

A SURVEY OF 'TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS  
RELATING TO ENTRY INTO EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION  
IN THREE EASTERN KENTUCKY COUNTIES

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An Applied Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the School of Education  
Morehead State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Specialist in Education

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by  
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Accepted by the faculty of the School of Education,  
Morehead State University, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Specialist of Education degree in  
Administration and Supervision.

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May 14, 1991  
Date

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ABSTRACT OF APPLIED PROJECT

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Morehead State University, 1991

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## ABSTRACT OF APPLIED PROJECT

### A SURVEY OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS RELATING TO ENTRY INTO EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN THREE EASTERN KENTUCKY COUNTIES

#### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this applied project was to survey public school teachers in three diverse eastern Kentucky counties in an effort to determine if the state of Kentucky may be developing a shortage of educational administrators, and if so, to discover the causative factors.

#### Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

- 1) to examine the possibility that there is an impending shortage in Kentucky's educational administrative pool,
- 2) to determine teachers' interest in entering educational administration,
- 3) to discover the reasons teachers may have for not desiring to become school administrators, and
- 4) to identify the major concerns of aspiring administrators.

## Limitations

This study was limited to Kentucky's public schools in Boyd County, Fleming County, and Martin County. Vocational and private schools were excluded.

## Methods and Procedures

Related literature on a national level, as well as that available on a state level, was reviewed. Possible causative factors in educational administration shortages were identified and related, when applicable, to the present situation in Kentucky.

A survey instrument was developed to determine the number of teachers interested in entering educational administration positions or preparation programs. The second part of the instrument attempted to identify the reasons teachers may have for not desiring to become school administrators, and to discover the major concerns of teachers who do aspire to become educational administrators.

The survey instruments were mailed to public school principals in three diverse Kentucky counties (Boyd County, Fleming County, and Martin County), whose profiles were reviewed and are presented in this study.

## Conclusions

- 1) There is little interest among teachers in the three counties in pursuing programs leading to certification in educational administration (3 percent plan to enroll).
- 2) The major reason teachers offered for lack of interest in pursuing educational administration programs was their enjoyment of teaching (93 percent).
- 3) Teachers' perceptions in the three counties with regard to pursuing educational administration are remarkably similar.
- 4) The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 was not identified as the primary reason for disinterest in entering school administration.
- 5) Availability of administrative positions is the main concern to those interested in acquiring administrative posts, although this concern seems to be unsupported by the data in this study.

## Recommendations

- 1) Studies on supply and demand trends in educational administration should be completed at least every five years, and more often during major educational changes.
- 2) Educational leadership departments of Kentucky's colleges and universities offering administrative certification should be surveyed to determine enrollment trends in administrative programs.

3) Administrators should be surveyed to determine both their retirement plans and their perceptions regarding the attractiveness of educational administration.

4) An authoritative, demographic database on teachers in Kentucky should be established.

5) Additional incentives should be implemented to attract outstanding teachers into educational administration.

6) The Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System should keep records of administrator retirements separate from teacher retirements.

7) School principals should be provided job security equal to that of other school administrators.

8) The image of the school administrator should be improved.

Accepted by :

John R. Dunbar, Chairman

Marion Williams

Don Miller

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	
Introduction .....	1
CHAPTER 2	
Review of Related Literature .....	3
CHAPTER 3	
Procedures .....	15
CHAPTER 4	
Data Analysis .....	21
CHAPTER 5	
Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations .....	31
REFERENCES .....	36
APPENDIX A .....	39
APPENDIX B .....	43

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Total Number of Public School Internships and Total Number of New Public School Principalship Positions from School Years 1988-89 through 1990-91 .....	7
2. Number of Principal Interns Certified by Year in Kentucky over the Five-year Period 1985 through 1990 .....	8
3. Number of Teachers Surveyed .....	22
4. Number of Teachers in each Category, Regarding Administrative Certification and Interest in Entering Educational Administrative Positions and Preparation Programs .....	23
5. Total Number of Teachers Interested in Entering Educational Administration Compared with Total Number Not Interested ...	24
6. Teachers' Top Five Reasons For Not Entering Educational Administration .....	25
7. Teachers' Top Five Reasons For Not Entering Educational Administration (by county) .....	26
8. Top Five Concerns of Aspiring School Administrators .....	29
9. Teachers' Years of Experience .....	45
10. Teachers' Rank .....	45
11. Number of Male and Female Teachers .....	45

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Recent indications suggest that there may soon be a shortage of well-trained principal candidates for our schools. Studies report that "up to half the nation's principals will be eligible to retire within the next five years (Buckner & Jones, 1990, p. 21). This situation represents more than a dilemma for a nation in the process of educational reform. For the state of Kentucky, such a shortage could be disastrous. With the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990, called "the most ambitious education reform in America" (Gilbert, 1991, p. 1), Kentucky has been thrust into the spotlight of the reform movement. Well-trained school administrators are vital to the success of Kentucky's struggling effort.

The principal plays three prominent roles in the school. First, the principal is a motivator who sets the standard for mediocrity or excellence. "High expectations" is now a common phrase; it is the principal who provides the performance level. "As the principal goes, so goes the school" (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1986, p. 239). Secondly, the principal is the instructional leader. With the passage of House Bill 940 (KERA), principals have become more important in the instructional process. School-based decision

making will give building administrators more control over curriculum, staff assignments, and other instructional matters. The principal must also be a management expert. Urgent daily activities, facilities, and financial matters are still included in the principal's duties.

