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New Teachers for the Nation's Children

an idea for Community Action

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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New Teachers for the Nation's Children

an idea for Community Action

Prepared by the WOMEN'S BUREAU in cooperation with
U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION
and
THE COMMITTEE ON NEW TEACHERS FOR THE NATION'S CLASSROOMS

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The Idea

**To offer accelerated teacher training of
high quality to mature college graduates,
mainly women, in communities where the
teacher shortage is acute.**

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Why new sources of teachers must be found

Some facts for 1955 about . . .

Pupils. For the third year in succession the number of pupils increased by more than a million and a half. This figure covers enrollments in elementary and secondary schools, both public and private.

Qualified teachers. The supply of new teachers completing requirements for elementary school certificates, which fell nearly 7 percent in 1954, dropped another 2½ percent in 1955. The number of degree candidates qualifying as high-school teachers rose 5 percent in 1955, but although this number is larger than in prewar years, it is much smaller than the number to be needed in the near future.

The National Education Association points out that, if all the 1955 graduates who prepared for teaching actually entered teaching, there would be barely enough new teachers for replacements—making no allowance for expansion. However, a partial survey of the 1954 graduates qualified for teaching indicates that as of November 1, 1954, only two-thirds of the total (three-fourths of the women) were employed as teachers. The proportion who enter teaching was especially low in mathematics and in sciences such as chemistry, where other occupations offer better prospects for advancement.

Teachers on emergency certificates. To meet teaching needs, schools have been forced to employ increasing numbers of teachers not qualified for standard certificates. The number of public school teachers with emergency certificates was estimated at more than 80,000 in 1954-55—an increase of 2,000 over the preceding year.

Classroom needs. The teacher shortage that began in the elementary schools is now beginning to reach the secondary schools. Until 1953, high-school enrollments did not again reach the 1940 level.

Shortages of teachers were reported for 1954-55 in

Elementary schools: rural, 44 States; urban, 35 States.

Secondary schools: rural, 20 States; urban, 11 States.

The plan can work!

Local action is the keynote

The Committee on New Teachers for the Nation's Classrooms was formed in August 1954 as a continuing committee under the cosponsorship of the Women's Bureau and the Office of Education. Its members represent 21 important civic and educational groups (see list on page 9).

By the spring of 1955, the Committee had been in contact with over 2,000 persons—

- who head boards of education,
- who direct teacher-training institutions,
- who are candidates for teacher training, or
- who are citizens eager to help in any way they can.

Civic groups, women's organizations, parent-teacher associations, and branches of the American Association of University Women are working with the Committee to survey teacher needs in local communities, to discover mature candidates with the liberal arts degree, and to enlist the aid of State superintendents of education to develop training programs adapted to THE PLAN.

A sample

One community—Evanston, Ill.—planned and held a “drive-in” conference in April 1955 to acquaint local groups with the idea of teacher training for mature college graduates and to recruit candidates.

The drive-in conference is a novel way of assuring that those attending live near enough to reach courses at one of the cooperating teacher-training institutions. In addition to speakers from the Committee and the local branch of the American Association of University Women, representatives of four Illinois teacher-training institutions took part in the conference.

How it grew

A second meeting of this group was called in August 1954, to consider the facts and come to a decision.

Successful programs

The successful operation of three programs of accelerated teacher training for mature candidates was reported (see page 7).

Community surveys

Interviews with nearly 100 persons representing 55 local groups in 13 areas in different sections of the country were reported by field staff. In addition to school superintendents, heads of teacher-training institutions, and boards of education, those interviewed included representatives of citizens' committees, parent-teacher associations, and branches of the American Association of University Women.

The conclusions reached at this meeting were—

The teacher shortage is critical—

The potential supply of young candidates is small—

The potential supply of qualified mature women is good—

Our Nation has the educational resources for teacher training, and—

The story

OF THE IDEA proposed by the Committee on New Teachers
for the Nation's Classrooms

How it began

THE IDEA of recruiting and training mature liberal arts graduates, mainly women, as teachers, grew out of a meeting called by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor and the Office of Education of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in May 1954.

At this meeting, a widely representative group of educators and citizens established the four basic features of THE PLAN:

(1) *Candidates* likely to make successful teachers can be selected by careful screening.

(2) Planning must be for a permanent program, producing candidates fully qualified for *standard teaching certificates*. Stopgap measures and emergency certificates are not a satisfactory solution for a long-term shortage.

(3) *Accelerated training programs* of high quality can be set up under the direction of State school superintendents and approved educational institutions.

(4) *Community-sponsored programs* are needed to recruit candidates locally for training and placement in the communities where the teacher shortage is most acute.

In the next 5 years we can expect . . .

More school children needing teachers than ever before. Birth rates have soared since World War II and show no sign of declining. The number of births in 1954—estimated at 4 million—is the highest in three decades.

A diminishing pool of young men and women to draw on for teacher-training candidates. The generation now of college age is the small one born during depression days.

For these reasons we must take prompt and effective action to keep the teacher shortage from continuing and growing even more serious.

We can increase the supply of qualified teachers by . . .

1. Persuading a much higher proportion of college-age youth to prepare for teaching.

This can be done only if teaching is made so attractive as a career that it can compete successfully against other occupations open to college graduates.

2. Holding qualified teachers for a longer period of service.

For women teachers, who make up three-fourths of all teachers, average length of service is lowered by withdrawals for marriage and child care. The present trend is toward earlier marriages and higher birth rates.

