Parents Assn. investigation to analyze, verify curriculum

To verify rumors and analyze the current curriculum, the Parents association will launch a curriculum investigation this year, Mr. Stuart Rice, the association’s chairman of school policy and wounded veteran of the university, will lead the investigation.

According to Mr. Rice, “the main goal of the association’s investigation is to gain an understanding of what the curriculum is and why it is that way.”

“MORE SPECIFICALLY, we plan to check out a number of good and bad rumors we’ve heard to see how, or if, the separate curriculums are correlated so as to balance out student work loads; and that the students with certain credit requirements to meet.

“We’re beginning with no presuppositions,” he continued. “Our feeling is that the curriculum is good, but we need any definitions, we will by all means make suggestions. But the power of suggestion is an effective weapon,”

Mr. Rice said that the idea for the investigation originated when members of the association were told that several curriculums were being abridged to accommodate the May Project where, for one month, seniors work on outside jobs or on individual projects.

TO FIND out how the abridgement was possible, the association decided on a curriculum investigation.

In the money

Once the midyear staff has paid enough bills, it will offer four or five more interviews. The association hopes to raise more than $10,000 this year, in order to pay the four, or five interviewers.

Who decides how U-High teachers teach?

Who decides how teachers at U-High will teach? Some of the teachers that U-Highers consider radical — those who employ highly experimental ideas in their curriculum, attendance and grade procedures — agreed that the decision is a combination of administrative and departmental requirements.

The individual teacher must formulate his course by interpreting these requirements, they said. It is conceivable, they added, that two teachers will not teach a course the same way.

MR. FAPL BELL, Social Studies teacher, pointed out that is courses offered by the Social Studies department will differ depending on a course’s teacher. He feels that his department’s main concern is to avoid overlap in the material covered by other courses and offered that the Social Studies department is doing its job well.

MR. KEVIN BERTNICK, French teacher, said that his department makes most of the decisions concerning the material to be covered. It is his job to interpret and expand on these instructions and present the material to the students, he said.

He feels that since this is a laboratory school, teachers must be willing to risk being wrong in experimenting with curriculum.

ENGLISH TEACHER JAMES CRAWFORD, also sighted, said that his department was flexible in his course planning once the requirements are met. The teachers

Mr. Bertonick gave everyone in all his classes A’s, cause, she said, “It was an ac­ceptance of the system’s ideas. SLC and U-High’s student body, especially from this year, have not contacted him concerning the committee’s work, but somebody told me they were going to court and I haven’t heard from them since.”

Speaking further of group organi­zation for curriculum reform, Mr. Rinne cited the curriculum dia­logues of black students and the Council on Race Relations, which includes students, parents and faculty members. He also noted that last year sev­eral students came to him with a proposal for new curriculum opportunities and independent study into a faculty meeting.

“I THINK we were well re­ceived,” he said, “but I don’t think it much came of it, except for the proposal for the May Project, which did indeed affect the curric­ulum.”

Mr. Rinne believes that faculty student dialogue on curriculum must be promoted so open and honest talk can take place result­ing in the school reorganizing stu­dent needs which up to now may have gone unnoticed.

“I would not want students mak­ing professional decisions,” he clarified, “but I definitely would want students to say ‘where it hurts,’ as the patient would say to the doctor, and I’d want the profes­sionals to stand ready to diag­nose the situation and also ready with the treatment. In this regard, we’ve only gotten started.”

Student effect on curriculum limited

Twelve Social Studies IV stu­dents are organizing a comprehen­sive study of U-High. According to their adviser, Social Studies Teach­er Earl Bell, the purpose is to learn investigative techniques and more about the school.

Junior Dinny Gottlieb, a partici­pant, said, “I think students have been wanting to do for years, in a factual, legitimate manner so they’ll listen and make im­provements.”

The May Project proposal was to coordinate the spare time of the teachers and that of the members of the association’s plans, Prin­cipal Carl Rinne, the curriculum, to find out how the structure and goals of U-High curriculum, the Parents association will launch a curriculum investiga­tion this year. Mr. Stuart Rice, the association’s chairman of school policy and professor of chemistry at the university explained, “will coordinate the spare time of the teachers and that of the members of the asso­ciation for interviews.”

Of the association’s plans, Prin­cipal Carl Rinne said, “I would welcome any curriculum investiga­tion by a responsible party. I think the school curriculum needs a thoughtful study and recommend­ations.

TOLD Mr. Rice there to learn French,” he said, “I have been wanting to do for years, in a factual, legitimate manner so they’ll listen and make im­provements.”

Through interviews and ques­tionnaires the group will gather data on faculty-student and adminis­tration-student relationships, philo­sophy behind the school, decision­making, class structure, curricu­lum and economics.

The group plans, next month, to compile its findings, with recom­mendations, in a book to be pre­sented to the administration.

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ALL DEPARTMENTS HERE USE EXPERIMENTAL TEACHING METHODS

By Bruce Gans

The closer U-Higher gets to graduation, the more conventional the Laboratory Schools look to him.

Freshmen and sophomores questioned by this reporter called U-High's curricular structure a "flexible" one. Juniors, on the other hand, call it experimental at best. Freshmen cited freshman learning projects—indeed student-designed and student-run courses of study through a mythological community called Zinevally—indeed independent learning component.

They also pointed to the May Project which will give seniors the opportunity to base their senior year on a self-designed curriculum, a "flexible" one. A senior, speaking on behalf of the entire class, said: "The May Project is important in class."

But Juniors Emily Mann, typical of juniors and seniors, is impressed with the laboratory aspects of the schools, said: "Most kids believe this is a lab school. That's because the administration tells it to us. But I don't believe it.

