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# The Teacher Shortage

Howard S. Kinkade

*Eastern Illinois State College*

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THE TEACHER SHORTAGE

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A Substantial Paper  
Presented to  
EASTERN ILLINOIS STATE COLLEGE

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

by  
Howard S. Kinkade  
July 1955

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## FOREWORD

Before 1820 the teaching profession was made up largely of men. Except for the "dame schools" which were operated by women, men were responsible for instructional programs in the schools. With the gradual emancipation of women we find them slowly taking their place beside men in the teaching profession. Educators thought of the rise of women teachers as a favorable movement in education. Leaders in the profession thought of instruction as simply a matter of imparting knowledge to children. It made no difference whether men or women did it. Today members of the teaching profession are concerned over the decline in the numbers of men teachers. According to Kaplan, at the close of World War II only about six per cent of the elementary school teachers in the nation were men.<sup>1</sup> Today educators are concerned not only with the growing shortage of men in the teaching profession but also with a similar shortage in number of women teachers.

Most people recall the temporary shortages of consumer goods a few years ago. In some instances they

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Kaplan, The Status and Function of Men Teachers In Urban Elementary Schools, Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 41, May, 1948, pp. 703-709.

produced panic and riot. Some of them were so serious they were investigated by Congressional Committees. Today our nation faces with seeming indifference a more critical shortage than any of those of consumer goods faced approximately a decade ago. For the next decade we shall need at least 170,000 new teachers each year. No Congressional Committees are investigating this shortage. Even many educators and administrators are going about with a "business as usual" attitude. Many parents are too busy earning a living to be overly concerned. This poses a problem which ultimately must be solved by those who are concerned. In the final analysis this means everyone.

Teachers are not made in a day. The exodus of teachers to other occupations is a sad commentary on our educational system. The destinies of 30,000,000 boys and girls rest in the hands of a profession whose ranks are slowly thinning. This poses four timely questions which will be investigated in this paper. First, how serious is the teacher shortage? Second, what has caused this shortage? Third, what can be done about it? Fourth, what are some aspects of a good recruitment program?

## CHAPTER I

### THE SITUATION AS IT EXISTS TODAY

One of the most pressing problems which education faces today is the current shortage of qualified teachers needed to staff our schools. The problem is not only one of immediacy but also a far-reaching one. It has been with us in increasing intensity since the war years; nothing short of a miracle can bring about its immediate solution. An educator recently said that what this nation really needs is a million good teachers. At first thought this would seem to be a sweeping statement but when viewed in the light of present and future needs it takes on greater meaning.

Although this paper is not primarily a statistical study, let us examine some statistical data in an effort to focus attention upon the crisis facing the teaching profession and our nation.

We emerged from the war with a school population of approximately twenty million. The school population was fairly static during the war years. Administrators could predict almost exact enrollments for each school year. Since that time our school enrollments have gradually climbed to the point where they are well



over thirty million. To further substantiate this point the following school enrollments for 1949-50 to 1954-55 as reported from the National Education Association are presented:

ANNUAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS 1949-50 to 1954-55<sup>1</sup>

SCHOOL YEAR	ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY	TOTAL
1949-50	19,404,693	5,706,734	25,111,427
1950-51	19,900,000	5,806,000	25,706,000
1951-52	21,318,000	5,456,000	26,774,000
1952-53	22,039,000	6,197,000	28,236,000
1953-54	22,801,400	6,388,000	29,189,400
1954-55	24,091,500	6,582,300	30,673,800

An examination of these figures will disclose that we have an ever-increasing number of pupils entering our schools each year. A projection of these enrollment figures seems to point to the fact that until 1959, at least, our school enrollments are going to be increasing

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<sup>1</sup>Advanced Estimates of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools for the School Year 1954-55, Research Division, National Education Association, p.7.

each year. The increasing enrollments and teacher shortages would not be so ominous were it not for certain other salient facts that further intensify the problem.

In the first place, our nation is faced with an acute building shortage. This lag in school building construction began in the 1930's because of lack of funds; it continued during the World War II era because of lack of materials, funds, and manpower. In the meantime increased birth rates have pushed enrollments far beyond predictions made in the 1930's. To focus attention upon the building shortage more clearly the following table will be helpful:

COMPARISON OF SCHOOL BUILDING SHORTAGES 1953-54 AND 1954-55,  
BY TYPE OF SCHOOL, GIVING NUMBER OF STATES  
HAVING DIFFERENT AMOUNTS OF SHORTAGE<sup>2</sup>

TYPE OF SCHOOL	VERY SMALL		CONSIDERABLE		LARGE	
	1953 -54	1954 -55	1953 -54	1954 -55	1953 -54	1954 -55
RURAL						
Elementary	17	20	25	21	6	7
Secondary	16	24	25	28	6	5
URBAN						
Elementary	10	0	22	27	25	21
Secondary	7	3	34	37	7	8

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

The foregoing summary seems to indicate that the building situation as a whole has improved slightly since 1953-54 with respect to rural elementary schools. It should be noted that in 1953-54 about 65 per cent of the states had "considerable" or "very large" building shortages. In 1954-55 about 58 per cent were in a similar predicament.<sup>3</sup>

In urban schools the situation is not so encouraging. In 1953-54 all but one state had serious shortages in elementary buildings and in 1954-55 all states show such shortages. In 1953-54, 41 states estimated that they had serious needs for extra buildings for secondary schools; in 1954-55 the number had jumped to 45.<sup>4</sup> This evidence would seem to support the fact that the housing of present school enrollments is far below the real need.

