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Teachers' Handbook for Sharpstein Elementary School

Clarence R. Rogers
Central Washington University

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TEACHERS' HANDBOOK FOR SHARPSTEIN
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements of the Degree
Master of Education

by
Clarence R. Rogers
July 1964

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

E. E. Samuelson, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Doyle Koontz

Persis Sturges

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Conservation of time and effort by elimination of confusion is important in the smooth functioning of any enterprise. Many routine procedures minute in themselves can become colossal irritants if there isn't common understanding by all persons involved. The operation of a school in a sense is a sizeable enterprise involving primarily people, both teachers and students to such an extent that guiding policies become of much greater importance.

New teachers moving into a system will find even the most simple practice a matter on which information must be acquired. Some plan of orientation for these new teachers is essential. A "big brother" or "big sister" plan as employed by many is likewise used in Sharpstein school Walla Walla, Washington to help with this initial orientation. By incorporating all the policies in a teachers' handbook, the information will be available for immediate use at any time. Hutton (6:15-16) claims that a handbook makes both old and new teachers feel more secure. It may be concluded that anything which will increase the feeling of security will enhance the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom.

The writer as principal is interested in improving Sharpstein Elementary School Walla Walla, Washington in all

areas, and he is convinced that a teachers' handbook will become a definite step toward this goal.

I. DEFINITION

Before the preparation of a handbook takes place, it seems wise to accept a definition of terms. The statement to be made here is found in the Encyclopedia of Modern Education, which states in part:

A handbook is a compact compilation of important facts, principles, theories, and data in each of the various phases of education . . . to stimulate teachers and others interested in the profession to further study in the field of education consisting of a list of directions, suggestions, statements of policy, and rules of the school system. A guide, not a textbook (5:808).

II. LIMITATIONS

No policies will be included in this teachers' handbook if they are in contradiction with the general all-district policies booklet. Information from the general all-district policies booklet will not be repeated in the teachers' handbook. Time has not permitted developing all policies in the handbook to date. The additional topics listed in Chapter IV under XIV will be developed before the opening of school in August. Others will be added as necessity dictates.

CHAPTER II

PROFESSIONAL JUSTIFICATIONS

Numerous writings support the premise stated in Chapter I as to the importance of a teachers' handbook. Wagner (10) believes that a handbook can be graced by a hearty welcome which will help teachers feel accepted. Wagner further states in his article "Helping the New Teacher", that:

To add humor--A Milwaukee publication uses the term wampum for salary, wigwam for transfer policy, medicine man for sick-leave and chieftan for promotions (10:444-445).

Baker, in "The Formation of a Teacher's Handbook", states under purposes of a handbook:

- (1) Serve as an easy reference and time saver,
- (2) eliminate many notices and bulletins, (3) relieve teachers of the embarrassment and time used in asking questions concerning matters of varied details that arise in the smooth functioning of a school, (4) outline the school regulations, duties, and provide guidance for teachers, especially those new to a school, (5) be a uniform reference on school procedures to secure more uniform results in clerical and administrative duties, (6) give knowledge of the philosophy and policies of the school, (7) simplify and clarify aspects of the clerical duties of teachers, (8) serve as a guide for administrative faculty meetings, and (9) save much of the time which is spent in writing periodic directions, and bulletins (1:123-124).

Van Landingham writing on the topic, "Instruments of and For Efficient Administration" says:

The ability of a principal to organize the routine items of administration, delegate them to responsible

people, is a criteria of his professional maturity. Relieved of these routine matters, he can then exert more of his energies to the most important phase of his job, the improvement of curriculum and instruction (9:119).

Spears (8:208-211) cited a good example of the St. Paul school system which had much faith in parent-teacher conferences, but was deeply concerned with the time and confidence lost by teachers in poorly planned conferences. This problem was successfully met by preparation of a guide on the subject in the form of a suggestion booklet placed in the hands of each teacher.

In viewing various teachers' handbooks used in numerous systems about the state of Washington and in a free exchange of ideas with principals and teachers, a general favorable reaction helps confirm the idea of their usefulness.