The effective schools research has established a definite link between the principal and a school's success. Even though there is a virtual consensus on the importance of the principal, it seems that fewer educators are interested in administration:

It appears that fewer teachers see any great financial or psychological advantage in leaving the classroom for the longer workday and work year to assume the additional burdens of leadership and responsibility, when the salary differential is not sufficient enough to compensate for the loss of job security, the added emotional turmoil and the conflict associated with the administrative life (Haley & McDonald, 1988, pp. 7-8).

With schools "being asked to guide the national culture, almost single-handedly, through a storm of change while confronted by the most diverse and challenging student population in American history," (Smith & Greene, 1990, p. 20) strong leadership is essential. According to a New York superintendent, "a crisis is brewing in school leadership" (Hess, 1988, p. 43). This study seeks to discover if the state of Kentucky may now be developing an administrative shortage, and if so, to discover the causes.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature on administrative shortages nationwide presents two main themes: an actual shortage in numbers of those who are qualified as administrators in comparison with the number of school administrators nearing retirement, and a shortage of those who are considered capable of coping successfully in today's administrative positions. The latter literature levels much criticism at preparation programs and generally recommends higher entrance standards, more practical training including internships, and graduate degrees beyond the Master's level. Because this study focuses on the state of Kentucky, and because Kentucky's reforms have already mandated higher requirements for administrative certification, this study will be concerned more with an actual supply problem in educational administration.

A 1987 article reported that as many as half of all U. S. principals could retire within the next five to eight years (McCormick, 1987, p. 18), which means the shortage is now closer. Robert Maher in a 1988 article stated that because 46 percent of building administrators were in the 50 to 59-year-old age group, new administrators would soon be in great demand (p. 32). A 1987 survey revealed that 61 percent of school administrators were aged

42 to 55 (Heller, Conway, & Jacobson, 1988, p. 21).

Scott Thompson, executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, reported:

More secondary principals are opting to retire at 55, 56, 57 than we had a decade ago. Most of them have stayed in that position for 10 to 15 years ... the difference between what they earn and what they will receive in retirement benefits is insignificant (McCormick, 1987, p. 20).

A 1984 report brings in reform as one contributing factor in the problem:

Many of the current principals entered the teaching profession after World War II ... They have served well and now wish to enter retirement without excessive new responsibilities (Thomas & Welch, 1984, p. 4).

The reality of a shortage seems to hinge upon two factors. On one hand, we seem to have a large number of administrators ready to retire and perhaps even likely to retire in the wake of recent reforms. Added to that situation, we seem to have fewer teachers entering the administrative pool. Several states have completed supply and demand studies in an attempt to forestall a shortage. A 1989 supply and demand study of South Carolina's administrators found that even those teachers who are certified as administrators may not be interested in seeking administrative posts. (Cravens, 1989, p. 11).

A 1988 survey sponsored by the Leadership in Educational Administration Development (LEAD) Center at the University of Albany, New York, attempted to "develop a more useful definition of what the problem of administrative shortage may be" (Haley & McDonald, 1988, p. 1). That study offers an explanation as to why there are qualified certificate holders who do not enter administration. The study points out that in the past, a Master's degree provided both a permanent teaching certificate and administrative certification, so that many teachers acquired administrative certification only as a career option. The survey also found that "Positions that attracted 100-125 candidates a few years ago now attract 25 to 30 candidates" (Haley & McDonald, 1988, p. 5).

A 1989 position paper by the New York State School Boards Association states that the supply of principals is a concern, and that "the number of new certificates for principals issued annually has dropped by a third since 1977" (1989, p. 10).

In north-central Texas, a survey of 200 school systems revealed that "more than 85 percent of the region's school executives will leave their jobs within the next five years. Reason: early retirement" (McCormick, 1987, p. 18).

In California, a 1989-90 staffing survey representing half the public school districts found 171 vacancies for administrators. The authors suggest that the second level in the

administrative credential may be the cause, as a Master's degree places a teacher at the top of the salary scale, and the difference between teachers' and administrators' salaries is diminishing (Amenta & Amenta, 1990, p. 14).

Michigan introduced an early retirement option which, according to a Michigan State University professor and researcher, caused a high turnover of administrators. A state study in Michigan found that by the 1990-91 school year, 52 percent of their public school executives would be eligible to retire (McCormick, 1987, p. 20).

Information on Kentucky's administrator supply and demand is limited to two sources: the Kentucky Department of Education and a 1988 study authored by three faculty members of Western Kentucky University. The study, The Kentucky Principal: A Self Perception, was completed to provide a database on principals. The authors mention that a 1955 study of Kentucky secondary principals and two follow-up studies in 1965 and 1975 constituted the available information on Kentucky's principals. A thirty-two question instrument was mailed to each of the state's 1715 principals; 902 usable responses (51.9 percent) were obtained. Relevant to retirement, 516 principals (60.7 percent) said they planned to retire within 10 years of 1988 (Cline, Richardson, & Flanigan, 1988, pp. 1-33).