In 1954 the Research Division of National Education Association asked state leaders to estimate the number of additional elementary classrooms needed in order to reduce enrollment to 30 pupils per room. Of the 32 states reporting, a total of 46,481 classrooms were reported as the number necessary to reduce classes to a maximum of thirty pupils. If the remaining 16 states had reported a similar need it seems reasonable that at least 70,000 additional classrooms are needed.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p.9.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

According to the information compiled by the Research Division of the National Education Association and reported in the Advance Estimates of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools for the School Year 1954-55, approximately 2.3 per cent of our 30 some million school population attend school a half-day or less. This would mean that nearly 700,000 pupils are being deprived of minimum desirable educational opportunities because of inadequate building conditions.

All this evidence seems to indicate the seriousness of the building shortage. Yet materials and money for buildings may be easier to get than the teachers needed to staff the buildings. Buildings can be had for a price. Qualified teachers in sufficient numbers may not be available at any price, and it is known inadequate buildings drive good teachers out of the profession.

In the late thirties there seemed to be a surplus of teachers at all levels of instruction. No one would have predicted that a few years would bring about such a complete reversal of the situation. Even the shortage occurring during World War II was thought to be only a temporary situation that would easily correct itself after the war. Then came an unprecedented increase in birth rate which has continued down to 1954-55 when a record of 4,000,000 was reached. More pupils called for more teachers, but a corresponding increase in the number of teachers did not follow.

In 1949 the United States Offices of Education reported a total of 962,174 classroom teachers, principals, and supervisors. In the year 1952-53 the report showed 1,050,613; in 1953-54 the number of teachers had increased to 1,083,183; for the year 1954-55 an all-time high of 1,126,561 teachers, principals, and supervisors were reported. In the past three years (1951-52 to 1954-55) the number of elementary and high school teachers increased by 110,000. During the same time our school population was increased by about two and a quarter million. Between 1953-54 and 1954-55 the increase in enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools was 1,263,000 pupils. The increase in the number of teachers from 1953-54 to 1954-55 was approximately 43,000. This means that from 1953-54 to 1954-55 the nation actually increased its teaching personnel by one teacher for each 30 new enrollments. This would not be alarming were it not for the fact that several thousand teachers leave the profession each year and that there are thousands of classrooms with enrollments so high that effective teaching may be difficult. We must add to this the fact that there were 4,559,000 children between the ages of 5 and 17 years of age who were not in school in 1953.

The additional supply of teachers needed to meet the need is difficult to estimate. Several facets of the problem must be examined. In the first place about

75,000 teachers drop out because of death, illness, retirement, or acceptance of employment in other fields. A substantial part of the teacher shortage is concealed by expanding classes. For several years an effort has been made to determine the number of teachers needed to reduce classes to a normal enrollment and provide for increased enrollments. This is difficult because teacher qualifications, classroom conditions, and pupil needs vary widely from place to place. Research is lacking to substantiate any number as the maximum enrollments for efficient teacher instruction. Most educators feel that enrollments in excess of thirty pupils do not constitute the optimum situation. A study made by the National Education Association indicates that at least 58,000 teachers were needed in 1954-55 to accommodate pupils and reduce classes to a maximum of thirty pupils.<sup>5</sup>

It is hoped that some of those teachers who hold substandard certificates will eventually be replaced or given leaves of absence to improve their qualifications. This corps of workers represents a source from which future teachers may come after being given a chance to improve their training. Yet the studies made by research workers of the National Education Association show that

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

63 per cent of these temporary teachers have less than four years of preparation. To replace sub-standard teachers would require approximately 35,000 new teachers.

If we add the 75,000 needed annually to replace those who retire or leave the profession, the 35,000 needed to replace those with substandard preparation, and the 58,000 needed to relieve the overcrowded classrooms in the nation we have a cumulative annual shortage of approximately 170,000 teachers.

If colleges were graduating as teachers the number of students needed to meet the teacher shortage there would obviously be no shortage. This is unfortunately not the case. Each year the number of men and women who complete requirements for certification in the 48 states, Alaska, Hawaii, and District of Columbia seems to be decreasing. The Report of the Seventh Annual National Teacher's Supply and Demand Study for 1954 on the following page will reveal some conclusive information in this respect.

An examination of the facts in this table will show that there was a marked decline in the number of persons who met certification requirements since 1953. These figures further indicate a continuance of the steady drop in eligible teacher candidates coming from colleges since 1950.

PREPARATION OF PERSONS CERTIFICATED AS TEACHERS  
TO TEACH IN 1953 AND IN 1954<sup>6</sup>

PREPARATION	NUMBER CERTIFICATED		
	1953	1954	DECREASE from 1953 to 1954
ELEMENTARY			
120 Sem. hrs.	37,430	35,088	2,342
90 Sem. hrs.	1,666	1,522	144
60 Sem. hrs.	7,614	6,908	706
30 Sem. hrs.	1,434	1,423	11
	48,144	44,941	3,203
TOTAL	48,144	44,941	3,203
HIGH SCHOOL	54,013	50,624	3,389
	102,157	95,565	6,592
GRAND TOTAL	102,157	95,565	6,592

Underlying all these figures is one startling fact. The teaching profession is not only losing ground so far as numbers go. It is also experiencing a decline in the number of men who are preparing to teach in the various fields. Obviously some fields are exclusively

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<sup>6</sup>Report of the Seventh Annual National Teacher Supply and Demand Study, Research Division of National Education Association, p. 6.



or predominately served by men. This is true of such fields as agriculture, industrial arts, science, boy's physical education, and athletics. The decline in these fields of preparation is certain to be felt more acutely as the first of the huge elementary classes enter high school. Somewhere, somehow more men must be secured to fill these various teaching positions.