"The Freshman Project has been around for years and lots of schools have classes with friendly atmosphere, friendly atmosphere don't experiment."

Mr. Fred Langendorf was unimpressed with the laboratory methods used at U-High. He said: "I've been to a few schools from which the students generally come. Some are quite 

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Mr. Gregor Heggen, a German teacher, prefers a more traditional approach to the study of languages. He believes that students should learn the grammar and vocabulary of a language in a structured manner.

Mr. Frank Tirro, music chair, agreed with Mr. Heggen that the introduction of a new music course was a "flexible" one. He believes that students should be given the opportunity to choose the music they want to study and to work at their own pace.

Mr. David Stameshkin, social studies teacher, said: "Our school is in an untraditional direction. "It is impossible to learn world history in one year," he explained. "Our school is in an untraditional direction. For the first time, the study of world history has been divided into five sections, each covering a different historical period. This approach is designed to allow students to explore different aspects of world history in depth."

Mr. Edgar Bernstein, social studies teacher, said: "We think the social studies curriculum is in an untraditional direction. "It is impossible to learn world history in one year," he explained. "Our school is in an untraditional direction. For the first time, the study of world history has been divided into five sections, each covering a different historical period. This approach is designed to allow students to explore different aspects of world history in depth."

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Views on school vary with class levels

By Joe Thomas

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News and sports roundup: Three tries and you're out

- Trying for their third win, U-High's Prep Bowl Quiz team was defeated by Tinley Park February 1, 20-46.
- Social Studies Teacher Edgar Bernstein is producer of "Slow Dance on the Killing Ground" at Harper Court theater, 53rd and Harper streets (see advertisement this page).
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In two of their roughest meets this year, according to Coach Ed Pounder, U-High's swimmers beat Mt. Carmel 48-47, January 7 there, and Fenger (second ranked in city last year) 49-46, January 28, here.

Maroons were paced by Senior Peter Schoen who, in the Fenger meet, broke the U-High pool record in the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:04.3. Qualifying time for this year's state meet is 1:06.7.

The basketball team's season isn't going as well, with Coach Sandy Paliak predicting a fifth place league finish.

With their best team ever, according to Coach Margaret Mates, the girls basketball team, 4-1, has lost only to Aquinas high school, 41-29, January 31, here. Aquinas is the third ranked girl's team in the city.

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As our readers see it: Blacks protest editorial

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We, the Black Students, vehemently protest to the Midway’s editorial “Invalid means to valid ends,” which appeared in the Jan. 28 issue.

First, where have you gotten your information about “the Black Student Association—an coalition of 20 black U-Highers”?! At the time this article was published, the Black Students Alliance did not formally exist. It only lived as a dream in the minds of most U-High black students and black teachers, and, evidently, it lived as a misconception in the minds of the Midway. Due to this misinform-ation, we regard your holding a non-existent organization responsible for the actions of a very small number of students who happen to be black, as “invalid.”

SECOND, YOUR analysis of the situation with the three black teachers is far from accurate. One of the men teachers did decide he could be more beneficial in the ghetto, that is true. We were unable to contact the lady who applied, but four of our black colleagues did talk to the other gentleman, who had reservations about taking the job because he felt he was being used as a guinea pig.” As a result of our discussions with him, we began to have doubts about our administration’s liberality.

Third, we hope the Midway has mitigated Dean Carmichael and Mr. Ford by the respective use of the articles “a” and “an” in their personal estimations of the need for black teachers. The quotations connote a need for one black teacher, and in the words of one white U-High faculty member, “It is ridiculous to say, ‘Don’t you see?’ We would hope that our Administrators did not mean what they said literally. But evidently the Midway interpreted them in exactly this way, when you say, “it would be easier for two teachers to face the problems here than one.”

Fourth, we would like to commend the Midway for saying our demands for Afro-American his-tory “are valid.” We would also like to applaud your contention that black teachers should be paid a higher salary, so that we will have not only black teachers, but the best black teachers available.

Therefore, we think that your “liberal” idea of having an overwhelming swarm of “at least two black teachers” weeps on tokenism. We think it would be much more realistic to speak in terms of “at least lovers” or “at least as many as possible.” You are suggesting racial quotas for our faculty. The only quota which should regulate the composition of our faculty is whether we have 5% Chinese teachers, or 5% Roman Catholic teachers, but rather that we have 10% superior teachers be they of any race, creed, or color.

Fifth, even when one considers your mistaken “facts,” the tone of your letter with its accompanying cartoon raises serious questions about your liberalism. The RSA (which now does exist) considers your comparison of us to a baby in a crib to be most insulting. The students on RSA’s working com-mittees are, in most cases, the same students who have been working hand-in-hand with the Administration for some time. Members of RSA are people who have found new directions by working for what they want, instead of merely demanding we be given something. That is maturity. Con-sidering your misconceptions about our organization, we think a polital apology via another Midway edi-torial would be quite in order.

We were quite amused by the 20-second editorial about an un-named Administrator who “worked with the STAC!” 20 years ago. We wonder about the bases on which you decided that he “has outraged any of them in the field of racial equality.” What does journalism teach you about broad generalizations?

Finally, we want to publicly commend Bruce Gans for his authentically liberal stance, and we agree that at this point, we “only understand results.” Gans’ dark star in the midst of the Midway’s white void is not entirely surprising. After all, even one of our Administrators worked for black people 20 years ago.

Editor’s note: Existence of the Black Student Association prior to the January close of the school was undisputed by U-High administration. However, the current January 22 and 28, Dean of Students Donald Carmichael had acknowledged RSA’S existence before the paper was published. The Midway would be happy to publish this information in conjunction with the three black teachers, but the paper meeting none. The au-thor’s editorial section is based on facts and logical argument, not on the basis of a person’s editorial position.

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