A STUDY OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED, WITH SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM IN MONTANA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the advent of man, the human race has had the problem of dealing with those individuals not endowed with the ability to learn and to function in society as well as the majority of the people. In ancient times these unfortunates were persecuted, mistreated, and neglected. Not until around 1800 were there beginnings in education for the mentally handicapped.[1] Education of the retarded followed in the wake of education of the deaf and blind.[2] Although some mentally handicapped children had been previously enrolled in classes for deviates, many of them disciplinary or truant boys, Rhode Island is credited with the establishment of the first school for "backward children" on November 30, 1896. The establishment of special education classes followed in rapid succession.[3]

Wallin accredits this growth in the number of classes to statutory action, in his statement:

> "The greatest impetus to the development of special education facilities for handicapped children in the public schools has been the enactment of permissive or mandatory special education statutes and the provision of subsidies for partial or complete support of special classes organized in conformity with state regulations". . . . By June, 1952, all the states, except Nevada and Montana, and the Territory of Hawaii had enacted some form of

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[1]Kirk, Samuel A., and Johnson, G. Orville, Educating the Retarded Child, Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston, Mass., 1951, p. 70.

[2]Wallin, J. E. Wallace, Education of Mentally Handicapped, Harper & Bros., New York, 1955, p. 6.

[3]Ibid., p. 18.

school legislation in interest of one or more groups of handicapped children.[4]

Wallin emphatically states that a special education program is the responsibility of the public school:

> The child's rights to an education are intrinsic and inalienable. Furthermore the primary agency for the education of all kinds of children is the publicly supported day schools; and the primary agency for the care, custody and support of every child is his own (or foster) home. Accordingly, no child should be committed to a residential institution if he can be successfully cared for and educated at large in society. . . . Therefore, the primary agency for the education of mentally deficient or mentally handicapped children is the public school system; state residential schools should serve merely as secondary ancillary lines of attack or defense.[5]

Economically, special education is sound. For every mentally retarded child removed from the grades, 2 to 4 normal children can be substituted without increasing the teaching load. Further, the staggering cost of useless grade repetition can be eliminated.[6] A mentally retarded child in a regular classroom requires two to three times as much assistance as a normal child.[7] In addition, the teacher is relieved of her greatest source of worry, discouragement, irritation, and nervous tension.[8] A special education room allows the student more encouragement, aid, and recognition, as well as stimulation through a comprehensive program of activities and experiences adapted to his

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[4]Ibid., p. 21.

[5]Wallin, op. cit., p. 67.

[6]Ibid., p. 88.

[7]Ibid., p. 75.

[8]Ibid., p. 80.

interest and needs.[9] Many mentally retarded children can become fully or partially self-supporting and socially acceptable if effectively trained. Special classes are an economic measure because of direct benefits to the handicapped child and the indirect benefits to the other children in the regular grades.[10]

Nickell, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Illinois, identifies educable mentally retarded children as those having the following characteristics:

1. They develop mentally from one-half to three-fourths as fast as an average child, therefore, their progress in school under favorable conditions is likewise about one-half to three-fourths the rate of the average child.

2. Although their vocabularies may be limited, their speech and language will be adequate in most ordinary situations.

3. Their levels of achievement vary from second to fourth or fifth grade subject matter by the age of 16.

4. Generally they do not begin to learn to read until they have reached a mental age of at least 6.

5. They do not ordinarily develop formal arithmetical skills until they have a mental age of approximately 7 to 8.

6. Generally they have the ability to become personally and socially adjusted to the point where they can be self-directive.

7. Vocationally, they can learn to do unskilled or semi-skilled work, and as adults they can usually support themselves financially.[11]

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[9] Ibid., p. 82.

[10] Ibid., p. 87.

[11] The Illinois Plan for Special Education of Exceptional Children; A Curriculum Guide for Teachers of Trainable Mentally Handicapped Children. Issued by Vernon L. Nickell, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chicago, reprinted by Illinois Council for Exceptional Children, 1955, p. 3.

Blessing describes the mentally handicapped as, "normal children with a special handicap and special needs, although their basic needs are recognized as differing in no way from their normal peers."[12]

Goldstein and Seigle describe the psychological needs of these children in the following manner:

> Basically the intellectual characteristics of retardates are similar to their normal peers in that they follow the same developmental sequence and differ not so much in kind of characteristics as in rate and degree. They learn in the same way as normal children, through experience, but their rate of learning is slower and they rarely learn as much, particularly in academic areas. However, psychologically, they require and seek love, security, recognition and a sense of belonging. Their handicap operates to prevent fulfillment of these needs; and it is when these needs are not fulfilled secondary characteristics appear in the form of maladjusted behavior patterns and attitudes, self-devaluation, low tolerance of frustration.[13]

Wallin[14] lists the following objectives of the special education program:

1. Continuous systematic study of each child by clinically-minded teachers to discover individual aptitudes, potentials, proclivities, and needs and to devise more effective methods of remediation and therapy.

2. The formation of likeable personalities from crippling distortion and injurious compensations by providing an atmosphere of contentment and acceptance, together with opportunities for joyous, successful achievements which will tend to dissipate feelings of insecurity, frustration, and dis-

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[12]Blessing, Kenneth R., "An Evaluation of Special Education Services for Educable Retarded Children with Some Suggested Refinements," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, Vol. 61, January, 1957, p. 492.

[13]Goldstein, Herbert, and Seigle, Dorothy M., Directors, The Illinois Plan for Special Education ofExceptional Children, Illinois Council for Mentally Retarded Children, Chicago, 1958, p. 11.

[14]Wallin, op. cit., p. 268.

heartenment and will engender feelings of hope, confidence, and determination; by applying sound mental hygiene principles to all the learning situations, and by using individuals and group psychotherapy.

3. The development of maximal motor, occupational, and economical effectiveness.

4. The development of practical social understandings and skills, desirable, civic qualities, and ethical character.

5. The development of practical literary tool skills as far as child's limitations permit.

6. The progression, from the time the child enters school, of personal, educational, and vocational guidance based on all the data available and on intimate personal contacts.

7. The provision of job information and job placement.

8. Follow-up investigations to determine the value of the training period provided and to further job and social adjustment.

9. Preparation for wholesome leisure-time diversions in both home and community.

10. The development of physical and mental efficiency and health.[15]

Until 1956, when the first special education classes were organized in Montana, education of the mentally handicapped child was the responsibility of the home or an institution. Today it is becoming more and more a function of the public school system. For the year 1960-61 there were 23 classes for the educable mentally handicapped in Montana, and more are scheduled for 1961-62.[16]

Although it has been estimated by various writers that between two and three per cent of the school population fall in the mentally

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[15] Ibid., p. 268.

[16] Personal letter written by Richard C. Mattson, Director of Special Education, to the author on July 11, 1961.

handicapped group,[17] only 306 pupils attended special classes for the mentally handicapped in Montana public school systems during the year 1960-61.[18] This is in contrast to the estimated eligible number of 4,000, or two per cent of the school enrollment for that year based on the 1961 school census. Realizing the disparity between those eligible and those actually receiving training, the writer felt that an expanded program was necessary, but that quality must not be sacrificed with this expansion.

Because special education is so relatively new in the state, the present seemed the appropriate time to lay the foundation for effective and expanding services. It was hoped that the results of this study might be of some value to those interested in the organization of special education classes for the educable retarded in Montana--educators, social workers, community leaders, and parents. A personal interest in retarded children actually prompted this study. The investigator and members of her family have been subjects in a longitudinal study on mental retardation at the Clinic for the Study of Mental Retardation, Childrens Hospital, Los Angeles since 1957. Through this affiliation, the writer has been privileged to attend annual seminars on mental retardation and has endeavored to carry back to others, interested in the welfare of the retarded in Montana, information not otherwise available to them. As first vice-president of the Montana State Association for Retarded Children and

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[17]Cruickshank, William M., and Johnson, G. Orville, Education of Exceptional Children and Youth, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1958, p. 191; Baker, Harry J., Introduction to Exceptional Children, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1953, p. 261.

[18]Mattson, op. cit.

chairman of the Committee on Education for this Association, the writer has maintained close contact with groups associated with the special education program.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was:

To develop a better understanding of the special education program and to determine factors contributing to the success of a special education program for the educable mentally retarded; also, to evaluate the present program in Montana in the light of the findings.

Procedures

There were four procedures used in the study:

1. Correspondence was carried on with the State Supervisor of Special Education to obtain facts concerning the special education program in Montana.

2. A review of the literature was made to determine what factors are important to the success of the special education program.

3. A questionnaire was sent to teachers of educable mentally handicapped students in public school classes in Montana for their opinions regarding the present status of the program in Montana.

4. The special education program in Montana was evaluated in the light of findings from the correspondence, review of literature, and the questionnaire. Recommendations were made following this evaluation.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to the investigation of the program for the educable mentally retarded within the public school system. This eliminated any consideration of educable retardates in private or institutional classrooms, or of the trainable mentally retarded. The questionnaire was sent only to teachers of special education classes for the educable mentally retarded in Montana.

Definition of Terms

Educable mentally handicapped children as used in this study are:

> Those children who are so intellectually retarded that it is impossible for them to be adequately educated in the regular classroom. They are, however, educable in the sense that they can acquire sufficient knowledge and ability in the academic areas that the skills can and will become useful and useable tools. Furthur, they have a prognosis of social adequacy and occupational or economic self-sufficiency, as adults. They will be able to apply the skills learned during the years of their formal training toward maintaining an independent social and economic existence as adults.[19]

"Special Education" is that type of education requiring special facilities or instruction because of physical or mental deviation from the average on the part of some children.[20]

The factors which contribute to the success of a special education program for the educable mentally retarded will be presented in the following Chapter.

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[19]Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 190.

[20]Schofer, Richard C., Special Education on Administrative Guide, A Manual for Providing Programs for Handicapped Children, State Department of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana, 1958, p. 1.

CHAPTER II

FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED

A review of literature revealed the following factors as being most important to the success of a special education program for the educable mentally retarded:

1. Enactment of statutes providing for a special education program.
2. Effective state administration.
3. Careful preparation of initial classroom within community
    a. Readiness of community, school personnel, and parents to accept the class
    b. Small initial classes
    c. Homogeneous grouping
4. Adequate housing and equipment
5. A skillful teacher
6. Early placement after evaluation of child by qualified psychological examiner
7. Curriculum based on life experience units
8. Integration of handicapped with regular students
9. Vocational training provided within framework of school, to include school work-experience and follow-up
10. Inter-agency cooperation and the team approach

These factors will be discussed in the following sections in light of their relative importance to a successful program for the educable mentally retarded.

Enactment of Statutes Providing for a Special Education Program

The first factor contributing to the success of a special education program is the enactment of statutes providing for the program and the provision of subsidies to support it. Legislation differs widely in various states. In some the statutes are mandatory; in others they are permissive. Similarily, plans for financing the programs in each state follow different patterns.

Enabling legislation providing for special education of the retarded may include the adoption of rules effecting teacher-certification standards, eligibility standards for students, diagnostic programs, and transportation. Other regulations may stipulate detailed requirements as to the method for reimbursement. Rothstein[1] confirms the importance of legislative action when he states that "while laws alone do not create programs they are the first step in the right direction."

Effective State Administration

The second factor considered important to the success of a special education program is effective state administration. In Montana the state's responsibilities for the special education program include the following:

1. To provide advisory and organizational assistance
2. To define standards for eligibility of children, teacher training, classroom facilities, and any other phases pertinent to the special education law

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[1]Rothstein, Jerome H., Mental Retardation, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, 1961, p. 165.

3. To give provisional approval to all public school special educational programs that meet the standards established by the State Department of Public Instruction.

4. To arrange for reimbursement after local school districts have filed all essential applications and reports

5. To assist in determining the needs for special education programs in local areas throughout the state

6. To keep statistical data

7. To assist the local schools in arranging for use of special services or essential specialists

8. To cooperate with other agencies and to interpret needs in the special education area

9. To interpret the state-wide special education program to lay and professional groups

10. To assist in a program of parent education as it pertains to exceptional children

11. To obtain professional literature regarding handicapped children

12. To assist local schools in the preparation of a curriculum suitable to the type and nature of the special class

13. To provide large-print textbooks for children with visual handicaps[2]

Wallin[3] states that "if proper returns are to be obtained from the investment, the instructional work in the special classes should be supervised by a specially trained, experienced, and competent supervisor." Most states now have directors or supervisors of special education, or some other official who administers the program. The dominant tendency is to have one person in charge of the entire program of special education.

