



M. E. C. — I. N. E. P.

CENTRO BRASILEIRO DE PESQUISAS EDUCACIONAIS

Ensino Elementar - Jugoslávia

1959

DISTRIBUIÇÃO

"On the bases of elementary school curriculum"

laid down by the Federal Council of Education

on February 27, 1959

P. 1

par. 2

C. B. P. E.

Jugoslavia

SAVEZNI ZAVOD ZA PROUČAVANJE ŠKOLSKIH I PROSVETNIH PITANJA

Beograd

Federal Institute for Educational Research

ON THE BASES OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM"

laid down by the Federal Council of Education

on February 27, 1959

ON THE BASES OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

laid down by the Federal Council of Education

The General Law on Education has introduced important novelties with respect to the responsibilities of various educational organs in connection with the framing and introduction of the curricula for elementary schools. The essence of the provisions laid down lies in the fact that in the field of the framing and introduction of the curricula the responsibilities are defined ranging from those which the organs for education of the Federation have, those which go to the educational organs of the Republics to those which are left to local educational organs and schools and the organs of social management of schools. The latter are participating for the first time in the process of the framing and completion of the curriculum for elementary schools on the line of ~~its~~ full coordination with the means and conditions of life of the locality in which the elementary school is functioning.

In accordance with these provisions, the Federal Council of Education, as the organ responsible for the introduction of general common bases of curricula for elementary schools in the country, introduced such bases of curricula for elementary schools at its session of February 27 of this year. In this way the educational organs of the Republics, which are responsible for the introduction of curricula, have received for further elaboration the curricula in the several Republics and these

should be ready for the next school year 1959/60.

In view of the fact that the bases of the curricula are being laid down after defining of the new conception of elementary school in accordance with the reform of compulsory education, the Federal Council of Education has decided to set out in the introductory chapters of the "Bases" in a concise way also the basic attitude regarding school, its role and tasks, the framework of its educational function and the character of its internal organization. After the setting out of the general principles upon which the reformed elementary school is being built, a common curriculum for the whole of the country is determined and after that the bases of the syllabus and the elements for organization of other forms of educational work which is done in the school are given.

The basic principles, although set out in a very concise way are important not only because of this document which the Federal Council of Education has introduced, but also because of the fact that they have been laid down at a time when all the educational organs of the several Republics are making preparations for the drafting of their own Republic laws on elementary schools. In this respect they can serve as the starting basis for preparation of those laws.

The elementary school is, it is stated in the introductory part, "an independent social educational institution based upon the principles of social management". It represents the foundation of the entire

educational system and is the basis of every further form of education. It is compulsory for all children of seven to fifteen years of age, and its standard character stems from the common educational aim which the socialist community sets. It is developed upon basically standard socio-pedagogical principles upon which every school develops its internal life in order that it could influence more successfully the general development of the young generation educated in it. Every school undertakes towards this and those pedagogical measures which guarantee to it full success in the educating of youth entrusted to it. The school authorities and teachers are called upon to introduce into the life and work of the school those forms and means of education which under the given conditions contribute the most towards realization of the educational tasks which their school has to fulfill.

Proceeding from the general aim of education set in the General Law on Education, the introduction specifically states the tasks of the elementary schools as of schools which provide the entire young generation with the bases of modern education, and especially equip it with the sound ability to read and write, introduce the pupils into interpretation of appearances, processes and rules of law in nature and society and acquaint them with the values and achievements of science and arts.

The document stresses as a special task the development of love towards work, cultivation of work and formation of work habits, and to this end envisages, in addition to the elements of general technical education also the introduction of elements of production work.

The school is also assigned the task to develop with the pupils the physical and mental abilities, especially the ability of observation, independent and critical judgement etc. Important attention is devoted to the task of physical and health education, as well as artistic, social and moral education.

