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ABSTRACT

The basic problem facing school administrators, supportive staff personnel, and school boards is how to successfully implement vocational programs for rural disadvantaged youth. Thus, this document was designed to help school administrators review the key administrative concepts relative to this type of vocational education program. The compact nature of the review should provide a ready reference for the practitioner seeking to develop and improve programs in his school and community. Special attention is devoted to (1) Historical Development of Programs, (2) Exemplary Programs and Procedures, (3) School Organization Patterns, (4) Labor, Industry, and School Cooperative Efforts, (5) Developing Professional Personnel, (6) Determining Program Offerings, and (7) Developing, Adapting, and Revising Instructional Resources. The strengths and weaknesses of these programs are also examined. (Author/JS)

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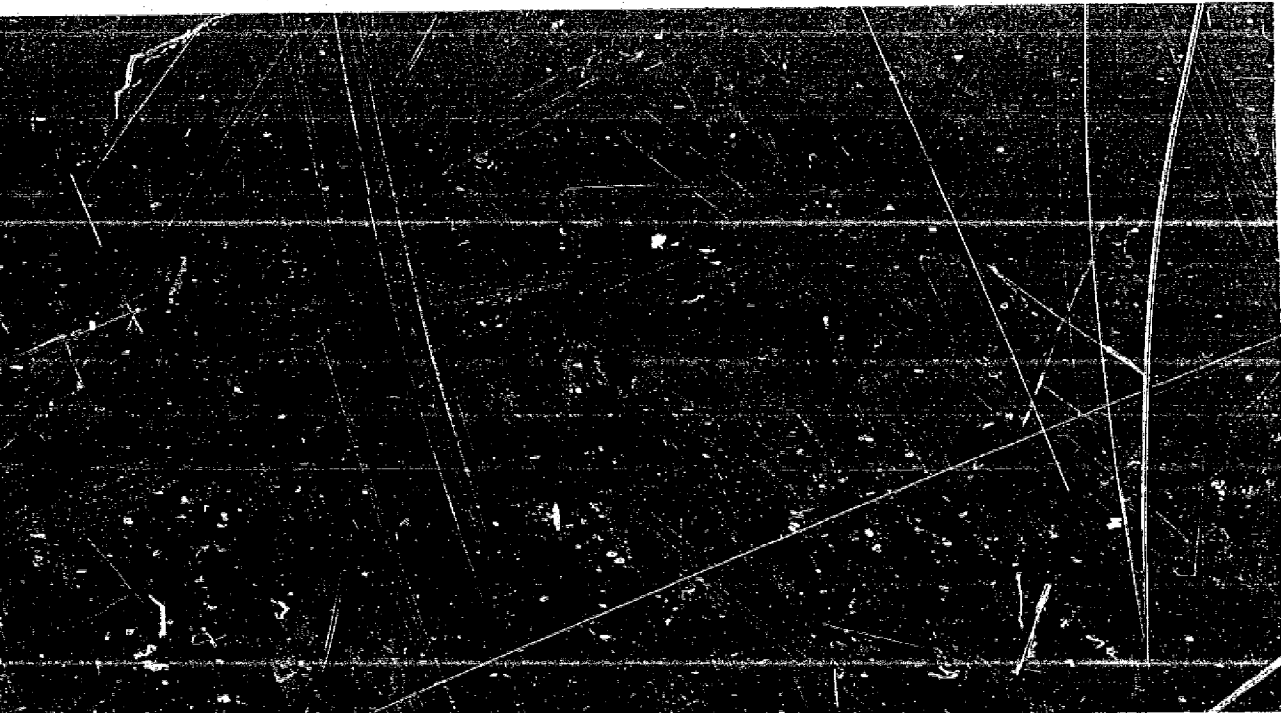


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preface

This publication is designed to serve school administrators interested in reviewing the key administrative concepts relative to vocational education programs for disadvantaged youth in rural areas. The compact nature of the review should provide a ready reference for the practitioner seeking to develop and improve programs in his school and community. Much has been written on the topic. However, the authors have been selective by citing references believed to be especially useful to administrators.

The profession is indebted to Oliver Robinson and Henry Schmidt for their scholarship in the preparation of this report. Recognition is also due B.B. Archer, Florida A. & M. University, Tallahassee, and John Richert, Eastern Montana University, Billings, for their critical review of the manuscript prior to its final revision and publication. J. David McCracken, information specialist at The Center, coordinated the publication's development.

