FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

A GUIDE TO A PROGRAM TO IMPROVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS
FOR THE BETHLEHEM SCHOOL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations ... iii
Introduction ... 1
Reasons for Making Study ... 1
The School’s Service Area ... 2
Principles of School Community Relations ... 4
Obstacles to Good School Public Relations in the Bethlehem Community ... 10
Conditions Favorable to Good Public Relations ... 13
Major Steps to be Taken in Order to Promote Better School-Community Relationships ... 14
Summary ... 22
Appendix I ... 24
Bibliography ... 31
**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

| Figure 1 - A Plot of the Bethlehem School Service Area | 3 |
INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on a study purposing to discover guidelines for developing a program to improve school-community relations for the Bethlehem School. In order to accomplish this general objective it has been necessary: (1) to clarify the reasons for making the study; (2) to state general principles upon which a program for improving school-community relations may be based; (3) to analyze obstacles and assets in the school's service area; and (4) to suggest definite steps that might be taken in order to promote better school-community relationships.

REASONS FOR MAKING STUDY

The writer has felt the need for a planned and organized effort to improve relations between the Bethlehem School and the school's community. Before he accepted the principalship of the school, those who knew the community told him some of the problems faced by the former principal. Patrons were of the opinion that their visits to the school were not appreciated. Some of the people were hostile toward the principal; they believed he felt himself above them. There was serious objection by part of the community to girls' wearing shorts in physical education classes. It was asserted that good administration would correct many of the problems of disinterest, misunderstanding and tension.

Initial interest in the field of school-community relations was intensified while attending a Public Relations Conference held
at Florida State University, Tallahassee, during the summer of 1951. The importance of a school-community relations program to unify the community into an effective working relationship was grasped more fully. The school would undoubtedly improve, and the people would cooperate better in efforts to provide a good environment for growing children and youth if a school-community relations program were launched to realize such objectives. Whatever school-community relations exist, they are the result of someone's choice of alternatives. School-community relations do not develop in and of themselves.

THE SCHOOL'S SERVICE AREA

The Bethlehem School's service area is illustrated in Figure 1. The Bethlehem School is situated in Holmes County in northwest Florida. It is located one hundred miles due west of Tallahassee, one hundred sixteen miles east of Pensacola, and fifty-six miles north of Panama City.

The school's service area extends north of the school six miles to the Alabama state line; southward five miles, at which point it meets the Bonifay school district; eastward five miles, adjoining the Poplar Springs school district; and westward five miles, to the Choctawhatchee River. As can be seen in Figure 1, the school is centrally located in the area.

The school community is served by ten school-bus routes. Seven small communities consolidated to form the Bethlehem School District. All of these still take pride in referring to themselves by their original community names, but have begun to recognize that unity of all seven is essential to their welfare. On the front of
Fig. 1 — A Plot of the Bethlehem School service area.
the school building the names of all seven communities are engraved in the overhead part of the building, along with the dates of consolidation and additions to the building. These were 1927, 1934 and 1940. A large inscription, "The Half of Knowledge Is To Know Where To Find It," also appears there. This was probably copied from the inscription on the front of the Florida State University's library.

The Bethlehem community is strictly rural. Farming, livestock raising, poultry raising and sawmilling are the principal occupations. No factories or industries are located in the community. About one-third of the people are prosperous and the other two-thirds are poor. The per capita buying income for 1948 was $263. The State per capita buying income for 1948 was $1064.¹

The average educational level of adults in the community in terms of schooling is about the sixth grade.

PRINCIPLES OF SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Any program to foster better school-community relationships should be based upon sound principles that are in keeping with democratic values.

According to George C. Kyte, public relations is a two-fold service of (1) keeping the public intelligently informed regarding the educational program and school conditions, and (2) apprising the school officials and employees of community conditions and the

people's attitude toward the educational program. Dr. Kyte further states that:

The three significant purposes involved in public relations must be (1) the sound improvement of the educational program for all learners, (2) the maintenance of an adequate educational organization, and (3) the educationally efficient operation of the organization.

The specific purposes of a desirable program of public relations should be

1. To clarify professional practices with respect to the instructional treatment of current social tendencies and problems, in order to meet essential needs of individuals and communities.

2. To develop intelligent, sympathetic understanding between parents and teachers in meeting the needs of every child, and efficient cooperation based upon a thorough insight into the responsibilities of the home and of the school.