Since the value of the all-district policy booklet has proved itself for several years in the Walla Walla school system, the teachers' handbook for Sharpstein school should likewise become a positive instrument.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

The desirability of the preparation of a teachers' handbook was discussed in the initial faculty meeting at the beginning of the last school year. Several teachers had intimated previously that a handbook should prove beneficial. Before the meeting the writer compiled a description of many practices as they existed at that time in Sharpstein School. The purpose of this was to assure a launching point. The teachers were encouraged to exercise freedom of thought in making desired changes. During several meetings various areas were discussed since they were to be covered in the handbook. For example, the librarian and others were extremely interested in formulating operational guide lines for the Central library. During the initial meeting it was decided which topics were strictly administrative and the principal agreed to state them in acceptable terms to be presented later to the faculty for acceptance or rejection. The ultimate goal was a workable teachers' handbook prepared democratically with every teacher having a part in its preparation.

Recommendations of changes or acceptance of the present procedures were presented to the entire faculty. As agreement was reached, the principal wrote the statements of policy in final form for the handbook.

The teachers' handbook constructed by utilizing a loose-leaf design so changes can be made by removal of a single sheet as alterations occur, assures each teacher an up-to-date handbook at all times.

Under subhead II in Chapter I "Limitations" it was stated that additional topics will be given. These supplementary topics are listed in Chapter IV under XIV and are to be developed by the principal prior to the opening of school. In the first faculty meeting August 28 any topics not previously discussed by the faculty will be presented for consideration and acceptance. During this meeting the staff also can decide the approximate number of additional meetings to devote to the handbook problem.

An initial handbook will be furnished each teacher within two weeks after the opening of school. This handbook will include all policies agreed on to date plus those accepted in the August 28 session. To accomplish this it will be necessary to make several additions to the handbook within a short time after its inception.

CHAPTER IV

TEACHERS' HANDBOOK FOR SHARPSTEIN SCHOOL

I. Time Schedule.

A. The Daily Schedule For Various Grade Levels:

- 8:25 A.M. First bell - Children may take necessary things to the classroom. Cafeteria tickets go on sale. Patrol persons go to their posts of duty. Teachers of grades 3 through 6 agreed that only children who plan to study should be permitted in classrooms before the 8:45 A.M. bell. An atmosphere of study should prevail during this period.
- 8:45 A.M. Last bell - Assembling time for all grades.
- 8:50 A.M. Tardy bell.
- 10:20 to 10:30 A.M. General recess time for all grades except kindergarten.
- 11:05 to 11:45 A.M. Band and Orchestra for grades 5 and 6. Advanced and beginners alternating.
- 11:25 A.M. Cafeteria for first grades.
- 11:30 A.M. Cafeteria for second grades also kindergarten dismissal time.
- 11:35 A.M. Cafeteria for third grades.
- 11:40 A.M. Cafeteria for fourth grades and Miss Biersner's sixth grade for cafeteria supervision.
- 11:45 A.M. Cafeteria for fifth grades also all children who are not remaining for cafeteria are sent home for lunch.
- 11:50 A.M. Cafeteria for balance of sixth grades.

The above schedule is somewhat flexible depending on time needed for serving varying menus.

- 12:30 P.M. Afternoon session convenes for kindergarten, first, and second grades.
- 12:45 P.M. Afternoon session convenes for grades 3 to 6.

Afternoon recess schedule controlled by teachers of grades 1 and 2.

- 2:20 to 2:30 P.M. General recess time grades 3 to 6.
- 2:45 P.M. Dismissal time for grades 1 and 2.
- 3:30 P.M. Dismissal time for grades 3 to 6.

Kindergarten

A.M. session 8:45 to 11:30 A.M.

P.M. session 12:30 to 3:00 P.M.

Kindergarten children do not use playground during A.M. recess period 10:20 to 10:30 or P.M. recess period 2:20 to 2:30 P.M.

B. Entering Building Before First Bell

In general pupils are not permitted to enter the building in the morning before the first bell, 8:25 A.M. Young people can think of numerous reasons for preceding this bell time such as taking sundry items to classrooms. Children may place a few extra special items occasionally in the lobby until bell time by checking at the office counter.

