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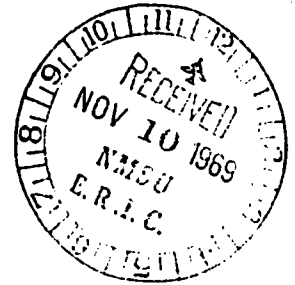
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ABSTRACT

The Congress of Hispanic Educators submitted this 1969 proposal for quality education to the Denver Public School Board. According to the Congress, before they could outline an educational program which would be effective and meaningful for the Hispano, it was imperative that a clear understanding of the basic objectives necessary for him to compete in the dominant society be obtained. This proposal discusses 3 of the general objectives thought to be realistic in terms of assisting the Hispano child to compete in his present school situation and in preparing him for future occupational and social endeavors. These general objectives consist of integration, which is a vital and fundamental step towards attaining quality education; a relevant curriculum for all elementary pupils; and the fostering of pride and identity in his own culture and heritage. The Congress proposed the formation by the Denver Public Schools of a task force in each area of study: (1) social studies, (2) language arts and humanities, and (3) math and science. Descriptions of the task forces, their objectives, and a time schedule, and examples of specific modes of operation, are outlined. A brief history of national and local realities of the foreign language program is included, along with the objectives and specific needs for such a program. (NQ)

ED 069456

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FROM: THE CONGRESS OF HISPANIC EDUCATORS
TO: THE DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD
RE: PROPOSAL FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

The Hispano in Colorado comprises the largest ethnic minority in the state, yet very little attention has been given to his problems, and much more specifically, to his educational problems. This document addresses itself to these particular problems.

It is inconceivable that a nation considered one of the most progressive and wealthiest in the world should have such a disproportionate number of poor and illiterate people in its midst. Illiteracy and poverty breed misery, poor health, discontent, hunger, immorality, and alienation.

Unfortunately a large segment of the Hispano community in Colorado finds itself in a state of gross poverty and low educational attainment. There are many contributing factors, the most prominent being the lack of salable skills and academic preparation needed in today's burgeoning and highly technological society.

In order for us to outline an educational program which will be effective and meaningful for the Hispano, it is imperative that we have a clear understanding of the basic objectives necessary for him to compete in the dominant society.

Following are the general objectives which are realistic in terms of assisting the Hispano child to compete in his present school situation, and in preparing him for future occupational and social endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

Gene Gallegos, President

1969

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INTEGRATION

Quality education for all children is an undisputed goal of the public schools. However, recent findings indicate that for children who experience education within a setting of racial, ethnic or socio-economic isolation, quality education has become an increasingly distant reality (2, 13). The misunderstanding, conflict and educational harm that result from this kind of isolation has been well researched and documented (12,13).

Programs of compensatory education have not been able to improve and sustain academic growth (6, 13). A recent research survey indicates that compensatory educational programs have been of limited effectiveness because they attempt to solve the problems of academic retardation and social alienation in the segregated environment which in itself is the principal source of those problems (13).

For the Hispano, this situation has reached tragic and intolerable proportions. Recent evidence reveals that the median education for the Hispano in Denver is 8.6 years as compared to 12.2 years for the Anglo population (3). The drop-out rate for the Hispano in Denver is estimated to be near the 60 percent mark (15). In light of the fact that nearly half of the total Hispano population in Denver has not yet reached the age of sixteen, the urgent need for quality education becomes more significant (3, 11). Indeed, the present educational approach offers the increasing Hispano population a dismal future.

If all children are to have the experience necessary for a fruitful and productive life, in a society of many racial and ethnic groups, they must have the opportunity to come in daily contact with individuals of different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. There is much evidence to support this position (1, 2, 10, 13).