3. To establish co-operative relations between the school and all other institutions and agents of the community in matters of public welfare, with particular emphasis upon sound educational purposes.

To advance the best interests of children, it is necessary to establish and maintain an educational institution that is an integral and vital part of the plan for developing an enlightened, competent, and constructively active citizenry. This goal can be achieved through the co-operation of the lay public and the teaching profession. Co-operative action depends upon the development of mutual understanding and shared wholesome attitudes.

In order to meet the purposes stated above, the following general standards should be met:


2Ibid., p. 400.
(1) A public relations program should be based on the practice of telling the truth. This standard involves marshaling and presenting all essential facts impersonally, unselfishly and honestly. It implies consideration of the rights and interests of every person in order to avoid unnecessary and unwise injury of any person.

(2) The principal must serve as the leader of the public-relations program. Its development must be a phase of the program for the school system. The principal's responsibilities to the school board and the superintendent are definite. The board of education represents the people in determining the general policies and regulations. The superintendent is the chief officer in administering the program. If it has become well-organized and systematized, the principal's planning is simplified. The specific planning by the principal would probably include

1. Conducting a continuous survey of all significant phases of the school and its community and making a critical analysis of the data thus obtained.

2. Determining the possible means to be utilized in administering and directing a public-relations program.

3. Considering the possible agents to participate in planning and executing the public-relations program.

4. Organizing the personnel and agencies into a workable program.

5. Training the agents as efficient, constructive operators of the program.

6. Putting the program into operation and maintaining its
efficiency.

7. Appraising the results in terms of defensibly sound purposes.\(^1\)

According to Moehlman, the public relations program should be utilized under four heads: (1) written agencies; (2) visual agencies; (3) oral agencies; and (4) social agencies. Written agencies include bulletins, letters, official publications, student publications, reports, newspapers and magazines. Visual means include school exhibits, individual children's school work, demonstrations, posters, motion pictures and school buildings. Oral agencies include speeches, lectures, conferences, interviews, sound motion pictures and radio performances. Under social agencies fall the ways in which individuals participate in community activities.\(^2\)

In his planning the principal should consider two types of agents. One type is directly responsible for the public-relations program: School-board members, superintendent of schools, principal, teachers, school nurse, school secretary, custodian, and other employees of the school system. The second type includes all persons who are not directly employed in the school system but who may be important participators in the public relations program: the pupils, their parents, newspapermen, civic officials and other citizens.

A careful consideration of each agent and agency should lead

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the principal to determine how every person can render the most efficient service in a constructive program of public relations. When a bulletin is sent out, the purpose of the bulletin should be kept in mind, as well as the persons to receive each bulletin, and the method of delivering it. The principal must plan and execute with great care the news furnished to the press. The total use of the school plant, the participation of children in public relations, and the formulation and distribution of various kinds of reports, and other co-operative activities must be determined and carried on in an organized manner.

Another important part of the principal's responsibility includes his instruction of all other school employees. In order to do this efficiently, he must prepare himself in the nature, procedures, and means of public relations. These activities provide the necessary foundation for his administration and direction of the planned program. The various activities will show evidence of the degree of efficiency of the school program.¹

For several reasons the teachers constitute the most important group of employed agents in the public relations program. They are in close contact with the children and the parents. They usually live in the community, especially in small communities. They have widespread community contacts as members of religious, fraternal and civic organizations.

The principal should aid the teachers in recognizing their

importance and the necessity for their co-operative planning and 
executing of the public-relations program. By means of teachers' 
meetings and individual conferences, the principal may assist the 
teachers in becoming constructive public-relations agents. Teachers 
should have a thorough grasp of community conditions, of the school's 
educational policies and program and o. their own school's particular 
educational policies, purposes and program. They should participate 
in (1) gathering the essential data about the community and the school, 
(2) developing the public-relations program, and (3) serving wherever 
possible as public-relations agents. ¹

The teacher should realize his position in teacher and pupil 
relationships. His pupils must be happy, enthusiastic, and under-
standing regarding their daily school experiences. They must recognize 
in him a person who is sympathetic toward them and deeply interested 
in them. He should be as keenly interested in his teaching as they 
are in coming to school each morning. When pupils like their teacher, 
they like their school. Parents reflect the attitudes of the children.

