

Minorities face barriers

Many people are not aware of the languages and cultural barriers the minority child often faces in school, according to Robert Egbert, dean of Teachers College at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Egbert spoke at the Conference on Teacher Education held last week at the Nebraska Center.

"We punish a minority child who speaks the only language he has learned before starting school," he said. "We also tend to disapprove of the child's entire heritage, thus alienating him more from society."

Robert Mackey, executive director of the Nebraska Indian Commission, told the group that the curriculum in the Lincoln Public Schools is turning out students who go on to become professional men.

Panel member

Mackey also said that in the lower echelons of the school system the opportunities offered to minority children are lacking.

He said that only 45 of about 25,000 students who graduated from the Nebraska public schools this spring were American Indians. In addition, 22 American Indians have studied this past year at the University of Nebraska, he said, but there has yet to be an American Indian graduate from the University.

"The system is not adequate to provide a meaningful learning experience for our Indian kids," Mackey said.

Not alone

"We are not alone in being deprived a good education," he said. "We are finding a lot of white kids from all phases of the economic scale being deprived of a good and meaningful education because the system is failing."

Mackey said that a major problem facing the American Indian child is the language and cultural barrier.

"Teachers that are hired are probably not capable of dealing with or understanding the problems affecting the Indian child," he said.

It would be helpful," Mackey said, "to have material which relates to the minority child, in addition to the regular material found in all schools. A minority child should be able to relate to what he is learning."

Regionalize examples

"It is important to regionalize learning examples in the areas where the child lives," Mackey said. "Don't stereotype!"

Mackey explained that an Indian child cannot relate to stereotyped pictures which depict American families eating breakfast and the father leaving for work. Too often, Mackey said, the picture shows a \$25,000 home with a Cadillac out front, a large breakfast on the kitchen table which was cooked on the latest electrical appliances and a new 17-floor office building in the background.

"An American Indian child cannot relate to this scene because his home is usually a shack," Mackey said. "The Cadillac out front is probably an old pick-up truck and the all-modern electrical kitchen is just not there. Also, there is no 17-story office building where the father goes to work. Most often the Indian father works

in the fields, topping beets, or is out digging ditches."

Established in 1970

The Nebraska Indian Commission was established in 1970 by Gov. Norbert

tries to avoid politics, but that the issues inevitably involve them in the political arena.

"We are encouraging our children to stay in school and work within the system," he said. "Even though we, along with the other minorities, are

first came to Nebraska she was shocked to find that the American Indian was looked down upon.

"I was always taught that I was better than others," she said.

She said that there is a

Lincoln, addressed the conference on the problems of the Chicano people.

Suarez said that the problems of the Chicano people are not as strong in the Lincoln-Omaha area as in Western Nebraska.

Both Suarez and Vallejo said that Chicano's also are regarded as second class citizens and that most of the Mexican-American children drop out of school.

"At the present time," Suarez said, "the Chicano student is full of frustrations."

Suarez said that either educators are not aware of the language barrier facing many of the Chicano students or the educators choose to ignore this problem.

Retarded or slow

"Too often," he said, "if a teacher cannot cope with or communicate with the Chicano child, the child is classified as retarded or slow."

Suarez said that he felt nothing was being done about the language barrier.

Another speaker, Lela Shanks, said that the white child needs the black, Indian or Chicano child in his school far more than the minority child needs to be there.

"Until you can get the majority of white parents to realize the need for that minority child and to accept the fact that a white child faces many of the same problems of the minority child, nothing much more can be accomplished."

Mrs. Shanks said that except for the language and cultural barriers faced by the Chicano and an Indian child, all children face the same type of problems in school.

Education

Tiemann as the Office of Indian Affairs and later changed its name. Mackey said the commission is slowly making gains in the area of education.

"We are accomplishing our goals slowly, but surely," he said. "We are studying the problems carefully using the system that exists, because as bad as it is, it is the only way."

Mackey said that the Nebraska Indian Commission

treated as second class citizens, we are telling our children to stay in the system, to get their education and to use the system to change the system."

Karen Buller

Another member of the panel was Karen Buller, Indian counselor in the department of Ethnic Studies at UNL.

Mrs. Buller, who is from Oklahoma, said that when she

definite need in the teachers college program and in all public schools for more opportunities in Indian education.

"It is often too easy to write off the Chicano or Indian child by saying, 'What's his problem,'" Mrs. Buller said.

Chicano problems

Omero Suarez and Delia Vallejo, both students at University of Nebraska

Educators confer on teacher training

Carolyn Mountjoy
School of Journalism

"We want to get people out of the customary way of looking at education," Erwin Goldenstein said last week at the Conference on Teacher Education at the Nebraska Center.

Goldenstein, professor of history and philosophy of education, and director of the TTT (Training Teachers of Teachers) Project said a major reason of the conference was to show different approaches to teacher education.

"School administrators need to see themselves as teacher trainers," Goldenstein said. "The University is no longer the isolated mecca it was 10 to 20 years ago."

Cooperative schools

The TTT project is also known as the Cooperative Schools TTT Model. Used mainly as a model for teaching elementary school, it is based on the theory that all phases of society need to be involved in the education of children.

Goldenstein said that efforts have culminated in the cooperative school project in which Teachers College and Arts and Sciences faculty members, along with candidates for masters and doctorate degrees, went to the public schools this past year to learn about children and the problems the public school teacher has in helping children learn.

Goldenstein said that people will model the behavior they are taught. He said that the cooperative schools TTT Model has great potential and that many educators familiar with this model felt that the ideas found in it should be shared.

Cultural seminars

Goldenstein said that the cooperative schools model deals with the development of cultural seminars involving blacks, Chicanos, American Indians and whites. It also includes the development of the open classroom with interest centers for different tasks.

Donald McCurdy, professor of secondary education, said that it was felt it would be fruitful to have a

conference showing the existence of a number of teaching models of different orientation which are being used at the University.

Another model for teaching which was discussed at the conference was the NUSTEP Model which is used primarily in the secondary schools.

Identify skills

"The NUSTEP model attempts to identify the skills needed by teachers and to recognize that not all teachers are alike," McCurdy said. It provides for openness and flexibility in teaching."

Two other teaching models were also discussed at the conference, the NU/McRel model and the Concordia Professional Education Major Model.

Roger Egbert, UNL Teachers College dean, spoke on "Needed Perspectives in Responding to Issues and Models in Teacher Education."

He said he is concerned that people think about the decreasing lifespan of jobs and of industry as a whole, as one of the most important issues relating to teacher education.

Education for adults

"No longer can we just teach students between the ages of 5 and 18," Egbert said. "I can not emphasize more the need for counselors and teachers for adults."

Egbert said that another issue teachers must face is the changing lifestyle. "We have tended to ignore the changing lifestyle and have felt it would take care of itself," he said.

"We have to help people to be more flexible and vice versa, we too need to be more flexible," Egbert said "We too readily accept what someone does just in the name of teaching. We accept standardized achievement tests and other ways of evaluating students blindly," he said.

"Instructional decisions are made by those directly involved with the child—the teachers," Egbert said. "No dean, administrator or school superintendent should assume that any decision he makes automatically influences the learning and development of the child."

KRNU on air first session

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