

ORIENTATION OF TEACHERS PRIOR TO SCHOOL OPENING
IN THE FIRST CLASS DISTRICTS OF OREGON

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Teachers fully realize the fact that they are facing many new situations when about to enter the classroom to undertake the task of teaching during the school year. It seems apparent then that teachers need and desire some sort of preschool opening orientation. Even though these programs do not cover all school problems, they are still highly desirable in that the teachers may get together for social gatherings and exchange ideas. This at least gives them the opportunity to "get into the feeling of it," or enable them to gain the rapport needed to face the new year.

Educational programs and policies are constantly being revised so that they may conform to needs of the students in a constant changing society. Educators are well aware of the many intricacies of education and know that it must assume the task of enhancing happiness and thereby develop a full-life meaning within each individual. The people of the community, through their school board, set the policy of the school; the superintendent sees that it is executed accurately by using every

educational device at his disposal. But since we know that the ultimate objective is to improve the status of student character, the school authorities should see to it that the teachers are familiar with every phase of the school and should be given every opportunity to be critical of school policies and curriculum, to become familiar with new ideas and techniques, and mainly to attain the feeling that they are essential in performing one of the most important duties in the community.

However, teachers are not always flawless and well realize this. They appreciate the fact that they may be given the opportunity before school opens in September to become acquainted with each other, to know the administrative staff and its expectations of them, to acquaint themselves with the underlying philosophy of the school, to look over new devices and aids with which to teach, to learn something of the community and the community philosophy in regard to the teachers, to learn something of the type of students within the community, and to become somewhat adjusted to the situation before school begins.

It is obvious then that if the teachers themselves feel the need for and have a desire to familiarize themselves with as many of the technicalities of the school as possible, then it seems that an orientation

before the opening of school is a necessity and of great value.

Administrators know that preschool conferences for teachers have been successful where they have been given trial, and fully realize the importance of a well-planned program, whereby the most can be accomplished in a relatively short time. Those administrators having conferences at this time realize the prospectus and scope of them, and their contributions to the success of a school year.

The recent war brought out the fact that post-war developments and changes necessitate sudden reverses in education, not only to catch up with, but to stay abreast of modern times in a changing and shifting society. Teachers then, can be given an opportunity through preschool orientation programs to grasp the needed techniques and thereby study pertinent problems of children, problems of the community, discrepancies in their own techniques, before beginning to teach. Through this means, at least, they can keep up with some of the modern educational policies as they develop.

Preschool orientation programs are not ends in themselves, but they do offer administrators an opportunity to provide in-service training for teachers when it is really needed and desired.

New teachers, to be sure, might be given the opportunity to understand better and realize the many problems they will have to face and to have a chance to learn some of the methods, in addition to their own ideas, used in coping with these problems. Educators more than ever before are fully aware of the fact that many new teachers, fine teachers, are lost to the profession due to uncorrected weaknesses in their beginning years.

More experienced teachers may have a tendency to become confirmed in their ways and methods of coping with the learning processes, and often are oblivious to certain pertinent and necessary changes in techniques, lesson plans, curriculum changes, and child development improvements. Older teachers many times find difficulty in being able to dispense with the traditional methods they have been using.

Wise planning by administrators in the preparation of their preschool opening programs may create, through the course of events, a prospectus that will stimulate the teachers' thinking and avoid many of the pitfalls that lie ahead. Their thinking can be directed wisely in order that they may catch the weak points and strengthen their own programs in time to open the school year. For an instructor to fail in any aspect of teaching

is regrettable, but instructors oftentimes do fail. Before the opening of school it seems, is the time for teachers to look into the realms of modern, moving education.

Another very important aspect of the preschool opening programs is that the teachers have been given a chance to express themselves, thereby taking a part in helping to formulate a spirited, smoothly-moving orientation program. It has long been known that teachers have felt like outcasts in many school systems and have been made to feel that they were a very small part of the school and the community. Naturally teachers enjoy these conferences; it gives them a chance to relax, to use a little critical and creative thinking in regard to dealing with their chosen field. Their interest and morale are keen when they can feel they have had a part in actually helping formulate plans for the betterment of a school.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers institutes and workshops for teachers have been prevalent for decades. These are devoted to the in-service training of teachers as are the preschool opening conferences. This continued training for teachers beyond their formal education is vital for

progress in the field of education. Education must not remain stagnant, but educators do not always know what is necessary before consulting their staffs; therefore, this type of training is a method of helping teachers become more conscious of current trends, and thereby enabling them to learn while they work.

Just how much teachers derive from the preschool conferences will depend in part on how much is put into them from the standpoint of planning and from the standpoint of time devoted to them. In a number of school systems throughout the United States teachers and administrators have acclaimed them to be such fine successes in educational development that these schools have lengthened their conferences to two weeks or more in an effort to meet the many challenging problems which can be presented and worked out at this time in an effort being advantageous to the school staff, the community, and ultimately the students.

Schools having had the preschool conferences definitely can see that through the September approach of in-service training the teachers will attack the many issues confronting them and will attempt to further their own professional growth. Most teachers are interested in their work and sincerely want to be of assistance in helping the students. With the aid of well-planned

conferences and advice teachers will certainly grasp the opportunities offered them in preschool programs.

Actually, it seems unfair to expect a teacher, especially one new to a system or an inexperienced one to adequately know the intricacies of teaching in that school the day it opens for student registration. The little time devoted to teaching and school problems before school starts can be so stimulating that the teachers themselves will radiate a fresh atmosphere, which the students will be receptive to and consequently will feel at ease with cheerful, systematic teachers, even though some of the teachers may have been in the system for a number of years. New acquaintances and the exchange of ideas and experiences are invigorating and essential in order to make the teacher feel at home.