Exceptions to the above restriction:

1. Pupils who arrive early for special pre-arranged help from the teacher.

2. When weather is disagreeable, bus children are permitted to wait on the ramp in the lobby until first bell time.
3. Other pupils who are considered in the same category, are youngsters whose parents because of inclement weather bring them in cars while enroute to work.
4. Children who are walking or riding bicycles, however, should be able to arrive after 8:25 A.M. to avoid waiting outside in the cold.

C. Regular Entrances and Exits At Bell Time

1. When the bell rings to terminate playground activities, the various rooms are to assemble for entry to the building at the following locations:
 - a. Rooms A and B at the south entrance of new unit.
 - b. Rooms C and D west entrance of new unit near health center.
 - c. Rooms 1, 2, 3, 4, and Achievement south basement door near Achievement room.
 - d. Kindergarten south basement entrance nearest to kindergarten room.
 - e. All others should assemble at the west main entrance.

- f. Teachers on the supervision schedule who are in charge of halls and playground for the day will supervise the groups who are lining up for entry at bell time.
- g. All teachers then should be ready to receive the children into their respective classrooms.
- h. The same doors will be used for exits except rooms 1, 2, 3, and 4 will use the ramp and main outside door to lobby for exit at noon and at close of day.
- i. During inclement weather when the multi-purpose room is used for after-school sports, the entrance via ramp is permitted.

D. Children Staying After School

- 1. When school is dismissed, children must go directly home unless participating in supervised activities in the building or on the playgrounds.
- 2. On afternoons when there are no supervised activities on the playgrounds, pupils may return to the playfields for play after reporting home first.
- 3. State law permits teachers to retain youngsters after school for a maximum of 40 minutes. By mutual agreement with parents this can be altered.

4. Sharpstein teachers have agreed to keep no child beyond 4:20 P.M. at any time. If teachers feel that a justifiable exception has occurred, it should be cleared through the office.
5. Teachers who retain children beyond 4:00 P.M. should assume responsibility for clearing them from the building and securing the door behind them or send them out the main front door past the office.

II. Cafeteria

A. Purchasing Cafeteria Tickets

1. Tickets are required for all cafeteria meals.
Cost of tickets:
 - a. Single tickets for children 30¢.
Any quantity may be purchased.
 - b. Teachers' salad lunch (book of 10 tickets) \$3.00.
 - c. Teachers' complete lunch (book of 10 tickets) \$4.00.
 - d. Children -- extra milk 2¢.
 - e. Teachers -- extra milk 6¢.
 - f. With the initial complete lunch teachers may choose coffee or milk.
 - g. With the salad lunch, however, teachers pay 5¢ extra if milk is chosen.
2. Teachers either may buy books or share books if they desire. These books are on sale each morning as stated later.

3. Children are responsible for their own tickets.
4. Tickets are sold in the basement of the north-west corner of the old building. The outside basement entrance should be used. Children will be instructed by teachers at the beginning.
5. Tickets are sold each morning only between 8:25 to 8:45 A.M. Even though the basement door is unlocked a few minutes prior to 8:25 A.M. as a matter of convenience to the ticket seller who must set up for selling, children should not enter until the 8:25 bell rings.
6. Immediately after purchase of tickets, each child should write his name and room number on every ticket. This practice simplifies the process of returning lost tickets to rightful owners.
7. Many teachers also write their names on each ticket. This is not mandatory, however.
8. To avoid loss children should take all extra tickets home and bring each day's requirement until the supply at home is exhausted. This enables parents to control the situation better.
9. Teachers should be sure children understand the plan.

10. As each room moves through the cafeteria line at noon, a student ticket taker will receive the ticket directly from the child. Teachers' tickets are placed in a separate receptacle on the serving counter. This prevents teachers being responsible to children.
11. Teachers should refer all problems to the office such as lost tickets, forgetting to bring tickets from home, or forgetting to purchase a ticket, thereby conserving much class time.

B. Cafeteria Serving

Each teacher takes the class to the cafeteria at the proper time. Classes move single file into the cafeteria through the door close to the stage without confusion. The time schedule as given above is the approximate schedule. Cafeteria lines will not move at the same speed every day because types of food being served and number of children eating varies from day to day.

