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Speech, Music Get Top Billing at Eastern High

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At Eastern High
Charleston, May 5 (Staff)

It is no coincidence when a school of only 190 pupils wins 11 first division ratings in the state music finals and places second in the state speech contest. That is just what happened, however, at Eastern State high, the little school which serves as a laboratory for student teachers at Eastern Illinois State college.

The same thing has happened before, and each time it does, Charleston parents get just as excited as their neighbors at Paris do when the team brings home a state basketball championship.

THE EASTERN State Vikings, members of the Eastern Illinois High School league, are not greatly feared in football. Ordinarily they do little better in basketball, although this year the team was rated in the upper quarter of league teams.

But when "T. C." youngsters start putting, singing, or playing an instrument, the judges sit up and take notice. (Eastern State high, was called Teachers College high, hence T. C. until last August, when the college name was changed, omitting the word "teachers").

The secret of Eastern State's music and speech success over a period of years probably lies chiefly in emphasis, in the caliber of instruction, and in the system of "practical teaching" employed by the college music department.

At present the high school music director is Earl Boyd, who is just one summer away from a doctor's degree in music. Working under him are nine "practical teachers."

MUSIC MAJORS at Eastern get a full year of experience in teaching. Three months are spent in the campus elementary school, three weeks with high school teachers, and one week in a public grade school.

A few elementary schools of the college training district have such a music period as the high school gives. Of these, there is a very fine one at Eastern.

Every year the music director and his group of students are responsible for a well-planned musical program from grades one right through grade eight. Some schools fail of "practising" their basketball players from grade one; Eastern provides ample opportunity from grade one. Almost the same is true in speech and music.

This year the speech group won two trophies, one as first in the district contest, Class B, at Champaign, and the other as first place winner, Class B, in debate. Chris Russell, who was third in extemporaneous speaking, Norma Metter, who won a third in verse reading, Roberta Pons, speech teacher; Chris Russell, holding cup awarded the runner-up school who won first in extemporaneous speaking, Dr. Archibald R. Ayers, principal of Eastern State high, and Mary Lynn Clark, third in original oration.

One of the smallest schools to compete in the state speech finals, Eastern State high speakers nevertheless carried off second place honors. Bornet, left to right, are Norma Metter, who won a third in verse reading; Roberta Pons, speech teacher; Chris Russell, holding cup awarded the runner-up school who won first in extemporaneous speaking. Dr. Archibald R. Ayers, principal of Eastern State high, and Mary Lynn Clark, third in original oration.

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