However, educational trends show that practically all school systems are realizing the importance of all methods of educational improvement aids for the teachers, and are facing the phase of preschool orientation of teachers each year. Many are devoting too little time to it in order to be convincing, but nevertheless, it is a step in the right direction.

Purpose of the Study

It is the purpose of this study to evaluate the teacher orientation programs of the first class school

districts in the state of Oregon. Secondly, to determine to what extent the various schools are providing the teachers with opportunities to grasp fully the many items to be considered before proceeding into another school year. Thirdly, to obtain from the administrators the objectives of a teacher orientation program which they feel are the most important. In other words, to discover the main objectives which administrators strive for in their programs. Fourthly, to offer a few suggestions in the light of the study that may be beneficial to future programs of this nature.

Interest in the Study

Due to the fact that educators are unceasingly attempting to improve the techniques of teaching which will lead to better results in the overall training of all secondary school children, there has been an increased interest in the value of preschool orientation of teachers. The increased enrollment in the secondary schools, and the shortage of trained teachers to handle this enrollment has more than impressed many educators and compelled them to become interested in preschool opening conferences for teacher in-service training. Startling results of studies evolving from the recent war have indicated that the schools are not doing the

job of educating boys and girls to enable them to face the realities of adulthood. Far too many people still cannot read or write, or are maladjusted in some manner. The reality of the many unsolved problems facing the adolescent today is causing a greater interest, not only in the teacher-training institutions, but the teachers and parents themselves, in the whole area of putting more emphasis and attention on each individual youth.

Preschool conferences have gained momentum through the years, and this means of aiding teachers in accomplishing better results is one with a great future. All teachers who have had teaching experience should have keen interest in such a program of in-service training.

Procedure for Collecting Data

Data were received from administrators of thirty-two out of the forty-four first class school districts in the state of Oregon through a letter and a questionnaire* sent to the superintendents of the districts where these schools are located. The response of 72.7% return on the questionnaire has been encouraging and shows the interest of the various superintendents in

*See Appendix

the study. The questionnaires were returned promptly.

As the questionnaires were returned, the data were studied and tabulated into the various sections. It seemed that tables would be the easiest and most accurate method of presenting each phase of the study.

The Oregon State College Library was an additional source for data in that several articles in current publications dealt in some manner with teacher orientation in regard to the opening of a school year.

CHAPTER I I

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

An examination of the current literature dealing with preschool orientation of teachers revealed a small amount of material relating directly to this study. It is the purpose of this chapter to supply a few ideas of authorities who have written on this problem.

Preschool orientation programs for the in-service training of teachers are relatively an old technique to educational programs. Educators have been using this as a means of in-service training for years. Alberty in his recent book states:

Not all teachers are equally intelligent, equally interested, or equally capable. But all can contribute something of value. The Principal who does not utilize the curriculum reorganization program as a means of promoting in-service growth is overlooking one of his best opportunities. But even more important is the fact that the participation of all in a common enterprise is the best way of underwriting the success of the venture. Otherwise, there is constant danger of "sabotage" from individuals and groups that are not identified with the program, and as a consequence do not understand the significance of the work that is being done.¹

Just when preschool orientation programs actually

¹Alberty, Harold, Reorganizing the High School Curriculum, p. 440, 1948.

started, could not be determined, as very little literature regarding the orientation of teachers before the opening of school has been located.

As a means of helping the schools meet the challenges of a new year effectively, it seems that an orientation program is invaluable. This would seem to be the logical time to present the many items pertaining to administrative-teacher relations. Teachers should have the correct philosophy of school and assignments in time to correlate their thinking and plans for the new year. Their proposed procedures must be coordinated to fit the problems of the school, the students, and the community.

Miller states,

It is an old saying that "A well-planned battle is half fought." When pupils find on reporting to classes an orderly situation, teachers with full teaching assignments, a regular program in balanced classes and evidence that nothing has been overlooked in the planning and in the organizing of the work of the teacher and administration they are likely to apply themselves seriously to their studies.²

So it is safe to assume that to attempt to cover the more important problems facing the opening of a new school year cannot be taken lightly. For the best

²Miller, Chester F., *Previewing the Year Ahead*, The Nation's Schools, vol. 36, p. 20, July, 1945.

possible situations to be presented to the students upon opening, it seems these important administrative problems should be and can be worked out before they arise. Miller again points out:

The preschool conference offers one of the best opportunities to carry out in-service training at an opportune time and with a minimum of interruption to the regular work of the school.³

Teacher improvement must move forward and can come about only in so far as the teachers themselves maintain a constant desire to improve. In regard to this Burton states:

Competence in teaching is not possible at all without an ardent desire to grow and to improve both personally and in professional knowledge and skill; willingness to give up easy, well-known routines; willingness to study the new and go through the arduous and difficult process of learning new ways.⁴

Administrators have commended the preschool conferences for teachers as being well worthwhile, but schools differ greatly on the amount of time devoted to such programs. This range undoubtedly is due to the size of the

³Miller, Chester F., loc. cit.

⁴Burton, William H., *The Guidance of Learning Activities*, p. 187, 1944.

school, and the number of teachers and especially to the number of new teachers each year. In an article in The American School Board Journal for October, 1946 this statement was found regarding this point:

Under the direction of Supt. Paul G. Hook, the teachers of Clifton Forge, Va., have held in successive years very successful preschool conferences. The original conference, held in September, 1945, lasted two days and included members of the teaching staff, the school executives and two outside consultants. The high school and elementary teachers joined for the general meetings, at which the consultants spoke, and the work proved so successful that in 1946 a conference of two full weeks was decided upon. The in-service training program has been commended as most worthwhile and successful by the school administrators.⁵

Norrix, Superintendent of Schools, Kalamazoo, Michigan, continues,

Faculty conferences operated like workshops are becoming common in Michigan school systems. In some communities, they have been substituted for the more traditional teachers institutes at the opening of school. While the preschool conference is dominant in this new development, some conferences are held during the school term. Their length ranges from one day to one week. The time is usually taken from the school year and teachers are paid for the days they attend.⁶

⁵ _____, Hold Preschool Conferences, The American School Board J., vol. 113, p. 58, October, 1946.