Therefore, the Congress of Hispanic Educators feels that integration is a vital and fundamental step towards attaining quality education for the Hispano child, as well as for all children. While we are cognizant of the complexities and pressures involved, we strongly recommend that:

- 1) Further action taken towards integrating the Denver Public Schools to include the Hispano child.
- 2) The initial steps already taken by the Denver Public Schools must ultimately lead to racial and ethnic balance in all schools.
- 3) The burden of adjusting to desegregation in the Denver Public Schools must be shared as equitable as possible by all citizens, rather than being concentrated upon one segment of the total population.
- 4) Serious consideration must be given to the abolishment of those disconcerting areas which might hamper a child's transition and adjustment to a new school setting. For example, the practice of ability grouping must come under critical review. Also, school fees and other matters requiring personal finances must be considered in relation to the child's ability to afford such costs.
- 5) Where busing is necessary, younger children should not be involved in an excessive amount of travel.
- 6) Serious consideration must be given to a child's participation in extracurricular activities, and to insure that all children have the opportunity to participate without any hardship on them.
- 7) The schools must take the leadership in establishing effective communications with the home. For those parents who, for whatever reasons, cannot or do not become involved in the school program, the school must make an intensive effort to become involved with the parent. The concept is old, only the emphasis is new.

- 8) Continuous and critical follow-up evaluations of all programs and activities must be conducted to insure that quality education is being provided for all children.

Inherent to the success of any program for improved education are the crucial factors of teacher understanding, expectations and attitudes. Here, the curriculum becomes relevant or rejected. Here, a child becomes an individual with individual abilities or becomes unidentifiable from the group and is tagged with group stereotypes. In other words, more than any other single factor in the educational process, the teacher provides the classroom environment for a child's education or alienation. The present educational plight of the Hispano strongly suggests that this is an area of urgent emphasis.

Unfortunately, educators have very little objective information and too much subjective information concerning the Hispano. It is essential that schools realize they do not get expert teachers, they develop them.

Therefore, the Congress of Hispanic Educators recommends that a mandatory pre-service and in-service program for all educators be instituted. The principal objective of such a program would not be simply to describe Hispano culture in general, but to provide educators with the skills and insights for understanding and developing the Hispano child to his full potential. This program must focus on the following areas:

- 1) Hispano culture, history and contributions to our present society.

An objective history of the Hispano in the southwest must be presented. Glorification and idealization of this tradition, or any other tradition, must be avoided. However, many myths must be destroyed as a condition for real understanding.

2) The relationship of socio-economic status to academic achievement.

Teachers must understand the present socio-economic status of the Hispanic, as well as the forces that led to the present situation (3).

3) Stress the importance of individual differences among children.

Educators must learn to recognize the Hispanic child as an individual with individual abilities. Although recognition of individual differences is a principle basic to education, too often the Hispanic child is stereotyped as possessing many false and contrived attributes (3, 9).

4) The relationship of a child's self-concept to academic achievement.

There is much evidence indicating that intellectual development is influenced by a child's self-concept and attitude towards himself as a learner. Educational psychology has long told us that being labeled a failure instills in a person a sense of unworthiness that eliminates motivation. Somehow this information has not been given much attention by educators (4, 5, 8, 14).

5) The relationship of teacher expectations to a child's school performance.

Studies have shown that children will perform and achieve according to the teacher's expectations. The more teachers expect from their students, the better the students will perform. Conversely, if children are treated as if they are uneducable, they will perform in that manner (7, 9).

6) The competent use of test data. All teachers must be trained to interpret, analyze and utilize test data in a competent manner. Frequently I.Q. scores, achievement test scores and other psychological tools are used to reinforce and justify low predictions.

- 7) Teacher-parent communication. Teachers must realize that parent involvement begins with teacher involvement. It must become the teacher's responsibility to bridge the gap that presently exists between the school and the home.

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RELEVANT CURRICULUM

ELEMENTARY

A RELEVANT CURRICULUM

Educators' findings and research have demonstrated the importance of early childhood years in educational development. A youngster has achieved 80 of his intellectual development by the third grade. His human values and attitudes are basically established within the first three to four years of school.¹ Thus a child's lifelong behavior patterns are established before he leaves elementary school. The above factors emphasize the importance and necessity of making the curriculum relevant for all elementary pupils.

