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PROJECT MEET

The Faculty of Education at McGill University has embarked on an internship program for the preparation of elementary school teachers. In 1967-68, Project MEET (McGill Elementary Education Teaching-Teams) includes nineteen carefully selected university graduates who have been placed in eleven cooperating schools.¹ Interns participate in lectures and seminars at Macdonald College and spend three full days each week in the schools where they are supervised both by members of the school staff and by College supervisors. Each intern has been awarded a bursary of \$1500 and these awards have been financed by the cooperating school systems.

Principals of the cooperating schools have been asked to involve the intern as a member of a teaching-team. Some schools have developed teams which include a team leader and teachers from a number of grade levels as well as the intern. In other schools, where the interns have been assigned to two or more teachers of a particular grade, the team teaching or cooperative teaching patterns are evolving gradually. It was considered essential that each school be given the opportunity to develop its own way of involving interns because it was felt that an imposed structure would not necessarily result in desirable educational change.²

A number of institutions have already explored the possibilities of the internship in teacher education, thus in designing the program for Project MEET, attention was given to the patterns at the University of Wisconsin,³ Central Michigan University,⁴ Claremont Graduate School,⁵ Stanford University⁶ and several universities and colleges in Oregon.⁷ As in most other internship programs, there are two related major objectives for Project MEET. The first is in exploring the possibilities of internship patterns of teacher education. The second is in making some contribution to practice in the schools by encouraging curriculum development and school reorganization. Supervisors from the Faculty are concerned

not only with the welfare of the intern, but also with the program in the schools.

Project MEET has been developed on the assumption that students become teachers by being involved in *teaching*. It is believed that by working closely with experienced teachers, principals and college instructors, the intern will have a good opportunity to define for himself the role of teacher and to identify instructional modes which suit him. Much emphasis is placed on the two days each week which the intern spends at the College and also on the supervision he receives from College staff. Hopefully, in this way the intern benefits from interaction with both practitioners and theoreticians.

The interns, the cooperating teachers, the principals and the College instructors are observing the Project carefully during 1967-68. The main purpose of Project MEET during the first year is in clarifying the demands of the internship and teaching-teams, but experience during 1967-68 should suggest a number of hypotheses about teacher education, curriculum development and school organization. The research dimension is most important so that internship and teaching-teams can be evaluated. It is for this reason that, even at the early stages, a number of graduate students who are working towards their master's degrees are participating in supervisory, teaching and administrative roles.

Unfortunately, some of the cooperating school systems were unable to indicate until June their intention to join the Project. In a few schools, the staffs were unaware before September that an intern was assigned to the school. For the program to succeed, it is clearly essential that the teachers give their support. It seems wise, therefore, for the teachers and the principal of a school to *request* interns in the future and for representatives of the Faculty to meet with the staff of the cooperating school before the interns are assigned.

Even though every attempt has been made on the part of the Faculty to assist interns, cooperating teachers and principals in defining the new roles, we know that both the interns and the teachers would benefit from a pre-internship program. Present plans are to sponsor, through the Summer School, a workshop on the internship and team teaching and to encourage interns, cooperating teachers and principals to participate.

Those who are part of Project MEET are finding it a very exciting, worthwhile and demanding experience. We are recognizing obvious advantages and new difficulties from the intern's point of view. The schools are developing for each intern a program which

will be of benefit to him and to the school. Perhaps what is of particular value is that the Faculty, the schools and the teaching profession are cooperating fully. The major responsibility for programs in teacher education is clearly that of the Faculty of Education, but Project MEET has enabled the University to involve the schools in an active and responsible way in the preparation of teachers.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, the West Island School Commission, the Macdonald Protestant Central School Board, the Pointe Claire and Beaconsfield Catholic School Commission and St. George's Independent School have cooperated with McGill University on Project MEET. One intern was placed in each of Northview, St. George's and Sunnydale Park Elementary Schools. Each of the following elementary schools received two interns: Barclay, Cedar Park, Greendale, Oakridge, St. Charles, Vivian Graham, Westminster and Westpark.
2. In a recent article the author has developed this theme more fully. See M. Horowitz, "Educational Change: Desire and Response," *The Teachers' Magazine*, 237 (1967), pp. 28-30.
3. R. H. Anderson, "The Organization and Administration of Team Teaching," in J. T. Shaplin and H. F. Olds (eds.), *Team Teaching*, New York: Harper and Row, 1964.
4. D. W. Brison, "Evaluation of an Award," *Phi Delta Kappan*, 10 (1965), pp. 495-497.
5. M. Bair and R. G. Woodward, *Team Teaching in Action*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964.
6. D. W. Allen, "A New Design for Teacher Education: The Teacher Intern Program at Stanford University," *The Journal of Teacher Education*, 3 (1966), pp. 296-300.
7. W. T. Ward and Joy H. Gubser, "Developing the Teaching Internship Concept in Oregon," *The Journal of Teacher Education*, 3 (1964), pp. 252-261.