⁶ Norrix, Loy, Preschool Conferences Prevent Haphazard Teaching, The Nation's Schools, vol. 34, p. 18, August, 1944.

The writer has been able to date preschool conferences back to 1930 and found that in 1935 as much as a week was devoted to such programs. Chester F. Miller, Superintendent of Schools, Saginaw, Michigan, has this to say:

Fifteen years ago we began with a two day conference. During the last ten years an entire week has been used in preparing and planning the years work before pupils report. During the time we have followed this practice, the first day of school has been more significant to them and more of a challenge to the teachers than it was under the old system.⁷

A matter of prime importance regarding the smooth functioning of a school is teacher-community relationship. Teachers should thoughtfully consider the attitude the community takes toward their activities as instructors. In regard to teacher-community relationships Williams has this to say:

Many of these items are matters of personal and private concern. It must be remembered, however, that teachers are public characters as well as private individuals; they are much in the public eye, and every locality has its own code of public behavior for its teachers. The teachers find themselves in the position of having to learn the code and either conform to it or go elsewhere. Certain legitimate individual privileges are not permitted

⁷Miller, Chester, F., loc. cit.

teachers in certain localities. Theoretically, this ought not to be the situation, but it is a condition and not a theory which confronts the teachers.⁸

Another main function contributing to the success of a school system is the matter of teacher cooperation. When the teachers are interested in the school and their work, it is likely they will have a high regard for their colleagues in that they are trying to build a better school together. When teachers help plan the conferences, it is only natural that they will have a greater interest, since the outcomes are a reflection of their thinking as well as that of the administration. In regard to this Norrix writes:

Conferences in which the teachers participate in the planning have done much to further this interest. One of the significant outgrowths of such participation is the beginning of a program of effective in-service teacher education through follow-up practices and through the process of evaluation of those leads developed in the conference. Other outgrowths will doubtless develop in time.

One of the most important benefits teachers derive from working together in these conferences is the better knowledge they gain of how to work with pupils. The ability to work informally with a group of school children in a classroom situation and to maintain a respectful atmosphere so necessary to

⁸Williams, L. A., Secondary Schools for American Youth, p. 479, 1944.

learning does not develop without considerable thought and effort. It comes naturally when teachers have learned to work and plan together. Michigan teachers and pupils alike are benefiting by preschool conferences.⁹

The value of preschool conferences lies, no doubt, in their leading toward better schools. This conclusion can be justified by looking at the benefits listed by Norrix and stated in the Michigan Study of the Secondary School Curriculum.

1. The preschool conference provides effectively for the orientation of new teachers to their teaching assignments, their schools and their communities.
2. It provides an extended working period for making a cooperative attack upon the problems of the school year.
3. It helps teachers achieve professional growth that comes only from working together upon recognized problems.
4. It enables a school staff to start the year effectively.
5. It provides opportunity for teachers to learn by actually using them, those techniques that they will be helping their pupils to acquire during the school year.
6. It enables teachers to become acquainted with a wide range of teaching materials and methods.

⁹Norrix, Loy, op. cit., p. 20.

7. It helps a school staff develop esprit de corps and enthusiasm for the challenges of a new year.¹⁰

¹⁰Norrix, Loy, loc. cit., p. 18.

CHAPTER III

THE STUDY

Administrative-Teacher Relations. A smooth, coordinated teacher orientation program in September is one that is well-planned and organized, and one of its most important aspects involves critical issues pertaining to the administrative policies of the school system.

As teachers should learn to know their students well, so should the administrators learn to know their teachers well. The instructors desire to learn specifically the policies relating to them which the administrators and board have established. Teachers and administrators certainly are aware that teachers need to learn and thoroughly understand the policies of the school. Also, teachers have many problems of their own affecting their lives as public servants, and involving their relationship to the community. They are vitally interested in the school's policy on sick leave, on promotion procedures, on retirement plans, and on salary schedules.

Many problems in this category give the teachers reason to feel at home at the school and in the community if they know and understand them before school commences.

Administrators have the opportunity at this time to present the school calendar for the year, thereby

clarifying and working out any conflicts of major significance. Teachers also enjoy learning ahead of time many of the duties they are expected to perform, such as dealing with registration of students, and assignment to committee work. It seems clear that these many problems of importance, if taken into consideration preceding school opening can be of great assistance in easing the strain of work of a school year.

A point of major importance which involves teachers and administrators is the social contact and fine understanding which may be developed among members of the staff. Friendliness and cooperative attitudes between both parties insure greater possibilities for success during the approaching year. It seems that this relationship, to be most effective, should be established early in the school year.

Table I on the following page shows the many problems dealing directly with administrators and the teachers, and the emphasis put upon them by the various Oregon superintendents. This category, as is noted by the response to it, is one upon which most Oregon superintendents placed much emphasis.