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What School Administrators Should Know About Vocational Education For Disadvantaged Youth In Rural Areas

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introduction

DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED—Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Affluency is the hallmark of our society, yet it has tragically circumvented one of every four rural Americans to the doles of deprivation. This figure would probably increase substantially if it were not for the migration of rural youth to the cities. Tragically, deprivation begets deprivation.

It is the authors' point of view that over 14 million rural black Americans, Appalachian whites, American Indians, Spanish Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans and migratory farm laborers have neither shared in the power structure nor received equitable rewards in a society characterized by urbanization and cybernetics.

Vocational and technical education can provide an integral role in assisting the rural disadvantaged through a genuine commitment to program development for employability of these young people. However, this effort must become a joint venture between all educators, social and community agencies, and industry within the geographical region.

Rural school administrators must become the agents of change if programs for employability of rural disadvantaged youth are to succeed. The cemented straps of traditionalism must be broken if these youth are to have the opportunity of enhancing their individual dignity. Anything short of this commitment will result in a perpetuated syndrome of hopelessness.

the problem

Voluminous writings on the disadvantaged seem to be the current of the age; however, research findings related to the employability of rural disadvantaged youth are either superficial or nearly nonexistent. Consequently, the authors and The Ohio State University Center for Vocational and Technical Education believe that a need exists for careful scrutiny of selected research and effective programs for improving the employability of rural disadvantaged youth.

The basic problem facing school administrators, supportive staff personnel, and school boards is how to successfully implement programs for the employability of these youth. Heretofore, most rural school systems have neglected the total commitment necessary for the amelioration of this problem. Thus, the authors set forth viable alternatives, procedures, recommendations, and accountability measures to assist school administrators and their supporting staff personnel in developing approaches for increased employability of rural disadvantaged youth.

development

Vocational Education

In the history of vocational education there have been many periods of controversy. Possibly no period has been as severe as the one which led us into the contemporary period of attempting to deal effectively with the disadvantaged.

Viewing vocational education in an historical perspective, Shimberg (1966) pointed out that vocational education became a controversial issue in American education after being ignored for a half century. There is vivid evidence that vocational education must render a new sense of accountability during the decade of the 70's. This mandate is described by the 1970 Rural Task Force on Vocational and Technical Education:

Youth and adults in rural America are the products of an educational system that has failed to meet their needs. Educational statistics from the 1970 census classified more than 3.1 million rural Americans as functional illiterates. The 1960 statistics showed that 700,000 adults in rural America had never enrolled in school, more than three million had less than five years of schooling, more than 19 million had not completed high school, and in 1960 more than two million rural youth between 14 and 24 years of age dropped out of school before graduating.

Prevocational education programs basically have been unavailable or ineffective in increasing the employability rates of rural youth. This situation is supported by the premise that a large percentage of the rural

population migrating to the central city lack the necessary skills required by industry. By and large, ineffective prevocational programs are characterized by the lack of administrative and professional imagination necessary to achieve the ideals in vocational programming. Nevertheless, the Vocational Amendments of 1968 have increased federal funds and provide a new dimension of flexibility concerning improved vocational programming for rural youth.

Manpower Development and Training

Over 80,000 rural youth have participated in training programs initiated through the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) since 1962. Yearly enrollments of rural residents of all ages in MDTA courses number 40,000. This organization works through the state employment agencies in an effort to extend the cooperative school program in sparsely populated areas. It is hoped this extension can be accomplished by establishing itinerant service points, setting up and utilizing mobile units, and increasing regular visitation to the rural schools by counseling personnel.

Vocational legislation is supporting the efforts of educators toward attaining the above goals. The Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 focus upon preparation for initial employment and open avenues toward establishing a greater relevance between job goals and preparation for them.

Reviewing a departmental report of The Manpower Development and Training Act, Gregory (1969) concluded that a generalization of manpower problems is far less possible in sparsely populated areas than in the cities. This assertion is due basically to the fact that since 1967 "rural" and "disadvantaged" are no longer synonymous.

To slow the migration rate of rural youth to the cities, Gregory suggested the following ways in which economic development in rural areas could be effected:

- 1) An improved information system on employment opportunities and outlooks;
- 2) Improved public education;
- 3) Expanded vocational counseling and guidance services;
- 4) Expanded and improved programs and facilities for the preparation of youth and adults for initial employment and for retraining;
- 5) More effective ways to help city-bound migrants make the move, find a suitable job, and adjust to the new environment.

