

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**  
**ROBERT NELSON BUSH**  
**(1914 - 1994)**

Robert Nelson Bush, Professor of Education, Emeritus, died of congestive heart failure at his Stanford campus home on March 5, 1994. He was 80, having been born in Sterling, Colorado on February 1, 1914.

Robert Bush was one of the nation's foremost specialists in the field of teacher education -- the enterprise of determining what teachers ought to know and how they ought to learn it and teach it. He worked at Stanford in designing the award-winning Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP), which began in the early 1960's and is still operating in ways highly similar to its original design. In another early project, one for the study of school systems and their improvement, he introduced anthropological perspectives, a hitherto unused way of examining schools and classrooms, by bringing then assistant professor of anthropology George Spindler into the project. Spindler went on to become the pioneer and still leading figure in the anthropological study of education.

Professor Bush served as chairman of the National Commission on Teacher Education and National Standards of the National Education Association and was an adviser, consultant, and director of field studies for many local, state, regional, and national as well as international groups. He was a consultant to the Ford Foundation on secondary education and teacher education for countries in South America, Africa, Australia, Oceania, and Europe, and was a member of a UNESCO Seminar on Teacher Education held in the Philippines for Asian educators.

Bush joined the Stanford faculty in 1945, after teaching at Menlo School and College and serving for two years as dean of the faculty at Kansas State Teachers College. He had earned bachelor's and master's degrees in history and political science at the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, in 1935 and 1937. He then went on to earn his doctorate in higher education at Stanford in 1941 under Alvin C. Eurich.

In 1959 Bush launched the innovative Stanford Teacher Education Program with a \$900,000 Ford Foundation grant. The program prepares students for secondary school teaching and provides a master's degree in education with a credential in subject areas. A unique feature consists of part-time teaching by the Stanford students throughout the entire school year instead of the several weeks or two months of practice teaching

common in most other teacher preparation programs. These STEP arrangements served to initiate Stanford's cooperation with local school systems that is now an important part of Stanford's research, service, and leadership in working with community schools.

In 1964 Bush collaborated with Professor Nathaniel L. Gage in leading the development of a successful School of Education proposal for what became the federally funded Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching (SCRDT). The Center operated from 1965 to 1976 and led the world in those years in the development of new approaches to the study of teaching. Bush and Gage were co-directors from 1965 to 1968, whereupon Bush became the director until his retirement in 1976.

For its first seven years the Center was located off campus; but in the late 1960's Bush took the initiative in competing for funds through which the U.S. Office of Education was then supporting the construction of new facilities for educational research and development. Bush personally developed a successful proposal and then collaborated with architects in designing the functional building now called CERAS (Center for Educational Research at Stanford), into which SCRDT moved in 1972. The building, unusual at that time, featured "open-landscape" offices that could be reconfigured as programs changed. It was equipped with a television and film studio, research laboratories, classrooms, computation facilities, and a large atrium suitable for a variety of events. The building has greatly enhanced the educational research, instructional and conference resources of the School of Education and the University.

During the SCRDT years, apart from its numerous other projects and programs which resulted in many monographs and other publications, the Center became known world-wide for its development of microteaching. Under the leadership of Bush and his co-workers (including Keith Acheson, Dwight W. Allen, Frederick J. McDonald, and Richard E. Gross), this technique of teacher training was evolved. Microteaching is a "miniaturized" form of teaching, in which a trainee teaches a small portion of a lesson, for a short time, to a small group of students. Usually the trainee carries out a single component, such as explaining an analogy or carrying out a short series of questions, of the overall task of teaching. These sample performances are videotaped, so that after the teaching the trainees can immediately see themselves in action and discuss their performance with an instructor and in some cases with the students they have taught. The procedure made teacher training more manageable and manipulable, and it caught on all over the United States and in many other countries. It is still being widely employed in various forms.

Another development in which Bush was instrumental, working with then assistant professor Dwight W. Allen, was flexible scheduling. In this innovation they exploited the emerging capabilities of computers for solving the problems that arise when class periods and sizes are adjusted to the special needs of subject matters and students, rather than being kept uniform. Widely heralded in the early 1960's, often combined with aspects of team teaching, flexible scheduling has never earned the broad

acceptance in the United States which characterizes similar setting and place arrangements often found in British secondary schools.

During these years Bush was a major participant in the continuing national effort to improve the professionalization and the education of teachers. He served on several national boards of educational associations devoted to these ends. He was recognized for his leadership with awards such as the 1977 citation for his "exemplary leadership in American education" by the Teacher Corps, another Office of Education program in which he played a leading developmental role. A program akin to a domestic Peace Corps, the Teacher Corps employed volunteers in poverty-stricken or inner-city areas. The citation said that Bush's "uncompromised goal was to bring equality of educational opportunity within the mind's reach and physical grasp of every American child, rich or poor."

During his long Stanford career, Bush served as a research associate with the Stanford Social Studies Investigation, Director of Vocational Guidance and Placement, Director of the University Summer School, and Faculty Coordinator of Alumni Conferences.

In 1955-56 Bush and his wife, Nancy Burton Bush, both received Fulbright grants for research at the University of Sydney, Australia, and at Victoria University College in Wellington, New Zealand. Subsequently the Ford Foundation funded them to study education and the improvement of university teaching in a number of foreign countries. They continued consulting at the invitation of universities and governmental departments in higher education, particularly in Colombia and Brazil.

Among Bush's professional affiliations were memberships on the executive board of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; on the Board of Trustees of the Council in Educational Development and Research; and on the Task Force on New Horizons on Teacher Education of the National Education Association. In these responsibilities he played a major role in helping revise national accreditation standards for teacher education.

Bush was editor of the *Journal of Secondary Education* from 1953 to 1963. He wrote widely for educational publications and was author of *The Teacher-Pupil Relationship* and coauthor of *A New Design for High Schools: Assuming a Flexible Schedule*. He also served on the editorial advisory boards of the *Journal* of the California Teachers Association and the *Educational Forum*, as well as that of the *New York Times*.

As is often the case among university faculty members, Bush's influence will continue not only through the specific ideas he originated and the movements in which he led and not only through his many students who have gone ahead to have distinguished careers of their own in education, but even more through the spirit of innovation and imaginativeness in formulating and tackling problems -- a spirit that he amply exemplified. Personally he was a tall, friendly, and debonair individual who

spoke softly; but, as is characteristic of good listeners, he asked insightful and thought-provoking queries which reflected his bright and creative intellect.

Bush's popularity in the University community resulted in his having a broad array of friends among faculty and students. He was elected as first president of the reorganized Stanford Faculty Club when it moved into its present building in 1966. His interests embraced opera, drama, and art. He and his wife, Nancy, traveled widely abroad, often as part of cross-national projects aimed at improving teacher education in developing countries.

Bush is survived by his wife of 53 years, Nancy Burton Bush, whom he met while they were both graduate students as she was moving towards a Ph.D. in psychology which she received from Stanford. He is also survived by a daughter, Wendy Bush Faris, a professor of comparative literature at the University of Texas -- Arlington, and by a son, Robert Burton Bush, a painter and arts administrator, a daughter-in-law, Carolyn Clark Bush, and a grandson, all of Santa Barbara, California.

Nathaniel Gage

Alfred Grommon

Richard E. Gross, Chairman