TABLE I

Teacher Orientation Problems Dealing with
Relationships of the Teachers and Administrators

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
School policy	30	100	2	100
School plant.	24	80	1	50
Obtaining instructional materials	27	90	2	100
Appointment to committees	16	53	1	50
Extra-curricular duties	30	100	2	100
Home room assignments	24	80	2	100
Advisory assignments.	23	77	2	100
Pupil registration procedures	25	83	2	100
Explanation of salary schedule.	21	70	1	50
Explanation of sick leave	26	87	2	100
Explanation of retirement policy.	21	70	2	100
Explanation of promotion policy	15	50	2	100
Teacher-staff acquaintance gatherings	28	93	2	100
Teacher-board relationship.	16	53	1	50
Summer school attendance policy	23	77	1	50
Exchange of experiences and new ideas	14	47	2	100
Membership in professional organizations.	27	90	2	100

It is interesting to note that all 30 or 100% of the superintendents having programs orientated their teachers on school policy, and the two schools not having programs listed that school policy should be included in such a program. This clearly shows the feeling of administrators toward orientating their teachers on the vital point of school policy. The only other point receiving the attention of all administrators in this section is that of extra-curricular duties, which clearly shows the wisdom of getting such an important aspect of the teaching-load well established ahead of time and avoiding any possible confusion later in the year. It is well to note the other points receiving attention in the programs of most of the schools. Orientation of teachers to the school plant, obtaining instructional materials, membership in professional organizations, explanation of salary schedule, and time for social gatherings were features on which the majority of the schools are putting emphasis.

None of the items was looked upon lightly. A study of the table shows that four things received emphasis in approximately 50% of the schools. The fact that roughly 50% included these points seems to reveal their importance and really does stand out with major significance. The two schools not having programs stated

that thirteen of the eighteen points should be included in a program.

Curriculum Problems. In order for schools to inaugurate the curriculum students need for more complete living, their goals and objectives should be clearly defined. Educators are constantly trying to discover better methods of seeking and attaining the objectives of the school as it fits into the community and the ways of American life. A satisfying and full life, as studies indicate, reveals the dire necessity for improvement in school curricula. If schools do not know or for some reason cannot put forth a curriculum capable of meeting the many pressing problems leading the failure or success in adulthood, the the only way, it seems, is for the School administrators and teachers to strive constantly for completeness and a sounder philosophy of curriculum. The communities must take interest in the curriculum of the school, to understand it and help it, to see to it that the school staff has the tools and the facilities with which to work if a meaningful curriculum can be formed. The purpose of a school can hardly be carried out if the facilities are not available.

But do all teachers have a complete understanding of the term curriculum as it relates to their schools? Do all teachers have the opportunity to work with curriculum problems? There is logic in the value of the

teachers themselves being able to understand the meaning of curriculum as it is formulated to develop the complete personality of the students.

Table II on the following page presents the emphasis being put upon curriculum problems in the orientation of teachers prior to school opening in the first class school districts.

TABLE II

The Area Involving Curriculum
Problems in the Orientation Programs

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Philosophy of curriculum	23	77	1	50
Committee evaluating and revising curriculum . .	6	20	2	100
Desired objectives and outcomes of curriculum. .	18	60	2	100
Areas of curriculum improvement.	13	43	2	100
Relation of curriculum to community.	16	53	2	100

Although the response to any one item in this category was not 100%, it is interesting to note that 23 or 77% of the schools show that they included philosophy of curriculum in their programs, and that 18 or 60% show that their programs involved desired objectives and outcomes of curriculum. The schools not including these two phases in their programs volunteered to emphasize that they believed the two phases should be included. Areas of curriculum improvement and the relation of the curriculum to the community were involved in only approximately 50% of the programs, but also received some support from superintendents who thought they should be. Another interesting feature about this section however, is that only six or 20% stated that their orientation programs involved a committee having to do with evaluating and revising the curriculum. This is important in that 40% of the remainder volunteered to state that they thought it a phase which should be included. The significant reason for the low percentage having included this phase is due to the length of time devoted to the orientation programs, thereby many schools did not have sufficient opportunity to stress this important matter.

Teacher Improvement. The constant changes brought about by a democratic society necessitates the need for changes within our school systems. To teach adequately

the approximate 7,000,000 students in our secondary schools today we should stress more thorough training in techniques and methods, more and improved teaching aids and devices, and more modern school buildings with adequate space.

Educators are continually learning more about the learning process, which clearly indicates the need for more individualized instruction to prepare better the students to undertake the studies which they are equipped for and interested in. Teachers cannot continue to teach by the old traditional methods and remain blind to needed improvements. In modern times they are causing a grave injustice to the students and to society if they do not leave the traditional techniques, and replace them with modern, more dynamic principles affecting the learning process.

True, many teachers are indifferent to new concepts of teaching, whose attitudes demand more thorough in-service training. In a well-organized teacher orientation program, both new and old teachers can have a chance to acquire more knowledge in the phase of improved teaching.

The work being done in the high schools of the first class districts in Oregon as shown in Table III, gives a composite picture of the importance which

administrators placed upon each phase of this vital problem.

TABLE III

Problems Stressed in the Orientation
Programs in Regard to Teacher Improvement

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Methods of teaching	17	57	0	
Remedial techniques	14	47	0	
Use of audio-visual aids.	25	83	2	100
Use of school equipment	26	87	2	100
Research and writing.	2	7	0	
Inter school visitation	4	13	2	100
Building up a professional library.	16	53	1	50

As evidenced by this table, the administrators of Oregon are putting great stress upon certain phases of teacher improvement in their preschool orientation programs. Although no one item lists 100% attention, it is well to note that the use of audio-visual aids and the use of school equipment received attention in approximately 85% of the schools. This undoubtedly shows the trend in stressing the importance of audio-visual aids and new school equipment, and their importance as aids to improved teaching. About one-half of the returns put stress directly on methods of teaching, remedial techniques, and the building up of professional libraries. These three phases received voluntary support from the superintendents who, although they did not include them, did stress that they thought such phases in this category received slight mention in their programs; they were research and writing, and inter-school visitation.

Teacher-Pupil Relations. It is the intention of most teacher orientation programs to stress certain points in the relation of teachers to pupils. This of course cannot be overlooked as educators have learned that no two pupils are inherently alike. Pupils need individual attention which will fit them to meet adequately their needs for personal and educational growth. No group of

pupils can be treated alike. Their interests, abilities, beliefs, and backgrounds resulting from their environments are certain to have many variances.