Perhaps federal programs are best summarized by stating that these efforts are looked upon as a fair start on the solution of a problem vital to the welfare of the nation.

exemplary programs, procedures

Researchers and experienced practitioners who have developed programs for the employability of rural youth place a great deal of confidence in the need for exemplary programs. These programs provide an opportunity for school administrators and supporting staff personnel to implement innovative theories and research findings. The unique problems of rural disadvantaged youth must be dealt with in realistic, creative, and meaningful ways. Consequently, school administrators and associated staff personnel can profit immensely from a thorough analysis of comprehensive program designs for the employability of these youth.

Research Procedures

The basic rationale for developing vocational employability programs for rural disadvantaged youth must involve a twofold mission: 1) a program designed to raise the educational level of these youth; and 2) procurement of jobs with vertical and horizontal mobility toward advanced levels of employment. Initial steps to follow in accomplishing these goals include:

- 1) Identify and select those people exhibiting strong feelings of marginality, helplessness, dependency, and not belonging.
- 2) Identify and develop leadership roles which will aid the families of the trainees in solving their socioeconomic problems.
- 3) Determine and develop manipulative skills in selected skill or trade areas existing within or outside the indigenous communities.
- 4) Appraise existing educational structures within the community as a basis for determining feasibility of skill centers, residential schools, area vocational schools, extension centers, and mobile classrooms.
- 5) Study the organizational structure of the state department of vocational education in relationship to a multi-agency approach in providing funds, staff personnel, and support for these programs.

Exemplary Programs

In developing exemplary programs for the employability of rural disadvantaged youth, special emphasis must be given to: 1) prevocational counseling, 2) theory as related to the vocational area, 3) practical skills, and 4) job orientation. Considerations must also be given to the following component aspects of these programs:

- 1) Supportive services such as health care, dental care, nutritional care, family living, and food stamp programs must be provided for the rural disadvantaged.
- 2) Isolated rural areas should be served regularly by mobile educational units. These units must provide computerized occupational information, films, slides, tapes, brochures, and specific information regarding skill requirements for occupational entry.

- 3) A multidisciplinary approach between the vocational service areas (i.e., vocational agriculture, home economics, business office education, distributive education, etc.) must disseminate occupational information related to vocational training for businesses and industry found in the community.
- 4) Placement services must be established to help the rural youth find housing accommodations and modes of transportation where relocation in distant communities or cities is required.
- 5) Leadership development programs must be established for youth who may become proprietors of businesses in rural communities.
- 6) Industrial and technical expertise must be utilized during on-the-job training programs for disadvantaged youth.
- 7) Schools must provide release time and transportation for students placed throughout the community.
- 8) In-service teacher education, internships, apprenticeships, and externships must be made available for teachers and paraprofessionals serving the rural disadvantaged youth.

Use of Technology

Technology and its effect upon the future of rural disadvantaged youth is being conceptualized by an increasing percentage of our nation's educators. This conceptualization should be exemplified in programs to develop the employability of rural youth in the shortest possible time. Venn (1969), in discussing the technology issue with the American Association of Junior Colleges, contended that technology programs would be a major challenge for the junior and community colleges. The nature of these programs would be highly suitable to the disadvantaged. In addition, these programs should include remedial aspects based upon the student's field of interest. In three to five years, youth who are graduates of such programs could achieve a level in the work force that would normally take 12 to 15 years by previous standards.

If programs are to become a reality in reaching the disadvantaged rural youth adequately, school administrators will be required to determine the kind of assistance needed to develop them. Wenrich and Ollenberger (1963), studying aspects of this thesis, surveyed high school principals in Michigan to determine the kind of federal and state assistance they considered most helpful in developing and operating programs and services for employment bound youth. Data collection was based upon the following activities:

- 1) The examination of school goals included in the study and evaluation of program offerings for employment bound youth.
- 2) Assessment of the needs of in-school employees and out-of-school youth.
- 3) The development of new programs to meet the needs of youth and employees.
- 4) The operation of specialized programs for preparing in-school youth for employment.

- 5) The development of specialized programs for out-of-school youth.
- 6) An increase in adequacy of counseling services to in-school and out-of-school youth.

