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A PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
PARENT-TEACHER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

The following proposal for cooperation between Northwestern University and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers stems from an appreciation of the fact that such cooperation can result in very gratifying mutual achievement in a field of great concern to both organizations. Leadership in developing relationships between home and school which will be of maximum benefit to children is not only obviously desirable but a recognized need in the education profession. By cooperation in a program such as is suggested below, Northwestern University and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers can contribute significantly to this need.

Northwestern University is establishing a coordinated childhood education program. This program of training and research coordinates all the University facilities concerned with the various phases of childhood education. Resources are complete with the one exception of specialized facilities for the education of parents. Because this resource is lacking, the University turns to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers for their cooperation and assistance.

THE PARENT-TEACHER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The program in parent-teacher leadership which Northwestern University envisages includes these activities:

I. Training

A program of training in parent-teacher leadership will be made a part of the regular curriculum of the School of Education so that it will be available during the entire year to all interested persons. This program will be an expansion of the Summer Workshop which the University now conducts in cooperation with the National Congress. Its aim will be to make students more familiar with the present day organization of the home-school movement, its program of projects and activities, and its implications for education today and tomorrow, and to train them in the techniques of effective home-school relationships.

The educational program as planned will be mainly on the graduate level. Its primary aim will be to reach persons in colleges, universities, and teacher-training institutions who are engaged in the curriculum field or in the instruction of teachers, in the hope that these men and women will go back and incorporate into their own teaching programs some discussions of the problems, techniques, and projects of the parent-teacher movement.

The training program will also be offered for school executives and supervisory personnel, classroom teachers, and special teachers such as school psychologists and teachers of special children.

It is hoped that eventually workshops can be set up at Northwestern to which leaders from local P.T.A. groups can come for a few weeks of intensive training in techniques of parent-teacher relationships and for general background in the whole field of child development and other interests included in the program of the National Congress.

## II. Leadership

Leadership and guidance will be provided by the University in bringing about more effective home-school relationships and in solving some of the problems which often retard such relations. Demonstrations of techniques of working with parents, designed to promote better understanding between home and school, will also be provided.

## III. Research

Research will be conducted in problems of child development, particularly at the pre-school level. Also to be studied are techniques of home-school relationships and other questions of joint interest to the University and the National Congress.

## IV. Publication of Materials

Study materials will be prepared and research findings published in cooperation with, and for the use of, the National Congress. Conversely, the University will make profitable use of some of the publications developed over the years by the National Congress.

### FACILITIES NOW AVAILABLE AT NORTHWESTERN

To carry on research and training in all aspects of child development and family living, Northwestern University can draw on an array of expert knowledge, professional experience, clinical facilities, and specialized equipment in its various schools and departments which would be difficult to duplicate elsewhere. Moreover, the resources of all the departments having to do with the welfare of children have been closely integrated through a coordinated program in child development which this fall will be put into operation in the training of school psychologists and special teachers. All the machinery of this integrated set-up will be available to carry on the new program in home-school relationships.

Some of the resources which will be most valuable in achieving the mutual objectives of the University and the National Congress are:

School of Education

Specialists in all phases of child development and education, among them

Dr. J. M. Hughes, Dean, specialist in administrative problems

Dr. E. T. McSwain, Professor of Elementary Education, specialist in the fields of child development and mathematics

Dr. Karl Robinson, Associate Professor of Speech Education, specialist in speech development of children

Dr. Viola Theman, Associate Professor of Elementary Education, specialist in the fields of child development, nursery education, and language arts

Dr. Paul Witty, Director of the Psycho-Educational Clinic, Professor of Elementary Education, nationally known for his work in the fields of children's reading problems, mental hygiene, and child development

Department of Psychology

Specialists in the fields of child development, child psychology, mental hygiene, testing and measurement, education of the mentally and physically handicapped, behavior disorders, among them

Dr. Donald Lindsley, Professor of Psychology, specialist in the psychology of the handicapped child

Dr. Robert Seshore, Chairman and Professor of Psychology, specialist in child psychology, measurement of individual differences, etc.

