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WILL YOU MAKE A SCHOOL?

by

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NATIONAL CHILD LABOR COMMITTEE

419 Fourth Avenue • New York 16, N. Y.

"WILL YOU MAKE A SCHOOL?"

Word got around . . .
Word of "a lady from the schools" . . .
And José came running.

José came from the asparagus fields
    where he worked each day.
Excitement ran with him
And his twelve-year-old voice piped:
"Will you make a school?"

Thirty years since José's plea,
But still it comes —
As it has all the days between —
From other young Josés,
    and Willie Lees,
    and Carmelitas:
"Will you make a school?"

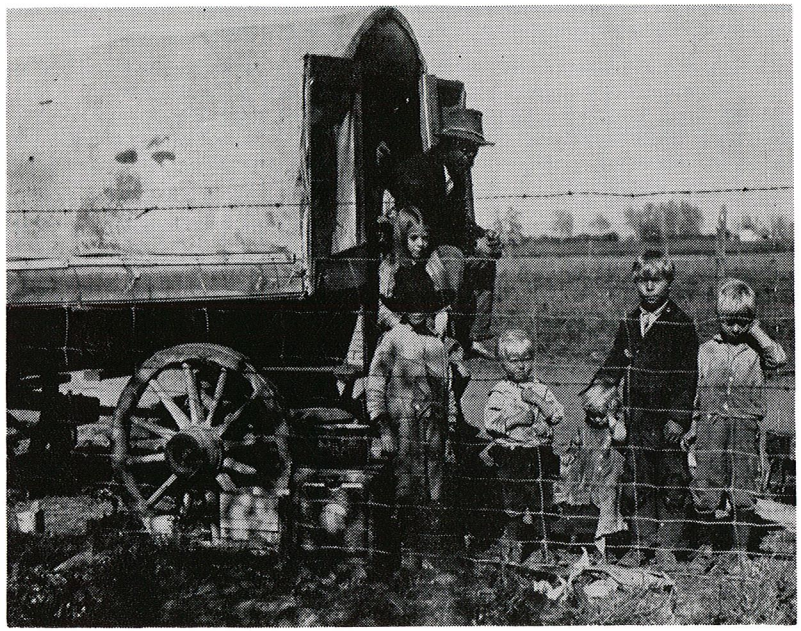
"Will you let me learn?"
"Will you help me to read?"
That's all they ask,
these children of the roads:
"Will you make a school?"

The author wishes to thank CURTIS GATLIN, who assisted, and LILA ROSENBLUM, who edited and designed this pamphlet.

YESTERDAY

This family of agricultural migrant workers was photographed with its prairie-wagon home in October, 1915. The children — aged seven, eight, and twelve — were accustomed to work steadily from sun up to sun down to help eke out a family existence. While they worked, boys and girls in nearby villages attended school regularly.

Year after year, similar families have moved across our land. On faster and faster wheels, they have sought work farther and farther from home. Their increased mobility has meant more time away from home base, shorter work stops, and greater isolation in camps and settlements. Their lack of real homes or communities has prevented them from enjoying the privileges or responsibilities to which their citizenship entitles them.



LITTLE HAS CHANGED OVER THE YEARS . . .

. . . but the names and faces of the children. There are fewer Polish and Japanese but more, many more, of Mexican parentage. In the Eastern migrant stream, there are many who come from the poorer Negro and White families of the South.

The children no longer attend school, as they once did, in box cars on railroad sidings close to the fruit trains that brought them from their homes. Nor do they arrive and depart on schedule or stay in one place long enough to attend school or to have teachers come to them, as they did in the early 'twenties. Now they have brief stays in several schools each year — if they enter school at all. They have more time on the move and less for the normal activities of childhood.

Migrant children do not know the security of fixed seasons or known destinations. Crowded into family cars or crew leaders' trucks, they follow the ripening crops that stretch across the land and the calendar. On routes and schedules determined by day-to-day rumors of work opportunities, they move from one nameless place to another, seldom, if ever, knowing where they are.

IN AGAIN, OUT AGAIN

For most of our nation's children, school begins in September and runs through May or early June. During these months, their education comes first. Their schooling is unbroken, except for traditional holidays. Family plans and even community events are geared to fit the school schedule.

But for thousands of migrant children it's a different story. Their school year begins — if at all — just any time or many times a year. Many attend school no more than three or four months and in several different schools. Moving as they do from state to state, sometimes as often as

seven times a year, they barely have time to feel comfortable with new classmates and teachers before they are taken away again to go through once more the painful experience of adjustment. School is little more than a series of frustrating beginnings and abrupt endings, a succession of unfinished lessons, half-made friendships, and broken hopes.