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[2]Appendix A

[3]Wallin, op. cit., p. 170.

This person has jurisdiction over the education of all types of exceptional children. This lessens the rivalry that often exists between antagonistic or competing groups when there are directors for each of the handicapped groups.

Careful selection of the state supervisor, as well as local supervisors in all school systems, is imperative. Fields stresses the importance of proper selection of a supervisor as shown in his statement:

> Experience has demonstrated that the efficiency of the average teacher of the mentally retarded, the inspiration that such a teacher can find in her work, and the willingness of such a teacher to respond to a program of growth and development, stems, in a large measure, from the climate of the school and from the attitude and adequacy of the supervisor. In essence, the role of the supervisor of the mentally retarded child is vital to the good work of the teacher.[4]

Fields lists eleven qualifications to consider when selecting supervisors. According to him a good supervisor should have:

1. A basic and comprehensive philosophy underlying the instruction of mentally retarded children in the schoolroom.
2. A broad concept of the aims, objectives, and implementations of a community-wide program
3. A clear and practical understanding of the psychology of the abnormal
4. Knowledge of the type of special curriculum required
5. A sound group of principles of guidance and placement as related to the mentally retarded
6. Knowledge of accepted supervisor philosophy and techniques
7. Ability to set up an effective operating organization

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[4]Fields, Harold, "Selecting Supervisors for the Mentally Retarded," Exceptional Children, Vol 22, March, 1956, p. 221.

8. A group of promotional procedures that will make the program attractive to the school, the family, and the community

9. A knowledge of sound methodology

10. A grasp of the basic elements of testing as a means to more effective teaching and as a device leading to constructive critical evaluation

11. A personality profile that will bring about cooperation and evoke personal and professional stimulation[5]

Fields[6] further recommends that a supervisor "should first and foremost have demonstrated outstanding ability as a classroom teacher."

Blessing[7] gives two other qualifications desired of a supervisor: a high code of professional ethics and physical condition strong enough to hold up under the extensive traveling required due to the responsibility of the position, and the pressures of constant appearances before parent, community, and educational groups.

Careful Preparation of Initial Classrooms Within Community

The third factor contributing to the success of a special education program is a program of careful preparation for initial classrooms within each community. The Illinois Curriculum Guide[8] states that experience has shown that careful preparation will reduce the number and intensity of problems that may arise if a program is begun in haste. A

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[5] Ibid., p. 223.

[6] Ibid., p. 223.

[7] Blessing, Kenneth R., "The Function and Role of the Modern State Department in Promoting Special Education Services for Exceptional Youth," Exceptional Children 26, April, 1960, p. 395.

[8] Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., p. 218-220.

period of study and preparation cannot be emphasized too strongly. It is not a simple procedure to be accomplished in a short time. It is better to proceed with caution and establish a good program than to defeat one through inadequate groundwork. Kirk[9] agrees that initial organization should be accomplished gradually.

Readiness of community, school personnel, and parents to accept the class. Readiness to accept the special education class must be developed in the community, among all school personnel, and with the parents of the children, through a comprehensive program of enlightenment carefully executed before the class actually begins. Positive attitudes must be developed within the community in order that the class may be initiated in an atmosphere of friendly acceptance. The citizen who has no handicapped child must be helped to realize the significance of the program.[10] Selling a special education program to the community takes time; long-standing misconceptions and prejudices are hard to destroy. Good public relations must be fostered through a planned program of interpretation. This can be accomplished through informational programs at P.T.A. meetings, mothers groups, service clubs, and church organizations.[11] Excellent films are available, which can be followed by panel discussions with a consultant present to answer questions. Orientation visits to special education rooms by public officials, prominent citizens, owners of radio stations, and newspaper

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[9]Kirk, op. cit., p. 126.

[10]Baker, op. cit., p. 473.

[11]Blessing, op. cit., p. 495.

men yield genuine insight and understanding.[12]

Favorable attitudes must be developed in all school personnel. This is more often necessary than not, according to the statements by Hill:

> Perhaps the first critical look should be directed toward the attitudes and beliefs of educators about children who have differences. It seems entirely possible that the vision of the American people is wider than that of many educators . . . many of our educators are committed to the policy of doing first things first, that is, providing for instructional and building needs of the unhandicapped and using what is left over, if any funds remain, to provide for children with special needs. . . . In too many instances, also, our leaders in education continue to ignore the reality of learning differences and refuse to consider the obvious needs for differentiated school services.[13]

> There is little hope for community acceptance until teachers and educators as a group have left behind them feelings of disgust, fear, or sentimentality and are willing to respect these children. They need to recognize, too, that the education of exceptional children is an integral part of the general education of all children.[14]

Within the school system negative and hostile attitudes have to be recognized and modified. This includes the attitudes of administrators, teachers, and all non-certified personnel.[15] All teachers must understand they have a contribution to the educational adjustment of

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[12] Journal of the International Council for Exceptional Children, Vol. 21, November, 1952, p. 47-49.

[13] Hill, Arthur S., "A Critical Glance at Special Education," Exceptional Children, 22:315-319, May, 1956.

[14] Journal of the International Council for Exceptional Children, op. cit., p. 48.

[15] Hutt, Max L., and Gibby, Robert Gwynn, The Mentally Retarded Child, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, 1956, p. 280.

the mentally retarded in the school, and must support them in such activities as the lunch program, recess, assemblies and in their regular classes for special activities.[16] Baker[17] believes that all regular teachers should have at least one introductory course in exceptional children to be able to recognize potential cases and offer sympathetic understanding. He states, "much of the success or failure of the special program centers around the attitudes which regular teachers assume toward the exceptional." For this same reason Blessing[18] "believed all staff members must have some in-service training or in-service workshop experience to gain the necessary insight into the characteristics, limitations and strength of the retardate, and with the philosophy and objectives of a desirable program for them."

In some instances much abuse has been done by staff members who have used the classes as a catch-all for those students with behavioral or remedial problems, as well as those who may be emotionally disturbed.[19] Derogatory epitaphs by other personnel or threatened transfer to the special class as punishment has been cited.[20]

Parental acceptance of the program and the admission that one's own child is handicapped is most difficult. Parents are hurt with the knowledge that their child is handicapped, and because they are hurt, they

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[16]Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., p. 226.

[17]Baker, op. cit., p. 469-472.

[18]Blessing, op. cit., p. 495.

[19]Ibid., p. 400.

[20]Wallin, op. cit., p. 92.

fight back. Denial, over-protection, or rejection are the most common parental responses, according to Hutt and Gibby. They state that "all parents of retarded children need some help in order to deal more adequately with their own problems."[21]

Parents must be counseled to accept their child as well as their emotional reactions to him. This acceptance cannot be forced but it must be encouraged. It is the responsibility of the school administrator or the teacher to help counsel parents through education and guidance. Parents are concerned with etiology. Feelings of shame and guilt can be dispelled with the knowledge of the true nature of mental retardation. They need to understand the capabilities of their child, his limits and his assets, so that the total training can proceed in a realistic manner. They need to be advised that they are not alone with their problem and should be encouraged to interact with other parents. They must be given a thorough knowledge of the way in which the personality of their child develops and what the child's unique needs are. Their own role in treatment of the child should be explained. Parents should be informed of all resources available to them.[22]

A most common fear of parents is that their child will be stigmatized by his placement in a special education room. They need to be helped to realize they are more stigmatized in the regular classroom. A sociometric review of Johnson[23] showed that the social segregation of

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[21]Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 252.

[22]Ibid., p. 252-255.

[23]Johnson, G. Orville, "A Study of the Social Position of Mentally Handicapped Children in the Regular Grades," American Journal of Mentally Deficient, July, 1950, p. 70-90.

the mentally handicapped group in the regular grade was quite complete ". . . eleven times as many of the most rejected were among the mentally handicapped as among typical pupils," according to Johnson's study.

Parents must be sold on the idea of transfer but sometimes they are given misleading hopes and promises in order to make the transfer willingly. They must understand that the class is not a cure, but that it does help equip the child to live with the handicap. They can be helped to realize that in the special education room their child will experience successes in contrast to daily failures. Heck[24] comments, "if parents welcome the transfer, then the child usually accepts the change in a happy frame of mind."

Recommendations from 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth state that the public school's responsibilities include the provision of counseling to families of mentally handicapped children, and the interpretation of specialized educational services to parents and the public.[25] Lord[26] also believes that there should be official service within the school structure to give assistance to parents from the time the child's problem is identified.

No problem in the organization of these special classes is more important than that of developing an attitude of acceptance toward the

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[24]Heck, Arch O., Education of Exceptional Children, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., N. Y., 1953, p. 342.

[25]White House Conference on Children and Youth, "Recommendations Concerning the Mentally Handicapped," Composite Report of Forum Findings, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. June, 1960.

[26]Lord, F. E., "A Realistic Look at Special Classes," Exceptional Children 22:321-325, May 1956.

class. This is confirmed by Heck[27] who states, "the past has too frequently seen those responsible for these classes foiled at this point, as a result, the work has failed."

Small initial classes. When organizing the initial class, it is advisable to start with a small one. Kirk[28] suggests activating the class with five or six students, and adding new ones gradually. This prevents problems arising when 15 children who have failed in school are placed in the same class at the same time.

Homogeneous grouping. It is important that the initial groups be as homogeneous as possible. The teacher can group the children more effectively for instructional purposes with less need for individual attention.[29]

When local systems fail to maintain minimum standards set up by the state to provide for homogeneous grouping, unwarranted claims for state reimbursement add to the cost of the program. Personnel should be encouraged to enforce minimum standards.[30] Lord refers to the problem when he states:

> Our special classes are far more heterogeneous than we hoped they would be. . . classes for retarded children are likely to have a good share of children who have problems other than retardation which are as important to the educational process as the primary disability. . . special education classes continue to attract the marginal child who does not belong there.[31]

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[27]Heck, op. cit., p. 363.

[28]Kirk, op. cit., p. 127.

[29]Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 196.

[30]Blessing, op. cit., p. 400.

[31]Lord, op. cit., p. 321.

Although small classes and homogeneity of grouping are important in all classes, they are most important with the initial class.

Adequate Housing and Equipment

The fourth factor important to a successful classroom is adequate school housing with appropriate materials and equipment. To facilitate integration and allow the children in the special classrooms contacts with normal children, it is desirable that the rooms be in schools with a similar chronological age group and as centrally located in a community as possible. Unless classrooms are rather centrally located there arises the problem of transportation and the necessity for someone to accompany the retarded to and from school in the primary grades. It is also advantageous if the classes are in buildings where there are services of the nurse, counselor, speech correctionist, and where homemaking, shop, art, and physical education instructors are available. However, in trying to meet these suggestions, the planning body must not solve the problem by grouping all classes in the same building; this isolates the children from regular students.

The room should be as large as a regular classroom, and well-lighted. It should be properly ventilated and heated. Soundproofing is necessary so that outside noises won't add to the distractions of the children and so that some of the activities of these children won't disturb others. These prerequisites may seem obvious, yet classes for retarded children are found lacking them.[32] In the words of Wallin:

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[32]Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., p. 221.

> The best way to discredit a special class is to relegate it to a dark, dingy corner in the basement, or a small hall room, or some other unused or inaccessible place in a remote part of the building. The policy followed all too frequently is to give the regular or normal children priority in room assignments, leaving the leftowers, if any, to the special class.[33]

Ideally all rooms should be provided with a sink and counter of a height comparable to the need of the age group. Bulletin boards and chalk boards are essential. At least one electrical outlet on each side of the room is required; more are required for advanced classes where housekeeping units are being taught. Open shelves, cupboards, and bins are a must for these children who must learn to care for their own belongings and practice orderliness. Lockers for clothing should be in the classrooms in the primary grades as care of clothing for them is also a part of the training program. Primary rooms should be near bathroom facilities.[34]

It is advisable that teachers stock their rooms initially with materials and equipment that can be put to use immediately, and gradually add to their inventory as they study the needs of their present class. The deciding factor should be the ability of the students to profit from the use of the proposed materials. Basic lists of desired supplies and equipment may be found, categorized for each level of learning, in a good curriculum guide.[35] The Montana Special Administrative Guide also lists desired equipment.[36]

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[33]Wallin, op. cit., p. 166.

