

RECOMMENDATION No. 38
TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION
concerning
SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING
(1954)

The International Conference on Public Education,

Convened at Geneva by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Bureau of Education, and having assembled on the fifth day of July, nineteen hundred and fifty-four for its seventeenth session, adopts on the tenth day of July, nineteen hundred and fifty-four, the following recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering the inalienable right of every person to the fullest education within the limits of his aptitudes, irrespective of his class, race, sex, language, or belief,

Considering the many changes now taking place in the conception and structure of secondary education,

Considering that secondary education now caters for an ever-increasing number of pupils, and that in one form or another it tends to include all adolescents,

Considering, in view of the important part played by secondary teachers in modern society, that the recruitment and training of these teachers are of first importance in raising the general level of culture,

Considering that the aim of secondary education is the balanced education of man on the spiritual, mental, physical, and practical planes, and that secondary teachers must therefore themselves enjoy training which meets the demands of such an education,

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Considering the secondary teacher's delicate task of guiding pupils and of helping each one of them to receive the kind of education best fitted to his aptitudes and to the needs of society,

Considering the secondary teacher's responsibility for the discovery and nurture of the various talents needed in the modern world,

Considering the necessity of adapting secondary education to the continuous developments and demands of the modern world,

Considering also that countries with different geographical, demographic, social, historical and cultural conditions, may well, although sharing similar aims develop varied solutions to the problems of secondary teacher training,

Submits to the Ministries of Education of the several countries the following recommendation:

Systems of training

1) It is desirable that the competent authorities should give the utmost consideration to the question of secondary teacher training, and ensure that secondary teachers receive the best possible general education and specialist professional and moral training, so as to enable them to fulfil their duties and tasks adequately;

2) Representatives of secondary teacher training establishments and of serving secondary teachers should be associated with the work of the bodies responsible for drawing up and revising secondary teacher training plans and curricula;

3) In choosing between the various systems of secondary teacher training (e. g., in a specialist type of establishment, or in a university with additional professional training, concurrently or subsequently), each country is well advised to select the one which best fits the structure of its higher education, its resources, its needs for teachers, etc.;

4) While the existence in a given country of a variety of secondary teacher training systems has undeniable advantages, the level of the training provided by the different systems should be as far as possible the same; when the general, specialist and professional training of secondary teachers is provided in one establishment, the length of the course and the extent of the training should not be less than when separate provision is made for professional training, concurrently or subsequently;

5) Secondary teachers of subjects which pupils can continue to study at university level, should receive training at university level;

6) Every system of secondary teacher training should make the greatest possible provision for the teachers of other subjects, for supernumerary teachers, and for all housemasters or teachers in charge of hostels for secondary pupils, where they exist;

7) Frequent contacts and exchanges of experience should be arranged between the authorities responsible for primary teacher training and those responsible for secondary teacher training, so as to ensure more adequately the continuity of education and facilitate the transfer from one educational level to the other.

Recruitment and admission to training

8) As at other levels of education, every endeavour should be made to achieve a good social and financial standing for secondary teachers, in order to attract persons who, while possessing the necessary aptitudes for secondary teaching, might otherwise be tempted to enter other professions;

9) Steps should be taken to provide facilities (scholarships, allowances, etc.) so that no suitable person is prevented by lack of means from securing secondary teacher training; the same purpose may be served by making boarding establishments for secondary teacher training, wherever they exist, free of charge;

10) Both sexes should have equal opportunities of access to secondary teaching, and of securing the necessary training;

11) Where the systems of training and the official qualifications for primary and secondary teachers are different, primary teachers should be enabled to secure appointment to secondary teaching posts, on their acquiring the appropriate qualifications;

12) In the recruitment and training of secondary teachers, account must be taken, not only of candidates' intellectual aptitudes and academic achievement, but also of their sense of vocation, their moral and educational worth, character, understanding of children devotion to work, emotional stability, and sense of social responsibility; where there are examinations or other forms of competition for the recruitment of candidates, personal interviews can serve to give a more complete picture of the personality of each candidate.

