

TRUMP VILLAGE NEWS

The Official Newspaper of Brooklyn's Largest Cooperative

April-May, 1969

Progressive New High School To Open September 1969

By Arlene Yanowitz

Throughout the ages, man has always moved ahead. Someone always had a new idea, a new thought, and he was willing to stake his very existence and life to prove his idea. We all know the results. We will land a man on the moon; medical science has increased the life expectancy of man from 45 years old at the turn of the century to 65 today. We live in an era of excitement, innovation.

A public relations man would bill the John Dewey High School on Stillwell Avenue, as the most exciting and innovating high school in the country. He would call it progressive, fantastic, impressive, thrilling, and many other more descriptive adjectives.

The school, costing ten million dollars, will open in the fall and will be the only school in the city and perhaps the nation, that will not grade its students. The school day will run for eight hours and 25% of the day will be utilized by the students for any subject he wishes to pursue. He can use it to reinforce his subject weaknesses, get a head start on his homework, or do an independent study on political science, literature, or bot-

any

ist to help him. In this manner, little problems never become big ones.

Who will go to John Dewey High School? A priority system has been developed. Youngsters in School District 21 (our district) will get first preference and then applications will be open to the rest of the borough. The school will have a capacity for 3,000 stu-

dents and will operate on a single session from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

The Board of Education calls this school a "laboratory of educational innovation". Who among us is ready to "lay it on the line" with the result of potentially rich rewards or do we accept only the status quo, the tried and true and stay in the same place.

The "fifty minute hours" will be changed to twenty minute "learning modules" which could be ignored if the class is deep in a learning exercise. Five seven week sessions of 35 days each, with two optional summer sessions, will replace the present two semester plan. At the end of each session, students and teachers will evaluate the students' progress. Those who have satisfactorily progressed will go on and those who are having difficulty will have their specific weakness reinforced. The programs will be geared to the individual student and he can progress at his own rate of speed. He can finish school in three, four, or five years.

The youngsters have expressed tremendous enthusiasm, but some parents have been hesitant. The hesitant ones fear the "permissiveness" potential, but Dewey will be a difficult school and once a student has advanced, he will have mastered the subject. Others have worried about college admission chances that may be hurt because there are no grades and no such thing as a high school average. In lieu of a percentage, the records will show the programs of independent study pursued by a youngster, what kinds of electives he has taken, portfolios of his own work in music, math or science, advanced placement courses, and national tests scores. This may offer a truer picture on a broader scope of an individual student than the conventional percentage.

Dr. Joshua Segal will be the first principal and is calling his new school an "educational palace" utilizing the latest and most modern techniques. He believes that grades are a hindrance to learning, are a temptation for cheating and really do not show what a student really knows. The school will train students for a real world and equip them with the tools necessary to deal with it.

The independent study technique is especially valuable. Failure to work independently is one of the major causes of college dropout in the freshman year. The optional resources center is another strong feature of the school. A student who runs into difficulty with algebra can sit down in a special room in his "free time" and try to work it out on his own or, failing that, he can find a teacher special-