[34]Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., pp. 221-222.

[35]Ibid., pp. 221-222.

[36]Appendix B

A Skillful Teacher

A skillful teacher is the most important prerequisite for successful special education work.[37] If the choice were between a poor teacher and superior equipment and poor equipment and a capable teacher, the administration should surely choose the superior teacher. Wallin states, "an energetic, resourceful, versatile teacher will find some means of presenting the program even if the equipment and external conditions are extremely inferior."[38] The success or failure of the special class teacher depends on her personality characteristics as well as her teaching skill. An even temper, nervous stability, emotional poise and maturity are required of the teacher. Cheerfulness, friendliness, fairmindedness, integrity, enthusiasm, persistence, initiative, resourcefulness, versatility, flexibility and adaptability are prime personality traits also desired.[39]

Hutt and Gibby[40] bring a new interpretation to the role of the teacher when they state that the retarded child tends to cast his teacher in a parental role more than the average. The special class teacher must be aware of this almost automatic form of behavior. She must be aware of her own emotional reactions in such a role and learn to accept her own feelings as well as those of the child. Good intentions and affection are not enough; she must have knowledge about personality

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[37] Wallin, op. cit., p. 241.

[38] Ibid., p. 220.

[39] Ibid., p. 241.

[40] Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., pp. 277-278.

dynamics, child development and human relationships as well as basic psychotherapeutic relationships. Without such specialized technical knowledge the teacher is not able to function.

A good teacher of retarded children will possess certain particular qualities, according to Hutt and Gibby:

1. Be in sympathy with the philosophy of education for the retarded child.
2. Be an emotionally well-balanced person.
3. Have certain specific traits, such as humor, tact, vitality, patience, sympathy, good personal appearance, originality, and creativity, good physical health, and have skills in planning and organizing.
4. Be accepting and understanding of children.
5. Have good interpersonal relationships with others.
6. Be willing to look for and accept help.
7. Have adequate training.
8. Know the following specific things: the nature of mental retardation, the nature of the world in which the retarded must live, the things necessary to live in such a world, the way to teach these things effectively.[41]

The teacher is the spark-plug for fostering positive attitudes.[42] Within a school system negative and hostile attitudes must be recognized and modified. The special class teacher has the responsibility to act as a liaison person in developing an understanding and an insight in regular staff members. She must explain characteristics, limitations, and strengths of the pupils in the room. She must help others understand

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[41] Ibid., p. 278.

[42] Ibid., p. 280.

the philosophy and objectives of the special education program.[43]

The teacher should have special education training. Without it she tends to pattern the class after the curriculum of the elementary grades. She must obtain supplementary training to understand the children, their needs, and the curriculum of the special class.[44] Twenty-two states, including Montana, require special training for special-class certificates, and according to Wallin,[45] "it is probable that requirements are not strictly enforced in any state at the present time because of the teacher shortage and other considerations." Certification requirements vary from state to state, and there is great need to untangle the present chaotic condition of certification. Reciprocal arrangements for honoring special-class certificates should be worked out between states.[46] A valid teaching certificate plus additional hours in such courses as occupational work, speech correction, clinical and abnormal psychology, and psychological testing are the usual minimum requirements for certification. Clinical, social work, and special classroom experience are accepted in lieu of certain credits. Heck[47] believes that in the future, no person should be considered as a teacher of these classes who does not have a masters degree. He further recommends three years of academic training, one year of professional training, and one year of special

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[43] Blessing, op. cit., p. 495.

[44] Kirk, op. cit., p. 127.

[45] Wallin, op. cit., p. 235.

[46] Ibid., p. 236.

[47] Heck, op. cit., p. 356.

education training plus a year's experience in regular classroom teaching.

Unfortunately, there is a severe shortage of skilled, trained teachers. The Western Interstate Commission reported that in 1958-59, 7,530 teachers would be needed to serve the educable retarded, while only 2,874 were employed, or only 38 per cent of the number needed.[48] Because of this shortage there exists the need for more effective recruitment of students for teaching careers in special education. A spirit of kindness will imbue some, salary differentials will lure others. A more effective measure aimed at recruiting capable students to enter special education work would be through an effective vocational guidance program. Counselors should be alerted to the opportunities and requirements for these teachers. Brochures and publicity from groups interested in promoting the welfare of the retarded could be made available to potential trainees.[49]

A study by Connor and Goldberg[50] suggests the following as reasons why some teachers of mentally retarded were stimulated to enter the field: (1) actual association with children and those happily engaged in their work, (2) observation of classes, (3) college courses in special education, (4) association with friends or relatives of a retarded child, and (5) no other teacher available.

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[48]Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Teachers of Exceptional Children for the West, The Commission, Boulder, Colorado, 1960, p. 30.

[49]Wallin, op. cit., p. 239.

[50]Connor, Frances P., and Goldberg, I. Ignacy, "Opinions of Some Teachers Regarding Their Work With Trainable Children: Implications for Teacher Education," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, January, 1960, p. 658.

The importance of skilled and trained teachers for the mentally handicapped cannot be overemphasized. They must have the qualities of any good classroom teacher. In addition to others required in this special area, Allen[51] says, "there are many instances where people who are thoroughly competent in other areas but who know little of mental retardation are being asked to assume responsibility for these programs." The demand for teachers exceeds the supply and an organized plan of recruitment seems necessary before enough qualified teachers will be available.

Early Placement After Evaluation of Student by Qualified Psychological Examiner

The desirability of selecting children early for special classrooms has inestimable value in the success of the program. Allen,[52] writing on "Program Trends for the Mentally Retarded," reports that as a result of research the trend is to discover children as early as five or six years, hence there has been a growth of school programs for younger children. This is a good procedure because it brings the parents and schools into closer cooperation sooner. Early training prevents negative conditioning of the child who has no place in the regular classroom. It eliminates the need for reeducation of the child who has been in the regular classroom. The field of pre-school education of the mentally handicapped within the public school system has been a most neglected field.

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[51] Allen, Amy A., "Program Trends for the Mentally Retarded," Exceptional Children, May, 1960, p. 418.

[52] Ibid., p. 468.

Kirk[53] states, "it is possible that many children who are unable to adjust to our society would have been able to make an adequate adjustment following an intensive program of pre-school education." Hutt and Gibby[54] agree that "there is a great need to extend the program down to pre-school age and to tie the parents closely into such a program because there is value to both and valuable experiences from such a program. Training is most urgently needed then and most effective at that time." Wallin also emphasizes the value of early placement when stating:

> Transfer to a special class should be made just as soon as the child's condition can be determined with reasonable accuracy. Defects and handicaps can be more easily improved or corrected the younger and therefore the more plastic the child is. . . . Moreover, early assignment often obviates the necessity of reeducation or the correction of wrong habits and attitudes which have been formed because of difficulties of scholastic and social adjustment and which often involve frequent repetition of the work or else failure in the grades. It often prevents the warping effects on personality development produced by discouragement or dissatisfaction resulting from futile strivings. Unfortunately, the schools are often very dilatory in referring retardates as candidates for special classes, probably in the belief that such children are merely adventitiously or temporarily handicapped and will soon catch up, or because of a fear of offending the parents by such a suggestion. Valuable time is often thus lost.[55]

Regulations concerning placement must be strictly enforced. Assessment must be a continuing process.[56] After the child has been

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[53]Kirk, op. cit., p. 153.

[54]Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 316.

[55]Wallin, op. cit., pp. 109-110.

[56]Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 109.

declared eligible, his admission into the class becomes the responsibility of the local school administration.[57]

In order that the special class may be organized in conformity with principles of efficiency and economy, the following directives should be rigorously followed by public-school authorities, according to Wallin:[58]

1. Recommendations for assignment should be made only after comprehensive case studies involving psychoclinical (chiefly psychological, but psychiatric in selected cases), medical, and educational examinations and personal and family history investigations.

2. Transfers should be made only after certifications have been authorized by a competent authority after review of the synoptic findings.

3. The psychoclinical examination should be conducted by a psychoeducational or psychological examiner who not only knows how to administer effectively and interpret the findings of tests of intelligence, aptitudes, motility, personality, and educational status (diagnostic, placement, and predictive tests) but who also has a basic comprehension of mental deficiency and of mental and educational retardation in their various forms, degrees, potentialities, and ramifications. There is no avoiding errors in assignments except through skilled diagnosis. The adequacy of psychoclinical examination and diagnostic facilities varies greatly throughout the country.

4. Referral of pupils for examination, therapy, or assignment should be made the definite responsibility of the school principal or a special referral official.

5. Referral for examination and transfer should be made just as soon as the child's condition can be determined with reasonable accuracy. Procrastination often leads to wasted opportunities and to maladjustments and inefficient response patterns that result in failure and frustration.

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[57]Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., pp. 222-224.

[58]Wallin, op. cit., p. 135-136.

6. Definite standards of eligibility for admission to special classes should be established in terms of chronological age, intelligence age, social maturity, educational achievement, specific disabilities, and other relevant factors. Special classes should not be made a dumping ground for psychological or educational ne'er-do-wells.

7. The grouping of children in special classes should be based on many criteria--chronological age, intelligence age, educational age, social age, clinical type, special aptitudes, etc.--not on only one. The practicability of any plan for grouping will depend on the number of children who have the same or similar types of handicaps. The purpose of any system of grouping is the better adjustment of the teaching process to the child's functioning level in the various areas of instruction.

8. Whenever possible, various special classes should be established to meet the needs of children of various chronological ages and stages of maturity, and having various degrees of impairment or specific disabilities.

9. Diagnostic classes should be established whenever possible for comprehensive observational studies of doubtful pupils and for the working out of remedial and developmental instruction to meet the needs of individual deviates.[59]

Curriculum Based on Life Experience Units

Most educators now recognize that teaching retarded children demands a developmental rather than a remedial approach. The curriculum is not remedial in nature. Remedial classes are designed to deal with specific scholastic disabilities. Special classes for retarded children, in contrast, offer a carefully tailored program designed to deal with developing the assets and reducing the liabilities of the retarded child. The mentally retarded child should be given a differential program in the class, not one that is an adaptation of the usual class curriculum.[60]

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[59] Ibid., p. 136.

[60] Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 271.

The curriculum does not primarily give the child more attention, more intensive instruction, or more drill in the regular program of studies but it individualizes the content and processes of that instruction to meet specific needs.[61]

Kirk states that regardless of the numerous methods of education developed for the retarded two common elements are present: the instruction is adapted to the slow learning ability of the children and the program is more practical and less academic with the emphasis on developing the personality and adequacy in occupational and social areas.[62] The academic and other skills learned are not ends in themselves but have meaning only as tools that will enable the child to achieve the basic objectives of the program more easily.[63] Hutt further explains the program when he says that the learning experiences should be aimed at the child's present day activities in all areas.[64] The unit of experience may be defined as "an actual experience in living related to the child's immediate interests and environment, which in turn related to his total experience makes for richer and more vital living."[65]

This type of curriculum will be explained in the following paragraphs. Cruickshank[66] suggests that primary class units should include those related to mental and physical health, social experiences, readiness

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[61]Wallin, op. cit., p. 84.

[62]Kirk, op. cit., p. 116.

[63]Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 3.

[64]Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 272.

[65]Rothstein, op. cit., p. 232.

[66]Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 225.

activities, quantitative concepts, motor skills and experiences with simple tools and common materials, developed around areas of living skills. The secondary curriculum would consolidate social and academic skills learned earlier, and expand academic skills. Pre-vocational and vocational experiences correlated with a school-work program and general occupational information should be part of the public school program. Goldstein and Seigle[67] advise a curriculum based on needs, interest, abilities, and handicaps of the child. Units are centered on "life functions" of citizenship, communication, home and family, leisure time, management of materials and money, occupational adequacy, physical and mental health, safety, social adjustment, and travel. Behaviors and skills are learned with each life function at primary, intermediate and advanced levels. Transfer of training from classroom performance to adult behavior would include intangibles of ethical, moral, and spiritual values of democratic living.