First and second grade teachers take turns by each person supervising the whole cafeteria until approximately 11:40 A.M., at which time Miss Biersner's sixth grade arrives. Miss Biersner supervises the entire cafeteria for the balance of the period until all children have finished.

C. When Children Finish Eating

After children are finished eating, they should return their trays to the tray table and move quietly back to their classrooms. First and second graders remain in the classrooms until 11:50 A.M. at which time they are permitted to go to the playgrounds. Third and fourth graders wait in classrooms until 12:00 noon when they are permitted to leave. Fifth and sixth graders usually do not finish before 12:00 noon so are not required to return to the classrooms. Two reasons for the time restrictions are: discourages children from eating too rapidly and limits time on playgrounds without supervision. Noon supervisors go to the playgrounds at 12:00 noon.

III. Telephone Use

1. All outgoing calls should be made on line 2, thus reserving line 1 for incoming calls. Only emergencies should permit outgoing calls on line 1.
2. Students are permitted to place calls only from the office, after presenting their signed permission slip from the teacher.
3. Teachers decide whether calls are justifiable or not.
4. Additional supplies of telephone slips are available from the secretary.

IV. Fire Drills

1. Fire drills are conducted on an average of twice a month. At the beginning of the year teachers are warned before drills at least once or twice to permit the giving of ample instructions.
2. When a drill is called, teachers should take their pupils the shortest route to the outside always being alert to the possibility of blocked exits. Children who have been assigned special duties should perform them quickly and rejoin their groups. Two pupils should see that all children are out of the room and if time permits close the doors before leaving. Teachers should lead the line until a point is reached where there is no doubt of reaching an exit without panic. After the teacher is confident that the leaders can draw the rest out he or she may linger to survey the situation for the rest of the children. The students should know where to assemble on the grounds well away from the building. Teachers should count noses to see that all students have vacated the building. The group should remain reasonably quiet until two short bells signal the return to classes.

V. All-district Policy Book

Teachers are urged to read Section IV and Section V in the all-district policy booklet.

VI. Secretary's Schedule

1. The school secretary's 7-hour day extends from 8:15 to 11:40 A.M. and from 12:40 to 4:15 P.M.
2. The secretary will assist whenever possible but her sundry tasks oftentimes become quite time consuming. When money is sent to the office, it should be in a container properly marked as to purpose with the teacher's name indicated. This permits preparation of receipts as time is available. Most teachers secure supplies from the stockrooms well ahead of time for classroom use. This makes better planning possible. On special occasions, however, when teachers find it necessary to send students to the secretary for supplies, the request should be written with clear instructions relative to quantity, size, etc. Since children can be very vague at times, much valuable time is lost in attempting to interpret the teacher's request if the child conveys it orally.

VII. Supplies

1. Writing and drawing supplies are stored in the supply and duplicating room in the office area. Cupboards on the main floor in the older building contain additional quantities.

2. The record sheet for materials received at each location should be completed each time with the signature of the teacher.
3. Minimum quantities are available in each classroom.
4. Reserve texts and workbooks may be obtained from the supply room on the first floor of the old building. If this stock is exhausted the secretary will order from the district central stock room.
5. Questions concerning other materials may be referred to the secretary or principal.

VIII. Assemblies

1. Several assemblies involving the whole school are held during the school year. These include three or four National Assemblies, about two talent assemblies involving Sharpstein Students, one or two exchange assemblies plus a few special assemblies.
2. When the whole school is involved, the seating at the top of the bleachers is reserved for the three sixth grades. Fifth and fourth grades sit just below the sixth in that order. Miss McIntire's third grade which does not have individual chairs in the classroom uses the lower front bleachers as does the achievement room. The balance of the classes carry chairs from the classrooms to the multi-purpose room. The lower grades arrange from lower to higher grades on the main floor beginning in front of the stage.

IX. Teachers' Rooms

1. Teachers' rooms are reserved for teachers only.

It has been agreed that these will not be used as rooms for instructing small groups of children. This statement does not apply to the conference room.

