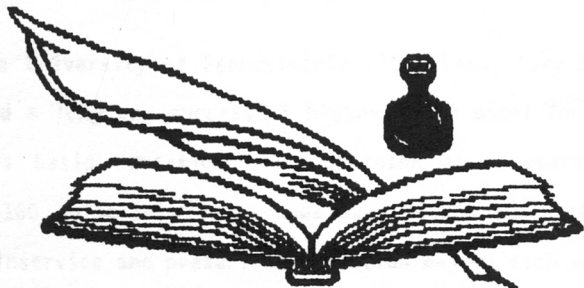


THE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL AT IUP: A HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE GETTING BETTER

**John R. Johnson
Warner E. Tobin
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FEATURE ARTICLE

Editor's Note: The Executive Board of the National Association of Laboratory Schools has authorized the inclusion of a feature article in each edition of the National Association of Laboratory Schools Journal. This article, which will be written upon invitation, will highlight one of the member laboratory schools and give a description of the school and its functions. The following article is one in this series:

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THE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

A HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE GETTING BETTER

John R. Johnson

Warner E. Tobin

University School

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Indiana, Pennsylvania

The Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) Laboratory School founded in 1875, has had a long and successful history as a model for higher education as well as basic education. Now operated as a laboratory of human resources with 160 children, it averages over 14,000 observations and participations by inservice and preservice education majors each year.

History

The Indiana University of Pennsylvania Laboratory School was created in 1875 as a "model school" to model new teaching methods and theories of instruction for normal school students studying to be teachers, and for

public school teachers in the community. The first building to house the Model School was John Sutton Hall, the first and only building for a long period of time on the campus of the then Indiana Normal School. John Sutton Hall housed all classrooms, the dining room, the dormitory, the library, the chapel, the sitting room, the President's apartment, the laundry, and the administrative offices along with the Model School. This building, with four floors above ground and a basement was the tallest building within a 50-mile radius. This building still stands on the campus and was completely restored to its original Victorian splendor with its 15-foot ceilings in 1981.

The model school, like many other early laboratory schools, served as the site for senior student teaching experiences. At that time, the student population of the normal school was approximately 250 and the student population of the model school was 80 pupils aged 8 to 18.

In 1883, the Model School was moved to a building of its own. Wilson Hall, which also still stands on the IUP campus, was reflective of the typical two-story academies or schools built in that era in western Pennsylvania. The classrooms were large with many windows to permit maximum natural lighting.

In 1939 the Model School was again relocated to a larger new facility bearing the name of Keith School in honor of John A. H. Keith, a former president of the then Indiana State Teacher's College. This structure, similar to many other high schools built in Pennsylvania from 1920 to 1940, contained the modern conveniences of metal lockers in the halls, coat presses in the back of each room, a large gym, and a large auditorium style demonstration room. It was from the demonstration room that "model" lessons were taught to a classroom of students for the benefit of those college students studying to be teachers. The class being taught was assembled on the lower

level of the room; and the observers, with pencil and paper in hand, sat in permanently mounted auditorium style seats around the outside edge of the room in two elevated rows. When possible, at the end of each lesson, the master teacher remained in the room to field questions and comments from the observers.

While the laboratory school was housed in Keith Hall, the scope of the school ran from K-10 with full offerings in every subject. The subjects taught in the Keith School provided a wide range of experiences needed to accommodate the increasing offerings of the expanding numbers of education majors attending the teacher's college.

In 1969 another new building was built to house the Departments of Elementary Education, Special Education, Communications Media, Educational Psychology, Counselor Education, the dean's offices, the radio and television studios and the newly renamed "University School." The motivation for this move was the enactment of legislation by the state legislature in 1965 changing Indiana State Teacher's College to Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Up to this point, all offerings on the campus were in the field of education. With the virtual overnight establishment of university status--budget, space, faculty, and money resources needed to be reallocated to accommodate the needs of the fledgling university. As a result, in addition to other realigning moves, it was deemed necessary to reduce the scope of the school from K-10 orientation to K-6. This allowed for resources to be reallocated to assist in strengthening and creating academic departments to expand offerings for students in areas other than education.

Since that simple beginning 114 years ago, the normal school at Indiana has evolved into a major state (Pennsylvania) university with 13,500 students, offering programs on three campuses at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral

levels. The University School itself has evolved into a laboratory of human resources, grades kindergarten through 6th grade, with a modified open concept school environment utilizing cooperative curriculum planning with University School faculty, University faculty, University students, graduate assistants, and teaching associates. The University School continues to provide the opportunity for University faculty and their students, and teachers in-service to observe and participate in exemplary teaching and learning experiences. Yearly numbers of individual observations and participations have averaged 14,000 each year since 1980. In addition, new and unique programs have been developed and introduced which are available to share with basic education. Some of these include programs for the handicapped--mental and physical--the hearing impaired; Chinese language and culture; thematic teaching of Chinese in the subject areas; multicultural education; art education; instrumental and vocal music; an avant garde, highly successful band program which has demonstrated the teaching techniques nationally; and a complete computer instruction curriculum for grades K-6.

Faculty

Faculty of the University School, a department in the College of Education, are considered full-time, tenured faculty members. Sixty-nine percent are full time with 31% of the faculty assigned from other departments of the University. For example, the teachers of Music, Art, and Physical Education are assigned to work half time teaching in their academic department on campus and half time teaching in the University School. This arrangement has served to strengthen the maximum use of the school as a laboratory for education majors while providing a realistic mix of theory with observable and interactive practice.

