

# Metric System Woven Into Curriculum

By W.W. EDGAR

Slowly but surely, the metric system of measurement is being integrated in the public schools of the land.

This is the system in which the basic unit is a meter instead of a yard, and instead of the drive for the transition is expected to come from the Olympic Games which open in a few weeks in Munich, Germany.

When the performances of the athletes are extolled in the public prints and over the air waves in meters instead of yards, feet and inches, which is the American custom, there

is apt to be considerable confusion.

**UNDER THE METRIC** system the base unit is a meter which is equivalent to 39.37 inches under the American system and had its inception years ago when measuring the distance from the equator to the poles—north and south.

The meter was designated as one ten millionth part of the distance and has been accepted in most countries, but not the United States.

The beauty of the metric system is that everything is measured in its—whereas our duodecimal system has 12

inches to a foot, three feet to a yard and 1,760 yards to a mile. Moreover, in the metric system, there is a relationship between linear and weight measurements. For example, one cubic centimeter of water weighs a gram. In our present system, a pint is 28.875 cubic inches.

"THERE IS A move on," David McDowell, superintendent of schools in Clarenceville, pointed out, "to adopt the metric system in its entirety. But we are just waiting to see what the State Board of Education recommends."

"We've always had it as part of our curriculum in some phase," he continued. "But it never has been emphasized or thought to be too significant."

Now, however, the students are exposed to the metric system of measurement as early as the fourth grade.

*The beauty of the metric system is that everything is measured in 10s -- whereas our duodecimal system has 12 inches to a foot, three feet to a yard and 1,760 yards to a mile.*

They are given another phase of the metric system included in their curriculums now.

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metric system instead of the English system."

In the Plymouth School district, according to Earl Gibson, assistant superintendent, metric system is introduced to students in the fifth grade in the form of measurements.

"This is expanded to include decimals in the sixth and seventh grades, and it goes almost full scale in the middle schools. Then, in high school, it is emphasized in both science and mathematics."

INTRODUCTION to the metric system doesn't begin until the sixth grade level in the Garden City schools.

The introduction is contained in an 11-page textbook which deals, first with units of measurement and then with units of weight known as the gram.

Donald Beatty, assistant superintendent in charge of

the curriculum, has worked out a series of exercises to acquaint students with the system that is official in all countries outside of the North American continent.

The exercises, are emphasized in the seventh and eighth grades, and conversions of the two systems are involved in industrial math.

THE SERIES of exercises is simple. First the student is asked to make a strip of paper one meter long, using a diagram of a one tenth of a meter, as a starting point.

Once the strip is prepared the student is asked to divide the strip into 10 equal segments with perpendicular lines.

Once this is done, the student is then asked to measure the length and width of the room, the height and width of the door, the height of the bulletin board, the width of

the window and the length of a pencil.

Each of these 10 segments of the tape is called a centimeter, and students then are asked to report their findings in meters and decimeters.

With each report, a comparison is made with the English system to portray the difference and, according to Beatty, the students oftentimes are surprised by the results.

FOR A LONG time, the metric system of weights has been used in science and medicine. This will be upgraded now, and the transition from inches, feet and yards to meters and centimeters will be in full swing to keep America in harmony with the rest of the world.

And the reports from the Olympic Games later this month will help to speed it along.

## Republicans Set Local Conventions

Local Republicans will hold their district conventions tonight to elect delegates and alternates to the GOP State Convention on Sept. 2 at Cobo Hall in Detroit.

The 2nd District Wayne convention, which includes Plymouth City and Township, will be 8 p.m. at the Republican headquarters, 292 S. Main St., Plymouth.

The 19th-Wayne will be at 8 p.m. in Bentley High School, 15100 Hubbard, Livonia. This

covers Livonia and Redford Township.

The 19th-Oakland will be at 8 p.m. in the Commissioners Auditorium at 1209 N. Telegraph, Pontiac. The district includes Farmington.

The 15th District, including Garden City and Westland, meets at 8 p.m. in the Colonial House, 10760 S. Telegraph.

The 18th District, including Southfield, will meet 8 p.m. in Clawson High School, 101 John

M.

## Omni Spectra Announces 3 Promotions

Omni Spectra, Inc. has named James F. Keast as corporate secretary, Gary G. Petersen as vice president-industrial relations, and Roger B. Smith as treasurer and corporate controller.

Omni Spectra, headquartered in Farmington, is a manufacturer of microwave components, RF coaxial connectors, and security products.

Keast was formerly staff assistant to the corporate secretary and corporate budget director. He attended Walsh Institute of Accountancy. Prior to joining Omni Spectra, Inc. in 1966, Keast held financial management positions with Shatterproof Glass Corp., Curis-Wright Corp., and Baker Brothers, Inc.

Petersen joined Omni Spectra, Inc. in 1967 after five years with the Western Electric Corp. He holds an undergraduate degree from the University of California and a masters degree from the University of Illinois.

Smith was promoted from assistant treasurer and controller, a post he had held since 1969. He joined Omni Spectra in 1962 after four years with the public accounting firm of Touche, Ross and Co. He holds degrees from Ohio State University and Ohio University.

## 19th Wayne Dems Meet

The 19th Wayne District Democratic convention will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 18, in Pierce Junior High School, 25605 Orangeawn, Redford Township. The school is near Chicago and Beech Daly.

The district convention is to elect delegates to the state convention on Aug. 26 in Grand Rapids.

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