Due to a child's environment, experiences and expectations to which he has been exposed, learning characteristics and needs of pupils vary considerably from school to school. Therefore it is imperative that all schools be encouraged to study their curriculum to see what changes and improvements are needed. To insure the accomplishment of this objective the following must be provided:

1. Released time for a representative group of personnel from each school to evaluate and revise their curriculum.
2. Services of curriculum specialists to aid faculties.
3. Compilation and dissemination of information on educational studies and innovations found effective.
 - a. Interest centers on Tuesday and Thursday
 - b. Teachers with strong background in a particular subject to aid other teachers half day while they teach the other half day.
4. Flexibility in curricula content, scheduling and time allotments to individualize instruction within each school.
5. Adequate implementation of revisions, including new subjects, new textbook series and shifts in emphasis requiring that teachers participate in workshops and in-service meetings. Released time

on a regularly scheduled basis must be made to enable educators to attend these meetings.

¹California Elementary School Administrators Association: "The Crisis in Elementary Education".

PLAN FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES, MATH/SCIENCE AND
LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL.

Congress of Hispano Educators

March 5, 1969

THE PROBLEM

A National Education Association publication entitled The Invisible Minority is by far the most thorough treatment of the educational deprivation of the Hispano in this country. The most successful programs for solving the problem strongly suggest that the schools should help the Hispano adjust by fostering pride and identity in his own culture and origin.¹ This entails allowing for a preference of his history and showing him how his own people contributed to our society.

De Hoyes takes a similar attitude as a result of his study into the educational aspirations of the Hispano. His work found that, with increasing acculturation, came higher levels of educational aspiration.² Thus cultural identity by the Hispano and cultural awareness for his teacher and peers is a clear way to achieve educational adjustment.

Educators have long held the assumption that cultural factors play an important role in education. Dewey indicated that with history is a group's vehicle for better understanding and awareness as to their self-worth. Furthermore, the educational process should concern itself with a starting point which is the individual's background of experiences.³

Accepted learning theories emphasize the importance of cultural relevance as the prime entity in the process. Hilgard stated that learning is a culturally relative thing and that a student's subculture will effect his learning style.⁴ Jerome Bruner suggests that the process of education concerns itself with those factors that are important in a person's culture. He looks carefully at various teaching aids as the means to expand experiences, clarify and give personal significance.⁵

Ausubel has concerned himself with the major cognitive learning activities that take place in the school environment namely the efficient and meaningful transmission of important knowledge. He indicates that learning is increased

when the student is provided with learning cues which assist him in accomodating and assimalating new concepts. These learning cues are inherent in the image of onew shortlushileness.⁶ Therefore, if a so-called "culturally deprived" group is truly deprived it is because he is deprived of his own culture.

Presently when United States history is written and taught, it excludes the Hispano student. The Hispano has been stripped of his heritage and his cultural traditions to a point where he no longer has a cultural base. We are, under present conditions, perpetuating a grave injustice to the student who straddles two cultures and in many ways finds identity in neither.

The question is: What are we as educators going to do about this problem? Are we to sit back and let the public schools play that traditionally passive role and continue to place the burden of achievement solely on the shoulder of the Hispano student? Are we as professionals willing to adjust our priorities and consider ourselves accountable for the inequalities that have prevailed for so long? We the Congress of Hispano Educators will not allow the existing situation to continue.

Because of the grave problem now existing in the education of Hispanic youth, the Congress of Hispanic Educators believes that the formation by the Denver Public Schools of a task force in each of the three major areas of study, 1) Social studies, 2) Language arts and Humanities, and 3) Math and Science, will be a step in the right direction towards finding solutions to the problem.

The description of the task forces, their objectives, a time schedule and examples of specific modes of operation are outlined below.

I. Description of Task Forces

The three task forces assigned by the Denver Public Schools will investigate and develop procedures which assist and encourage Hispanic students to stay in school; thus enabling them to achieve a level of performance which will place them in a competitive position with other young adults of the same age.

A) One task force will be assigned to the Social Studies disciplines with the prime objective of reviewing and researching present course content and teaching methods involved in teaching our Hispanic student. An integrated approach to the social studies would be most advantageous for the purpose of developing a positive attitude.

This task force will be charged with the responsibility of producing a viable curriculum supplement and/or revising the present curriculum so that it will include a substantial amount of information on the Hispanic culture. The social studies program should contain the following:

1. A historical frame of reference (for both teacher and student) that includes the Hispanic
2. Inclusion of a commorative historical approach that does justice to the Hispanic people - This will allow Hispanic youngsters the opportunity to identify with the great men and women of his cultural background

3. Inclusion of a comprehensive and transmittable political, economic, and sociological history of an average member of the Hispanic community.

