

# IMPORTANT DATES IN OEA HISTORY

## *Friends of Our Schools Committee*

What is the Friends of Our Schools Committee? The primary purpose of the committee is to provide our community a tool for developing better education for the youth in the Omaha Public Schools. The committee is responsible for developing the "orange ticket," which is a voting guide to citizens in obtaining the best qualified candidates possible for the Omaha Board of Education.

When was the Friends of Our Schools Committee Formed? The Committee was formed in 1937-39 under the leadership of Mrs. H. T. Jones as a community service project while she served as President of the Omaha City PTA Council.

Who are the Friends of Our Schools? The Friends of Our Schools in 1935 were interested parents and educators—so it is today—parents and educators interested in promoting better education for Omaha youth.

Why the need for the Friends of Our Schools Committee? Up to 1935, the schools of Omaha had steadily deteriorated in educational quality to the point where there was no money for books or the cleaning and repairing of school buildings. An extreme limitation on taxes prevailed and the school year was shortened. Teachers' salaries were in the lowest category in the nation. Many citizens committees were appointed to study the situation, but little progress was made. At that time, the City PTA

Council and a group of PTA leaders decided that the schools could only be improved through the careful selection of School Board members who were interested in solving educational problems of the city.

This is the "why" of the Friends of Our Schools today—to provide each and every child of Omaha a strong educational system through careful selection of school board candidates.

How are candidates selected for endorsement by the Friends of Our Schools Committee? After candidates have filed for office, each candidate will receive a questionnaire to provide the committee with general information and a statement as to his desire to serve on the School Board. The selection committee is made up of eleven persons comprised of lay persons and educators. After they have reviewed the candidates' questionnaires, the selection committee then by secret ballot endorses a number of persons for the vacancies to be filled.

How do I become a member of the Friends of Our Schools? According to Article VIII, Section 5, of the OEA By-Laws, "One dollar of the annual amount paid by active members shall be, and constitute, a contribution from each such active member to the Friends of Our Schools Committee. All such contributions shall be remitted to the Friends of Our Schools Committee."