Being founded upon the principles of social management, the elementary school organizes its internal life and work by building up the pupils' self-government in order to develop with the pupils the spirit of communal life, responsibility and discipline. It has to help the pupils understand the outlooks of development of socialism in our country, it has to be directly connected with the life of the respective locality and to help the pupils understand the problems and tasks of their community and, in cooperation with parents and social organizations, to act as a factor of socialist education.

The curriculum is divided into eleven broad educational fields which during the schooling branch out into specific subjects, so that it is partially based also on the principle of division of subjects. A total number of classes is fixed for every grade, and it depends upon the specific conditions and possibilities of every school how the problem of timetable for the entire work in the school will be solved, as well as the problem of the time devoted to teaching in individual grades. The school life and work demand a new arrangement of work in school, and a longer school day. The work day in the school should in the future embrace, in addition to teaching, also production work, free activities, rest and recreation. As a rule, the pupils will perform most of

their tasks and obligations in the school rather than at home.

In addition to the tasks for every field the bases of the curriculum embrace only the necessary outlines of subject matter for various educational fields. For mother tongue the subject matter is divided into three parts viz.: for I-III grade, for IV-V grade, and finally for VI-VIII grade.

The emphasis during the first years is on the pupil acquiring the skill of reading and developing it to a degree of fluent and logical reading, also developing the skill of proper oral expression and reciting. Parallel with the skill of reading a pupil acquires during these years also the skill of writing and expressing himself in writing and the elementary knowledge of use of words (for subjects and beings, for actions), the composition of sentences, the function of nouns and verbs in a sentence.

From grade IV to VI there is a particular educational field: "study of nature". Here the pupil acquaints himself with those phenomena which are connected with *the* surface of earth, life on earth (earth, its creation and life on it, manifestations of life, man as a living being and his dependence upon plant and animal world, as well as upon a number of other natural phenomena and processes).

The teaching of natural sciences in grades VII and VIII branches out into physics, chemistry and biology as three separate subjects which continue to be closely interconnected. In these grades the pupils acquaint themselves with certain elementary laws of nature, and come

to understand the necessity of acquiring knowledge of natural science in order to be able to understand the world surrounding them and to find their bearings in it. The document sets out the necessary outlines of subject matter for all these three subjects. The emphasis is on those parts which have a broader field of application in modern life. The document especially points out the importance of experiments and laboratory methods in the teaching of these subjects. The teacher is instructed to proceed from concrete technical means used by man in production, transport, industry, as well as from agricultural projects, parcels of land, farms etc. when teaching various phenomena and processes in the field of physics, chemistry and biology.

Mathematics occupies an important place in the education of a pupil by tasks assigned to it, as well as by the subject matter assigned to the various grades. Compared with the former syllabus, certain changes have been made in the subject matter especially in geometry. It is significant that the document thus solves also the problem which has been under discussion during the recent years, namely whether the same level of instruction in mathematics should be provided for children in rural and city schools or whether there should be a difference in the sense of providing higher instruction to city children.

General technical education of pupils of elementary schools runs from the first to the last grade. During the first years the pupils acquire elements of this education through the teaching of all subjects, but from the

fourth grade onward there is a special educational field in which they acquaint themselves with the characteristics and way of treating of various materials; they acquaint themselves with tools and measuring instruments used during basic production processes, they are introduced into technical drawing in order to be able to use them; they acquaint themselves with propelling machinery, transmission mechanism and machine tools and with similar basic knowledge of power; they acquaint themselves with agrotechnics and with the main processes of industrial and agricultural production. In this way the pupils develop interest for engineering in modern life, as well as for technical equipments and materials which are important for the improvement of human life. By working in the school workshop a pupil develops the skill and art of using hands, learns how to properly use and maintain tools, instruments and simple machines.

General technical education, viewed from a broad angle and in conjunction with the teaching of natural sciences, may have a considerable influence on the laying of foundation for production and work education of pupils and on the discovery and realisation of various forms of participation by pupils in production and other work. This particularly comes into consideration during the last grades of elementary school when the school can receive aid from experts in connection with work in school workshops or in workshops of vocational schools. Production work at this age is subject, naturally, to the educational task of the school and to the degree of general development of the pupil.

