

# 23 Teachers Will Staff New Willowbrook Unit

By CY BERLOWITZ

Willowbrook State School Director Dr. Jack Hammond announced yesterday that he has received authorization to hire 23 teachers for the school's new \$1.5 million education unit. However, said Dr. Hammond,

only about half the new teachers will be recruited by September. The remainder will be hired in succeeding months.

Salaries for the teachers will amount to \$165,000 yearly with an additional \$40,000 to equip classrooms in the new

building, under construction since last summer.

The authorization was made possible by increases in the State Mental Hygiene Department's budget and recent legislation requiring all children between the ages of 5 and 21 who are in state institutions to receive similar educational opportunities provided in local school districts.

Impetus for the expansion of institutional education facilities stemmed from charges made last year by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy that mentally retarded children in some state institutions were not being properly schooled.

Dr. Hammond said Willowbrook will now be able to extend services to the more severely retarded. He also plans to lengthen the school day.

"Many go only a half day and we hope to give them a full one," he remarked.

The law requires mentally retarded to be in school until they are 21, but, because of limited facilities, many are forced out when they reach 16.

Willowbrook has a young adult program for ages 16 to 18, which will be expanded, the director said.

"The longer we keep them in school, the higher levels they'll reach," he commented.