The importance of teacher and pupil attitudes toward each other and toward life is a vital factor in proper pupil growth. It is only reasonable to assume then that if the teachers themselves do not hold correct attitudes which are significant to societal standards, the students will experience difficulty in developing along certain patterns leading to complete development. These correct attitudes carry over into the other phases of teacher-pupil relationships. The matters of grading, discipline, classroom and extra-curricular activities are of great significance to pupil growth and must be handled with a keen sense to correct teaching methods.

The matter of guiding and supervising students is one that can be handled carelessly or aimlessly, and as a result seriously impair, rather than benefit the students in helping them form correct attitudes toward living happily in a democratic society. This phase is of extreme importance, as without a sincere, patient, and helpful outlook of the teachers toward the students the needed rapport between the two is missing and the learning situation hindered.

Table IV gives evidence that this section is of

vital importance to a preschool orientation program, as the superintendents specifically and almost as a group gave unanimous attention to problems dealing with teacher-pupil relationships.

TABLE IV
Problems Involving Teacher-Pupil
Relationships

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Attitudes toward pupils	25	83	2	100
Grading system.	30	100	2	100
Discipline.	27	90	2	100
Organization and classroom activity	21	70	2	100
Guidance and supervision of pupils.	25	83	2	100
Extra-curricular activity	28	93	2	100

This particular section is interesting in that not one of the six phases received a low ranking by the administrators. In the phase of grading 30 or 100% of the schools returning questionnaires stated that they orientated their teachers on this point. Discipline and the relation of teachers and pupils during extra-curricular activities received attention from approximately 90% of the schools. Also of importance in regard to this table is that the two schools not having programs listed that they felt that all six of the points in Table IV should be included in a preschool orientation program. The table shows definitely that the great majority of the first class school districts of Oregon are quite thoroughly giving their teachers the opportunity of inservice training in the area of teacher-pupil relationships.

Teacher-Community Relationship. The matter of the relation of the teachers to the community is one of great concern, and technically cannot be overlooked by the administrative staff and the teachers themselves. It seems only fair that the teachers should know the expectations of the community toward them and learn as rapidly as possible the nature of the community.

The writer feels that administrators should orient their teachers on the type of community, its

social standards, its religious background, and the interest the community takes in its school, through the parent-teacher organization and other means. Many pitfalls in teaching and needless criticism and embarrassment on the part of teachers can be avoided if they have some idea of their social implications to the community.

The smaller communities seem to limit privileges and demand more of teachers than do the larger towns or cities. Certain parties dislike their teachers smoking in public, and dancing is frowned upon by certain religious groups. Many communities assume their teachers will voluntarily teach sunday school classes, head the boys or girl scouts, supervise the youth centers, and enter many other social-community activities. On the other hand, many communities allow their teachers full freedom in choosing their activities as long as they meet professional standards.

The attitude of communities toward participation of teachers in political affairs might well be taken up in preschool orientation programs.

It is the wise teacher who takes these various aspects of the teaching profession into account when accepting duties in any community. So it would show the wisdom of the school boards and administrators if they offered the teachers an opportunity to concentrate on

these matters before the opening of school.

So it seems that these matters would be ones which call for sound discussion in the in-service training of teachers, and could be handled appropriately in the preschool orientation programs if time permitted the administrators to do so.

The matter of teacher-community relationships as it was treated in the high schools of the first class districts in regard to the orientation of their teachers prior to school opening is shown in Table V. This particular section received less attention as a whole than the others but still holds a prominent place in most orientation programs.

TABLE V

Problems in the Area of
Teacher-Community Relations in the
First Class School Orientation Programs

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Church membership and/or church attendance	7	23	1	50
Membership in church organizations	11	37	1	50
Community politics	6	20	0	
Social demands of community	12	40	1	50
Parent-teacher relations	18	60	2	100

A study of the statistics in Table V reveals that 18 or 60% of the programs in the schools stressed the phase of parent-teacher relations. This seems to be the main point included in the orientation programs, but it is well to note that even though the other phases were not included in most of the conferences, they did receive emphasis in several of the schools. Twelve or 40% of the schools returning questionnaires oriented their teachers on the social demands of the community and 11 or 37% did so on the phase of teachers' memberships in various club organizations. The teachers' roles in community politics were taken up in the programs of 20% of the districts having programs, and the phase regarding church attendance received attention in 23% of the programs. The fact that a number did not include some or all of these phases in their programs might show that the need was not apparent at the preschool opening conferences, and that the type of community may have some bearing on stressing these points at this time.

Important Objectives. Preschool orientation programs for teachers are becoming dominant due to the opportunities provided teachers at such a time when new policies and new situations regarding the new year and pertaining to the classroom are prevalent. These conferences have many objectives and aims which are

valuable to education, but just which are the most important would be difficult to ascertain. However, certain objectives will be outstanding no doubt in all school systems, because they are vital to the profession of teaching. Many schools will have a different slant as to the main goals of their specific programs, and have as their main objectives those which are of the utmost importance to their particular school systems, and to the community. Factors of various sorts may cause the aims of these conferences to vary in importance. The main factor regarding each aim or objective would certainly seem to be the one which satisfies the particular superintendent in regard to his school system.

Of course the objectives will have some overlapping to be sure but each one in itself is something to be accomplished in order to lead to a desired end. One specific aim of teachers' conferences before the opening of school is that of building morale. Teachers are human, and like to feel that someone is taking an interest in them. This one characteristic in itself should be sufficient grounds for all schools to hold preschool opening programs.