A teacher should display a wholesome interest in the child 
when talking to a parent about him. His welfare and development must 
be primary considerations. The teacher should foster a spirit of co-
operation and understanding between himself and the parent. A cordial 
aquaintanceship will inspire mutual confidence. The teacher's in-
sight into and appreciation of the educational program, the school, and

¹Godfrey M. Elliott, "Teacher-Community Relationships," School 
Executive, LV (August, 1936), 440-441.
the child influences the parent to become an enthusiastic, understanding supporter of the school. The children's reactions and development, together with the observations and comments of parents, affect the professional reputation of the teacher. The teacher must earn public recognition as a skilled teacher who always endeavors to do his best.1

A very important phase of public relations is the teacher's report to parents. The report card, which is the means most generally used, quite often fails because officials try to serve two basic purposes with the same card. The solution to this would be to have two forms. One report should be sent to the parents furnishing them with important information they should know for the child's good. The other should be a professional-case record. The report sent home should emphasize what is right with the child rather than what is wrong. A conference may be necessary to complete understanding and co-operation. Suggestions should be made for overcoming the obstacle.2

OBSTACLES TO GOOD SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS
IN THE BETHLEHEM COMMUNITY

The three dominant religious groups in the Bethlehem School's service area are Methodist, Baptist, and Holiness. These groups have different ideas of what is socially right or wrong. One noteworthy

1Philip Lovejoy, "The Teacher's Part in the Public Relations Program," Education, LVI (October, 1932), 74-76.

illustration is found in the request that girls' physical education be taught on the back side of the school to avoid criticism of the use of shorts. Another criticism is aimed at folk dancing. Some patrons object to this while others do not.

One obstacle to satisfactory school-community relations is the fact that three different church groups in the community are all trying to build new churches at the same time. This causes some rivalry and bitterness among them. It affects the school in that each of these groups asks the principal to use school facilities to help make money.

Political factions and rivalries are at a high pitch now because of the recent elections which were stormy and heated. Every conceivable device for vote-getting was used. These rivalries never are healed, but burst out anew over and over again. This community seems to be in the thick of the fight. This affects the school in that some of the people relieve their feelings by refusing to cooperate in school-community activities.

Probably one of the most serious obstacles to good public relations is found in the wide range of family incomes. About one-third of the families have good incomes and two-thirds do not. This difference in economic status has a direct influence on the public relations of the community. Those families who do not have the things they need are resentful toward other families which do have them. About forty per cent of the people were on the welfare roll until recently. Most of these have since then been dropped from the list and are struggling to earn a living. Malnutrition is widespread among these underprivileged families. This affects the school in that most
of the low-income group feel so inferior that they will not take part in school-community affairs.

When a group in one of the seven communities in the school district becomes dissatisfied over any issue, whether religious, political, or social in nature, they refer to the fact that they were consolidated against their wishes and that if things cannot be arranged like they want them to be, they should be permitted to return to their small two-teacher schools. This is used as an argument to gain what they desire. Most of the people realize that this would not be good for the pupils, but some of them still hold this view. As has been previously stated, the consolidations took place in 1927, 1934 and 1940. One statement reflecting the attitude described above was made by a school patron and bus driver. He stated that because of the unequal distribution of capital outlay money, he preferred to send his children to the school in the county seat where the money is being spent.

As was clearly evident, no organized plan for improving school-community relations existed until recently. Or, to state the situation another way, if one ever existed, it had completely disintegrated. A political campaign four years ago in which a former principal of the school ran for the office of county superintendent against the incumbent caused opposing factions to spring up. A similar situation exists in 1952 in which a former resident of the community entered the race and won. In each case new factions arose.
The P.T.A. is a very influential force in the school community. It has sponsored a number of worthwhile projects. The most outstanding was the purchase of a seven-hundred dollar curtain for the auditorium stage. The money was raised by presenting a "Womanless Wedding" in two performances and by sponsoring a political rally. Another worthwhile achievement was that of recommending that some needed repairs be made on the school building and that a loading shelter be added as an annex to the building to be used by the pupils for getting into and out of the buses in rainy weather. This part of the recommendation was carried out. Other repairs were recommended which will probably be carried out at a later date.

Among the worthwhile accomplishments of the Parent-Teacher Association probably the most important from the school-community relations point of view is that of furnishing opportunity for all groups of the community to associate and enjoy fellowship together. All types of community problems are discussed. The social hour is enjoyable, interesting and beneficial. Considerable advancement has been made in promoting good will and willingness to cooperate.

