

EXPLAIN SYSTEM OF PHYSICAL TRAINING

Booklet Written by Winnetka School Leaders Gives Program in Junior High School

Editor's note: Winnetka Talk has published many articles regarding the various phases of Winnetka's remarkable system of public school instruction. Little emphasis, however, has been given the physical training side of the work, the development of boys and girls to make them robust and the inculcation of attitudes that make for good sportsmanship and fair-dealing. The accompanying article has been prepared and published in pamphlet form jointly by Harry P. Clarke, director of physical education, and Willard Beatty, assistant superintendent of schools. It should be of interest to every parent of a school boy or girl. Because of its length the article will be published in installment form.

The advent of the junior high school has introduced new problems and new possibilities in the field of physical training. The setting apart of early adolescent boys and girls has at last drawn our attention to their needs and at the same time given us an opportunity to meet those needs. In recognition of this fact a new program of physical activities was put into effect at the Skokie school in Winnetka three years ago. This program marks a radical departure from much of the current practice and has met with such success that we believe our procedure will be of interest to others in the same field.

The Skokie school is a junior high school consisting of the seventh and eighth grades. The school has an enrollment of about 270 pupils. It is coeducational, the number of boys and girls being about equal. The classes are departmentalized and follow a modified platoon plan. The playground is therefore in use constantly for groups of from 60 to 75 pupils. The boys and girls are segregated for their playground activities because of their different interests. Routine adjustments have also made it more convenient for a woman to handle the girls' play periods and a man the boys' play periods, although during one year a man handled both sexes with complete success.

Have Double Purpose

In the matter of physical equipment, the school is fortunate. The total playground area is about eight acres. A rectangular space 100x200 feet is surfaced and artificially drained so that it is available under almost any weather conditions, except during actual rain or snow storms. An additional space sufficiently large to provide a football and hockey field has been turfed and is maintained in reasonably good condition. Other areas are available for practice fields, and a portion of the playground still remains in its original condition, too wild for organized play. The school has a gymnasium large enough to contain a basketball court of standard size with a small amount of space for spectators. The dressing

room and shower room space is unfortunately very much limited and not as adequate as is desirable in view of the program which is being carried on.

In planning this new program of physical training, two major aims were uppermost in our minds. First, we think it desirable to develop strong, healthy, normal bodies and minds. Second, we think it desirable to foster certain personal, civic, and social attitudes which we believe to fall within the responsibility of the school.

In order to contribute most successfully to both of the aims which influenced the development of our program, we have striven to introduce as much competitive activity as possible. We hope by this means to stimulate greater interests on the part of the children and at the same time to be able to stress the elements of co-operation or team work essential for successful competitive activity.

Play of Broad Scope

We believe that having a large number of competitive games offers the big muscle training and lung development and the precision and promptness of response which are the aims of most gymnastic training and at the same time satisfies a majority of the play tendencies of early adolescent children. The danger of overstrain which frequently accompanies competitive games can be eliminated by adequate supervision of the children's activities, and it is understood on our playgrounds that games may be interrupted at any time that a player shows fatigue. Our play periods, therefore, have been given over to speed ball, soccer baseball, baseball, Newcomb, volley ball, dodge ball, and a large variety of relays. One period a week is devoted to folk dancing for the girls; this is very popular. One period a week during portions of the year is devoted to corrective gymnastics for those children who, in the annual physical examinations, are shown to be suffering from physical defects.

For competitive games the play groups are divided into teams, varying in size according to the game. The teams remain constant in personnel during a given series of games, and a slight recognition is made of the winning team in this play-period competition. These teams are usually organized by the whole group electing as many captains as there will be teams. These captains then draw for their order of choice and are allowed to choose in rotation the members of their teams. The result is that the teams are usually evenly balanced, and the competition is keen.

The physical director is assisted in his supervision by three play leaders, chosen from among the children by election, who share with him responsibility for deciding minor matters of routine, refereeing games, and adjudicating disputes between teams. It is understood on the playground that the decision of a play leader shall be final in any instance under dispute. Where feeling has developed that an individual play leader is incapable of fair and impartial judgment, he may

be removed from his position. While he holds authority, however, his decisions are respected.

(To be Continued)

A CORRECTION

In last week's issue of this paper, it was erroneously stated that Mrs. Paul MacClintock, who was coming out from Chicago to attend the Tenney-Cheney dance, was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Morris Larned Greeley. Mrs. MacClintock, who was Miss Elizabeth Copeland, is their niece. WINNETKA TALK regrets this error.

Mrs. John C. Cobb is entertaining at dinner this evening before the dance at Indian Hill club in honor of Mrs. Frank D. Fulton who is leaving for Florida Wednesday.

REHEARSE XMAS CANTATA

"The Coming of the Prince of Peace" is the title of a cantata or Nativity play with ancient carols to be presented by the Sunday school of the Wilmette Baptist church Wednesday evening, December 23. Rehearsals for the production have been in progress for several weeks and the program is attracting much attention in the parish.

Mrs. William B. Hale of Willow road spoke this week at the meetings of the East Elm Street, the Willow Street, and the Ridge Avenue circles.

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