

# Grange Day

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Further, he said that education needs to become socially ingrained as something that is done lifelong, not just until finishing required courses.

He said that considering education as a temporary part of life may have been satisfactory when people's jobs didn't change much over a generation, and people worked at one job or business for their entire working career.

However, the modern work environment requires that workers be flexible and knowledgeable. That means, he said, that education must be considered as something that is continuous.

The charge to parents, teachers, community and political leaders is to not shortchange youth by underestimating what they need, what they can do, and by not undermining their potential by underproviding appropriate resources and expectations.

He said agricultural education is not what is used to be, it's more sophisticated. In Pennsylvania there is to be more money directed toward agricultural education, he said, because it requires scientific, technical and cutting edge knowledge.

Further, he said that an incentive program is to provide students in grades K-12 with a better understanding of the agricultural industry.

He said the vision for Pennsylvania agricultural education is being developed and will require the cooperation between Penn State University, agricultural educators, the state Department of Agriculture and the state Department of Education.

He said that currently efforts are underway to try to put together regional standards for agricultural education, to use the World Wide Web to link classrooms, as well as working with other states for remote educational opportunities. He said that if the audience were aware of all that has been done, "I think you would be pleased with the direction."

He said there is a lot more to be done.

Hickok said that perhaps the most important issue is academic standards.

He said work is being done on state standards of achievement, so that, for the first time, a bottom line of achievement can be established.

For example, he said that in a college course, students are given a syllabus, which is an outline of the course and expectations of students. He said it helps the student and the college professor, because they can both be held accountable to each other.

What is sought, he said, are state standards for the different major disciplines. Benchmarks for standards are being set with other states, he said.

He did emphasize that what is

being developed is not curriculum. "That will always be at the local level," he said.

The standards will be "... what we think they ought to know to remain competitive."

Testing, he said, isn't an adequate measure of a student's ability. What it means is that a student tested well one day. "It doesn't say how proficient a student is in the subject. We want both. That is the system we're moving toward. Performance and accountability, that's what education needs to emphasize."

He said that with the state taxpayers paying \$14 billion this year for public education, the system ought to be open to improvement and public knowledge about what is going on.

He said every school district (with a population over 3,000) is being profiled by the state, and

information on teaching, curriculum, courses, and "hundreds of pieces of information" compiled on each so that comparisons can be made by people.

The goal is to "reconnect people to public schools," he said.

Four years ago, the state budget had one line item for educational technology and distant learning. It was \$500,000 and directed to libraries. This year with a mix of federal, state and local funds, there is to be \$225 million delivered to schools for improvements in technology.

The Linked-to-Learn program has been ranked tops in the nation, he said.

"It sounds like a gimmick, but I've seen it make a tremendous difference." He said that in a small school in Clinton County the students were linked to a college and now have access to a network of

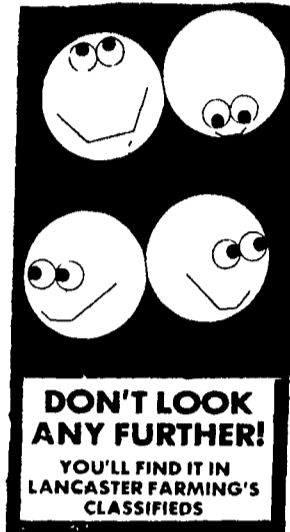
educational resources bigger than the state of Connecticut.

In another example, he said a rural physician would annually leave his practice for a week to travel for professional development. With computer technology and linked-to-learn, he is now able to achieve the same professional development without having to leave his patients without a readily available physician.

However, Hickok said, "Technology will never take the place of the classroom. The classroom is part of what makes education happen. It is a tool."

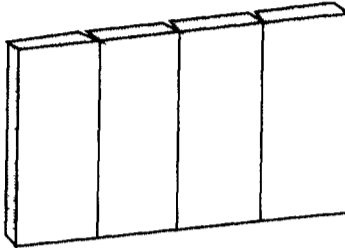
"Through the smart use of technology, we're seeing not just small, but dramatic improvements."

He described one district in which there was a 25 percent increase in math scores one year after using new technology.



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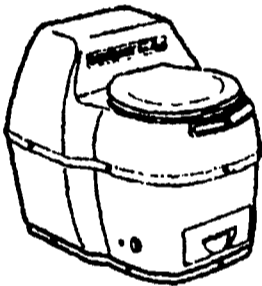
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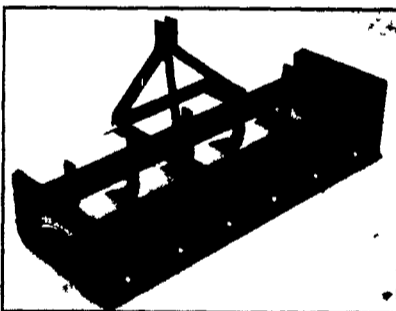
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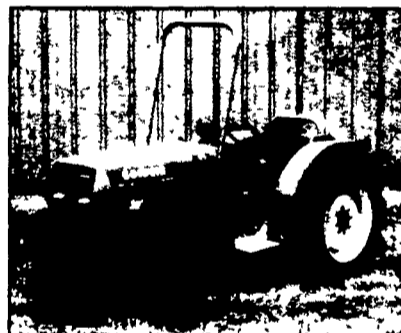
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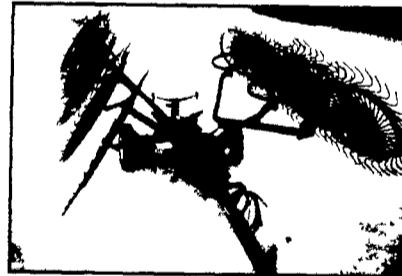
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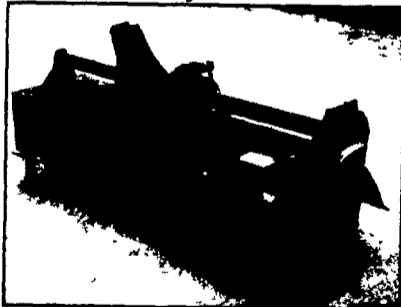
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