The Parent-Teacher Association was organized at the beginning of the 1950-51 school term. In that year there were seventy-eight paid-up members. Attendance at the meetings ranged from one hundred twenty five to one hundred seventy five people. Free school bus transportation was provided for the meetings. Attendance this year has dropped some because the buses did not run, but interest in the Parent-
Teacher Association is still very much alive. The Parent-Teacher Association is definitely an asset in the school-community relations program.

The Masonic Lodge and Eastern Star are school-community relations assets in the school district. Many of the faculty members, school bus drivers, and prominent people of the community are members and through their fraternal associations advance the school-community relations program. Other organizations which are assets are the Future Farmers of America, the Future Homemakers of America, Key Club and the 4-H Club.

Another asset is found in the location of the Methodist Bethlehem Camp in the community near the school. This is a camp sponsored by prominent ministers and church laymen for summer young people's work and revivals. The camp has a worthwhile influence on many people, directing them toward brotherly living. It seems to be free of the petty rivalries and jealousies found elsewhere.

MAJOR STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN ORDER TO PROMOTE BETTER SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

In order to overcome the obstacles previously mentioned, it will be necessary to plan an overall school-community relations guide. The following possibilities are advanced.

Step I - Make a study of the community to reveal as accurately as possible the key men and women and the key organizations. In every community there are men, women and organizations that are outstandingly influential in determining community attitudes and actions. The principal must not neglect to know these people and to gain their confidence and their interest.
in his educational program. These individuals should be studied somewhat and their views, ways of thinking, attitudes, and ideas regarding financial support of education and the several types of educational enterprises ascertained.

Even though there has not been a definite public relations program for the Bethlehem School Community set up until the present time, the principal, having been interested in a school-community relations program for the last year, has learned the key people and the key organizations of the community. The key people of the community are: a prominent farmer who is president of the County Farm Bureau and past P.T.A. president, a county commissioner, a county school board member, two county trustees, one merchant, one farmer, and the county tax collector. The key organizations are: the Masonic Lodge, the Eastern Star, the churches, the Bethlehem Camp, and the Parent-Teacher Association.

**Step II** - Get the key people and key organizations interested in the school-community relations program.

These key people must be educated to and interested in specific phases of the school program for the future. The extent to which the aims of the school system are advanced will be determined largely by the success of the principal in securing the co-operation of the community in this program. Since these men are influential in community affairs, it is very important that their views toward the school program are the same as those maintained by the principal. Much can be

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done by the principal to interest each of these key men in his program by private conversation in which they are encouraged to reveal their attitudes and modes of thinking. During these conversations, the principal should be selling his school and its good points to them. The principal will urge these key men to visit the school regularly. When these visits are made, opportunity should be given for them to see the school program in operation. During the visits these key men should be made to understand and appraise the school program.

These key men can do much to interest the key organizations in the school-community relations program for the Bethlehem community. One of the key men, who is a county school board member, is a member of the Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star, and Parent-Teacher Association. Another one, the past Parent-Teacher Association president is an influential church worker. He also continues to be active in the Parent-Teacher Association, serving as Vice-President for the 1952-53 term. Five of these men are members of the Parent-Teacher Association.

An important factor in establishing professional leadership is the character and nature of the religious, business, fraternal, and social affiliations made by the principal in the community. Too vigorous an assertion of independence in these matters may not serve any good purpose in the interest either of personal freedom or of the school program. The principal will not undertake a position in the community in which his religious affiliation is likely to be a serious handicap to him professionally. It is fair neither to his church nor to his school. He will not hesitate to follow his conscience in the matter of leadership and attendance at his preferred house of worship.
Beyond that point participation in religious affairs may not be wise from the standpoint of his professional success. Participation in any denominational strife not only is undignified, but almost certain to prove disastrous to professional leadership.\(^1\) The principal is a member of the Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star and Parent-Teacher Association. He must be very careful that the contacts he makes by participating in these organizations become aids to professional leadership and to the school.

Probably the most desirable way to interest the Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star, the churches, and the Parent-Teacher Association in better school-community relations is through key men and the teaching staff who are members of these different organizations.