For several years the teaching shortage affected the elementary school more severely. Now these increasing elementary enrollments are entering high school. The surplus of high school teachers so evident a few years ago is disappearing. The high enrollments of elementary schools will definitely continue for some time. Since 1950 at least there has been a steady decline in the number of high school teachers preparing to teach. The table on the following page shows this steady decline.

ANNUAL NUMBER OF U.S. COLLEGE GRADUATES, 1950 TO 1954,  
PREPARED TO TEACH IN EACH FIELD<sup>7</sup>

FIELD OF PREPARATION	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
HIGH SCHOOL	86,890	73,015	65,510	54,013	50,624
ART	2,225	2,296	2,249	2,019	1,951
MUSIC	5,296	4,652	4,882	4,641	4,576
HOME ECONOMICS	4,899	4,640	4,648	4,282	4,053
WOMEN'S P.E.	3,178	2,562	2,607	2,485	2,489
ENGLISH	10,709	9,461	8,211	7,166	6,727
FOREIGN LANGUAGES	2,193	2,133	1,859	1,519	1,364
COMMERCE	7,235	5,750	5,165	4,571	4,426
AGRICULTURE	3,294	2,404	1,891	1,601	1,636
MATHEMATICS	4,618	4,118	3,142	2,573	2,281
SOCIAL SCIENCE	15,349	12,178	9,406	8,149	7,240
MEN'S P.E.	10,614	8,179	6,546	5,416	4,990
IND. ARTS	4,890	4,284	3,161	2,570	2,165
SCIENCE	9,096	7,507	5,246	4,381	3,978

<sup>7</sup>Report of the Seventh Annual National Teacher Supply and Demand Study, National Education Association, Research Division, (Washington: March, 1954), p. 9.

PER CENT OF CHANGE IN NUMBER OF COLLEGE GRADUATES  
PREPARED TO TEACH IN SPECIFIC FIELDS, 1950 TO 1954<sup>8</sup>

FIELD OF PREPARATION	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
HIGH SCHOOL	-----	-16%	-29.2%	-37.8%	-41.7%
ART	-----	+3.2%	+1.1%	-9.3%	-12.3%
MUSIC	-----	-12.2%	-7.8%	-12.4%	-13.6%
HOME ECONOMICS	-----	-5.3%	-5.1%	-12.6%	-17.3%
WOMEN'S P.E.	-----	-19.4%	-18.0%	-21.8%	-21.7%
ENGLISH	-----	-11.7%	-23.3%	-33.1%	-37.2%
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	-----	-2.7%	-15.2%	-30.7%	-37.8%
COMMERCE	-----	-20.5%	-28.6%	-36.8%	-38.8%
AGRICULTURE	-----	-27.0%	-42.6%	-51.4%	-50.3%
MATHEMATICS	-----	-10.8%	-32.0%	-44.3%	-50.6%
SOCIAL SCIENCE	-----	-20.7%	-38.7%	-46.9%	-52.8%
MEN'S P.E.	-----	-22.9%	-38.3%	-49.0%	-53.0%
IND. ARTS	-----	-12.4%	-35.4%	-47.4%	-55.7%
SCIENCE	-----	-17.5%	-40.3%	-51.8%	-56.3%

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

When we examine these figures two facts are obvious. In the first place there has been an overall decline of 41.7 per cent in teachers prepared to teach in high school in the period 1950-1954. Secondly, in the fields of English, mathematics, science, agriculture, commerce, and industrial arts, which are offered in nearly all high schools, the per cent of decrease in numbers prepared to teach has climbed to 50.0 per cent or better. When we remember that high school enrollments are just beginning to rise and that the number of teachers is rapidly declining, the future is not very reassuring.

In our consideration of the teacher shortage we must view with some alarm the high rate of teacher turnover in most areas. An annual loss of 10 per cent is not unusual in many systems. In other fields the rate of turnover is much lower. Such a drastic turnover in other fields of employment would be cause for an extensive study and appraisal of factors contributing to the loss of workers. Teachers have been aware of this for some time. A great majority of the people outside the teaching profession seem to be entirely oblivious of this crisis which is now and for many years to come will affect the educational opportunities of their children.

## CHAPTER II

### WHY THE TEACHER SHORTAGE EXISTS

The facts which have been cited prove very conclusively that a shortage of teachers exists. Why does this shortage exist is the question which naturally follows. In the first place, many branches of industry offer more attractive salaries and purportedly better working conditions. Many people who are trained for teaching are therefore attracted into other fields of employment. An insurance company recently published a brochure which ran as follows: "Teachers wanted! Income first year should be double your present teaching salary. Liberal bonuses to ambitious workers. Many former teachers now earning ten to fifteen thousand dollars per year".

While low salaries are no doubt responsible to some extent for teacher shortages, there are several other factors which are probably more causative. Many young people today are avoiding the teaching profession because of the memory of unpleasant relationships with former teachers. There was Miss Jones who scowled and ranted the whole day through. There was pretty Miss Smith who

was driven to the point of insanity by the big boys in Senior English Class. Then there was Mr. Jones who could and frequently did make you feel so cheap. You never had a chance to explain to Mr. Jones.

