

Team Teaching: A Different Approach to A Better Education

By EARL H. ADAMS
Mail Tribune City Editor

Team teaching is a term used in educational circles today to describe a variety of situations in which two or more teachers cooperate in instructing a group of students.

The board of education of Norwalk, Conn., public schools has said their program is designed "to provide a better education for pupils through a more flexible type of classroom organization which permits sound grouping practices and fuller utilization of the special talents and strengths of teachers."

Norwalk was one of the country's pioneers in adopting the team teaching type of instruction.

The structure and approach to team teaching varies among schools where it is used - from a strict team organization with a leader, cooperative teachers, clerical aides and perhaps even intern teachers, to the team which achieves its effectiveness by cooperation through partial departmentalization as it is in the fifth and sixth grades in Medford public schools.

The Team in Norwalk, Conn.

In Norwalk, Conn., for example, each team consists of a team leader, one or more cooperating teachers, and at least one teacher aide, all of whom work on a full time basis. There also may be a part-time teacher, or a part-time teacher aide.

At Lexington, Mass., High school, the organization is a more cooperative type arrangement between teachers rather than a strict hierarchy team organization.

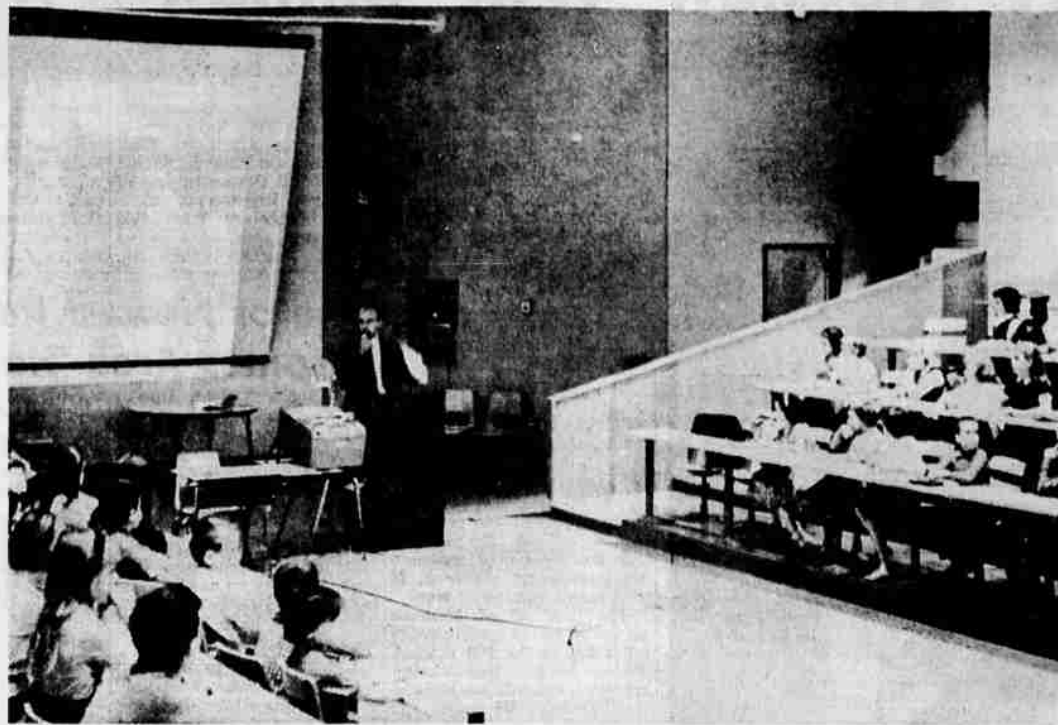
Courses at Lexington, however, are scheduled so teachers may work closely together in class on a voluntary and instructional basis.

Basically, however, the team teaching organization is the same: two or more teachers, with or without clerical aide and with or without a designated leader or chairman, cooperating in teaching a group of students.

Provide Certain Desirable Factors

Team teaching situations provide certain desirable factors, which, for the most part, may be lacking in the conventional, self-contained classroom. Among them are:

1. Greater utilization of the teacher's strength.
2. Educators believe that a teacher interested in a specific field is a more effective instructor in that subject, and students appear to be more interested in the subject when it is well presented.
3. In a team teaching situation, the teacher with a specific interest teaches the subject in which that interest is utilized. The teacher may have other instructional obli-



About 60 third and fourth grade students at Estabrook elementary school in Lexington, Mass., attend a mathematics lecture. The instructor utilizes an overhead projector in this picture taken by Salem Architect James Payne on a recent visitation to schools in the east and mid-west.

gations, but his main teaching responsibility is in his particular field.

Teacher Instructs All Subjects

In the self-contained classroom, the teacher instructs all subjects. Educators believe that a teacher whose interest is predominantly in one subject, say for example English, will not make a good instructor in another subject, such as science. The teacher most likely will not

have the knowledge or ability to teach a subject in which he has little interest.

2. More individual student attention.

In most team teaching situations, teachers have a better knowledge of the student's abilities and weaknesses. These factors may be discussed by the team at a planning session, and means of assisting the student are planned.

One or more of the teachers in a team organization will have free time when the student has free time so the two have an opportunity for consultation.

Not in Position to Tell

In the self-contained classroom, the teacher, if he is weak in one or more subjects, may not be in a position to tell if a student needs help in a particular field. The student may need assistance or encouragement in developing a budding ability not recognized, an ability which could be recognized by a "specialty teacher."