Results of a survey of the first class school districts in Oregon regarding five major important

objectives of preschool opening teacher orientation programs are shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI

The Objectives of Preschool Orientation Programs
as Superintendents Ranked Them as to Their Importance

Objectives		Rank Position									
		Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs	Schools Not Having Programs
To Provide In-Service Training	No	1	2	3		6		6		7	
	%	4	100	12		25		26		30	
To Make Teachers Feel at Home	No	7		0	1	6		9	1	3	
	%	25			50	25		39	50	13	
To Promote Good Public Relations	No	1		5		2		6		11	2
	%	4		19		18		26		48	100
To Orient Teachers with School Policy	No	14		6		6	1	0	1	0	
	%	50		23		25	50		50		
For Teachers to Plan Materials for Opening	No	5		12	1	4	1	2		2	
	%	18		46	50	17	50	9		9	

The results of this phase are of vital interest in that they give an adequate impression of emphasis being put on the various objectives by the superintendents of first class school districts of Oregon. Each objective seems to stand out with some schools, but at the same time, it is obvious that most of the schools rank certain ones more important than others.

Fourteen or 50% of the superintendents ranking a first objective placed "To Orientate Teachers with the School Policy" as the main objective of their programs. Seven or 25% ranked "To Make Teachers Feel at Home" as their main objective. It is interesting to note that "For Teachers to Plan Materials for the Opening Day" received the first main objective ranking in five schools, and is the standout as the second main objective in most of the cases.

Twenty-six of the thirty superintendents made a second place ranking and "For Teachers to Plan Materials For the Opening Day" received the emphasis from 12 or 40% of them. "To Make Teachers Feel at Home" received a high first place ranking, but was not ranked as a second place objective in any of the schools' programs.

Twenty-four or 80% of the superintendents were widely divided on the third most important objective in their programs. Six or 25% ranked "To Orient Teachers

with the School Policy" as their third most important objective in their orientation programs. Another six or 25% ranked "To Make Teachers Feel at Home" as third in importance, and still another six or 25% ranked "To Provide In-Service Training" as third most important in their programs. The valuable point here is that "To Orient Teachers with the School Policy" is the foremost objective, being ranked as most important by the group.

Of the five major objectives being ranked, the two having the least importance were "To Provide In-Service Training," which ranked fourth and "To Promote Good Public Relations," which ranked fifth. Nine or 39% of the superintendents ranked "To Make Teachers Feel at Home" as fourth in importance in their programs. Six or 26% stated that "To Provide In-Service Training" ranked fourth in importance in their programs. Both objectives received the least emphasis of the five in the total ranking and were quite evenly divided for the fourth and fifth rank in importance.

Eleven or 48% placed "To Promote Good Public Relations" as having the least importance in their programs, while seven or 30% put "To Provide In-Service Training" in fifth place.

It is interesting to note though, that each of these objectives received one first place ranking and

several second place rankings, showing the emphasis being put on these two objectives in a few of the first class school districts.

The overall picture as shown in the table reveals however, that on a percentage basis, the most important objective in the majority of the first class school district programs is that of "Orienting Teachers with School Policy."

Time Devoted to Programs. The time devoted to preschool opening programs throughout the state seems to vary as to the thinking of the administrative staffs and the school boards of the various districts holding such programs, and to the school situations themselves.

Various schools have limited orientation programs and others have extensive ones. The philosophy of the preschool opening programs by the teachers themselves may have some bearing on the length of the programs.

A few schools are holding programs involving a two-weeks period after having experimented with them previously.

In Oregon the schools were quite divided as to the amount of time spent on the preschool opening programs, but did not vary radically as a whole. Table VII gives a complete presentation as to the amount of time devoted to the program.

TABLE VII

Amount of Time Devoted to Orientation
Programs Before School Opening

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
One-half day	5	17		
One to two days.	12	40	1	50
Three to four days	10	33	1	50
One week	5	17		
Two weeks.				

At the present time most Oregon first class school districts are devoting one to two days to their orientation programs. Twelve or 40% of the thirty-two schools used a period of one to two days.

Another large percentage of the group, ten or 33%, stated that they used from three to four days.

No one employed a full two-weeks period for an entire program, but one superintendent stated that his system included individual conferences which were held for two weeks. One other program consumed eight days and was included in the table in the one week class. It is interesting to note that quite a number, five or 17%, carried on a preschool conference period of one week, while the same percentage of schools used a half-day period. This seems to indicate the trend however, that more and more emphasis is being put on preschool orientation of teachers.

Types of Conferences. Preschool orientation programs have expanded to meet the need for evaluating the many topics arising from group discussions. The general meetings are usually followed by small group assemblies for the purpose of working out different problems pertaining to the instructors of the schools. The trend seems to be toward large, small, and individual conferences as a necessity for the ultimate thoroughness of

any program. The objectives cannot be reached by any one type of conference.

Table VIII indicates the fact that all types were deemed necessary by the majority of the first class school districts of Oregon, and gives the percentages of schools having used the three types of conferences in attempting to orient their teachers in their preschool programs.

TABLE VIII

Types of Conferences Used
in Orientation Programs

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Large group conferences	26	87	2	100
Small group conferences	26	87	2	100
Individual conferences	20	67	2	100

It is worthwhile to note that all three types of conferences were used by many of the Oregon schools in carrying out their programs. Twenty-six or 87% used small group conferences, while 20 or 67% of the thirty schools having programs used individual conferences. Other schools used two types, further indicating the attempt being made to thoroughly orient their teachers

before the beginning of the school term.

Compulsory Attendance. It seems plausible that since preschool opening conferences are for the professional growth of the teachers themselves, that all would attend their respective preschool programs with the personal desire to improve regardless of the time involved or the remuneration received.

Some school systems pay the teachers for arriving early and attending the conferences, while others assume it to be part of the teaching time to attend, as they are paid on a twelve months basis. All teachers are usually required to attend the preschool conferences.

Table IX shows the reaction of the Oregon superintendents to the question.