Analysis of the data collected from 123 (98 percent) of the respondents revealed that most of them felt there was inadequate time given to leadership in developing programs for employment-bound youth. Furthermore, almost three-fourths of the respondents felt programs could be improved if provisions were made for the financial support of an assistant who would be given the responsibility of directing these programs. School administrators and associated professionals can utilize technology once delineated areas of program development have been established.

A program focusing on the teaching-learning process has been successfully conducted between the University of Maryland and the Montgomery County School System. As described by Maley (1967), this program focused on an experimental laboratory for a "people concept" and emphasized the individual's role as related to the learning process. The approach attempted to replace the traditional approach of "teacher-telling" with the approach of self-educating by stress, whereby the process of obtaining the answer is more important than the derived answer.

This multiphase program conducted at the seventh, eighth and ninth grade levels utilized a unit-seminar-contract project approach to teaching; a contemporary approach to American industry, the group project method, and line production technique; and a consideration for the student's psychological needs, resourcefulness, capabilities, future aspirations, ability to solve problems, and ingenuity. This research provided several approaches that could be used with the aforementioned concept of educating youth, such as: 1) the use of contemporary units, 2) research and experimentation, and 3) technical development by groups or individuals.

organization

Shared Time

School organization patterns have been one of the major deterrents to program development for employability of rural youth. This organization buffer exists at the secondary level, but occurs particularly at the post-high school level.

A state school of vocational education consisting of a main campus plus seven extension centers holds much promise for developing the employability of rural youth. As described by Ramey (1967), through careful vocational guidance the student may complete one-half of his chosen vocational course work while attending high school, and the remaining year may be completed at the main campus of the vocational school. The only entrance requirement for students is that they possess an intelligent reading level. This organizational structure represents a viable alternative to the standard patterns found in most schools.

School administrators serving rural youth must take the initiative and leadership in developing plans and in organizing shared programming in vocational education. Hence, it becomes imperative that a joint and shared exchange between secondary, community college and junior college administrators occur in determining the following programming steps:

- 1) Identification of job entry-level occupations within a geographical region;
- 2) Determination of the technical skills required for job entry-level occupations;
- 3) Location of new facilities to provide benefits for the clientele population to be served; and
- 4) Determination of the curricular offerings, recruitment procedures, information dispersal and financial resources.

Traveling Educational Vans and Mobile Units

The idea of traveling education is not a new concept in developing the educational level of the rural population. However, some school districts and vocational education personnel are suggesting this technique as an approach to improving the level of employability of rural youth.

An Arkansas study of mobile teaching vans indicated that such an approach was feasible in the development of employable skills for rural youth and adults. Job clusters, i.e., small gasoline engine repair, hotel work, motel work, hospital and nursing home work, housekeeping, and general manufacturing, were recommended as component aspects of occupational exploration and training programs.

The increasing velocity of secondary school consolidation makes it imperative that school administrators and other vocational personnel devise means of providing a vocational program that contains several skill areas for rural youth from isolated schools. Rhodes (1967) discussed a proposed vocational cooperative that would utilize mobile laboratories operating from a central facility to the participating schools.

cooperative efforts

The degree to which programs for developing the employability of disadvantaged rural youth are successful depends, to a large extent, upon the joint efforts of the industrial and educational components of the local communities. The kind of cooperative efforts that labor, industry, and schools undertake should be based upon sound feasibility and be revealed through research. Robinson (1968) studied the feasibility of developing occupational programs in home economics at the post-secondary level. From interviews with business administrators, school administrators, instructors of home economics and students enrolled in home economics at the secondary and post-secondary level, the major findings showed that:

- 1) The majority of the business and school personnel felt there was a need for trained personnel in the occupational home economics areas.
- 2) The schools and businesses would be interested in working together to develop occupational programs and would require or permit students to observe and participate in experiences as part of the occupational preparation.
- 3) Businesses and educators agreed upon the percentage of course work in general education and the percentage of time that should be allocated to theory and skills.
- 4) Both groups agree that a positive attitude toward work was a quality needed most for employment.
- 5) Industry, school officials, and students should be involved in determining the most desirable occupational programs to be offered at the post-secondary levels.