Their plight is illustrated in the following story, told by a Michigan teacher:

> "Joe is a thirteen-year old . . . who came into our fifth grade last October. He had come up from Texas . . . Pleasant, courteous, and ambitious, he readily became a favorite of all the children. On January 15, the principal chose Joe as a safety patrol for the second semester. On January 19, the patrols were to assume their duties. That day, his family started back to Texas. After he had left, we found this note:
>
> 'Dear Boys and Girls — You have been nice to me but a got to go to Taxes. I wanted to stay but they didn't let me stay. You were good to me when I was here but now that I was going to be a safety I'm going. What luck. I like it here very much. I had lots of fun with you guys.'
>
> 'To Miss Field — Your the best teacher I ever had. You been very good to me. Please write to me.
>
> Joe the guy who was going to be a safety.'"

TODAY

How widespread is this problem? The U.S. Office of Education reports:

> "No one has ever counted them all; no one has been able to. But employment records estimate the total migrant farm labor force at nearly one and a half million. Assuming, as some states do, that for every seven migrant workers there are three children of school age, we may well say that every year at least 600,000 children are being denied the privileges of a public school education simply because they are always on the move."

Today's migrant children . . .

- "Have the lowest educational attainments of any group in the nation."
- "Enter school later and attend fewer days than other children."

  For example, a Florida report states, "Less than forty-three percent of the children within the compulsory age range — seven to fifteen — received as much as thirty weeks of schooling during the year covered by these interviews, while fourteen and eight-tenths percent received less than twenty weeks."
- "Make the least progress."

  For example, an Arizona report states, "Most migrant children entering classes were retarded in achievement up to fifty percent in comparison with their age level." Colorado reports, "Eighty-two percent of all school-age children were retarded from one to eight years. Practically all children eleven years of age and over were retarded three years or more."

- "Drop out of school sooner."

  For example, a Colorado report states, "Thirty-five percent of the children of school age had left school or had never been in school."
- "Constitute the largest single source of illiterates."

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

Survey after survey has pointed out the educational plight of the migrant child. With each new study, citizens have been aroused, committees formed, meetings called, and resolutions passed. City fathers, local school boards, and governors have been petitioned for help. More committees have been appointed, conferences called, and recommendations endorsed.

But facts are soon forgotten, and citizen indignation is short-lived. Time-worn arguments (voiced by those who fear either the loss of future workers or increased school taxes) often convince communities that responsibility for the education of "those outsiders" belongs elsewhere, that migrant children lack the ability to learn and the willingness to attend school. A catch-as-catch-can education is generally accepted as "good enough."

Too often palliative measures ease the community conscience. Assured that something is being done, voices raised in protest and fingers pointed in shame are lowered. Citizens and consumers settle back to continue enjoyment of inexpensive fruits and vegetables harvested at a staggering cost to the nation: the sacrificed education of thousands of our citizens of tomorrow.

This clipping that appeared in September, 1955, in a Texas newspaper, might have been printed in any community where migrants work:

Migratory Farm Children Pose Difficult Problem For Schools

The return of the itinerant farm laborers to ———— in November will again pose a serious problem to the local schools, Dr. ————, superintendent of city schools, said Wednesday.

The schools, already taxed for space and instructors by the record enrollment this fall, will be forced to absorb the children travelling with the labor force. As a result of the return of these laborers the school enrollment always swells during the winter months of November through March.

The problem is not only caused by the increased number of students but also by the fact that most of these children have not been attending school while . . . out of the state. As a result of their "laying out" of school they are from two to three months behind the other children and get little out of the regular instruction, the school superintendent said.

Dr. ——— has contacted the state and federal educational agencies for help and advice on the problem, and they have offered little help toward a concrete solution. Legislation is already in force outlawing the use of minor children in farm work during school hours, but many agricultural states cannot or will not enforce the law.

Many of the children would like to stay here and attend school regularly but the parents are unwilling to sacrifice the six to seven dollars per day which the child can earn in the field, he said.

Farmers who hire children under sixteen years of age to work in the fields during school hours are liable for prosecution under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

"There is no evident solution at this time to the problem of what to do about the students who attend our city schools only six of the nine months of the school year," Dr. ——— concluded.

The peculiar plight of migrant children calls for special educational methods. Today, more than thirty years after California first tried special classes and schools for migrant children, few states provide educational programs adapted to their particular needs. Many second generation migrants are worse off than their parents.

Not even a dozen states have specific legal prohibitions against employing children during the hours they belong in school. Twenty-one states have no legal minimum age either during or outside school hours, while fourteen set fourteen years as the minimum for employment during school hours.

Even in states that specifically prohibit employment of children under sixteen during school hours in agriculture, nonresident children (for whom there frequently is no state financial reimbursement) are regarded as "outside the law." Law enforcement officers, conscious of community pressure, too often look the other way when enforcement may arouse grower displeasure. In states that do not have these prohibitions at all, special agricultural exemptions or exceptions in state child labor and school attendance laws permit migrant children to work while local children are required to attend school.

Nationally, children employed in agriculture are protected by the following federal laws:

> *The Fair Labor Standards Act*, which prohibits employment of any child under sixteen years of age *during school hours* in agricultural work related in any way to products that go across state lines.
>
> *The Sugar Act*, which controls employment in sugar beets and sugar cane by making growers who hire children under fourteen ineligible for payments under the act.