The Kentucky Department of Education provided data on 1988-89 projected principalship needs. It reveals that 1241 principals and



486 assistant principals were employed in Kentucky (vocational and private school principals were not included). Of these, 383 principals (30.8 percent) and 112 assistant principals (23 percent) had 25 or more years of experience in 1988. These statistics do not, in themselves, indicate cause for alarm. Other information, however, may indicate a more serious situation. The number of new principals and assistant principals employed over the past three-year period has remained relatively stable. The number of these newly hired administrators who are interns, however, has risen drastically (Table 1).

TABLE 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOL INTERNSHIPS AND TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALSHIP POSITIONS FROM SCHOOL YEARS 1988-89 THROUGH 1990-91.

School Year	Interns in Public Schools	New Principalships in Public Schools
1988-89	7	218
1989-90	25	187
1990-91	44	187

(Kentucky Department of Education. Office of Instruction. Division of Teacher Education and Certification. Principal Internship Branch.)

From the data in Table 1, it may be concluded that the state is drawing on the newly-trained administrative pool of interns to help fill principalships. This supply, however, is limited, as indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF PRINCIPAL INTERNS CERTIFIED BY YEAR IN KENTUCKY OVER THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD 1985 THROUGH 1990.

YEAR	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
NUMBER CERTIFIED	386	474	631	168	95	37

(Kentucky Department of Education. Office of Research and Planning. Division of Research.)

Table 2 reveals a severe drop in the number of principal interns certified in the five year period 1985-90. The number of interns certified by Kentucky in 1990, in fact, was short of the number of public school interns employed in the 1990-91 school year (44 were employed as indicated in Table 1, while 37 were certified as revealed in Table 2). Even assuming that there may exist a backlog of certificate holders, at the recent annual principal and assistant principal turnover of approximately 200 (Table 1), such a supply could not provide adequate numbers of new principals for more than a few years. The recent trend in employment of interns also

indicates that either the previously certified are not applying for administrative positions, or they are not being hired.

One of the most unfortunate circumstances encountered in this study is the fact that reliable data on the number of Kentucky administrator retirements is not available. Neither the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System, the Kentucky Department of Education, nor the Kentucky Association of School Administrators can supply 1985-90 administrator retirement numbers. Such retirements are not separated from teacher retirements. This data could possibly provide further insights.

The reasons teachers may not be entering administration, as well as the reasons administrators may opt for early retirement, are not difficult to find. Literature dealing with the problems associated with educational administration abounds. "Why give up the classroom when the alternative is long hours, little prestige, and inadequate compensation for your troubles?" (Hess, 1988, p. 43). An Executive Educator survey found that 90 percent of high school principals work 51 or more hours per week (Heller, Conway & Jacobson, 1988, p. 21). A ten-year study found that K-8 principals also have an average work week of 51 hours, with 49.6 percent of elementary principals spending 9 hours at school each day excluding week-ends (Doud, 1989, pp. 87-88). Summer vacation is a major attraction to teachers, but administrators generally work at least part of the summer. Doud's study found that 37 percent

of K-8 principals report no vacation at all (1989, p. 83).

Long hours is only one problem in administration. Other concerns include stress (Williamson & Campbell, 1987, p. 109), little salary differential as compared with teachers (New York State School Boards Association, 1989, p. 10), and loss of job security. Sections 80 and 283 of the Kentucky Education Reform Act exclude principals from the law requiring that certain procedures be followed when administrative personnel are demoted (A Guide to the Kentucky Education Reform Act, 1990, p. 11).

Doud's survey found that three in ten elementary principals have no tenure rights (1989, p. 81). Litigation is another concern; principals face a 12.5 percent chance of being involved in litigation (Doud, 1989, p. 127).

In addition to all the established deterrents to entering the field of educational administration, the emphasis of the reform movement seems to have shifted from teaching to the principalship:

The principalship is like the eye of the storm in education reform -- surrounded by competing pressures, relatively stable, but poised on the brink of inevitable change. Principals themselves feel this impending change. Many express a deep ambivalence about the job (New York State School Boards Association, 1989, p. 1).

The principalship is not a coveted position. Arkansas' governor stated in hearings of the Task Force on Leadership

and Management, "Principals told us that expectations for them are not clear" (Clinton, 1986, p. 208).

There is literature which argues that no actual supply problem in numbers of administrators exists. The assistant secretary of research and improvement at the U. S. Department of Education said in 1986:

We need not worry that higher standards will yield a personnel shortage. Even with the pool of candidates as constrained as it is today, California's administrator training programs produce so many graduates that every principal in the state could be replaced every five years -- a far larger supply than the demand warrants (Finn, 1986, p. 41).

Daniel Griffiths, chairman of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, says there is not a "shortage of minimally qualified administrators, but of gifted administrators" (Hess, 1988, p. 43).

Kermit Buckner, administrator of development for the National Association of Secondary School Principals, coauthored an article which states:

...there appears to be no shortage of people anxious to become "the principal." However, as career development incentives flower, the financial incentives that might have enticed good teachers to consider administration may diminish, and the recruitment of principals from business or the military will not fully meet the demand and will create additional training problems (Buckner & Jones, 1990, p. 20).

