

Research and Planning Project For Mentally Retarded in Essex County

November 1968

Master Plan for Older Trainables (16-20) in Essex County

Phase 1 - Fall 1969

Establishment of a pilot project in the Nutley area which would serve approximately twenty trainable students in a pre-vocational program. This program would include students from Belleville, Bloomfield, East Orange, Glen Ridge, Montclair, Nutley, and perhaps Irvington. The program would include half a day in the classroom and half a day in a workshop setting. Plans are being developed for cooperation between the Nutley Board of Education and the Occupational Center of Essex County to establish and maintain this program.

Phase 2 - Fall 1971

Cooperative program of a similar nature between the West Orange School District and the Occupational Center of Essex County. The school programs in the West Essex area will have grown to a population of approximately twenty older adolescent trainables. A half-day school program and half day work orientation program is envisioned. This program would draw from the western half of Essex County.

Phase 3 - 1975

It has become increasingly evident that the need for a pre-vocational program for severely handicapped high school aged students in the areas of mental retardation, the physically handicapped, and the emotionally disturbed will demand a County wide cooperative arrangement in about five years. A combined Educational and Training Center for the Handicapped is envisioned as the logical outgrowth of this expanded population in the County which demands a special pre-vocational program.

Phase 4 -

Long range plans for the Essex County area call for development of a "Community Group Living Center" which would serve several types of severely handicapped adults, and attempt to keep these handicapped adults out of State institutions. Many of the trainable children in public school classes will need this type of a facility as an adult, or will be forced into an institutional life.

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Research and Planning for the Mentally Retarded

Essex County - November 18, 1968

Dr. John Hicks, Consultant

Phase I - The Nutley Satellite

Introduction:

The study of trainable retardates in the County had suggested that a pilot project be considered commencing as of September 1969. It was recommended that this pilot project be under the direction of the Nutley School System, since at this time a large program for the trainables is now being conducted in that area. This part of report will attempt to delineate the suggested program.

Communities:

In projecting such a satellite program which will deal with a pre-vocational program for adolescent (16-20) trainables the following school districts should be considered.

<u>District</u>	<u>Estimated # of T. M. R. - 16-20 - (1969-70)</u>				
	16	17	18	19	20
1. Belleville	2	1	0	0	1
2. Bloomfield	1	1	1	2	0
3. (educable of Bloomfield)	2	1	2	0	0
3. East Orange	5	1	1	0	0
4. Glen Ridge	0	1	1	0	0
5. Montclair	0	0	0	3	0
6. Nutley	2	0	2	0	1
<u>Totals</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>

<u>Nutley Region</u>					
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1969-70</u>	<u>70-71</u>	<u>71-72</u>	<u>72-73</u>	<u>73-74</u>
Ages 16-20	31	36	40	43	43

Results of the survey taken indicated that approximately 66% - two out of every three trainables in public school classes would be eligible for this type of a program. This leads us to the following estimates of pupil population of eligible trainables in

the Nutley Region.

Eligible for Program

Nutley Region Totals	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74
18-20	20	24	26	28	28

These figures were determined by analyzing the present populations in these classes by ages. These are minimum figures, and allow for the natural growth year by year as the students shift in age. No projections are included concerning growth in size of school districts, or of people moving in and out of school districts.

The six school districts included in this project represent a total school aged population of just over 40,000 students. These six school districts are growing at a rate of 1.5% per year. This growth should insure that the size of the program will not diminish.

Administration Program:

The program which is envisioned encompasses approximately 18-20 students for the school year 1969-70. It has been suggested that this phase of the program be half of the school day. The students participating in the program should be enrolled at the Lincoln Avenue School in Nutley. Home districts would contribute as per state legislation at a rate of \$2000.00 per year per child. The responsibility for assessing districts, hiring teachers, and transportation to the satellite would be the responsibility of the Lincoln School.

The sending district, as usual would accept the responsibility of transporting the students from their home district to the Lincoln School. These sending districts would agree to pay the fees charged by the Nutley District, as allowable under state law. Sending districts would act as referral agents in proposing students for this special program, also.