However, flagrant violations of these federal acts are not uncommon. Adequate enforcement is made almost impossible by limited inspection staffs, the mobility of workers, and the swiftness of their moves from crop to crop. What is needed is the voluntary compliance of growers and family leaders plus citizen vigilance and responsibility for reporting violations.

CROPS COME FIRST, SCHOOL LATER

Crop vacations are still stumbling blocks in the enforcement of school attendance and child labor laws. In many states, delayed openings and early dismissals or emergency closings to coincide with peak planting and harvesting periods are still common. In some areas, the crop vacation legalizes the use of migrant children in the field while local children are transported to a neighboring district to permit their uninterrupted schooling. Many times, an entire school, teachers and children alike,

marks time in order to legalize the working of only a few migrant children.

Such circumventions of laws that were passed to protect children against employment during the hours they belong in school make a mockery of the right of every child to an education. Examples of such abuses come in from all over the country:

> In 1955, a Colorado report stated, "The . . . and . . . Schools, by reopening on October 10, tended to further complicate the labor situation. This action forced the younger workers out of the fields at a time when less than seventy-five percent of the harvest had been completed. The . . . School District, on the other hand, kept their school closed until October 17. The action certainly aided the harvest in that area."
>
> In 1956, an Oregon newspaper reported, ". . . Public Schools, both elementary and senior high, will open for classes September 17, according to . . . Superintendent of Schools there. The change from September 10 was made at the request of the Fruit Growers Association to allow the children to work during the harvest."

THE PICTURE IS NOT ALL BLACK

Here and there, citizen concern about visiting migrant children has produced some solutions. Paper plans have become working plans, and temporary measures have grown into permanent educational projects.

Even short-term or emergency efforts to educate migrant children have contributed to the understanding of their special needs. Pilot summer schools and projects have shown that, when communities provide for the schooling of agricultural workers' children, everybody profits: the child, the family, the farmer, the community, and the nation. Such projects have proved that migrant parents and children appreciate the value of education and that, given a chance, migrant children can and do learn.

> For example, a report from Minnesota states, "Most of the children seem to have a great liking for school — attendance of the migrant children has been good . . . once we manage to get them into school. They are eager to learn and seem to want to take advantage of the opportunity given them."
>
> A Pennsylvania school writes of one of its students, "Elijah B., age ten, below average in school . . . had a desire to improve himself. He enjoyed the summer school and wanted to attend regularly. Mr. G. (his uncle) thought differently and assigned him to the bean picking crew each day." Elijah would pick for others, hoping "his empty basket would earn him the reputation of a poor picker, and the oportunity to return to school. His uncle . . . would often beat him for doing these tricks."

A migrant father in Idaho was so enthusiastic about education for his children that he went to the fields at 3:00 a.m. so that he could be home in time to baby-sit and permit older children to go to school. Another enthusiastic parent was a mother in California who wrote the

following letter:

> "Dear Teacher:
>
> Will you give the transfer to James because we are going to move. He does not want to go but there is no work here. We will come back to this school again because all of the children like the nice school and the teacher. They say everybody is so kind to them and the rooms are so pretty. They all learned so much here for all the good teachers. I wish I had gone to a school like that."

THEY MADE A SCHOOL

In many parts of the country, young José's eager "Will you make a school?" is being heard. Individuals and groups, aware of his problems, are trying to do something to combat educational inadequacies.

These pioneers have learned by trial and error. Their experience can be of considerable value to others interested in tailoring educational programs to migrant needs. Therefore, the following pages are devoted to descriptions of some of these experimental projects, which are representative of the types of programs being attempted.

EXPERIMENT IN CALIFORNIA

In Fresno, California, there is a two-year project concentrating on programs of school studies for migrant children.

How It Began

The state of California had migratory families even before the turn of the century. To meet the educational needs of their children, educators tried mobile classrooms that followed the migrant routes. But experience soon showed that children learn best when they belong, when they are part of a community school. Also, additional teachers were brought into the regular schools at peak seasons to handle the influx. In 1927, the legislature appropriated $10,000 for special migrant classes to be conducted in rural districts.

With this background, at least one California city — Fresno, in the heart of the San Joaquin cotton area — learned that migrant children pose special educational problems for all schools. Its school leaders saw the need for intensive experimentation and, in 1953, were able to secure funds for this purpose from the Rosenberg Foundation.

School administrators, county consultants, and representative trustees from school districts involved participated in this project, sponsored by county school superintendents and directed by a project council.

How It Worked

The whole point was to learn how teachers could improve the quality of school experience for migrant children. The following are some ways they found useful:

- Help the children feel they belong.

- Offer ways for them to practice healthful living, nutrition, homemaking, and money management.
- Use familiar materials and activities.
- Give each child's educational problems individual attention.
- Exchange information with other schools.
- Adapt courses to language difficulties.

