

lesson which must be conveyed by the school is that of work well done, of intellectual awareness, love for truth, perseverance and courage. (Parent Report, III, 21)

What are my general impressions after more than a year as the principal of a partially "activated" school? I can summarize them as follows:

Probably the most beneficial outcome of our selection as a pilot school is the impetus it has given to everyone on the staff to examine critically his own teaching techniques. From this critical assessment, and from a willingness to experiment cautiously with new ideas, has emerged a better over-all program, one that makes better provision for individual differences, that better recognizes certain of the facts about child development, and that stimulates imagination and curiosity.

The things that are happening in our school are, for the most part, things that are happening or could happen in other elementary schools. The label "activist" is not, in itself, important.

What is important is that teachers develop a professional and critical attitude towards their own work, that they recognize and accept the differences that exist in children, and that they strive consciously to develop in their classrooms an atmosphere conducive to the pursuit of knowledge, the growth of understanding and the development of social skills.

These are the things that have been happening in Mountrose School.



The McGill Centre for Learning and Development

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With the establishment of a Centre for Learning and Development, McGill recently launched a major drive to encourage reform and innovation in learning and teaching methods at the university level. The Centre is directed by Marcel Goldschmid of the Department of Psychology, and has a permanent staff of three other professors as well as three research assistants. An advisory board, made up of well-known scholars from Canada and the United States, will oversee its work.

The Centre is faced with a difficult task. Student dissatisfaction in Canada and elsewhere has reached crisis proportions. However, as is well known, innovations in teaching and learning methods have generally failed to keep pace with rapid increases in university enrolments and students are demanding immediate improvements in their learning environments. Clearly, dramatic improvements in the teaching-learning system will not occur overnight, nor will changes in the status quo come without concerted efforts by the university community at large. Thus, while the Centre will have primarily a consultative role, its job will also be to provide information, stimulation and research on teaching and learning.

As a first effort in providing information and stimulation on alternative approaches to instruction, the Centre is sponsoring a conference on **Educational Innovations in Higher Learning**. Presentations, panel discussions, and multi-media experiences will focus both on themes of general interest such as "Students Without Teachers," "New Initiatives in Higher Learning," "The Technology of Education" and subjects of interest to specific reference groups. Attempts to provide alternatives to the large lecture are a major interest of the Centre, and the conference will draw from the experiences of individuals who have successfully re-designed the large lecture in other universities. This conference, as well as newspaper articles and a Centre **Newsletter**, will hopefully stimulate university-wide interest in the educational environment at McGill.

The University has established a \$100,000 fund to support research experiments in methods of teaching and learning. Instructors from all Departments are being encouraged to attempt new approaches to their courses and the Centre for Learning and Development plans to provide consultation on proposed changes as well as to participate in the evaluation of these experiments. The Centre will also become involved in student and staff seminars on learning, workshops with individuals and groups of professors who wish to implement changes in their courses, and in programs of study for instructors who may spend part of a year working directly in the Centre.

Although this venture is new to McGill, over 200 such Centres are in operation in the United States alone. Like the McGill Centre, these stemmed from a need to match prolific research and development at the elementary and secondary levels of schooling with similar projects in higher education. Examples of noticeable changes at the lower levels include team teaching, non-grading, modular scheduling and continuous progress systems. Though the particulars of each innovation have differed, the purpose has remained the same — more appropriate merging of instructional strategies with student needs. The Centre seeks to employ these and other strategies to attain the same essential goal in the university.

