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Many Pupils Preparing at C'ville In On-the-Job Training Program

BY SUPT. LOUIS SCHMIDT

If a visitor finds the special education classroom at the Clarenceville Senior High School empty, it is only because the students are out learning to prepare for their future.

Job training and placement is part of each student's daily program, and from the reports that have been coming into the school, it is only one year since the first students were placed.

The School Board approved

special education, senior high

program that was aimed at helping the mentally handicapped students of the area to achieve a future that would not be hopeless.

With this in mind the special education teacher set up the senior high job training and placement program.

Cooperative training has set its primary purpose the training of in-school youth for basic competency in specific occupations which fit their abilities, aptitudes, and interests. Cooperative training enables secondary schools to offer vocational training in many occupations of which the training cannot be provided for in the classroom. So too, the programs at the high school level for the mentally handicapped happen for its goal.

The "mentally handicapped" students at Clarenceville are those with the capacity to be trained for work and the capacity to hold positions of responsibility. "Mental retardation" does not mean that the person's total being is retarded. Only his intellectual capacities happen to be retarded. He may have other skills and aptitudes in which he conceivably could excel other students.

These skills and aptitudes can make him a valued employee. This is the Clarenceville story.

A VISIT TO THE Redford General Hospital might find a Clarenceville student in a bright and cheerful yellow and white uniform which she made herself, making beds, carrying water to patients, straightening hospital rooms, and assisting the nurse in charge with "patients" care.

Reports from this and previous job-training placements commend the quality and quantity of her work and mention that she is courteous, agreeable, cheerful, tidy, and dependable. This student has been on the job-training program for the past three years. Next year

she will be placed on a full time nursing assignment and on completion in June of 1965 will sit for the state board examination in the classroom," said Mrs. Bene.

This month Mrs. Benedict has two students working as "nurses' aides" one in a school and the other at the Redford Community Hospital.

Another student is a custodian's assistant at an elementary school, another has been assigned to a printing company learning various jobs of the printing field.

They have what amounts to job training during the weekly school session in the classroom," said Mrs. Bene.

Each student brings to the program his own levels of abilities and potential. There the special education teacher begins the determining of a plan of study that will be best suited to achieve his goals for the future.

Reading, spelling, writing are given special emphasis, with arithmetic following close behind. These tools are needed if they are to succeed.

With special education students, the teacher must stick closely to the specifically designed content. All materials used in special education are geared to each individual student's needs and understanding.

The first six weeks in the senior high special education program are spent primarily with vocational training. It is during this time the teacher finds out where his interests lie and what kind of job placements might be successful.

There is LITTLE segregation of special education at Clarenceville High School. All education students are also assigned to any academic class for which they can qualify.

Throughout the school, you will find these students enrolled in a general science class, a mathematics class, gym, art, music, home economics, home room, and other subjects.

These students are also in shop. The very fact that these students can hold their own when in a regular class helps to promote good relationships with their peer groups.

The regular students have shown an increasing awareness of concern for the special education students. Both special education students are encouraged to both the general teaching staff and all students to take part in club activities and school affairs. They have become a real part of the total school population.

The basic requirements for the job-training students are that they must have been on the program, not less than four years, have a steady job, and have completed the required courses in the educational curriculum: English (Language arts), mathematics, science, history, and government. Most of these subjects are geared by the special education teacher to the student's capacity.

Classroom equipment indicates the emphasis placed on job training. In one section are the furnishings of a standard hospital room, bed, telephone, telephone, a refrigerator, sink and kitchen range adjoins the hospital room. Tall, narrow storage units partition the small "teacher's office."

All the special education students take typing and have the use of a typewriter in the special education room, which is a parlor. There is also a spirit duplicator with which the students are taught to use, in return they are now doing most of the "duty" work for the teachers in their building.

A MANUAL ADDING machine is replaced by an electric adding machine as each student's proficiency increases. Two large tables in another section of the room make work centers for arts and crafts where the students make many items. There are many teaching aids throughout the room. Books and other materials are used freely by the students. Everything in the room is for their stimulation and pleasure. It is truly a room for learning.

Mrs. Lois Benedict has a variety of baskets on display. Mrs. Benedict said, "This is not the basket weaving class, but students can copy them with style. The use of arts and crafts has a purpose. Working with a new student on some project gives me a chance to observe and know this child, to learn how well he can follow directions, and how well he can work with tools. When a project is finished I usually have some very good ideas in which way to go in planning the student's program."

Finding jobs for her charges is the most time consuming part of the special education teacher's job. She must interview many calls on employers before she finds an assignment for the handicapped youth. However, after an employer has had a student working for him, it is easy to place another.

"The employer must be understanding of what we are attempting to accomplish with these students. He has to understand that the special education teacher must have more instruction time and guidance.

"We do not try to place students unless we think they can handle the job assigned, and

they have what amounts to job training during the weekly school session in the classroom," said Mrs. Bene.

The women will gather at noon for luncheon, after which the Alice, Rebecca, Salom Farmington Center will present

festivals for all occasions with

the Alice, Rebecca, Salom

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