At Colorado State College the integrated life experience unit has proven highly successful. In his Introduction to Outcome Charts, Vaughan[68] suggests that curriculum content offered is expressed in terms of cores of learning experience. These are stated as competencies, skills, and concepts rather than as specific subject matter. Areas are: (1) Arithemetic Competencies, (2) Social Competencies, (3) Communicative Skills, (4) Safety, (5) Health, and (6) Vocational Competencies. Clearly stated specific outcomes are desired and realized as a result of daily class activities presented within a unit of instruction. Twenty basic experience

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[67]Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., p. 1.

[68]Vaughan, Tony D., Introduction to Outcome Charts, p. 1.

units are the foundation for the program. They are taught at five developmental levels: pre-school, primary, intermediate, pre-vocational, and vocational.

Vaughan[69] agrees with Goldstein and Seigle[70] that curriculum guides should be permissive enough not to stifle the ingenuity of the teacher.

Martens[71] names three basic qualifications which give the well-developed unit of experience its value: (1) the experience or activity should be real and not make-believe, (2) should provide for cooperative living, and should contribute to the child's understanding or experience of the feeling of working with others, and (3) the results, tangible or not, should be emotionally, physically, and mentally satisfying to the child.

Within every experience there should be levels of growth so that each child accomplishes what is most necessary to satisfy his own needs. The daily division of time among the several activities involved in the unit of work may pose a problem, and in order to allow for some degree of flexibility many class programs are planned on a weekly rather than daily basis. In general, a carefully planned schedule will allow approximately half the time for teaching the skills and the other half for group activities involved in the unit.[72]

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[69] Ibid., p. 2.

[70] Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., p. 1.

[71] Martens, Elise H., Curriculum Experiences for the Educable Mentally Retarded, (ed. by Rothstein, op. cit., p. 321).

[72] Ibid., p. 235.

Martens[73] names the following experiences as being valuable and vital to the child in a special classroom:

1. Social and civic experiences. These are related to the child's life in his home, his school, and his community. In addition, he may learn a few things about his state and the world, and something about other people outside his immediate environment.

2. Reading experiences. Some mentally retarded children will be able to learn to read only for their own protection, while others will read for information and instruction. A few will read for pleasure.

3. Language and Spelling. Activities carried on in the classroom should be the basis for introducing new words, which should be meaningful to the child since they will already be a part of his speaking vocabulary. Their correct spelling should not stop with the "spelling lesson" but should be a part of every writing activity.

4. Numbers. Whatever number situations arise in the life of the child or his family could be considered good content in arithmetic. Essentials should include practice with the following skills: addition and subtraction of two-digit numbers, addition and subtraction of dollars and cents, content of multiplication tables, short division, simple fractions and mixed numbers, common weights and measures, clock and calendar facts, timetables and schedules. The mentally retarded child needs many meaningful experiences with numbers before he is ready to handle simple problems. Before he leaves school, he should also acquire a working vocabulary of arithmetical terms. Use of the unit of experience does not eliminate need for drill. Short drills can be based upon the content of the unit of experience.

5. Penmanship. Here legibility is the chief goal. Habits need to be formed through drill but does not automatically mean "copybook" penmanship. The child's writing should always be neat, legible, and free from smudges.

6. Other experiences are desirable in science and the arts (music, play activity, dancing, form and color). Manual and occupational experiences are profitable to the child. Through these experiences the children learn by doing, and they progress from childish satisfaction in manipulation and play with

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[73] Ibid., p. 231-269.

tools and materials to feeling pride and taking pleasure in constructive efforts which serve a purpose.[74]

The preceding paragraphs point out the effectiveness of various life experience curriculums. Terms used vary with different authors, but in essence, the children in a room for educable mentally handicapped learn skills and behaviors through techniques that relate their learning experience to their environment.

Integration of Handicapped with Regular Students

Another factor in the education of the mentally handicapped is the opportunity for integration of the child in the special education room with the children in regular rooms. Opportunities for teaching social competencies and satisfactory human relationships and experiences are possible in art, music, and physical education classes. Participation in assemblies, student athletic events, school parties, lunchroom activities, or on the playground are further avenues of integration.

The teacher should use caution with integrating experiences. She must not force them before the child is ready or trained for the experience. Failure to adjust to activities with normal children could result in rejection of the child by himself as well as by others. The teacher should sense this readiness and also the readiness of other teachers and other children to accept the handicapped in their activities.[75] Cruickshank[76] believes integrating activities should be those in which the

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[74]Ibid., p. 231-269.

[75]Goldstein and Seigle, op. cit., p. 219.

[76]Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 199.

normal and retarded have equal skill and abilities and that they are supplemental to the program, not a replacement. Blessing,[77] in his article on suggested refinements in the education of the educable mentally retarded child, suggests that segregation should be for educational purposes only, with as much integration as possible.

Vocational Training Provided Within Framework of School to Include School Work Experience and Follow-up

An adequate vocational training program should be provided within the framework of the school system and should involve more than trade training. In addition to providing special skills, the program should also stress non-technical aspects of work. These evolve around factors such as how to get along on a job, how to relate to home and co-workers, the importance of getting to work on time, and similar concepts.[78] The idea that job opportunities for the retarded individual are highly limited is a myth and should be abolished.[79] Vocational education is feasible and produces rich returns for the retardate in society. The apparent decline of the number of individuals seen as being retarded in later life is because these individuals have been capable of achieving vocational success. They have become self-supporting members of their communities. Although some accomplish this without outside help, many

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[77]Blessing, op. cit., p. 492.

[78]Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 281.

[79]Ibid., p. 286.

more could if provided with specially designed programs of vocational training, guidance and placement.[80]

This training may first start within the school building, with the retarded working in the cafeteria, as supply room helpers, projectionists, or office messengers.[81]

Many schools have developed various kinds of cooperative arrangements with industry to provide school work experiences. This experience provides an opportunity for selected students to be profitably employed in a school approved occupational experience. The student is paid an hourly wage equal to that of other beginning or part-time employees. His work progress is entered on the student's program card and school credit is given toward graduation. School sponsored work experience allows the student to make a more gradual transition from school to industry. The school and industry must work together if they are to understand what each has to offer to the total education and rehabilitation of the mentally handicapped. The student must also understand his responsibilities to both the school and his employer. All work experience programs must be administratively approved.

The role of the teacher in school work experience cannot be minimized. She is the key person in evaluating a student's occupational readiness and in correlating classroom experiences with work experiences. She is responsible for bringing about changes in negative attitudes of co-operating employers, and she interprets the student's weaknesses and

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[80] Ibid., p. 317.

[81] Blessing, op. cit., p. 496.

strengths to the employer. She is responsible for informal guidance.[82] This is the reason why Blessing[83] suggests that for certification the special classroom teacher should receive more guidance and occupational information training. Additional services in guidance, pre-vocational testing, try-out periods in school exploratory work projects, school-work plans, selective job placement, and supervision in the early phases all involve good counseling techniques. Cooperation with Vocational Rehabilitation or State Employment Agencies and community service groups is a valuable adjunct to the school program, the former two may be staffed with counselors to ease the responsibility for the teacher. Experience shows that successful rehabilitation is probably too great a task to be carried out effectively by one agency; however, where this cooperation has not been established the burden in preparing and placing students on jobs has fallen on the public schools. Job placement should include plans for follow-up if optimal adjustment is to be achieved.[84]

One of the implications of the vocational training program is that to be effective the school program must be developed with the idea of providing a good vocational program for the older student. Blessing[85] states that the most neglected group is the 16-21 year group, and that young retardates often drop out of school unprepared to work in the community because programs for training are not available to the older

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[82] Ibid., p. 317.

[83] Blessing, op.cit. p. 495.

[84] Rothstein, op. cit., pp. 307-312.

[85] Blessing, op. cit., p. 494.

retardate. Hutt and Gibby[86] say there is a great need to extend the age limit upward beyond the age of normal adolescence because the retardate matures more slowly and does not reach full maturation until beyond the normal age. It is during this latter period that vocational programs should be stressed. A retarded child may need vocational training for many years.

Inter-Agency Cooperation and the Team Approach

The final factor important in a successful special education program is that there should be inter-agency cooperation and a team approach to the problem. The planning of a life program for any retarded person can be accomplished best through an inter-disciplinary team approach. Often the capable and enthusiastic teacher loses sight of the valuable contributions that may come from team-work with professional people, such as the pediatrician, public health nurse, social worker, and vocational education counselor. Through their combined efforts the teacher is provided with needed valuable information. Caution may be necessary, however, with unschooled or inexperienced team members who might tend to usurp the teacher's role. The teacher must always be conscious of the fact that she is the specialist in teaching.[87]

In addition to professional personnel, there is great value to the teacher from teamwork with other staff members. Administrators, and other teachers, who may work directly with some of the students, sometimes

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[86]Hutt and Gibby, op. cit., p. 315.

[87]Rothstein, op. cit., p. 541.

need to be represented on the team. Since 20 per cent of the handicapped children need help in communicative skills, the services of the speech therapist are very important.[88] Community leaders, representatives of parent organizations, governmental employees, and representatives of labor may well function on another team. Great progress can be made through the coordinated efforts of a state-wide inter-agency council on mental retardation.[89]

The next chapter will present the opinions of special education teachers regarding the present status of programs in Montana.

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[88]Arnold, Ruth G., "Speech Rehabilitation for the Mentally Handicapped," Exceptional Children, 12:50, March, 1955, p. 50.

[89]Appendix D.

CHAPTER III

OPINIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS REGARDING THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE PROGRAM IN MONTANA

Although Chapter II gave a good comprehensive view of the special education program in general, it was felt that more information was necessary about the program as it actually exists in Montana at the present time. As a means of obtaining this information, a questionnaire was sent to the 23 teachers of the 23 classes in this state.[1]

The questionnaire was sent Special Delivery with a return receipt requested. Five questionnaires were undelivered. Of the 18 teachers who received the questionnaire, 16 responded.

The questionnaire consisted of 13 open-end type questions. It was considered that this type of question would allow for a wider latitude of opinion and be less restrictive than if more highly structured, and that this freedom would reveal apsects of the program that might not otherwise come to light.

For the sake of clarity, the information received through the questionnaire has been condensed and compiled under the following headings: training and experience of the teachers, motivating factors in entering the field and rewards of special education teaching, sponsors of original classes, placement procedures, resistance encountered by the teachers, problems causing dissatisfaction, and suggestions for improving

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[1]Opinions of special education teachers from questionnaire, Appendix C.

the program. The results will be discussed briefly in the following sections.

Training and Experience of the Teachers

The teachers represented a wide variety of training and experience. All but three indicated they had a bachelor of science or bachelor of arts degree. Three had some graduate credits toward a masters degree. One teacher has her masters degree. Another teacher, whose questionnaire did not reach her, has almost completed requirements for a doctorate. The degrees specified by the teachers were in elementary education, education, and psychology and education.

Teaching experience ranged from 5 years to 30 years. Regular teaching experience, before going into special education classes, was gained in primary and intermediate grades, and in high school. One teacher had taught Indian children; another had taught underprivileged Spanish-speaking children; and another had 8 years of experience teaching in an institution.

Motivation and Rewards

The majority of the teachers now teaching in special education entered because there was the need for such a teacher in the school system. Two had been substitute teachers and, when called on to substitute in former ungraded classes because other teachers refused, became interested. One started because the superintendent asked her to "try it," A former superintendent encouraged another teacher to enter

the field. Interest in remedial and corrective work was cited as a motivating factor by another teacher. One teacher, who wanted to return to Montana, was offered the special education room and since she had no objection, took the job. "Good openings" was the reason given by another teacher for going into special education work. One teacher had been interested in retarded children as a result of having had a retarded child in her home under a foster-care plan. Two had visited institutions for the retarded and became aware of the need for teachers of the retarded. Two were interested in the welfare of the handicapped.