Department of Sociology

Specialists in social aspects of children's behavior problems, juvenile delinquency, child welfare agencies

School of Medicine

Staff of the Department of Pediatrics and its affiliated Children's Clinics, including many well-known specialists in all aspects of child health, nutrition, growth and development, care of the handicapped, child psychiatry, etc. (Dr. Stanley Gibson, Chairman, Department of Pediatrics, and Director of Children's Memorial Hospital, and staff)

Also, specialists in social hygiene and sex education, including Dr. Bertha Shafer, Assistant Professor of Dermatology

### Dental School

Specialists in pedodontia and dental health of children, including Dr. George Teuscher, Associate Professor of Pedodontia; facilities of the Children's Clinic of the Dental School

### School of Speech

Specialists in speech training and re-training, work with hard-of-hearing children, creative dramatics and story-telling, among them

Dr. Raymond Carhart, Professor of Audiology

Dr. Clarence Simon, Professor of Speech Correction and Director of the Speech-Hearing Clinic

Winifred Ward, Assistant Professor of Dramatic Production, Director of the Children's Theater

Dr. Harold Westlake, Assistant Professor of Audiology

### Department of Home Economics

Specialists in nutrition and child care, home management and family relationships, family finance (Dr. Ruth Bode, Chairman of the Department of Home Economics, and staff)

### School of Law

Specialists in government and public service, family law, legislative processes, etc.

### School of Music

Specialists in the musical development of children (Dr. Ruth Wyatt, Assistant Professor of Music)

### Department of Physical Education

Specialists in recreation, playground activities, hygiene, and physical development of children

### Clinics and Other Laboratory Facilities

Northwestern University maintains a number of clinics which will be of use in the program of parent-teacher leadership, including:

- 1) The Montgomery Ward Children's Clinic maintained by the Medical School
- 2) The Children's Clinic of the Northwestern Dental School
- 3) The Psycho-Educational Clinic in the School of Education, directed by Dr. Paul Witty, which specializes in reading and personality problems
- 4) The Speech-Hearing Clinic conducted by the School of Speech

While the School of Education does not operate a laboratory school, it has access to the public schools of Evanston and other North Shore communities for practice teaching and research. It also has access to the facilities of the following agencies for observation and study: The Evanston Cradle; the Spalding School for Crippled Children, in Chicago; the Montefiore School in Chicago (for delinquents); the Sight-Saving Class of District 75, Evanston.

To fill the chief gap still remaining in its laboratory facilities, Northwestern this fall is establishing a nursery school in cooperation with District 76 in Evanston, to be located in Nichols School. This school will provide opportunities for the study of a wide variety of problems in the pre-school area--one which has been largely neglected, but which is of great importance in the parent-education program. It will offer opportunities for practical experience to students specializing in nursery school education, and will also serve as a laboratory for developing and demonstrating techniques in parent-school relationships. By establishing the nursery school in cooperation with the public school system of Evanston, Northwestern hopes to prove the feasibility of publicly supported nursery schools and to demonstrate how such a school should be operated.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED TO CARRY ON

#### THE PARENT-TEACHER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

What is needed to put all these rich resources to work in a more extensive program of parent-teacher leadership at Northwestern, as outlined earlier in this discussion, is the appointment of a man who will devote full time to the field of parent education and home-school relationships.

The School of Education at present does not have on its staff a person with the time to direct this work, nor does it have available the funds to hire an additional faculty member. That is why it will welcome the cooperation of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers in implementing this project.

3) As an institution of national fame, Northwestern attracts superior students and gives them superior training. Graduates of the School of Education usually assume positions of leadership in their schools and communities.

4) Northwestern has already had some experience in the field of home-school relationships, through the Summer Workshop conducted as a joint enterprise of the National Congress and the University. School people and lay leaders in this field have learned to look to Northwestern for leadership.

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This presentation has tried to point out some of the ways in which Northwestern University might be of service in helping to attain the objectives and carry out the program of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. The program as outlined will benefit the Congress by providing a national training center on the graduate level to which people from all parts of the country can come for training, by providing a source of stimulation for all aspects of its activities, and by disseminating more widely the philosophy of the parent-teacher movement. It will help the University by making possible more complete and effective training of teachers to meet all the practical problems with which they must deal in their work. But even more important--it will benefit those whose welfare is closest to the heart of both the Congress and the University--the children and youth of America.