

New Federal Asbestos Rules

Final U.S. regulations for asbestos containment in the nation's schools will require administrators to have their schools inspected and submit a management plan to the states by October 12, 1988. The plans must outline how the schools will eliminate, contain, or monitor asbestos. Implementation must begin by July 1989.

Asbestos, which has been used for a variety of purposes, from insulation of pipes to floor tiles, causes a type of lung cancer. Earlier laws required only crumbling asbestos to be inspected, but the present law covers both crumbling and non-crumbling asbestos and requires that parents and employees be notified if the substance is found.

Both public and private schools are covered by the law. Experts predict that 107,000 schools will have to be inspected.

Administrators are urged to begin dealing with the problem right away. If they wait, there may not be enough inspectors or program writers to meet the demand. Inspection, containment, and management plans can only be completed by authorized personnel certified by EPA-approved programs.

The problems associated with training inspectors and inspecting thousands of school buildings will be compounded by the tight deadlines. The high demand and low supply of people approved to combat asbestos are expected to drive up substantially the costs of inspecting and removing the substance.

For additional information call (800) 835-6700 or (202) 554-1404 in the Washington, D.C., area.

Vo-Tech at High School and College Level

Between 1981 and 1982, the proportion of students attending U.S. high schools that offered agriculture-related courses rose from 22 to 55 percent. Those attending schools with trade and industry courses rose from 34 to 98 percent, and those attending schools with industrial and commercial arts courses rose from 25 to 74 percent.

Schools with computer science courses rose from zero to 61 percent during those years. Availability of courses, however, does not necessarily predict enrollment. Only 3 percent of the students were actually studying data processing or programming in 1981, and there was virtually no change in the proportion of high school students taking industrial arts, business, or agriculture courses between 1972 and 1981.

It appears that most vo-tech students are studying at the postsecondary level. Of the 13 million college students now working toward a degree, certificate, or occupational license, 29 percent are defined by the U.S. Government as vocational. Another 1.6 million Americans are pursuing a vocational certificate or diploma in a noncollegiate environment.

This number is merely the tip of the iceberg. The U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey indicates that 23 million people were taking part-time adult-education courses in 1984. Of these students, 84 percent were aged 25 or older. Two-thirds were enrolled for job-related reasons. Employers provided nearly one-fifth of this instruction.—From *American Demographics*, September 1987.

Children's Reports Go Home— On Video

"When the fifth- and sixth-grade students in Dan McAdam's class in Wichita, Kan., presented their Kansas history reports, McAdam videotaped them. The children were encouraged to take the videocassettes home and share them with their parents."—*It Starts in the Classroom*, September 1986. Reprinted with permission from *It Starts in the Classroom*. Copyright 1986, National School Public Relations Association.

Americans' Leisure Activity? Watching TV

From three-year-olds to grown men, TV accounts for by far the biggest single chunk of the average American's leisure time—about two hours a day. By comparison, people spend an average of only 19 minutes in conversation, 13 minutes in crafts and hobbies, 5 minutes in active sports, and 4 minutes reading books. Despite the amount of time spent watching TV, people claim that they are lukewarm in their enthusiasm about it. On a list of 22 daily activities rated by their enjoyability, television ranked seventeenth, well behind reading books and magazines in ninth place.—Reported in *Time, Goods, and Well-Being*, edited by F. Thomas Juster and Frank P. Stafford. ISR Publishing, 1985.

Literacy a Relative Term

"How literate are America's young adults?" asks *Research in Brief*, then answers its own question:

If the standard of literacy is that of a century ago (ability to write one's name), virtually all today's young adults are literate.

By World War II standards: 95 percent meet or exceed fourth-grade performance levels.

By standards of the 1960s' War on Poverty: 80 percent meet or exceed eighth-grade performance.

By some of the standards used in a 1985 National Assessment of Education Progress study: 80 percent *unable* to use a bus schedule, 63 percent to use a road map, 21 percent to locate "gross pay-to-date" on a pay stub, and 28 percent could not write a letter to point out an error in billing.—Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, November 1986.

