

CAVERLY TO RETIRE

Superintendent To End

32 Years Of Service

Ernest R. Caverly, Superintendent of the Brookline Public Schools, recently announced his intention to retire from his post in January 1964. The nationally-known educator has served Brookline for almost 33 years.

Dr. Caverly was born in Boston and educated in the Boston Public Schools and at Boston Latin School. He then attended Harvard University from which he was graduated cum laude in 1915.

The new teacher received his first experience when at the age of twenty, he taught at Mill Brook, a small private school in Concord, Mass. Since then, he has served only in public school systems; he taught at both junior and senior highs in Springfield, Mass.; he was principal over 425 students in Brattleboro, Vt.; he was Director of English in the Public Schools of Newton; and he was principal of Drury High in North Adams, Mass.

With this brilliant record behind him, Dr. Caverly came to Brookline in 1930 to serve as Headmaster of the High School. He remained in this post one year only, for in 1931 he was invited to succeed Oscar C. Gallagher as Superintendent of the Brookline Public Schools.

"Practically all my time and thought is devoted to the schools themselves," the Superintendent told the SAG in a special interview, "but I do maintain several outside or related activities." He is active in the Baptist Church locally and in the Massachusetts Council of Churches. He has been a member of the Board of the YMCA for more than 20 years, and a member of the Board of Governors of the Huntington School for over ten years. He is a life member of the National Education Association, and a member of the New England School Development Council which he was the first chairman from 1946-47). In addition he is a past President of the Brookline Kiwanis Club

(1934), and a Past Master of the Brookline Lodge of Masons.

"I have also done a great deal of traveling," he said. "This highlighted my trip to the USSR in 1959



Dr. Caverly

under the auspices of the Brookline School Committee and the National Education Association."

An average day for Dr. Caverly begins at 6:00 a.m., when he gets up to check the weather to answer approximately fifty phone calls when there is a possibility of no school. ("Incidentally," he added, "this is the first year since I have been Superintendent that no school has been called off.") He arrives at his office at 8:00, a simply furnished, functional room on the street level of the Town Hall, supplied with a constantly ringing phone

and little children giggling at the window. He then begins the tedious task of checking departments, reviewing applications for teaching positions, handling the unexpected, and managing, in general, the spending of the \$4 million allotment for schools in the town budget. His time is usually divided between the schools and his office. "While I'm busy in one place, he stated, work piles up in the other. The telephone of course, speeds up my job, but it increased my responsibility because of my increased accessibility."

He leaves his office at 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening, but he often must attend meetings.

Many changes have taken place in the Brookline Public Schools, particularly at the High School, since Dr. Caverly first became Superintendent in 1931. At that time there were 1500 students at the high school, one guidance counselor, one secretary, and 73 members of the faculty. Today there are 2400 students, 10 guidance counselors, 10 secretaries, and twice as many faculty members. There was no house plan until 1933, when Dr. Caverly personally proposed and also urged it. The program of studies was more rigid then. It didn't have the flexibility and variety we have today; there were five curricula, of which a student chose

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one, and took the course offerings comprising with it. There are many more subjects offered today resulting from the growth of the school and increased consciousness of the need to put each student in a class where he can be successful. Alpha Pi was given up several years ago in favor of the National Honor Society and activities have increased. In 1931 there was no assistant Superintendent of Schools, no business agent, no chief guidance counselor, and very few clerks. There was an adult education program then which has continued to grow and be successful, but there was no summer school until last year.

Dr. Caverly has seen many trends in the schools during his 33 years of service. To begin with, there

has been an emphasis on decreasing class size, increasing guidance (both formal and that of the adjustment counselors for students with special problems), diversification of curricula, and re-evaluation of courses (made necessary by recent growth in math and science. In addition there has been an organized interest in the schools on the part of the community. Dr. Caverly explained "There wasn't a single PTA when I became Superintendent--now there is one in every school and a Council for Public Schools to unite. These groups have been extremely useful as they formalize the community's interest in schools, not just in general, but in particulars."

After retirement, Dr. Caverly hopes to relax and travel.

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