What It Achieved

The whole community got involved. Many civic, church, welfare, business, farm, and education groups that had never worked together learned to do so profitably. One result of their cooperation was the finding and setting down of tested methods of teaching "in three-room or forty-room schools, in classrooms where most of the children live in cotton camps or where only three or four newcomers come to ruffle the routine."

Children Who Move with the Crops, a beautifully written and illustrated report of the project, has been made available to thousands of interested people throughout the country.

AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In Waupun, Wisconsin, the aim was to discover how a traditional elementary school program planned for middle-class, English-speaking pupils could be adjusted to the needs of children from low-income, Spanish-speaking, itinerant families.

How It Began

In the summer of 1949 the Waupun Provisional League of Women Voters made a study that uncovered a serious lack of educational and recreational opportunities for migrant workers and their children. A Waupun Council on Human Relations was immediately organized to work out a solution. The council started a summer school for children and a family recreation program in cooperation with the Governor's Commission on Human Rights and the University of Wisconsin.

After the summer school had been held for three years, its leaders grew convinced of the need for a teaching unit expressly designed for migrant children. In 1953, therefore, the council established a laboratory school, the Waupun Curriculum-Development Project, which was sponsored by the state Migrant Committee (which raised the necessary funds) and supervised by the state department of public instruction.

How It Worked

"Two of the best teachers" of the Oak Center School District (chosen for the readiness of its community and the demonstrated interest and ability of its school system) worked with the children, under the supervision of the project coordinator — the state supervisor of elementary education — with the cooperation of the county superintendent of schools and state department of public instruction.

Their goals were to . . .

- define the teaching skills and tools needed.

- learn how to make the most of the strengths of migrant children and overcome their weaknesses.
- develop teaching materials expressly designed for the use of these children.

What It Achieved

Approximately one hundred and seventy-five migrant children profited.

A TWO-STATE, TWO-COUNTY COOPERATIVE VENTURE

Palm Beach, Florida, and Northampton, Virginia, cooperated in this program to increase school attendance among migrant children.

How They Began

The state and county school systems of these two cities made a study of educational needs of migrant children in the area that disclosed the fact that a significant number of the same children enrolled in these two county school systems year after year. The cooperating groups decided to embark on a project to improve teaching techniques and adaptation of programs of school studies, to institute better referral and transfer records, and to find better ways to recognize the childrens' possibilities and problems.

How They Worked

The two school systems — financed by a special research fund of the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor — jointly employed a supervisory specialist. She worked as a member of the regular supervisory staffs of both school systems, met with individual school faculties, visited homes, and served on community committees — arranging her time to correspond with the movements of migrant families.

What They Achieved

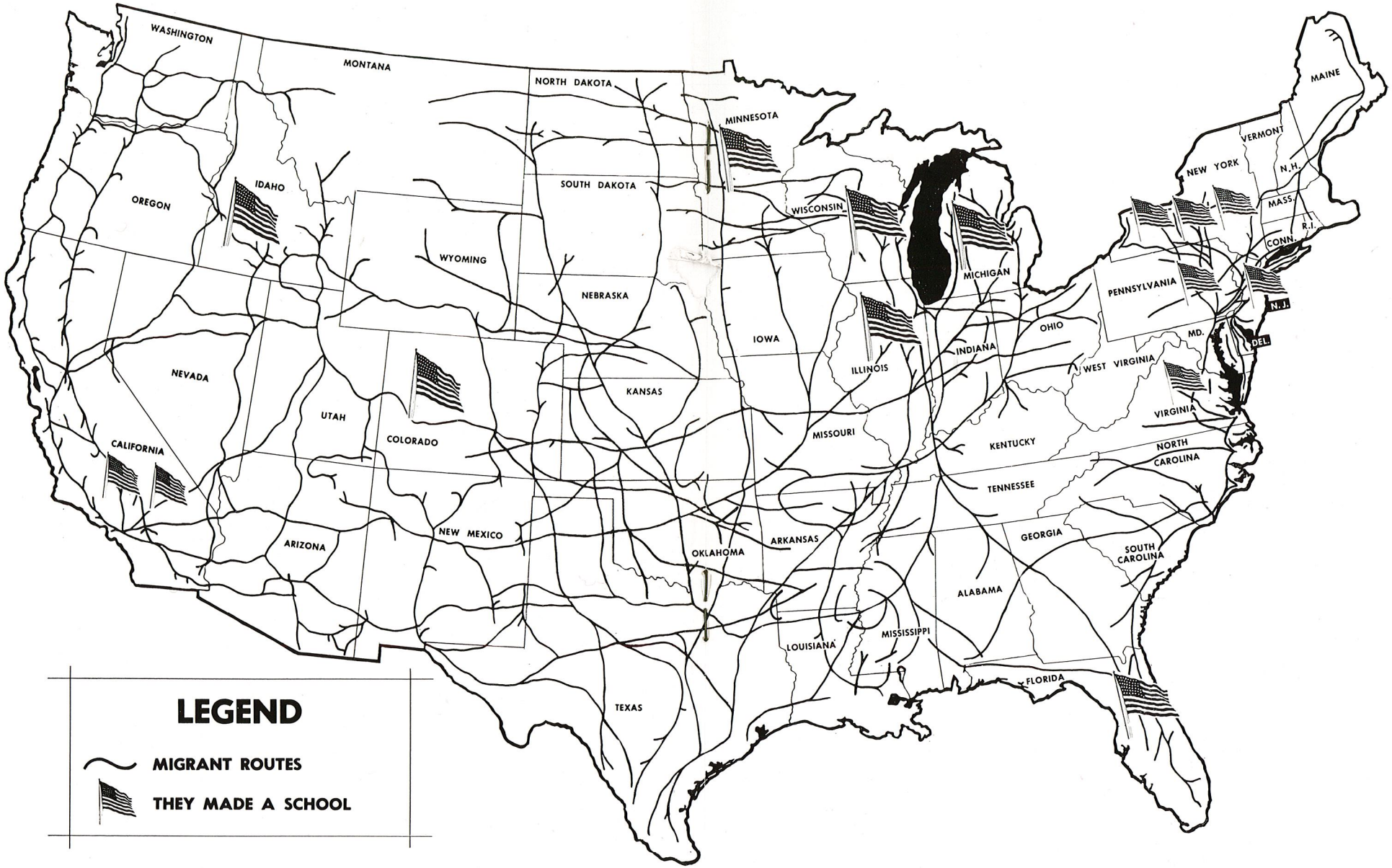
Some of the results included:

- Two extension classes for teachers, conducted by the two Florida state universities and aimed at providing "in-service" training for all teachers, developing an outline of school subjects for use in college programs for teachers going into schools serving migrant children.
- Employment of four of the best teachers as "helping teachers" in overcrowded classrooms in Northampton to give greatest attention to teaching languages.
- Introduction of transfer cards system (developed by the U.S. Office of Education) for charting a student's progress.
- Development of "demonstration center of improved home living," where boys learn such things as installing ceilings and refrigerators, making tables, while girls practice cooking and study buying of good foods.

Working with Migrant Children in Our Schools, a Guide to the Education of Migrant Children, was prepared and published.

TEACHERS' WORKSHOP

In the summer of 1956, thirty teachers from all over California attended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TEXAS
LEGEND
MIGRANT ROUTES
THEY MADE A SCHOOL

a six-week workshop at Fresno State Teachers College.

How It Began

The workshop was initiated and sponsored by the California Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the PTA provided twelve scholarships. The faculty of specialists and experienced teachers that works under the leadership of the Fresno County project director was financed by a grant from the Rosenberg Foundation. Teachers lived in the county school administration building and had access to all resources of the regular project.

How It Worked

The workshop included laboratory activities for teachers of primary, intermediate, and upper grades. Some of the areas of special concentration include:

- music
- corrective reading
- language problems
- arithmetic
- human relations

What It Achieved

In addition to the concrete value of the learning experience for the teachers, the project has encouraged other communities to follow its lead. With special grants from the National Child Labor Committee, the following workshops are planned for 1957:

- A two-week workshop in Colorado, sponsored by the state department of public instruction and Adams State Teachers College.
- A six-week workshop in Arizona, sponsored by Arizona State Teachers College.
- A one-week workshop in Idaho, sponsored by the College of Idaho and the state department of public instruction.

DEMONSTRATION SUMMER SCHOOL

Every year, about a hundred migratory children attend summer school in Freehold, New Jersey. It is held under the auspices of the Migrant Labor Board and Bureau with the cooperation of the state department of education and local school boards.

How It Began

In 1943, the legislature appropriated funds for migratory childrens' education. Attempts to teach the children through the established school program or to keep them in school made it obvious that a special program of studies was needed.

The demonstration school in Freehold was established to meet their requirements. But, after three successful summers, it was closed because of a cut in the state appropriation.

However, the program was resumed the following summer at the insistence of citizens, led by the Consumer's League, the Home Missions Council, and other organizations. The school is now located in larger quarters.

What It Achieved

A migrant family center, run by a community committee, and a migrant health program, made possible by the state department of health, add greatly to the strength of the school program.

SUMMER SCHOOLS IN NEW YORK

In 1956, the state board of education operated two experimental schools at East Cutchogue, Long Island, and at Albion.

How They Began

The state department of education became interested in an experimental school conducted in 1952 by the National Council of Churches as supplementary education for migrant children living in the area during the harvesting season.

In the spring of 1956, after intensive efforts by several private and public agencies, including the National Child Labor Committee, the legislature appropriated funds for two schools.

How They Worked

Both schools, which ran for six weeks, were directed by local school boards and supervised by the principals. Two certified teachers were employed, and about forty children — from six to thirteen — were enrolled in both schools.

Special features included:

- Training in work with their hands.
- Free bus transportation.
- Hot lunches.
- Physical examinations by county health agents.
- Supervised play periods.