Curricula

13) While the training of secondary teachers should be sufficiently specialized to give them a thorough knowledge of their teaching subjects, a balance should nevertheless be maintained between their specialist training and general culture; the provision of optional courses can serve this purpose;

14) The professional training of secondary teachers should include, not only courses in psychology and education (including philosophy of education) and teaching practice, but also special courses involving, for example, a study of social background and relationships, professional ethics, international understanding, etc., so as to foster a spirit of democracy and freedom and of the brotherhood of man;

15) Secondary teacher training curricula should give emphasis to the problem of international cooperation, so as to foster understanding, tolerance, and respect for the freedom and independence of all nations;

16) The courses in psychology and education forming part of secondary teachers' professional training must give adequate emphasis to practical research in psychology and education, adolescent psychology, and the special methods of teaching the various subjects, to school organization, administration and legislation, and to the educational problems of the country concerned; such courses should also include experimental education (evaluation techniques) and sociology, and for junior secondary school teachers, special instruction in educational guidance (differential adolescent psychology covering aptitudes and sentiments) and functional methods of teaching and individual work;

17) Every secondary teacher training establishment, whether of the specialist or university type, should offer an adequate number of theoretical and practical courses in psychology and education and make ample provision of the necessary books and journals;

18) Great emphasis should be given to the practical side of secondary teachers' professional training; it is not sufficient for trainees to attend lessons given by other teachers or to give trial lessons; it is better to require them to undertake sufficiently long periods of practical work with various classes in various schools, and thus accustom themselves to being in charge of a class and to participating in all aspects of school life;

19) While the value of demonstration schools is recognized in the practical training of secondary teachers, it is desirable that the greater part of teaching practice should take place in ordinary secondary

schools, so that the trainees are brought into touch with the school conditions under which they will more commonly be working;

20) It is important to introduce future secondary school teachers not to one but to a variety of teaching methods appropriate to the secondary level, so that they may themselves choose the method best suited to their teaching situation; in this connection participation in educational research and experimentation can be of great value;

21) The practical side of secondary teachers' professional training should include an introduction to social activities, such as the organization of leisure-time pursuits, cultural activities and youth movements, and participation in parent-teacher associations;

22) The staff of secondary teacher training establishments should be selected not only for their academic qualifications, but also in the light of their personal worth and teaching experience.

Further training

23) It is desirable that secondary teachers should have opportunities for further training throughout their career both in their teaching subjects and in the principles and methods of teaching;

24) Whatever form such opportunities for further training may take (conferences, seminars, discussion groups, study weeks, vacation courses, etc.), an important share in their organization should be taken by inspectors, principals and teachers of teacher training establishments, and by secondary teachers' associations;

25) Where the education authorities do not themselves assume responsibility for organizing further training for secondary teachers, funds should be made available for the purpose to teachers' associations and other appropriate bodies and groups;

26) Secondary teachers should be given every facility (scholarships, allowances, leave) to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities for further training offered them; for this purpose it is desirable in principle and where compatible with service needs to grant several months of paid leave on completion of a certain length of service;

27) In addition to individual and group travel at home and abroad for study purposes, valuable means of further training for secondary teachers include teacher exchanges with countries abroad, on the lines suggested in Recommendation No. 29 concerning the International Interchange of Teachers, adopted by the XIIIth International Conference on Public Education in 1950;

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28) Every endeavour should be made to promote the publication of the books and journals that secondary teachers require, and to facilitate their reading and discussion of them; this is a field in which teacher training establishments, information centres, and psychological and educational research institutes are particularly well qualified to take increasingly effective action.

Emergency training

29) Wherever the introduction of emergency training appears justifiable on the grounds of a rapid increase of school enrolments, persons undergoing such training should be required to reach a certain academic and professional level before being appointed to a post;

30) Persons trained through emergency courses, who give evidence of possessing the required aptitudes, should be given opportunities of completing their professional training and thus of qualifying for admission to the regular secondary teaching grades.

Assistance from international organizations

31) It is highly desirable that Unesco, the International Bureau of Education, and regional organizations should assist in promoting secondary teacher training and further training.