TABLE IX

Reaction of Superintendents Regarding
Compulsory Attendance of Their Teachers

	Those Schools having Programs		Those Schools not having Programs	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Is your program compulsory for all teachers?	30	100	2	100

It will be noted that 100% or the entire thirty

districts, and including the two districts not having programs, stated their programs are or would be compulsory for all teachers.

Teacher Aid in Planning. In some districts the teachers play an important part in helping organize the preschool conferences for the following year. In other cases the administrative staff formulate their programs in the summer in readiness for the preschool conferences in the fall.

There seem to be many advantages in having the teachers help in the planning of their conferences, as many of them are fully aware of the important problems they have encountered and would like to have presented, not only for themselves but for the new teachers and other faculty members.

The teachers would probably take more interest and have more enthusiasm for such conferences if they themselves had helped in the planning.

Table X gives the number and percentage of Oregon superintendents and their response to the matter of teacher aid in planning the districts' orientation programs.

TABLE X

Reaction of Schools Regarding
Program Planning with Teachers

	Those Schools having Programs				Those Schools not having Programs			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Did teachers help in planning the orientation program	16	53	14	47	2	100		

The number of school systems using the resources of the teachers in preschool opening program planning was quite evident. Sixteen or 53% of the thirty systems having orientation programs had their teachers help plan their programs, while approximately an equal number, 14 or 47% stated that their teachers did not help plan their programs.

It may be observed that the two administrators in the systems where there were no programs, responded by stating that they thought teachers should help in planning a program of this type for the forthcoming year.

A few of the superintendents stated that their teachers would in the future aid in drafting the school orientation program.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has been made in an effort to ascertain the present status of preschool orientation programs as they exist in the first class school districts in Oregon. Since it is a relatively new movement in the majority of the school districts, it thereby led to the initiation of a survey among the first class school districts. It is hoped that the study may be of some value to the administrators wishing to inaugurate or add to a preschool orientation program.

The status of preschool orientation of teachers seems to be permanently assured within the programs of the schools conducting them. Many schools throughout the country have acclaimed them to be most worthwhile, and have increased the number of days in their programs in order to take advantage of orienting their teachers when the materials, techniques and problems can best be dealt with--before the opening of schools.

Most of the Oregon first class school districts have programs in operation at the present time and are covering as many points as possible. Seventy-three per cent of the administrators returned questionnaires. Of the 73% returning questionnaires 68% had programs of

varied length and five per cent did not have programs, but stated what they thought preschool orientation programs should involve.

The Oregon schools are as a whole taking advantage of a few days before the opening of school and are using them to orient their teachers, even though some are not carrying on extensive programs.

The majority of the schools gave strong emphasis to such items as school policy, school plant, teaching materials, assignments, and other administrative-teacher problems. About 50% of the schools also gave emphasis to such points in this category as the relation of the teachers to the board, and policies on teacher promotion. It can be concluded that the larger schools are putting some emphasis on many of the problems pertaining to or connected with the future school year, thereby showing the importance of teachers being oriented on these problems at the beginning of a school year.

In regard to curriculum problems, the main phase in which teachers were oriented in the Oregon schools was that of philosophy of the curriculum. The other phases in this area were included in a number of the schools' programs. More than 50% of the schools put much stress on discussing desired objectives and outcomes of curriculum, and curriculum improvement areas.

Audio-visual aids are vital to improving teaching methods, and the arrival of new and more efficient equipment in the schools is evidenced by the orientation programs in the schools of Oregon. The teachers in over 80% of the first class school districts received orientation on the use of audio-visual aids and school equipment. On the other hand, research and writing in the category of teacher improvement received very little recognition, with only seven per cent of the programs involving this point.

The area of teacher-pupil relations was regarded highly in practically all of the schools' programs. One hundred per cent discussed their grading system, and 93% discussed the phase of extra-curricular activity relations of teacher to pupil. The other phases of discipline, classroom organization, guidance, and attitudes, received emphasis in over 80% of the programs.

Many of the schools did not orient their teachers on teacher-community relationships in their preschool programs. Parent-teacher relations received attention in 60% of the schools, and 47% discussed social demands on the teachers. Membership in clubs, churches, and community politics were in the minority, but were discussed in over 20% of the schools.

The administrators in first class districts of

Oregon had a marked difference of opinion as to the importance of objectives. The most important objective in one program was not necessarily the most important in another. However, "To Orient Teachers with School Policy" would be classified as the most important overall objective, with "For Teachers to Plan Materials for Opening" as second most important, and "To Make Teachers Feel at Home" as the third most important. "To Promote In-Service Training" and "To Promote Good Public Relations" were given approximately equal ranking by the superintendents.

Most of the schools took from one to two days, and three to four days to orient their teachers. Seventeen per cent devoted one week to their programs, while another 17% devoted a half-day.

The majority of the schools incorporated large group conferences, small group conferences, and individual conferences as a means of disseminating information for teacher growth before the opening of school and 100% stated that their orientation programs were compulsory for all teachers. It can be concluded that the amount of time devoted to programs in Oregon averaged from two to four days.

In the majority of the districts, the teachers helped plan the programs, but 47% of the schools did not have their teachers help in constructing their programs.

A few of the superintendents stated, however; that they were going to incorporate the teachers' help and ideas in the future, thereby indicating that teacher interest and ideas are vital to the success of preschool opening orientation programs. The trend, as shown by the programs of the first class school districts of Oregon, seems to be that all first class school districts will eventually have teacher orientation programs, and will be formulated with the assistance of the teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teacher orientation programs before school opens in the fall should be broadened in all first class school districts to include as many phases of modern in-service training techniques as the particular conditions in the schools will permit.
2. All administrators of the first class districts should devote at least a week to insure proper coverage of all the problems of importance before school opens in the fall.
3. The teachers should be consulted and should assist the administration in formulating the program in the spring to be followed for teacher orientation the following fall.