School administrators, counselors, and vocational educators who are interested in conducting programs for developing the employability of rural youth must work jointly to develop adequate counseling programs. A program of this nature was conducted by Western New Mexico University and three New Mexico High Schools, with support of the university and the New Mexico State Department of Vocational Education. Industry was also involved in providing observation experiences of the world of work during planned field trips. The major goals of this program were:

- 1) To increase the children's feeling of security by presenting sources of information on careers.
- 2) To encourage the curiosity of the students by letting them know that over 40,000 different occupations exist, and by giving them the source for explanation of these occupations.
- 3) To begin developing a desirable approach to the process of occupational choice and aspiration in regard to aptitudes and attitudes, and to look at "self" realistically.

These goals were achieved through counseling sessions once a week, a career night, and a field trip. Labor and industry provided resource persons who worked actively in the occupation to provide the students with first hand information. This counseling program was conducted over a period of two school years for two of the small rural schools involved.

Evaluation by the students, university personnel, and public school personnel revealed a strong desire to have the counseling program intensified and continued. Similar counseling programs for rural youth were conducted in the States of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and Utah, using industrial funding.

Professionals who work with the disadvantaged are beginning to see the value of informal programs specifically designed to meet the needs of rural youth. The State of Arkansas Extension Service conducted a four-year special youth project program for rural disadvantaged youth.

Basically, it was informal educational program designed to change the behavior and attitudes of the youth and adults who participated in the project. The program involved the extension service, public school personnel, and local communities. Initial contact was made with rural disadvantaged families, welfare agents, and school and church organizations. An evaluation of the study, conducted through a "Narrative Approach," indicated the following:

- 1) The general public, when aware of the needs, is interested in helping the disadvantaged help themselves. It welcomes and will support a well planned and meaningful program.
- 2) Special youth project programming is an effective way of reaching the disadvantaged.
- 3) A comprehensive program for reaching the disadvantaged will include many methods and techniques. Not only would it include extension-organized groups and activities, but also church, school, civic groups, etc.

personnel

Teacher Selection

Without question, the teacher of the rural disadvantaged is the key person upon whom educational success depends. Acceptance, respect, compassion, empathy, and understanding represent the central core for effective teaching of rural youth and adults. Credentials and mastery of pedagogical skills appear to be less important than commitment and sensitivity to the unique needs of the disadvantaged student. Viewed by an interdisciplinary team, the following teacher competencies are offered by Tuckman and O'Brian (1969):

- 1) Understand the unique personal, family, community, and social and economic problems of this group.
- 2) Minimize cultural and ethnic differences by avoiding conspicuous style of dress, inappropriate speech patterns or condescending attitudes.
- 3) Communicate with the disadvantaged by utilizing simple, direct vocabulary without being patronizing; make genuine identification with the needs of the students; avoid sarcastic, judgmental or moralistic tones; and take a positive, optimistic, and encouraging approach.
- 4) Cooperate with teachers, counselors and other professionals in dealing with the reluctance, fear and ambivalence of the disadvantaged.
- 5) Adjust teaching approaches to the style and rate of learning of the disadvantaged by using step-by-step targets, stressing the concrete and literal rather than the theoretical and abstract, and

... pacing progress to the students' abilities while not underestimating their potential.

Goldberg's (1963) research provides an excellent summarization of the teacher "style" deemed necessary for success with disadvantaged children:

The successful teacher meets the disadvantaged child on equal terms, as person to person, individual to individual. But while he accepts, he doesn't condone. He sets clearly defined limits for his pupils and will brook few transgressions. He is aware that, unlike middle class children, they rarely respond to exhortations intended to control behavior through invoking feelings of guilt and shame. He, therefore, sets the rules, fixes the boundaries, establishes the routines with a minimum of discussion. Here he is impersonal, undeviating, strict, but never punitive. Within these boundaries the successful teacher is businesslike and orderly, knowing that he is there to do a job. But he is also warm and outgoing, adapting his behavior to the individual pupils in his class. He shows his respect and liking for his pupils and makes known his belief in their latent abilities.

Vigorous efforts are necessary in recruiting and selecting teachers from the ranks of disadvantaged populations. Increased numbers of black Americans, Appalachian whites, American Indians, Spanish Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans should be encouraged to become teachers. "Role identification" which leads to a positive concept of "self" can be accomplished if teachers from the rural disadvantaged are recruited successfully.

Sensitizing the Staff

The professional teaching staff must become sensitized to the following erroneous folk myths if successful programs are to be developed for the rural disadvantaged.