In answer to the question "Do you find this work particularly rewarding; if so, in what ways?" only one answered that she did not find it "particularly" rewarding. Samples of the enthusiasm these teachers have for their work may be found in the following illustrative responses:

> I love it. The children are extremely receptive to affection and respond to it to achieve capacity. I believe these children are much more apt to work hard for small gains, they are so eager to excel and they apply themselves so diligently to their tasks.
>
> Seeing the success of these children when given opportunities to success. The joy and tears of a parent when their child perhaps reads his first sentence.
>
> It is very rewarding. Most anyone can teach the normal child. Some learn in spite of you. I rather like to think these children learn, at least, in part because of me.
>
> I just love teaching these children, if you have one child learn one word, remember one direction, or mingle with other children you know your time has been well spent.
>
> A tremendous personal satisfaction belongs to the teacher who sees a child begin to develop and adapt himself to the class situation, and to see a child demonstrate that emotional control can be cultivated, and most of all, to know that for the first time, a child has responded to some outside stimulus.

> Rewarding through the eyes of my pupils . . . it is a thrill to watch them take their place in an acceptable way. Rewarding, too, in the eyes of parents. It is wonderful when we watch our parents gradually accept their child's place in our room and be proud of his accomplishments.
>
> Wonderful relationship with parents of these children. Great satisfaction in seeing change in children as they find their place, growth of certainty that these children can be helped.
>
> Yes, there is a feeling of having made a direct contribution to someone's welfare and happiness. It is absorbing to the point wherein personal problems take a back seat.[2]

Other rewards mentioned were seeing the child's happiness and contentment in the classroom, their adjustment, and the excitement of the students when something was mastered. "Satisfaction in helping the regular classroom teachers by taking the retarded children out of the regular room so they could have more time to devote to the gifted and average" was another comment.

As a result of answers to the questions on why the teachers had gone into special education teaching and in what ways it was rewarding, it became evident to the investigator that surely some plan should be developed to make the field more attractive to other teachers. Even though most of the teachers entered special education teaching because they were asked to, and not because they were particularly inspired to, all but one found this teaching very rewarding. These responses seem to clearly indicate that the personal satisfactions and joys of teaching retarded children need to be emphasized in recruiting new teachers for the field, and that mere "need" falls short of proper motivation.

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[2] Ibid., Opinions of special education teachers from questionnaire, Appendix C.

Sponsor of Original Classroom in the Community

In response to the inquiry, "Do you know who instigated the original classroom in your community?" teachers from seven school systems replied that the parent group had been most responsible. A psychologist in one system started ungraded rooms 35 years ago and these later became the special education rooms. Two classes were reported to be an outgrowth of "opportunity rooms" sponsored by civic organizations. One parent-teacher association and several principals were also credited with responsibility for starting the classes.

Placement Procedures

Selection of students to be evaluated and their placement in the special education rooms were reported as being handled by such disciplines as the school nurse, special education teacher, supervisor of special education, a special education consultant, principal, a counselor, state psychologist, and mental hygiene clinics.

Teachers wrote that psychological evaluations were done by the state psychiatrist from Warm Springs, a special education consultant, mental hygiene clinics, a college psychometric testing bureau, and a counselor.

Resistance Encountered by Teachers of the Special Education Classes

Two questions were designed to reveal resistance facing teachers in their work. Seven teachers found resistance in other school personnel.

There was a reference to regular classroom teachers who were unable to accept the retarded child for what he is worth and felt the special education room was a "baby-sitting" proposition. "Not being supplied with essentials because of lack of understanding on the part of the administrator" was another source of resistance reported. One teacher said she was "alone" in her work. Others referred to regular faculty members who were slow to recognize the value of special education. Derogatory remarks were cited as having been made by some teachers, a principal, and members of a school board. Regular teachers in one school were critical over having to supervise retardates during the noon-hour period. One teacher said that after her principal had the first room for retardates in operation, he felt his obligation was finished and had made no plans to continue the program to serve more students. Another teacher wrote that although community and faculty attitudes had improved much in the past 5 years, there was still room for further improvement.

Parental resistance included one parent whose child did not qualify for the classroom, one who preferred to think of her child as only physically handicapped and demanded her son be worked to the limit of his endurance, and a couple who had been improperly counseled by a school nurse. This couple, the teacher added, became strong supporters of the program when they understood it and realized the value of special education.

Parental problems were reported handled by a special education consultant in a larger school system and by a mental health clinic in two schools. One teacher supplied parents of the students with reading materials on retardation. Several teachers encouraged classroom observations by parents to note their child's improvement. There was the

belief stated by several teachers in the value of directing new parents to an organized parent association. In two communities a strong parent group had eliminated any parental resistance.

One teacher reported resistance from parents of a normal child who objected to having their child eating lunch with "those children."

Problems Causing Dissatisfaction to the Special Education Teacher

When asked if there were other problems causing teacher dissatisfaction, one teacher expressed resentment at not being allowed to teach in the manner or content acceptable to the children but was expected to carry on a watered-down program. Transportation was a problem in one of the larger schools where the children from widely-scattered sections of the city had to have older children or adults accompany them to school. Several teachers voiced objection to the fact that they had students in their rooms who did not meet qualifications for eligibility in the room. They expressed real concern over this issue. Another teacher had asked that a team consisting of superintendent, principal, nurse, welfare worker, doctor, and teacher meet every six weeks to plan for the welfare of the students but reported she had received no cooperation.

Twelve to seventeen-year-old retardates were reported housed in an elementary building in one school system. The teacher realized these students should be situated in a building with students nearer their own chronological age. Two teachers expressed dissatisfaction because of inadequate equipment, and another stated her classroom was too small.

Suggestions for Improving the Program

Several teachers expressed a need for help in curriculum development. Some asked that teaching units be made available to them. There were several specific requests for a workshop or some in-service training for the teachers on content and methods. One teacher wrote that there was a need to coordinate the efforts of all the teachers throughout the state. Suggestions as to how this could be accomplished were through a workshop, a letter from the state supervisor coordinating the efforts of all teachers, and a meeting of special education teachers during the annual meeting of the Montana State Association for Retarded Children.

Opinions on certification brought conflicting answers. Some teachers thought requirements for certification should be strengthened, and others thought they should be relaxed. One teacher wrote, "I know of two classes that will have teachers with no special training whatever. It scares me! . . . I believe we must not allow people to believe any teacher can teach special education. Even if we have to wait to open new classes we should hold to high standards."[3] One teacher felt there should be more careful screening of teachers with reference to their personality and character traits. Another thought the requirements were "too pedantic" and that there should be more stress on physical work and "learning to labor." She also suggested the possibility of a supervisor over workers.

A higher salary level was proposed by one teacher. There was also the recommendation that some provision be made to aid teachers

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[3]Ibid., Opinions of special education teachers from questionnaire, Appendix C.

financially in order that they could attend summer school. Scholarships for summer training were also suggested.

There was a need, as expressed by one teacher, for more help in educating the public in aims of the program. One teacher suggested that classes be reduced to two half-day sessions; she felt that it was difficult to be with her class from 9 until 3 without a break during the noon hour, and that perhaps the class could be divided according to ability.

Again, in response to suggestions for improving the program, as in the question concerning problems facing the teacher, the belief was stated that state regulations regarding pupil qualifications should be enforced. One teacher proposed that a program for trainable retarded children be started within the state for those children who are too severely retarded to qualify for the educable mentally retarded program. Another suggested the training program at Boulder for children not meeting minimum entrance requirements. There were no suggestions as to what provisions should be made for the emotionally disturbed children who are in the program in one system.

There should be provisions for compulsory placement of students who are qualified for the classroom, according to one teacher. At the present time placement requires parent approval.

At the time the questionnaire was sent out, the position of state supervisor of special education was filled on a part-time basis. Mattson, who was also Supervisor of Guidance, had been asked to take over until a qualified supervisor of special education could be found to replace a former supervisor who had accepted another position. The teachers expressed need for more visits and more help from the part-time supervisor,

but realized that he was doing an excellent job in view of the fact that he was trying to do the work of two supervisors. Only one teacher replied that she had received no help from the supervisor. The majority of the teachers reported that they appreciated literature mailed to them from the state office, and also the encouragement they received when they had problems.[4]

Summary

Sixteen of the 18 teachers receiving the questionnaire responded by giving their opinions regarding the special education program for the educable mentally retarded in Montana. All but three of the teachers had bachelors degrees, and some were working toward advanced degrees. All had regular classroom experience ranging from 5 to 30 years. Most of them had no special education training but entered the area of special education to fill a need and because they were asked to. All but one found the work particularly rewarding.

The majority of the teachers said that they had encountered resistance from other school personnel and parents.

Although there were a number of suggestions made by the teachers to improve the program, the main ones seemed to be the need for enforcing

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[4]Mr. Raymond Lehrman has been appointed acting Supervisor of Special Education. His permanent appointment will be in effect as soon as he receives his pending masters degree. He is well qualified for the position. In addition to elementary teaching experience, and experience as a principal of an elementary school, he has worked as a speech therapist and has been a Supervisor of Special Education; in this capacity he worked mainly with the cerebral palsied and the orthopedically handicapped.

regulations concerning student eligibility and placement, giving curriculum help to the teachers, and providing for a full-time state supervisor.

An evaluation of the present program in Montana will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM IN MONTANA

In Chapter II certain factors were selected as being most important to the success of a special education program for the educable mentally retarded. The present program in Montana will be evaluated with respect to these factors.

Enactment of Statutes Providing for a Special Education Program

In Montana, the 1955 legislative session created the Special Education Law and the law went into effect on July 1, 1957.[1] This law was permissive. House Bill 34 amends Section 75-5003, Revised Codes of Montana, to make former legislation mandatory where it applies. House Bill 34 went into effect July 1, 1961.[2] The amendment states that any district having not less than 10 educable mentally retarded children must establish a class. Although this mandatory legislation has caused one large system to establish a class, the status of special education in Montana will not be significantly affected by the new law because of age-range and class-size regulations and because of the limited population within the state. Regulations state that there shall not be chronological age span of more than four years between students in the classroom. Class size is established at not less than seven students nor more than 15. The new law will be more effective later on when the systems grow

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[1] Appendix A

[2] Ibid., Appendix A

in size. Provisions are made in the law for school districts to use other state approved classes that exist within the state, and for transportation service from home to school and return for all handicapped children enrolled in a state approved special education program of such ages as is deemed wise. The local school board had the right to exclude persons of low intelligence or severe delinquent behavior.

The determination of children requiring special education is the responsibility of the state superintendent of public instruction in cooperation with appropriate medical, psychiatric, and psychological advice. This is an important item in the legislation, for it eliminates the possibility of pressures being exerted by persons to qualify children for the classes who do not meet eligibility standards.

Reimbursements on the part of the state for such programs shall be computed on the basis of counting each mentally retarded child as three in average number belonging. Transportation reimbursements shall be made on a schedule arrived at by the state superintendent and these expenditures shall be added to the transportation budget of the district. The state reimburses two-thirds of the approved transportation, and the county one-third.

Any child residing in a district but attending classes in another district will be included in the computation of average number belonging to the district maintaining the program; the resident district will pay the tuition to the district in which the class is located. The same is true of high school children.

Statutes are good in Montana, and provide for a growing population. However, there are questions in the mind of the investigator that bear

consideration in making an evaluation. From where do the funds come to maintain the program, in the event that a school district cannot finance the program? If special levies set up to finance such a program or to include such a program fail, what is the effect of mandatory legislation? In the face of an acute shortage of trained special education teachers, how does a district obtain the services of a skilled and qualified teacher? There exists, in the opinion of the investigator, the possibility that school districts may be forced into adopting a special education program before they are prepared to do a good job of it. This would be unfortunate as one of the factors responsible for the success of the program as brought out in the review of literature is the importance of careful preparation in initial classes. It takes time to insure acceptance of the program by members of the community who do not have a handicapped child, by other school personnel who will be associated with the program, and by the parents of the children eligible for the class. This presents the problem of parents who fail to cooperate in having a child evaluated for the classroom. This happened in two communities in Montana that were prepared to initiate the program.[3]

It remains for the state department and local school districts to iron out some of the problems involved in mandatory legislation, however, the probability of meeting the needs for more educable mentally retarded children is encouraging.

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[3]Mattson, op. cit.