**Step III** - Get the teaching staff interested in a better school-community relations program.

The teachers are the most important single group in the school so far as the school-community relations program is concerned. The situation of the teachers in the Bethlehem community is somewhat different from that in most communities. Most of them live outside the community because of inadequate housing facilities. This does not create a serious problem in school-community relations because the majority of the teachers do take part in community affairs. The principal will aid his teachers through conferences and teachers' meetings to become interested in better school-community relations. The principal can stimulate interest by practicing democracy in planning the school-

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community relations program with the teachers. The teachers should have a thorough knowledge of the school’s aims and of the community. They should participate fully in all activities of the program.

Teachers’ social contacts play a very important part in a school-community relations program. If the school is to gain recognition as an integral part of community life, teachers must participate willingly and cheerfully in the important phases of community activities. This being true, the teachers should be encouraged to join religious and other acceptable organizations in the community. It is believed that this participation is important but not to the point of the teacher’s suffering. The amount which a teacher should do in this better school-community relations program will be determined through conferences and teachers’ meetings.

The reason why teachers should belong to these civic groups is because they are brought into contact through them with the adult members of the community which gives the teachers an insight into the ideals, problems, needs and conditions of the community. This also puts the teacher in a position to interpret the school to the people of the community.

Good teacher-parent relationships are very important in the better school-community relations program. The teacher must show the parents that he is interested in them, their problems, and their children. Since home visits are appreciated by the parents in Bethlehem Community, these should be encouraged. These visits put the teacher in a position to interpret the school to the people of the community.

Step IV - Get the pupils interested in the school-community relations program.
The pupils are very important in the program because they reach almost everyone in the community. To many people the school is what the children say it is. Therefore, it is important to have a happy group of children find satisfaction in their school. The teacher-pupil relationships are an important function of the program. It is necessary for students to be sent home happy and enthusiastic about their daily school experiences. The pupils must recognize the teachers as being truly interested in each one of them. "When pupils like their teachers, they like the school, and parents reflect the feelings of their children."1 Another point to remember is that children grow up. What they will think of schools as adults may have its origin in their own experiences in the school.

These things being true, it is very necessary to have a happy school in order to promote better school-community relations. The school program should be so presented to the pupils as to stimulate and reflect good school-community relations. The mediums through which this will be carried out are: (1) the classroom; (2) the Future Farmers of America and the Future Homemakers of America clubs; (3) the school newspaper; (4) field trips; (5) school exhibits and school assemblies; (6) school athletics; and (7) commencement exercises.

In the classroom, pupils should be made to feel at home. It would be well to have a committee in each classroom to welcome pupils and make them feel at home, and to send flowers to sick children and call their parents and inquire about their children's health.

1Kyte, op. cit., p. 407.
The Future Farmers of America and the Future Homemakers of America Clubs are especially important in the Bethlehem program since this is a rural community. Besides being of educational value to the students, they offer them social contacts. They bring the parents into contact with the school.

The school newspaper is important because students contribute to the publication periodically. Parents enjoy reading the school news and seeing their children’s names in print.

Field trips play an important part in the program in that they bring pupils and teachers before industry, business, and the community. These trips should be carefully planned and their value to a sound program of school-community relations evaluated.

School exhibits and school assemblies are important in that they bring parents into the school and show them their children’s work and what the school is trying to accomplish.

Athletics help interpret the school-community relations program. They promote good will and foster a good school spirit. Their public relations value lies in the opportunities they provide observers to see children actually engaged in athletic contests in which skill, teamwork, and fair play are demonstrated.

In this report, it has been shown that a better school-community relations program is not a program for the principal’s office alone. The principal, teachers, and pupils must work hand in hand.

**Step V - Get newspaper publicity.**

An important avenue through which the public can receive reliable information about the school is through the local newspaper. In the
Bethlehem Community this would have to be the Holmes County Advertiser. The principal's relations with the representatives of the paper are most important. He should cooperate with them in news regarding the school and inform himself concerning what is news, what are news values, and how news stories are prepared. He should keep in mind that because the school is a public institution in which a great majority of the readers of the paper are interested, it may receive free of charge newspaper space for which commercial organizations must pay considerable sums of money, and he should realize the possibilities of that opportunity. He should also realize that because of the fact that the newspapers are read in practically every home and the news therein taken practically at face value, the paper usually constitutes a powerful factor in the moulding of public opinion. In this better school-community relations program, it is important to enlist the aid of the editor of the paper.