- 1) With rare exception, research dealing with the disadvantaged has treated them as if they were homogeneous groups despite the mounting evidence that heterogeneity exists to the same extent as in other elements of the population.
- 2) According to Cohen (in National Committee on the Employment of Youth, 1969), these children have yearnings, ambitions, untapped potential, worldly interests, and family attachments characteristic of any socioeconomic strata of the population.
- 3) Smith (1969) points out that differences among affluent children are as striking as those among the poor. Socioeconomic status, aspirations, attitudes, educational achievement, cultural and social status differ between rural disadvantaged groups.
- 4) Careful examination of disadvantaged children will reveal that many come from families living in chronic poverty. Udall (1967) indicated in his report at the National Outlook Con-

ference that one-third of the rural population accounted for one-half of the population designated as living in poverty. Tragically, poverty begets poverty.

Perhaps, as succinctly stated by Gordon (1970), there are no characteristics which identify disadvantaged children and youth more accurately than the low income status of their families, the disorganization of their community and family life, and their low academic achievement. These manifestations must be clearly visible to the teacher or rural disadvantaged children, youth, and adults if their fallowed intelligence, capacities, and creativity are to be developed.

The Differentiated Staffing Concept

The concept of differentiated staffing represents a major step toward both increasing the status of the teaching profession and effectively serving the rural disadvantaged—thereby raising the educational efficiency of public schools. A report edited by Clark (1970) recommends that the “rank and rewards of a teacher should not be determined merely by longevity or by the mere collection of credits in graduate courses, but by demonstration of the teacher’s ability to raise the academic achievement of his pupils to contribute to the professional growth of his peers.” A four-rank paradigm is suggested: 1) Resident Teacher, 2) Staff (or experienced, or certified) Teacher, 3) Senior Teacher, 4) Master Teacher.

The underlying philosophy of this career ladder suggests that certification of the teacher would become a reality after, rather than at the beginning of the resident teaching status. Hopefully, a resident teacher could be certified at the end of a minimal period of three years, following a systematic assessment of his strengths and weaknesses. If the teacher has demonstrated teaching effectiveness and professional growth, he or she would be promoted to the next level on the career ladder.

A staff or certified teacher would continue to be assisted by college personnel. This teacher would also contribute to the professional development of the resident teacher and would be appraised primarily in terms of a demonstrated ability to contribute to high academic achievement of the students.

A senior teacher, operating at the third level of professional rank, would be promoted to this position as the result of demonstrated student achievements. In addition, a senior teacher must demonstrate personal and professional maturity which would be attested to by parents, supervisors, and his peers in the teaching profession. Consistent performance and general reputation should be an important standard to be met in order for a teacher to attain this rank.

A master teacher represents the highest professional rank to be achieved by members of the teaching profession in this suggested scheme. To attain this rank, the individual must be rewarded for outstanding performance as a teacher based upon the use of distinguished, imaginative,

creative, and consistent methods in directing the learning process. This must be evidenced by a high degree of student achievement up to and beyond general expectations. Nomination and promotion to the rank of master teacher should be made on the basis of the enthusiastic consensus of the teacher's peers, the supervisors, and concerned parents.

Use of Paraprofessionals

A supportive cast of paraprofessionals would greatly enhance program development for the disadvantaged. Clerical aides, media aides, technical aides, technicians, interns, teaching aides, and tutors can assist the regular teacher in the following ways: 1) in the teaching operation, by caring for the educational media; 2) in the preparation of teaching aides, by preparing mock-ups and by assisting with displays and simulations; 3) by assisting with group and individual supervision, plus a host of other services based upon the individual's expertise.

The movement toward the utilization of paraprofessionals stems not only from the practical needs for teacher assistance, but from a recognized fact that the complexity of the rural public school system has placed greater demands upon classroom teachers. Not only can these paraprofessionals provide educational and school-related assistance, but they can be instrumental in developing a more systematic program for recruitment and training of minority personnel to serve the culturally different. Therefore, parents and adults drawn from the community will facilitate the important goal of community involvement in the educational activities of the school.

Supportive Services

Traditional long-range planning or an extensive therapy stance will not suffice in counseling the disadvantaged student. These youth seek help that is real and immediate and deals with the "here and now." Obviously, a new type of counselor is needed who is prepared to provide direct and practical assistance on everyday problems, i.e., resolving teacher-student conflicts, helping with health needs or family crises, securing emergency funds, and obtaining immediate legal services.