Buckner and Jones contend that "the best and the brightest" teachers should be encouraged to enter educational administration. Otherwise, they say, the vacancies created by the mass retirement of present administrators may be filled by persons who are not "high potential teachers" (1990, p. 20).

In a publication sponsored by the New York Leadership in Educational Administration Development (LEAD) Center, the question of administrative shortage was addressed:

There has been a great deal of conventional wisdom informally expressed among those playing a role in the hiring of school administrators that a shortage of candidates for such positions exists. There seems to be little hard data to support this notion and in fact evidence from the New York State Education Department, Division of Teacher Certification, indicates the number of persons who have been issued Administrator Certificates far exceeds the number of administrative positions in the state ... but perceptions of both a decline in quantity and quality seem to persist (Haley & McDonald, 1988, p. 1).

The study did conclude that there are fewer well-qualified candidates for all administrative positions than in previous times, and stated that data "beyond numbers of certificate holders and numbers of positions is critical" (Haley & McDonald, 1988, p. 14).

Solutions to an administrative shortage have been offered. Some advocate alternative certification for persons who are proven leaders in business or the military, as does the author of the following passage:

The principal leads a school team that consists primarily of instructional specialists. While he must surely possess clear educational goals and priorities and know about teaching, testing and curriculum, he need not be an expert in classroom matters provided that he has such experts on the team (Finn, 1986, p. 40).

Former Secretary of Education William Bennett suggested retired military officers as a source of educational administrators (Haley & McDonald, 1988, p. 13).

Both the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) are strongly opposed to alternative certification. "NAESP holds that persons entering the principalship should have at least five years of elementary classroom teaching experience" (Doud, 1989, p. 27). NASSP's executive director says:

If principals have not taught through the entire cycle of the school year from September to June, living with students, fellow teachers, counselors, and parents, how can they understand the central task of the school -- classroom instruction -- or the context of achieving this task? (Thompson, 1988, pp. 40-41).

In Principals for 21st Century Schools, NAESP's position is clear: "Principals should understand the nature of instruction within a particular environment and have substantive classroom experience" (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1990, p. i).

The reaction to an urgent shortage in Utah in 1987 prompted another type of solution. A cooperative program between the Davis County School District and Utah State University delivered courses on site in the district. When the state endorsed retirement at 55 years of age and 25 years of experience, the expected large turnover took place. The newly trained teachers were ready to fill the vacated positions (Ashbaker & Bench, 1987, p. i).

In conclusion, a supply and demand controversy in educational administration seems to be clear in one aspect: a large number of principals across the nation are expected to retire soon. There is also agreement that principals play vital roles, and that they are more important in today's schools than ever before. Most of the writing on administrative shortages agrees that administrator preparation programs must be made relevant to the job. The final observation regarding the available literature presents a clouded picture. The exact nature of the rumored administrative shortage is unclear, and although numerous problems are associated with the principalship in particular, no specific cause has been identified as the reason for a shortage.



## Chapter 3

### PROCEDURES

Several sources were used in an attempt to determine if the state of Kentucky may be developing a shortage of administrative candidates, and if so, to identify the cause.

First, the related literature, both nationwide and on a state level, was reviewed. Also, telephone calls were placed to three separate school districts to inquire about the general perception on a local level regarding an impending administrative shortage. Next, a survey instrument was developed in an attempt to determine if fewer teachers are planning to enter educational administration, and to discover the reasons.

The Kentucky counties selected as the population to receive the survey instrument were Boyd County, Fleming County, and Martin County. The choice of counties was based on the premise that Boyd County, Fleming County, and Martin County represent the diversity necessary for validity. Also, these three counties have a sizable teacher population of approximately 800.

The instruments were mailed to each public school principal in the three counties (private and vocational schools were excluded) with the request that they distribute one instrument to each teacher and return the completed instruments by mail.

### Boyd County

Boyd County is by far the most populous of the three counties selected for this study. It is a rural, urban county with a 1990 estimated population of 56,500. The largest city, Ashland, has 25,960 persons. The other city and county seat, Catlettsburg, has a population of 3,180. Total households number 19,960 with 2.73 persons each. Per capita income in Boyd County for 1988 was \$13,975. The 1987 median family income was \$25,893. (Boyd County Cooperative Extension Service)

The Ashland office of the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources, Department for Employment Services reports that there are several major employers in the Ashland area: Ashland Oil, Armco Steel, K Steel, and the Chessie Systems shops and yards are just a few. Employing significant numbers also are Calgon Carbon, Inc., Columbia Gas, Corbin Ltd., International Nickel Company (INCO - Huntington Alloys), and Mansbach Metal, Inc.

Oil refining, rail traffic and steel-making are Ashland's principal industries. The major agricultural businesses are raising beef cattle and producing eggs (GTE South Incorporated, 1990, middle pages).

There are three school systems operating in Boyd County. The Boyd County School District includes a vocational school, one 10-12 high school, two 7-9 schools, four K-6 schools, a K-4 school, two 1-6 schools, and an early childhood learning center

which includes Headstart and kindergarten (Kentucky School Directory, 1990, pp. 67-68). According to Boyd County's central office, the 1991 spring enrollment is 4,282 pupils, 1227 (29 percent) of whom receive a free or reduced price lunch.