What They Achieved

Accomplishments are still being evaluated. There is a possibility that out of these two schools will grow an extensive summer school program for migratory children as part of the total state public school system.

A STATE-FINANCED PROGRAM

In Wiggins, Colorado, a "pilot" school was held in 1955; two, in 1956, and three, in 1957, plus a teacher-training workshop.

How It Began

The board of education — prodded by a local school superintendent, his county superintendent, and its own chairman — looked into the state school emergency fund statute (long on the books) and was forced to recognize the education of migrant children as "an integral part of the total school effort" for which funds were authorized. In 1951, the Governor's Committee on Migrant Labor recommended that state funds be secured for migrant schools and that staff help be supplied by the state board of education.

In 1955, Wiggins, a town of three hundred and thirty citizens, was chosen

as the site for the first summer school. The local board of education provided building, books, supplies, a lunchroom manager, janitor, and bus driver. The superintendent — assisted by beet growers and processers and a ten-year-old boy serving as interpreter — recruited thirty-seven students in home visits with the Spanish-speaking migrant workers. Letters in colloquial Spanish — edited by the janitor — did much to win their confidence.

How It Worked

Two accredited teachers, employed for six weeks, taught youngsters from six to thirteen in small groups — arranged according to learning ability. Attendance was good, although some pupils walked and others were brought by the bus, which had to travel one hundred miles a day to pick them up.

The emphasis was placed on helping each child to find out about himself and to feel at home in the group, although basic school work was given. Children also learned while taking daily showers and in toothbrushing periods, lunchroom hours, and playground times.

What It Achieved

In 1956, thirty-one children — one-third of whom had attended the year before — were enrolled for the school's second year.

Its success led to development of a second school at Palisades, a fruit area, where children from Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma outnumbered Texas-Mexican children. The Peach Growers' Association, the Mesa County Migrant Council, and local groups played an important part in its beginnings.

A UNIVERSITY-OPERATED SUMMER SCHOOL

A grant from the National Child Labor Committee enabled Pennsylvania State University to operate a seven-week summer school at Ulysses, Pennsylvania.

How It Began

Facts about educational retardation of migrant children in the state were brought to the attention of university officials by the National Child Labor Committee, which drew up a general plan for supplementary school programs to be held during summer months. The university set up an advisory committee of officials from public, private, and religious agencies to assist in developing and operating a summer school.

How It Worked

The school was supervised by the department of education of Pennsylvania State University, sponsored by the University Christian Association, and assisted by the Potter County superintendent of schools. It was staffed by eight students from the university's education department and enrolled forty-four students from five to eleven. The courses were tailored to fit the needs of the pupils enrolled.

Its purposes were . . .

- to provide extra schooling for migrant children.
- to study the effects of migrant life on the school progress of the children and to measure the possible effectiveness of extra education.
- to study the effects of the school upon the migrant workers and the local residents.

What It Achieved

In 1957, the summer school will be held again, financed by the National Child Labor Committee with the aid of grants obtained from The Jacob R. Schiff Fund and The Lucius and Eva Eastman Fund.

ANOTHER PILOT SUMMER SCHOOL

The cooperative efforts of state, local, and national agencies made possible a school in Bay County, Michigan, supervised by the state department of public instruction.

How It Began

In 1954, studies were made in Bay and Van Buren counties that showed most migrant children were retarded in school. State education officials and leaders of the Michigan youth and employment commissions recognized the need for extra schooling for these children.

In late 1955, through the interest and encouragement of the National Child Labor Committee, a committee was set up to plan a school.

How It Worked

A seven-week summer school was operated by two experienced teachers during July and August at the Town Line School. It was attended by thirty-five Texas-Mexican children, whose parents participated in four "parents' nights."

The county superintendent of schools was chairman of a steering committee that included representatives from several state bodies — employment, public instruction, youth commission, and Central Michigan College. A grant from the National Child Labor Committee financed the first year. Major operating costs were: teachers' salaries, cafeteria staff, food expenses, bus transportation, and classroom supplies.

What It Achieved

Enthusiastic interest on the part of local citizens and the Inter-Agency (Governor's) Committee on Migratory Labor points to the possibility of an expanded summer school in Bay County in 1957 and the development of a second school in another part of the state.

A NINE-'TIL-NOON SCHOOL

Each summer, a growing number of migrant children enroll for from five to six weeks in a school in Des Plaines, Illinois.

How It Began

In 1948, a pediatrician whose calls had taken her into sordid, one-room, migrant homes suggested to the American Association of University Women, of which she was a member, that they sponsor a school, which has since grown into a community enterprise enlisting the service of well over a hundred volunteers.

How It Worked

The school now has a professional teacher in each classroom, although

originally classes were taught by members of the AAUW. Increased enrollment has called for financial aid beyond that supplied by the Illinois Council of Churches and the Des Plaines Community Chest. Classes have moved from limited space in a church to the local school.