A similar thought was expressed to me a few years ago by Mr. W. W. Knecht who was Principal of East Richland High School at the time. Mr. Knecht had spoken to a young man on his faculty urging him to take some additional training in the field of supervision and administration. In his opinion this young man had abilities which would fit him for a supervisory position. The young man replied, "What! me--be a superintendent and be like you--not me. Being a teacher is bad enough--but a superintendent--you can have it." Could it be that, as teachers, we are unwittingly preventing many of our promising young people from entering the profession?

Perhaps the negativistic attitude which some teachers take toward their profession is of itself enough to account for a part of the teacher shortage. Since I became interested in this teacher shortage problem I decided to determine what was being done in my own locality to encourage young people to enter the teaching profession.

The Southeastern Division of the Illinois Education Association bulletin issued in the fall of 1952 reported the findings of a study regarding efforts made in the eight counties of the Southeastern Division of the

Illinois Education Association to recruit teachers through Future Teachers Of America Clubs. The findings are as follows:

Number of Senior High Schools	24
Senior High School Pupils Enrolled	7,109
Number of High Schools having Future Teachers Of America Clubs	3
Number of Future Teachers Of America Members	91
Number of Senior High School Teachers	250

Three high schools in twenty-four seemed to be carrying out a positive teacher recruitment program! Three teachers in 250 apparently were giving active leadership to a teacher recruitment program! Ninety-one students in 7,109 were receiving sustained information and opportunities for exploratory experiences in the teaching profession! If we assume that the Southeastern Division is typical of teacher divisions over the state and nation, it is not too difficult to explain the lack of new recruits in the teaching profession.

Another factor which is responsible for the teacher shortage is the attitude of teachers toward themselves. In recent years teachers have assumed a self-pitying attitude, which when projected to national proportions has pictured teachers as a group of "sob sisters". Teachers have moaned about low wages, large classes,

bitter parents, "mean kids", unreasonable superintendents, and too many papers to grade. On the other hand, one never hears a doctor or nurse complain of too many patients, too long hours, or unreasonable parents.

An article in the Reader's Digest of August, 1949, featured an article entitled "Teachers at the Wailing Wall". In the article Miss Morrison says, "Teachers, day by day, by careless word and by deliberate misstatement, are selling their profession so short that they are driving young students away from teaching. It's the wailing that does it. A minority wailing--but how the sound carries."<sup>1</sup>

To continue the same idea John L. Bracken, writing in the Journal of National Education Association, makes this comment: "The sob story about poor down-trodden teachers is paying off in different coin than was anticipated. It seems to be keeping people out of the profession."<sup>2</sup>

In recent years the teaching profession at all levels has been the target of bitter attacks by lay groups. Magazine articles such as "What's Wrong With our Schools"<sup>3</sup> have been numerous. At higher levels of education

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<sup>1</sup>Wilma Morrison, Teachers At The Wailing Wall, Reader's Digest, August 1949, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>John L. Bracken, Hold That Line, National Education Association Journal, December, 1952, p. 564.



charges that schools may be fostering Communistic ideologies have been made. In nearly every community one need not talk to many people until he encounters someone who is bitter in his attack on teachers and schools. In many instances this feeling may be unjustified. On the other hand, it may be the result of failure of teachers to maintain and present to the public sound professional attitudes and behavior. As a result parents in many areas comment frequently that teachers arrive only a few minutes before time for school to start and trample upon the children's heels in their haste to get away at night. Members of parent-teacher associations have been heard to comment, "Where are all the teachers tonight?" It is impossible in some schools to get more than half of the teachers to attend a meeting of the Parent Teacher Association. Imagine a doctor who wouldn't attend a medical meeting held in his own city.

The public has also become aware of the unprofessional attitude some teachers have taken toward children who learn slowly. In many cases teachers have shown little or no desire to help such pupils. Pupils and parents have sensed this unprofessional attitude and have talked about it with other lay people. Teachers have been careless in discussing matters which pertain to children. They have talked at the bridge table, the barber shop,

and the beauty shop about the dumb Jones boy and the bright Smith girl. They have glibly related incidents occurring at school which if they had happened in the work of doctors or ministers would have been treated with highest professional confidence by them. All this explains why the profession of teaching is belittled in many circles.

Some people have watched teachers at such meetings as the Divisional Meetings of the Illinois Education Association knitting, sewing, or whispering while speakers were using every trick in the bag to hold attention and impart at least one idea that could be taken back to the classroom to justify paying a thousand or more teachers for the day. These same people have likewise raised their eyebrows when they discover dozens of teachers who are being paid for the day in order to attend a meeting for professional growth spend the afternoon shopping or visiting long after sessions have started. To add insult to injury these already disillusioned people see two or three hundred teachers walk out in the afternoon before the last speaker is introduced. "Whose business is it if we want to leave early?" teachers will say. Then comes the day when a tax increase is up for consideration. The teachers need higher salaries in order to attend summer school and thus provide better teaching for boys and girls. Now it's the taxpayers business, and they usually do a

pretty good job of attending to any business which will result in higher taxes. The next day after the election the newspaper carries the all too familiar caption, "School Tax Referendum Defeated by 430 to 131 vote". Underlying these are some reasons for our teacher shortage.

That the profession of teaching lacks many of the earmarks of a genuine profession is also evident in other respects. For years the teaching profession has been thought of by many teachers and lay people as a stepping stone to better opportunities. Many young women think of teaching as affording an opportunity to meet an eligible bachelor. Many men also choose teaching as a job to fill in until something better comes along. This indicates that the teaching profession lacks some of the marks of a true profession.