4. All administrators of first class districts should orient their teachers before school opens in the fall on the use of audio-visual aids and other aids, as well as in the use of school equipment.
5. The orientation program should deal with setting up a committee for evaluating and revising the curriculum.
6. All schools should orient teachers on policies and customs within their particular communities.
7. All programs should encourage a more free exchange of experiences and new ideas among teachers during their orientation program.
8. Problem cases, whether they pertain to discipline or a handicap, should be discussed in all school orientation programs before the opening day.
9. All schools should orient their teachers on their salary schedule due to the important bearing this point has on the attitude of the teachers.
10. All schools should orient new teachers on the state retirement policy due to the technicalities of the law.

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Journal

OLD SPANISH

AND

APPENDIX

OREGON STATE COLLEGE
School of Education

58

Corvallis, Oregon

Superintendent of Schools

Dear

A study is being made on teacher orientation prior to school opening in the first class districts of Oregon and your cooperation in answering the enclosed questionnaire will be appreciated. This study is being made under the direction of Dr. R. J. Clinton, at Oregon State College.

Two questionnaires are enclosed; one for you to keep for your own files, and the other to be returned. I have prepared the questionnaire so that it can be answered in a very short time. Please fill out and return the questionnaire whether or not you had a program, for the opinions of all leading school administrators are necessary in this study.

Enclosed is a self-addressed stamped envelope for your convenience in returning the questionnaire.

It is my intention to publish an article on this subject in the Oregon Education Journal, or some other professional journal.

Thank you kindly for your cooperation.

Very respectfully,

Robert M. Woodward

Enclosures 3

ORIENTATION OF TEACHERS PRIOR TO SCHOOL OPENING
IN THE FIRST CLASS DISTRICTS OF OREGON

59

PART I

DIRECTIONS: Would you please check in column 1 the points your orientation program involved if you had one. If you did not have a program would you please check in column 2 the points you think such a program should involve.

A. Administration-Teacher Relations.	1	2
1. School policy-----	_____	_____
2. School plant-----	_____	_____
3. Obtaining instructional materials-----	_____	_____
4. Appointment to committees-----	_____	_____
5. Extra-curricular duties-----	_____	_____
6. Home room assignments-----	_____	_____
7. Advisory assignments-----	_____	_____
8. Pupil registration procedures-----	_____	_____
9. Explanation of salary schedule-----	_____	_____
10. Explanation of sick leave-----	_____	_____
11. Explanation of retirement policy-----	_____	_____
12. Explanation of promotion policy-----	_____	_____
13. Teacher-staff acquaintance gatherings-----	_____	_____
14. Teacher-board relationship-----	_____	_____
15. Summer school attendance policy-----	_____	_____
16. Exchange of experiences and new ideas-----	_____	_____
17. Membership in professional organizations-----	_____	_____
18. -----	_____	_____
B. Curriculum Problems.		
1. Philosophy of curriculum-----	_____	_____
2. Committee evaluating and revising curriculum-----	_____	_____
3. Desired objectives and outcomes of curriculum-----	_____	_____
4. Areas of curriculum improvement-----	_____	_____
5. Relation of curriculum to community-----	_____	_____
6. -----	_____	_____

C. Teacher Improvement.

1

2

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Methods of teaching----- | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Remedial techniques----- | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Use of audio-visual aids----- | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Use of school equipment----- | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Research and writing----- | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Inter-school visitation----- | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Building up a professional
library----- | _____ | _____ |
| 8. ----- | _____ | _____ |

D. Teacher-Pupil Relations.

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Attitudes toward pupils----- | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Grading system----- | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Discipline----- | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Organization and classroom
activity----- | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Guidance and supervision
of pupils----- | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Extra-curricular activity----- | _____ | _____ |
| 7. ----- | _____ | _____ |

E. Teacher-Community Relationship.

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Church membership and/or
church attendance----- | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Membership in club
organizations----- | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Community politics----- | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Social demands of community---- | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Parent-teacher relations----- | _____ | _____ |
| 6. ----- | _____ | _____ |

PART II

1

2

1. If you had a program please number in column 1 the most important objectives in your orientation program for teachers. If you did not have a program please number in rank order in column 2 what you think would be the most important objectives. Number most important as 1, etc.

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| a. Provides in-service training----- | _____ | _____ |
| b. To make teachers feel at home----- | _____ | _____ |
| c. To promote good public relations----- | _____ | _____ |
| d. To orient teachers with school policy----- | _____ | _____ |
| e. For teachers to plan materials for opening----- | _____ | _____ |
| f. ----- | _____ | _____ |

2. Please check in column 1 the time devoted to the program if you have one. If you did not have a program please check in column 2 the time you think should be devoted to such a program.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|
| a. One-half day----- | _____ | _____ |
| b. One to two days----- | _____ | _____ |
| c. Three to four days----- | _____ | _____ |
| d. One week----- | _____ | _____ |
| e. Two weeks----- | _____ | _____ |
| f. ----- | _____ | _____ |

3. Please check in column 1 the type of conferences you used if you had a program. If you did not have a program please check in column 2 what you think should be used.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| a. Large group conferences----- | _____ | _____ |
| b. Small group conferences----- | _____ | _____ |
| c. Individual conferences----- | _____ | _____ |
| d. ----- | _____ | _____ |

1

2

4. Please answer "yes" or "no" in column 1 if your program for all teachers is compulsory. If you did not have a program please answer "yes" or "no" in column 2 if you think a program should be compulsory for all teachers.-----

5. Please answer "yes" or "no" in column 1 if your teachers helped plan the orientation program. If you did not have a program please answer "yes" or "no" in column 2 if you think teachers should help plan the orientation program.-----