Knowledge of society as a subject is taught continuously from the first to the last grade. In the first grades (I-III) it is a part of the broad field of "knowledge of nature and society". At that stage the children acquaint themselves with life and work of men in the family and community. In the IV and V grades in the teaching of "knowledge of society" the pupils acquaint themselves with social happenings in the past and in the present on the wider, Yugoslav scale. They acquaint themselves in general lines with Yugoslavia, with the economic-geographic characteristics of wider areas and with the life of men in them. Certain data and illustrations are given simultaneously of the life in the past, and especially about the events in the War of National Liberation and from our recent past, at the same time, comparing, wherever suitable, the happenings in our country with certain important events in other parts of the world. In this way the pupils are introduced, by means of important events in the life of our country and peoples, into the understanding of the achievements of brotherhood and unity, love towards our peoples is developed with them as well as respect for rights of other peoples.

In the final years of schooling the "knowledge of society" teaching branches out into specified fields, namely: history, geography, bases of economic and social systems, as well as bases of socialist morals. These parts have to be closely interconnected, they have to complement one another and to represent a certain complete whole.

After the introduction in the VI grade, in which basic knowledge is furnished of general geography which is necessary for acquainting of pupils with geographic

regions, one passes over to teaching about Europe and this is taken by broader geographic areas and their basic physical-geographical and economic characteristics. Other continents are dealt with in the VII grade, while the VIII grade is devoted to the study of the FPRY, its geographic position, size and physical-geographic characteristics by broader regions. A short study is made of population, populated areas and structure of population by occupations.

On the basis of the Constitution of the FPRY, the social system, the People's Committees and their functions are dealt with, a review is made of the People's Republics; basic data are given on the economy of the FPRY and on its development, in particular on the economy of the Communes, on the mechanism of management of enterprises, cooperatives and so on.

History is taught from the VI grade onward taking a number of important historical events and happenings by a certain chronological order. The pupils acquaint themselves with the basic features of life and with various periods of development at the beginning of communal life, in the ancient Greek and Roman period, in the development of the Middle Ages and Modern Time, and especially with the most important events and historical figures in the history of our peoples during their struggle for liberation.

The final grade of schooling is devoted to the introduction of pupils into the understanding of the happenings and events in the immediate past, into the develop-

ment of the War of National Liberation, and especially into the development of the socialist social system in our country. On the basis of current themes the pupils are introduced into the understanding of the present day picture of the world, the struggle for peace in the world, the role played by our country etc.

A strong effect of the school on the social-moral plane begins with the beginning of schooling and extends to all forms of educational influence which the school organizes. Under the curriculum the bases of socialist morals are introduced in the final grades (VII and VIII) as a specific educational field in which the pupils are given particular help in the fixing of certain basic ethical values. It is significant that the framing of the programme of work in this field is left to the teaching staff of the school on the basis of the needs and conditions of life of the surroundings of the pupils, while the life of man in our socialist community and the social relations developing in that community are taken as the basis. In this way the studies will be more interesting to the pupils and more approachable to them, while systematization of certain ethical ideas will rest upon what a pupil experiences.

From V to VIII grade the pupils learn one of the foreign languages which are taught in the school.

In view of their significance in modern education and in the building up of a fully developed person, physical and health education occupy their proper place in the curriculum and in the bases of the syllabus, as well as in the setting of general tasks for the elementary school. In addition to teaching, physical and health education is

carried out in sports and physical culture organizations which function within the framework of the school. The school is also called upon to organize camping, summer vacation centers and excursions for the pupils as well as recreation exercises. It has to concern itself with the health of the pupils, to organize health protection for the pupils. To this end, in cooperation with corresponding social organizations, the school starts various activities and finds funds for providing better food for the children and so on.