3. More efficiently planned courses.

Through greater utilization of the teacher's strength, curriculum, especially those in team teaching situations, can be better planned.

Course material is planned weekly throughout the school year by the team in a planning session, when all members of the team discuss material to be presented, use of and arrangements for visual aid equipment, and other aspects of instructing the course.

Relieved of Routine Paper Work

The teacher in most team situations is relieved of routine paper work through utilization of clerical aides.

Features

Sports

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

SECTION B MEDFORD, OREGON, SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 1963 PAGES 1 to 8

Pittsburgh's Teaching Approach

By LAWRENCE WERNER

United Press International

Pittsburgh—UPI—Robert once was "a devil" in the opinion of his teachers. He was unmanageable and unwilling to learn—a product of "slum shock."

Today, Robert is a conscientious pupil, eager to keep up with his class, interested in his subjects and taking music lessons.

The transition of this 11-year-old fifth-grader from a serious discipline problem to a hard-working pupil is credited to a revolutionary concept in education—team teaching.

In a radical departure from the traditional methods of classroom instruction, team teaching utilizes the special talents of teachers and permits individual assistance for both talented and "slow" pupils.

Teach 8,500 Students

Since its inception here in 1960, team teaching has spread from five elementary schools to eight elementary and two junior high school facilities containing 8,500 pupils—with some eye-opening results. The program here is one of the largest team teaching projects in the nation.

Even though an authori-

tative evaluation of the program will not be ready before next fall, Dr. Charles Hayes, director of the program, and his staff and the teachers in the program are optimistic about its future. They have noted encouraging signs.

Promising indicators are the change in many of the students—the majority of whom are from "changing neighborhoods"—and the enthusiasms of the participating teachers.

Dr. Hayes describes "slum shock" as an environmental condition which inhibits a student in the learning process. Under conventional teaching methods, many of the youngsters are unable to overcome their frustrations and, as a result, do not realize their full capabilities.

Recognized Difference

A teacher with 15 years experience, Mrs. Bette Shuttleworth said she recognized the "tremendous difference between team teaching and the conventional system."

Dr. Hayes believes that "most communities fail to utilize the potential of the areas in which they live." Team teaching permits the

community to take part in the education of children and sees to it that the special skills of both teachers and students are realized.

Example of Teaching

Here is an example how team teaching works in Pittsburgh:

A typical team consists of a team leader, or master teacher, four regular teachers, a teacher intern from a nearby university, and a team mother, a member of the community in which the school is situated.

Mrs. Harvey, a teacher for 18 years, is a team leader for 114 second graders at Crescent school. The grade formerly was apportioned into four classrooms with about 36 pupils in each.

Now, class sizes vary according to subject, the learning ability of the students and special skills of the teachers.

Teaches Language Arts

For example, Mrs. Harvey, with the help of team mother Mrs. Olive Fleming, teaches a class in language arts to 96 average students and 11 below average. Another teacher, Virginia Pagnato, in a nearby classroom, teaches 11 gifted and college potential students

in a creative writing class. Mrs. Rosemary Hulsman's class in phonetic analysis consists of five sub-average students.

Mrs. Theresa Manella teaches sentence structure to seven students classified as below average and one slow. Teaching intern Linda Pollard instructs a gifted child and 12 college potential children in oral expression.

Phyllis Lewis, assistant to Dr. Hayes, says the flexibility of team teaching is its strength.

Teach in Large Classes

Teachers may teach in a large class in one subject and a small one in another. A pupil may learn one subject in a class of near 100 and another in a conversation group-size class.

Large groups usually are for subjects in which the students can make normal progress, while concentrated instruction is reserved for subjects in which they need either special help or have outstanding ability.

Team teaching recognizes that all youngsters "do not have the same type of needs," Dr. Hayes said. If a student is proficient in reading, he may be slow in arithmetic and more energy is applied to help him catch up in mathematics. For another student, the opposite may be true.

Individual Instruction
In conventional methods of instruction, these youngsters would not be afforded the opportunity to receive individual instruction because of the teaching work load in the older system.

Teachers, too, have certain areas in which they perform more efficiently, and team teaching uses them accordingly. An important facet of the program, Dr. Hayes said, is the weekly meeting of the team teachers. It is at these sessions that pupils are evaluated and the teachers given a chance to work out various problems in the flexible program.

Team teaching, Dr. Hayes said, reaches out into the social and cultural world to help the pupils cope with the "intellectual competencies needed in today's world." Regular field trips, which provide pupils with experiences related to their school work and which they probably would not get at home, are part of the curriculum.

Team mothers perform duties such as handling projectors and other offices which help free the professionally trained teacher for instruction.

By the end of the 1963-64 school year, \$1,116,400 will have been spent on team teaching in Pittsburgh schools.

It may prove to be one of the best investments ever made in teaching in the steel city.



An instructor in one of Pittsburgh's teaching teams addresses a classroom of students. (UPI)



Wilson school's teaching team is shown above discussing educational material. Seated are, left to right, Mrs. Barbara Doolen, music, art and penmanship; Mrs. Ruth Kay, reading and English; and Russell Car, physical education, health and science. Standing, left to right, are Verne Goodrich, arithmetic, and Robert Baccus, principal.



Mrs. Ruth Kay, reading and English instructor for fifth and sixth graders at Medford's Wilson school, is shown in one of her classes. Team teaching in the fifth and sixth grades is accomplished through partial departmentalization.