

District high school system outlined . . .

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Further increases led to the building of additions in 1955, 1959 and 1964.

The school enrollment in September 1953, the last year in the Stone School, was 134. In September 1966 we estimate that the figure will be about 435. There was a steady annual increase up to this year when we experienced a levelling off. It is anticipated, however, that there will be further increases as the overall population of the whole district increases.

At present the facilities in the school are adequate even with the addition of one extra class in September 1966. We should be able to absorb the anticipated increase for two or three years but will likely require more rooms after that time. However, a sharp rise in population could force earlier building.

It has been the policy of the Acton District High School Board to attract and retain good, qualified teachers so that the students of the school may benefit from the best instruction possible. Since the school is adjacent to the Metropolitan Toronto area there is constant competition with the schools of the latter in hiring teachers.

It is necessary therefore, to maintain a salary schedule and working conditions that are competitive. Progressive steps in these directions have been taken over the past several years and the Acton Board is now in a favorable position.

Teachers have recently gone on record with the submission that working conditions at the school and the attitude of the Board toward education are among the best in the province. At present the staff of the high school numbers 24. Although the average of years of experience is not high, the calibre of the individuals and their overall effectiveness is improving from year to year.

The caretaking staff consists of three full-time caretakers, who keep the building and the school property in excellent condition. They are Rudolph Spielvogel, Ken McKinnon and Norm Robertson.

Because of the size of the student body the program of the school is limited. The following programs are being taught at the present time: five-year Arts and Science, four-year Arts and Science, four-year Business and Commercial, Special Commercial J. (Grade 12).

The five-year program in Arts and Science makes provision for pupils of good general ability to proceed to Grade 12. Pupils may also secure the further education leading to the Second Grade School Honor Graduation R.R. 2 or (b) to qualify for admission to a university.

CHURCHES—The church for which her studies for which St. Alban's Assisi completion of Rev. R. McMeade is required.

Acton Baptist, or program in Arts Rev. S. Gamm designed to provide a balanced secondary Acton United, Reformed, based on stan- Christian Reform curriculum and ach- Rev. W. Van Dijk whose pupils pos- Evangel Pentecostal general ability Rev. S. Thoman r interests; it Knox Presbyterian, has one of the Rev. A. H. McKenzie.

Maple Ave. Baptist, not plan to Georgetown, but wish to general educa- St. Joseph's R.C., or the Sec- Rev. V. J. Morgan tion Dis-

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employment in commerce and industry.

Special Commercial Course, designed to fit the graduate for office employment, is an intensive one-year vocational course based upon an adequate general education. Pupils who have completed satisfactorily Grade 11 or 12 of any approved five-year program or Grade 12 of a four-year program are eligible for admission to this course.

In September, 1965, a class in Driver Instruction was established in the school. A total of 147 schools in Ontario are now offering the course and 60 more are expected to start offering courses in September 1966.

A memorandum from the Department of Education and the Department of Transport emphasizes that all courses in driver instruction must be held outside regular school hours and must not reduce, or interfere with, the time allotted to the regular subjects in the school curriculum.

Students who wish to have courses not offered in their home school (technical or vocational courses) may take such courses at neighboring schools. The Board will pay for tuition but not for transportation. About 40 students from this district are now attending Georgetown or Guelph.

In order that the effectiveness of instruction be increased and that more effective use be made of school time "The Six-Day

Cycle" will be introduced in September, 1966. This is a schedule which repeats itself every six school days. It was designed originally to overcome a number of problems which have bothered secondary school administrators and it appears to have been successful in the schools that have already adopted it.

EDUCATION RESEARCH

With the advent of computers, educators have more statistics available on various aspects of education than they can apply or interpret. The Department of Education has taken giant steps to keep abreast of growing problems. They have been able to do this by making full use of research techniques and findings.

Decisions based on scientific researches in education are not necessarily beyond reproach. However, these decisions should be altered or supplanted only after contrary information has been obtained from more objective or more extensive researches. The corollary is that lay people, teachers and board members should keep an open mind about new findings and new methods. Changes are not suggested at Department levels unless they have been scientifically proved to have merit.

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

A problem which is felt here in Acton and in other schools is an apathetic attitude toward studies. We find all too often

that capable students fail to achieve their potential for fear of having an accusing finger pointed at them by some of their more vocal and indolent classmates.

Too many are satisfied just to scrape by with a minimum of effort and reproach anyone who does a conscientious job. To say that this attitude is dangerous is gross understatement because it teaches students to develop habits of laziness which culminate in failure.

As a result of a survey of our graduates for the past 10 years, we discovered that no student passed grade 13 in one year who had less than a 66 per cent average in either of grade 11 or 12. Similarly, no student ever obtained a grade 13 diploma in one year who had less than 75 per cent in grade 9.

These facts point out that no one, regardless of his ability, has been able in a short time to develop good work habits. Even if such a person is able to develop a healthy attitude toward studies, his inadequate knowledge of previous work makes success close to impossible. Results show that those students who learn to work hard early in secondary school are able to continue successfully. Such students, furthermore, do not exemplify a declining average throughout their high school work.

We refuse to allow students who are obviously not working

to remain in school. In most cases, parents have been entirely cooperative in such instances and we have been able to affect a satisfactory change in attitude. Although the Reorganized Program entices more people to stay in school longer, it definitely does not permit students to attend school without working.

It is essential that secondary schooling instill in students those attributes which will mould them into good citizens, successful employees or employers, inspiring and judicious parents. If this is to be realized educators must insist upon conscientious attitudes and acceptable social behavior on the part of the students.

There is no patented method of leading each human being to personal success. However, we intend to do the best possible with the equipment and personnel which we have at our disposal.

We require the co-operation and support of everyone if we are to inspire the young people of today to become the progressive free-thinking, capable adults of tomorrow.

CEMETERY ENLARGED

A new cemetery area of seven acres has just been added to Fairview cemetery. Acton also has the Roman Catholic Dublin Cemetery near town, and the historic Pioneer cemetery. Each year the graves in all three cemeteries are decorated on Decoration Day.



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