Another professional weakness of many teachers is their failure to subscribe to and read professional books and magazines. This is considered a requirement in all true professions. In this same connection one should also cite the refusal or reluctance of some teachers to join professional organizations. My thesis is further substantiated by the specifics set forth on the following pages.

1. Failure of teachers en masse to affiliate with local and National Professional Organizations.
2. Apathy on the part of teachers en masse to becoming highly professionally-minded.
3. Lack of cohesion, solidarity, and support of the profession by teachers affiliated with professional organizations.
4. Division of teacher groups on issues involving membership, representation, and acquisition of benefits for the profession as seen in the work of teacher unions and local and state teacher organizations.
5. The wide divergence between administrator and teacher groups.
6. Failure of teachers en masse to replenish periodically their educational preparation through additional study and schooling.
7. The throes and woes teachers exude and experience in "in-service training" and opening of school "pre-planning" despite the special pay or provisions made by various systems.
8. Failure of teachers en masse in subject-matter areas to affiliate with national organizations specifically concerned with those respective areas.
9. Failure of teachers en masse to subscribe to educational periodicals.
10. Certain segments of the profession not always considered on level with other segments, i.e., elementary education.
11. Lack of nation-wide professional esprit de corps among school personnel as exhibited by personality clashes and professional jealousies.
12. Failure of teachers and administrators alike in establishing and supporting a nation-wide system of internships for teachers.

13. Lack of evidence that the teaching profession on the national level is in a state of flux; that is, constant changes, improvements, higher standards, and momentous and pointed cases which indicate the fast pace and growing esteem of a profession.
14. Use of teaching as a stepping stone to entering other professions.
15. Failure of the profession to expand its best efforts in recruitment and pre-selection of teachers.<sup>3</sup>

When the profession rids itself of the foregoing weaknesses and takes on all the true connotations of a profession several great obstacles in the teacher shortage will have been eliminated. This will not take place over night. In the final analysis it will have to be the result of a sustained program encompassing all aspects of the profession.

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<sup>3</sup>R. Roderick Palmer, Is Teaching A Profession?, Phi Delta Kappan, January, 1953, p. 139.

## CHAPTER III

### WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ALLEVIATE THE SHORTAGE

How to alleviate the teacher shortage is indeed a difficult problem. If it were not, the shortage would not have continued over the years. There are those who would say that the responsibility for correcting the situation rests with the profession itself. They contend that teachers must do a better job of teaching and also exert a positive influence which will result in more young people training for and entering the profession. It is undoubtedly true that much of the impetus for the movement should emanate from the profession itself, but this may not be enough. Parents, clubs, and other civic groups must ultimately join with the teaching profession to bring about a suitable solution. In the pages to follow an effort will be made to set forth a number of constructive approaches to the problem.

Those who view the teacher shortage on the surface only would say that the solution is simple. If standards for entering and remaining in the profession were lowered we could easily increase the supply of teachers. This would be an unfortunate thing because it would be

sacrificing gains in professional preparation which have taken years to accomplish. It would be setting back educational progress at least half a century. Experience with other professions whose standards are very high has shown that entrance into such professions is sought by far more people than those of low standards. The medical profession has the highest standards for entrance and preparation of all professions. Yet one does not find a shortage in the number who seek entrance into its ranks. This would seem to indicate that raising standards and keeping them high might ultimately do more to alleviate the shortage than lowering them. It would not be too presumptuous to say also that the high esteem in which the medical profession is held is due largely to the high educational, professional, and ethical standards set by its members. The teaching profession should take note of this.

If the teaching profession admits all who are willing to make the minimum preparation, the quality of the profession is not apt to be improved. Standards for entrance must be kept high if the prestige of the profession is to be raised. Many persons seek admission to the teaching profession who do not have the interests of pupils at heart. Many seek to make teaching a part-time interest. When periods of unemployment come, we find many people trying to get back into teaching who had

previously left it when more lucrative employment presented itself. Dr. Harold Anderson of the University of Chicago tells about the lawyer who during the depression years attempted to get a teaching certificate so that his income as a lawyer could be supplemented. In all probability this lawyer would have given as little as possible to the teaching profession. He would have expected to arrive at school a few minutes before nine, would have refused extra duties, and would have left the building at the earliest possible hour.

Those people who would recommend the lowering of standards are concerned with numbers of teachers rather than quality. They do not consider the fact that the teacher shortage is most acute in states where standards are lowest and that the shortage is less acute in states where standards are high.

Unsatisfactory supervisory relationships must be responsible for many teachers leaving the profession. The graduates of our teacher-training institutions of today have been accustomed to democratic practices in instructions and supervision. When they go out into the teaching field they are often subjected to undemocratic supervisory practices. In some cases there is no cooperative planning on the part of supervisor and teacher. Teachers are left to "sink or swim". If they fail once they may not be given a second chance.



Democratic supervisory techniques could do much to lessen the hazards new teachers or teachers new to a community have to face. Too often the supervisor says to the new teacher, "Well, here is your room, if I can be of help to you anytime, let me know." In a situation like this many teachers will not seek help until it is too late. They feel that asking for help will reveal a personal weakness on their part which the superintendent will count against them.

Teachers are often disillusioned when they are forced to carry out a program of work in which they had no part in planning. They carry it out half-heartedly because they feel this is Mr. Smith's plan and not their own. "If I could only have a permissive atmosphere in which to work," teachers will remark.