Daily Schedule:

The Lincoln School at Nutley now houses six classes for the trainables in four rooms. This is accomplished by sharing rooms and by a double shift -- classes in the morning and others in the afternoon. There is no room to expand this program in that building.

What is suggested is that the 18-20 students assigned to this program be included in the early morning schedule, starting school at 9 a.m. as usual. At approximately 11:30, after the students have eaten lunch, they would be bussed to the satellite program, which would be housed near the school. At approximately 1:45 these students would be bussed back to Lincoln School, in time to catch their transportation home. This would free two classes at Lincoln at approximately 11:30 and allow the afternoon session begin earlier.

Another way of scheduling this program would be for the Satellite Workshop to rent only one room to the school - space for ten students. The twenty students involved in the program would then alternate morning and afternoons between the Lincoln School and the Satellite. Ten would be assigned to a class in the Lincoln School in the morning from 9-11:30 while the other ten would be at the Satellite Shop. At 11:30 these groups would be reversed, and from 11:45 to 2:00 the class that was in the Lincoln School would be at the satellite.

This has several advantages. Space for ten students would actually serve twenty, both in the Lincoln School and in the satellite. The school could consequently only rent room for ten students. This would also allow that space in the satellite to be in use all day, not just half a day. The cost of renting the space to the school could be spread over twenty students.

It might also work better if the male teacher, under these conditions, be assigned to the satellite, and handle both groups as they appear in the satellite. Mrs. Forrester or Mrs. Epstein would then handle the Lincoln School program for both groups. Consequently, the teacher would not have to move with the children. The students who were assigned to this program would be capable of this transition from one teacher to another.

If the school institutes this new program a similar arrangement should be considered, either in renting a single room that would house ten students along with one of the classrooms in the Lincoln School; or renting two rooms in a store and using one all day as a classroom and the other all day as a simulated workshop.

Personnel:

The school personnel needed for this type of program are basically teachers of the two classes, presently hired by the Nutley Board of Education. These teachers have had many years of experience working with the older adolescent trainables and would seem well suited for this phase of the program. It would be recommended that the male teacher recently hired, although not having as much experience as Mrs. Forrester and Mrs. Epstein, might be asked to participate in the program as one of the two teachers.

Auxiliary personnel can be utilized in the program. Special resource people can be asked to service this group of students. The Special Education "Team" is a useful concept for this program. The evaluation and remedial personnel are essential in screening students for inclusion in the program. A system of referrals would have to be established, and a yearly procedure established. Directors of Special Services must be aware of this newly proposed program, so that the appropriate referrals could be made. Mr. D'Andrea, as Principal of the Lincoln School, would remain responsible for these classes.

Classroom Curricular:

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The structure of the program deals with pre-vocational skills appropriate to this group. The morning sessions at Nutley can remain to a large extent, patterned after the program described in A Flexible Guide For Teachers of Trainable Children, published in 1955 by the Lincoln School.

Additional elements would focus on the students afternoon experiences at the satellite. The afternoon program would focus on learning pre-vocational skills, work habits, social skills, work relationships within a sheltered environment, and skills of semi-competitive employment. It is suggested that those students in trainable classes who seem capable of semi-competitive employment be included in this program, as a preparation for their transition into the world of work.

Students Eligible for the Program:

At one point in this study a survey was taken of the students now enrolled in the Nutley Region. The information was requested from teachers of the classes now handling trainable adolescents. Teachers were requested to indicate one of three categories as the most realistic future placement, competitive employment, sheltered workshop, and not capable of sheltered workshop.

This was done to indicate a pool of students who might be considered for the September 1969 program. All efforts should be made this next spring to establish more selective and discriminating procedures for choosing students. Directors of Special Services and Child Study teams would be appropriate here in this function.

However, the results of the survey indicated that the following students might be considered for this special program.