Youngsters Trying Wine Coolers

A survey conducted by "The Weekly Reader" found that one out of three children between nine and 12 have tried wine coolers. And almost half had felt peer pressure to try the sweet bubbly beverages. According to the report, an estimated 42 percent of children have tried wine coolers by sixth grade, and only 17 percent of sixth graders believe it would be harmful to drink the coolers every day.

Increasing Problems Confronting American Children

- About 20 percent of all children in America live below the poverty line, but among Hispanic children the figure has climbed to 40 percent and among black children to 43 percent.
- Children represent about 40 percent of the poor in the United States.
- More than 10 percent of children suffer from physical or emotional handicaps.
- More than 13 percent of 18- and 19-year-old women in the U.S. have children. The U.S. teen birthrate is virtually the highest of any Western nation.
- Sixty percent of today's three-year-olds will be raised by a single parent by the time they reach the age of 18. More than half of these children will live in poverty.—*Washington Post*, October 11, 1987, A23.

Why Teach the Arts?

Writing in *Basic Education: Issues, Answers, and Facts*, Ernest L. Boyer, former U.S. Secretary of Education, says:

"The arts are needed in the nation's schools because they help children express feelings and ideas words cannot convey.

"Through the language of the arts we can integrate our splintered academic world.

"The arts are essential because they provide the child a language that is universal. Its meaning can be understood by all."

AACRAO Studies Transfer of Credit for Ontario 13th Grade Subjects

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars has recently printed a study of the transfer credit practices of selected U.S. colleges and universities toward grade 13 courses offered in the Canadian province of Ontario.

The monograph, prepared by John A. Larsen, surveyed 735 foreign student admission officers from Wisconsin and the 10 U.S. states with the highest foreign enrollments in 1983-1984.

Credit was most likely to be granted for courses in biology, chemistry, calculus, Spanish, history, French, physics, English, and German, in that order. Courses least likely to be granted credit included secretarial practice, screen education, consumer studies, Anglais, family studies, mathematics of investment, space and man, physical and health education, accountancy, Francais, and law. Very few institutions granted advanced standing without credit.

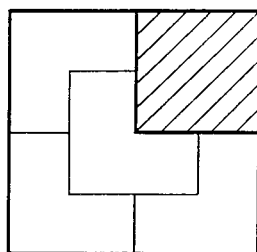
More institutions granted credit than did not grant credit, but usually not for all courses. Private campuses were more likely than public institutions to allow transfer credit or advanced standing. However, public campuses were more likely to grant credit by departmental examination.

Universities offering a master's and/or doctoral degrees were less likely to grant credit than were institutions in which the terminal degree was the bachelor's. More selective institutions were less likely to grant credit than those with open admissions standards.

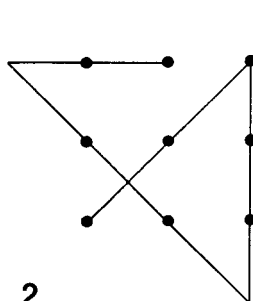
In general, the author of the AACRAO study found that Ontario "Grade 13 students were ahead of Grade 12 students from the United States and other Canadian provinces, but not a year ahead." He recommended that "some middle ground, such as accepting only those courses which are part of a sequence, such as mathematics, natural sciences, English, etc. from all Grade 13 schools and dealing with others on a case-by-case basis, would be most appropriate."—From AACRAO Monograph No. 35. □

COMPUTING WITH CLASS ANSWERS

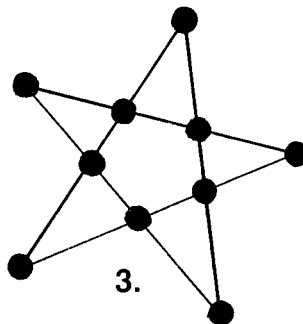
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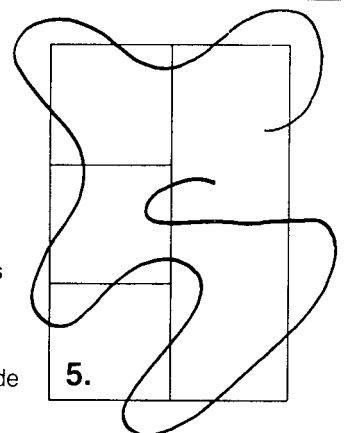


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