Effective State Administration

In Montana, the state superintendent of public instruction with the approval of the state board of education shall prepare courses of instruction in the education of the mentally handicapped child, shall establish the qualifications of teachers, shall make provision for proper promotion, direction and supervision of classes for the mentally handicapped and shall provide necessary and adequate supervision, and shall appoint a supervisor and specify his qualifications.[4]

The fact that the supervisor of special education has jurisdiction over the education of all types of handicapped students is a commendable feature of the program. It eliminates the possibility of competition between conflicting interest groups. In other states, programs have been "notoriously lopsided" because of the intervention of pressure groups in the all-over program.[5]

Courses of study, size of classes, adequacy of methods of instruction, the distances to be traveled to each class and the necessary equipment and special services for mentally handicapped shall comply with requirements prescribed by the state board of education, which shall also have the authority to make any other needed regulations.[6]

The supervisor, under the direction of the state superintendent of public instruction shall discover the child needing special education by such methods as are necessary and shall supervise subjects and methods

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[4]Appendix A.

[5]Wallin, op. cit., p. 33.

[6]Appendix A.

and equipment to be used in the classrooms. For the purpose of properly educating and caring for the children, the supervisor shall see that the courses of instruction shall be made available for all teachers in training and in service. He may hold conferences, cooperate, consult, advise and investigate with school superintendents, principals, individual teachers, parents, school boards, and other interested groups and persons.[7]

Montana has been fortunate in the selection of supervisors. Teachers expressed appreciation for the help they received from supervisors. There were complimentary remarks made about all the supervisors with which they have had experience. Only one teacher said that she had received no help.[8] The recent appointment of a person to the position on a full-time basis will eliminate some criticism of the program resulting from the absence of a full-time supervisor. Even with restrictions due to lack of time and great distances to be traveled, the services of the former supervisor on a part-time basis was appreciated by most teachers.

A true evaluation of the special education program must point out areas that need to be improved in the state administration. This is not to say that these deficiencies may not be justified in view of shortage of funds and distances that have to be traveled, and the newness of the program; however justified, there remains the necessity of pointing out areas for improvement.

Regulations as established are not being enforced. The teachers reported there were children in their classes who did not qualify. This

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[7] Ibid., Appendix A.

[8] Ibid., Opinions of special education teachers from questionnaire, Appendix C.

results in unfair demands for reimbursement. The responsibility for the presence of these children rests with the state administration, as school administrators and school boards do not have the power to decide who is eligible for admittance. While it is advisable that some facilities be made available to children who do not qualify, that is not of immediate concern in this particular study.

There exists a need to provide courses of instruction for those in training and in service. Results of the questionnaire clearly indicate the necessity for curriculum development. Teachers said they needed help in this area. They asked that units be made available to them; others wanted a workshop.[9] There is no question but that this is an area of immediate need.

Regulations as established by the state board of education name certain qualifications for teachers, yet there are teachers who do not meet minimum qualification standards. The minimum qualifications for a teacher of a special education class are that the teacher must:

1. Be regularly certified as a teacher in Montana, with a minimum of a bachelor degree
2. Have a minimum of at least two years successful teaching experience
3. Have a minimum of 15 quarter hours in special education, included in these 15 quarter hours are the following recommended courses:
   a. Introductory course in special education
   b. Introductory course in the education of the mentally handicapped
   c. Supervised practice-teaching with the mentally handicapped

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[9] Ibid., Opinions of special education teachers from questionnaire, Appendix C.

4. The following supplementary courses are also recommended:

   a. Arts and crafts
   b. Counselling and guidance
   c. Introductory course in psychology testing
   d. Introductory course in speech correction
   e. Mental Hygiene[10]

Certain personal characteristics were also specified in the regulations in relation to teacher certification. Regulations state that a competent elementary school teacher with a genuine interest and concern for the welfare of the children may serve effectively in the program, and where such a teacher is available, it is recommended that the school administration utilize such a teacher by requesting emergency special education certification. Regulations further state that the teacher should be encouraged to broaden her qualifications during summer months.[11]

There is an acute shortage of trained teachers. However, there are teachers in the state who do not meet even minimum requirements. The suggestion that they be "encouraged" to qualify themselves should perhaps be strengthened to state that they "must" qualify themselves. This might tend to penalize an excellent teacher already in the field, but when the program expands there will be the need to enforce regulations concerning teacher qualification.

Counseling is recommended only as a supplementary course. A review of literature pointed out the importance of good counseling techniques to the skilled teacher. She is the spark-plug for creating positive attitudes and readiness to accept the program by the community, other school

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[10] Schofer, op. cit., p. 10.

[11] Ibid., p. 10.

personnel, and with the parents of educable mentally retarded children. She also needs to counsel the student; good counseling techniques are of extreme importance in vocational training programs. The investigator believes that counseling courses should be a definite requirement for certification.

The state administration shall be the agency for cooperation with other agencies in matters of public school education of the educable mentally retarded child. Right now is the time for the administration to begin a program of cooperation with the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, especially. Greater numbers of children are now reaching the age where they need school work-experience and vocational training. That training has not been available to them.[12]

The Special Education Administrative Guide is in need of revision.[13] When revised, it should be published in quantity enough to be available to all administrators and teachers of special education, as well as for distribution to persons interested in starting a special education program in the community. The guide which the investigator used in this study was one of the two available copies left from the original publication order.[14]

Need for Careful Preparation of Initial Classes in Each Community

That there has been careful preparation of initial classes is

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[12]Mattson, op. cit.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

evidenced by the fact that only one classroom has failed, and that was a number of years ago.[15] Since 1956 when special education legislation was created in this state, there has been a gradual but steady growth in the program. Seven school systems initiated state-approved classes the first year, two more were started in 1958, two in 1959, and two in 1960. There were 23 classes for the educable mentally retarded in Montana during the year 1960-61. More classes are scheduled for the year 1961-62.[16] Literature revealed the need for adequate and careful preparation when starting special education classes in order to insure the acceptance of the program by the community, school personnel and parents. As previously mentioned some classes were scheduled but plans were dropped for various reasons. Lack of funds resulted in postponement of one class. Hesitation to start a second classroom in a community where the regular special education teacher had received a grant and needed a replacement caused that community to delay the new class. In two communities where where were no classes, anticipated classes failed to materialize when parents refused to cooperate in having their children evaluated for eligibility.[17] These delays, though regrettable, may represent strength in view of the fact that it is better to prepare carefully for new classes than to have them fail because of inadequate preparation.

The fact that two schools failed to institute programs when parents would not have their children evaluated points out the need for close cooperation between the state department and local school administrations. Some better program must be devised to "sell" parents on the

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

idea of special education, and the values of it to their child. The investigator knows personally that there has been an effort in the two previously mentioned communities to adequately inform the parents of the children who were eligible. This poses the question as to whether compulsory enrollment would be advisable. One teacher suggested this idea in response to the questionnaire. There is hope that a more concentrated effort to counsel parents should make this extreme measure unnecessary. All resources should be made available to help parents accept their responsibility in providing special education for their retarded children. These resources could include the supervisor, psychologist, social worker, counselor, doctor, nurse, other special education teachers, and satisfied parents of children in classes in other communities. In addition, films and literature promoting the values of special education are available.

In addition to establishing an atmosphere of readiness on the part of all persons involved in the special education program, literature revealed the desirability of small initial classes, homogeneously grouped. Montana State requirements are that there shall not be more than a four year age span among the children, and that classes should contain not fewer than seven nor more than 15 students.[18]

Adequate Housing and Equipment

Through questions concerning housing and equipment of special education rooms, it was learned that four classrooms were held in semi-

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[18]Schofer, op. cit., p. 8.

basement rooms, one in a very small room, and five on the second floor of school buildings. In one school system older retardates, 11-17 years old, were in an elementary building and would have been better housed in a building with regular students more their own age. Inadequate equipment was reported by the teachers in two classes. In cases where housing or equipment is very poor, the state administration should exercise its power to enforce regulations and eliminate this problem.

Curriculum Based on Life Experiences

It has been previously stated that curriculum planning is an obvious weakness in the program in Montana. There is great need to plan a curriculum guide, or make a good one available to all teachers, and to coordinate the efforts of the teachers. While a review of literature pointed out the effectiveness of a curriculum based on life experience units, the Guide revealed but a few lines on these units.[19]

Integration of Handicapped with Regular Students

There was meager information about integration as a result of the questionnaire. There were inferences of it, however, during the lunch hour, on the playground, and during assemblies. Whether there was any integration of the retarded with regular students in any special classroom activities was not revealed. The importance of integration of special education students with regular students should be pointed out to school personnel in schools maintaining special education classes.

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[19]Ibid., p. 23.

Vocational Training Provided Within Framework of the School to Include School Work-Experience and Follow-up

Vocational training is an area to be developed in Montana. Because the program is new, relatively few children have been ready for school work-experience until recently. However from now on the numbers needing training will be increasing and there must be preparation now to provide that training. With the enactment of Public Law 113 in 1943 and Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1954, retarded children became eligible for training, with certain qualifications.[20] This training is a vital part of the special education program and should be provided.

Inter-agency Cooperation and the Team Approach

Since it would never be feasible for a single department of the state government to handle all the business having to do with mental retardation, proper coordination of services is necessary. This could best be accomplished by having an inter-departmental or inter-agency commission on mental retardation, directly responsible to the Governor. The establishment of a permanent structure in the nature of an inter-agency commission on mental retardation in Montana would be in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of State Governments and the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth.[21] There is the

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[20] Rothstein, op. cit., p. 336.

[21] Appendix D.

feeling that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Director of Special Education should be represented on that commission. Cooperation resulting from this proposed commission would be beneficial to the special education program in Montana.

There is the need for cooperation between all school personnel with respect to the special education program. A large number of teachers who answered the questionnaire indicated that they had encountered resistance from other staff members. Since there were reported references to lack of support from other staff members, some effort needs to be made to stress the importance of cooperation in all school personnel. The supervisor should be aware of this and meet with all members of any school staff, routinely, as a part of the business of setting up initial classes. The team approach is also necessary in evaluating and placing a student in the classroom. Representatives of the medical and nursing professions, social workers, and counselors might well be a part of a team, along with the special education teacher and administrator, to ease the problem of placement.

At the present time there is very little inter-agency cooperation in the education of mentally handicapped students.

Summary

Although the special education program has grown to 23 classes for the year 1960-61, with more anticipated for the following year, there remains a glaring disparity between the number of children eligible for special education and those actually receiving it. There is a need for

a study to determine why the needs of more children are not being met.

Results of the study indicate that the special education program in Montana is only partially effective. In order to lay a good foundation for future expansion there needs to be improvement in a number of areas. The areas needing most attention at the present time seem to be in the enforcement of existing state regulations, curriculum development, and vocational training.

Recommendations to improve on expanding programs of special education are given in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the special education program and to determine factors contributing to the success of a special education program for the educable mentally retarded; also, to evaluate the present program in Montana in the light of the findings.

A review of literature was made to determine which factors contributed most to the success of the program. Opinions of special education teachers in this state were obtained through a questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire, correspondence and conversations with the state supervisor, and a study of state statutes and regulations added to the information about the program. The present program in Montana was evaluated in the light of the findings. Recommendations were listed which may be of value in laying a firm foundation for further expansion of the special education program for the mentally retarded in Montana.

Summary

Literature revealed certain factors which were deemed most important to the success of a special education program for the educable mentally retarded. The following are summary ideas concerning these factors:

1. Enactment of statutes is essential in creating a program and while laws alone do not make a good program they are the first step in the right direction.

2. Careful selection of a qualified supervisor is imperative because his role is vital to the program.

3. Experience has shown that careful preparation for initial classes will reduce the number and intensity of problems that may arise if a program is begun in haste.

4. Requirements for housing and equipment are the same as for any good classroom.

5. A skillful teacher who possesses the necessary personality traits is the most important prerequisite for a successful special education room.

6. Current research points out the importance of early placement of a child in the classroom after a complete evaluation of the student by a qualified psychological examiner. Regulations concerning placement must be strictly enforced.

7. Most authorities recognize that teaching retarded children demands a developmental rather than a remedial teaching approach.