The Ashland Independent system has four K-6 schools, a Headstart-6 school, a 1-6 school, a 7-8 middle school, a 9-12 high school, an ungraded day treatment center, and a cerebral palsy school (Kentucky School Directory, 1990, p. 60). The central office of the Ashland system reports an enrollment of 3,788 students, 1329 (35 percent) of whom receive a free or reduced price lunch.

The Fairview Independent system serves 748 students in a K-2 school, a 3-6 school, and a 7-12 school (Kentucky School Directory, 1990, p. 91). Fairview school officials report that 218 (29 percent) of students receive a free or reduced price lunch.

Boyd County has a total enrollment of 8,818 students in its three public school systems. The most current dropout rate available is 1.55 percent. Those aged 25 years and older who are high school graduates constitute 59 percent of the population of Boyd County (Kentucky Department of Education. Division of Pupil Attendance).

### Fleming County

Fleming County may be viewed as an agricultural county. Of the county's 204,660 acres, 129,354 are classified as cropland. Farming is reported as the main source of income for 720 persons. The farms average 156 acres. Fleming County ranks sixteenth in the state in terms of agricultural sales (Fleming County Cooperative Extension Service, 1990, p. 2).

The population of Fleming County has shown little growth in recent years. The 1990 population was 12,273. There were 4,311 households with 2.83 persons each. One-fourth of the population is below the poverty level. The 1987 median family income was \$17,602, with \$10,103 as the 1988 per capita income. The 1989 unemployment rate in Fleming County was 7.2 percent.

Fleming County's largest firm is U.S. Shoe Corporation, which employs about 450. There are four other manufacturing firms employing from 10 to 120 persons each. Employment is divided equally among manufacturing, state and local government, and wholesale-retail trade. Approximately 700 persons are employed in each category. (Fleming County Cooperative Extension Service and Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development).

The largest city and the county seat is Flemingsburg, with a population of 2,890. Both Maysville Community College and Morehead State University are located within 30 miles of Fleming County. (Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development).

The Fleming County School District serves 2,256 students. The system includes four K-6 schools, one 6-8 middle school, and a 9-12 high school (Kentucky School Directory, 1990, pp. 137-38). In 1989, 52 percent of the school children received free or reduced price lunches (Fleming County Cooperative Extension Service).

The dropout rate for Fleming County is 3.21 percent. As of 1980, 40.2 percent of the population aged 25 and over were high school graduates (Kentucky Department of Education. Division of Pupil Attendance).

#### Martin County

Martin County is a mountain county with a 1990 population of 12,526. Inez, the county seat, is the largest community, with a population of 511. Another community, Warfield, has a population of 364. (Bureau of the Census. Department of Commerce).

Mining is the primary source of employment and earnings in Martin County. An increase in the price of oil in 1973 caused economic growth in this coal mining county. Earnings per job increased to a high of \$41,397 in 1980. By 1987, average earnings per job had fallen to \$33,681. This is still much higher than the state 1987 average of \$18,636. Yet, per capita personal income in 1987 for Martin County was \$9,522, or 24 percent lower than the state average. Unemployment in 1987 was reported as 13.7 percent,

while the state average was 8.8 percent (Economic Trends in Kentucky Counties, 1967-1987: Martin County, 1990, pp. iii-5).

Martin County's school system serves 2,988 students. The district includes one Headstart school, two Headstart-5 schools, five K-5 schools, one 6-8 middle school, and a 9-12 high school (Kentucky School Directory, 1990, pp. 137-38). The food service director of Martin County Schools reports that 1,451 students (49 percent) receive a free or reduced price lunch.

The school dropout rate in Martin County is 3.08 percent, and 34.5 percent of the population aged 25 and older are high school graduates (Kentucky Department of Education. Division of Pupil Attendance).

## Chapter 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

Public school teachers in three diverse Kentucky counties were surveyed. The counties selected to receive the survey instrument were Boyd County ( a rural, urban county with three school systems and a population of 56,500), Fleming County (an agricultural county with a population of 12,273), and Martin County (a mountain county heavily dependent upon mining, with a population of 12,526). The private and vocational schools were excluded from this study. Survey instruments were mailed out February 23, 1991 and received until April 6, 1991.

The survey instrument was designed for a dual purpose: to determine the number of teachers who are interested in becoming school administrators, and to determine the major reasons teachers may have for not desiring to become administrators.

Of 815 instruments that were mailed to principals for distribution to teachers, 411 were returned. Two instruments were inadequately marked, and therefore unusable. This produced a usable return of 50.2 percent, broken down by county as follows:

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF TEACHERS SURVEYED

County	Instruments Mailed	Usable Returns	Rate of Return
Boyd	501	236	47.1%
Fleming	136	97	71.3%
Martin	178	76	42.7%
TOTAL	815	409	50.2%

First, the survey instruments were sorted based on the way teachers categorized themselves in terms of their certification and their desire to become school administrators. These categories, as listed on the survey instrument (see Appendix A), were designed to classify teachers into five possible situations with regard to their interest in entering educational administration positions and administration preparation programs. The five categories were:

- a) I am not certified as a school administrator, and have no desire to become certified.
- b) I am certified as a school administrator, but do not plan to seek an administrative position.
- c) I am certified as a school administrator, and I am seeking an administrative position.
- d) I am presently enrolled in a school administrator preparation program.
- e) I am not certified as a school administrator, but I plan to enter a preparation program.