Prospective Students

<u>Student</u>	<u>Home District</u>	<u>School Attending</u>	<u>Sheltered Workshop</u>	<u>Competitive employment</u>
1.	Irvington	Union Ave-Irv	x	
2.	Irvington	"		x
3.	Bloomfield	Lincoln-Nutley	x	
4.	No. Arlington	"	x	
5.	Glen Ridge	"	x	
6.	Bloomfield	"	x	
7.	Glen Ridge	"	x	
8.	Bloomfield	"	x	
9.	East Orange	"		x
10.	Montclair	"	x	
11.	Nutley	"	x	
12.	Montclair	"	x	
13.	No. Arlington	"	x	

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Student	Home District	School attending	Sheltered workshop	Competitive employment
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Other Possibilities:

14.	[REDACTED]	Verona	Verona	X
15.	[REDACTED]	Cedar Grove	"	X

Lower Functioning Educables:

16.	[REDACTED]	Nutley	G. Morris-Bloomfield	X
17.	[REDACTED]	Bloomfield	"	X
18.	[REDACTED]	Nutley	"	X
19.	[REDACTED]	Bloomfield	"	X
20.	[REDACTED]	Bloomfield	"	X
21.	[REDACTED]	Cedar Grove	"	X
22.	[REDACTED]	Nutley	"	X

Sponsorship of the Satellite

This research and planning project grew out of the County Superintendent's Office. The Committee represents both the educational and post-educational programs for trainable retardates in the county. The focus of the committee has been on developing programs for the last years of a trainable adolescent's school life - 16 to 20. Perhaps it would seem obvious that the educational authorities should sponsor this program.

During the last committee meeting the opposite was recommended. It has been suggested that in essence such a program will only be relevant, realistic, and capable of meeting the needs of older adolescent trainables if the activity takes place away from the school building, and must be dovetailed into an on-going program for adult retardates in the same community.

The school program is envisioned as a part of a total program (a satellite workshop) for the retarded in the Nutley area. The school would rent the space (room for twenty students) from the satellite. The activities in the satellite are those activities which prepare and train retardates, as well as other handicapped adults, for productive living and employment.

Such a program would be designed after that seen on Long Island, only on a much smaller scale. Cooperation from both the educational and training fields would be essential if such a program would be carried out. It is hoped that through the Vocational Rehabilitation Commission, the Occupational Center of Essex County, the Nutley Board of Education, and the New Jersey Association for Retarded Children, such a community project might be envisioned in the near future.

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The facts speak for themselves. The Nutley Region as outlined in this section of the report will graduate thirty-one trainables from public school classes in the next five years. The Occupational of Essex County now services fifteen clients in training programs supported by DVR from the area, plus about an equal number of long term sheltered workshop clients. A recent survey done by N.J.A.R.C. indicates that these are approximately 25-30 adult "graduates" of school programs from this area who are in no program whatever. These are enough clients to support such a satellite program.

Courses of Action

At a recent Board of Education meeting in Nutley, Dr. Fleisher, Superintendent, and Mr. D'Andrea, Principal of Lincoln School, were given the support needed to outline and plan for this program. They are planning with the Committee for a program which will start as of September 1969. The major problem faced at this time is whether the Nutley Board of Education should go ahead and develop the school program apart from a satellite plan from the Occupational Center of Essex County.

For the Nutley Board of Education to rent space, buy or lease the equipment needed, and underwrite the costs of maintaining suitable work "contracts" or production, seems almost prohibitive. Furthermore, as much as it would be a step in the right direction, such a pre-vocational program outside of a sponsoring workshop setting would at best be an "artificial environment".

Expansion of the Occupational Center of Essex County into the Nutley area in the form of a Satellite would also be expensive. As expensive as it may appear, the community need matches the demands of other areas. Plans are being formulated to incorporate this expansion into a project which would be supported partly by federal funds. The feasibility of such a project will not be known for several months, although the costs to the schools in the area should be calculable shortly.

Whether the Nutley Board of Education takes the initiative or the O.C.E.C. develops a satellite in that area, one thing appears certain. In the case of the trainable retardate, vocational planning demands the skill, effort, and financial support of several community agencies.