B) A second task force will be assigned for the Language Arts curriculum. The priority here is the development of methods and materials that will advance the communication skills of Hispanic students. The integration of a variety of media will be investigated and developed for use on a multi-sensory basis. It is hoped that the Humanities will become an integral part of this endeavor.

C) A third task force will involve itself in the Math-Science curriculum with intent to explore those areas of the disciplines that lend themselves to the learning styles of the Hispanic student. Recent research has revealed a number of pedagogical strategies that have proven successful in teaching mathematical and scientific concepts to the less advantaged student.

The above statements are but suggestions for the assigned groups. We do not want to restrict the task forces. We merely wish to suggest a direction they may take or consider, thus leaving it up to them to decide what the priorities will be and allowing them the opportunity to design their own research projects.

Similarly it is imperative to provide the student with the opportunity to develop to his utmost ability; that is to assist him in the development of a mental process which will allow him to become an autonomous learner. The student can thus develop a concept of self-worth to where he may involve himself in an "independent study" project, based on his personal interest, on his selected time, and within his method of operation.

II. Composition of the Task Forces

Many of the past programs involving the education of the Hispanic student have not succeeded because there has been little or no minority representation

in the developmental stage. Because of this, we deem it necessary to implement the following recommendations:

- A) Each task force be composed of five members with the chairman appointed from within
- B) The Congress of Hispanic Educators recommend the qualified Hispanic and non-Hispanic personnel to work in each of the three task forces of the stated disciplines

III. General Objectives

1. To give proper emphasis to Hispanic culture in the specified curriculums - With an in-depth study of Hispanic culture, it would be a matter of time before this emphasis will influence the total program of studies. The above stated curriculums will begin to draw upon the resources of other supportive disciplines.
2. To research and/or develop instructional materials emphasizing an appreciation of Hispanic culture for all students
3. To develop guidelines for the necessary in-service seminars for the teachers who will teach the courses and use the newly developed instructional materials.
4. To establish criteria for the evaluation of the present curriculum being taught in those schools with a significant percentage of Hispanic students. This criteria should also consider the effectiveness of the newly developed instructional materials.

IV. Prospective Time Schedule

The three task forces involved will initiate investigation and development of the ways and means to fulfill the stated objectives in the summer of 1969. A pilot project to test the products of the summer's work in a classroom situation will take place Semester I of the 1969-70 school year.

V. Examples of Specific Modes of Operation

Social Studies

A social studies curriculum should provide for a scope and sequence allowing a spiral approach to the curriculum construction with important environmental strands weaving a structure. Priorities in such an endeavor, with respect to the Hispano, are relevancy and motivation.

A curriculum structure could be developed as follows:

Course One - Level - 8th grade

A narrative approach to develop an historical frame of reference that includes the Hispano.

Course Two - Level - 10th grade

Development of a commorative history that lends itself to biographical inquiry and independent study.

Course Three - Level - 12th grade

Construction and implementation of a political, economic and sociologically based course which lends itself to independent study and group discussion - Independent study, especially in the library or the learning or instructional materials center, will help students find solutions to problems and form opinions that are based on fact, not hearsay, stereotype or one point of view. Group discussions should help students develop a tolerance for other people's opinions. This will help to develop the concept of multiple solutions to a given problem. Hopefully, the strategies employed will promote the development of an autonomous learner as well as one with a broader perspective on life.

Language Arts

On the secondary level it is important to continue to identify the differences in the language development of the Hispano and non-Hispano student and to determine the effect of these differences as they relate to success or failure in the Language Arts program which is so important to its communication skills (English, Drama, Journalism, Reading, Semantics, Speech, etc.) The related areas of the Humanities (music, literature, art, etc.) offer much in the way of esthetic value that should be incorporated whenever possible into the Language Arts program.

The task force should concern itself with the strengths and weaknesses of present programs of study, revise, or supplement the courses of study in order to include proper emphasis on the Hispanic contributions.