The regrettable part about the supervisory program often is that young teachers are expected to know everything when they set out to teach. Often the supervisor does not show the new teacher how to overcome weaknesses or correct mistakes. Yet, too often, at the end of the year he will be required to point out to new teachers wherein they have failed and the reasons for failure to reemploy them. Often one failure of a new teacher is enough to cause that teacher to leave the profession for good. Proper supervision might have saved that teacher

for the profession. As it is, this failure will prejudice that teacher's attitude against teaching and schools for the rest of her life.

Good supervisors study the teacher's past record, analyze her abilities, and assign her to a position where a measure of success can be expected. They believe in the idea that nothing succeeds like success and will go to no ends to see that the teacher succeeds in spite of herself. They inspire confidence. They realize that the loss of a single teacher represents a considerable loss in terms of time and expense. A good supervisor is in close enough contact with the teacher's work that he can anticipate difficulties which may arise and is ready to help the teacher over the difficulty. He is prompt to provide all supplies and materials necessary for success. He realizes that in order to do a good job of instruction, teachers must have supplementary materials, reference materials, and other instructional aids.

It is indeed a sad commentary on our educational program when we find supervisors so busy with such details as lunch money, bus routes, and other administrative details that they are allowing teachers to fail. One can not deny that these routine clerical duties must be done, but it would seem that this work could be delegated to others in order to gain time for duties of a real professional nature.

At this juncture one should mention the disillusionment that young teachers frequently suffer in the first few months of teaching. Usually young teachers go out into the field full of zeal and ambition. They are eager to try new ideas and willing to give unselfishly of their time and efforts. Yet, too often, they meet with a defeatist attitude on the part of older teachers. Older teachers will by insinuation or direct word gradually stifle this enthusiasm of the younger teacher. Such teachers will say, "Wait until you teach a year or two, you'll find out that you can't teach some kids anything." In the same breath they will continue, "Teachers' meetings, committee meetings, and the like are a joke, you'll learn the hard way as I did." When experienced teachers reflect such unprofessional attitudes towards their work it isn't long until new teachers are in the same "rut".

We have been saying that to a degree, the supervisory program holds the key to the solution of the teacher shortage. Teachers who are not allowed to work in a democratic atmosphere, or are victims of poor supervisory techniques, become unhappy teachers. Unhappy teachers may become ineffective teachers. Unhappy and ineffective teachers leave the profession or create a negative attitude within it.

Any attempt to solve the teacher shortage must necessarily embrace a plan to increase the competency of teachers within the profession. This can be facilitated by in-service-training programs for teachers. Industry makes great efforts to orient and improve the skills of new recruits. In this particular, the teaching profession might well take a lesson from industry. In some localities teachers are busy nearly two weeks before the children arrive, engaging in workshops, forums, institutes and similar programs of in-service-training. There are demonstration lessons, cooperative planning periods, examination of instructional materials, visual aid demonstrations, and similar activities all designed to unify and improve the effectiveness of the instructional program.

We must attract more young people into the teaching profession. Indeed, the young people of our nation are the hope of humanity. Much can be done in the classroom to foster an atmosphere which will ultimately bring more young people into teaching. We must be striving to make our teaching more dynamic and stimulating. We must stop being dictators and taskmasters and make learning an enjoyable cooperative activity. If we are to attract young people into teaching, we must be optimistic and happy in our outlook. We must constantly be aware of our morale, our health, and our day-to-day relationships

with pupils. We dare not become pessimistic, diffident, or antagonistic. Youth may be looking to us for inspiration and guidance. If we are not the very essence of it, few will be inspired by our example.

The youth of any generation and particularly our youth of today are looking for adventure and challenges. We must point out the challenges and adventure in teaching. If youth are seeking challenges, what greater challenge can be found for a young teacher than that presented by a roomful of wistful, bright-eyed first-graders on the first day of school?

The spirit of service to others seems to be lacking in many phases of society today. Materialism seems to be supplanting the missionary spirit. Young people resent preacher-teachers but we must keep before them the need for service. If only a few catch the spirit the effort will have been justified.

We need to be watching for young people who possess desirable teacher qualities and make them aware of the opportunities in teaching. It might be well to make the suggestion in a subtle way at first. The suggestion would be, as it were, a mere planting of the idea in the mind of the pupil. It thus becomes an idea for reflection and thought. We must not stop here but keep the challenge before the student. We need to be diplomatic and persistent.

There are young people who may fail to recognize the opportunities that exist in teaching. Recruitment of young people for teaching implies proper guidance and counseling services. Guidance services in a school should use films, brochures, and consultants from colleges to point out that many opportunities exist in teaching which did not exist a few years ago. Expansion of the schools' curricula and services requires such professionally trained teachers as speech correctionists, guidance directors, counselors, physical therapists, coordinators, camp directors, school nurses, and many others whose work is highly challenging and perhaps less confining than classroom work.

Many teachers fail because of poor guidance and counseling in high school and colleges. Colleges in particular must take more pains to see that young people who are preparing to teach are properly guided. All too often we find young people preparing for some field of teaching and yet lacking the necessary personal requisites for success in their chosen field. Proper guidance and counseling at the college level can be of great help to the student and the teaching profession by steering them into a field where requirements are more in conformity with the abilities of the student.