For supervised occupational experiences and counseling to be successful, the counselor must have entry to a wide array of supportive services such as those suggested by the National Committee on the Employment of Youth (1969):

- 1) Medical and dental examinations and treatment to correct the high incidence of defects among the disadvantaged.
- 2) Case work and psychiatric services.
- 3) Day-care services or baby sitters for the young children of female students.
- 4) Legal services for dealing with policies and related problems.
- 5) Transportation facilities (public buses and related problems. travel to distant or unaccessible classrooms or jobs.

6) Loan funds for work-related emergencies, such as lunch money, or money to purchase work clothes and tools.

7) Welfare support and services.

The supportive agencies must be held accountable for their treatment of youth referred to them. Feedback from both the agencies rendering service and the youth involved will provide a vivid and accurate picture of the variety and availability of services in the community.

offerings

Employment Opportunities

School administrators and other professionals who are concerned with devising employability programs for disadvantaged rural youth must become acutely aware of rural migration trends, color trends in the rural sector, and contemporary issues facing rural populations. For example, Maddox (1967) analyzing industrial trends in the southern region of the U.S. found that there is a demand for better educated and/or more skilled workers, managers, technicians, and professionals who cannot be provided through the existing school system. Thus, the level of employment projected to 1975 provides some bases for projecting vocational programs.

School administrators, state educational personnel, and representatives from business and industry must jointly plan employability opportunities for the rural disadvantaged. The identification of new skills needed in the rural occupational matrix will then lead to relevant course offerings. This type of cooperation and sensitivity led the Louisiana State Department of Commerce and Industry (1968) to identify the manpower needs for training in brick masonry, meat processing, carpentry, and nurses aide training. With the assistance of school administrators, professional counselors recruited the trainees, utilized individual and group counseling procedures, and provided simulated job interviews throughout this extensive and successful training program.

Special advisory committees are recommended for assisting curriculum development and for the selection of on-the-job training programs. A random selection of people in the rural community would add a great deal of meaning to programs designed to employ the rural disadvantaged.

Migration Patterns

Rural youth, like urban and semi-urban youth, are seeking economic betterment. The increase in migration has caused concern on the part of school administrators and community officials in the rural sector. The exodus of rural youth seeking employment in major cities will result in a diminishing tax base in rural communities. This situation must be dealt with effectively by school administrators, supporting school personnel, and industrial leaders through seminars and open discussion meetings. As analyzed by Beard (1966), these seminars should be developed with the

following objectives in mind:

- 1) To develop a conceptual framework for studying socioeconomic mobility.
- 2) To develop a better understanding of the problems and decisions facing educational policy makers, program planners, administrators, and teachers.
- 3) To develop lines of communication to exploit available resources, to conduct research, and to disseminate research findings.

These seminars and open discussion meetings must be conducted in the local rural community for most beneficial results. The development of human resources, classified as rural disadvantaged, most likely will develop through vocationally oriented programs suited to the needs of the rural depressed areas.

instructional resources

Curriculum Adoption and Implementation

Curriculum adoption and implementation for the rural disadvantaged must be person-oriented and student-centered. Because the traditional monolithic educational structure has failed to develop verbal skills for the disadvantaged adequately, curriculum emphasis must be placed on the concrete rather than the abstract, on application rather than theory, and on the individual's interests, personal characteristics, and abilities. Individualized instruction represents the paramount consideration in developing relevant curricular patterns for the rural disadvantaged.

The essential ingredient underlying successful curriculum development and adaptation rests squarely on the shoulders of a well prepared teacher of the disadvantaged. Thus, preservice and in-service teacher preparation must allow the teacher to utilize his or her intelligence and innovative abilities in relating course content to occupational experience programs and the real world of the students.

The Warsaw Project, conducted by the University of Illinois (1970), suggests the following format for academically disadvantaged students who respond favorably to applied biology, agriculture, and mechanics.