The general program emphasizes the "three R's" plus music, handcraft, dancing, and visual aids geared to the abilities of three age groups: preschool (three to six), intermediates (seven to ten), and an advanced group (eleven to sixteen).

What It Achieved

A number of new and practical techniques emerged from the experience, including:

- Spanish-speaking social workers (recruited by the Division of Home Missions) spend evenings visiting parents to explain the school program.
- Volunteer teachers and helpers bring their own children to the school as an example to migrant mothers.
- A health clinic examines all children.
- Daily cookies and milk or fruit juice are supplied by special groups.
- Former Spanish-speaking pupils act as interpreters.
- Family nights were attended by as many as four hundred migrant families and townspeople.

A HARVEST SCHOOL

During the summer of 1956, a hundred children from six to thirteen years of age from the Caldwell, Idaho, labor camp attended six-week sessions at a school they called *estudios agradables* (agreeable studies).

How It Began

The Migrant Ministry of the Idaho Council of Churches presented the idea of a summer school to the College of Idaho, a private, denominational college.

The school might have been called "Operation Shoestring," for dollars were scarce. The cost would have to be measured in terms of hours of volunteer service, unstinted energies, donations of goods, used books, equipment. and pocket money given to meet daily emergencies. The college provided blackboards, books, and general equipment, and the local school system donated used work books (erased for reuse by volunteers).

The management of the labor camp provided a large recreation hall with four classrooms. To make opening on schedule possible, a girls' state church conference adjourned to act as emergency clean-up crew. A local dairy donated milk, and various church groups provided cookies.

How It Worked

A morning school was supervised by the college, and an afternoon recreation program by the Migrant Ministry, because of convictions about the importance of keeping religion and education separate. The Migrant Ministry ran a separate nursery school during the hours school was in session to free teachers and baby-sitters from responsibility for younger

brothers and sisters.

Four teachers under direct supervision of the college's division of education earned credits for supervised teaching. There were four classes, grouped according to individual needs, which met daily from 8:30 to 11:30. Average daily attendance was fifty-five.

Teachers gave special attention to the development of basic skills. When school ended, each child was given a report to take to his next teacher, telling the number of days attended, his progress, and the things in which he needed most help.

What It Achieved

Pleas from parents for more weeks of school, the sacrifice of a father who (although unable to find work in the area) stayed to let his boy finish school, and the youngsters' pride of accomplishment seem to testify to the success of the venture.

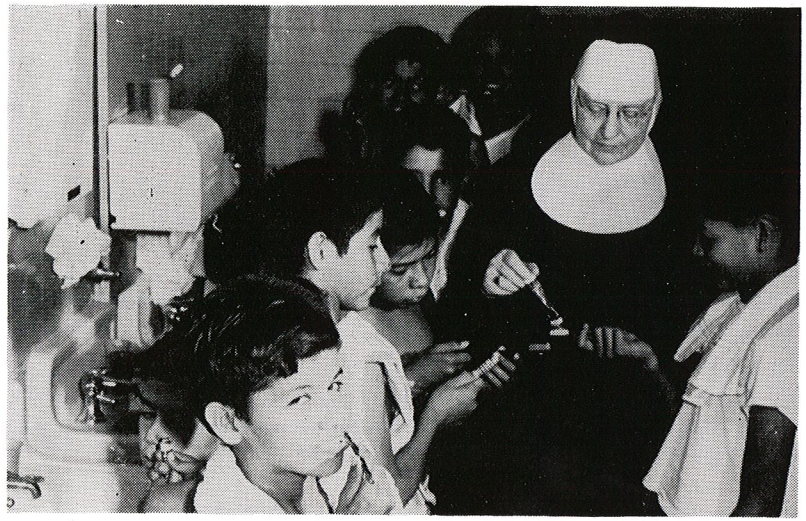
A WEEKDAY BOARDING SCHOOL

The Benedictine Sisters of Crookston, Minnesota, sponsored a school that has been held every summer since 1941. Enrollment reached one hundred and ninety in 1956 — about a third of whom had attended the previous summer.

How It Began

The Cathedral School at Crookston had enrolled migratory children in its regular classes for years. But their attendance was uncertain, and their achievements, slow.

In 1941, extra summer sessions for the migrant children were begun. Then, in 1943, the six-week program was turned into a boarding school because the children had to be brought from such great distances each day.



How It Worked

Women of the church mended quilts and discarded sheets donated by local hospitals. After they cut them to size, they were ready for cots donated by the American Legion. School children and community citizens gave gifts and money to help turn classrooms into dormitories. Boys slept in the high school gymnasium, while girls were bedded down in the classroom.

What It Achieved

The school is conducted each summer. The Benedictine Sisters and some of the seminarians from nearby St. Joseph's are in charge of school classes — from kindergarten through sixth grade. Children arrive on Sunday afternoon in time for dinner and live at school until Friday afternoon, when they are returned to their homes. Tuition is charged for those who are able to pay.