The teaching profession will not be improved by attracting young people who do not have a sincere interest

in children. By the same token, it is losing prestige by retaining teachers who do not like children. Many school systems now require that applicants show specific evidence of interest in children as manifested by their work with Boy Scouts of America, 4-H Clubs, Sunday School work, or similar youth work. The Mt. Vernon, Illinois, Schools emphasize this philosophy of education. A part of the information included in the application form completed by all applicants who seek appointment to the Mt. Vernon Schools will support the statement given above: "Our philosophy of education is one which believes that the schools are maintained primarily for children, that these children are individual boys and girls, entitled to be dealt with as such." Elsewhere in this application the following information is included: "We have many average applicants seeking every regular teaching position which we have. We want this school system to be far better than average. For that reason average teachers need not apply. Use this space to show that you possess teaching possibilities much above the average." I am convinced that this school system has high standards. It seems certain that this school system attracts and retains good teachers. It is also more than just passing interest to note that the people of Mt. Vernon have great faith in their schools and teachers as evidenced by the success of recent school building campaigns.

Thus far little has been said about salaries as a factor in getting and retaining good teachers. It is agreed that salaries are not the only consideration in the teacher supply question. Some of the rewards of teaching will always have to be in the form of satisfactions derived from service to humanity. Obviously salaries are very low in many areas. In many cases schools are paying the highest salaries that the tax structure can support.

There are many teachers who may not complain about their low salaries, yet they have economic problems which may affect their effectiveness as teachers. We can add to the morale of teachers and increase their effectiveness by paying a salary that will enable a teacher to further his education, travel, maintain a decent standard of living, educate his children, engage in some activities for cultural and recreational benefits, and be permitted to face retirement with the assurance that he will not be required to rely upon charity for his support.

If competent young men are to be attracted to elementary teaching some provision for improvement in salary must be made. This can be done by providing duties which will bring extra increments. Most young men are willing to assume extra responsibility if compensation is provided. Good supervisors would do well



to place young men in upper grade positions where happiness and success are more likely. Promotional opportunities for men in the elementary field must be made as attractive as they are in the secondary field. Equal pay for equal training and duties at the elementary and high school levels must come.

Public school teaching is unique in that it is one of the few professions which must rely upon public taxation for its financial support. Since this is the case, some school people now feel that teachers must join forces as labor groups have done and issue an ultimatum to the public demanding that salaries be increased to levels comparable to those of other professions. Proponents of this plan feel that as long as teachers continue to teach at present salaries and do not force a showdown on the issue, the public will do nothing. The teaching profession, in most cases, has sought improvement by the slow process of patient waiting. For the most part, members of the teaching profession have been loyal to the task of training and guiding boys and girls. Members of the teaching profession should move cautiously. They must remember that the public is willing to pay for any service if it feels that adequate service is being rendered. The public becomes indifferent and antagonistic only when it feels that it is paying for services not being rendered.

It is predicted that the teacher shortage will get worse before it gets better. This will require a more effective use of our present supply of trained teachers. We have been accustomed to thinking of teaching effectiveness as having a direct ratio to class size. If the supply of teachers becomes more critical we may be compelled to revamp our entire instructional program and assign larger numbers of pupils to each teacher.

During the war large groups of men were instructed by a few instructors who made excellent use of films, mock-ups, and other multi-sensory teaching aids. It is recognized that these trainees were adults and that the skills being learned were in most cases different from those learned by boys and girls. It would seem conceivable, however, that with the required assistance, materials, training, and equipment teachers might in some cases successfully instruct classes of one hundred or more. It is also perhaps true that with proper training, non-professional people could do much of the routine work such as paper grading, recording of scores, preparation of learning materials, showing of films, and the like. A similar thing has been used very effectively in the nursing profession. Formerly nurses did routine as well as highly technical duties. In recent years nurses' aides have been trained in a short time to do many routine duties once performed by nurses. This has released

nurses for more specialized work. If the teacher shortage becomes more acute, the teaching profession may be forced to resort to similar techniques.

A rather unique opinion in regard to class size was expressed by Lyle M. Spencer, President, Science Research Associates, Chicago, in an address before the State-wide Teacher Recruitment Conference, sponsored by the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce, Springfield, Illinois, when he said, "One of the most cherished ideas in the whole field of education is the notion that the smaller the numbers of pupils in a class, the better the quality of instruction would be. When I tried to find the facts why this is so, I confess that I could not obtain any real objective evidence. I then went to Dr. Paul Mort of Columbia University, one of the most skilled educational researchers in the country. He told me that no real proof of this educational maxim actually exists."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Spencer then suggested that one of the ways to meet the teacher shortage is to accept the larger classes and then invent effective means of teaching large groups. He cited a study as an illustration of one method of dealing with certain learning situations: "Some time

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<sup>1</sup>Lyle M. Spencer, A Business Man Views Teacher Shortages, Education Digest, Vol. XIX, April, 1954, p. 11.

ago, Dr. William Vincent, then at Pennsylvania State College conducted an experiment on the teaching of general science. In one group he had the teacher, a well-trained one, by the way, teach general science by traditional methods. In another group he had all the teaching of factual knowledge done by motion picture films. He determined afterwards by extensive tests that the children taught from films learned the material in half the time it took to do it in the teacher-led class, and that there was no essential difference in amounts that the group learned."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Spencer concludes that films and other effective ways might be found for teaching certain types of information to large groups. He was not saying, however, that films could replace the teacher and that they were equally effective for all teaching situations.

