

Schools in the Houston area use training and reward systems to attract and keep bilingual teachers.



Solving the Teacher Shortage in Bilingual Education

Finding and keeping competent staff for bilingual education programs is a growing concern for many school districts. After several years of experience, school districts and colleges of education in the Houston area have formed successful training and reward systems to help alleviate the problem.

Training

Master's in Bilingual Education. To solve the problem of a 45 percent turnover rate, the Houston Independent School District worked with the University of Houston on a program designed to entice outstanding bilingual teachers to stay with the district. The teachers receive training leading to a master's degree with emphasis in bilingual education. The district pays tuition, fees, and books. In return the teachers agree to teach in bilingual classes while in the program and for at least two years after completing their degrees.

Of the 35 teachers who began the program, several were unable to continue their graduate work, but only one left the district for a more lucrative position. In short, the project resulted in staff stability. Teachers also reported great satisfaction with their experiences. They now serve as master teachers for observation, supervision of student teachers, and in research; the professors involved in the project provide personal consultation on curriculum, assessment, and classroom management questions.

Informal Sharing Sessions. When formal training is impossible, in-

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formal sessions to clarify program goals contribute to staff stability. The discrepancies in teacher, administrator, and parent expectations reported by Baca de McNicholas (1977) disappear.

In Galena Park, a suburban district, second-year bilingual teacher Lydia Guerrero took the initiative when parents wanted an explanation of the state-mandated bilingual program. The building principal allowed her to conduct a session at which she informed parents of the state's objectives and the school's program. For the first time in the school's history, every parent attended. In a bilingual session, administrators, parents, and teachers exchanged ideas. The following year, in another community meeting, school personnel were praised by parents, many of whom tearfully testified to their children's success in school. In the five years that Galena Park has had a bilingual program, not one bilingual teacher has left the district.

Interagency-Planned Inservice. A third approach is interagency-planned inservice. In areas such as bilingual and accommodative education where federal funds are available, free consultant services enhance the inservice programs. However, teachers often spend hours in training sessions with no university credit for their studies.

In Houston the university, the district, and the Bilingual Resource Center cooperated to provide inservice for college credit. The participants were expected to achieve the college entrance requirements and be graded on their work, the district paid the tuition and fees, and the university

personnel administered the program and guaranteed the quality of the work. The teachers favored the project because it allowed them to combine time spent on inservice with degree work. It gave them the opportunity to upgrade their credentials as well as their competencies.

Rewards

Despite the extra work they may perform and the extra skills they possess, it is not politically popular to pay bilingual teachers more. Monolingual teachers and teacher organizations representing them are fearful that with the growth of bilingual populations, monolingual teachers will be displaced. Administrators feel trapped between the two groups.

The issue need not be allowed to develop. Some teachers have always been compensated for extra work or skills: coaches who work extra hours, teachers with special endorsements or advanced degrees, and teachers with more years of experience usually earn more money.

The Houston schools have developed a program to compensate teachers for working in areas where extra effort is required. Called the Second Mile Plan, the program compensates teachers for retraining in bilingual education, for decreasing student absenteeism, for teaching in schools where low achievement scores are raised, or for participating in other such projects. Unfortunately, that extra salary is often referred to as "battle pay" so that difficult teaching situations continue to be stigmatized. However, this plan is acceptable because it makes merit pay more objective. Universities are happy to help by providing the training required for teachers to take part in the plan.

(Continued on page 233)

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preach—middle schools? This book is a welcome addition to the middle school bibliography and should be a help to both beginners and practitioners in middle school education. *The Exemplary Middle School* covers basic characteristics of middle school students, educational goals, educational options, program components, and organizational systems and also gives recommendations for staff preparation and implementation. The authors provide solid illustrative strategies and guidelines already developed nationally by exemplary middle schools.

Available for \$19.97 from Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

A Quest for Common Learning: The Aims of General Education.

Ernest L. Boyer and Arthur Levine.
Washington, D.C.:
The Carnegie Foundation for the
Advancement of Teaching, 1981.

—Reviewed by Daniel Tanner, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Boyer and Levine examine general education in terms of current problems and issues in higher education, analyze its historical evolution and social context, offer a rationale for general education, evaluate current practices (curricular content, process, and outcomes), and offer a proposal for a general education curriculum.

They make a convincing case for reviving general education in the college after almost three decades of decline and neglect. Yet aspects of the report are disappointing because it attempts to cover too much with too little.

The report calls for a partnership between school and college leaders to work together in reconstructing the curriculum in general education and then proceeds to ignore the schools while it focuses exclusively on higher education. The report also fails to mention its sister report by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies, *Giving Youth a Better Chance* (1979), which offered virtually no word on general education in the high school. This report should have recognized the necessity of considering general education in school and college as an inseparable endeavor if we are to take democracy seriously.

Available for \$6.95 from the Carnegie Foundation.

Evaluating with Validity.

Ernest R. House.
Beverly Hills, California:
Sage Publications, 1980.

—Reviewed by Thomas R. Hopkins, project director of the Hispanic and American Indian Higher Education Research Project, University of New Mexico, College of Education.

Those familiar with House's writings will find very little in this book that is new. Six of the twelve chapters have been published earlier and the rest do not necessarily add new knowledge. He defines validity, "... to mean something like 'worthiness of being recognized.'" I think that he quite properly relates education evaluation to the social-human factors rather than to the hard sciences. He certainly does not exclude quantitative argument but qualifies it with the dictum that it, "should always be used in conjunction with human judgment and that human judgment should be given the superior position."

There are a few theoretical discussions on education evaluation per se, which is why this volume is appropriate for use in courses pertaining to assessment of education activities.

Available for \$9.95 from Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212.

The School/Work Nexus: Transition of Youth From School to Work.

Eli Ginzberg.
Bloomington, Indiana:
Phi Delta Kappa
Education Foundation, 1980.

—Reviewed by Lowell Horton, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois.

In the early sixties, James Conant found American society oblivious to the "social dynamite" inherent in the inadequate education and large scale unemployment of ghetto youth. The problem of Black teenage unemployment is still with us. In addition, government statistics show that each year approximately 800,000 young people in the country reach working age inadequately prepared for work and adult responsibilities. Many will remain unemployed or marginal

workers throughout their lives unless educators, politicians and a concerned community intervene to assist them in effecting a linkage to the world of work.

Eli Ginzberg examines why the transition from school to work is relatively smooth for some young people and exceeding difficult for others. He assesses realistic options available to an affluent and concerned democracy for smoothing the path of those young people who are encountering the major problems.

Available for \$5 from Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, Eighth Street and Union Avenue, Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402.

JUDITH WALKER DE FELIX

(continued from page 224)

The need for professionals with linguistic and cultural competence will increase in the years ahead. Business and government agencies are already recruiting bilingual professionals for other occupations. Our programs give the schools a chance to recognize the work of bilingual teachers and keep them in the classroom. ■

References

Acosta, Robert and Blanco, George. *Competencies for University Programs in Bilingual Education*. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1978.

Baca de McNicholas, Patricia. "An Assessment of Perceptions of Urban Parents and School Personnel Toward Bilingual Bicultural Education." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1977.

FRED ROSENAU

(continued from page 163)

able to make its views known and to have those ideas judged openly in the marketplace of ideas.

Concerned parents should be encouraged to make their views known, in writing, following formal school district procedures. But there's a vast difference between a concerned, responsible parent and a crackpot, self-appointed censor who doesn't live in the community and is not a tax-paying parent there. School administrators, librarians, and teachers should be able to listen critically to the comments of both and then judge what actions are appropriate to the nature and intent of the challenge. ■

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