and needs of the young children of the poor. They may be skilled in talking to the parents of these children, interpreting to them the value of the experience the children are having. . . . Teacher-assistants should be chosen both for how they can contribute to them (Head Start children) and to their own children.¹

This rationale for using neighborhood residents, developed by Project Head Start, describes the strengths which neighborhood residents, particularly mothers of young children, can bring to the child development program. The O.E.O. Training and Development Center conducted a series of programs designed to train Los Angeles County neighborhood residents as teacher-assistants so that they would be able to use their inherent strengths and learn new skills for the benefit of the local Head Start programs.

The purposes of the project were to provide adequate entry level preservice preparation for teacher aides so that they could begin functioning in local Head Start programs and, to a lesser extent, to develop local community leadership. Broad goals included:

- To help aides obtain new insights into school-community relations;
- To help aides improve their skills in perception and in communication;
- To help aides develop an understanding of the ethics of the teaching profession, especially as they relate to the role of aides;

¹ Project Head Start, Community Action Program, Office of Economic Opportunity, *The Staff for a Child Development Center*, Booklet #1, Washington, D.C.