The information collected based on this sorting revealed the following:

TABLE 4. NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN EACH CATEGORY, REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE CERTIFICATION AND INTEREST IN ENTERING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS AND PREPARATION PROGRAMS.

County	Number of Teachers by Category					Total
	a	b	c	d	e	
Boyd	199(84%)	10(4%)	9(4%)	9(4%)	9(4%)	236(100%)
Fleming	83(86%)	3(3%)	5(5%)	4(4%)	2(2%)	97(100%)
Martin	68(89%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	3(4%)	3(4%)	76(100%)*
TOTAL	350(86%)	14(3%)	15(4%)	16(4%)	14(3%)	409(100%)

\*Does not equal 100% due to rounding

Combining categories "a" and "b" provides the total number of teachers not interested in a career in school administration (includes those who are certified to be administrators). Likewise, totaling the numbers in categories "c," "d," and "e" indicates how many teachers are interested in pursuing administrative positions. This "c, d, and e" group includes teachers who are certified as administrators and are seeking positions in administration, those who are currently enrolled in preparation programs to become certified, and those who plan to enter administrative preparation programs. The following table presents these totals:

TABLE 5. TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHERS INTERESTED IN ENTERING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION COMPARED WITH TOTAL NUMBER NOT INTERESTED.

County	Number Not Interested (Total a & b)	Number Interested (Total c, d, e)	Total
Boyd	209 (89%)	27 (11%)	236 (100%)
Fleming	86 (89%)	11 (11%)	97 (100%)
Martin	69 (91%)	7 (9%)	76 (100%)
TOTAL	364 (89%)	45 (11%)	409 (100%)

As shown in Table 5, 364 (89 percent) of the 409 respondents indicated that they have no desire to become school administrators even though they may be certified to do so (combination "a and b" group). Only 45 (11 percent) of 409 teachers report interest in securing administrative posts. Of these, 15 are in category "c" (those who hold an administrative certificate and are seeking positions). Nearly half (7 of 15) of these teachers have been certified for administrative positions for seven to thirteen years, and four of them have in excess of twenty years of teaching experience. Therefore, they may not all be considered sincere or realistic administrative candidates.

In an effort to discover why the great majority of teachers

have no interest in a career in educational administration, the study identified twelve possible reasons from a review of the related literature. Teachers were asked to indicate the importance of each of these reasons by circling a "3," a "2," or a "1," representing "very important," "important," or "not important" in their decisions not to pursue educational administration (see survey instrument, Appendix A). A tally of teachers' responses disclosed the top five reasons teachers perceive as determining factors in the decision against the pursuit of an administrative career. Those results are presented in the following tables:

TABLE 6. TEACHERS' TOP FIVE REASONS FOR NOT ENTERING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

Top-Ranked Reasons	Mean Score (1-3 Scale)	Number Reporting This Reason as Important
1) I enjoy teaching	2.62	338/364 (93%)
2) Too much physical and emotional stress	1.95	232/364 (64%)
3) No free time in summer	1.92	247/364 (68%)
4) Too much responsibility	1.84	218/364 (60%)
5) Long work hours	1.81	206/364 (57%)

TABLE 7. TEACHERS' TOP FIVE REASONS FOR NOT ENTERING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

<u>Top-Ranked Reasons by County</u>	<u>Mean Score (1-3 scale)</u>	<u>Number Reporting This Reason as Important</u>
<u>Boyd</u>		
1) I enjoy teaching	2.64	198/209 (95%)
2) No free time in summer	1.84	140/209 (67%)
3) Too much physical/emotional stress	1.83	123/209 (59%)
4) Long work hours	1.81	121/209 (58%)
5) Too much responsibility	1.74	117/209 (56%)
<u>Fleming</u>		
1) I enjoy teaching	2.59	76/86 (88%)
2) No free time in summer	2.16	64/86 (74%)
3) Too much physical/emotional stress	1.97	55/86 (64%)
4) Too much responsibility	1.86	51/86 (59%)
5) "Hassle" of certification	1.81	51/86 (59%)
<u>Martin</u>		
1) I enjoy teaching	2.59	64/69 (92%)
2) Too much physical/emotional stress	2.27	54/69 (78%)
3) Too much responsibility	2.10	50/69 (72%)
4) More risk of lawsuits	1.90	40/69 (58%)
5) "Hassle" of certification	1.88	47/69 (68%)

Write-in reasons given by teachers for their disinterest in entering educational administrative programs or positions included: less contact with students, less contact with academic field, district politics, and discrimination against women in administrative hirings.

After the tally of teachers' responses identified their top five reasons for not entering educational administration, the mean score for each item was determined. Tables 6 and 7 illustrate that the top-ranked reason, by a significant margin, for teachers' disinterest in pursuing educational administration is "I enjoy teaching," with a mean score of 2.62 on a scale of 1-3. (A "3" would indicate that all teachers rated that reason as "very important.")

The third column in Tables 6 and 7 discloses the number of teachers who marked that reason either "very important" or "important" as a deciding factor against an administrative career.

