

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS 1375

administration and supervision

"(Principals) and their assistants are frequently buried in routine clerical, supply, and repair work to the point where they are unable to provide adequate supervision over instruction. Too often they are pressed by their burdens into using their assistants and even their teachers for routine tasks that could well be performed by less professionally qualified persons."

—The Instructional Program in the Public Schools of New York City, New York State Education Department

The success of this program will depend largely on the character of the principal chosen for each Effective School. To head each of these schools successfully, we need a supervisor who can understand underprivileged children and their families, who is sensitive to their needs, problems, aspirations, and frustrations; who is highly skilled in intergroup and interpersonal relations; who is emotionally mature, whose own security is not threatened by an expression of disagreement from the faculty, the children, or the community; who believes in his program strongly enough to resist any attempt to water it down.

He must be a person of genuinely sophisticated professional attainments, who keeps abreast of new developments in the field of education and related disciplines. He should be a person who can inspire trust and confidence in the children, the parents, and the teachers with whom he will work.

Once we have chosen such a principal we must not permit him to be buried in routine clerical, supply, and repair work. An administrative assistant should be provided to insure the principal's freedom to supervise and improve instruction.

recommendations

- 1) A subcommittee of the board of education should be designated to supervise this program.
- 2) A committee consisting of a psychiatrist or a psychologist, a sociologist, and a supervisor should be chosen to interview and recommend principals for the pilot schools. This committee should set up criteria for choice, in the light of principles set forth above.
- 3) To insure sympathetic supervision in the upper echelons, the same committee should be constituted as a standing committee permanently available to assist the principals.
- 4) In a large school system these schools should be designated as a tentatively autonomous school district, and placed under the authority of a single field superintendent.
- 5) Each school should have an administrative assistant whose primary interest is in the management aspects of this program, to free the principal for greater participation in the educational aspects of the program.

staffing

"There are thousands upon thousands of devoted, hardworking professionals in the New York City school system. They are struggling against incredible odds to provide education of high quality to children in their care."

—The Instructional Program in the Public Schools of New York City, New York State Education Department, 1962

An extremely important factor in the teacher's unwillingness to remain in slum schools is the frustrating nature of the task under present conditions. Make the conditions such that real learning is seen to be going on, and the flight of teachers from these schools will be reversed.

Under ideal conditions we would ask for the screening of teachers for these schools, using the same criteria we have set down for principals. However, it is unrealistic to consider restaffing these schools completely.

We should therefore plan on retaining the present staff and rely upon a wide campaign to attract volunteers elsewhere.

Many teachers would be willing to volunteer if they were assured that: 1) Viable conditions for teaching were being created; 2) Provision were made for genuine participation by the faculty in the solution of the school problems; 3) Criticism could be made without fear of retaliation, even in the most subtle form, and 4) Teachers would have the right at the end of the first year to return to their home schools if, in either their own opinion or that of the principal,

they cannot work freely, happily, and effectively with the children and the community.

recommendations

- 1) Guarantees should be given that if either principal or teacher finds, by the end of the first year, that the teacher is not suited to work in this school situation, there will be a transfer, without prejudice, back to the home school or to any school with a vacancy which is agreeable to the teacher.
- 2) Guarantees should be given that if, at the end of the year, either teacher or principal requests a transfer, there shall be one, without prejudice, back to the home school or to any school with a vacancy which is agreeable to the person requesting the transfer.