

Subcommittee on Comprehensive School Plan named and "What our schools should be" statement

Education Committee Determined on Constructive Program

Accepts in Good Faith the Offer of Board to Co-operate With Civic Organizations of City

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UNANIMITY of action which has marked the procedure of the Education Committee of the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce since the beginning of the year points to a determined program in support of a constructive school policy in Indianapolis.

With the approval by the Board of Directors of the report of the sub-committee on school affairs, except as to that part of the original report which related to the request for the resignation of certain members of the board, and the unanimous vote of the committee to hold that recommendation in committee, meanwhile accepting, in a spirit of friendly co-operation and good faith, the recent offer of the Board of School Commissioners to receive advice and assistance from local civic organizations, definite steps have been taken by the Chamber of Commerce for the betterment of public school conditions in Indianapolis.

Sub-committees Named

In line with this program the following five sub-committees have been named to seek a satisfactory solution of present school problems, in co-operation with the members of the school board:

Sub-committee on Comprehensive School Plan:

Lee Burns, chairman
E. O. Snethen
Thomas C. Howe
James M. Ogden
G. A. Millett

Sub-committee on School Finance:

M. A. Potter, chairman
James W. Noel
Brandt C. Downey
Charles W. Jewett

Sub-committee on Improvement of Sanitary and Health Conditions:

Mrs. Ralph E. Kennington, chairman
Dr. Alfred Henry
E. O. McMeans
Isidore Felbleman

Sub-committee on Architectural Research:

Paul H. Buchanan, chairman
Dwight S. Ritter
Samuel W. Huls
Richard A. Shirley

Sub-committee on General Activities:

Brandt C. Downey, chairman
M. A. Potter
Lee Burns
Mrs. Ralph E. Kennington
Paul H. Buchanan

The enumeration of unsatisfactory school conditions, embodied in the recent report by a sub-committee of the Education Committee, was largely the result of personal

visits to school buildings in all parts of the city. Facts observed in individual cases were supplemented by data on the general school situation secured from the official records.

Suggests Remedy for Evils

The bare figures on file at the office of the Indianapolis public school give but a vague idea of the actual state of the schools. Buildings were found where space underneath stairways was being utilized for storage in violation of the law. Third-floor rooms, not listed officially, were discovered to be in use. A partial statement of these unhappy conditions was made by the sub-committee in its report by way of showing how great is the immediate need for efficient handling of the big problems of school administration.

Having shown the very great and pressing need for adequate school facilities the sub-committee which made the report then turned to constructive suggestions, in support of which the various sub-committees have been appointed. As a fundamental step it was urged that there be a comprehensive school plan, for the entire city, basically sound in character and farvisioned enough to cover the needs for ten years to come. Hoping to see such a plan properly made and placed before the people in such a way as to win their confidence, the committee proposed that an expert of known wisdom and ability be called in as a consultant by the Board of School Commissioners. It is believed that in connection with this work the assistance of the City Plan Commission will also be helpful.

New Department Advised

Another constructive suggestion made by the committee provided for the establishment of a department of educational and architectural research, which would be engaged in laying out the educational requirements and fitting buildings to them in a manner best calculated to secure efficiency and economy. Such a plan was put into effect in Detroit by the Bureau of Governmental Research, with the result that it is reported by the Detroit Board of Commerce to have been the greatest single saving to the taxpayers of that city that had been known in the school system and that its effect was not only economy, but efficiency in school planning.

Believing that the lack of adequate artificial lighting, together with the outside toilets found at twenty-eight school buildings, outdoor drinking fountains and cinder playgrounds, is eloquent proof of the need for improved sanitary and health conditions in the Indianapolis schools, a committee has been appointed to take immediate steps toward the elimination of unsanitary and unhealthful school conditions.

Financial Plan Needed

Inasmuch as the question of financing the construction of new school buildings is of outstanding importance, a committee well equipped to confer with the Board of School Commissioners on the ways and means of establishing a sound financial plan has been appointed.

A Committee on General Activities, composed of the heads of the other four sub-committees, with Mr. Brandt C. Downey as chairman, has been named to co-ordinate the work of all the committees and to deal with problems of efficiency in the operation of the public school system.

It should be restated, for the benefit of any who should question the purpose of the Education Committee, that there is one and only one aim in view, that is, to secure proper modern school facilities for the city of Indianapolis at the most reasonable cost consistent with the proper regard for educational requirements.

What Our Schools Should Be

It is believed that time and events will indicate the unquestionable aim and purpose of the Education Committee of the Chamber, and it is to be hoped that by frank dealing with the Board of School Commissioners desirable steps toward securing efficiency in the administration of school affairs can be assured.

The members of the Education Committee are ready to act in all good faith on the offer of the Board of School Commissioners to accept co-operation. They are also ready to stand behind their demand for the proper conduct of school affairs by men and women who have no other purpose than to make the schools of Indianapolis worthy of the community, and the equal of the best the country can offer.

Two "Plurals" Are Signed in February

WITHIN the Membership Committee of the Chamber of Commerce there is a special committee. B. A. Worthington is its chairman.

This committee calls on firms that should carry plural memberships in the Chamber. Early last month Chairman Worthington, Frank Wood, F. W. Johnson and H. R. Packard, membership secretary, called on the Van Camp Packing and Products Company. They came away with a signed plural membership application.

On February 13 John B. Reynolds, general secretary, Mr. Wood and Mr. Packard made a similarly successful call on Mr. L. S. Goodman, of the Real Silk Hosiery Mills, Inc.