Variations among the three counties, as presented in Table 7, are negligible. Of the reasons where differences do occur, they are insignificant. The most noticeable difference is that the reason "no free time in summer" did not rank in the top five in Martin County. "More risk of lawsuits" did appear on Martin County's top five list. Given the fact that Martin County's surveyed population was the smallest in the study, and the similarity of the numbers after the top reason was identified, these variations are

minimal. Boyd County is the only one of the three counties in which "long work hours" was ranked among the top five reasons for not entering school administration. Written-in comments by teachers called attention to the fact that there are long hours in teaching as well as in administration, so perhaps some teachers did not identify with that reason as a difference between their jobs and administrative ones.

More noticeable than variations are the striking similarities in teachers' perceptions. The item "I enjoy teaching" clearly ranked first in all three counties. This data would support the conclusion that teachers find their present positions rewarding. That is, 89 percent of all respondents in this study do not wish to become school administrators, and the top-ranked reason teachers gave for that decision is the enjoyment they derive from teaching.

An inspection of the data in Tables 6 and 7 also reveals that recent educational reform does not appear in the top five reasons for teacher disinterest in entering educational administration in any of the three counties. The literature suggested that educational reform might figure prominently against entrance into school administration.

Those teachers who categorized themselves as a "c," "d," or "e" (those who indicated interest in pursuing educational administration) were asked to rank thirteen concerns derived from the related literature that an aspiring administrator might have. A tally of

their responses provided the basis for the following ranking of the top five concerns to those interested in becoming educational administrators:

TABEL 8. TOP FIVE CONCERNS OF ASPIRING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS.

Top-Ranked Concerns	Mean Score (1-3 Scale)	Number Reporting This Concern as Important
1) Availability of administrative jobs	2.37	41/45 (91%)
2) Loss of job security	2.29	35/45 (78%)
3) New demands of KERA	2.20	37/45 (82%)
Effect on home life	2.20	36/45 (80%)
4) Increased responsibility	2.16	35/45 (78%)
5) Risk of lawsuits	2.11	34/45 (76%)

As illustrated in Table 8, the top-ranked concern of aspiring school administrators is the availability of administrative jobs, although the differences among these concerns are insignificant. This finding indicates that teachers wishing to enter the ranks of educational administration perceive an overabundance of available qualified people. This study, however, did not find large numbers of certificate holders. Only 15 teachers of 409 respondents are in category "c," those who now hold administrative certification and

are seeking administrative positions (Table 4). As noted, some of these may not realistically be considered as administrative candidates.

Loss of job security was ranked as the number two concern of those teachers wishing to enter educational administration. This may be a reaction to the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, which excludes principals specifically from the law requiring that certain procedures be followed in demoting administrative personnel.



## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

Teachers in three diverse Kentucky counties were surveyed to determine their interest in becoming school administrators and to discover the reasons they may have for not desiring to enter educational administration. The three counties selected were: Boyd County, a rural, urban county with a population of 56,500 and three school systems; Fleming County, an agricultural county with a population of 12,273; and Martin County, a mountain county with a population of 12,526 and an economy heavily dependent upon mining. The survey instruments were mailed to principals in the public schools (private and vocational schools were excluded) on February 23, 1991. The last data packet was received on April 6, 1991.

Eighty-nine percent of respondents reported they had no desire to become educational administrators. Only 14 respondents (3 percent) indicated that they plan to enter an educational administration preparation program.

The study found that the primary reason teachers are reluctant to enter the ranks of school administration is their enjoyment of teaching, with 338 of 364 teachers (93 percent) reporting this reason

as "important" or "very important" in the decision not to enter school administration.

Eleven percent of the respondents indicated interest in becoming school administrators (45 of 409 respondents). These aspiring administrators ranked availability of administrative positions as their major concern, by a slim margin. Approximately half (7 of 15) of those who already hold administrative certificates and report that they are seeking administrative posts may not be authentic candidates due to the number of years they have been certified without securing administrative positions.

The question of a shortage of future Kentucky administrators remains. This study indicates that few teachers are now entering preparation programs, but a prediction of the number of candidates that will be needed to fill vacated posts was hampered by the fact that administrative retirement numbers were not available.

There is some discrepancy in the fact that availability of positions was the major concern of aspiring administrators, while this study indicates little interest among teachers in pursuing administrative preparation programs.

The foregoing data does not indicate that the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 is a deterrent to teachers in regard to entering educational administration positions and preparation programs. The attractiveness of teaching has very possibly been enhanced by the Kentucky Education Reform Act. The attractiveness of the position of school administrator apparently pales by comparison to that of

the teacher. This problem may need further investigation as to its implications for future supply studies for administrators.

Although no definitive statement regarding an impending shortage of Kentucky school administrators can be wholly supported by the data in this study, indications strongly suggest that the existing pool of administrative candidates is not growing sufficiently. If barely adequate numbers of new candidates are prepared each year to replace outgoing school administrators, a critical situation would be created: virtually no selection of candidates would be possible. Additionally, institutions offering educational administration preparation programs will not continue to do so under declining enrollments. Potential educational administration students would face the hardship of relocating for such training, thus further reducing their numbers.

### Conclusions

Based upon the foregoing presentation of data, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- 1) There is little interest among teachers in the three counties in pursuing programs leading to certification in educational administration (3 percent plan to enroll).

