

Education Association Gives Tips on Makings of Good School

"Editor's note: This is the first in a series of stories furnished by the National Education association. They range from what constitutes a good school to special problems among pupils.)

Washington—If you have a school age youngster—and the census bureau says about 40 per cent of all American families do—chances are you'll find yourself in or about his school with some regularity during the next few months.

If yours is a kindergartener or in the primary grades, the sheer business of getting him to and from will probably call for more trips to school than to the supermarket.

Then, depending on the school program and your own child's progress, there are teacher conferences, talks with the principal or guidance counselor, perhaps with the special education director or school doctor.

Other Activities
Add September's back-to-school activities, American Education Week in November, PTA meetings the year round, mother-daughter and father-son affairs, invitations to "come see our art corner"—and it's pretty clear that if you don't become acquainted with your child's school, it won't be for lack of opportunity.

Yet, judging from queries that come into headquarters of the National Education association, opportunities to get acquainted with the school do not necessarily result in parents knowing how to judge that school.

The question most often asked of NEA officials, outside of professional queries, remains: "How can I tell if my child's school is a good one?"

The fact that parents find that question a puzzler is well understood by most educators. In education, as in most other matters, you have to know what to look for before you can determine value. Just as distinguishing between red and green doesn't make one an authority on fine art, a quickie conference with a teacher or a 12-minute tour of a school building can't possibly permit you to be an authority on how good a school really is.

List of Guidelines

Because most educators feel that we won't have better schools until the general public knows how to judge a school, and because citizens groups themselves have asked for it, the NEA recently drew up a list of guidelines to help laymen evaluate their local schools.

NEA officials warn, however,

that the guidelines are not meant to be used as a simple check-the-right-box type of quiz. Education is too complex a process for that. A school, they say, must be judged by how well it is serving its community, and communities differ. A school must be judged by how well it is serving modern society, and our society is a fast-changing one. Further, a school must be judged by how well it is educating for occupations, for college, for adult life, for citizenship.

These values just don't lend themselves to neat little checks in neat little boxes. What's a necessity in one place may seem a "frill" in another. What serves a college-going community does not necessarily serve a community struggling to keep teenagers from dropping out of high school.

Represent Thinking

With that warning, here are some guidelines that represent the best thinking of informed laymen as well as educational specialists:

Does the public school program provide for all ages from kindergarten through adulthood?; for the average, the mentally retarded, the highly talented?; for the handicapped and/or emotionally disturbed?

Do all elementary and sec-

ondary-school pupils attend full-time sessions?

Is each child challenged to achieve to his maximum capacity? Is he placed in a situation where he can achieve a satisfactory measure of success?

Does the school attempt to develop in each learner a respect for work and excellence in performance, an appreciation of learning, and the ability to carry a task through to completion?

Small Classes

Are classes small enough to insure individual attention for each child? What proportion of classes have no more than 25 pupils?

Is there sufficient space in each classroom for pupils to move about freely?

Is there work space for exhibits, demonstrations, and projects?

Does your school have a well-organized pattern for testing the intelligence, achievement, aptitudes, and interests of pupils?

Standards of Achievement

Are standards of achievement mutually understood by teachers, pupils, and parents? Does the system of reporting pupil progress give sufficient information?

Are community resources and the special talents of laymen utilized to enrich the

school program?

Do pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time? Do they take pride in the school? To what extent is discipline a problem? Why? Is the morale of the staff high? Are teachers adequately paid and do they have status in the community?

Fund Distribution To Klamaths OK'd

Washington—UPI—Final congressional action was taken Monday when the House passed a bill permitting distribution of funds to Klamath Indians for their share in the sale of the Klamath marsh in Oregon.

The bill goes to the White House. It permits distribution of \$510,905, or about \$300 per member of the tribe, for the sale of the Klamath forest and marshland.

Ultimately, each Klamath Indian is expected to receive approximately \$45,000 when all assets of the entire reservation are disposed of, but the present legislation permits distribution of the marshland sale proceeds in advance of the 1961 date set earlier under the Klamath termination act.

Has the curriculum of the local schools been critically reviewed in recent years?

Samples of Questions

These are just samples of questions you should be asking about your local schools. Other, more specific questions about elementary schools, high schools, and school boards may be found in the complete set of NEA guidelines, titled "How Good Are Your Schools?" available for 10 cents from the National Education association, 1201 16th st. N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

It's plain to see that learning how to judge your child's school is neither a one-time nor a some-time thing. Like everything else about parenthood, it's a bigger job than you may have anticipated. But if you care enough, the time to start getting the answers is on your next trip to school.

You'll find the school principal or PTA officers willing to answer questions because, after all, these are the goals they're working toward, even if they can't always give rosy answers. When you really get into the subject, it's a good bet that you'll find it fascinating enough to plunge in more deeply. PTA and the local citizens committees on schools will help you there.



SHAKING HANDS and smiling, Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan (right) greets San Francisco's James P. Wilson, secretary of the city's World Trade Association, as they met in Moscow. Between the two and also smiling is Cyril Magnin, San Francisco Port Authority chief, and a stern-faced unidentified person.

Crosses Burned On School Grounds

Birmingham, Ala.—UPI—Police today were seeking two white men in connection with the burning of crosses on six all-white Birmingham area public school grounds Monday night.

Several crosses were burned last year on school property, but officials at that time dismissed the burnings as student pranks.

Two white men were seen Monday night running to their car from the Jones Valley High school in suburban Powderly where one cross was burned.

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