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Is the University Elementary School a vestigial organ of the College of Education, or is it a significant aspect of modern teacher education?

There are as many answers to this question as there are systems of logic. For example, it might be stated that all laboratory schools make significant contributions to teacher education and to public schools; the University Elementary School is a laboratory school; therefore, the University Elementary School is a significant contributor to teacher education and the public schools. The fallacy is obvious: the major premise assumes exactly the point to be proved.

Another approach might be to

# In Transition: The University Elementary School

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avoid any direct answer to the question and through discussion of the functions of the School attempt to lead the reader to formulate his own answers. However, this approach may leave the reader perplexed or, even worse, lead him to conclusions other than the ones which the author is attempting to validate.

An unwillingness to risk these possibilities precludes either of the foregoing approaches. This article assumes the burden of proof by beginning with the following thesis:

*The University Elementary School has been and will continue to be a significant contributor to teacher education and to the public schools of Hawaii.*

## UNIVERSITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DEFINED

The University Elementary School, which includes the second through the sixth grade, is one of the three University of Hawaii laboratory schools which also include the University Pre-school and the University High School. In the Elementary School there are two classes at each grade with one teacher and 25 pupils assigned to each class. The professional staff, in addition to the classroom teachers, includes a librarian and part-time library interns, a counseling psychologist, a nurse, a principal,

and special teacher-consultants in art, foreign language, music, physical education, and science.

The School is one of the nine departments of the College of Education. As such, it is an administrative sub-unit of the University of Hawaii and the principal is responsible to the Dean of the College. The organizational structure of the Elementary School corresponds to the definition of a campus laboratory school published by the Association for Student Teaching:

*Campus Laboratory School: A school which is controlled and supported by the college and which is organized as an integral part of the teacher education program to provide significant opportunities and relate the various phases of the teacher's activities both in and out of school (1:x).*

Since the name of this journal suggests the development of perspectives and since one of the early contributors to the journal strongly advises viewing situations "in a series of complementary perspectives" (3:3-5), it seems particularly appropriate to attempt to view laboratory schools in general and the University Elementary School in particular in historical, philosophical, and comparative perspectives.

During the past decade, the roles of laboratory schools have been carefully examined by college administrators, faculties of laboratory

schools, teacher educators, and various legislative and lay groups. In order to understand the recent and rigorous role-examinations, it is necessary to review the early development of campus schools.

From the beginning of the American teacher education movement, continuing attempts have been made to analyze the roles of the teacher and to identify those experiences which would help to prepare him for the classroom. Laboratory schools were developed within teacher education programs because it was believed that they would provide the best environment for teacher-preparation experiences. Not all teacher education institutions, however, were (nor are) in agreement as to the roles of classroom teachers and as to the most effective ways of developing understandings of these roles. Several types of laboratory schools evolved with different functions designed to achieve the varying objectives espoused by the individual teacher education institutions.

It is possible to identify at least five distinguishable types of laboratory schools: the practice school, the model school, the training school, the demonstration school, and the experimental school. Blair, Curtis, and Moon have written in detail regarding the development of the laboratory school movement and of these five types of schools (2:1-8). Examples of all of these types and combinations of types of laboratory schools still exist throughout the country today. They reflect varying philosophies of teacher education.

### TRAINING SCHOOL JOINS THE UNIVERSITY

In Hawaii, the University Elementary School was a part of the Territorial Normal and Training School which in 1931 became the Teachers College of the University of Hawaii. This campus laboratory

school was founded, primarily, as a training school. Indeed, with such a parent institution it would be difficult to imagine the Elementary School not reflecting the training school philosophy of that period. This training school concept continued until recent years. In discussing the training school, Blair states:

The training schools were refinements of public school patterns of the time. They were characterized by the same curricular organization and goals that had become general in public education and little emphasis was given to the development of new or experimental curricular experiences (2:5).

One of the stated roles of the training school was to train teachers for conditions which they would find in the public schools. Although there were exceptions, campus training schools in general were only moderately successful in providing experiences comparable to those which teachers would meet in the public schools. These schools were regarded by public school educators as having "better-than-average" learning programs, atypical pupil populations, and faculties composed of master teachers. Despite these "ideal-conditions" criticisms, the training schools continued to flourish as one of the major types of laboratory schools. Perhaps the most valid explanation of this continuation was that the staff members of these schools and many other professional educators were very vocal in their insistence that, despite the atypical characteristics of the schools, the practice teachers (now more appropriately referred to as student teachers) were having excellent experiences in the campus schools. They believed that these experiences were far superior to typical public school experiences. Because of the limited training of many teachers in the public schools,

many educators believed that student teaching should remain in the training schools.

### PRESSURES TO CHANGE FUNCTIONS OF UES

In the United States during the past decade, campus laboratory schools have been subjected to increasing pressures. These pressures, as well as several related factors, have been responsible for a critical role-analysis of the campus schools.

Two very significant pressures have been the results of the rapidly-increasing enrollments in teacher education programs and the inflationary spiralling of the costs of personnel, programs, and facilities. The numbers and sizes of campus laboratory schools have not kept pace with the phenomenal increases in enrollments. Rising costs have severely limited the expansion of campus schools, and many schools have been appropriately asked to justify their continued existence upon the contributions they make to education.

Concurrently, with these pressures have come proposals from teacher educators for professional laboratory experiences of increasing complexity and scope. More frequent and earlier contacts with children have been recommended for prospective teachers. While based upon sound reasoning and a sincere effort to improve the quantity and quality of the pre-student teaching experiences, these recommendations have resulted in increased requests for campus schools to assume these additional pre-service functions. In this area of broadening laboratory experiences, the student teaching experience, too, has expanded from periods of a few weeks to an entire quarter or semester.

Other significant factors related to this role-examination have been the increasing numbers of excel-

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