Example: U.S. or World Literature - Junior and Senior High. When exploring Mythology, Folklore, Legend, Biography, Autobiography, Poetry, Drama, Short Stories, Novels, etc in a regular course of study, give proper and regional emphasis to Hispanic contributors. Many Hispano poets, dramatists, legendary figures, etc. will be a source of inspiration and encouragement to the Hispano student and will add depth and dimension to the knowledge of all students.

Math/Science

The following are examples of specific suggestions that might be given to the task force in the mathematics and science areas.

1. To evaluate present mathematics and science teaching practices in predominantly Hispano schools.
2. To research the psychological and social aspects of mathematics, science, and the Hispano.
3. To explore promising programs now being developed in other parts of the nation.

4. To explore multi-media approaches to teaching mathematics and science.
5. To find techniques for the individualization of mathematics and science curriculum.
6. To evaluate the funding of the mathematics and science departments in predominantly Hispanic schools.
7. In general, to improve science and mathematics instruction for all children.
8. To investigate the teaching strategies in reference to practical applications.

FOOTNOTES

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³Dewey, John. How We Think, 1910.

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SPANISH

Congress of Hispanic Educators
Report to the Board of Education

March 6, 1969

INTRODUCTION

In our general proposal, we have stated under general objectives that we would like to correlate English and Spanish in all areas of the curriculum where it is feasible, and under relevant curriculum, we have added that we would like to provide for those children with interests and ability in the Spanish language opportunities to develop this talent to its fullest.

We would therefore like to take this opportunity to inform you of the current status of our Foreign Language program as it relates to the elementary school and the steps which we feel will enhance the quality of education for every pupil in grades 5-12.

In this report, we shall attempt to give you a brief history of national and local realities, our reasons for the importance of upgrading this discipline, and our objectives and specific needs.

History

National

Twenty years ago, the teaching of a foreign language was at low ebb, partly due to the fact that such a course was generally considered an elective. Foreign language in the elementary schools was unheard of except for the "prestige" schools.

During World War II, the armed forces had teachers who taught languages and emphasized the oral approach.

During the early 50's, the U. S. Commissioner of Education strongly recommended the teaching of foreign languages as a basic element of general education. The National Defense Education Act was initiated and foreign languages in the elementary schools became a reality.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 gave foreign language study a boost, and as a result less commonly taught languages are now being stressed, and subject matter in a foreign language is being considered.

More than 500 summer and year long institutes have been conducted since 1959. 27,000 teachers have been exposed to language courses. 300 or more research projects to improve language instruction have materialized.¹

Local

Denver was chosen as one of those 300 or more research projects. Answering the call of national concern in learning other languages and cultures, and financially supported by the Federal Government, our system produced a quality television series in Spanish which was used as the medium of instruction in every fifth and sixth grade class. All children were exposed to the Spanish language. In many cases teachers and pupils were learning the language simultaneously. In spite of the lack of qualified teachers, pupils learned the basics of the language. In addition, many teachers took on the challenge of learning a new language and began to take language courses on their own.

At the present time, the majority of the 86 elementary schools teaching Spanish FLES are using the materials developed during the 1960-1964 Denver-Stanford Project. This program closely follows the television series which was developed as part of the total program.

During the school year 1968-69, twenty-three elementary schools have used McGraw Hill Spanish materials along with related materials developed by the Denver Public Schools to reinforce cultural and historical aspects of the Spanish language. Television is not used with this program. However, television could be utilized as a supplement. Reports from teachers using the current materials are very favorable. All elementary schools will have the opportunity to use the new materials during the school year 1969-70. Hopefully, a sufficient number of in-service programs will be made available to develop a solid core of well-trained Spanish teachers from each school.

Why Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools?

Many authorities have recognized the evidence concerning the process of language learning, introducing study of a second language to children at an age when they are naturally curious about language, when they have fewest inhibitions, and when they imitate most easily new sounds and sound patterns. They have also recognized the fact that real proficiency in the use of a foreign language requires progressive learning over an extended period.²

Most present-day psychologists seem to agree that the optimum age for beginning the continuous learning of a second language seems to fall with the span of ages four through eight, with superior performance to be anticipated at ages eight, nine, ten. In this early period, the brain seems to have the greatest plasticity and specialized capacity for acquiring speech.³

Why FLES in this region?

