

Office Memorandum • Department Faribault State School & Hospital

TO : Dr. Engberg

DATE: June 6, 1956

FROM Olive Lynch

SUBJECT:

Reference is made to our discussion regarding the role of the school department in the institution program. I believe it the responsibility of that department to carry on a program of education and training for all children in the institution who can benefit from such training,

A small group of children are receiving inadequate training in classes at present, but the large percentage of our school age children, just as deserving of a school program, must be excluded because of the limited number of authorized teaching positions and availability of qualified teachers at present salaries.

A conservative figure on our educable school age children (i.Q. 50-75) would be a constant 80. These children are those with handicaps in addition to mental retardation. They are the deaf, the spastics, children with marked speech defects, the emotionally disturbed, the visually handicapped, those children, who because of gross delinquency, are not acceptable to Owatonna, but who are potentially rehabilitable. Also included in this group are the children who are too young to go to Owatonna; they need a good nursery school program.

We have an educable group of 250 young adults who need refresher and remedial work in the academic area, in addition to pre-vocational training, counseling and guidance to improve attitudes and social skills in order that they may adjust better in the community. Some of these people have grown up in a community which more or less rejected them, they were not given the kind of training they needed and became problems in the community upon

reaching adolescence. Others in this group have been in an institution, wether Faribault or Owatonna, and need such training as will fit them for successful community adjustment. These young adults need a program now, their retention in the institution any longer than necessary has obvious undesirable facets.

The legislature in Minnesota has made it possible for public schools to establish classes for the severely retarded child (I.Q. 25-50) recognizing the right of these children to have such training as they can benefit from. Regardless of where these children are, whether it be in an institution or in the community they need certain skills to lead a satisfactory life within their limits.

We have at least 300 of these severely retarded children in our population. Most of them are receiving no formal training. Our big problem is to adapt education to the capacities and needs of our children. Beginning instruction may be done in a well structured play program, some of it will be done on a kindergarten primary level that is of as much educational value as formal training at a higher level. The program, techniques, methods and aims are bound to be on a trial and error basis; but the residential school is particularly suited to the use of experimental methods and research, Our staff of expert personnel in the field of mental deficiency cannot be paralleled in a public school situation, making our potential contribution in the field of research invaluable.

Because of the number and variety of types to be found in an institution student teachers could get training not available to them anywhere else in their special field. They could work with the educable, severely

retarded, children with multiple handicaps and do bedside teaching in the course of their practice teaching duties.

The foregoing represents my thinking in terms of the school department's obligation to the institution and presents a picture of our teacher needs.

Our present authorized teacher personnel includes five elementary teachers, one teacher for the deaf mentally retarded and one principal. During the current year, it was not possible to fill four of the existing vacancies with qualified teachers.

In addition to the authorized positions, we have a need for the following:

Two academic and remedial teachers

One male industrial arts for adult education

One female home economics_____J

One music teacher, one physical education teacher, and eight additional teachers to work with our severely retarded, nursery school, kindergarten children. We also have need for a teacher to work with our visually handicapped and a speech clinician.

It would be desirable to have all of these teachers have a bachelor's degree in education plus a special certificate in the field of mental retardation.

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