Since 1983, all new faculty hired must possess a doctorate. This same policy is true for all faculty in all departments on the campus. Salary and increases for the faculty are guaranteed by the collective bargaining unit contract. This contract is the same contract negotiated by the 14 Pennsylvania state-owned universities in the State System of Higher Education (SSHE). Specified in the contract, faculty of laboratory schools are required to work a minimum of 35 contact hours each week. This is in addition to time spent in planning, meetings, and consultation with university students and faculty.

Tuition

For the first 107 years of the school's existence no tuition was charged to students attending the school. All operating costs were covered in the regular University budget. However, in 1982, a voluntary yearly contribution of \$40.00 was requested from parents of students attending the school which was used to purchase materials and supplies used directly in the instruction of the students. In 1985, the Board of Trustees of the University initiated a mandatory yearly-increasing tuition which will be \$300.00 per student in 1989-90. In addition, each student is assessed a health services fee which covers the cost of a half-time school nurse which is provided by the health center on campus. The tuition fees collected are used by the school for the purchase of materials and equipment for the students and to underwrite field trips.

In addition, an account in the Foundation for IUP provides for parent and other benefactor tax-deductible contributions in the name of the University School. Some of the monies are restricted for particular donor projects or uses while other monies may be used at the mutually agreed upon discretion of the faculty for special unbudgeted purchases. Currently a special fund

has been established in the foundation to pay for the development of a school playground which has been nonexistent since 1969.

Current Mission of the School

The mission of the University School at Indiana University of Pennsylvania is to serve as an exemplary model of educational research, theory-based curriculum, and instruction in daily practice.

It is recognized, on the IUP Campus, that an expanded role of the laboratory school necessitates a research facility and staff to accomplish the formulated goals of the College of Education. To this end, support has been given to develop an experimental program which makes research possible.

The University School faculty members work together to combine their knowledge and specialized talents to create innovative educational programs which are piloted, refined, and disseminated. The University School provides a quality educational environment serving as a resource facility for:

1. a heterogeneous population of regular and special education students K-6;
2. graduate and undergraduate University students preparing for careers as professional educators;
3. other University faculty members conducting research and involved in pre-service clinical experiences;
4. elementary school teachers and administrators requesting assistance in staff and curriculum development; and
5. the professional education community at large through dissemination, including presentations and publications.

The IUP University School believes in a life long learning orientation for faculty members supporting active professional participation in roles as educators, mentors, coordinators, consultants, researchers, presenters, and

scholars. To this end, the University, through the Pennsylvania statewide Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculty Bargaining Unit, created a Doctoral Teaching Associate Program to provide released time for faculty to engage in scholarly activity and research. For the IUP University School this has meant that since 1987 some of the faculty in the School have been awarded a Teaching Associate to work in the regular classroom to release the teacher half time. The Teaching Associate must be enrolled in advanced doctoral studies in the Department of Professional Studies and working on a terminal degree in Elementary Education. For their work as half-time instructors in the school, the teaching associates receive half of a beginning instructor level salary and tuition remission. The Teaching Associate may be renewed for up to two additional years thus providing continuity and stability to the educational program of the school.

While being released, the master teacher must work on personally identified, but administratively approved, research and/or curriculum development projects. It is expected that the projects will result in publications and/or presentations at regional and national conferences. A semesterly accounting of productivity is reviewed to determine eligibility for continuance of release for scholarly work. This new and unique program has provided the faculty of the University School with the necessary time to more adequately do that which was always expected in addition to the full-time job of being personally responsible for a full classroom of students and coordinating thousands of college student observations and participations.

Examples of Educational Research at the School

The IUP University School works in concert with researchers through united cooperative planning for a research project and by providing the student population for a particular study. One recent example was a poster

presentation at the National Academy of Neuropsychologists regarding research conducted by Rattan and others at the IUP University School utilizing the "Older Children's Category" test as a measure of concept formation and prediction of cerebral integrity.

Other materials produced by University School faculty and graduate students include: (a) An Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture for Young American Students, (b) A Guide for Thematic Teaching about China in American Schools, and (c) A Kindergarten Through Grade Six Computer Instruction Curriculum.

The IUP University School envisions as its future role, a continuation of the curricular research, creation of lighthouse programs, and the demonstration of these programs to its interested publics. For the near future it is intended to strengthen ties with Shanghai Teacher's University and its Laboratory School. This will include utilization of computers, modems, and printers to experiment with common educational curricular units between classrooms of the two schools. It is also intended to exchange faculty and children for short term visits.

Students of the School

As is the case with most laboratory schools, the IUP University School provides an excellent education for the students attending in addition to all the other functions it performs. The students attending the school come from eight nearby school districts, with only 40% having parents with occupational affiliation at IUP. As has been tracked both formally and informally, graduates of the school consistently do very well in all they attempt. Repeatedly it is noted that students who attend the University School are better prepared to cope with change and are more flexible, self-reliant, independent, self-starting, and know how to maximize the use of their time. Among the

most famous of the University School attendees is Mr. Jimmy Stewart, world famous actor and hometown boy of Indiana, PA, who attended the then Model School in the 1920s.

Conclusions

The Laboratory School movement in the United States is still visible, strong and ever changing. On the IUP Campus the need for the laboratory school is an essential and vital part of the curricular development effort and continues to be extremely important. It is a place that weaves together the reality of school with the theory of the curriculum researcher. The IUP University School is a place where bold ventures in curriculum design can be conceptualized, worked on, developed, and disseminated.