Specific tasks have been placed in the bases of the physical education programme and means and forms of educational work have been determined. In the beginning grades there is to be every day a short physical exercise lasting for up to thirty minutes, while from the III to VIII grade there is to be at least three classes a week. The school is called upon to introduce, in cooperation with the physicians, special "corrective" gymnastics exercises for those pupils who need such exercises. There are games once a week during the afternoon for grades I-IV, and a whole day of games and sports for grade V-VIII. It is necessary to make during the course of the year, at least six excursions into the country, for the beginning grades half day excursions and for other grades full-day excursions.

Arts and music education have a more favourable place in the curriculum than had been the case in the hitherto curricula.

Arts education broadens the field of work and, in addition to drawing envisages also painting, model making, aesthetic appraisal of works of art. In the beginning grades particular attention is devoted to the leaving of the

pupil to his own impressions, while later on he is directed how to observe and find out numerous visual facts presented to him. Attention is also devoted to activities in the field of applied arts in order to develop with the pupils the ability to appreciate beauty in daily life.

Music education is not limited as it had been up till now to singing and to the learning of the basis of theory of music, but is expanded to include instrumental music beginning with percussion instruments which the children freely choose. The pupils are gradually acquainted with works of famous composers and are taught how to differentiate between various instruments and their functions in an orchestra.

Beginning with the VI grade, the curriculum contains domestic science as a subject with the aim of developing with the pupils the sense of modern home economics, for a rational organization of work and rest, for saving of material, expenditure of power etc. The pupils are acquainted with the modern way of life at home and in the family (diet, housing, clothing) as well as with organization of social services for households and in community centers.

x x x

In accordance with the demands expressed in the provisions of the General Law on Education which pertain to organization of internal life and work in elementary school, the "Bases" also set out the propositions regarding the need of expansion of educational work to new domains outside the teaching process and to the introduction of new forms of school activities. The so-called "free activities" of pupils are separately dealt with. In principle,

these are activities which are organized upon the principle of children's self-government. The conducting of these activities is left to the pupils and to Pioneer Organizations. The school, the parents and the social organizations endeavour to help a pupil to discover proper activities during the school year.

With respect to the organization and form of free activities, every school proceeds from its conditions and possibilities, so that it would be harmful to introduce here any universal schemes. The need is stressed of developing of a certain independence of pupils's organizations in the laying down of the programme of work.

Free activities are a part of educational work of the school.

From their early childhood the pupils express a desire to make something. The school should satisfy this desire of theirs and, within the framework of its activities, obligatorily introduce various forms of work activities, on certain levels, also those activities which have the character of production. Thus, in the elementary school already work will become an integral part of the life of a pupil, while work education will become one of the factors of reduction of difference between physical and intellectual work.

The character and forms of work and production education are, naturally, determined by the degree of psycho-physical development of the pupils and by the tasks of the elementary school. In the laying down of the programme of this work every school is independent. The school proceeds from its actual conditions and possibilities, but this work has to be based upon the teaching in general, and in

particular upon the teaching of natural sciences and general technical education.

It would be unjustified to limit this work in rural schools to only activities of an agricultural character, and in cities exclusively to activities of an industrial character. In a city it is possible to find also a series of activities within the framework of communal work (the putting in order of grass plots, parks, afforestation, harvesting, etc.) cultivation of school gardens, model plots), while in rural districts, in addition to agricultural work various technical plants may also be used. In both cases school work shops and plants of various suitable enterprises may be used.

Pupils' cooperatives are recommended as a suitable form of work. These cooperatives should have their plots, work shops and other material means for work. The cooperatives function upon the principle of pupils' self-government.

The role of elementary school, especially in the rural districts is not limited to only work with children but is extended on educational questions to cooperation with the family and social organizations of the respective place.

X

In the final part of the "Bases" demands are made for the elevation of the material basis of elementary schools, especially for the development of school space, equipping with modern teaching aids and other means necessary for work.

The introduction of the "Bases of curricula for elementary schools" represents the end of a stage of deve-

lopment of a new type of eight-year elementary school. A social-pedagogical foundation has been laid for its internal development in which should further participate not only the Republic organs of education but also the local organs of education and the teaching staffs.

Beograd, May 1959