A VOCATIONAL-TRAINING SCHOOL

In 1956, the New York State and National Council of Churches, in cooperation with the state department of education, conducted this school for migrant teenagers in a New York labor camp.

How It Began

Financed largely by a grant from the Turrell Fund, the program was set up with the support of the camp's owner, manager, and crew leaders. A cabin was made available, and all equipment — except for an electric range — was improvised from fruit crates and scrap lumber. Fifty dollars was invested for an old car on which the boys could learn practical mechanics. The accent was always on using only materials available to typical migrant workers at a minimum cost.

How It Worked

Two instructors worked with about six boys and six girls. They taught the girls how to plan nutritious meals at very low cost, to prepare several new dishes, to make curtains out of flour sacks, and numerous other domestic crafts. They taught the boys how to build a cabin out of scrap lumber, make table and benches for use at mealtime, to make simple automobile repairs, and to lay linoleum.

The main objectives of the school were to . . .

- experiment in the development of a program of school courses for vocational education, using only the limited materials available to migratory families.
- impart to the children basic homemaking and trade skills that would be of practical value in helping them improve their position in society.
- serve as a demonstration project.

What It Achieved

During the six weeks, the teenagers learned many practical skills. Experimental as the project was, its sponsors felt it had been worthwhile. One of the parents summed up her appreciation this way:

> "If I had had this when I was a child, I wouldn't be following the crops today. I will pay anything if you will just learn my little girl."

These, then, are a few of the people who have made a school. By and large, they have been people fired with purpose and enthusiasm, who have used any and every community resource to achieve their goal. They needed them to help combat the obstacles and apathy surrounding this problem.

WHEN THE CHILDREN LEARN, EVERYBODY PROFITS

The results of this pioneer work have been rewarding, especially the gains made by the children themselves.

> For example, a Colorado report states, "Achievement tests show that children made educational gains of from six months to a year and seven months during the six-week school."
>
> A Florida report states, "Excluding the children enrolled in the first grade, almost twenty-four percent of the children were not able to do any initial book reading as of September ('55). In June ('56) less than three percent had not begun initial book reading. Of the four hundred and twenty-two children enrolled in June, forty-eight percent had made one full year of progress in reading; forty-three percent had made two years; three percent had made three years. In other words, ninety-four percent of the children had made one or more years of progress in reading."

Even the growers who know about these projects are enthusiastic.

> For example, a Colorado grower said, "The main object of the summer school was to make better citizens . . . yet the school helped the economy of the state as workers were more willing to stay and help with the harvest because of the community interest in their children."

What the education of these children can mean to society as a whole is immeasurable.

> A Connecticut commissioner of education said, "A constitutional government based on democratic ideals is not safe until the people have been prepared to participate intelligently and rationally in the conduct of their own affairs. The production of a constructive attitude towards government is not possible merely by waiting for it to develop.
>
> "Each one of us is a citizen, whether he be a college graduate or possess only a sixth grade education. No one asks how much education one has or what his I.Q. is when he casts his vote, or runs for office, or serves on a jury, or buys goods. Yet the security of this country is vested in an educated citizenship. Our first line of defense is a citizenship prepared to protect and improve our way of life and to defend the principles for which this country stands . . ."
>
> — Alonzo G. Grace, "The Trends Affecting Education"

WILL YOU MAKE A SCHOOL?

Any citizen who lives in a community where migrants work can be the prompter of a cooperative movement to create a school for their chil-

dren. If you want to help make a school, you can profit from the experiences described. The tools and techniques are here. The know-how is yours for the asking. The incentive, the courage, the belief must come from you.

HOW TO MAKE A SCHOOL

The first thing to consider is the specific need of your community. Without current local information, even the best intentioned efforts can lead up a blind alley. For example, a shift to foreign, imported labor and single men, or a change in harvesting methods, might leave you with a school and no pupils.

Start with a roundup of the facts. Hold a meeting of interested agencies and individuals who will appoint a follow-up committee to check on the information.

You'll want to find out:

- How many migrants are in the community?
- How many are expected and when they will arrive?
- How long they will stay?
- Who they are — Spanish-Americans, Negroes, Indians, or White Americans?
- What services are provided by agencies already working with them?
- What community and state resources are available for financial assistance or special facilities?

Some agencies that may be helpful include:

. . . Farm Placement Office of Employment Service . . . Growers' Association . . . Council of Churches . . . Catholic Diocesan office . . . Parent-Teachers Association . . . American Association of University Women . . . Extension Service . . . Chamber of Commerce . . . men's, women's, and youth service groups and the schools . . .

Guided by the facts, you'll be ready to determine your school's sponsorship, time and place, and responsibilities of participating agencies.

Be sure to make specific arrangements and delegate responsibility for:

- transportation of pupils
- free or low-cost lunches
- books, teaching materials, and special equipment

The growth of the project should be recorded and the day-to-day progress of the school in session.

For further assistance, write for our Migrant School Kit, 25¢.

GOOD LUCK!