

Junior High Schools Focus for New Science Education Project

This month some 3000 junior high schools in Colorado, North Carolina, and Ohio will receive packages of information, ideas, and resource materials as part of the new Science Resources for Schools Project.

The states will be the first to participate in Science Resources for Schools (SRS)—a 3-year pilot project which will attempt to link schools with the scientific community. The project is directed by the AAAS and funded by a grant from the Standard Oil Company (Ohio).

SRS packages will include a variety of information and materials selected from:

- *Posters Plus*. Wall posters visually depicting substantive science and accompanied by background leaflets which discuss the concepts and principles in the poster and suggest imaginative ideas for classroom, library, or other school settings.

- *Ideas in Science: Notes for Teachers*. Illustrated leaflets with useful background information on up-to-date topics to help teachers understand science in new ways.

- *Doing Science*. Activity sheets designed to help teachers involve students in projects and activities relating to everyday phenomena.

- *Science in Perspective: A Bulletin for Principals*. Background discussions

which relate important issues in science and science education to the world of the school. It will address ways and means of improving science in schools.

- *Opportunities in Science*. Pamphlets and fact sheets on science careers.

- *Dialogue: Science Resources for Schools*. A project newsletter for communicating between AAAS and participating schools.

- *Science in Schools: A Policy Review*. An annual summary of policies, practices, new directions in science education; a review of key issues which bear on the quality of science in the schools.

- *Science 83*. The AAAS's award-winning magazine of popular science.

- *Science Books & Films*. A review magazine of books, films, video cassettes, and filmstrips about science.

SRS will concentrate on the critical junior high school level because it is often at this level (ages 12, 13, and 14) that students begin to make decisions about what they can and cannot do. The goal of the project is to give every student a strong background in science and mathematics, regardless of their ultimate career goals.

F. James Rutherford, AAAS chief education officer, describes the SRS as being "a unique partnership between state and local governments, a corpora-

tion, and the scientific community." Rutherford will direct the SRS project.

SRS will work to overcome a serious national weakness in science and mathematics education. "Today we realize that science education is important for all students in our schools," said Rutherford. "They will need a solid science and mathematics education in order to be good citizens in a technological world, to qualify for jobs in the decades ahead, and to better relate to the natural world around them. In doing this it is particularly important that we reach out to minority youngsters, girls, and children from poor families for they are a crucial resource for our future."

Another AAAS program aimed at junior high schools is "Challenge of the Unknown." This project will produce and distribute to schools a series of films, microcomputer programs, and teacher notes, all focused on using mathematical problem-solving in situations of real interest in the middle grades. The Phillips Petroleum Corporation is funding "Challenge of the Unknown."

In addition, the Association is working to improve science practices and policies nationwide. AAAS formed the Coalition for Education in the Sciences, an alliance of affiliated science and engineering societies that are concerned about the state of science and mathematics education in the United States. The Coalition publishes *Science Education News* and will initiate a number of projects designed to help improve the quality of science and mathematics education.

AAAS also is continuing its involvement in the Chautauqua Short Courses for College Science Teachers program as well. During the 1983-84 academic year, a reduced number of Chautauqua short courses is being organized by the regional field center directors and AAAS. All of the courses will be offered during the spring of 1984.

Through this range of activities, and others such as Annual Meeting symposia, the "Focus" and "Report on Science" radio shows, and articles in *Science* and *Science 83*, the Association is working to focus the attention of both the general public and the scientific and engineering community itself on the causes of poor science and mathematics education and to initiate concern and action that will improve the situation.

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Insurance Program Announcement

The AAAS Group Term Life Insurance Program is now administered by the Smith-Sternau Organization, Inc., and underwritten by the New York Life Insurance Company. These changes went into effect 1 September 1983 (see *Science*, 5 August 1983, p. 541) and are part of the Association's efforts to offer an attractive and cost-effective insurance program to members.

All members who are current policyholders in the AAAS group life insurance program should have received information from Smith-Sternau explaining any steps necessary for the transfer. Any member policyholder who has not received this information by mail should contact Smith-Sternau *immediately* to avoid any lapse in insurance coverage.

For more information, please contact Gwen Wilhelm, the Smith-Sternau service representative, at 800-424-9883 (toll-free); in the Washington, D.C., area call 296-8030; or write to: Administrator, AAAS Group Term Life Insurance Program, 1707 L Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036.