3. Reemploying former teachers.

Some localities are trying to recruit former teachers with good qualifications who have left the profession. Refresher courses offered during the summer are useful to bring former teachers up to date on recent developments in special subject-matter areas and teaching methods.

4. Recruiting and training mature women who are college graduates.

In the country as a whole, there are at least half a million women through the age of 54 who are college graduates, who are not in the labor force, and who have no children under 5 years, according to a rough estimate based on 1952 figures.

In most communities there are college women without young children—women who would be interested in teaching and who have the intelligence, the maturity, the liberal arts background to make excellent teachers. They need only the training in professional education.

THE IDEA presented here is to recruit additional teachers from this great reservoir of college women.

THE PLAN calls for community action to initiate local programs to screen the candidates with care, offer them intensive teacher training near their homes under the direction of established teacher-training institutions, and place them in local classrooms.

Three successful training programs

The recruitment and intensive training of mature college graduates is not an untried plan. Three programs reported at the August 1954 meeting are described below.

Southern California. Started in the spring of 1954 by the school superintendents of the area, this program is conducted by three teacher-training institutions (San Diego State College, University of Southern California, and Claremont College). Local candidates 25 to 50 years of age meet elementary certification requirements through one year of supervised teaching between two summer sessions of professional training. Trainees are paid three-fourths of the usual beginning salary; the other fourth goes to make up the salary of the supervising teacher.

Metropolitan Detroit (6 counties). Initiated by Wayne University in consultation with school superintendents and the Michigan State Department of Public Instruction in 1954, this program offers training to college women 21 to 50 years of age as part of the regular curriculum. Candidates with a bachelor's degree can obtain the 20 credits, including practice teaching, needed to qualify them for a 5-year certificate to teach in elementary schools.

Ohio. At least 12 colleges and universities including all the State Universities of Ohio, are cooperating in a project initiated in 1953 by the State Department of Education. This offers an intensive, shortened program for elementary teaching certification of college graduates up to 48 years of age without previous teaching preparation. The program consists of one year's teaching between two full semesters of academic training. Requirements vary with the college, but the majority call for 30 credits, of which 6 credits are in supervised paid teaching.

The women who complete these programs are qualified for standard elementary teaching certificates, and usually become good teachers.

What you can do

If you are a parent or citizen interested in the proper education of our boys and girls—

- you can ask your local school authorities about the extent of the teacher shortage in your community.
- you can find out what is being done along the lines described here.
- you can work with others in your community, if need be, to get a project under way.

If you are a college graduate with a liberal arts background and other basic qualifications for teaching, and would be interested in preparing for a teaching position—

- you can get in touch with your local school authorities and tell them of your interest.
- you can ask your State Department of Education about the possibility of training for teaching under a plan like one of those described in this leaflet.

If you are a teacher who has recently completed one of these intensive training programs—

- you can give others the benefit of your experience. The Women's Bureau offers its services as a clearing house for exchange of information on training programs for liberal arts graduates. Tell us what you think of the training you received; what modifications might be desirable; how you were accepted by the school and the community where you teach; and how you like your new profession.

If you are in educational work, as a teacher, as a member of the school board, or on the staff of a teacher-training institution—in a community which has or expects a teacher shortage—

- you can check to see if a plan of this nature has been explored;
- you can propose consideration of such a plan;
- you can help to put the plan in operation.

Committee on New Teachers For the Nation's Classrooms

Organizations represented at the August 1954 meeting:

- American Alumni Council, Washington, D. C.
- American Association of University Women, Washington, D. C.
- American College Public Relations Association, Washington, D. C.
- American Council on Education, Washington, D. C.
- American Federation of Teachers, Chicago, Ill.
- Association of American Colleges, Washington, D. C.
- Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, Washington, D. C.
- Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, Education Department, Washington, D. C.
- Commission on the Education of Women, American Council on Education, Philadelphia, Pa.
- Council of State Governments, Chicago, Ill.
- Fund for the Advancement of Education, New York, N. Y.
- Kansas State Department of Public Instruction, Certification and College Accreditation, Topeka, Kans.
- Maryland State Teachers College, Towson, Md.
- National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, National Education Association, Washington, D. C.
- National Congress of Parents and Teachers, Rhode Island Branch, Providence, R. I.
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Washington, D. C.
- National Council of Catholic Women, Washington, D. C.
- National Council of Chief State School Officers, National Education Association, Washington, D. C.
- National Council of Jewish Women, New York 36, N. Y.
- National Council of Negro Women, Washington, D. C.
- Rutgers University, College of Education, New Brunswick, N. J.

For additional information, read

Better Schools. Published by the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 2 West 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y. Vol. I, no. 1, Mar. 31, 1955.

A Brief Summary of the 1955 Teacher Supply and Demand Report. Prepared by the NEA Research Division. Reprinted from *Journal of Teacher Education*, March 1955.

How Can We Get Enough Good Teachers? A Guidebook. 1954. National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 2 West 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

A Manual on Certification Requirements for School Personnel in the United States. 1953 Edition. National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, NEA, 1201 Sixteenth Street NW., Washington 6, D. C.

NEA Journal. National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street NW., Washington 6, D. C.

School Life, published monthly by the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C. (See especially, "Elementary and Secondary School Enrollment in the United States 1929-30 to 1959-60," Vol. 37, No. 4, January 1955.)

The Shortage of Young Women Workers. Women's Bureau Leaflet 15, 1953. U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C.

Taking Action in the Community. Leadership Pamphlet No. 3. Adult Education Association of the U. S. A., 743 North Wabash Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

Teaching Is an Attractive Career. 1955. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. 4 pp.





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