Step VI - Organize a school-community relations council composed of teachers and laymen. This council would consist of the principal, two teachers from the primary grades, two from the intermediate grades, two from the junior high grades, two from senior high school, the Parent-Teacher Association's president, the county school board member from the district, the merchant and the county tax collector. This council can evaluate, suggest, or initiate activities.

It must be kept in mind that the program must be thought through not only in relation to the school but also in relation to the community and its reaction. It must be realized that in overt action, progress
can be made only slightly in advance of the community. By the very nature of the organization of public education, this is a principle which is of necessity true, and to fail to observe it and take advantage of it is likely to lead to temporary successes followed by discouraging reverses.

**SUMMARY**

In preparing the guide to the better school-community relations program, an effort has been made to present a means of developing a program through the cooperative efforts of the laymen of the community, the school personnel, students and parents. The techniques recommended could not possibly be instituted by one person or even by two or three, but must represent the united efforts of every one who is in any way connected with the school. The program centers around the laymen of the community, the principal, the faculty, and the students. All others must be invited to participate and made to feel that they are a vital part of the plan also. The program cannot be a principal’s school-community relations program in which he plans and executes these goals, forcing them upon the others. Each teacher must feel free to contribute. The principal becomes the leader in the situation while making his contributions. This is situational leadership. All who make contributions must feel responsible for the outcome of them. With privilege goes responsibility. The faculty meeting is a good place for cooperative planning. Here the aims to be achieved should be mutually agreed upon and plans made for their fulfilment.

In conclusion, the success of the school-community relations
In conclusion, the success of the school-community relations program determines in large measure the degree to which the school can benefit the pupils and the community. It is essential to the welfare of the students. In order to be sure that good school-community relations are maintained, it is essential that an evaluation be made periodically. This should be done by all who are participating. Any adjustments and changes that need to be made can be projected by those affected.
APPENDIX I

The following suggestions found in "Techniques In School Public Relations For Teachers and Administrators," which appeared in the Florida Education Association Bulletin No. 6, of March, 1952, might include ideas stimulating and useful in the Bethlehem situation.

1. Appoint an over-all public relations committee made up of teachers and laymen. This committee can evaluate, suggest, or initiate activities.

2. Know the editor of the local newspaper. Ask him how he wants his news presented. Studies show that parents and taxpayers want most to know about the curriculum and teaching practices, and show least interest in athletics and Parent-Teacher Associations.

3. Set up a committee within the school to send birthday greetings to children on the days of their anniversaries.

4. Have a committee in each classroom to welcome new pupils and make them feel at home.

5. A good alumni association can be a valuable asset in developing pride in the school.

6. Send letters and flowers to sick children; call their parents and inquire about the children's health.

7. Put on demonstration lessons for parents.

8. Send invitations to parents for weekly visits. At the end of the visit ask them, "How can we improve the schools?"

9. Have a good school newspaper.
10. Let teachers appear before the board of education to explain the curricular work they are doing; purpose, aims, results of subject taught.

11. Use every opportunity to get pupils and teachers before the public (service clubs, P.T.A.'s, radio programs).

12. Develop study groups for parents to discuss pertinent problems of given pupil age groups such as in reading, spelling, health.

13. Distribute curricular bulletins to the public explaining how various subjects are taught, and why they are taught as they are.

14. Confer with parents regularly about their children - well in advance of a possible disappointment.

15. Tell parents about the assets and achievements of their children. Notes to parents should carry good news whenever possible.

16. Hold a demonstration class in a store window during American Education Week.

17. Send pupils to homes in neighborhood to conduct a periodic sample survey. They ask, "Do you have any complaints about us?" They report the results to the assembly.

18. Guide children into worthwhile holiday weekend activities.

19. Ask parents to check cards regarding work done by pupils at home.

20. Have parents rate the table conversations at home as an aftermath of classroom instruction.

21. Place facts about your school on programs for plays.

22. Dedicate trees to worthy citizens. (Why not; you'll plant the trees anyway).
23. Prepare bulletins on such subjects as "What Toys Should Santa Bring?", "What Books Should We Give to Children?", "How Does the School Feel about Comics?".