- 1) The Instructional Staff
 - 1.1 applied biology and agriculture occupations instructors
 - 1.2 communications or English teacher
 - 1.3 mathematics instructor
 - 1.4 ancillary personnel, i.e., guidance counselor, reading specialist, and school psychologist
- 2) The Instructional Facilities
 - 2.1 a land laboratory should provide a classroom, a storage area, an animal housing unit, a greenhouse, an acreage of tillable land and a woodlot or forest

- 3) Selection of Students
 - 3.1 interest inventory
 - 3.2 school records and personnel data
 - 3.3 parental support
 - 3.4 advisory council
- 4) The Instructional Program
 - 4.1 applied biology and agriculture and supportive courses.

Implementation of such a program should be based upon the following recommendations (assuming a multiple teacher department):

- 1) Mix the disadvantaged students with the other first-year students in applied biology and agriculture to study for one period each day in the high school agricultural classroom or shop.
- 2) Conduct a class with the disadvantaged students at the land laboratory for two or three periods each day.
- 3) Provide a separate class in communications for one period each day.
- 4) Provide a separate class in mathematics for one period each day.
- 5) Integrate disadvantaged students in regular physical education classes.
- 6) Mix the disadvantaged students with lower ability students during the second year.
- 7) Return the disadvantaged students to the regular school schedule for the junior year.

Providing Learning Centers

Facilities for both educational and non-educational activities must be provided as learning centers. These facilities should be constructed so as to insure adaptability to future changes in technology and cybernetics. Three distinct laboratories are recommended by Olson (1969) to meet the educational needs of disadvantaged youth.

- 1) The Specifically Designed Laboratory. Laboratories designed to perform a specific function are appropriate when 1) adequate space is available to house a separate lab, 2) employment needs warrant increased student enrollment to justify the laboratory, 3) competencies needed by students before a cooperative work experience warrant the laboratory, and 4) facilities do not lend themselves to any other creative activity.
- 2) Multiple Use Laboratory. The use of several laboratories as facilities may be beneficial when they can be adequately equipped and coordinated to provide beneficial experiences. In such a situation the student is provided with closely related experiences as he rotates through a sequence of different laboratory activities.
- 3) Laboratory Conversion. In many instances, a laboratory can be converted to house new equipment to perform the specific functions needed in a given program. The laboratory need not be devoted during the entire day to this particular area, and in most

cases, it will not be because the laboratory must serve one, two, or possibly three different needs and functions. It means, in some cases, that specialized job equipment and roll-in types of facilities will be used. Adequate storage space is necessary to enable much of this material to be put away at the end of the class, or at least rolled out of the laboratory working area. Adequate facilities are needed for both the development and storage of visual aids in all three types of laboratory utilization.

Schools located in rural areas should capitalize on such innovations as mobile demonstration facilities and trailer houses that can be moved from school to school.

conclusions

With the advent of the 1967 report of the President's National Commission on Rural Poverty, the less vocal rural disadvantaged were once again discovered. Yet, it is questionable if the majority of the rural youth living in deprivation have been afforded vocational programs designed to improve their economic, social, political, or educational bondage. The perpetuation of both physical deterioration and psychological dehumanization of rural disadvantaged youth can be changed if school administrators and supporting staff personnel are willing to design effective vocational employability programs. These programs must insure successful job entry, equal opportunity toward achieving affluency and the means for enhancement of their individual dignity.

Strengths of Programs

Procedures, alternatives, and recommendations which have proven successful include:

Traveling educational vans hold much promise for low cost vocational education employability as described in the Arkansas model.

Cooperative arrangements between school systems and industry provides a solid base for meaningful curriculum and program development.

Supportive services such as information centers, health care centers, and counseling centers play an important role in preparing rural disadvantaged youth for work placement and/or occupational entry.

Seminars and community discussion forums provide a means of communications between the school system, the industrial sector, and the parents in identifying job clusters, skill requirements, and realistic occupational goals.

Those school administrators who have utilized research findings concerning instructional resources, e.g., The Warsaw Project, exemplary programs, differentiated staffing, empathetic paraprofes-

sionals, and facilities designed for flexibility, have developed successful employability programs.

Weaknesses of Programs

The major dilemma confronting rural school administrators is one of attempting to expand employability programs for the disadvantaged student during a period of financial crisis. However, federal vocational monies are specifically earmarked for disadvantaged populations. Other difficulties include:

Limited numbers of rural disadvantaged youth are involved in viable vocational programs for employability.

Both qualified teaching personnel and program directors are difficult to secure.

There remains a reluctance on the part of school administrators to jointly engage industry and various community agencies in shared planning and developing of employability programs for rural disadvantaged youth.

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