- 2) The major reason teachers offered for lack of interest in pursuing educational administration programs was their enjoyment of teaching (93 percent).

3) Teachers' perceptions in the three counties with regard to pursuing educational administration are remarkably similar.

4) The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 was not identified as the primary reason for disinterest in entering school administration.

5) Availability of administrative positions is the main concern to those interested in acquiring administrative posts, although this concern seems to be unsupported by the data in this study.

#### Recommendations

1) Studies on supply and demand trends in educational administration should be completed at least every five years, and more often during major educational changes.

2) Educational leadership departments of Kentucky's colleges and universities offering administrative certification should be surveyed to determine enrollment trends in administrative programs.

3) Administrators should be surveyed to determine both their retirement plans and their perceptions regarding the attractiveness of educational administration.

4) An authoritative, demographic database on teachers in Kentucky should be established.

5) Additional incentives should be implemented to attract outstanding teachers into educational administration.

- 6) The Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System should keep records of administrator retirements separate from teacher retirements.
- 7) School principals should be provided job security equal to that of other school administrators.
- 8) The image of the school administrator should receive attention toward improvement.

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APPENDIX A

Cover Letter and Survey Instrument

February 23, 1991

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am undertaking a research project as part of the requirements for an Ed.S. degree. Please distribute one survey instrument to each teacher, collect, and return them to me by March 6, 1991.

I have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed, large brown envelope for the returns. Your help will be greatly appreciated!

Joanne Ramey Morgan  
West Carter Junior High School  
P.O. Box 910  
Olive Hill, KY 41164

HOW MANY INSTRUMENTS DISTRIBUTED? \_\_\_\_\_(Number of Teachers)

HOW MANY INSTRUMENTS RETURNED? \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Fellow Teacher:

I am undertaking a research project as part of the requirements for an Ed.S. degree. Please help me out by taking a few minutes to complete this instrument. There is no need to include your name. Turn the completed form in to the principal by Friday morning.

SURVEY OF TEACHERS

Years of experience? \_\_\_\_\_ Rank III, II, or I? \_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female? \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK ONE:

- \_\_\_ a) I am not certified as a school administrator, and have no desire to become certified.
- \_\_\_ b) I am certified as a school administrator, but do not plan to seek an administrative position. (When was certificate issued? \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_ c) I am certified as a school administrator, and I am seeking an administrative position. (When was certificate issued?)
- \_\_\_ d) I am presently enrolled in a school administrator preparation program.
- \_\_\_ e) I am not certified as a school administrator, but I plan to enter a preparation program \_\_\_\_\_ (When?)

If you checked "a" or "b" above, how important were the following concerns in your decision not to enter school administration?

3 - Very Important  
 2 - Important  
 1 - Not Important

CIRCLE ONE:

I enjoy teaching ..... 3 2 1  
 long work hours ..... 3 2 1  
 no free time in summer ... 3 2 1  
 loss of job security ..... 3 2 1  
 not enough salary difference ..... 3 2 1  
 "hassle" of certification. 3 2 1  
 more risk of lawsuits .... 3 2 1  
 too much physical and emotional stress ..... 3 2 1  
 too much responsibility .. 3 2 1  
 internship ..... 3 2 1  
 KERA (HB 940) will demand more of administrators.... 3 2 1  
 few administrative job openings in my county .... 3 2 1  
 other \_\_\_\_\_ 3 2 1

If you checked "c," "d," or "e" above, how important are the following concerns to you as an aspiring administrator?

3 - Very Important  
 2 - Important  
 1 - Not Important

CIRCLE ONE:

giving up teaching ..... 3 2 1  
 long work hours ..... 3 2 1  
 no free time in summer .. 3 2 1  
 loss of job security .... 3 2 1  
 risk of lawsuits ..... 3 2 1  
 increased responsibility. 3 2 1  
 increased stress ..... 3 2 1  
 new demands of KERA ..... 3 2 1  
 internship ..... 3 2 1  
 assessment training ..... 3 2 1  
 effect on home life ..... 3 2 1  
 availability of administrative jobs ..... 3 2 1  
 certification requirements ..... 3 2 1  
 other \_\_\_\_\_ 3 2 1

## APPENDIX B

Additional Data

This study collected some demographic data which proved to be inapplicable to the topic at hand. This information is presented below in the hope that it may be pertinent in related studies and/or that it may be of interest to the reader.

TABLE 9. TEACHERS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.

Years Experience:	0-5	6-10	11-19	20+	Unmarked	Total
Boyd County	37	31	90	56	23	237
Fleming County	19	15	33	25	5	97
Martin County	20	17	17	14	9	77
TOTALS	76	63	140	95	37	411

TABLE 10. TEACHERS' RANK.

Teachers' Rank:	I	II	III	Unmarked	Total
Boyd County	79	101	37	20	237
Fleming County	31	48	15	3	97
Martin County	12	39	19	7	77
TOTALS	122	188	71	30	411

TABLE 11. NUMBER OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS.

Sex:	Male	Female	Unmarked	Total
Boyd County	36	191	10	237
Fleming County	16	78	3	97
Martin County	10	63	4	77
TOTALS	62	332	17	411