8. Special class students should be given as many opportunities for integration with regular students as possible, but not until the child is ready or trained for the integrating experience.

9. An adequate vocational training program should be provided within the framework of the school system and should include school work-experience and follow-up.

10. Efforts of all persons concerned with the care, welfare, and training of the retarded child should be coordinated through an inter-disciplinary team approach.

Opinions of special education teachers as reported through a questionnaire suggested need for improving the present program.

An evaluation of the present program in Montana, in the light of what literature determined as a good program, pointed out the need for improvement in certain areas.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn:

1. There is a great need to develop a strong special education program in Montana.

2. There is a need to educate the community, all school personnel, and the parents of the handicapped with the philosophy and objectives of the special education program.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study it is recommended that:

1. The administrative guide be revised as soon as possible and printed in quantities that will allow for distribution to all administrators, special education teachers, as well as to lay persons seeking information about the program.

2. Regulations pertaining to pupil eligibility and teacher certification be enforced.

3. A curriculum guide based on some form of life experience units be distributed to all special education teachers.

4. A workshop be held for teachers on content, methods, and materials of special education.

5. All regular class teachers be required to take some course that will alert them to a retarded child and acquaint them with the philosophy and objectives of the special education program.[1]

6. A minimum requirement for certification should include courses in counseling.

7. A broad program for teacher recruitment be planned to meet the demand for skilled teachers.

8. Some scientific method for collecting valid data be made to plan ahead for anticipated needs for special education classes in each community.

9. A program for the early identification of retardates be established.

10. A nursery school program be developed for young retardates.

11. Plans be formulated and adopted to make vocational training available within the school, to include school work-experience and follow-up.

12. An inter-agency commission on mental retardation be formed to coordinate the efforts of all state agencies concerned with the care and welfare of mentally handicapped children; the state superintendent of public instruction and the supervisor of special education to serve on that commission.

13. Another study be made to determine why there are no classes for the educable mentally retarded in each community or combined communities to meet the needs of those children requiring special education.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Laws Relating to Special Education

75-5001. Special Education -- mentally handicapped children -- physically handicapped children. Within the meaning of this act special education is that type of education requiring special facilities or instruction because of physical or mental deviation from the average on the part of some children. These handicapped are defined as follows:

(1) Mentally handicapped children are children who are not capable of profiting from the general educational program of the public schools. These children may be considered in three groups as follows: (a) Educable mentally handicapped. Those children who, at maturity, cannot be expected to attain a level of intellectual functioning greater than that commonly expected from an eleven-year-old. (b) Trainable mentally handicapped. Those children who, at maturity, cannot be expected to attain a level of intellectual functioning greater than that commonly expected of a seven-year-old and who, for entrance into a training program, are capable of walking, of clean bodily habits, and of obedience to simple commands. (c) Custodial mentally handicapped. Those children who do not show a likelihood of attaining clean bodily habits, responsiveness to directions, or means of intelligible communication. The public schools are to assume responsibility for only the educable handicapped groups.

(2) Physically handicapped children are those children who are capable of profiting from the general education program of the public schools, but who need special equipment, special services, and transportation to compensate for such physical handicaps as cardiac, cerebral palsy, or other physical handicaps including inadequate hearing and vision, which makes them unable to profit from the normal education processes without some special provision. Nothing herein shall be construed to interfere with the purpose and function of the school for the Deaf and Blind in Great Falls. (En. Ch. 206, L. 1955.)

75-5002. Courses of instruction -- preparation -- cooperation. The state superintendent of public instruction, with assistance from the state board of health, and superintendent of the state training school, and with the approval of the state board of education, shall prepare courses of instruction in the discovery and education of the handicapped child.

The state superintendent of public instruction shall cooperate with the state board of health in the utilization of the board of health specialists in hearing, speech and physical defects, both on the state

and local levels, and shall also utilize the Montana mental hygiene clinic and specialists at the state training school in determining the type of special instruction needed by mentally deficient children. (En. Ch. 206, L. 1955.)

75-5003. Local boards of trustees -- powers -- determination of children requiring special education and the type of education responsibility of state superintendent -- reimbursement by state -- computation. The board of trustees in each school district may maintain special classes for educable mentally handicapped children or for physically handicapped children, or may arrange to use the services of such approved crippled children's classes as may exist within the state, or may provide transportation services from home to school and return for physically handicapped children of such ages as it deems wise; provided, that the local board has the right to exclude persons of low intelligence or severe delinquent behavior. The determination of the children requiring special education and the type of special education needed by these handicapped children shall not be the responsibility of local boards of trustees but shall be the responsibility of the state superintendent of public instruction in cooperation with appropriate medical, psychiatric and psychological advice listed above. Two (2) or more districts may combine to provide such educational facilities.

Reimbursements on the part of the state for such programs shall be computed on the basis of counting each such mentally handicapped child in such special classes as two (2) in average number belonging, and each physically handicapped child according to a schedule to be prepared by the state superintendent of public instruction, but in no case shall it be over (3) average number belonging for each such child, pro-rated according to time and number in these special classes, or in home tutoring. Transportation reimbursements shall be made on a schedule arrived at by the state superintendent of public instruction, and such expenditures shall be added to the transportation budget of the district. The state shall reimburse two-thirds of such approved transportation.

Children sent to the crippled children classes in any other approved program within the state shall be counted on the rolls of the home district and the home district shall transfer the funds for each such child to the school district in which these classes are located according to prescribed schedules, provided, however, that when children are sent to an institution supported by funds of the State of Montana the home district will not be required to transfer funds for such child. (En. Ch. 206. L. 1955.)

75-5004. Mentally handicapped children not to be deprived of school privileges without consent of state superintendent -- notifying local welfare department and state training school of those excluded. No mentally handicapped child shall be deprived of school privileges except with the express approval of the state superintendent of public instruction, upon appropriate medical, psychiatric, and psychological advice. Each child so excluded shall be brought immediately to the

attention of the local welfare department and of the proper authorities of the state training school who shall be charged with responsibility for providing adequate protection and care, in keeping with available facilities, so far as the parents are willing to accept such services.

75-5005. Petition of parents for establishment of special teaching program. The parents or guardians of seven (7) or more mentally handicapped children of one (1) type, living in one (1) town or in neighboring towns, which children can be taught together, may petition the district board or boards of trustees for the establishment of a special teaching program. The district board or boards of trustees shall request the state board of education for such advice and assistance as the state board of education considers appropriate in the organization of such a program. (En. Ch. 206, L. 1955.)

75-5006. Qualification of teachers -- medical, psychiatric, and psychological services -- promotion, direction and supervision of special education -- supervisor -- agency for cooperation with other agencies -- courses of study, size of classes, distances to be traveled. The state superintendent of public instruction, with approval of the state board of education, shall establish by regulation the qualifications of persons appointed to teach mentally handicapped children. The state board of health shall provide qualified medical, psychiatric, and psychological services as needed to assist the state superintendent of public instruction in making diagnosis, recommending care, or passing upon the eligibility of children for admission to or discharge from special programs for mentally handicapped children.

The state superintendent of public instruction, with the assistance of the state board of health, and with approval of the state board of education, shall make provision for proper promotion, direction and supervision of special education for mentally and physically handicapped children and shall provide necessary and adequate supervision and consultation for the purpose of carrying out this act and shall appoint a supervisor and specify his qualifications. The state superintendent of public instruction shall be the agency for cooperation and consultation with federal agencies, other agencies and private bodies on matters of public school education of mentally and physically handicapped children, reserving to other agencies their full responsibilities for other aspects of the care of such children. Courses of study, size of classes, adequacy of methods of instruction, the distances to be traveled to each school or class and the necessary equipment and special services for mentally and physically handicapped children shall comply with the requirements, prescribed by the state board of education, which shall also have authority to make any other needful regulations to carry out the purposes of this act. (En. Ch. 206. L. 1955.)

75-5007. Supervisor -- powers and duties. The duties of the supervisor, under direction of the state superintendent of public instruction, with assistance from the state board of health and superintendent of the state training school shall be to discover the child needing special education throughout the state by observation, examination, and by

intelligence, emotional and achievement tests, and such other methods as are deemed necessary and expedient by him, and to administer an educational program for the exceptional child and to supervise subjects and methods and equipment to be used in the classrooms and schools insofar as they affect the handicapped child, and provided, however, that the provisions of this act shall not be mandatory upon any school or school district.

For the purpose of properly educating and caring for such children, the supervisor shall see that the courses of instruction mentioned above shall be made available for all teachers in training and in service. He may recommend ungraded classrooms in schools, home study, special facilities, or transportation. He may hold conferences, cooperate, consult, advise and investigate with school superintendents, principals, school facilities, individual teachers, parents, school boards, and other interested groups and persons. He may suggest physical or mental examinations and perform other duties within the limits of this act not specified but directed by the state superintendent of public instruction on approval of the state board of education. (En. Ch. 206, L. 1955.)

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 75-5003, REVISED CODES OF MONTANA, 1947, RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR MENTALLY RETARDED AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN; PROVIDING FOR LOCAL PROVISION OF SPECIAL CLASSES; PROVIDING FOR STATE REIMBURSEMENT; PROVIDING FOR TUITION PAYMENTS; AND CONTAINING A REPEALING CLAUSE. (House Bill No. 34.)

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. That section 75-5003, Revised Codes of Montana, 1947, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

"75-5003. Local boards of trustees -- powers -- determination of children requiring special education and the type of education responsibility of state superintendent -- reimbursement by state -- computation. The board of trustees in each school district, when it appears that there are not less than ten (10) educable, mentally retarded or physically handicapped children in the district, must maintain special classes for educable mentally retarded children or for physically handicapped children or for physically handicapped children, or may arrange to use the services of such approved mentally retarded or physically handicapped children's classes as may exist within the state, or may provide transportation services from home to school and return for all handicapped children enrolled in a state approved special education program of such ages as it deems wise; provided, that the local board has the right to exclude persons of low intelligence or severe delinquent behavior. The determination of the children requiring special education and the type of special education needed by these handicapped children shall not be the responsibility of local boards of trustees but shall be the responsibility of the state superintendent of public instruction in cooperation with appropriate medical, psychiatric and psychological advice listed above. Two (2) or more districts may combine to provide such educational facilities.

"Reimbursements on the part of the state for such programs shall be computed on the basis of counting each such mentally retarded child in such special classes as three (3) in average number belonging, and each physically handicapped child according to a schedule to be prepared by the state superintendent of public instruction, but in no case shall it be over three (3) average number belonging for each such child, prorated according to time and number in these special classes, or in home tutoring. Transportation reimbursements shall be made on a schedule arrived at by the state superintendent of public instruction, and such expenditures shall be added to the transportation budget of the district. The state shall reimburse two-thirds of such approved transportation and the county shall reimburse the remainder of such approved transportation according to said schedule.

"Any child who is mentally retarded, or physically handicapped, or both, who is enrolled in a state-approved elementary school special education program which is maintained by a district other than the district in which such child resides, shall be included in the computation of average number belonging to the district maintaining the special education program, according to the provisions herein. The district in which such child resides shall pay to the district where such child attends an amount of tuition based on the tuition rates established in section 75-1630, and such payment shall be made in the manner prescribed by section 75-1630.

"Any such child who is enrolled in a state-approved high school special education program which is maintained by a high school located in a county other than the county in which such child resides, shall be included in the computation of the average number belonging to the high school maintaining the special education program, according to the provisions herein. The county in which such child resides shall pay to the high school where such child attends an amount of tuition based on the tuition rates established in section 75-4230, and such payment shall be made in the manner prescribed by section 75-4230.

"When children are sent to an institution supported solely by funds of the state of Montana the home district or county will not be required to pay tuition for such child."

Section 2. All acts and parts of acts in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Appendix B

Procedure for Establishing Special Education Programs for Educable Mentally Handicapped

A. Eligibility Standards

To be accepted in a special class for the mentally retarded, a child must meet these criteria:

1. Be of legal school age, the minimum being six years.

2. Be impaired intellectually to such a degree that he can expect, at maturity, to attain a mental age of not less than seven years nor more than eleven years, and whose I.Q. limits would fall within the range of 55 to 69, with an allowable deviation of five points either way.