To further explode the theory that small classes are necessary for effective instruction the following ideas expressed by Mursell are of great importance: "When it is said that the ideal class size is about 25, this is a rash and indeed a meaningless statement; for one cannot tell what the ideal size may be unless one knows what is going to be done, and one cannot plan activities intelligently until one knows, amongst other

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

things, about how many people will be involved. This is true of a party, and it is also true of a class. A big party will not do just the same things as a small one, but all may have a good time nevertheless. A large class will not be handled just the same as a small one, but good learning may still go on, for it is quite untrue to say that large classes necessarily defeat teaching."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>James M. Mursell, Successful Teaching - Its Psychological Principles (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1946), p. 26.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME ASPECTS OF A RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

Authorities feel certain that the teacher shortage will continue for at least ten years. If effective recruitment programs are not launched, the shortage may well continue for the next quarter century. Since so much depends upon effective recruitment it seems necessary to emphasize some of the aspects of a good recruitment program.

No recruitment program can be effective if it seeks to attract any and all people to the profession who are willing to make the minimum preparation. Such programs must be highly selective. Many persons now believe that programs for selection of teaching candidates must begin early in high school or possibly as early as junior high school. Opportunities for observing teachers at work and for assisting with duties should be provided for prospective candidates rather early. Many high schools are now offering courses in diversified occupations. This enables pupils to engage in part-time work under supervision of persons thoroughly trained in their particular work. These experiences might well be extended to those interested in teaching. Expert counselors and guidance

directors should constantly be available for helping these young people. If such prospective candidates lack the necessary personal qualifications it is the duty of guidance directors to steer them into other fields.

Recruitment programs must be designed to attract considerable numbers of returning service men. Returning service men perhaps constitute the most promising supply of future candidates for teaching. Since these men will be sought by various groups to enter certain fields of training, the teaching profession must stand ready to make its bid.

The nursing profession is now calling for one out of every twelve high school graduates to enter that profession. If the teacher shortage is to be met, one out of every four graduates must become teachers.

Through newspaper, radio, and similar media an appeal must be made to former teachers who left the profession for reasons such as health, family responsibilities, and the like to return to teaching. In many areas this has met with a hearty response. This phase of recruitment, however, can be considered only as a stop-gap operation. Many feel that the bottom of the barrel has been reached so far as this source of supply is concerned.

Clifford P. Archer offers the following suggestions for a successful recruitment program:

1. Many who chose teaching did so because of early

childhood experiences in handling children. Hence we suggest the selection of capable candidates at Junior High level. They would become "helping teachers" and work with children. A small stipend would be helpful. Instruction and guidance would parallel apprenticeship experience.

2. Future teacher clubs would help keep interest alive.
3. Bulletins of information should be prepared for counselors and advisers.
4. A re-education of teacher attitudes would help.
5. Scholarships of up to \$400 a year should be provided by State and Federal government for those who will prepare to teach - these should be distributed by a State Advisory Commission so as to offer inducements in areas of greatest shortages.
6. State controls should be set up to guard against oversupply and selection of competent only. Teacher training institutions might assign quotas.
7. A campaign to educate the lay public to the teacher situation and its opportunities may be helpful. Non-technical films, books, and other visual materials, radio programs, newspaper publicity, programs at P. T. A. and similar media.
8. Homes for teachers in each community should be built.
9. More clerical help to teachers.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Clifford P. Archer, Teacher Recruiting, School and Society, Vol. 65, April, 1947, p. 266.



## SUMMARY

The teacher shortage may be expected to continue for a number of years. Because of the many factors affecting teacher supply and demand any approach to the solution must be far-reaching and continue for many years. This paper has attempted to cite statistical evidence to prove the existence of the teacher shortage, suggest ways of overcoming the shortage, and finally point out some aspects of a recruitment program.

At the present evidence indicates that our nation is short about 170,000 teachers. When we remember that the school enrollments are soaring each year it seems certain that each succeeding year will bring new demands for teachers. How they will be obtained is a difficult question. Perhaps we shall be lucky to find enough teachers to keep school let alone teach school.

The nation faces an acute building shortage which is depriving many children of good educational opportunities. Most buildings are bursting at the seams. At least 700,000 children are now attending school on half-day or other part-time arrangements. Moreover, nearly four and one-half million pupils between the ages of 5 and 17 were

not attending school at all during 1953. It is estimated that 50,000 new classrooms are being built annually but this is not keeping pace with increasing enrollments. The United States Office of Education predicts that by 1960 we shall need at least 720,000 new classrooms.

Why the teacher shortage exists is a complex question. Many people feel that higher salaries would help alleviate the shortage. On the other hand, many feel that salary is not the most important factor. Most leaders in education are agreed that standards for entrance must remain high. The major premises upon which this paper is written are that the shortage exists to a major degree because of a negativistic attitude of teachers towards their own profession, poor or inadequate supervision and administration in some cases, failure of some teachers to encourage young people to enter the profession, attacks upon education by lay groups, and a decreasing degree of professionalism displayed by some members of the teaching profession.

Recruitment of teachers must be selective if it is to be effective. As early as the elementary level young people who show interest and aptitude in teaching should be given opportunities to work with children. Guidance and counseling must play a very vital part in helping young people choose the right fields in teaching. Increasing the number of scholarships in teacher

education institutions would permit many to train for teaching who otherwise would not be able to do so.

The shortage of teachers should be of concern to all. Parents, teachers, and interested clubs, organizations, institutions, and agencies should coordinate their efforts as they seek to deal with the problem. Many feel that the teaching profession itself must take the initiative in solving the problem. We can not go on with a "business as usual" attitude. The educational welfare of 30,000,000 boys and girls is at stake. Let not the oft quoted phrase, "Too little and too late", be found true of the teacher recruitment program. Wanted, a million new teachers in the next decade!

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