X. Teachers' Playground and Hall Supervision Schedule

1. This schedule is compiled each year in a separate listing for each individual teacher.

XI. Library

1. The school library serves the school only when it is used constantly and consistently by teachers and students.
2. Grades 3-6 classes have regularly scheduled periods for going to the Library to borrow books, read, strengthen library skills, and seek information. They are also welcome at afternoon recess and after school.
3. Teachers should feel free to go to the library at any time. They should plan their library periods, with the Librarian, as carefully as they plan other classes. They are welcome to go with their class each week, and many times need to stay with the class in the library.

4. Request slips for material to be used in the classroom should give this information:

Teacher's name - Grade	<u>Sample</u>
<u>Subject</u>	D. Jones 5th gr.
Depth or specific needs	<u>North central states</u> N. Dakota S. Dakota Nebr. Kansas Illinois Etc.
	Products, manufacturing, economy, with map making to follow

5. Teacher loans are made for an indefinite period - "as long as needed". Students borrow books during library periods for a one week period, with renewal privileges.
6. Primary teachers should feel free to use the library as much as other teachers. Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades are invited to the library for seasonal story hours--Halloween, Christmas, and Easter.
7. Book truck service is provided to primary teachers on a schedule to fit the teachers' needs.
8. Reference books are available, may be borrowed for brief classroom use, and should be more widely used. Morning use of reference books by a class may be scheduled to fit your needs.

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XII. Safety--tether ball poles

1. Improper handling of the tether ball poles could be hazardous. They are to be handled only by designated crews under direct supervision of a playground teacher.

XIII. School Patrol

1. Detailed procedures for handling the school patrol are under the supervision of the teacher in charge but a few general statements on operation will be helpful for all teachers.
2. Fifth grade boys and girls serve on the patrol for the second semester then as sixth graders, they function for only the first semester thus giving them two half-years or the equivalent of one full year.
3. At 8:25 A.M. (first bell--not before) patrol members secure their equipment and report to their assigned posts. They remain on duty until school convenes at 8:45 A.M.
4. At recess periods and dismissal times 2:45 P.M. and 3:30 P.M., patrol persons should leave the classroom two minutes before the bell to be on duty at the proper time. Patrolmen are not required to serve beyond ten minutes at these two periods. At 11:25 A.M. patrol persons who direct foot traffic at street crossings should leave classrooms at least

three minutes before the bell when the first classes begin to move into the cafeteria. The extra time allowance will help insure this schedule against delay.

5. Patrol members who attend other posts on grounds and in the building will eat at 11:25 A.M. so they may go on duty by 11:45 A.M. As soon as the street traffic crossings have cleared after 11:45 A.M., these patrol persons may eat. Street traffic patrolmen will resume duties from 12:30 to 12:45 P.M.
6. Kindergarten children dismissed at 3:00 P.M. are assisted at crossings by the teacher to reduce the loss of classroom time by patrol members.

XIV. Partial List of Additional Topics Which Will Be Used

1. Intercom--Announcements
2. Gym use
3. Parent - Teacher Conferences
4. Parent Teacher Association
5. Civil Defense
6. P.E. Schedules
7. Student Council
8. Student Secretaries
9. Playground areas assigned
10. Lost and Found Articles

11. Student Banking
12. Restrooms
13. Band and Orchestra
14. General Safety Practices

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

This teachers' handbook represents many hours of work but the writer is convinced ultimately it will prove a definite time saver. It never will be considered to exist in its final form. Revisions will take place continually. By arranging the booklets in looseleaf form, changes may be incorporated by removal of a single sheet, thus assuring each teacher an up-to-date handbook.

The usefulness of the handbook will be evaluated at the close of the ensuing school year. A brief evaluative sheet will list pertinent questions such as:

1. Approximately how often did you refer to your handbook during the year?
2. Was it more helpful at the beginning of the year?
3. Do you believe it is most useful for beginning teachers?
4. Does it eliminate the need of a "big brother" or "big sister" idea?
5. Should the handbook continue to be developed?
6. Should the handbook cover other areas such as curriculum etc.?
7. Please make additional comments.

The questionnaire results and oral discussions should provide a meaningful evaluation of the instrument.

After the handbook develops into an acceptable inclusive instrument, annual revisions may prove sufficient.

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