3. Be physically competent, as determined by a medical examination.

4. Be toilet trained.

5. Be able to communicate his needs.

6. Be of no physical danger to himself or others.

7. Be capable of responding to simple directions.

Other Determining Factors:

Opinions from teachers and other school personnel

School achievement records

Mental ability, as determined by school group and individual tests, clinical tests and records.

Health of the pupil

Parental attitude and cooperation

B. Steps in Establishing a Special Class for the Educable Mentally Retarded

1. Testing procedures

   a. Group mental tests should be administered to all pupils attending school at the level at which the special class

is being organized - elementary or secondary.

b. Performance mental tests should be given to avoid the confusion of mental ability and reading achievement.

c. Those pupils whose I.Q. falls within the area of 80 or below on the group test should be given individual tests by the school.

d. Those pupils whose I.Q. falls within the 55 to 69 range, with allowable deviations, and who otherwise meet the established criteria, should then be referred to a recognized and qualified clinical or educational psychologist or testing facility for more conclusive individual testing and evaluation. This, in most instances, will be the nearest State Mental Hygiene Clinic - Billings, Butte, Great Falls or Missoula.

e. A few intelligence tests which are widely used and recommended are:

OTIS QUICK-SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TESTS, World Book Company, Yonkers, New York.

KUHLMAN-ANDERSON INTELLIGENCE TEST, Personnel Press, Inc., Princeton, New Jersey.

CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY, California Test Bureau, Los Angeles, California.

2. Evaluation and recommendations:

It is recommended that each school select three or more from the following to serve as an Admissions Committee:

Classroom Teacher	Psychological Examiner
Special Class Teacher	School Nurse
Principal	Supervisor of Elementary Education

The State Supervisor of Special Education will then meet with the Admissions Committee to evaluate all information:

a. Opinions of teachers and school personnel
b. School achievement records
c. School test records, both group and individual
d. Health records
e. Parental attitude
f. Results of individual tests at Mental Hygiene Clinic, or from other approved and qualified clinical or educational testing facility

The recommendations of the Admissions Committee will then be forwarded, along with necessary application forms, to the State Department of Public Instruction. Final approval of those children determined to be eligible for a special class for the educable mentally retarded will be made by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and written notice sent to the local school district. Conferences with the parents of these children must then be held to secure their approval for the entrance of their child into the special class.

C. Teachers Qualifications

As a minimum, a teacher of a special class of educable mentally retarded children must:

1. Be regularly certified as a teacher in Montana, with minimum of a Bachelor's Degree

2. Have a minimum of at least two years successful teaching experience

3. Have a minimum of 15 quarter hours in special education. Included in these 15 quarter hours we recommend the following courses:

   Introductory course in special education
   Introductory course in the education of the mentally handicapped
   Supervised practice-teaching with the mentally handicapped

The following supplementary courses are also recommended:

Arts and crafts
Counselling and guidance
Introductory course in psychological testing
Introductory course in speech correction
Mental Hygiene

Personal Characteristics

1. A sincere liking for and desire to help handicapped children.

2. Emotional maturity and stability

3. High tolerance level

4. Sense of humor

5. Ingenuity and resourcefulness

A competent elementary school teacher, with a knowledge of the fundamental principles of teaching and learning, plus a genuine interest in, and concern for, the welfare of educable mentally handicapped children, may serve effectively in this program. Where such a teacher is available, even though meeting only the minimum standards, it is recommended that school administrators and boards of trustees utilize such a teacher, by requesting emergency special education certification from the State Department of Public Instruction. This teacher should be encouraged to broaden her professional qualifications by attending a college or university during the summer months. This would enable the teacher to "pick up" those special education courses which she has not taken.

D. Characteristics of a Special Class for Educable Mentally Handicapped Children

1. An I.Q. range of 55 to 69, with a five point deviation either way.

2. A chronological age group of 6 to 21 years, and a chronological age span of not over four (4) years.

3. A termination age of twenty-one years (on the twenty-first birthday).

4. Provisional entry for all children when they first enter the special class. The reason for this provisional status of each new child is for purposes of determining whether he or she will truly profit from the special facilities and teaching. The length of time in which a child is on provisional status will be determined by the local school system. The Division of Special Education of the State Department of Public Instruction recommends a provisional period of not less than six weeks.

5. A periodic re-appraisal of all children in a special class to determine the rate of progress for each, and any different action that might better be taken.

6. A minimum number in a special class shall be seven (7); the maximum number shall be fifteen (15). The younger the chronological age-group, the smaller the class should be.

E. Nature of the Special Classroom

It is important that the room be located in a regular elementary or secondary school building, and that it have a desirable location on the ground floor within the building. If most of the children in a special class are of elementary school-age, it would be preferable to have the special room in an elementary school. If most of the children in a special class are of secondary school-age, then it

would probably be most suitable to have their special room in a secondary school building. Basement classrooms should not be used.

The room should be at least as large as a regular classroom in order to allow for the various types of activities, and should have adequate lighting and ventilation.

Chalkboards and display space should be extensive and conveniently located.

There should be plenty of open and closed storage space, bins, closets, drawers, and cupboards.

Electrical outlets should be available.

A sink, work counter or table, and lavatory are highly desirable.

Pupils in the special class should have equal access to all facilities of the school - playground, gymnasium, showers, shop, library and lunchroom.

Appendix C

Questionnaire

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304 West Cleveland
Bozeman, Montana
July 20, 1961

Dear Special Education Teacher:

Before I present my problem, may I present myself. Many of you I already know; the rest I hope to meet. First of all, I am the mother five children, one of whom is mentally retarded. My family is participating in a mental retardation study being conducted at Childrens Hospital, Los Angeles. I am an affiliate of the American Association on Mental Deficiency. As state vice-president of the Montana State Association for Retarded Children I am interested in seeing that the parents play a proper and effective role in the special education program within this state.

This questionnaire is part of an investigation I am making to determine factors contributing to the success of special education for the educable mentally handicapped. I have used this avenue as a means of obtaining more information pertinent to Montana and I hope to incorporate many of your ideas in the study.

Since I am a mother of a retarded child and because I have spent a great deal of time talking to other parents and to parent groups throughout the state, I have more than a casual academic interest in the education of mentally handicapped children. I will interpret the results of the study to the Montana State Association for Retarded Children at the convention next spring in Bozeman. I hope you will find time to answer these questions. Your answers will be confidential and your name will not be revealed in any manner. I am submitting the investigation to a committee August 4th as a final requirement for a Master of Education degree. Time is short and I will be most grateful for an early reply.

Thank you so much,

/s/ Vesta Baxter Anderson

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUCCESS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
FOR THE EDUCABLE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED

The following open-form questions have been used to enable you to answer more fully and freely without too much structuring. Your personal answers may bring out certain factors relevant to the state of Montana that I cannot get through a review of literature.

1. What is your educational background and experience?

2. What motivated you to enter this area of teaching?

3. Do you find this type of teaching particularly rewarding? If so, in what ways?

4. Are there problems that have caused dissatisfaction? (Point out such items as inappropriate placement, location of classroom, inadequate equipment, etc.)

5. Do you know who instigated the original classroom in your community? (Principal, school board, teacher, parent)

6. Who is responsible for making referrals, counseling with parents, and arranging for assignment of the child to your room?

7. Who does the psychological testing and evaluating of the mentally handicapped child in your room?

8. If you've experienced parental resistance, how did you handle it?

9. What factors would you say have contributed to the success of special education in your community?

10. What resistance have you faced in your work? (List such factors as community attitudes and attitudes of other teachers.)

11. What suggestions and provisions would you make regarding the regulations established by the State Department of Public Instruction?

12. List suggestions concerning state supervision. In what areas have you received help? Where could you use more help?

13. The preceding questions were designed to get at certain types of information, but there may be other suggestions or comments pertinent to the study that you might like to make. Please list below.

_____ Check here if you would like a summary of results, which I will be most happy to send you as soon as the study is completed.

Name_____(Sign if you wish)

Address_____

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Appendix D

MONTANA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN

P. O. Box 946
Sidney, Montana
June 19, 1961

The Honorable Donald G. Nutter, Governor
State of Montana
Office of the Governor
Helena, Montana

Dear Governor Nutter:

The following proposal is respectfully submitted for your consideration: that an inter-agency or inter-departmental committee or commission on mental retardation in Montana be appointed. In accordance with currently accepted ratios, Montana has approximately 20,000 mentally retarded children and adults. These range in mental capacity from the severely retarded who will require life-time total care to those less retarded who are often found to be self sufficient and independent when provided with an educational and training background.

This proposal is made on the following premise: That all retarded children can be helped to live fuller, better, more constructive lives than they do presently; that the limitations we observe in later childhood, adolescence and adulthood are the result of certain basic physiological deficiencies or defects upon which have been grafted secondary disabilities of an environmental character; and that early recognition and programs from infancy can lessen considerably the impact of the deficiency upon the individual. However necessary, institutional placement is an extreme form of protection. Parents of the retarded are repelled not by the idea that their children need sheltering but by the character of the shelter provided.

These five essentials; early diagnosis and prognosis, early training, realistic schooling, imaginative protection, and public enlightenment form a pattern of action. A pattern, which when implemented, can form a well rounded habilitation approach to the problem of retardation.

It is obvious, we believe, that it would never be feasible for a single department of state government to handle all the business having to do with mental retardation. We believe it is obvious then that state government has a responsibility for proper coordination of services to mentally retarded citizens and proper cooperation among all state departments and state agencies in Montana having any area of responsibility to

the mentally retarded or mentally deficient. We believe this would best be accomplished by having an inter-departmental or inter-agency committee or commission on mental retardation, directly responsible to the Executive Office of the Governor. I feel that this inter-departmental committee should be, in its voting membership, limited to the representatives of State Departments or Agencies. It may choose to select an advisory body (as has been done in some states) however, it could be surmised that it would not be proper to have on it legislators nor, as voting members, citizens representing community interests.

The establishment of a permanent structure in the nature of an inter-agency commission on mental retardation in Montana would be in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of State Governments and the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth.

If this proposal meets with favor, we would hope the following list of appointments might be included:

1. Executive Officer, State Board of Health
2. Director, Child Health Services Division
3. Director, Public Health Nursing
4. Administrator, State Department of Public Welfare
5. Director of Public Assistance
6. Director of Child Welfare Services
7. Director of Statistics and Research
8. State Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction
9. Director of Special Education
10. Executive Director, State Legislative Council
11. State Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
12. Employment Service Director, Unemployment Compensation Comm.
13. Superintendent, Montana State Training School and Hospital
14. Superintendent, Montana State Hospital, Warm Springs, Montana

Appointments of representatives of other State departments or agencies may be indicated such as those of correctional institutions.

It is not meant to imply that the mentally retarded are more important that any other group, rather, it is to point out that it can be anticipated, as a certainty, that in view of the many years of neglect of the mentally retarded followed by a sudden "revolution", which has made them not only visible to the community, but participants in the community, a considerable amount of guidance will be required to insure the best interests of Montana, both at the community level and State level.

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With or without adequate guidance, volunteer agencies and parent (relative and friend) groups in Montana can be expected to expand and develop private and independent programs for the mentally retarded. With or without guidance it must be anticipated that no small amount of legislation will be introduced in the ensuing years pertaining to the mentally retarded. I point out the significance of the effect of the Senate amendment to House Bill 34 in the last session of the Montana State Legislature, providing for mandatory special education. House Bill 34, with the amendment, was passed in both bodies without a single dissenting vote. This indicates a highly favorable atmosphere for new legislation concerning Montana's retarded children and adults.

An inter-agency or inter-departmental committee or commission on mental retardation in Montana can best determine legislative needs and establish priorities for long range planning in the State of Montana.

Respectfully,

/s/ R. Homer Gorder, President
Montana Ass'n for Retarded Children

enc: Fundamental Questions
Brief Characteristics of Ass'ns for Retarded Children
Table of Persons in Public Institutions by States
Graph of Enrollment of Mentally Retarded Children in Public School Special Classes in the State of New Jersey
Graph of Number of Waiting Eligible Applicants for Admission to Institutions in the State of New Jersey
Brochure, A Forward Look for Connecticut's Mentally Retarded