In this geographic region, foreign language, and in particular, Spanish in the elementary schools, takes on added significance when we consider that:

. . . we are situated in the Spanish Southwest. There are nearly four million persons with Spanish-Mexican antecedents in the five southwestern states: Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. Most of them speak Spanish, and considering the circumstances, remarkably good Spanish.⁴

. . . our region is rich in Spanish historical heritage as a direct result of the fact that Spanish-speaking people have been settled in the Southwest for more than 350 years.⁵

. . . often, without consciously knowing it, we are surrounded by and have contacts with many contributions of the Spanish culture as evidenced by the name of our state, the 150 cities in Colorado with names which are either Spanish or Indian in origin, the 50 or more metropolitan streets in Denver with Spanish names, the 60 or more restaurants which specialize in Spanish or Mexican food. Other significant contributions can be found within the areas of music, art, architecture, agriculture, and language.

. . . according to the official 1960 U. S. Census, there were 157,173 Spanish-surnamed persons in Colorado or a total of 8.96 percent of the total Colorado population. The Spanish-surnamed population in Colorado increased 32.4 percent between 1950 and 1960. In 1950, there were 24,950 Spanish-surnamed in Denver. In 1960, there were 43,147 Spanish-surnamed. By 1975, projected figures estimate that in Denver, the Spanish-surnamed population will double itself to 41 percent of the total population.⁶

. . . in Denver Looks at Our Schools, 1968, conducted by Research Services, Inc., Denver, Colorado, opinions on the importance of elementary school subjects were made and the following results were given:

. . . In 1965, 74 of 100 people felt that foreign language was a very important or important subject.

. . . in 1968, 75 of 100 people felt that foreign language was a very important or important subject.

In addition, parents ranked foreign languages above music and art and more than half of Denver's Hispano residents considered foreign language training a very important elementary school curriculum element.⁷

Perhaps this is an indication that this particular segment of the community has a deep feeling toward retaining this most important part of their culture.

Objectives

The study of Spanish beginning early in a child's school life, at least by Grade 5, can lead directly toward the attainment of the following objectives:

I. BETTER COMMUNICATION

- A. By developing proficiency to speak and understand a language other than English.
- B. By developing proficiency to read and write correctly in the second language.

II. CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

- A. By helping children to learn the ways of another culture in order to help them to understand and to accept people with a cultural background different from their own.
- B. By stimulating children's interest in the humanities through the literature of other nations.

III. SELF REALIZATION

- A. By extending the reach of the children's understandings and insights.
- B. By developing with the Hispano child a healthy self-image through the study of the language, the history, and the culture of his forebearers.

Needs

1. Strengthen the study of Spanish in all schools beginning at least by Grade 5.
2. Provide for native or near-native Spanish trained teachers to be placed in all schools, using itinerant Spanish trained teachers in smaller schools.
3. Provide for adequate classroom materials in all Spanish classes.
4. Adopt the McGraw Hill Elementary Spanish Series in order to correlate with the same materials now in use in the junior and senior high Spanish program.
5. Provide for at least four co-ordinators or supervising teachers in the area of Spanish who will need to be allowed planning time both before the inception of the program and during its first years so that visitations, workshops, and articulation meetings form an integral part of his work.

It is now evident that better articulation is needed to develop a solid grade five to grade twelve program in Spanish. After a great deal of close scrutiny by foreign language committees and foreign language teachers on each level, the McGraw Hill Spanish materials have been selected for use, thus providing for a step by step 5-12 program. This is only the beginning. Our suggested needs serve as a guideline toward a successful program.

Conclusion

Today mankind is confronted as never before with the necessity for adequate communication among all peoples. Language barriers must be lowered in order that feelings of mutual respect among all citizens of this ever-shrinking globe may be established. Nor is the global concept too large a one with which to cope in the educational program of our time. Children and youth must be provided continuous and expanding opportunities to extend the breadth of their cultural understandings and to develop co-operative attitudes.⁸

It is hoped, in the words of Congress, that we will "correct as rapidly as possible the existing imbalances....which have led to an insufficient proportion of our population educated in modern foreign languages".⁹

FOOTNOTES

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