24. Send letter or bulletin to new arrivals in community describing school services.

25. Open gymnasium to parents for evening recreation.

26. Send bulletins to homes regarding recommended radio programs for children.

27. Do one unusually nice thing for (at least) several pupils each day!

28. Prepare materials on vacation opportunities in your vicinity.

29. Send something worthwhile to the child's home every week.

30. Arrange attractive annual exhibit of school materials and pull public in with a big concert, flower show, or play.

31. Write a handbook for parents telling all about your school (faculty, rules, assembly programs, policies, health program, etc.

32. Arrange a series of public meetings on the subject "What Your Child Learns in School."

33. Prepare a check list for parents covering joint responsibilities of school and parent concerning the child.

34. Set up a special committee of teachers and parents to work on the problem of curriculum revision for the high school.

35. Have parents help determine many school policies. Explain problem carefully in a bulletin; ask for their suggestions and opinions.

36. Find out what colleges and industries think of your graduates.
37. Sponsor public forums on pertinent topics.

38. Arrange for teacher-school board conferences on salary and other professional problems.

39. Encourage staff members to join community organizations.

40. Encourage teachers to write for publication.

41. Give complimentary tickets and invitations to strategic people for special school functions.

42. Prepare films or slides to show schools in action.

43. Publish periodic booklets of pupils' poetry, stories, etc.


F.E.A. Service Bulletin No. 5 offers the following "Techniques in School Public Relations" for:

A. Teacher Associations Working with Local County School Boards.

1. Keep them informed by sending Association bulletins and publications.

2. Subscribe to N.E.A. Journal for each board member. (F.E.A. Journal is sent to members of all school boards of the State).

3. Meet with board members to discuss teacher problems and problems concerning the school.

4. and 5. (Omitted)

6. Make wholesome personal contacts: select proper teacher to contact board members.

7. Ask board members for written contributions to the Association bulletin.

8. Secure participation of board members in community affairs of the association.
9. Hold joint professional meetings with worthwhile speakers.

10. Write letters of appreciation of accomplishments of the board.

11. Carry on joint research projects.

12. Invite board members to meetings of the Association.

B. Local Teacher Association Working with the General Public.

13. Sponsor a speakers bureau to service community groups.

14. Organize a film library.

15. Make movies or slides to show school activities.

16. Sponsor forums, Community Discussions.

17. As an association, participate in community-wide projects.

18. Entertain legislators, strategic lay leaders, or prominent public officials.

19. Organize a public relations council composed of teachers and laymen.

20. Encourage teachers to join community organizations, including your local Taxpayers Association and Chamber of Commerce.

21. Prepare appropriate radio broadcasts.

22. Co-sponsor, with commerce and business groups, Education-Industry conferences in your community.

23. Publish an association bulletin or newspaper.


25. Take leading part in sponsoring important community events, such as, on Memorial Day, "I Am An American" Day, or Armistice Day.

26. Use teacher members to put on public plays, dramas, recreational or cultural entertainment.

27. Use the press wisely and well. Cultivate the editors.
J. Local Teacher Associations Working Together in the Profession.


30. Give every teacher something to do in work for the Association.

31. Pep up business meetings with a social hour.

32. Keep membership thoroughly informed by (a) work on committees, (b) regular oral and written reports, (c) general discussion of major problems.

33. Plan all meetings well; secure outstanding speakers from time to time.

34. Hold periodic teas and dinners; don't forget the possibilities of picnics, hikes, camping for all members.

35. Agreement on salary policies.

36. Work together with the superintendent or supervising principal. Mutual confidence is essential for professional growth and advancement.

37. Awards to school with largest attendance at regular meetings of the Association.

38. Notes of appreciation to members doing outstanding work. "The best public relations is to render a good and valuable service." 1

The Florida Education Association's Action Program says county organizations, other local groups, schools, and individual teachers can improve public relations by: (1) noting what children say; (2) conveying proper impressions about teachers and schools; (3) encouraging newspaper articles; (4) arranging local radio programs, store-window displays (with a real story), outdoor poster-displays; (5) using films; (6) planning teacher visits to business-industry; business-industry

1Ibid., F.E.A. Service Bulletin No. 5.
visits to schools; (7) printing school data on reverse seat tickets and programs; (8) setting up panel discussions and study groups composed of both lay and school people; (9) making poll of public opinion for school attitudes; and (10) using all information in The Journal and in F.E.A. pamphlets and bulletins on school needs.¹

¹Ibid.
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